

Appendix One: Additional Carers Information

Partnership working

Carers have a wealth of information and knowledge about the person that they support. As well as raising concerns, carers are able to support safeguarding enquiries by sharing information and are valued partners in such enquiries. Their views may hold the key to protecting people. If a carer speaks up about abuse or neglect, it is essential that they are listened to and appropriate enquiries made. Carers may identify and mitigate risk and act as advocates. The lessons from [Transforming Care](#) and other public inquiries need to be taken forward in viewing carers as equal partners unless there are valid reasons not to.

Where the adult at risk lacks capacity, carers may reasonably provide professionals with the outcome they consider the adult at risk would want, as they know the persons likes and dislikes, what relationships are important to them and what relationships they may find difficult. Consideration for the carer and adult in safeguarding plans, for example, family conferences that have their own dynamics need to take into account conflicting views as carers may not want the same outcome as the adult they are supporting. [Go back to 'carers and safeguarding' \(main document\)](#)

Prevention

Carers play a significant role in preventing the need for services and it is important that professionals consider preventing carers from developing needs for care and support themselves. There is a plethora of research findings that people who act as long time carers, have poorer physical and mental health. Strategies that support carers to continue to care should take carer resilience into account. Listening to local carer communities about the pressures they are face should be reflected in Joint Strategic Needs Assessments. Partnership working between, health, social care and carers groups is one way of working effectively to ensure that prevention strategies reduce the incidents of safeguarding and support carers to carry out their duties safely. [Go back to 'carers and safeguarding' \(main document\)](#)

Support

'If a carer experiences intentional or unintentional harm from the adult they are supporting, or if a carer unintentionally or intentionally harms or neglects the adult they support, consideration should be given to whether, as part of the assessment and support planning process for the carer and, or, the adult they care for, support can be provided that removes or mitigates the risk of abuse.' (Statutory Guidance 14.35). One vehicle for assessing individual need is a carer's assessment which is distinct from a needs assessment. Safeguarding should always be at the forefront of assessments. Professionals need to be candid with carers about the risks that a carer's assessment may identify for either preventing the need for safeguarding to them, or preventing the risk of the carer abusing the person that they are caring for.

Whole family assessments might also be considered using the framework of Think Family as an appropriate way forward. Working collaboratively with other agencies, carers may also receive support from a number of agencies. [Go back to 'carers and safeguarding' \(main document\)](#)

Information and Advice

Carers need to know how they can find support and services available in their area, and be able to access advice, information. Carers need to know, that they can raise a concern in a safe environment and be confident that their concerns will be acted upon. It might be that people are unaware that the actions that they take could be perceived by others as abusive. For example, someone with a learning disability entitled to state benefits to meet their living expenses, and to have money as part of their access to leisure and other personal requirements may have this controlled by a family member. Families, who view individual benefits as part of the family income, may not view their actions as abusive, but where the adult they are supporting has little or no choice about how their money is spent, this could be seen as financial abuse by others.

Where carers may have acted in a way that constitutes abuse staff should respond according to adult safeguarding procedures so that the adult is safeguarded appropriately. Whilst there may be mitigating circumstances to take into consideration the wellbeing and safety of the adult should be paramount.

Carers should have access to information and advice in a way that is meaningful to them and may themselves be in need of care and support and need to know how they can access services. [Go back to 'carers and safeguarding' \(main document\)](#)

Advocacy

In some instances, the most appropriate person to support the adult at risk and act as an advocate is the primary carer. Where the carer is acting in the role of advocate, they may need support to do so, therefore professionals need to provide information and ensure that it is understood. The carer themselves may be in need of an advocate. For example, where there are safeguarding concerns about an older person with their own care and support needs caring for a partner with dementia. Assumptions should not be made about carers acting as advocates or being in need of advocacy and each case should take account of the personal circumstances. [Go back to 'carers and safeguarding' \(main document\)](#)

The Role of Carers in Strategic Planning

There are two key areas that should take account of carers in safeguarding strategic plans. First, SABs should ensure their policies, procedures and practice recognise the need to support carers and also to work with carers who are experiencing or causing harm or abuse. Second, SABs should engage with carers and local stakeholders and work together for better safeguarding practice. [Go back to 'carers and safeguarding' \(main document\)](#)