

Multi-Agency Risk Management Guidance for Professionals

**Solihull
Safeguarding
Adults Board**
Protecting Adults Together



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1. Introduction

This guidance has been developed by Solihull Safeguarding Adults Board to help those working with individuals who have complex needs and unmanaged risks, and where services are unable to engage with them. This Multi-Agency Risk Management Approach sets out how partners should work together to safeguard and promote the individual's wellbeing. This approach is sometimes referred to as complex discharge meetings, professional's meetings or multi agency meetings.



2. Circumstances in which a Multi-Agency Risk Management Approach May Be Needed

A Multi-Agency Risk Management Approach may be required when an individual with care and support needs or an individual with no care and support needs but with high vulnerabilities:

- ✓ has been identified as being at risk of significant harm, and is known to one or more agencies with repeated concerns or presentation, but there are no established plans to manage ongoing needs;

And

- ✓ has the mental capacity to make relevant decisions, but has refused essential services or interventions, which could result in significant harm to the individual;

And

- ✓ current management approaches have not been able to mitigate the risk of this significant harm;

And

- ✓ there are concerns about the individual's ability to manage their;
 - Personal care and hygiene
 - Home environment

- Activities of daily living such as shopping
- Health conditions
- Finances
- Safety
- Protection from abuse and neglect

And

- ✓ one or more of the partners have concerns about the individual and believe a multi-agency discussion would be of benefit.

A Multi-Agency Risk Management Approach may also be required when an individual with care and support needs has been identified as being at risk of significant harm due to the behaviours or dynamics of their family.



3. What Is Involved in a Multi-Agency Risk Management Approach

A Multi-Agency Risk Management Approach means:

- Identifying a lead professional
- Holding multi-agency meetings
- Sharing information
- Clarifying of roles and responsibilities
- Using a Risk Enablement Approach
- Ensuring effective record keeping

3.1 Identifying a Lead Professional

The lead professional should be a professional from the agency with the most significant involvement with the individual and supporting the individual's primary needs and concerns.

The role of the lead professional is to coordinate a Multi-Agency Risk Management Approach with effective multi-agency working.

If there is no identified lead professional, the concerned practitioner should take responsibility for co-ordinating a multi-agency meeting. During this meeting, a decision can be agreed as to who will take on the lead professional role moving forward.

3.2 Multi-Agency Meetings

Multi-agency meetings should be convened at the soonest opportunity to aid effective partnership working. There does not need to be an open safeguarding adult enquiry to organise these multi-agency meetings.

The lead professional would usually organise this meeting, however any agency can request a meeting, at any time, to ensure good partnership working. Multi-agency meetings called, under this guidance, should be prioritised.

These meetings should be chaired by the lead professional's manager and the meeting should have minutes, and actions with timescales for implementation and review.

The individual must be at the centre of such meetings either in person or the individual's views and wishes should be available at the meeting. Where appropriate, the views and wishes of the individual's family/loved ones should also be available.

These meetings should involve agencies with current involvement or who have or could have a role in providing information and or support.

3.3 Sharing Information

Individuals have a general right to independence, choice and self-determination including control over information about themselves.

Therefore, individuals should know when, why and with whom information about them is being shared and their consent should be obtained.

If an individual refuses intervention to support them or requests that information about them is not shared with other partners, their wishes should be respected. However, there are circumstances where the practitioner can reasonably override such a decision. Practitioners can share information:

- If they believe the individual lacks capacity with regard to the concerns and they believe it would be in the individual's best interests to share.
- if they believe there is a risk to others or
- for the 'prevention or detection of a crime'.
- if they believe sharing information is in the 'public interest' which may include concerns the individual is being controlled or coerced.

It is important to evidence your rationale for sharing information in order to make decisions to share defensible.

When sharing information practitioners must ensure the 6 elements to Information Quality are adhered to in that the information must be:

1. Accurate
2. Valid
3. Reliable
4. Timely
5. Relevant and
6. Complete.

For more information, please see the [SSAB Information Sharing Agreement](#) and [SCIE Safeguarding Adults: Sharing Information Guidance](#)

If you are not sure if information could be legitimately shared or action taken without the consent of the individual, further advice should be sought from a manager who may seek legal advice.

3.4 Clarifying of Roles and Responsibilities

It is important to clarify, at the earliest opportunity, each agencies roles and responsibilities to avoid confusion and / or duplication. This will support with agreements about who is best placed to undertake specific actions with appropriate timescales.

3.5 Using a Risk Enablement Approach

A Risk Enablement Approach supports individuals to make their own decisions about the level of risk that they are comfortable with. These guidance documents share further information about Risk Enablement or Positive Risk Taking.

- [Safeguarding Adults in Solihull - What Does Good Practice Look Like](#)
- [Risk Enablement - Balancing Wellbeing and Risk](#)

A Risk Enablement Approach will involve:

- Identifying what is important to the individual, what is working well, and what their views are about the risks. It may be necessary to assess an individual's mental capacity and, where appropriate, referring for the provision of accuracy.

- Considering the network around the individual, to the degree that the individual wishes. The network may involve families, friends or the community.
- Multi-agency working and working in collaboration with other agencies to gain a full picture of the risks to the individual and to plan strategies to address it.
- Assessing risk, including the risks to others, but considering the strengths of the individual.
- Identifying the actions that could mitigate the risks, keeping in mind the outcomes the individual has identified and the impact on their wellbeing.

3.6 Ensuring Effective Record Keeping

Assessments, judgements, and defensible decisions should be clearly recorded. The names of those involved in decision making and those responsible for actions should be documented; this is especially important where situations are complex, high risk, or controversial.

Recording should show:

- Reasons for the decisions
- That decisions are balanced
- That the individual has been appropriately supported with decision making, including being supported to weigh the potential negative consequences of the options they consider
- That decisions are regularly reviewed
- Reference to relevant legislation



4. Supporting Forums/Processes

A Multi-Agency Risk Management Approach may result in a referral to the forums or processes below. It may also be helpful within the multi-agency meeting to check with partners regarding supporting processes which may support the individual and their circumstances.

- [Safeguarding Adults Procedures](#) if there are concerns than an adult is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect
- **MARAC** where information identifies a high risk of serious harm or homicide from domestic abuse.
- [Solihull Exploitation Screening Tool](#) if there are concerns than an adult is at risk of exploitation, the completion of the exploitation screening tool would support to identify risks and the most appropriate pathway to manage ongoing risks.
- [Dispute Resolution Procedure](#) where one partner agency may have concerns about the way another partner agency are delivering their part of the safeguarding process, this procedure works to the principle that concerns should be taken up promptly and openly through the appropriate agency line management structures and resolved at the lowest possible level.



5. Case Example – Where a Multi-Agency Risk Management approach would have been beneficial

Solihull Safeguarding Adults Board undertook a deep dive audit with a number of partner agencies, reviewing a good practice self-neglect case. Within this audit, it was identified that using a Multi-Agency Risk Management approach this situation would have been helpful for all partner agencies. The circumstances of the case were as follows:

- Ms B lived alone in a 3-bedroom house which she owned, the property was described as extreme hoarding and was full of flies and insects.
- West Midlands Police, Age UK and West Midlands Fire Service were initially involved with Ms B and offered advice and information however they continued to have concerns about the way Ms B was living and therefore made a referral to Adult Social Care.
- A social worker became involved and aimed to develop a professional relationship and rapport with Ms B to encourage her to accept support. Ms B was extremely reluctant to accept support and was said to have mental capacity with regards to her living arrangements.
- Over a lengthy period of time, different professionals were involved with Ms B and information was shared between certain agencies.
- Ms B was then admitted to hospital following a fall in her property and a safeguarding concern was opened due to the level of hoarding in place. Various professionals then became involved to support Ms B and clear her property to meet her outcome to return home.
- It became apparent during this audit that although information had been shared between agencies, some agencies had different information which could have been useful for all agencies to be aware of. I.e., it was established that Age UK, Solihull, had been supporting Ms B for at least 2 years but the level of this support was unknown.
- Having a Multi-Agency Risk Management approach when initial concerns of significant risks were identified for this person, would have enabled all relevant agencies to come together to share appropriate information, and discuss any actions to be taken to support the individual and aid effective partnership working.



Safeguarding Adults Board Business Team
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Council House
Manor Square
Solihull
B91 3QB



0121 788 4392



ssab@solihull.gov.uk



www.safeguardingsolihull.org.uk

