



Partnership Protocol between all members of the Wigan Safeguarding Adults Board and partnership including the Local Authority, Wigan Integrated Care Partnership (and provider trusts), Greater Manchester Police and Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service, Wigan Probation Service Greater Manchester, and all other partners.

Wigan Safeguarding Adults Board and Partnership

Resolution Protocol

Resolution of professional disagreements in work relating to safeguarding adults at risk or neglect or abuse, and their families.

Wigan Safeguarding Adults Board and Partnership have developed the following Resolution protocol to help professionals achieve positive outcomes for adults and families. Partnership working is at the core of the work that we undertake, and professional agreement and challenge is central to our day-to-day practice in Safeguarding. This protocol provides a framework to help partner agencies positively resolve issues or challenges and ensure adults at risk of abuse or neglect and their families the support they need at the right time.

If you are the safeguarding leading for your organisation, please ensure that you disseminate and implement this policy throughout your organisation as per the following instructions.

All partner agencies:

- Ensure staff are made aware of the guidance via your internal communication channels.
- Make the Local Protocol available via your own websites with a link across to this page.
- Update in-house policies and procedures to reflect protocol.
- Update in-house training to reflect protocol.

Introduction

What is this process? This process outlines the steps to be taken when there are concerns raised by practitioners from more than one agency in relation the safety and welfare of an adult at risk of neglect or abuse, and / or action being taken to safeguard an adult at risk. Concerns raised may be due to a disagreement between agencies or a shared concern.

Within this process the term “family” is used to describe parent / carers and family members such as siblings as well as extended family members.

Why do we need this process? When working with practitioners from other agencies there will at times be differences of opinion with regards to how to respond to an identified concern about an adult or their family. There may be occasions where practitioners agree there is a concern, but this requires a strategic leadership approach

to support safe working outside of standard practice guidelines in the best interest of the individual. This process has been designed to guide practitioners in the steps that they should take when concerns arise.

Who is this aimed at? This process is aimed at practitioners working with adults who may require safeguarding either regularly or occasionally. These practitioners will come from a wide range of agencies both statutory and non-statutory. The levels within this protocol should be interpreted by all agencies, in a way which allows the application of relevant roles and job titles in individual agencies within the operational structure of this protocol.

The key contact for comments about this policy is wsabtraining@wigan.gov.uk

Professional Disagreement and Shared Professional Concern

When having conversations (and working) with practitioners from other agencies there will at times be differences of opinion with regards to how to respond to an identified concern.

Disagreements can be a sign of developing thinking, and the value of exchanging ideas from different perspectives should not be under-estimated. When there are disagreements between agencies, this should be recognised as potential for healthy debate. However, disagreements may disadvantage the individual involved if they are not resolved constructively and in a timely manner. On occasion, disagreements which cannot be resolved, may need to be escalated up to first line managers (and beyond if appropriate) who should address any concerns.

There may be occasions where practitioners agree there is a concern, but this requires a strategic leadership approach, where there is a perceived need for a significant amount of additional resource at pace, or to support safe working outside of standard practice guidelines in the best interest of the adult at risk. This will require escalation to senior management and the tripartite leaders for oversight, decision making,

In order to support and challenge a clear process needs to be in place to ensure that all practitioners involved in multi-agency work understand the steps they should take when concerns arise. This process should however be measured in its approach to allow practitioners the opportunity to openly discuss their concerns with other practitioners. Throughout our work the safety and wellbeing of the adult at risk is the primary concern, and professional disputes must not obstruct this. If you feel that a practitioner or an agency is not acting in the best interests of the adult at risk, you have a responsibility to

respectfully challenge the practitioner or agency. Should you have a concern that an adult at risk is at risk of, or is suffering significant harm, this should be responded to using your own agencies safeguarding procedures.

Examples of disagreement

- Differences in the handling of referrals / requests for services between agencies.
- Disagreement on attendance at multi-agency meetings.
- Differences in opinion with regards to an adult at risk's plan.
- Concern about the action or inaction of another professional in relation to the safety and wellbeing of an adult at risk.
- Information sharing concerns.
- Disagreement about the provision of services.

Principles of concerns resolution

When trying to resolve disagreements practitioners should work within the following principles:

- The safety and wellbeing of the adult at risk is paramount, and should they be considered to be at risk of significant harm Duty and Advice should be contacted or the adult at risk's social worker if they have one.
- Keeping the adult at risk at the centre of all professional discussions.
- Quality conversations about which approach should be undertaken.
- Ensuring that the right conversations are had with the right people at the right time, taking place face to face where possible.
- To resolve disagreement using a restorative approach which includes appropriate challenge.
- Resolving disagreements in a timely manner.
- Undertaking a solution focus approach.
- Concerns, actions, responses and outcomes must be recorded and agreed.

The following **multi-agency working principles** should also be adhered to:

- **Be committed to developing trusted relationships** – this will rely on openness, honesty and high-quality communication with each other and with the adult at risk.
- **Aim to understand each other** – we will check out our understanding of each other’s language and meaning when necessary; this can be especially relevant due to use of jargon or service specific terminology. We will also challenge and rethink language that is oppressive, discriminatory, or blaming, seeing language as dynamic rather than static.
- **Adopt restorative and strengths-based approaches** – as practitioners, we will give high support and high challenge to each other to enable strength based, solution focused and restorative approaches to working effectively with adult at risk.
- **When it gets hard, we will try harder** – instead of withdrawing from each other when situations are complex and hard to navigate, as practitioners and agencies we will try even harder to find common ground, support each other and align ourselves for a coordinated approach.
- **Share information about our own roles, agencies and statutory responsibilities** - we are committed to supporting others to understand our particular roles and statutory responsibilities.
- **Do what we say we will do** – we will follow up on actions agreed in meetings and provide regular updates so that everyone knows what is going on to help with the coordination of the adult at risk’s care and support.
- **Model the attitudes and behaviours we hope that adult at risk experience** - as practitioners, we adopt the principles of acceptance, curiosity and empathy.

Resolving Disagreements and Concerns

Resolution Process

The following process should be followed by practitioners when raising a concern and/or disagreement. There may be times when concerns should be escalated straight to the Head of Service level dependent on the immediacy / seriousness of the issue, and

therefore in some circumstances it is not always appropriate to apply this process in a linear way.

It is the expectation that wherever a disagreement has been highlighted under this policy that professionals at every level should respond immediately to the concerns being raised.

Step 1: Practitioner to Practitioner

- Immediately discuss with colleagues and own agency designated lead for safeguarding to clarify thinking and practice.
- Attempt to resolve any disagreements with the practitioner face to face before initiating the full process. This could include using any of the identified ways listed above.
- A clear written record should be kept and shared with everyone involved, this should include a clear evidence-based reason for the disagreement.

Should concerns and/or disagreement be in relation to processes whereby there is a Lead Professional / Chair of multi-agency meeting they should be informed in writing for information and monitoring.

Where a resolution is reached this should be clearly recorded and shared with everyone involved including the agreed points of resolution and any next steps.

Step 2: Line Manager to Line Manager

If following Step 1 the concern and/or disagreement remains, discuss with your designated lead for safeguarding and immediately refer this to your line manager, for them to discuss with the line manager of the other practitioner.

Line managers may consider utilising any of the identified approaches listed above to facilitate the resolution or the Partnership resolution seeking proforma (appendix 5).

They should do this within an agreed timescale with the practitioner raising the concern, and a timescale for response from the other line manager should also be agreed.

The principles of recording as outlined in Stage 1 should be followed both during the process and at the point of resolution.

***For agencies where there is no line manager (e.g., self-employed, single person organisation etc.) professional bodies, funders, commissioners or trustees should be contacted.**

Step 3: Head of Service / Senior Manager to Head of Service / Senior Manager

If agreement cannot be reached following discussions between first line managers the issue must be referred without delay through the line management structure to the equivalent of Head of Service, **again with agreed timescales for responses.**

This should be as quickly as possible and ideally within the working week it was raised between stages.

The principles of recording as outlined in Stage 1 should be followed both during the process and at the point of resolution.

Director/Assistant Director to Director/Assistant Director

If professional disagreements remain unresolved, each Head of Service / Senior Manager will raise the disagreement immediately following Step 3 above at Director / Assistant Director level within their own agency or within health the Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Adult at risk.

The Director / Assistant Director (or within health the Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Adult at risk) of the complainant agency will then write to the Director / Assistant Director (or within health the Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Adult at risk) of the receiving agency and meet to achieve a final resolution.

The principles of recording as outlined in Stage 1 should be followed both during the process and at the point of resolution.

Stage 3: Exceptional Circumstances

If the disagreement cannot be resolved within the 3-step process set out above, this should be referred to the WSAB Service Manager (**p.whitemoss@wigan.gov.uk**)

A further meeting will be facilitated between the WSAB and the referrer and agencies involved with the purpose of achieving a resolution. Where matters remain without resolution at this level Executive Leads for the Partnership will be informed and their suggestions for a resolution sought.

If at any stage the process is halted for any reason such as sickness, meetings being cancelled etc the agency with the concern should record why the process has been halted and ensure that the process is resumed as soon as possible, seeking line management support if required. It may be that in cases of sickness a different person needs to take over the process. Every effort should be made by all parties to ensure that the process does not drift.

Things for Consideration

- Appropriate timescales for passing on, and responding to, concerns should be agreed for each stage. These should take into consideration any potential risk to the individual and need for provision of services. Any changes or requests for extensions to timescales should be agreed and recorded.
- Where a meeting is convened to discuss concerns, consideration needs to be given as to whether it is appropriate for families to attend and this should be communicated with all involved. When these meetings are called, they remain the responsibility of the agency who calls the meeting to take the lead on inviting appropriate professionals and administrate the meeting.
- Clear agreed written records should be kept and shared with everyone at all stages, which must include written confirmation between the parties about agreed resolutions, next steps and the proposed follow-up of any outstanding issues. Feedback should be given at every stage to the practitioner who raised the original concern.
- If throughout the process you feel that an adult at risk is suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm, you are responsible for communicating your concerns to your immediate line manager and / or your organisation's designated lead for adult at risk protection or the adult at risk's social worker if they have one.
- Practitioners should continue to use their agency procedures in conjunction with this document.

Please Note:

At all stages actions / decisions must be timely and shared with relevant personnel who are directly involved with the service user(s).

This person must in turn record detail re: the conflict, and decisions taken on the service users file and inform the parents / carers / advocate of the outcome – if this appropriate to safeguarding the adult at risk / involved.

**Level 1
Practitioner to Practitioner**

When professionals cannot agree with a decision or response from any agency in relation to:

- determining the levels of need for a adult at risk or adult at risk
- roles and responsibilities, and
- the need for action and communication re: a safeguarding issue, initial attempts should be made between the workers to resolve the issues informally.

At this level this may include, for example, a phone call between agencies or a meeting to outline the concerns and seek to come to a mutually agreed outcome.

If the agencies involved are unable to reach a mutually agreed outcome, then the respective professionals must refer the disagreement to their own manager / named safeguarding lead in their organisation.

If resolution not achieved, then progress to Level 2

**Level 2
Line Manager to Line Manager
Immediately or as soon as is practicable.**

The manager / named safeguarding lead should discuss the concerns / response with their opposite manager in the other agency. (Appendix 2 for agency contact details) the WSAB proforma (Appendix 3) may be used to support this.

At this stage it may assist to have a meeting to define and potentially resolve the issues. The escalation solutions focused meeting template (Appendix 4) may be used to support this.

**Level 3
Head of Service to Head of Service
Immediately or as soon as is practicable.**

Where resolution cannot be achieved through line management this should be referred to equivalent heads of service.

If the matter remains unresolved, then the matter must be referred to equivalent directors/assistant directors as soon as practicably possible, if not immediately depending on the concerns.

meetings should be arranged to discuss a final resolution.

**Level 4
Exceptional Circumstances
Immediately or as soon as is practicable.**

If the manager / named safeguarding lead are unable to achieve a resolution, they should refer it to the Wigan Safeguarding Adults Board and Service Manager Safeguarding Adults. This may take the form of a meeting, or phone conversations.

A further meeting will be facilitated between the WSAB, and the referrer and agencies involved with the purpose of achieving a resolution.

Where matters remain without resolution at this level the Executive Leads for the Partnership will be informed and their suggestions for a resolution sought.

Where concerns remain following escalation to Executive Leaders, the case will be referred to the WSAB Independent Chair

Appendix 2

Stage 1 Useful Contacts

Adult Social Care	Contact Numbers
Adult Duty Team	01942 828777
Wigan Locality Team	01942 489494
Ashton Locality Team	01942 828787
Leigh Locality Team	01942 404523
Hospital Discharge Team	01942 822117
Adult Safeguarding Team	01942 486178
Principal Social Worker	07824600429

Homes	Contact Number
Safeguarding Lead	01942 486222

Greater Manchester Police, Wigan Division	Contact Number
Response Inspector	0161 856 7221

Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service	Contact Number
Prevention Manager	07734 275762

Wigan, Wrightington and Leigh NHS Foundation Trust (WWL)	Contact Number
Named Nurses for Safeguarding Adults and Children	01942 481161

Wigan ICP Safeguarding Team	Contact Numbers
Colette Lawler Assistant Director Safeguarding Children	07789 857252
Reuben Furlong Assistant Director Safeguarding (Adults)	07795 826153

GMMH	Contact Numbers
Adult Safeguarding Lead: Teresa Dias	07950 263643 Teresa.Dias@gmmh.nhs.uk
Head of Safeguarding: Cathryn Buckley	0161 358 2416 or 07778 342998

Probation (CRC and National Probation Service)	Contact Numbers
Jim Robson, Senior Probation Officer	07526 987549
Mandy Bailey, Senior Probation Officer	07793 631089

Wigan and Leigh Drug and Alcohol Recovery Service	Contact Numbers
We are with you, Wigan and Leigh	
Operations Manager Wigan	01942 827979
Operations Manager Leigh	01942 404299

Safeguarding Leads and Teams Main Numbers for logging/discussion/resolution at Stage 2

Wigan Safeguarding Adults Board	Contact Numbers
Paul Whitemoss, Service Manager	07557 758690

Wigan Council	Contact Numbers
Safeguarding Service Manager (Adults): Sumayya Hanson	07951271187
David Gray (Housing, Drugs and Alcohol, Targeted Commissioning)	07760 172265
Jenny Yates, Service Manager, Age Well	07833 476532
Sarah Owen Service Manager Community Safety / PSR Hub	07734 731658
Kieran Davies Business Manager Domestic Abuse, Sexual Violence & Public Service Reform Hub	07824537538
Ray Deakin, Lead External Provider Manager, Housing with Care	07734494246
Lindy Wardle, Service Manager, Provider Management and Market Development	07867914578
Ellen Waite, Lead External Provider Manager, Residential and Nursing	07385223524
Andrea Woodcock, Lead External Provider Manager, Home Care	07887898677

GMMH	Contact Numbers
Adult Safeguarding Lead: Teresa Dias	07950 263643
Head of Safeguarding: Cathryn Buckley	07778 342998 or 0161 358 2416

Greater Manchester Police	Contact Numbers
DI Dave Henshall Vulnerability Lead Adults	0161 8567952
PS Trish Cope & PS Janine Smith Domestic Abuse & Vulnerable Adult	0161 856 7960
Sally Layland CMT Lead MARAC	0161 856 7955

Greater Manchester Fire and Rescue Service	Contact Number
Derek Dempster, Prevention Manager	07734 275762

Wigan PSR Hub (Adults, Prevent, Domestic Abuse, Anti-Social Behaviour)	Contact Numbers
Sarah Owen, Wigan PSR Hub	07734 731658

Probation / CRC	Contact Numbers
Jim Robson, Senior Probation Officer	07526 987549
Mandy Bailey, Senior Probation Officer	07793 631089

Appendix 3

Partnership Resolution Seeking Proforma Stage 2 (Service Manager to Service Manager)

Family Details

	Name:	Address:	D.O.B:
Adult at risk 1			
Adult at risk 2			
Adult at risk 3			

Adult Social Care:		Adults Mental Health:	
Complex Dependency:		GMP:	
Substance Misuse:		Housing:	
GP:		WWL:	
Other (please specify):			

Agency Concerns

Analysis of concerns identified:

Reason for seeking resolution:

Resolution required – What Needs to Happen that currently isn't.

What are we worried about?

What's working well?

What needs to change?

What will be the impact on the Adult at risk/others if nothing changes?

Appendix 4

Escalation Solution Focused Meeting Template (Service Manager to Service Manager)

Meeting No:

Meeting No:			
Name:	D.O.B:	Date of Meeting:	Date of next meeting:
Attendees:		Apologies:	

Agency Identifiers:			
Agency Name:		ID Number:	
Agency Name:		ID Number:	
Agency Name:		ID Number:	
Agency Name:		ID Number:	

Service Known to:

Service Known to:			
Adult Social Care:		Adults Mental Health:	
Complex Dependency		GMP:	
Substance Misuse:		Housing:	
GP:		WWL:	
Other (please specify):			

Case Summary

Analysis of concerns identified:

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Agenda Items

- Situation
- Case Presentation
- Background
- Pertinent
- Information sharing
- Safeguarding concerns
- Adult at risk/their voice
- Assessment
- Actions/planning
- Recommendations
- Individual agency actions and timescales
- Contingency planning
- Next meeting date
- Agree summary and or escalation to appropriate external national governance.

Planned Actions to be taken:

No	Action	Agency and owner	Purpose of action	Deadline (Specified date)
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				

Appendix 5

Pro-forma for reporting where issues have been resolved.

Unique Identifier from your services records:	
Name of Board Members, Roles and Agencies involved:	
Brief details of issue:	
At what level of the protocol was the issue resolved?	
Does this case give rise to any lessons learned? (Please circle)	Yes No
If yes, please detail	

Do the lessons learned indicate the need for the following: (please circle Yes or No for each of issues below)

A requirement for staff training?	Yes	No
Review of WSAB Protocol or procedure?	Yes	No
Inform Commissioner of the Service?	Yes	No
If yes, which service is this regarding?		

Date of completion:	
Name:	
Signature:	

Please e-mail your completed form to the WSAB Team at wsabtraining@wigan.gov.uk