

The Safeguarding Conference

Context

The decision to call Safeguarding Conferences is usually taken at Strategy Meetings. Occasionally a Safeguarding Conference may take place without a Strategy Meeting being held.

The Safeguarding Conference enables inter-agency, multi-disciplinary discussions to clarify the following:

- The details of the case.
- Legal intervention.
- Different professionals' roles and responsibilities.
- Development of a Safeguarding Plan.
- Individual responsibilities for actioning the recommendations.
- Reviewing and monitoring the case.

The Procedure

Safeguarding Conferences will normally be held within 20 working days from the initial alert but this may depend upon decisions taken at Strategy Meetings.

Planning

- Appropriate location.
- Arrange for suitably experienced person to chair.
- Communication needs of all those attending.
- The vulnerable adult's needs - for example, an interpreter, transport or an advocate need careful planning.

Information to the Vulnerable Adult and Other Relevant People

Inform the vulnerable adult:

- Exactly what the meeting is about.
- Who is going to be at the meeting?
- What will be discussed - the agenda.
- They have a right to speak.
- They can sit where they choose.

- They can have a break at any time.
- They can have support and legal advice.
- They can bring an advocate.
- They can send an advocate on their behalf if they do not want to attend the meeting.

Who is Invited

- The vulnerable adult and/or their representative advocate.
- The investigating officers.
- Adult & Community Services Practice Manager
- GP.
- Local Authority solicitor (who would need the investigator's report in advance).
- Any other appropriate or useful agencies.

The Conference Process

- Everyone attending states his or her name, agency and what their involvement is in the case.
- The investigating officer(s) must give a report outlining the details of the case and the action taken to date.
- Representatives from other agencies will inform the conference of their previous involvement with the individual or case and of any action being undertaken or planned.
- Availability of statutory powers of intervention must be discussed.
- A protection plan should be agreed stating the responsibility of each agency.
- The protection plan should be completed (if possible) at the conference, signed by all involved and a photocopy given to all those attending.
- Where a mental health need is identified, the Safeguarding Adults plan should be incorporated into a Care Programme Approach (CPA).
- If appropriate, arrangements for reviewing progress must be made
- If it is decided that a protection plan is not necessary, or that no further action is to be taken, the reasons why must be detailed in the minutes.

Minutes

A **detailed** set of minutes must be taken at the Case Conference. The Chair will be responsible for ensuring a dedicated minute taker is present.

The Chair, will ensure that minutes are sent to all those who were invited to attend the conference within 10 working days.

Any questions or clarification about the content of the minutes must be made to the Chair of the meeting within five working days of receipt. **Only the Chair can agree any changes to the content of the minutes.**

The minutes of the Case Conference are confidential and should only be distributed to those agency members who attended or were invited to attend the conference. **They must not be reproduced without permission of the Chair.**

Ideally the Chair should ensure the minutes are produced in a manner that makes them understandable to the service user or nominated person for example Braille, large print, total communication and so on.

An adult protection outcomes form (SS30) will be completed by the Chair after the Conference detailing the safeguarding plan or reasons for no further action.

The role of the vulnerable adult

The following steps should be followed

The protection of the vulnerable adult is paramount at the Case Conference. The rights of other parties will be respected.

The vulnerable adult should always be invited to attend.

If the vulnerable adult agrees, their carer(s) can be invited. If the vulnerable adult is unable to give consent, the Chair will make this decision.

When an allegation of abuse has been made against a service user a separate Case Conference should be held but with the same Chair.

Only invite those people who are relevant to the individual or case, or who can be helpful in formulating the protection/care plan.

Sharing Reports

The investigating officers should share any reports they have written with the relevant individuals, prior to the conference.

This will:

- Encourage an open atmosphere at the Case Conference.
- Reduce areas of conflict at the Case Conference.

Safeguarding Plans

These should be specific and detailed. They should be agreed in Safeguarding Conferences but more detail can be added after the Conference.

Include objectives of the plan:

- What are you going to try to achieve?
- List the people involved and their responsibilities and tasks.
- How to monitor and review the plan.

Long-Term Work

Reviewing and monitoring should be ongoing. The Plan should be reviewed every six months.

Refer to the Guidance for more information about Safeguarding Adults reviews.

Remember to keep the service user's wishes central to the process.