

Protocol for Management of Institutional Safeguarding Adults Investigations

1. Introduction

Safeguarding Adults Alerts are co-ordinated by the Safeguarding Adults Manager/Assistant Team Manager. There are processes in place to ensure that, in normal circumstances, alerts are managed in a timely and proportionate manner.

2. Responsibility

Safeguarding Adults is 'EVERYBODY'S BUSINESS' (No secrets). A Safeguarding Adults institutional investigation is often complex and involves a wide range of staff, both internal and external. It is the responsibility of ALL staff to prioritise such an incident. The purpose of this protocol is to ensure that actions are taken in a coordinated and effective way to mitigate risk to service users and the Authority. Actions need to be proportionate and responsibility clearly defined.

It is worth noting here that any Police investigation will take precedence of any internal investigation.

3. Investigation of Safeguarding Referrals

Following the receipt of a safeguarding alert, the most appropriate Team carries out the investigation as follows:

If the person at risk is a Service user already allocated or known to a Team, then that team investigates; if the person is allocated to Review would usually be re-allocated to another team for SA investigations purposes, unless known well in Review.

If the person at risk is unknown to Community Care then they will need to be assessed but they should go to the most appropriate Team;

If the person has a possible mental health problem or learning disability then the appropriate Care Team will investigate; it may be that a joint assessment is appropriate;

If the person at risk does not reach the criteria of the individual Care Teams e.g. young person, substance misuser, street homeless or someone with complex needs then they are allocated to the most appropriate team by the Safeguarding Manager following discussion with other Team Managers.

Where a Team is at capacity e.g. because of an unusually high numbers of safeguarding referrals or high sickness levels in the team, the Safeguarding Manager will negotiate with colleagues to ensure that referrals are investigated or chaired by another Team.

Housing & Community Care

There may also be occasions where the incident is so high risk that a Senior Officer will coordinate activity (see Protocol for Management of High Risk Safeguarding Adults Incidents).

4. Institutional Abuse

When an alert is received about an institution or service where vulnerable adults live (whether placed by this Authority, other Authorities and people who fund their own care) the decision must be made whether to investigate the incident as a one off or to investigate the institution as a whole rather than just the one incident.

The decision will be made at the initial Strategy Meeting.

This may be because of:

- The seriousness of the incident
- The incident is one of a series of safeguarding alerts add up to a concern about the operation of the institution
- The incident coupled with other concerns e.g. around contract compliance

5. Investigations

As with all safeguarding referrals, the initial priority is to make the person at risk safe. A range of activities are undertaken dependant on the needs and wishes of the person at risk. However in addition these will include:

- Inform CQC and other authorities placing at the institution
- Inform Contracts and Commissioning Teams

Other activity will depend on the nature of the incident and what is jointly agreed at the initial Strategy Meeting but will almost always include a review of other vulnerable people living at the institution.

6. Review of Other Vulnerable People in the Institution

The number, timescale and nature of reviews will depend on the seriousness and nature of the incident(s) but in principle should be:

- Multi Agency e.g. CPN/Care Manager, District Nurse/Care Manager
- Undertaken by the Community Care Team with the most outstanding or due reviews for people living at the institution (this will avoid duplication on reviewing activity)
- A Report completed by the Reviewing staff on any common issues found and any recommendations on actions to be taken.
- A summary report taken to the Quality and Monitoring Group

7. Development of Action Plan

From the report made following the reviews, together with any other investigations, an Action Plan will be developed in conjunction with the Manager of the Institution.

The Lead for development of the Action Plan will be nominated during the course of the Safeguarding Adults investigation.

The Action Plan will be reviewed by the Chair of the Investigation (or other nominated person) and monitored by the Quality and Monitoring Group.

The Quality and Monitoring Group will formally sign off the Action Plan.

Date: January 2010

Reference: Berkshire Policy and procedures for Safeguarding Adults (2008)