

Background: The Sussex Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures have recently been updated. An updated section on Self-neglect takes account of learning from Safeguarding Adults Reviews involving cases of self-neglect. It sets out a framework for collaborative multi-agency working within Sussex to provide a clear pathway for all agencies to follow when working with adults who are self-neglecting. The procedures are to assist professionals from any agency who are working with and supporting an adult who is displaying self-neglecting behaviours.

This briefing sets out the key sections of the new Self-neglect policy and procedures. Safeguarding leads in all SAB partner agencies are encouraged to share the briefing and use it as a basis for team discussions and training.

The Self-neglect policy and procedures – a summary

Section	Summary
Overview of the self-neglect process	This section includes a flowchart setting out an overview of the process to be followed including identifying the lead agency and how the process is co-ordinated. You will find a copy of the flowchart on page 2 of this briefing.
Self-neglect and the Care Act 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of early intervention and prevention • When is a Section 42 enquiry required? The three key tests. • Non-statutory safeguarding enquiries • Professional judgement and risk factors to be considered
Self-neglect: signs and causes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicators of self-neglect • Reasons for self-neglecting behaviour • Self-neglect and hoarding • Home safety visits
Working with adults who self-neglect	This section addresses the key principles of engagement and includes guidance on the challenges of non-engagement including advice on effective interventions in multi-agency settings.
Self-neglect and mental capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessing mental capacity • Fluctuating capacity • Decisional and executive capacity • Unwise decisions • Inherent jurisdiction • Best interests decision making and the Court of Protection
Collaborative multi-agency working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-agency meetings • Timescales • Seeking legal advice • Recording and communicating outcomes
Comprehensive assessment of neglect (including risk assessment)	The process to be put in place following a multi-agency meeting and the factors to take into account when assessing risk. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How risks will be managed - Ongoing monitoring arrangements and who is responsible - Contingency plans
Multi-agency review meetings	The process to be followed if risk remains or is ongoing including guidance on obtaining new perspectives and escalation of cases if required.
Legal remedies	The policy and procedures include an appendix on legal remedies.
Self-neglect: checklist for practitioners	A checklist which provides a guide throughout the process for the manager and/or practitioner to be able to reflect on the self-neglecting situation. The checklist can be used as a tool at the planning or closing stage or during supervision as an aide or prompt to help to consider some of the key stages of the intervention. Includes hyperlinks which access the relevant section of the procedures.

Overview of the self-neglect process in Sussex

Self-neglecting adult identified by an agency / service

The identifying agency:

- considers whether any immediate actions are required – for example, to contact emergency services or any other actions to minimise risk to the adult or others, **and**
- considers the need to contact Adult Social Care to raise a safeguarding concern (consider the 3 key tests under Section 42 of the Care Act) or to request a social care assessment, **and / or**
- considers whether to convene a multi-agency meeting.

Identify lead agency

The local authority will be the lead agency if a safeguarding enquiry under Section 42 of the Care Act is undertaken (but the local authority may cause another agency to lead this enquiry, if the agency is better placed to do so). In other cases, the lead agency will be the agency best placed to co-ordinate the process at this point. This could be because:

- the agency is already involved with the adult,
- the agency has a duty of care towards the adult because of their needs,
- the agency holds significant information relating to the adult,
- the adult has shown a likelihood to engage best with this agency in the past, and / or
- the adult's main needs appear to relate to the service provided by the agency.

Lead agency co-ordinates information gathering

Including consideration of the most appropriate actions to address the concerns raised, and initial considerations about the adult's mental capacity.

Multi-agency meeting

The lead agency convenes a meeting under the self-neglect procedures to:

- Consider risks and issues of mental capacity.
- Share information between agencies.
- Devise a shared action plan.

The lead agency will make arrangements to involve the adult concerned as much as possible and / or their representative / advocate.

Comprehensive assessment of risk

Outcomes determined / risk addressed

- Support accepted.
- Ongoing monitoring

Outcomes determined / risk remains

- Escalation (to risk panels if available / senior managers / legal services) / ongoing monitoring.
- Repeat multi-agency meetings.
- Safeguarding concern raised where required.

Further information

The full self-neglect policy and procedure can be accessed here:

<http://sussexsafeguardingadults.procedures.org.uk/pkoox/sussex-safeguarding-adults-procedures/sussex-multi-agency-procedures-to-support-adults-who-self-neglect>

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