

Southampton Local Safeguarding Adults Board Multi-agency Risk Assessment and Management Guidance



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Multi-agency Risk Assessment and Management Guidance			
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GUIDANCE

Purpose of Risk Management Format

1. To enable a considered record of the risk to an Adult to be recorded and evaluated.
2. To enable the active participation of the Adult at Risk
3. To understand the perspectives of all those participating in the process, to facilitate an open discussion of the risks.
4. To facilitate a shared and supportive decision making process that agrees the best outcome for the Adult.
5. To agree, with the Adult, their family and support network, and involved professionals, a statement of the Risks experienced by the Adult.
6. To set out an Action Plan that responds to, manages and monitors the Risks
7. To share this plan as appropriate and necessary.
8. The plan should seek to develop the resilience of the Adult and of those supporting him/her.
9. To share the understanding of how the risks will be managed, within a multi-disciplinary approach.

Applying the Risk Management Process and Recording Forms

The current LSAB Safeguarding Policy Guidance advises about risk assessment processes and practice. Risk Assessment is an essential component of the response by all services to situations where vulnerable adults are unable to effectively protect themselves from significant risks.

The process should be considered and applied in situations of risk, where there is evidence of concerns listed below.

Risk management should be seen as a separate process to Safeguarding. It is essential to differentiate between risks that meet the safeguarding adults S42 criteria, and risks that have other causations, as broadly defined below. The S42 Safeguarding criteria should be used to enable a definition of the risks to the Adult. Where this is the proper course of action to be followed. The 4LSAB Policy guides the process. Risk Management processes are able to be used where the criteria is not met, or where it is seen to be the most appropriate methodology to be utilised.

Risk assessment has the primary purpose of taking a collaborative multi-agency approach to situations where an adult is not able to maintain/manage their own safety. It enables a focused analytical response to unsafe situations that uses the resources and knowledge of people in the adult's informal and formal networks, to maximize the safety of the adult, with the aim of to reducing and managing risks and monitoring progress. Risk management should enable the Adult to improve their capacity to respond to the issues facing them and to be positively supported by others in their life.

Scope and Parameters of Risk Management

- There is evidence that he/she is unable and/or unwilling to provide adequate or effective care for him/herself,
- Where the Adult has complex needs, involving input and support from a number of services,
- Is unable to obtain necessary care to meet their needs;
- Is unable to make reasonable or informed decisions because, for example, of their state of mental health or because they have a learning disability or an acquired brain injury;
- Has an evidenced history of making risky or unconsidered decisions which are seen to have adverse consequences for the Adult and/or others,
- Is unable to protect themselves adequately against potential exploitation or risk,
- Has refused essential services without which their health and safety needs cannot be met but do not have the insight to recognise this.

Who can use the form?

Any involved professional can set up and lead a risk management assessment process. It can be used city-wide, and aims to provide a collaborative framework for professionals to work in partnership. The forms can be used alongside a services own risk management processes, using the knowledge and experience of the Adults, their relatives and friends and all professionals involved in the Adults wellbeing.

It does not need to be led or directed by Adult Social Care.

Sharing the Form and Plan; Involving the Adult

The Adult at Risk should always be involved in and at the centre of the Risk Management process. They should always be fully aware that it is taking place, and be actively involved at the level they wish and/or are able to participate. The plan must be shared with the Adult and have their understanding, ideally their consent and agreement.

The adult should be offered an Advocate where he/she needs independent support and advice.

Positive Risk Taking

A risk averse approach should be avoided, positive risk taking is a normal characteristic in life, and this should be part of the approach taken in the Risk Assessment Process. The Adult's wishes should be understood and he/she should be enabled to best maintain their preferred way of life, and allowed, within reasonable parameters, to take risks. Risk management should not be about seeking to remove all risks, it puts in place an action plan that enables risks to be managed and reduced, but also gives the Adult choice and control, and maximising, where possible, their independence. This will involve accepting uncertainty, as all risk cannot be predicted or prevented.

We must seek to change the situation for the Adult, to reduce the risks to acceptable levels, whilst respecting their choices and promoting the quality of their life.

Human Rights Act

The application of the relevant clauses of the Human Rights Act, specifically articles 5 and 8 is highly relevant to good quality risk management

Article 8 concerns the right to respect for private and family life, their home and their correspondence. This right can only be restricted in limited and specified circumstances

Article 5, the right to liberty and to security. Adults have the right to not be deprived of their liberty, except in specified circumstances, where, for example, criminal acts have been committed or are suspected

These rights should be seen in association and considered within the risk management process. They clearly advise that decisions should respect these rights and must minimize the potential imposition of solutions that act to remove or jeopardise any of these rights.

Mental Capacity

The principles of the Mental Capacity Act should always be used when considering the mental capacity of an adult.

When an adult is seen to potentially lack capacity to make decisions for him/herself, staff must consider if there is a need to formally assess if the adult has/does not have capacity to make a specific decision.

The adult's decisional and executive capacity to make a decision must be taken into account. The ability to understand the consequences involved in risk taking and to manage any risks and safety implications resulting from choices or decision making, should be assessed. The right to make unwise or unreasonable lifestyle choices and to refuse support should be respected.

Defensible Decision Making

The decision making process must take necessary steps to ensure that it has followed an evidenced and defensible process, one that has considered all the factors fully and reasonably, including the wishes of the adult.

Defensible decision making needs to give assurance that

- all reasonable steps have been taken;
- reliable assessment methods have been used;
- information has been collated and thoroughly evaluated;
- decisions are recorded, communicated and thoroughly evaluated;
- policies and procedures have been followed; and
- practitioners and their managers adopt an investigative approach and are proactive

GUIDANCE FOR COMPLETION OF THE PROCESS

Principal Components

- An up to date chronology, including the adult's Care and Support Plans
- A full understanding of the adult's perspective, wishes and preferred outcomes
- A clear analysis of what the risks are for the adult, for others and for the wider public
- An analysis of the benefits and risks of both intervention and non-intervention
- The use of a balance sheet, that weighs up risks and benefits
- A multi-agency approach and involvement of a wide range of appropriate professionals/partners
- Active participation of the adult, their views and wishes
- A clear action plan, that sets out tasks and responsibilities for those involved. It must be clear about what the Adult will do, what the lead professional will do, and what other staff and representatives will do.
- A monitoring and review plan, where this is needed

Completing the Risk Assessment Form

1. Personal details of adult. Include details of the lead professional.
2. Summary of current situation and concerns; to be completed by the staff member who calls the meeting.
3. Care Support and Health Plan. This states what support, formal and informal, from any source, is provided and received by the adult.
4. Key information. Complete this at the meeting, using any or all of the subject headings.
5. Risks, complete all relevant sections/headings; ensure that the two final sections about the involvement of the adult and the views of their friends and others are completed.
6. Risk Statement; Identify, record and analyse the likelihood and the imminence of each relevant risk
7. Identified risks, see guidance in the form. Record the risk; the action plan to manage the risk, and state who is responsible for managing each risk, how they do this, and a timescale for the action.
8. The plan must consider and specify how the risks are to be reduced or removed.
9. It may be necessary to plan how to minimize risks, or to reduce them to acceptable levels, it cannot always be possible to remove risks.
10. There should be a recognition of the value of positive risk taking. Risks occur throughout life, and a risk averse approach should not be taken. Risks should be balanced with respect for the Adult's choices and their quality of life.
11. Record any significant disagreements to the risk plan, from the adult, their family members or representatives, and by professionals. Note alternatives plans and proposals that are not part of the agreed plan.