

INFORMATION SHARING

IN SAFEGUARDING ADULTS

Sharing the right information, at the right time, with the right people, is fundamental to good practice in safeguarding adults.

Why is Information Sharing Important to Safeguarding?

Information sharing is vital to safeguarding and the wellbeing of adults.

A recurring theme identified in many Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs) has been a failure by organisations and practitioners to record information, to share it, to understand its significance and then take appropriate action.

What Are the Key Things You Need to Consider When Sharing Information?

Fears about sharing information cannot be allowed to stand in the way of the need to safeguard adults from abuse or neglect.

Practitioners should not assume that someone else will pass on information which may keep an adult safe. Practitioners should use their professional judgement when making decisions on what information to share and when. They should follow their organisation's procedures and seek advice, if in doubt. When asked to share information you should consider:

- Has the person consented to the sharing of information?
- Is it in the adult's vital interests to prevent serious harm, distress or life threatening situations?
- Is it in the public interest e.g. there is also a risk to others?
- Whether the adult has care and support needs
- Is the adult at risk subject to coercion or undue influence, to the extent that they are unable to give consent?
- Does the adult lack the mental capacity to consent to a referral to Health & Adult Services and it is in the adult's best interests.

7 GOLDEN RULES TO SHARING INFORMATION

HM Government released advice for practitioners regarding information sharing for the purpose of safeguarding children. [Click here to read](#).

Although intended for safeguarding children and young people, the principles of the guidance also apply to safeguarding adults. It identifies the following 7 golden rules to sharing information.

1. GDPR IS NOT A BARRIER TO SHARING INFORMATION

GDPR provides a framework to ensure that personal information about living persons is shared appropriately.

2. BE OPEN AND HONEST

Be open and honest with the person (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.

7. KEEP A RECORD

Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it - whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

6. NECESSARY, PROPORTIONATE, RELEVANT, ACCURATE, TIMELY, SECURE

Ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those people who need to have it, is accurate and up to date, is shared in a timely fashion and is shared securely.

3. SEEK ADVICE

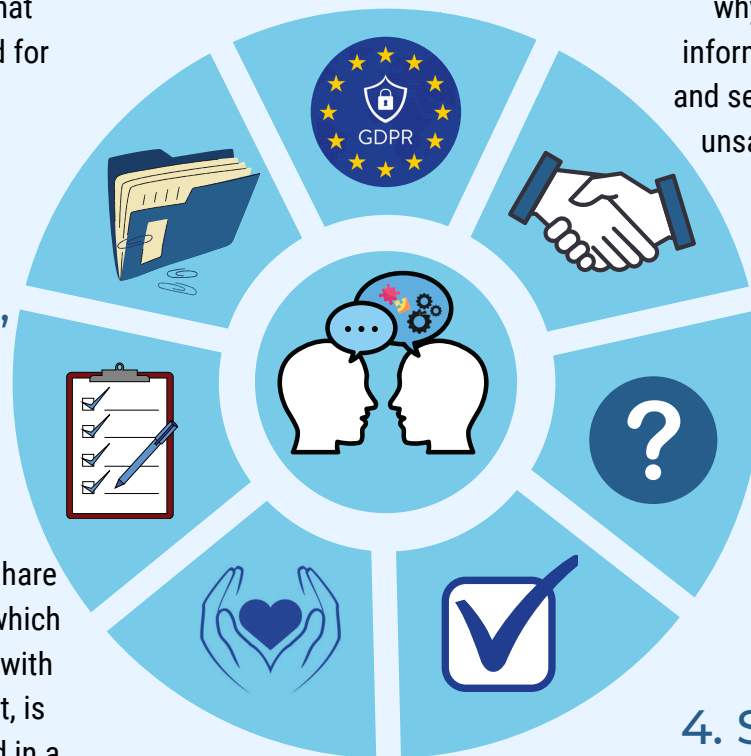
Seek advice if you are in any doubt, without disclosing the identity of the person where possible.

4. SHARE WITH CONSENT WHERE APPROPRIATE

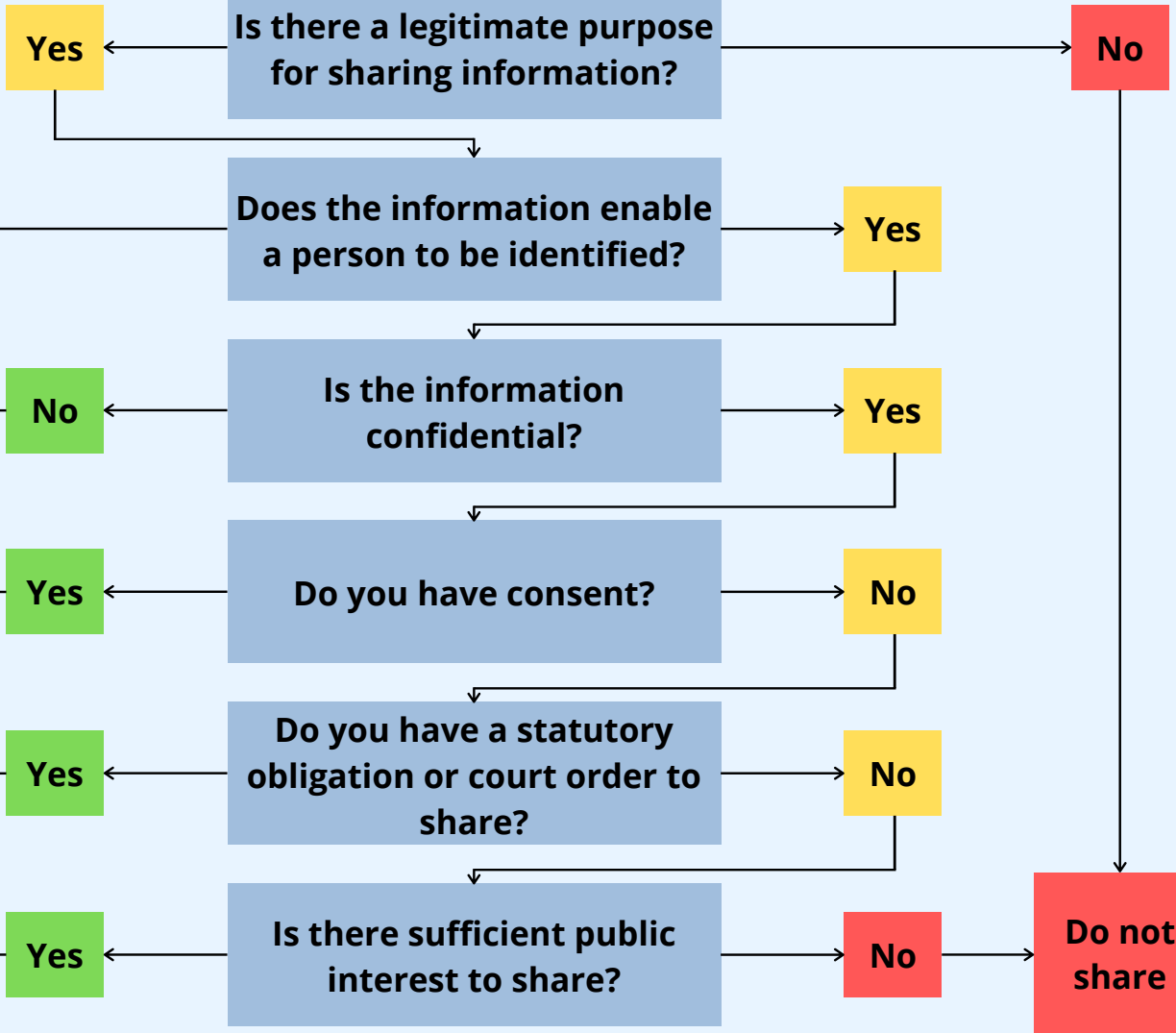
Share with consent where appropriate and, where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. You may still share information without consent if, in your judgement, that lack of consent can be overridden in the public interest. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case.

5. CONSIDER SAFETY AND WELLBEING

Base your information-sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and wellbeing of the person and others who may be affected by their actions.



You are asked to or wish to share information



- Share information:**
- Identify how much information to share
 - Distinguish fact from opinion
 - Ensure that you are giving the information to the right person
 - Inform the person that the information has been shared if they were not aware of this and if it would not create or increase risk of harm

Record the information sharing decision and your reasons, in line with your agency's procedures or local protocols

Seek advice from your manager, supervisor, child protection advisor or Caldicott Guardian if you are not sure what to do at any stage and ensure that the outcome of the discussion is recorded