

SAFEGUARDING ADULTS AT RISK

A COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK FOR STAFF WORKING WITH ADULTS AT RISK IN BRIGHTON & HOVE Managers' Guidance to Competency Assessment

Updated February 2012



Acknowledgements

Thanks to

Bristol City Council
East Sussex County Council

Managers' competency guide produced by:
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Introduction from the Safeguarding Adults Board

This competency framework for safeguarding adults at risk has been produced on behalf of the Brighton & Hove Multi-Agency Safeguarding Adults Board by the Training Strategy Sub Group in conjunction with colleagues from East and West Sussex. In 2005 the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services produced *Safeguarding Adults*. This made a number of recommendations for adult protection work, and included the following recommendation:

“5.11 Each organisation has established ‘Safeguarding Adults’ competencies for each staff role and enable staff to have successive levels of training in line with their personal and professional development. Where appropriate this training is mandatory.”

Everyone who supports adults at risk should be clear about their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding. We hope that this competency framework will help all staff to be clear on their responsibilities.

The Board has asked all members to respond to the framework, and the recommendations from *Safeguarding Adults*. The framework has been distributed to adult social care staff and unions for consultation, and the feedback from this has been shared with the people who participated in the consultation. As safeguarding is core to the work of Adult Social Care the Board expects each member of staff, in conjunction with their manager to use the framework as a record of competency. There is a Managers' Guide which will help you in this.

The Board asks all staff who work with adults at risk to be aware of their responsibilities in relation to safeguarding. We encourage managers of council services outside of Adult Social Care to consider the framework, and taking it forward in their area of service. If you would like to discuss implementing the framework in your area of service, please contact Tim.Wilson@brighton-hove.gov.uk (Development Manager), or Michelle.Jenkins@brighton-hove.gov.uk (Safeguarding Adults Manager).

Yours

Denise D'Souza
(Chair person of Safeguarding Adults Board, March 2010)

What is competency?

Competency is the combination of the skills, knowledge, and experience held by individual staff and how they utilise these qualities to inform their practice in a way that is commensurate with their occupational role and responsibilities.

To be competent you need to be able to interpret a situation in its context and to have a repertoire of possible actions to take, and have been trained in the possible actions in the repertoire, where this is relevant. Regardless of training, competence grows through experience and the abilities of an individual to learn and adapt.

Why use a competency framework?

As you will be aware the term *adult protection* is now referred to as *safeguarding adults*. This terminology was introduced in a document called *Safeguarding Adults* produced by the Association of Directors of Social Services in 2005. This document reviewed adult protection work and developments since the publication of *No Secrets* in 2000.

Standard five of *Safeguarding Adults* (Association of Directors of Social Services, 2005) concerns training and includes this recommendation:

“5.11 Each organisation has established ‘Safeguarding Adults’ competencies for each staff role and enable staff to have successive levels of training in line with their personal and professional development. Where appropriate this training is mandatory.”

Increasingly the Care Quality Commission is keen to ensure that organisations have implemented the recommendations of *Safeguarding Adults*. As a manager the competency framework will be a useful aid to ensuring your staff have the right skills, knowledge and experience to support adults at risk. Constructive use of the framework can help identify areas for development, and also be useful to staff undertaking a qualification and wishing to demonstrate competence.

Training and Updates

The Brighton & Hove Safeguarding Adults Training Strategy Sub Group recommends that staff, carers and volunteers either:

- Complete an annual check against the competencies and complete appropriate development activities

Or

- Complete update training at a level appropriate to the role every three years

About this guidance

This guidance is offered for managers to use when they are assessing the competence of their staff. Against each competence suggestions are made for the type of evidence which might demonstrate competency. Owing to the variety of safeguarding work, the suggestions below are not offered as an exclusive definitive list, rather indicative of the sorts of things which may demonstrate competence.

Throughout the guidance, reference is made to the Pan *Sussex Multi-Agency Policy and Procedures for Safeguarding Adults at Risk*. These are being constantly reviewed and updated so signposting to the policy is limited to which part of the document is relevant to the competency.

Assessing Competence

Competence can be assessed in a number of ways:

- Direct observation. This is usually the best way to have confidence in the person's competence. Owing to the occasional nature of some of the safeguarding procedures and the sensitivity of the subject, it may be necessary to use some of the alternative methods described below.
- Questions can be used to assess if the person has the necessary knowledge
- Scenario based questions/case studies and real life activities allow a person to demonstrate their skills that would be relevant to actual situations
- Use of reflective accounts
- Accounts by a third party observer (including people from partner agencies).
- Evidence of *knowledge* may be shown by successful completion of training or qualification with an assessed component against the relevant area of knowledge.
- Evidence of *competence* may be shown by attainment of a competency based qualification (QCF)
- Safeguarding adults documentation, e.g. minutes, reports of alert etc.
- Feedback from service users and carers.
- A combination of the above where any one method does not supply sufficient evidence to give confidence of competence

If written accounts are used, the name(s) of people involved should be anonymised, and people should do their utmost to maintain the confidentiality of service users. The dignity of the service user should not be compromised through the assessment process. Service users should always consent prior to any observation for the purposes of competency assessment.

All staff should act within their professional frameworks such as codes of conduct, Care Standards etc.

When should competency be assessed?

Each member of staff should have a record of their competency in relation to safeguarding adults. This would usually be done

- as part of the induction process when a person commences employment
- in the event of a person taking on a new role in relation to safeguarding adults
- with existing members of staff recommended on an annual basis

There is an established culture of competency assessment in some staff groups, such as adult social care and health. As with competency based qualifications, there would not be a requirement to reassess the competencies within a set timeframe. That is not to say, once completed the competency framework should be forgotten about, there will be the need to update skills and knowledge, and the competency framework will be a useful aid to processes such as appraisal and personal development planning, and can be referred to when the person or their manager has reason to believe an individuals competence may have changed.

Adult Safeguarding - Competences for all staff

Staff at all levels, including volunteers will be able to:

Main Areas	Outcomes	Suggested evidence <i>For the alerting competencies an NVQ/QCFr higher in Social Care or attainment of Skills for Care Induction standards or Learning Disability Induction Award will be a measure of attainment of competence.</i>	Links to National Occupational Standards	Links to Courses
ALERTING	1) Understand and apply the principles that underpin all safeguarding adults' activity.	Looking for understanding of local authority role; duty to protect; respect for individual rights; basic understanding of Mental Capacity Act; treating reports seriously; concept of proportionality; principles of and limits to confidentiality, codes of conduct		All courses
	2) Recognise evidence and indicators of possible abuse.	Questioning, written accounts, observation. Can describe types of abuse and at least two indicators for each type.		All courses
	3) Recognise factors that may increase the risk of abuse.	Should be able to list at least five factors.		Basic awareness update & above
	4) Recognise an adult who may be at risk of being abused as defined by the local policy, including informal carers.	Should be able to explain the definition of adult at risk and list at least three groups of adult at risk.		All courses
	5) Understand how to ensure the immediate safety of an adult at risk.	Consideration of risk. Appropriate involvement of police & other professionals		All courses
	6) Understand and use procedures to enable suspected abuse to be reported	Who to contact and their phone numbers / contact details		All courses
	7) Report and record concerns about suspected abuse using appropriate systems	As (6) & also demonstrate knowledge of location of, and usage of Report of Alert Forms		Basic Awareness & update
	8) Work in a manner that minimises the risk of adults at risk being abused	Demonstrates work practice in line with organisational & local health & safety and risk management procedures. From (3) demonstrates		All courses

		commitment to pro-active steps to minimise vulnerability e.g. use of supervision; adhering to policies; complaints procedures; whistle blowing policies. Non discriminatory, person-centred approach.		
	9) Recognise the impact of related legislation to the safeguarding of adults at risk	As appropriate to role. As a minimum Mental Capacity Act for all. Essential Standards of Quality and Safety for registered services		All courses
	10) Understand “whistle blowing” policy and procedure and use it where necessary	Able to demonstrate understanding of when to whistle blow, how to whistle blow, their rights under whistle blowing policy and how to access policy.		Basic awareness & provider managers
	11) Understanding procedures for making a ‘Safeguarding Alert’	see policy and procedures part 2		All courses
	12) Know where to report a ‘Safeguarding Alert’ at all times of day or night	Should know how to contact Access Point		All courses

Every three years (minimum) staff at all levels, carers and volunteers will be expected to complete a recognised refresher activity to keep themselves up to date with the above competencies and any additional changes.

In addition to competences 1- 10 as stated above, all Managers (including staff who may act as the senior staff on duty) will also be able to:

Main Areas	Outcomes	Supporting evidence	Links to National Occupational Standards	Links to Courses
	13) Understand when emergency services, and/or emergency protection plans may be required	See policy and procedures part 2		All courses
	14) Understand the need to preserve evidence, and know how this is best achieved	See policy and procedures part 2		All courses
	15) Know how to support staff and service users who report concerns about abuse	Service user – follow recommendations form investigation officer; reassure; treat allegations seriously; don’t make promises can’t keep; don’t be		Provider Managers & higher courses

	judgemental; help with communication; letting ordinary life continue as appropriate Staff (alerter) – let them know it is their professional duty; ensuring they are not victimised; acknowledging feelings; good supervision arrangements; brief update on investigation, within limits of confidentiality		
16) Determine when a concern would be dealt with through incident reporting or through raising a safeguarding alert	See policy and procedures part 2		
17) Take appropriate actions for incidents which are not dealt with as safeguarding	See policy and procedures part 2		
18) Follow a system which identifies patterns and cumulative incidents and raises alerts if there are a number of these	See policy and procedures part 2		
19) Understand the four levels of investigation in response to a 'Safeguarding Referral'	See policy and procedures part 3		All courses
20) Understand the requirements of undertaking a safeguarding enquiry as part of Level 1 safeguarding investigation	See policy and procedures part 2		Provider Managers & higher courses
21) Undertake enquiries as part of a level 1 safeguarding investigation and report to the investigating manager using appropriate forms and systems.	Observed to do this, or reflective account provided		Provider Managers
22) Understand the requirements and procedures for applying for a Deprivation of Liberty order (residential and hospital managers only)	Should know DoLS apply to adults who lack the capacity to agree to their care or treatment, and are being cared for in a hospital or registered care home in a way which deprives them of their liberty. Good understanding of risk assessments and restrictive practices & how these can contribute to dol.		DoLS Briefing

		Requirement to have regard to DoLS Code of Practice. How to access forms, and how to refer through Access Point.		
	23) Understand the potential impact of abuse on adults at risk in your service	Partially covered in (2). Demonstrates understanding of how abuse has or may affect service users in their service.		All courses
	24) Understand the purpose of a safeguarding strategy meeting/discussion, and how to contribute to this and any subsequent investigation plan	See policy and procedures part 3		All courses
	25) Understand the purpose of a safeguarding case conference, and how to contribute to this and any subsequent protection plan	See policy and procedures part 3		All courses
	26) Understand and use the Independent Safeguarding Authority as required.	The VBS launched on 12 October 2009 and individuals will be able to apply for ISA registration and a CRB check on one application form from July 2010. The legal requirement for employees to register with the ISA and employers to check their status will come into force in November 2010. Currently (Feb 2012) under review		<i>Basic Awareness Update</i>
	27) Understand the National Minimum Standards, or other service requirements, relevant to the service you manage	Discussion/written account. NVQ 4 or above in social care		NVQ 4, L5 Diploma L 2 Diploma Working with the CQC
	28) Retain appropriate recording systems for the collation and monitoring of 'Safeguarding Alerts' within your service	Observation/discussion.		All courses
	29) Ensure staff in your service are competent in safeguarding practice, and are able to identify and report safeguarding concerns. (This may include the need to provide staff training)	Observation. Should help staff address development needs including arranging for training; support in supervision; discussion at staff meetings etc; promotion of safeguarding; use of competency framework with supervisees.		Provider Managers

	30) Support service users who may have been victims of abuse.	Observation/ reflective accounts		All courses
	31) Support service users to understand safeguarding issues, and protect themselves from possible abuse.	Evidence of raising awareness with service users, e.g. accessible information, promotion of safeguarding in service user meetings, awareness raising sessions with services users.		

In addition to competencies 1-28 Senior Managers will also be able to:

Main Areas	Outcomes	Supporting evidence	Links to NOS	Links to courses
LEADERSHIP	59) Lead and manage staff and services to protect adults at risk, promote their rights and treat them with dignity and respect	Describe how they promote understanding and adherence to SAAR policies & processes.		
	60) Engage with strategic partners to ensure systems, policies and procedures are in place to protect adults at risk in Brighton & Hove	Including PAVA, SAAR Board, SAAR Training Strategy Sub Group, contributing to policies and procedures etc.		
	61) Publicise and promote SAAR policy and procedures to increase public awareness of the issue	Observation, describe own contribution.		
	62) Ensure plans and targets for 'Safeguarding Adults at Risk' are embedded in all other strategic partnership working	Evidence from plans & targets		
	63) Ensure that current and future service providers are compliant with the SAAR policies and procedures	Should be able to list at least three ways they ensure this.		
	64) Enable staff to access training and support that	Should be able to describe / demonstrate		

	ensures staff attain a level of SAAR competence commensurate with their occupational role and responsibilities			
	65) Ensure safeguarding procedures are accessible to all adults covered by the SAAR policy	Should be able to describe how this would be done, or describe/show examples		
	66) Ensure service users and their carers are supported and enabled to be involved in all aspects of SAAR activity	Should be able to list at least three areas of service user involvement in safeguarding activity. Describe how existing user and carer networks are involved in SAAR activity.		

Appendix 1

Supporting Links and documents

Public Interest and Disclosure Act 1998 (“Whistle blowing”)

Link to the “whistle blowing” policy at:

<http://wave.brighton-hove.gov.uk/LGCSDocumentLibrary/Human%20resources/Administering%20employees/Grievances/Whistleblowing%20Policy.doc>

GSCC Codes of Conduct

NMC Codes of Conduct

Policy and legislation

- No secrets (D of H 2000)
- Sussex multi-agency policy and procedures for safeguarding vulnerable adults (June 2007)
- Professional Codes of Conduct (e.g. GSCC)
- NHS and Community Care Act 1990
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Care Standards Act 2000
- National Minimum Standards
- POVA list/Independent Safeguarding Authority
- National Service Frameworks
- Mental Capacity Act 2005 and Codes of Practice
- Deprivation of Liberty safeguards
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Groups Act 2006
- Criminal Procedures and Investigation Act 1996
- Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998
- Crime and Disorder Act 1998
- Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act 1999