

Bristol Safeguarding Adults Board



Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy

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1. Introduction

The Care Act 2014 places a duty on local safeguarding adults boards to develop and implement a clear strategy around the prevention of abuse or neglect of adults at risk. Prevention is one of the core principles of safeguarding: “It is better to take action before harm occurs” and as such forms a fundamental part of the Safeguarding Adults policy and procedures.

The Care Act (2014) identifies the aims of prevention in safeguarding as including:

- To prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs;
- To raise public awareness so that professionals, other staff and communities as a whole play their part in preventing, identifying and responding to abuse and neglect.

The Care Act emphasises the need to empower people, to balance choice and control for individuals against **preventing** harm and reducing risk, and to respond proportionately to safeguarding concerns.

Identifying what works, for whom and in what situations, can be a challenge. Considerable abuse and neglect takes place in secret which makes it difficult to prove that an abusive event has occurred, or that an abusive event has been prevented. It is therefore very difficult to judge what constitutes a successful prevention intervention. Consequently effective prevention requires good partnership working, and a multi-agency approach is essential in terms of developing a well-defined early intervention and preventative strategy to safeguard adults at risk across Bristol. And all agencies will take an active role in implementing and promoting the strategy within and across the locality.

2. Aim of the prevention and early intervention strategy

- To promote an outcomes approach in safeguarding adults that works for people resulting in the best experience possible;
- To raise public awareness so that professionals, other staff and communities as a whole play their part in preventing, identifying and responding to abuse and neglect.

That establishes:

- How safe are local people?
- Are local agencies working effectively internally and together to safeguard?
- Does the person feel safer as a result?

3. Key Messages:

The following principles and key messages underpin the preventative strategy:

- 3.1** Prevention needs to take place in the context of person-centred support; working with individuals to enable them to take steps to make themselves safer and are empowered to take control of their lives, be supported to manage risks and make choices in terms of their outcomes in line with the principles of **'Making Safeguarding Personal'**.
- 3.2** Safeguarding monitoring data and other intelligence should be used to identify people, groups or localities most at risk in order to target preventive work. Any "difficult to reach" groups should be identified and strategies put in place to raise awareness and reporting amongst these groups and communities.
- 3.3** Safeguarding training strategies and programmes should address prevention and early intervention. This should include Making Safeguarding Personal, risk enablement, risk management, community safety, legal powers and remedies. Staff should have access to specific training relevant to their role.
- 3.4** Preventative strategies integrated into all agencies plans, policies and procedures

4. Principles

- 4.1 Prevention in safeguarding should be broadly defined and should include all health and social care user groups and service settings. It does not mean being over-protective or risk-averse.
- 4.2 Service users and their families, friends and carers should be actively encouraged to participate in developing solutions to challenges they may be facing.
- 4.3 An approach which enables the individual to influence the support and services they receive (or when groups of people get together to influence the way services are designed, commissioned and delivered).
- 4.4 It includes multi-agency working (including information sharing), community safety, community participation and public awareness, as well as awareness raising and skills development with adults at risk.
- 4.5 Robust risk management (undertaken within the context of positive risk taking) is an important tool in effective prevention and early intervention.
- 4.6 A range of options of support are available to keep individuals safe from abuse - tailored to individual's needs
- 4.7 Services that prioritise both safeguarding and independence
- 4.8 Public awareness of safeguarding issues

5. The role of the individual worker in prevention from harm and early intervention

The worker must be familiar with their own organisations Safeguarding procedures and policies, which is in line with Bristol's Multiagency Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures. The worker must also be familiar with internal procedures including Whistleblowing, Complaints, Information Sharing and Duty of Candour. This will enable them to be open and honest with regard to

care issues and Safeguarding Adults concerns and enable them to assess and address their own developmental needs and evaluate practices within the workplace.

The workers role in prevention and early intervention with service users, families, friends and carers should consider:

- Reinforcing through literature and day to day interactions with service users that everyone has the right to live free from abuse and ensuring that they have access to appropriate support, including advocacy to exercise this right.
- Identifying vulnerability factors and potential risks as part of the needs assessment and addressing these as part of the support planning process.
- Using support plans to reduce loneliness or isolation and helping the person to strengthen or build their social and support networks.
- Using accessible ways and support to help people understand the different types of abuse and its prevention including what to look out for and the steps to take if abuse is suspected.
- Providing people with information about sources of independent information, advice and advocacy.
- Where appropriate provide people with information about the role of the Court of Protection and Office of the Public Guardian as well as the mechanisms available (e.g. power of attorney, deputyship, Department of Work and Pensions appointee-ship) to ensure their best interests are protected and to safeguard against financial exploitation if they lose their capacity to make welfare and/or property and financial decisions in the future.
- Awareness raising about what constitutes abuse for adults at risk is a significant preventative measure as this promotes awareness and openness to the possibility that abuse may be happening and to help them recognise and respond to abuse.

- Attend training and education of service users on exploitation and abuse in order to help them to recognise this and to have the interpersonal skills necessary to deal with the situation should this occur.
- Where appropriate supporting carers by offering a needs or carer's assessment and use this as an opportunity to explore the individuals' circumstances and consider whether it would be possible to provide information, or support that prevents abuse or neglect from occurring.
- Recognise that abuse or neglect may be unintentional and may arise because a carer is struggling to care for another person.
- Support the person to access support and services to help them recover from the abuse or neglect they have experienced.
- Individual workers are responsible for appropriate assessment and management of risk and appropriate information sharing.

6. The role of service providers

Effective service management is a significant contributor to the prevention of abuse through evidence as follows:

Service providers should ensure that Safeguarding Adults Procedures are rooted in the culture of the organisation. That demonstrates a person centred approach to care; a zero tolerance of abuse and neglect which encourages whistleblowing. They need to ensure that staff, service users, friends and family members are aware of the nature of abuse and neglect and what to do if it is suspected.

Service providers should ensure that staff are aware through internal guidelines of what to do when they suspect, witness or receive a disclosure of abuse or neglect of adults. This should be incorporated into induction programmes, staff manuals and practice handbooks so that individual staff members are aware of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding adults. Information should emphasise that all those who express concern will be treated seriously and will receive a positive response from managers.

Service providers should ensure effective employment and safer recruitment practices are in place and that staffing levels and the workers' competence is appropriate to meet the needs of the service users. This should include effective supervision, appraisal, regular staff training and updating of skills.

Service providers should oversee performance management and recording practices; governance and audit arrangements; responses to complaints and the promotion of effective links with other agencies and community networks.

Policies have a significant role in the prevention of abuse; they should be reviewed and updated regularly and made available to all staff and volunteers as they provide clear frameworks against which workers and volunteers can evaluate their own and their colleagues' performance.

7. The role of Commissioners

The principles of wellbeing and adult safeguarding must be directly linked into commissioning, contract and procurement activity. Commissioners of services should set out clear expectations of provider organisations through contractual arrangements, assuring that:

- Managers and staff are clear about their role in complying with the Bristol Multiagency Safeguarding Adults Policies and Procedures;
- Recruitment of a workforce with the right skills that comprehends and implements Bristol Multiagency Safeguarding Adults Policies and Procedures.

Commissioners should assure themselves, through contracting arrangements that a provider is capable and competent in responding to allegations of abuse or neglect, including having robust processes in place to investigate the actions of members of staff.

Commissioners should put in place robust arrangements to enable poor or unsafe care to be identified and addressed at an early stage.

All commissioners or providers of services in the public, voluntary or private sectors should disseminate information about the multi-agency safeguarding policy and procedures.

Commissioners also have a responsibility for monitoring overall contract compliance and monitoring to ensure that any identified actions are undertaken and completed within agreed timescales.

8. The role of local authority safeguarding adults functions

The local authority is the lead agency in relation to this framework in order to guide and support individuals raising safeguarding concerns and for those working to safeguard adults at risk.

The local authority responsibilities include:

- Providing efficient and timely responses to safeguarding referrals within agreed timescales.
- Feeding back outcomes of triage to referrers.
- Ensuring that Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) is embedded in safeguarding practice.

- Ensuring relevant parties are engaged in strategy discussions and/or invited to strategy meetings.
- Communicating the names of individuals undertaking specific roles within the safeguarding process to relevant parties.
- Ensuring individual/s undertaking safeguarding enquiries are aware of who they need to feedback outcomes of enquiries to.
- Appropriate and timely sharing of information with relevant parties.
- Ensuring that safeguarding referrals are managed in line with the safeguarding adults process, stages and timescales – i.e. from point of referral to conclusion.
- Informing referrers of outcomes at the end of the safeguarding process (where appropriate).

9. The role of the safeguarding adults board

The Safeguarding Adults Board will have an overview of the prevention work taking place in its area and will maintain links with other strategic forums and plans to ensure this work connects with their work. These include links with Health, CCG, Police, Local Safeguarding Children Board, Housing, Safer Bristol Partnership and the Care Quality Commission.