

Learning Together from Multi-Agency Audits - Key findings, learning points and recommendations



Representatives from a number of agencies (including WAHT, Police, NSCP, BNSSG CCG, Adult Social Care) took part in the audit

Purpose: - to test multi-agency responses to Domestic Abuse concerns

Background

The audit looked at a random sample of ten cases from safeguarding adults concerns. It focused on:

- How safeguarding concerns were identified
- Professionals' understanding of domestic abuse, and extent of professional curiosity
- Management oversight/supervision
- How risks were assessed
- Information sharing and joint agency working

Where do we need to improve?

- Greater awareness of the role of the MARAC across agencies
- Always consider referral to IDVA services
- Greater awareness of, and confidence to use in practice, the DASH risk assessment tool across all agencies
- Action plans to be SMART
- Distribution of enquiry plan and/or safeguarding plan to all involved agencies
- Evidencing casework supervision and management oversight in records

What is working well?

- Appropriate and timely safeguarding concerns raised; various agencies - SWAST, WAHT, mental health team, mental health social worker, community nurse, Lighthouse, police, self-referral, GP surgery staff, podiatrist
- Effective joint working and information sharing between agencies
- Multi-agency involvement in initial disclosure assessment
- Many examples of how well the police identified and managed situations of domestic abuse and how that information was shared with social care
- Appropriate actions to mitigate risk
- Consistent use of DASH by police
- Safeguarding awareness and professional curiosity among staff is generally good
- Risk to others considered and actioned accordingly - 'Think Family' - i.e. referral to Children's Social Care.
- Evidence of positive outcomes when dealing with reluctant victims of domestic abuse

Key Messages

- Not all adults who experience domestic abuse meet the threshold for safeguarding adults. In such cases individuals will be signposted to other sources of support.
- Where there is a concern about a person's ability to make a decision, a mental capacity assessment must be undertaken. Mental capacity assessments must be formally recorded.
- Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) emphasises the importance of a person-centred approach; adopting the principle of 'no decision about me without me'. Independent advocates should be used to support victims who have difficulty representing themselves.

Reflective Questions

- Where would you find the DASH risk assessment, and would you feel confident to use it?
- How would you 'Think Family'?
- How would you offer support to victims who do not want you to report?

Next Steps for Audits

- Future audits to include conversations with the service user to determine their views/comments about the service received.

Reading

- LGA: 'Adult safeguarding and domestic abuse. A guide to support practitioners and managers': [click here](#)
- SafeLives (2016) 'Spotlight #1: Older people and domestic abuse': [click here](#)
- SafeLives (2016) 'Spotlight #2: Disabled people and domestic abuse': [click here](#)