

Scrutiny review scoping proposal

1 What is the review?

Adult Safeguarding – how can this be defined to better protect and assist vulnerable adults, families, carers and paid staff?

The review is being conducted as members believe there is sometimes ambiguity, or different interpretations, over how abuse is defined for vulnerable adults and this can create difficulties for the people concerned: adults, staff, families, and carers.

These are some of the consequences of false accusations of abuse or neglect:

- Staff leaving the sector
- Staff staying but being resentful and demoralised (in the context of there already being a problem with recruitment and retention)
- In the case of family carers, them needing support and solutions but instead getting the opposite i.e criticism, leading to possible disengagement with services

2 What outcomes could realistically be achieved? Which agency does the review seek to influence?

A recommended protocol or approach for defining and better protecting vulnerable adults in care settings.

Goals:

- To make things clearer for staff so that they are not accused of abuse or neglect when it is not abuse or neglect, so as not to put people off working in the sector
- Introduce checks and balances to prevent vexatious accusations
- Make the whistleblowing system for staff to report issues more transparent and accessible

The review is aimed at improving outcomes for :

- Council safeguarding leads , social workers and commissioners
- Paid staff
- Care providers
- Vulnerable Adults
- Carers
- Family and friends of vulnerable adults

3 **When should the review be carried out/completed?**i.e. does the review need to take place before/after a certain time?

Completed by 2024

4 **What format would suit this review? (eg full investigation, q&a with executive member/partners, public meeting, one-off session)**

Full investigation.

5 **What are some of the key issues that you would like the review to look at?**

What is the definition of abuse? What is the definition of neglect?

Would it be beneficial to:

- introduce the same system as in childrens' safeguarding - PIPOT (Persons in a position of trust)?
- promote undercover boss type work experience for senior managers to gain a better understanding of the work of care workers
- Recommend that social workers spend a week as a front line care worker (for example) as part of their training?
- SCIE training for local care home staff?

Conduct case studies and examine examples of where things are unclear:

- Some consider turning people every two hours during the night is necessary in order to prevent pressure sores, others consider this to be abuse. <https://hellocare.com.au/two-hourly-repositioning-prevent-bedsore-abuse-study/>

- Some staff are told that it is abuse to wake care home residents up, but sometimes staff are then told to do this
- Is it abuse or neglect to leave someone in bed all day?
- Call bells in care homes - disconnection considered to be abuse but there are cases where it could be necessary
- When looking after someone at home, families are often told that they should not lock the front door, but they do because they want to keep their relative with dementia safe

6 Who would you like to receive evidence and advice from during the review?

- Hourglass (elder abuse charity)
- SCIE (Social Care Institute for Excellence)
- Chair of the Southwark Safeguarding Adults Board
- Officers from adult safeguarding department
- A manager of a local home
- Unions – to consider how investigations are conducted
- Care home resident (case study)
- SLAM dementia nurse (case study)
- Carer / former carers (case study)

7 Any suggestions for background information? Are you aware of any best practice on this topic?

8 What approaches could be useful for gathering evidence? What can be done outside committee meetings?

e.g. verbal or written submissions, site visits, mystery-shopping, service observation, meeting with stakeholders, survey, consultation event

Interviews with organizations with expertise in this area.

Case studies – possibly through a workshop.

