

Learning from Safeguarding Adult Reviews – Mr A – July 2018

Background

Mr A, aged 70 years, was found dead in a river in Calderdale in August 2017. His cause of death was confirmed as drowning combined with a pre-existing heart condition. He had been reported as a missing person to West Yorkshire Police by a family member the previous day. When his body was recovered he was found not to be wearing the Buddi monitoring system which had been provided by Adult Social Care (ASC), a measure utilised to manage the known risk factors in relation to Mr A. wandering and getting lost.

Safeguarding Concerns

Concerns about Mr A's self-neglecting behaviour included failing to attend or cancelling medical appointments, issues with personal hygiene, medication compliance, nutritional intake and weight loss, alcohol intake, falling, wandering and getting lost, failure to replace items within the household such as heating systems.

Despite several agencies holding information which they exchanged at different stages, no risk assessment, multi-agency meeting or discussion took place to consider or coordinate information, review care arrangements or establish a Safeguarding plan to manage the identified risks of Self Neglect as Mr A's condition deteriorated.

Practitioners made assumptions that Mr A's self-neglect was a personal lifestyle choice, despite the concerns raised by family and friends in relation to his mental capacity to make certain decisions, deterioration in his health and wellbeing and increasing risk factors.

Key Learning

- Concerns that a person may be at risk of self neglect should be assessed using the screening tool and decision-making flowchart in the Calderdale Safeguarding Adults Board [Self-Neglect Policy and Tool-kit](#) in order to inform an appropriate response and where appropriate to raise as a Safeguarding Concern.
- Carers Assessment (Care Act 2014) should be undertaken by the local authority when individuals are providing 'necessary' informal support for a person living in the community.
- The CSAB supports use of the [Herbert Protocol](#) when a person is reported missing. The protocol invites carers/family members/friends to provide details of a relative to the Police in advance in the event that a vulnerable person goes missing. This review recommends further benefits if all the agencies involved also contribute relevant information to the Herbert Protocol form.
- Communication with family members and between agencies to share safeguarding related information should be coordinated to promote clarity and consistency.

- The Joint Multi-Agency Safeguarding Adults policies and procedures need to be applied consistently by all agencies, especially in relation to raising safeguarding concerns, risk assessment, multi-agency planning and risk management.
- Risk assessments should be periodically reviewed and/or refreshed, especially when there are any changes in circumstances
- In complex cases where there are indicators of self-neglect, resistance to intervention and offers of support, Practitioners/Managers should apply the Mental Capacity Act to facilitate understanding of the person's functioning and management of risk.
- Case recording should be clear, concise, demonstrate analysis and the rationale for decisions. Management oversight in the records will evidence accountability.
- The lack of response/contact by an adult at risk should be seen as a potential indicator of crisis and followed up accordingly.

Good practice

There is evidence of individual practitioners listening to family concerns, acting upon these to arrange medical appointments with the support of family and friends.

The practice of an individual practitioner in accompanying Mr A. to the hospital and arranging appointment times more suitable for Mr A after initially refusing to attend is seen as good practice.

Calderdale Safeguarding Adult Board Response

- The [Joint Multi Agency Safeguarding Adults Policies and Procedures](#) were revised and implemented in April 2018 and include the response to self-neglect
- The multi-agency [Self-Neglect policy](#) and toolkit which incorporates consideration of mental health and alcohol misuse was produced and distributed (August 2018)
- CSAB Business Plan (2018 – 2021) includes the promotion and use of the updated Herbert Protocol
- A comprehensive multi-agency audit to explore the extent to which the Mental Capacity Act is understood and implemented in Calderdale commenced August 2018 and will make recommendations for improvement across the partnership.
- The CSAB has produced a guide on the Principles of Recording

Contact

For guidance or advice about Adult Safeguarding, call Gateway to Care on **01422 393000**.

To report adult abuse, complete this form and email it to gatewaytocare@calderdale.gov.uk.

Out of normal working hours, call the Emergency Duty Team on **01422 288000**.