

1 Background

In December 2021 the Protection & Accountability subgroup undertook a Line of Sight to Practice panel event, in relation to the theme of self - neglect.

The event was led and chaired by a nominated member of the subgroup who was independent. Panel members included representatives from SAB partner agencies, as well as frontline practitioners and managers from agencies who worked with the people.

The event enabled panel members to discuss how we supported two people in depth, engaged in active challenge and identify a number of learning points from areas which worked well, and those which could be further developed.



2 Safeguarding and self - neglect

The Care Act 2014 defines self - neglect as covering a wide range of behaviours - neglecting one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings, and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

It should be noted that self - neglect does not always prompt a S42 enquiry, an assessment should be made on a case-by-case basis. It is, however, important to recognise that without early intervention, existing health problems may be made worse.

Neglect of personal hygiene may mean that the person suffers social difficulties and isolation, physical and mental health breakdown. Dilapidated property or excess rubbish can become infested and can be a fire risk, which is a risk to the adult, family, neighbours, and others.



3 Identified good practice

- Person - centered practice was evident and the views and wishes of the people were taken into consideration throughout the enquiry.
- Strengths - based practice was evident, the positive aspects of the people's circumstances and networks were recognised, and these were used in the development of care and support plans.
- Collaborative working was evident which led to the reduction of risk, and positive outcomes for the people.
- Timely and appropriate information sharing took place between agencies.
- Decisions, where appropriate, were made in best interests and recording / rationale was robust.
- Complexities of the situations were recognised, and periods of transition were put in place between agencies and teams.



7 Effective approaches

➤ **Multi - agency** - work with partners to ensure the right approach for each person.

- **Person centred** - respect the views and the perspective of the person, listen to them and work towards the outcomes they want.
- **Acceptance** - good risk management may be the best achievable outcome; it may not be possible to change the person's lifestyle or behaviour.
- **Non - judgmental** - it isn't helpful for practitioners to make judgements about cleanliness or lifestyle; everyone is different.
- **Empathy** - it is difficult to empathise with behaviours we cannot understand, but it is helpful to try.
- **Patience and time** - short interventions are unlikely to be successful, practitioners should be enabled to take a long - term approach.
- **Trust** - try to build trust and agree small steps.
- **Reassurance** - the person may fear losing control, it is important to allay such fears.
- **Exploring alternatives** - fear of change may be an issue so explaining that there are alternative ways forward may encourage the person to engage.
- **Always go back** - regular, encouraging engagement.



6 Develop your learning

To inform your practice you can:

- Ensure you are familiar with the Humber - wide Hoarding Protocol: [Microsoft Word - Hoarding Protocol 10 \(northlincsab.co.uk\)](https://www.northlincsab.co.uk/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Microsoft-Word-Hoarding-Protocol-10-northlincsab.co.uk)
- Refresh your knowledge and understanding of the SAB Multi - agency Policy and Procedure: [North-Lincolnshire-MA-PP-FINAL.pdf \(northlincsab.co.uk\)](https://www.northlincsab.co.uk/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/North-Lincolnshire-MA-PP-FINAL.pdf)
- Access the policies and research relating to self - neglect published by SCIE: [Self-neglect | SCIE](https://www.scie.org.uk/research-and-evidence/self-neglect/)
- Discuss complex situations with your supervisor, consider whether there is any research which may deepen your understanding of the experiences (this could be with your supervisor, or with colleagues).
- Use reflective practice as a way of reviewing your experiences to help make positive changes to your future practice. Turn your experiences into learning.



4 Key learning

- There was some uncertainty as to when a concern about self - neglect may require a safeguarding response under S42 of the Care Act 2014.
- The difficulties in respecting people's right to private life, versus a safeguarding duty to keep people safe from abuse and neglect were recognised.
- There would have been benefit in one agency taking the lead to co - ordinate the management of risk.
- There was inconsistency in relation to safeguarding terminology which may have caused confusion.
- The use of the Humber - wide Hoarding Protocol and clutter index would have been useful in identifying thresholds.
- Consideration could have been given earlier as to whether responses to circumstances may have been as a result of physical or mental ill health.



5 Top actions

- Continue to ensure the voice of the person with a lived experience is embedded in the design of policies and procedures, training and in the delivery of future services.
- Develop multi - agency guidance and tools, and raise awareness to support partner agencies and frontline practitioners in relation to self - neglect.
- Coordinate the delivery of multi - agency training specific to self - neglect, to help ensure that partner agencies and frontline practitioners are supported and have the appropriate tools when working with people who may be at risk from self - neglect.
- Continue to develop the tools and guidance available to partner agencies and practitioners in relation to safeguarding adults legal literacy.

** Please note - all details of all updated guidance, policies and multi - agency training available will be published on the SAB website <https://www.northlincsab.co.uk/> and shared via our communications network.

