

THE HERBERT PROTOCOL

Safe & Found



Care Providers' 60-second Briefing

What is the Herbert Protocol?

It is a simple risk reduction tool to be used in the event of an adult with care and support needs going missing.

It consists of a form that contains vital information about a person at risk that can be passed to the police if the person is reported missing.

A recent photograph of the person should also be kept with the form. It is not intended to replace existing safeguarding and security measures.

Who decides who is at risk?

The judgement should be based on your professional opinion.

Who fills the form in?

In a care setting, the care provider, the person at risk or their family can fill in the form. Please seek permission from the person at risk or their next of kin. If neither is possible, the care provider should make a 'best interests' assessment.

When should the form be sent to the police?

The police only need the form if the person is reported missing. There is no need to send it before then.

Where should the form be stored?

It should be stored securely in the care setting, in accordance with data protection laws, but where you can find it quickly.

Printed or electronic form?

Electronic is preferable, however, hand completed hard copies can also be used.

What should a care provider do if the person goes missing?

After you have conducted an 'open door' search of the address, grounds and outbuildings and you believe a person is missing, alert the police at the earliest opportunity. If you believe the person missing is at a high risk of harm, please call 999.

Tell the police operator that you have the Herbert Protocol person profile.

Nothing is more worrying or distressing than when a loved one or friend goes missing or doesn't return home when expected.

For people living with or caring for an adult with care and support needs, this may be quite common. The Herbert Protocol is a national scheme adopted by West Midlands Police and other police services across the country.

It encourages carers, families, friends or neighbours, to hold information about the person with dementia that can help the police find them if they do go missing.

The basis of the scheme is for vital information about the person such as medication, description, photograph, significant places in the person's life and their daily routine, to be recorded on a form.

The form should then be stored safely – either in electronic format on a computer, or a printed version. It may need to be located quickly, at any time of day or night, by the person who needs the information to begin the initial searches.

When the form is complete, it will contain confidential information about a person so it should be stored securely. Any partner agency required to complete the form will become the data controllers and must store it appropriately.

The police will only ask for the form, or the information in the form, if the person is reported missing.

The information will help the police and other agencies locate the missing person as quickly as possible and return them to safety.

Frequently asked questions



When should I complete the form?

As soon as possible.

What should I do with the form when it is complete?

Please keep it in a safe but prominent position where you can find it quickly. The police will only ask for it if the person it refers to has been reported missing.

What should I do if my relative or friend goes missing?

Call 999 and ask for the police – have your Herbert Protocol form to hand.

I don't understand some of the terms on the form - what should I do?

Don't worry, just complete as much as you can.

What will the police do with the information?

We will use the information to help find the missing person. It will be stored securely and only shared with other agencies if there is a need to safeguard someone.