



## Pan Berkshire Safeguarding Adult' Multiagency Guidance Risk Management

### Version History

Version	Date	Endorsed by:	Description
1.0	04/03/26	Pan Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures Subgroup	FINAL

**Note:** The West Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Board logo is not shown because it was unavailable when this document was published (30/3/26).

## 1. Introduction

Effective risk management is a cornerstone of adult safeguarding, fostering safety and wellbeing for adults at risk of abuse or neglect. This guidance sets out a shared approach for all agencies across Berkshire, ensuring coordinated and consistent responses to risk within the framework of the Pan Berkshire Adult Safeguarding Multiagency Policies and Procedures.

Risk can be defined as the chance of something happening, or not happening, that can have a negative or positive impact. Risk can be thought of in terms of danger, loss, threat, damage or injury but as well as negative characteristics, risk taking can have positive benefits for individuals and their communities.

Risk management is part of everyday practice when working with adults who have care and support needs it enables practitioners to help to keep people safe and support them to live full and rewarding lives. Within any risk assessment framework, the aim is to support adults so that they can achieve the outcomes that matter to them most and live the lives they want to lead. Strengths based risk assessment helps to promote individual wellbeing and support adults to make their own decisions and choices.

Not all risks need to be eradicated, but they can often be managed to prevent or reduce the impact of harm. Risks should be defined in relation to:

- a specific situation
- what is the presenting risk
- who or what is the risk
- mitigation or strategies to address the risk

Undertaking a comprehensive risk assessment involves collating and evaluating evidence – balancing possible positives of a course of action against potential drawbacks using professional judgment.

Risk management must be collaborative, person centred and involve the adult and family/carers as partners in creating tailored safety plans. Risk can mean different things to different people; therefore, it is important that all professionals working with the adult come together and consider risk holistically so that care meets the adults' needs in a way that is safe and supportive and enables them to do the things that matter to them. Cultural awareness is a critical component of risk assessment as it can influence how risks are perceived, managed and responded to.

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## 2. Principles of Risk Management

- **Person-centred approach:** Place the adult's views, wishes and desired outcomes at the heart of all risk management decisions. Recognise individuals' rights to make their own decisions and take their own risks. Consideration of the persons capacity in line with the MCA and current legislation including the Mental health act and the Inherent jurisdiction of the high court when appropriate.
- **Empowerment and partnership:** Work collaboratively with the adult, their carers, families, and relevant agencies to assess and manage risk.
- **Proportionality:** Responses to risk should be proportionate to the severity and likelihood of harm, balancing safety with autonomy and choice and tailored to the adult's individual wishes and circumstances

- Prevention: Take proactive steps to reduce the likelihood of harm wherever possible and recognise that all risks cannot be removed from a person's life.
- Accountability: All agencies must be clear about their roles and responsibilities in risk management, ensuring transparent documentation and defensible decision-making.

### 3. Risk Identification

Any agency or individual may identify risks to an adult's safety or wellbeing. Early identification is vital and should include:

- Recognising signs of abuse, neglect, or self-neglect.
- Listening to concerns raised by the adult, their family, carers, or professionals.
- Considering patterns of concern, escalation, or repeated incidents.

### 4. Risk Assessment

A multiagency risk assessment should be conducted where there are concerns about an adult's safety. This should:

- Be undertaken collaboratively, involving all relevant agencies and the adult wherever possible.
- Identify the nature, seriousness, and likelihood of risk, including immediate and longer-term factors.
- Consider the adult's capacity, wishes, and any protective factors
- Be clearly documented and regularly reviewed.
- Assessment of risk is dynamic and ongoing, and a flexible approach to changing circumstances is needed.

### 5. Risk Management Planning

Risk management plans should be tailored to the individual and include:

- Actions to reduce or remove identified risks.
- Clear roles and responsibilities for each agency and professional involved.
- Contingency planning for foreseeable emergencies or escalation of risk.
- Regular review dates and mechanisms for updating the plan.
- Arrangements for sharing information, in line with data protection and safeguarding legislation.

### 6. Multiagency Working and Information Sharing

Effective risk management relies on timely and appropriate information sharing between agencies. Agencies should:

- Share relevant information to facilitate a comprehensive understanding of risk.
- Respect confidentiality but prioritise safety and wellbeing when there is a conflict.
- Document decisions and rationales for sharing or withholding information.

### 7. Review and Escalation

Risk management should be dynamic and responsive to change. Agencies must:

- Consider multi-agency risk management frameworks for example (MARM, MART or similar) or seek advice from your organisations safeguarding lead.
- Regularly review risk assessments and management plans.
- Escalate concerns through appropriate management or safeguarding channels if risks increase or are not being managed effectively.
- Ensure lessons learned from incidents inform future practice.

### 8. Training and Supervision

All professionals involved in safeguarding adults should receive regular training covering working with risk relevant to their role and have access to supervision and support when managing complex cases. Refer to your organisations training programme.

## 9. Governance and Accountability

Each agency must ensure robust governance arrangements for overseeing risk management, including auditing practice, monitoring outcomes, and ensuring compliance with the Pan Berkshire Adult Safeguarding Multiagency Policies and Procedures.

## 10. Conclusion

This guidance reinforces the commitment of all Pan Berkshire agencies to collaborative, person-centred risk management in adult safeguarding. Effective partnership working, clear communication, and ongoing review are essential for reducing harm and promoting the wellbeing of adults at risk.

## 11. Useful Resources/Further reading

[Care and support statutory guidance - GOV.UK](#)

[Mental Capacity Act Code of Practice - GOV.UK](#)

[Care Act guidance on strengths-based approaches - SCIE](#)

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