



**safeguarding
adults at risk**
a cumbria partnership

Guidance Paper 1

Information Sharing

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Cumbria Safeguarding Adults Board

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Information Sharing

In Cumbria, an information sharing protocol has been agreed by statutory partner organisations. The purpose of this guidance is to outline the basic principles involved in sharing information in safeguarding work. The government has produced a series of extremely useful documents and guidance papers which can be accessed at: www.ecm.gov.uk/informationsharing

Sharing Information where there are concerns about harm to an adult

- You may be sharing information about an adult as part of your aim to deliver effective intervention at an early stage to prevent problems escalating and to increase the chances of achieving positive outcomes.
- There may also be situations where you are asked or may want to share information because of concerns about abuse or neglect of an adult at risk.
- Where harm, or risk of harm, to an adult at risk is suspected appropriate action must be taken in accordance with the Cumbria Multi-Agency Policy and Procedures at your local office.
- Where there are concerns that the actions of others may put adults at risk of harm it may be possible to justify sharing information with or without consent for the purposes of identifying people for whom preventative interventions are appropriate.
- Where there is a statutory duty or a court order to share information you must do so unless, in the case of a court order, your organization is prepared to challenge it.

Seven Golden Rules for Information Sharing

1. **Remember that the Data Protection Act is not a barrier to sharing information** but it provides a framework to ensure that personal information about living persons is shared appropriately.
2. **Be open and honest** with the person (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.
3. **Seek advice** if you are in any doubt, without disclosing the identity of the person where possible.
4. **Share with consent where appropriate** and, where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to share confidential information. You may still share information without consent if, in your judgement, that lack of consent can be overridden in the public interest. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case.
5. **Consider safety and well being:** Base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well being of the person and others who may be affected by their actions.
6. **Necessary, proportionate, relevant, accurate, timely and secure:** Ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those who need to have it, is accurate and up to date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely.
7. **Keep a record** of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

Key questions for information sharing

