



**safeguarding
adults at risk**
a cumbria partnership

The Early Indicators Practitioners Guide

Updated October 2015

Cumbria Safeguarding Adults Board

The Early Indicators Practitioners Guide

Record – Reflect - Talk to Someone – ACT

This guide has been developed following detailed research into known cases where abuse took place in residential services and nursing homes for older people. Detailed analysis has produced a series of indicators. When there is a pattern or cluster of these indicators in a service it can be said that the people receiving this service are at risk of abuse. The overall aim is to contribute towards the prevention of the abuse of older people in care services. (University of Hull, 2012)

- The indicators are organised into 6 themes. This guide gives the themes and examples.
- There is a matrix that can be used to collect information and reflect on the risks that might be present in a service.
- Abuse occurs particularly where a pattern or cluster of concerns across the different themes and is much more significant than concerns in one theme.
- The indicators can be used in one of three ways:
 - An individual can use the matrix to record and structure concerns
 - A group of people including families and professionals can use the matrix to collect concerns about a service from different sources
 - A team from a service can use the matrix to review and reflect on their own service
- NB.a pattern of concerns is NOT PROOF of abuse and abuse can happen when indicators are not apparent.
- This guide is designed to help people to RECORD – REFLECT – TALK TO SOMEONE- ACT
- This guide is designed to help you organise your thoughts, to help you and your manager decide what action needs to be taken, for example, to share with your local Early Warning Meeting, to share with your local Quality Improvement Process, an immediate referral to the Adult Safeguarding process. Your manager will know how to do this.
- Ring 03000 616161 for reporting concerns to the Care Quality Commission (CQC).
- Please remember that all concerns about actual or suspected abuse or neglect must be reported to the local authority immediately
- This guide is also available on the safeguarding adults board website www.cumbria.gov.uk/safe
- This guide does not replace listening directly to people using services
- If this guide is being used by an individual family member you should share your concerns by ringing your local Adult Social Care Office

The 6 themes to think about are:

1. Concerns about management and leadership

The people who manage the home and other managers in the organisation. What are they doing, or not doing that might put people at risk of abuse?

2. Concerns about staff skills, knowledge and practice

The people who work in the home. What are their skills and practice like? What are they doing that might put people at the risk of abuse? Remember this is not just people who work as care workers or nursing staff. For example, this section also includes the practice of managers and other non-care staff who work in the service.

3. Concerns about residents' behaviours and wellbeing

The people who live in the home or service. How are they? Are they behaving in ways which suggest they may be at risk of abuse?

4. Concerns about the service resisting the involvement of external people and isolating individuals

Are the people in the home cut off from other people? Is it a "closed" or an "open" sort of place? Does the service resist support from external agencies or professionals?

5. Concerns about the way services are planned and delivered

This is about the ways in which the service is planned and whether what is actually delivered reflects these plans. For example, are people receiving the levels of care which have been agreed? Are the residents a compatible group? Is the service clear about the kind of support they are able to deliver?

6. Concerns about the quality of basic care and the environment

Are basic needs being met? What is the quality of the accommodation like?

Examples

I. Concerns about management and leadership

Is there evidence that:

- There is a lack of leadership by managers, for example managers do not make decisions and set priorities
- The service/home is not being managed in a planned way, but reacts to problems and crises
- The manager is unable to ensure that plans are put into action
- The managers know what outcomes should be delivered for older people, but appear unable to organise the service to deliver these outcomes, i.e. they appear unable to 'make it happen'
- Managers appear unaware of serious problems in the service
- The service does not respond appropriately when a serious incident has taken place. They do not appear to be taking steps to reduce the risk of a similar incident happening again
- Managers appear unable to ensure that actions agreed at reviews and other meetings are followed through
- Managers do not appear to be paying attention to risk assessments or are not ensuring that risk assessments have been carried out properly
- Managers do not appear to have made sure that staff have information about individual residents' needs and potential risks to residents
- The manager leaves staff to get on with things and gives little active guidance
- The manager is not role-modelling good practice to the staff team. They are not involved in practice with residents
- The manager is very controlling
- The managers have low expectations of the staff
- The manager is new
- There is a high turnover of managers
- The service is experiencing difficulty in recruiting and appointing managers
- The manager leaves suddenly and unexpectedly
- The manager is new and doesn't appear to understand what the service is set up to do
- A responsible manager is not apparent or available within the service, for example they may be:
 - On holiday
 - Covering other services
- Arrangements to cover the service while the manager is away are not working well
- The services' resources are not being deployed effectively to meet the needs of the residents. For example:
 - There is a high turnover of staff
 - Staff are working long hours
 - Staff are working when they are ill
 - There is poor staff morale

2. Concerns about staff skills, knowledge and practice

Is there evidence that:

- Staff appear to lack the information, knowledge and skills needed to support older people and/or people with dementia
- Staff appear challenged by some residents' behaviours and do not know how to support them effectively
- Staff do not manage residents' behaviours in a safe, professional or dignified way. For example, staff;
 - Send residents to their rooms
 - Use medication inappropriately or as a first resort
 - Ignore residents
- Members of staff perceive the behaviours of residents as a problem – and blame the residents
- Staff blame residents' confusion or dementia for all their difficulties, needs and behaviours; other explanations do not appear to be considered
- Members of staff are controlling of residents
- Residents are punished for behaviours seen to be inappropriate
- Staff treat residents roughly or forcefully
- Staff ignore residents
- Staff shout at residents and are impatient
- Staff shout or swear at residents
- Staff talk to residents in ways which are not complimentary/derogatory
- Staff do not alter their communication style to meet individual needs. For example they speak to people as if they are children, they 'jolly people along'
- Members of staff use negative or judgemental language when talking about residents
- Staff do not see residents as individuals and do not appear aware of their life history
- Staff do not ensure privacy for older people when providing personal care
- Record keeping by staff is poor
- Staff do not appear to see keeping records as important
- Risk assessments are not completed or are of poor quality. For example, they lack details or do not identify significant risks
- Incident reports are not being completed
- There is a particular group of staff who strongly influence how things happen in the home
- Staff informally complain about the managers to visiting professionals
- Staff lack training in how to use equipment

3. Concerns about residents' behaviours and wellbeing

Is there evidence that one or more of the residents:

- Show signs of injury due to lack of care or attention (e.g. through not using wheelchairs carefully or properly)
- Appear frightened or show signs of fear
- Behaviours have changed
- Appearances have changed, for example they have become unkempt or are no longer taking pride or interest in their appearance
- Moods or psychological presentation have changed
- Behaviour is different with certain members of staff/when certain members of staff are away
- Engage in inappropriate sexualised behaviours
- Do not progress as would be expected

Is there evidence that:

- The overall atmosphere is flat, gloomy or miserable?

4. Concerns about the service resisting the involvement of external people and isolating individuals

Is there evidence that:

- Managers and/or staff do not respond to advice or guidance from practitioners and families who visit the service
- The service is not reporting concerns or serious incidents to families, external practitioners or agencies
- The service does not pass on information and communicate with residents' families and external practitioners
- Managers do not appear to provide staff with information about residents from meetings with external people, for example reviews
- Staff or managers appear defensive or hostile when questions or problems are raised by external practitioners or families
- Staff are hostile towards or ignore practitioners and families who visit the service
- The service does not liaise with families and ignores their offers of help and support
- Managers or staff are defensive and concerned to avoid blame when things go wrong or there are problems
- Staff or managers give inconsistent responses or account of situations
- There are residents who have little contact with people from outside the service
- There are residents who are not receiving active monitoring or reviewing (e.g. people who are self-funding)
- Residents are being kept isolated in their rooms and are unable to move to other parts of the building independently ('enforced isolation')

5. Concerns about the way services are planned and delivered

Is there evidence that:

- There is a lack of clarity about the purpose and the nature of the service
- The service does not appear able to deliver the service or support it is commissioned to provide. For example it is unable to deliver effective support to people with distressed or aggressive behaviour
- Decisions about where residents are placed are influenced by a lack of suitable alternatives
- The service is accepting residents whose needs and/or behaviours are different to those of the residents previously or usually admitted
- The service is accepting residents whose needs they appear unable to meet
- There appear to be insufficient staff to support residents appropriately
- Residents' needs as identified in assessments, care plans or risk assessments are not being met. For example residents are not being supported to attend specific activities or provided with specific support to enable them to remain safe
- The layout of the building does not easily allow residents to socialise and be with other people

6. Concerns about the quality of basic care and the environment

Is there evidence that:

- There appear to be insufficient staff to meet residents' needs
- There is poor or inadequate support for residents who have health problems or who need medical attention
- Residents are not getting the support they need with eating and drinking, or are not getting enough to eat or drink
- The service is not providing a safe environment
- Staff are not checking that people are safe and well
- There are a lack of activities or social opportunities for residents
- Residents do not have as much money as would be expected
- Residents lack basic things such as clothes, toiletries
- Support for residents to maintain personal hygiene and cleanliness is poor
- There is a lack of care for residents' property and clothing
- The service does not have the equipment needed to support residents
- Equipment is not being used or is not being used correctly
- Equipment or furniture is broken
- The service is not providing equipment to keep residents safe
- Staff are not using wheelchairs safely and correctly
- The home is dirty and shows signs of poor hygiene
- The quality of the environment has deteriorated noticeably
- Levels of activity for service users have declined noticeably

**Indicators of Concern in Care Services
Examples from Research**

Name of Service:

Name and job title of person completing this form:

Signature:

Date form completed:

<p>1. Concerns about management and leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a lack of leadership by managers, for example managers do not make decisions or set priorities • The service/home is not being managed in a planned way, but reacts to problems or crises • Managers appear unaware of serious problems in the service • The manager is new and doesn't appear to understand what the service is set up to do • A responsible manager is not apparent or available within the service. 	<p>2. Concerns about staff skills, knowledge and practice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff appear to lack the information, skills and knowledge to support older people/people with dementia • Staff appear challenged by some residents' behaviours and do not know how to support them effectively • Members of staff are controlling of residents • Members of staff use negative or judgemental language when talking about residents • Record keeping by staff is poor 	<p>3. Concerns about residents' behaviours and well being</p> <p>One or more of the residents :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show signs of injury through lack of care or attention • Appear frightened or show signs of fear • Behaviours have changed • Moods or psychological presentation have changed
<p>4. Concerns about the service resisting the involvement of external people and isolating individuals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managers/staff do not respond to advice or guidance from practitioners and families who visit the service • The service is not reporting concerns or serious incidents to families, external practitioners or agencies • Staff or managers appear defensive or hostile when questions or problems are raised by external professionals or families 	<p>5. Concerns about the way in which services are planned and delivered</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a lack of clarity about the purpose and nature of the service • The service is accepting residents whose needs they appear unable to meet • Residents' needs as identified in assessments, care plans or risk assessments are not being met • The layout of the building does not easily allow residents to socialise and be with other people 	<p>6. Concerns about the quality of basic care and the environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The service is not providing a safe environment • There are a lack of activities or social opportunities for residents • Residents do not have as much money as would be expected • Equipment is not being used or is not being used correctly • The home is dirty and shows signs of poor hygiene

Indicators of Concern in Care Services

Name of Service:

Name and job title of person completing this form:

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Date form completed:

1. Concerns about management and leadership	2. Concerns about staff skills, knowledge and practice	3. Concerns about residents' behaviours and well being
4. Concerns about the service resisting the involvement of external people and isolating individuals	5. Concerns about the way in which services are planned and delivered	6. Concerns about the quality of basic care and the environment