

Appendix 8

Protocol for Inter-Authority Investigation of an adult at risk

This document is an extract from the Association of Directors of Social Services (ADSS) Protocol for Inter-Authority Investigation of Vulnerable Adult Abuse.

ADSS Protocol for Inter-Authority Investigation of Vulnerable Adult Abuse.
This agreement was ratified by the ADSS on 20th February 2004 and was intended for adoption by all Local Authorities and Safeguarding Adults Boards/Protection Committees.

Introduction

These arrangements recognise the increased risk to vulnerable adults whose care arrangements are complicated by cross boundary considerations. These may arise, for instance, where funding/commissioning responsibility lies with one authority and where concerns about potential abuse and/or exploitation subsequently arise in another. This would apply where the individual lives or otherwise receives services in another local authority area.

This protocol aims to clarify the responsibilities and actions to be taken by local authorities with respect to people who live in one area, but for whom some responsibility remains with the area from which they originated.

This protocol should be read in conjunction with Section 3.8 of 'No Secrets' (DH 2000) and LAC (93) 7 Ordinary Residence, which identifies these responsibilities in terms of:

- The authority where the abuse occurred in respect of the monitoring and review of services and overall responsibility for adult Boards.
- The registering body in fulfilling its regulatory function with regard to regulated establishments.
- The placing authority's continuing duty of care to the abused person.

Principles

The authority where the abuse occurs will have overall responsibility for co-ordinating the Safeguarding Adults arrangements (and, for the purposes of this protocol, be referred to as the host authority).

The placing authority (i.e. the authority with funding/commissioning responsibility) will have a continuing duty of care to the vulnerable adult.

The placing authority should ensure that the provider, in service specifications, has arrangements in place for protecting vulnerable adults and for managing concerns, which in turn link with local policy and procedures set out by the host authority.

The placing authority will provide any necessary support and information to the host authority in order for a prompt and thorough investigation to take place. The host authority will make provision in service contracts, which refer to this

protocol, outlining the responsibilities of the provider to notify the host authority of any Safeguarding Adults concern.

Responsibilities of Host Authorities

The authority where the abuse occurred should always take the initial lead on referral. This may include taking immediate action to protect the adult, if appropriate, and arranging an early discussion with the police if a criminal offence may have been committed.

The host authority will also co-ordinate initial information gathering, background checks and ensure a prompt notification to the placing authority and other relevant agencies. It is responsibility of the host authority to co-ordinate any investigation of institutional abuse. If the alleged abuse took place in a residential or nursing home, other people could potentially be at risk and enquiries should be carried out with this in mind.

The Commission for Social Care Inspection should always be included in investigations involving regulated care providers and enquiries should make reference to national guidance regarding arrangements for the Safeguarding of vulnerable adults.

There will be instances where allegations relate to one individual only and in these cases it may be appropriate to negotiate with the placing authority their undertaking certain aspects of the investigation. However, the host authority should retain the overall co-ordinating role throughout the investigation.

Responsibilities of Placing Authorities

The placing authority will be responsible for providing support to the vulnerable adult and planning their future care needs.

The placing authority should nominate a link person for liaison purposes during the investigation. They will be invited to attend any Safeguarding strategy meeting and/or may be required to submit a written report.

Responsibilities of Provider Agencies

- They should have in place suitable adult protect procedures to prevent and respond to abuse which link with the local inter-agency policy and procedures set out by the host authority.
- They should ensure that any allegation or complaint about abuse is brought promptly to the attention of Social Services, the Police, and/or the Commission for Social Care Inspection in accordance with local inter-agency policy and procedures.
- They will have responsibilities under the Care Standards Act 2000 to notify their local CSCI area office of any allegations of abuse or any other significant incidents.

Agencies who have services registered in more than one local authority area will defer to the CSCI area office relevant to the area in which the abuse took place.

