

Responding to a Safeguarding Concern

Note: If printed, this document is for immediate reference only. Do not file it, as it will go out-of-date over time and be replaced by newer versions. Always refer to the latest CMS version.

Contact Centre

Deciding whether the concern is a safeguarding issue

- In the first instance, check whether the concern is actually a safeguarding issue. If it does not relate to an adult who has care and support needs and who is at risk of harm or neglect, it may for example be more appropriately dealt with as a complaint or request for referral, in which case follow the relevant procedures described elsewhere.
- Check with your senior practitioner if you are unsure whether this is a safeguarding concern.

Not a safeguarding issue

If the safeguarding concern is not a safeguarding issue, and can be addressed through another route (as described above), then record details of the contact on a safeguarding assessment on AIS and workflow to Central Duty Team.

Is a safeguarding issue

If the safeguarding concern is deemed to be a safeguarding issue (including if the adult has care and support needs and is a self funder), or if further investigation is required to make this decision take the following actions:

- If someone is in immediate danger or there is a need to preserve forensic evidence, contact the appropriate emergency service immediately – for example, ambulance, police.
- Find out whether the adult at risk has given their consent for the referrer to raise a concern and record this. However, safeguarding action may be taken in some cases where the adult at risk has not given consent – for example when the adult at risk does not have capacity to make an informed decision or where it is in the public interest or a serious crime has been committed. The team making the safeguarding enquiry will make this decision, so always act on a safeguarding concern.
- Record the details of the concern on the Contact to Assessment tab on AIS, and workflow to the Central Duty Team. Also email CDT alerting them to the fact that a safeguarding concern has been raised.

CDT and All Other Teams

Deciding whether the concern is a safeguarding issue

The practitioner who has been notified of the safeguarding concern should take the initial steps to determine whether it is a safeguarding issue, even if their team is not the team that will be involved in any subsequent enquiry.

- If not already established by the Contact Centre, check whether the concern is actually a safeguarding issue. If it does not relate to an adult who has care and support needs and who is at risk of harm or neglect, it may for example be more appropriately dealt with as a complaint or request for referral, in which case follow the relevant procedures described elsewhere.
- Use the Fact Finding and S42 split guidance to help ensure that fact finding is appropriate and proportionate at this stage. This can be found in the Local Resources area of the procedures site.
- If the concern is from one of the three emergency services or a member of the public and you require more information to decide, then contact the referrer or whoever else can provide the relevant information if it is safe to do so.
- If the contact is from a health or social care provider, request a written record of the 'first account' of the allegation/ witness statement/ disclosure to provide the information required. **Please Note:** Do not wait to receive this before acting: the written first account will be part of the documentation relating to the safeguarding concern.
- Record information gathered on a Safeguarding Assessment Form in AIS.
- Index any associated documents in AIS.
- Make sure you have gathered sufficient information to enable the team leader/senior practitioner to decide the appropriate action.
- Discuss the outcome with your team leader/senior practitioner.

Is a safeguarding issue

If this is a safeguarding concern (including if the adult has care and support needs and is a self funder), take the following actions:

- If someone is in immediate danger or there is a need to preserve forensic evidence, contact the appropriate emergency service immediately – for example, ambulance, police.
- If not already established by the Contact Centre, find out whether the adult at risk has given their consent for the referrer to raise a concern and record this. However, safeguarding action may be taken in some cases where the adult at risk has not given consent – for example when the adult at risk does not have

capacity to make an informed decision or where it is in the public interest or a serious crime has been committed. The team making the safeguarding enquiry will make this decision, so always act on a safeguarding concern.

- Notify the Safeguarding Adults Manager of the safeguarding issue for a final decision to be made about the need for a Section 42 enquiry.

Safeguarding Adults Manager Actions

Upon notification that a safeguarding concern is deemed to be a safeguarding issue;

- Make the decision about whether this is a safeguarding issue, based on your assessment of risk. **Use the risk matrix in all cases.**
- If this is a safeguarding issue and a Section 42 enquiry is necessary, workflow to the relevant locality or specialist team.
- Also send an email to the relevant team to alert them to the fact that a safeguarding concern has been raised together with the link to the case on AIS. Phone them if the matter is urgent.
- Make sure the relevant team has accepted responsibility for the safeguarding referral. If there is any doubt, discuss with the senior/manager.
- If a section 42 enquiry is not necessary refer to guidance in the Local Resources 'Non-Statutory Safeguarding Responses'.

Police MERLIN/LAS Reports

Merlin Officer

- Receive work via email or on-line. If you receive a phone call about a Merlin case, request the caller to send it in writing by email to the Contact Centre.

If this concerns an open case, index the document to the person's case file on AIS and workflow to the team to whom the case is open.

If the case is not open, index the document to the person's case file on AIS and workflow to:

- Mental Health Duty team if the Merlin/LAS report concerns a person with mental illness if they are aged 18-65 and not aged 18-25 and in transition from children's services to adult services
- Learning Disability Immediate Response team for people with a learning disability

- Central Duty Team for other cases.

You need to check whether the person mentioned in the Merlin/LAS report is on the system. If not, then add the person to AIS.