

Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board
Threshold of Needs Matrix
October 2016

Introduction

This document has been developed by Oxfordshire Safeguarding Adult Board Members in response to findings from case reviews and audits which have shown the need for better shared understanding by agencies.

It provides guidance for professionals and service users, to clarify the circumstances in which the adult social care service will assist in safeguarding adults in Oxfordshire.

These limited illustrations below highlight the relevant actions required depending on the level of the concern. This guidance should be used in conjunction with the Oxfordshire multi-agency safeguarding vulnerable adult's procedures and guidance.

Note: Not all possible actions will be applicable each time and not all possible alternatives are suggested; this is a guide showing limited illustrations to help you when deciding on the best course of action and you should use your professional judgement in deciding if a real concern is similar to the illustrations below.

Prior to raising an adult safeguarding concern

1. Does the concern meet the criteria for a Section 42 safeguarding enquiry under the requirements of The Care Act 2014?

- The adult is reported as having or appears to have needs for care and support (whether or not Oxfordshire County Council is meeting any of those needs)?
- The adult is reported or appears to be experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect?
- And as a result of care and support needs is the adult unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect?

2. Has the person given their consent to enquiries being undertaken?

Consent is not essential when deciding whether concerns should be raised. However, wherever possible you should discuss your concerns with the person and/or their representative and seek their consent explaining that one possible outcome may be an enquiry led by adult social care. Where the person is not willing or able to freely give their consent to information about their circumstances being shared you will need to consider the following:

- To what extent is the person able to make a particular decision or take a particular action for themselves to protect themselves at the time the decision or action needs to be taken?
- Are there any children and/or other adults at risk involved, or is there a potential risk to others?

If the person does not consent to information sharing you may also consider the following factors with them in supporting them to make an informed decision.

- How severe/serious is the harm/potential harm caused?
- What is the impact/potential impact on the person's independence, health and wellbeing?
- Is the abuse likely to be repeated or escalate?
- Is there evidence that the person may be subject to intimidation, threats or coercion?

If you remain unsure as to what action to take you should discuss this with your manager or your organisation's safeguarding lead. Ensure you record all actions clearly with reasons for your decision.

3. Threshold of Needs Matrix

Guidance: This tool does not replace professional judgement or aim to set a rigid threshold for intervention. It helps you consider the type and seriousness of abuse and the circumstances in which a referral to adult social care may be required.

Types of abuse and seriousness	Levels of harm and related indicators/examples				
Level	Lower Level Harm May not meet the threshold for Section 42 enquiry. Outcomes may include advice, information, risk management, staff training, disciplinary or complaints procedures		Significant ↔ Very significant Harm Likely to meet threshold for Section 42 enquiry A safeguarding concern should be raised or a consultation made with the Safeguarding Service Triage Team 08165 328232	Critical Likely to result in urgent Section 42 enquiry Serious criminal matter – immediate discussion with police required.	
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Error causing no/little harm, e.g. skin friction mark due to ill-fitting hoist sling • Minor events that still meet criteria for 'incident reporting' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isolated incident not involving a staff member • Inexplicable very light marking found on one occasion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inexplicable marking or lesions, cuts or grip marks on a number of occasions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inappropriate restraint • Withholding of food, drinks or aids to independence • Inexplicable fractures/injuries • Assault 	Grievous bodily harm/assault with weapon leading to irreversible damage or death

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Sexual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Isolated incident of teasing or unwanted attention, either verbal or touching (but excluding genitalia) which has NOT been committed by a person in a position of trust, where this is not of a serious nature and the effect on the vulnerable adult is low 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Verbal sexualised teasing or harassment Isolated incident of teasing or low-level unwanted sexualised attention (verbal or by gestures) directed at one adult by another whether or not capacity exists - no harm or distress caused 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sexualised touch or masturbation without valid consent Being subject to indecent exposure Contact or non-contact sexualised behaviour which causes distress to the person at risk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attempted penetration by any means (whether or not it occurs within a relationship) without valid consent Being made to look at pornographic material against will/where valid consent cannot be given 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sex in a relationship characterised by authority, inequality or exploitation, e.g. staff and service user Sex without valid consent (rape) Voyeurism

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Psychological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Isolated incident where adult is spoken to in a rude or inappropriate way – respect is undermined but no or little distress caused 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Occasional taunts or verbal outbursts which cause distress The withholding of information to dis-empower 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treatment that undermines dignity and damages esteem Denying or failing to recognise an adult’s choice or opinion Frequent verbal outbursts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Humiliation Emotional blackmail e.g. threats of abandonment/ harm Frequent and frightening verbal outbursts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Denial of basic human rights/civil liberties, over-riding advance directive, forced marriage Prolonged intimidation Vicious/personalised verbal attacks

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Domestic Violence (Where there are children in the household or present this must be referred to the children's MASH)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One off incident with no injury or harm experienced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occasional taunts or verbal outbursts • Victim has no current fears • Adequate protective factors • Children in household or present-refer to Children's Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inexplicable marking or lesions or grip marks on a number of occasions • Subject to controlling behaviour • Frequent verbal/physical outbursts • Children in household or present - refer to Children's Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assault causing serious harm • Subject to stalking/harassment • Serious sexual assault or humiliation • Experiences constant fear • Subject to severe controlling behaviour e.g. finances/medical treatment • Children in household or present-refer to Children's Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject to regular violent behaviour • Threats to kill/choke/suffocate etc. • In constant fear of being harmed • Sex without valid consent (rape) • FGM female genital mutilation • Honour based violence &/or forced marriage • Children in household or present - refer to Children's Services

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Neglect & acts of omission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Isolated missed home care visit - no harm occurs Adult is not assisted with a meal/drink on one occasion and no harm occurs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequacies in care provision leading to discomfort - no significant harm e.g. occasionally left wet No access to aids for independence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recurrent missed home care visits where risk of harm escalates, or one miss where harm occurs Hospital discharge, no adequate planning and harm occurs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing lack of care to extent that health and well-being deteriorate significantly e.g. pressure wounds, dehydration, malnutrition, loss of independence/confidence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Failure to arrange access to life saving services or medical care Failure to intervene in dangerous situations where the adult lacks the capacity to assess risk

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Financial or material abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Money is not recorded safely or recorded properly • Single or one off incident of missing money and/ or belongings where the quality of the service user's life has not been affected and little or no distress is caused 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult not routinely involved in decisions about how their money is spent or kept safe - capacity in this respect is not properly considered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult's monies kept in a joint bank account – unclear arrangements for equitable sharing of interest • Adult denied access to his/her own funds or possessions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Misuse/misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits by a person in a position of trust or control. To include misusing loyalty cards • Personal finances removed from adult's control • Adult coerced or misled into giving over money or property 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fraud/exploitation relating to benefits, income, property or will • Theft

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Organisational (any one or combination of the other forms of abuse)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of stimulation/ opportunities to engage in social and leisure activities SU not enabled to be involved in the running of service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Denial of individuality and opportunities to make informed choices and take responsible risk Care-planning documentation not person-centred 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rigid/inflexible routines Service users' dignity is undermined e.g. lack of privacy during support with intimate care needs, pooled under-clothing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bad practice not being reported and going unchecked Unsafe and unhygienic living environments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff misusing position of power over service users Over-medication and/or inappropriate restraint managing behaviour Widespread, consistent ill treatment

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Modern slavery	All concerns about modern slavery are deemed to be of a significant/critical level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under control of another/fearful • Long periods at work • Unable to get medical treatment • Poor living conditions/low wages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly moved to avoid detection • Lives in work place • No health and safety in work place • Under control of others e.g. gang master, dealers, pimp for prostitution • Subject to violence/threats/fearful • Risk of physical/psychological harm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regularly moved to avoid detection • Lives in sheds/lockup/containers • Risk of fatality or serious injury • No freedom/unable to leave • Risk of organ harvesting • Wages used for debt • Not in possession of ID or passport • Subject to forced marriage

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Discriminatory/ Hate Crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Isolated incident of teasing motivated by prejudicial attitudes towards an adult's individual differences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Isolated incident of care planning that fails to address an adult's specific diversity associated needs for a short period 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inequitable access to service provision as a result of diversity issue Recurring failure to meet specific care/support needs associated with diversity Recurring taunts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being refused access to essential services Denial of civil liberties e.g. voting, making a complaint Humiliation or threats on a regular basis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hate crime resulting in injury/emergency medical treatment/fear for life Hate crime resulting in serious injury/attempted murder/honour-based violence

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Self-neglect NB: Only exceptional cases of self-neglect will trigger adult safeguarding. All standard interventions must be used first to manage risk e.g. Care Management/Care Plan Approach/Multi-Disciplinary Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-care causing some concern - no signs of harm or distress • Property neglected but all main services work • Some evidence of hoarding - no major impact on health/safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First signs of failing to engage with professionals • Property neglected • Evidence of hoarding • Lack of essential amenities • No access to support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refusing medical treatment • High level of clutter /hoarding • Insanitary conditions in property • Won't engage with professionals • Problematic substance misuse • Potential fire risk/gas leaks • Multiple reports from others • Self-neglect is life threatening 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of self-care results in significant deterioration in health/wellbeing • Chaotic substance misuse • Environment injurious to health • Potential fire risk or gas leaks • Others affected by self-neglect • Multiple reports from other agencies • Behaviour poses risk to self/others • Failure to arrange access to lifesaving services or medical care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life in danger without intervention • Chaotic substance misuse • Environment injurious to health* • Imminent fire risk/gas leaks • Access obstructed within property • Multiple reports from other agencies • Behaviour poses risk to self/others

