



West of Berkshire

**Safeguarding Adults Board**

Reading, West Berkshire & Wokingham

**COVID case in 2020 : The importance of seeing and talking directly to the person involved when working with remote consultations.**

# **Learning from a safeguarding case**

# Case background

- Elderly Male (X) lived with Nephew at home for many years. They attended the GP surgery pre COVID and always engaged, they did present with some slight degree of “unkempt” appearance but not of a significant concern as this was their usual presentation for many years.
- X was admitted to hospital with significant decline to his physical health: falls, reduce mobility, concern regarding nutrition intake and pressure damage.
- There was a safeguarding concern raised in regard to neglect of care and a safeguarding concern was raised and included a response from primary care.

# Primary Care Contact

- The last contact with the GP was by a phone contact within a month of the hospital admission. The GP said that they were in 'shock' in the level of X's decline.
- X's pre-pandemic GP surgery visits with his nephew, no concerns were identified by the GP in regards to X's wellbeing and the ability of X or his nephew to seek assistance if needed.
- Support options were explored by the GP with X's nephew during appointments. The nephew was offered a referral to adult social care for X but this was declined by the nephew and the GP did not consider this to be a risk for X.
- Mental Capacity and Consent
  - The GP had not recorded or considered if X had capacity. They didn't talk directly to X.
  - If X has capacity the nephew is not the decision maker in regards to the referral to adult social care, it is X who should consent or decline.
  - If the GP felt that X didn't have capacity then they would need to consider whether to make a referral to Adult Social Care in Best Interest and record this in the notes.

# Learning ... into practice Do's

## Learning points

- X was not spoken to directly re the offer to social care ?
- Mental capacity was a potential indicator in this case as he was referred to the memory clinic.
- The male carer didn't ask for help or support when it was needed. This may be learnt behaviour or generational.

## TO DO

- Always talk to the patient directly for consent to refer. Do not accept a response from family friends.
- Consider and Document Mental Capacity Assessment (MCA). Remember a MCA can show evidence that a person had capacity and choice.
- Consider that certain, groups of people may not easily come forward to ask for help . Ask and explain what help may look like, get people to describe their day of caring to get a picture of what they may be doing and what help maybe needed .
- Be proactive: you can influence and change intergenerational patterns in reducing the risk of self neglect

# The challenges

- What is challenging in this type of case is families may often not want us to “interfere” so it’s finding ways to explore your professional curiosity as opposed to feeling like you are forcing your way in.
- The families perspective could be that they have always managed and would like to keep it that way – we acknowledge it’s a delicate balance for staff who need to reassure themselves about someone’s safety and the real nature of the risk.
- Record keeping with a rationale for decision making, consulting with others, supervision and MDT can be useful ways to discuss and work with the legislative frameworks and consider risks.

Have you been  
professional curious  
enough ?



Thanks



## ***Concerned about an adult?***

If you are concerned about yourself or another adult who may be being abused or neglected, in an emergency call the Police on 999.

If you think there has been a crime but it is not an emergency, call the Police on 101 or contact Adult Social Care in the area in which the person lives:

- **Reading** – call 0118 937 3747 or email [safeguarding.adults@reading.gov.uk](mailto:safeguarding.adults@reading.gov.uk) or complete an online [form](#)
- **West Berkshire** – call 01635 519056 or email [safeguardingadults@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:safeguardingadults@westberks.gov.uk) or complete an online [form](#)
- **Wokingham** – call 0118 974 6371 or email [Adultsafeguardinghub@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:Adultsafeguardinghub@wokingham.gov.uk) or complete a online [form](#)

For help outside of normal working hours contact the **Emergency Duty Team** on 01344 786 543 or email [edt@bracknell-forest.gov.uk](mailto:edt@bracknell-forest.gov.uk)



Thank you for taking the time to read this learning summary. If you would like to provide any feedback or have any questions regarding the Board, please contact: [Lynne.Mason@Reading.gov.uk](mailto:Lynne.Mason@Reading.gov.uk)

The Board has two websites: [Home | Safeguarding Adults Board \(sabberkshirewest.co.uk\)](http://sabberkshirewest.co.uk) and a website dedicated to safeguarding policies and procedures: [Home Of Berkshire Safe Guarding For Adults \(berkshiresafeguardingadults.co.uk\)](http://berkshiresafeguardingadults.co.uk)