

Risk Assessments

This document, adapted from various safeguarding resources, provides a tool to assist practitioners in making casework decisions related to adult safeguarding. It outlines examples of abuse, potential risks, and severity levels. The tool is designed to promote consistent responses, but professional judgement should be applied in each individual case.

Care Act Compliance:

In line with the Care Act (2014), this tool emphasises prevention, proportionate responses, and person-centred risk management.

Why Use This Tool:

The tool supports decision-making in managing risks, responding to welfare concerns, and triaging adult safeguarding referrals. It aims to ensure proportionate responses based on the individual's needs and case complexity, while using a Red/Amber/Green (RAG) system to assess urgency. It provides clarity for the Safeguarding or Welfare Lead when formal safeguarding/welfare enquiries are needed.

Use this grid to help you make decisions on how to deal with safeguarding reports and to support what you decide to do.

Factors		Guidance and considerations		
1. Vulnerability of adult at risk	Less vulnerable	more vulnerable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the adult at risk have needs for care and support? Is the adult at risk of abuse or neglect? Can the adult protect themselves? Does the person lack mental capacity? 	
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the person dependent on the alleged person causing harm? Has the alleged person at risk been threatened or coerced into making decisions?
The abusive act			<p>Questions 2-9 relate to the harmful act and/or the alleged harmer. Less serious concerns are likely to be dealt with at triage stage only, whilst the more serious concerns will be likely to progress to a safeguarding enquiry.</p> <p>Refer to the table overleaf. Look at the relevant categories of abuse and use your knowledge of the case and your own professional judgement to gauge the seriousness of the concern.</p>	
2. Seriousness of abuse	Low	Significant	Critical	Professional judgement is to be used to decide whether repeated concerns over a certain period of time will result in the need for progression to a formal safeguarding enquiry.
3. Patterns of abuse	Isolated incident	Recent abuse in an ongoing relationship	Repeated abuse	Impact of abuse does not necessarily correspond to the extent of the abuse – different people will be affected in different ways. Views of the adult at risk will be important in determining the impact of the abuse.
4. Impact of abuse on person	No impact	Some impact but not long lasting	Serious long-lasting impact	Other people may be affected by the abuse of another adult.
5. Impact on others	No one else affected	Others Indirectly affected	Others Directly affected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are children, relatives or other residents/service users affected or distressed by the abuse? Are other people intimidated and/or their environment affected?
6. Intent of alleged harmer	Unintended /ill-informed	Opportunistic	Deliberate/ targeted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the act/omission a violent/serious unprofessional response to difficulties in caring? Is the act/omission planned and deliberately malicious? Is the act a breach of a professional code of conduct? *the act/omission doesn't have to be intentional to meet safeguarding thresholds
7. Illegality of actions	Bad practice – not illegal	Criminal act	Serious criminal act	<p>Seek advice from the Police if you are unsure if a crime has been committed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the act/omission poor practice (but not illegal) or is it clearly a crime? Is willful neglect occurring?
8. Risk of repeated abuse on person	Unlikely to recur	Possible to recur	Likely to recur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is the abuse less likely to recur with significant changes (e.g. training, supervision, respite support) or very likely even if changes are made / more support is provided?
9. Risk of repeated abuse on others	Others not at risk	Possibly at risk	Others at risk	<p>Are other adults and/or children at risk of being abused?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very unlikely? Less likely if significant changes are made? This harmer/setting represents a threat to other vulnerable adults or children.



<p>Types of abuse and seriousness</p>	<p>Concerns are likely to be managed at triage stage only and / or be managed via routine case management. You should always seek advice from a SAM or your supervisor. Professional judgement or concerns of repeated low level harm may progress to a safeguarding enquiry.</p>	<p>Concerns of a significant nature will receive additional scrutiny and are likely to require safeguarding triage and may progress to a safeguarding enquiry. Some examples of significant harm may include criminal offences which will need to be referred to the Police.</p>	<p>Concerns of a critical nature will receive additional scrutiny, and progress urgently to a safeguarding enquiry. The Police will need to be contacted where there are concerns that a crime has been committed.</p>
<p>Physical</p>	<p>Low</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff error causing no /little harm e.g. friction mark on skin due to ill-fitting hoist sling Minor events that still meet the criteria for incident reporting Isolated incident involving service on service user Inexplicable minor marking found on one occasion Minor event where users lack capacity 	<p>Significant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inexplicable marking or lesions, cuts or grip marks on a number of occasions. Accumulations of minor incidents Inappropriate restraint drinks or aids to independence Inexplicable fractures/ injuries Assault 	<p>Critical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grievous bodily harm / assault with a weapon leading to irreversible damage or death Pattern of recurring errors or an incident of deliberate maladministration that results in ill health or death
<p>Sexual (including Sexual exploitation)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Isolated incident of teasing or low-level unwanted sexualised attention (verbal or touching) directed at one adult by another whether or not capacity exists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recurring sexualised touching or isolated or recurring masturbation without consent Voyeurism without consent Being subject to indecent exposure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sex in a relationship characterised by authority inequality or exploitation e.g. receiving something in return for carrying out a sexual act Sex without consent (rape) Attempted penetration by any means (whether or not it occurs within a relationship) without consent
<p>Psychological/ Emotional</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Isolated incident where adult is spoken to in a rude or inappropriate way – respect is undermined but no/little distress caused 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treatment that undermines dignity and esteem Denying or failing to recognise adult's choice or opinion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Denial of basic human rights / civil liberties, overriding advance directive Prolonged intimidation Vicious / Personalised verbal attacks

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Financial	<p style="text-align: center;">Low</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff personally benefit from user funds e.g. accrue 'reward' points on their own store loyalty cards when shopping Money not recorded safely and properly Adult not routinely involved in decisions about how their money is spent or kept safe – capacity in this respect is not assessed Non-payment of care fees not impacting on care 	<p style="text-align: center;">Significant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adult's monies kept in joint bank account – unclear arrangements Adult denied access to own funds or possessions Ongoing non-payment of care fees putting a person's care at risk Misuse/Misappropriation of property or possessions of benefits by a person in a position of trust or control Personal finance removed from adult's control 	<p style="text-align: center;">Critical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fraud / exploitation relating to benefits, Other criminal activity e.g. theft, robbery, financial scams, mass marketing fraud
Neglect / acts of omission (see also Physical abuse re medication)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Isolated missed home care visit where no harm occurs Adult is not assisted with a meal/drink on one occasion and no harm occurs Adult not bathed as often as would like – possible complaint Inadequacies in care provision that lead to discomfort or inconvenience – no harm occurs e.g. being left wet occasionally Not having access to aids to independence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recent missed home care visits where risk of harm escalates, or one miss where harm occurs Hospital discharge without adequate planning and where harm occurs Ongoing lack of care to the extent that health and wellbeing deteriorate significantly e.g. pressure wounds, dehydration, malnutrition, loss of independence / confidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Failure to arrange access to lifesaving services or medical care Failure to intervene in dangerous situations where the adult lacks the capacity to assess risk On-going lack of care or inaction which leads to serious injury or death Legislation breaches e.g. health and safety, environmental health leading to serious injury or death. No engagement Significant denial and little insight into the risks or fluctuating capacity to understand risks Potentially combined risks with other areas such as mate crime, Anti-social behaviour, rogue traders, scams Environmental factors (vermin, fire risk, poor/no toilet facilities) Hoarding which causes risk to life – fire, crushing, exit blocked
Self-Neglect <i>Self-neglect will not necessarily prompt a section 42 enquiry. Only serious, critical self neglect needs to be managed under formal safeguarding procedures. Decisions to be made on a case-by-case basis</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incontinence leading to health concerns Some insight and willingness to change, likely to accept help Network of kin who can help/ support/ monitor The client functions day to day in terms of food, hygiene, community access Poor management of finances leading to health, wellbeing or property risks Isolated / occasional reports about unkempt personal appearance or property which is out of character or unusual for the person Some evidence of hoarding but no major impact on health / safety No immediate risk Low risk to health (such as no vermin, no fire risk, won't be crushed by a hoard pile, no infection risk) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of care or behaviour to extent that health and wellbeing deteriorate significantly eg pressure sores, wounds, dehydration, Behaviour which poses fire risk to self and other Chaotic / problematic substance misuse Neighbours / others affected by self-neglect High level of clutter / hoarding Concerns from multiple agencies Environment injurious to health / wellbeing Reluctance to engage commit to the process/ change, not taking all the required steps. A degree of denial Has limited daily function re activities of daily living (food, hygiene, accessing community, mobility etc) Lack of essential amenities, insanitary conditions in the property 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Failure to seek lifesaving services or medical care where required Immediate risk, person likely to come to harm without intervention in the near/ immediate future Unable to leave the house, not seen for some time, evidence of day to day struggling (food, hygiene, mobility, community access etc)

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Discriminatory	<p>Low</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> One-off incident of teasing or taunts motivated by prejudicial attitudes towards an adult's individual differences One-off incident of care planning that fails to address adults specific diversity associated needs for a short period 	<p>Significant</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inequitable access to service provision as a result of a diversity issue Recurring failure to meet specific care/support needs linked to diversity Refused access to essential services Denial of civil liberties e.g. voting, making a complaint 	<p>Critical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hate crime resulting in injury / emergency medical treatment /fear for life Hate crime resulting in serious injury or attempted murder / honour-based violence Humiliation or threats on a regular basis
Organisational (involving one or combination of the other forms of abuse)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of stimulation /opportunities for people to engage in social activities Service users not given sufficient voice or involved in the running of the service Denial of individuality and opportunities for service user to make informed choice and take responsible risks Care planning documentation not person centred 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rigid/inflexible routines Service user's dignity is undermined e.g. lack of privacy during support with intimate care needs, sharing under-clothing Bed/poor practice not being reported and going unchecked Unsafe and unhygienic living environments Limited freedom of movement Being forced to work for little or no payment Limited or no access to medical and dental care No access to appropriate benefits Limited access to food or shelter Be regularly moved (trafficked) to avoid detection Removal of passport or ID documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff misusing their position of power over service users Over-medication and/or inappropriate restraint used to manage behaviour Widespread consistent ill-treatment Failure to meet legislative responsibilities leading to injury, death or unacceptable / restrictive practice Sexual exploitation Starvation Organ harvesting No control over movement / Imprisonment Forced marriage
Modern Slavery	<p>All concerns about modern slavery are deemed to be of a significant / critical level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inexplicable marking or lesions, cuts or grip marks on a number of occasions Alleged perpetrator exhibits controlling behaviour Limited access to medical and dental care Accumulations of minor incidents Frequent verbal / physical outbursts No access / control over finances Stalking Relationship characterised by imbalance of power 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Threats to kill, attempts to strangle, choke or suffocate Sex without consent (rape) Forced marriage Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Honour based violence
Domestic Abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Isolated incident of abusive nature Occasional taunts or verbal outbursts 	<p>The CAADA DASH Risk Assessment Checklist should be used to determine the level of risk in domestic abuse cases and a referral made into MARRAC where appropriate</p>	