

## 1 – Background

The Vulnerable Adults Risk Management (VARM) process provides a framework for professionals to facilitate effective multi-agency working with adults at risk (adults with care and support needs, whether these are being met or not) 18 or over who are deemed to have mental capacity to make decisions and who are at risk of serious harm or risk of death through self-neglect, refusal of services and/or high levels of risk-taking activity.

Serious harm means risk of death or injury (either physical or psychological) which is life threatening and / or traumatic and which is viewed to be imminent or very likely to occur.

## 2 – Why it matters?

The VARM ensures that people who are at significant risk of harm or death have a coordinated, dedicated response from agencies across North Lincolnshire. Working in a multi-agency way is essential when working with people who are experiencing a high level of risk. VARM aims to remove barriers to working in this way and provides an open forum in which a person's life can be discussed and responsibility for managing risk can be shared.

VARM aims to reduce risk to the person as far as possible and ensures that the views of the person are central and they are invited to attend.

## 3- Criteria

The following criteria should be followed when considering a VARM referral:

- A person must have care and support needs or appear to have (whether those needs are being met or not)
- They must have capacity to make decisions and choices regarding their life
- There is a risk of serious harm or death (see policy for full criteria)
- There is a public safety interest (not always applicable)
- There is / or are a high level of concerns from partner agencies
- (When applicable) Hoarding clutter index and or above Fire Risk. Refer to the Humber-wide Hoarding Protocol

## 7 – Further information

Further information can be found on the Safeguarding Adult Board website – [www.northlincssab.co.uk](http://www.northlincssab.co.uk) including:

- VARM policy and guidance document
- Leaflet – What to expect when attending a VARM meeting
- VARM referral online form

## 4- Referrals

When considering a VARM referral, the criteria should be key. A referral to VARM should only be made when agencies feel that they have exhausted internal mechanisms for managing risk or where formal consultation would enhance the response.

If a referral is appropriate this can be made via the eform which will enable the referrer to consider all the criteria.

Referrals will then be reviewed by the Principal Social Worker who will decide whether the criteria for VARM is met.

## 6 – Consent

Information will only be shared on a 'need to know' basis when it is in the interests of the adult. The decisions about what information is shared and with who will be taken on a case-by-case basis.

The VARM lead will chair and record actions of the meeting on a Risk Management Assessment and Risk Management Support Plan and distribute to attendees. It is important to agree timescales for each part of the process to prevent delay.



## 7 Minute Briefing

## 5 – Questions to ask yourself

- Would you be able to identify what steps to take when a person is at significant risk of harm who has mental capacity to make decisions about their life?
- Are you utilising a multi-agency approach to respond in a joint way to situations in which a person is at significant risk of harm?
- Do you understand when a referral to VARM is appropriate and are you utilising this mechanism where required?
- When referring to VARM, are you keeping the views of the person central and promoting their involvement in the meeting where possible?