

# Coventry Safeguarding Adults Board Multi-Agency Guidance on Prevention and Early Intervention in Adult Safeguarding



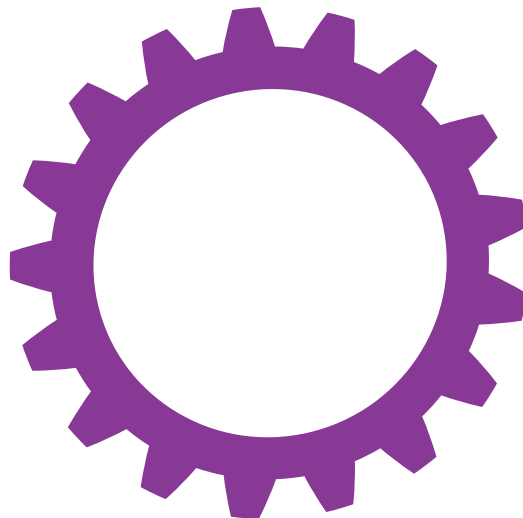
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## Introduction and Context

Critical to the vision of the Care Act 2014 is that the care and support system works to actively promote wellbeing and independence and does not just wait to respond when people reach a crisis point. It is vital that the care and support system intervenes early to support individuals, helps people retain or regain their skills and confidence, and prevents need, or delays deterioration wherever possible. This approach applies equally to adult safeguarding.

The Care Act 2014 places a duty on Local Safeguarding Adults Boards to develop preventative strategies that aim to reduce instances of abuse and neglect in its area. Prevention is one of the 6 main principles of safeguarding as outlined in the Care Act and as such forms a fundamental part of local adult safeguarding policy framework and arrangements. The Safeguarding Adults Board will have an overview of the prevention work taking place in its area and will maintain links with other strategic forums and plans to ensure this work ties in with their work. These include links with the Health and Wellbeing Board, Safeguarding Children's Partnership, Police and Crime and Domestic Abuse Boards.

This guidance recognises that there are several building blocks for prevention and early intervention, including:

- ▶ A well-trained workforce operating in a culture of zero tolerance of abuse
- ▶ People being informed of their rights to be free from abuse and supported to exercise these rights, including access to advocacy
- ▶ A sound framework for confidentiality and information sharing across agencies
- ▶ Access to good universal services, such as community safety services
- ▶ Needs and risk assessments to inform people's choices
- ▶ Safeguarding to achieve a balance between protecting people and preserving their right to make decisions for themselves
- ▶ Availability of a range of options for tailored support to keep people safe from abuse
- ▶ An informed public that is aware of the issues to ensure the success and effectiveness of this guidance

## Prevention and Early Intervention Key Messages

The following principles and key messages underpin this guidance;

- ▶ Prevention in safeguarding should be broadly defined and should include all health and social care user groups and service settings.
- ▶ Prevention needs to take place in the context of person-centred support and personalisation with individuals empowered to make choices and supported to manage risks.
- ▶ Safeguarding monitoring data and other intelligence should be used to identify people, groups or localities most at risk in order to target preventive work.
- ▶ Any not yet reached groups should be identified and strategies put in place to raise awareness and improve reporting amongst these groups and communities.
- ▶ Implementation and extension of the personalisation agenda and direct payments has highlighted the need for the agencies to work preventively to ensure service users are supported to protect themselves and make informed decisions about action when experiencing or likely to experience abuse, neglect or exploitation.
- ▶ Service users and their families, friends and carers should be actively encouraged to participate in developing solutions to challenges they may be facing. 'Co-production' and a collaborative strength-based practice is an approach which enables the individual to influence the support and services they receive (or when groups of people get together to influence the way services are designed, commissioned and delivered). This approach contributes to developing the resilience of individuals and helps promote self-reliance and independence.
- ▶ Effective prevention requires good partnership working and a multi-disciplinary approach adopted within and across local services.
- ▶ Robust risk management (undertaken within the context of positive risk taking) is an important tool in effective prevention and early intervention.
- ▶ Safeguarding training strategies and programmes should address prevention and early intervention and include as core skills Making Safeguarding Personal, risk enablement, risk management, community safety, legal powers and remedies. Staff will access such training as relevant to their role.



## Activities to Promote Prevention in Safeguarding

Local agencies and services are encouraged to undertake a range of activities aimed at promoting general wellbeing and maintaining independence as a means of eliminating or reducing the service user's vulnerability to potential exploitation, abuse or neglect.

General activities to promote wellbeing may include;

- ▶ Providing universal access to good quality information.
- ▶ Supporting safer neighbourhoods.
- ▶ Actively addressing hate crime or anti-social behavior.
- ▶ Promoting healthy and active lifestyles.
- ▶ Reducing loneliness or isolation, such as via befriending schemes or community activities.
- ▶ Encouraging early discussions in families/groups about potential future changes.
- ▶ Having conversations about care arrangements if a family member becomes ill or disabled.

Specific activities to prevent exploitation, abuse or neglect may include;

- ▶ Identifying vulnerability factors and potential risks as part of the needs assessment and addressing these as part of the support planning process.
- ▶ Using support plans to reduce loneliness or isolation and helping the person to strengthen or build their social and support networks.
- ▶ Using accessible ways and support to help people understand the different types of abuse and its prevention including what to look out for and the steps to take if abuse is suspected.
- ▶ Providing people with information about sources of independent information, advice and advocacy.
- ▶ Providing people with information about the role of the Court of Protection and Office of the Public Guardian as well as the mechanisms available (e.g. power of attorney, deputyship, Department of Work and Pensions appointeeship) to ensure their best interests are protected and to safeguard against financial exploitation if they lose their capacity to make welfare and/or property and financial decisions in the future.
- ▶ Reinforcing through literature and day to day interactions with service users that everyone has the right to be free from abuse and ensuring where someone needs support in exercising this right, they can access appropriate support, including advocacy services.

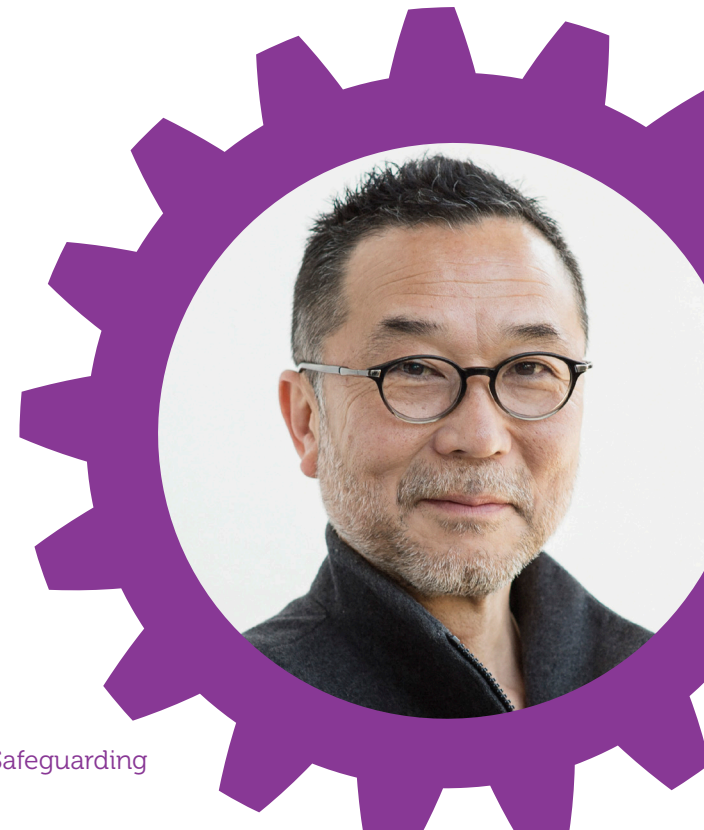
- ▶ Providing training and education of service users on exploitation and abuse in order to help them to recognise this and to have the interpersonal skills necessary to deal with the situation should this occur.
- ▶ Developing and promoting a range of 'Keeping Safe' initiatives e.g. Mail and Telephone Preference Services, Safer Places, Trading Standards, Making Money Matter, No Cold Calling Zones, Mate Crime Awareness, SCAM Awareness initiatives, Neighbourhood Watch and Dementia Friendly Communities.
- ▶ Ensuring there are effective links between local adult safeguarding arrangements and government strategies on PREVENT and Human Trafficking.
- ▶ Monitoring adults for the risk of radicalisation given that current research has highlighted that radicalisers are increasingly targeting people with a learning disability or other vulnerabilities.
- ▶ Ensuring people are safe in whatever setting they live and that they are protected by the crime prevention measures aimed at the whole community and that they can access mainstream criminal justice and victim support services. This requires effective links between adult safeguarding arrangements and the full range of community safety services and resources.
- ▶ Supporting carers by offering a needs or carer's assessment and use this as an opportunity to explore the individuals' circumstances and consider whether it would be possible to provide information, or support that prevents abuse or neglect from occurring, for example, by providing training to the carer about the condition that the adult they care for has or to support them to care more safely.
- ▶ Recognition that abuse or neglect may be unintentional and may arise because a carer is struggling to care for another person. This makes the need to take action no less important, but in such circumstances, an appropriate response could be a carer assessment and support package for the carer and monitoring.
- ▶ Ensuring the person is able to access support and services to help them recover from the abuse or neglect they have experienced. This approach will also help build future resilience.



## Activities to promote prevention and early intervention in care settings may include;

- ▶ Organisations should ensure that the principles of wellbeing and adult safeguarding are directly linked into commissioning, contract and procurement activity.
- ▶ Commissioners should assure themselves, through contracting arrangements, that providers have clear arrangements in place to prevent abuse or neglect and that they undertake a range of activities aimed at keeping service users safe.
- ▶ Care providers should be able to demonstrate a person-centred approach to care; a zero tolerance of abuse and neglect which encourages whistleblowing; staff, service user and family awareness of the nature of abuse and what to do if this is suspected; safe recruitment practices; regular quality monitoring and audit of care; regular staff training and updating of skills and clear policies and practice guidance available to all staff and volunteers.
- ▶ Care providers should make their staff aware through internal guidelines of what to do when they suspect or encounter abuse of adults in vulnerable situations. This should be incorporated in staff manuals or handbooks detailing terms and conditions of appointment and other employment procedures so that individual staff members will be aware of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding adults. This information should emphasise that all those who express concern will be treated seriously and will receive a positive response from managers.
- ▶ Commissioners should assure themselves, through contracting arrangements that a provider is capable and competent in responding to allegations of abuse or neglect, including having robust processes in place to investigate the actions of members of staff.
- ▶ Commissioners should put in place robust arrangements to enable poor or unsafe care to be identified and addressed at an early stage.
- ▶ All commissioners or providers of services in the public, voluntary or private sectors should disseminate information about the multi-agency safeguarding policy and procedures.

This prevention guidance has been developed from work originally undertaken by four Safeguarding Boards in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.



## Appendix 1 Examples of Prevention and Early Intervention

### Care Home Improvement

The Coventry Joint Quality Assurance Team (Strategic Commissioning Team) works to ensure care providers are delivering safe, high-quality care to individuals, with a continued focus on supporting commissioned providers with poor CQC ratings or quality concerns. In the twelve months of 2022/23, all 70 contracted residential care and nursing homes received an annual quality assurance visit, with further assurance sought where any risks were identified. We also continued to support and quality monitor over 80 contracted community providers (for example, home support and supported living providers) to ensure the safety and quality of care delivery. The quality team have also strengthened links with GP practices to improve the support offer to homes and communication across the health and social care system for providers. 2022/23 saw homes re-opening in full and welcoming families back with an increase in activities and events. A number of quality improvement campaigns were also developed and trialed, including the 'Mouth Care Matters' (aiming to improve oral health in care homes) piloted successfully in 4 care homes and the refreshed 'Say No to Infection' campaign (a training and accreditation package dedicated to the prevention and control of infection), both of which will be rolled out wider through 2023/24.



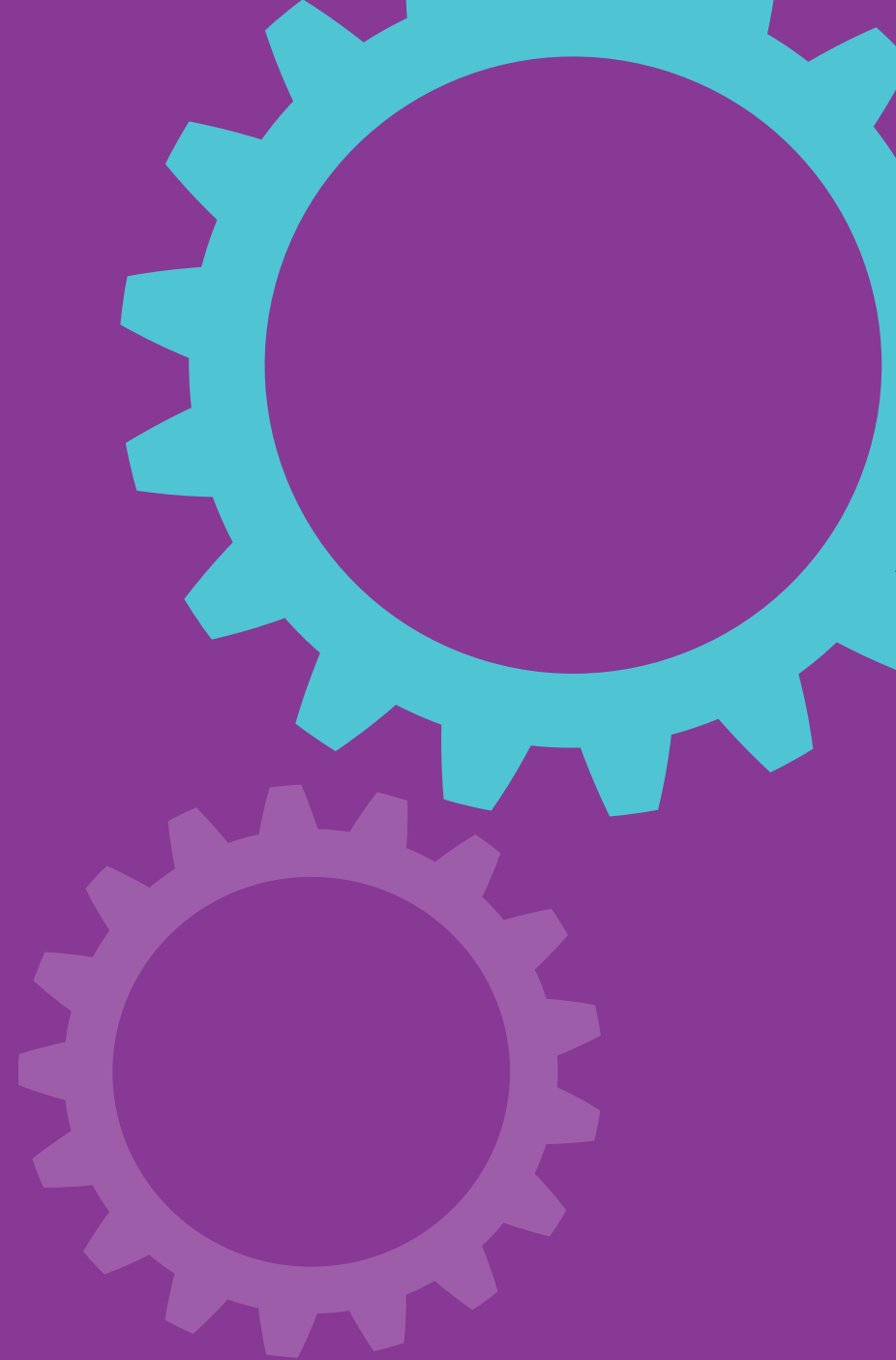


## Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse has been identified as a priority for Coventry, and is a key issue for Public Health, West Midlands Police, community safety and safeguarding. The Coventry Domestic Abuse Strategy 2018-2025 addresses domestic abuse, including honour-based violence and forced marriage. It recognises that domestic abuse can affect anyone, although women and children carry the highest burden. It highlights a number of groups that face additional barriers to accessing help and support, and/or may be at an increased risk of certain types of abuse. The following groups are identified as falling within these categories:

- ▶ Adults with care and support needs, including disabled people
- ▶ Black, Asian, minority ethnic and refugees
- ▶ Older people
- ▶ Men
- ▶ Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender

Coventry City Council appointed a Domestic Abuse Programme Delivery Manager in September 2021 to support the delivery of the local authorities' statutory duties under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. This role also co-ordinates the city-wide domestic abuse strategy to ensure a coordinated community response to domestic abuse involving a wide range of statutory and voluntary sector services. Coventry City Council also commissions a range of domestic abuse support services that includes community-based support services that can be accessed via the safe to talk helpline on 0800 111 4998 or [www.safetotalk.org.uk](http://www.safetotalk.org.uk)



## Modern Slavery

Coventry City Council appointed a Modern Slavery Lead within the Community Safety Team in April 2023. This position coordinates a Council-Wide response to adult modern slavery and exploitation holding strategic and operational responsibilities, the role does not provide direct support to people affected by modern slavery. The Modern Slavery Lead provides training and resources to professionals in Coventry to prevent, identify and respond to modern slavery. The position provides advice and signposting to professionals working on cases of modern slavery. The Modern Slavery Lead is creating multi-agency pathways and processes for professionals to follow when they suspect modern slavery. The position also holds a database of modern slavery concerns, which is used to track trends across the city. The Modern Slavery Lead has strengthened partnership working across Council departments and external organisations which has led to new strategies to prevent and tackle exploitation and better outcomes for those affected by modern slavery.

## Prevent

Prevent forms part of the government's Counter Terrorism Strategy: **CONTEST**. It has been in place as a **statutory duty** for all Councils and specified authorities since 2015; to safeguard people from radicalisation and stop them from becoming involved in or supporting terrorism. In Coventry this is achieved through ensuring robust training processes are in place so that relevant professionals can identify and be aware of the indicators and vulnerabilities to radicalisation. This equips them with a clear understanding of how to seek advice, guidance and knowledge of the **referral pathway** to support individuals of concern. There is a strategic level multi-agency partnership (Prevent Steering Group) in place that oversees the delivery of a Prevent action plan that outlines the key priorities in-line with the annual risk and threat assessment.

**Channel** is a pivotal component that supports Prevent, a multi-agency panel led by the local authority is in place to protect people of any age, faith, ethnicity or background who could be susceptible to radicalisation through the provision of early intervention support. This is achieved through a combination of safeguarding solutions that could include awareness, education or targeted intervention to address any underlying issues that may be contributing to the identified risks.

A **Professionals Guide on Prevent and Channel** has been produced as a quick reference to support practitioners.



## Trading Standards and Scams

Older people have always been more at risk of postal scams. They are getting more sophisticated now, and it can be difficult to spot the difference between scam mail, junk mail and genuine offers from legitimate companies.

They are sent directly to the home address, and often have the residents full name on. Usually, residents end up on the 'mailing list' as the result of responding to just one 'competition' or even not ticking to opt out of the open register on the Electoral Roll. Once a potential 'victim' is identified, this information is sold through and shared by the scammers.

Trading Standards had a call from a manager at a local residential care home, where one resident appeared to be having ever increasing amounts of mail delivered. When questioned by staff, the resident closed up and would not discuss the matter. With the residents' permission, Trading Standards paid a visit. The whole sitting room area had neat piles of mail stacked up, and on looking through, it was everything from lotteries to competition wins. It turned out the resident was sending money to claim 'winnings'.

Working with the home management, a close relative, the local building society, and of course the resident, Trading Standards managed to slowly remove all the mail. Whilst the resident did not quite comprehend the severity of the issue, he did allow the home management to 'hold' his mail and let his relative scan through it first on a weekly basis. Any scam mail was removed and over a period of time, the level of mail reduced once the scammers realised they were getting no responses – or more importantly to them – money!

For more information on scams please see the Councils' webpage:

<https://www.coventry.gov.uk/trading-standards/scams-warnings/13>



