



CROYDON MULTI-AGENCY
SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD

STRATEGY
to
SAFEGUARD ADULTS
AT RISK OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT

2010 – 2015

Introduction

This multi agency strategy has been developed by the borough's *safeguarding vulnerable adults' board*, a group formally constituted by Croydon Council with multi agency membership from NHS Croydon, police, ambulance, private and voluntary sector representatives and the engagement with service users at a strategy development day.

Abuse or neglect represents a threat to the safety, health and well-being, and dignity which our society expects for all individuals as our civil and basic human rights.

Abuse or neglect often happens in our own homes, and by people we know and trust. Sometimes it is clearly recognised, at other times it may be difficult to identify. For example, vulnerable people may be 'groomed' into believing someone is a friend and that they are acting in their best interests. Abuse may happen through ignorance or due to the burden of caring. Abuse or neglect also occurs in care home settings, hospitals or housing units and can be malicious intent or due to the delivery of poor quality of care and poor professional standards.

What is abuse?

Abuse can take various forms including physical abuse, sexual abuse, psychological abuse or emotional abuse; financial or material abuse, neglect and acts of omission, discriminatory abuse, or institutional abuse. Self neglect may become a form of abuse when appropriate action is not taken and a vulnerable adult suffers from harm or neglect.

Who are vulnerable adults at risk of abuse?

A vulnerable adult is defined as a person who is 18 years or over and "who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation."

National policy context

There is no specific legislative framework for safeguarding vulnerable adults (as there is for safeguarding children) although there is a duty under common law for local authorities to protect adults at risk as well as more general duties, for example under the Human Rights Act 1998.

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 provides a statutory framework for people who lack capacity to make decisions for them. The Act introduced two new criminal offences: ill treatment and wilful neglect of a person who lacks capacity (S.44)

Further protection for those who lack capacity is provided by the Court of Protection and the Office of the Public Guardian who have duties and responsibilities to support decision making with the framework of the MCA.

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Group Act 2006 created the Independent Safeguarding Authority who operates the vetting and barring scheme which replaced the Protection of Vulnerable Adults list.

Department of Health *No Secrets Guidance 2000: developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse* required statutory agencies, co-ordinated by the local authority, to work together to develop a framework for the prevention of abuse within their areas. During 2008-9 this guidance had an extensive consultation resulting in key messages including the need for *stronger national leadership, statutory basis of local arrangements and revision and updating of the 'No secrets' guidance.*

The Law Commission is currently reviewing the law for provision of adult social care including their duties to protect vulnerable adults and is expected to report its findings in spring 2011.

The review confirms government policy in adult safeguarding is uncertain. The review of 'No Secrets 2000' ended in January 2009, and to date there has been no clear evidence of the implementation of the recommendations.

Currently the duty to safeguarding **adults at risk**; comes from 'common law' rather than a specific piece of legislation. Adults have the right to make decisions and choices which may be unwise, the challenge for the Safeguarding Adults Board is to develop frameworks which protect vulnerable people but do not inhibit their right to independence, choice and risk taking. It is a complex area of work, often made more difficult by the attitude of society towards vulnerable people.

The "personalisation" agenda is bringing about a major transformation of social care, which aims to give people control over how they use the resources available to them for their care, and greater choice in the options for helping them to live independently. Self-directed support, in the shape of direct payments or personal budgets, is increasingly the way in which service users are being helped by local authorities to meet their care needs. The concept of personalisation was first introduced in the 2006 health white paper, *Our Health, Our Care, Our Say*, and set

out in detail in the concordat, *Putting People First*. Giving people choice and control requires the right balance between protecting people and allowing them to make their own decisions and choices, even if these are unwise, because risk-taking is a normal part of living independently. .

About Croydon

Croydon is an outer London borough, located in the south of the capital. With 341,800 residents, it is the most populous of the London boroughs, and this population is projected to increase by 16,000 residents by 2026. The population is highly mobile with large numbers of people moving into and out of the borough each year. Croydon's population is also very diverse; black and ethnic minority residents make up almost 42% and more than 100 languages are spoken.

Amongst those groups likely to be in need of community care services, 60,000 people are aged 60 and over, over 6,000 people have a learning disability, nearly 5,000 a serious physical disability, and over 4,000 a severe mental health problem. The number and proportion of older people is growing, as is the number of younger adults with disabilities because of an even greater increase in life expectancy than across the whole population. At the last census, over 29,000 people were providing informal care to relatives or friends.

Given the emphasis in this strategy on promoting awareness and providing protection, these characteristics have implications for how we disseminate information and respond sensitively to reports of abuse.

Imagine Croydon: a vision for the borough

We are Croydon, an ambitious vision of the borough in 2040, was drawn up by Croydon Strategic Partnership after extensive local consultation. Croydon's Community Strategy sets out the steps we will take over the next five years to give life to this vision. Of particular importance in relation to the safeguarding strategy is the aim of creating a "caring city" in which people from all backgrounds and ages will get on well together, have a sense of community and feel safe. Our priorities are to improve health and well-being, encourage independence amongst vulnerable people, transform social care services, support and encourage volunteers, and prevent and reduce crime and anti-social behaviour.

The safeguarding adults strategy has a vital role within this caring city. Being able to live independently, reducing the need for more institutional forms of care, and providing people with choice and control over the services they need and opt for, are objectives which are highly valued by older and vulnerable people. The role of informal care by large numbers of relatives, friends and neighbours is central to these objectives, as is the contribution of volunteers and voluntary organisations. The aims set out in this safeguarding strategy ensure that independent living and

choice can be achieved with the minimum of risk to individuals from abuse and exploitation.

The need for safeguarding in Croydon

Over the last four years, the number of incidents of abuse reported has almost quadrupled from just over 200 in 2006/07 to over 900 in 2009/10. We believe that the trend is, in the main due to major campaigns to raise awareness of abuse and neglect, the development of a significant training programme, together with awareness of and confidence in the reporting procedure.

The growing number of vulnerable people in the community may impact upon the growth in safeguarding referrals in the future. We cannot be sure how much of the increase, if any, might be due to an underlying increase in the incidents of abuse but it is expected that the rate of referrals will level off in the next few years

Abuse is most likely to happen in a person's own home and people who may have caused harm where identified as friends, family carers, relatives, or neighbours (35% in 2009-10), with approximately another 10% identified as community domiciliary carers.

A quarter of those who have allegations of causing harm or neglect are identified as staff in a care home. The responsibility for coordinating the safeguarding process for clients placed within Croydon care homes by other boroughs falls upon Croydon professionals, and Croydon safeguarding staff. With over 175 care and nursing homes the borough is an 'importer' of vulnerable people, the London Borough average being approximately 59.

Our work within care homes to train staff, raise awareness and promote high standards of care is also very important in bringing incidents to our attention.

The annual safeguarding adults report provides statistical data showing the outcome of the completed safeguarding investigations together with an analysis of the trends identified from the statistics. The report includes legal update which impact on the work with vulnerable adults; information about the work of the safeguarding adults board and its subgroup and the key targets set for the year

Preventing and tackling abuse

Croydon has a well-developed approach to safeguarding. Our framework incorporates a body of protocols covering, information-sharing and responses to incidents within care agencies; procedures for the reporting and investigation of abuse; information and guidance for service users, carers, and care professionals; and awareness-raising campaigns.

Our approach to dealing with those who may have caused harm is thorough, but we also recognise the importance of high quality care to actively prevent abuse from happening.

In its 2009/10 assessment, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) recognised the progress made in Croydon and particularly mentioned the priority given to safeguarding and success of awareness-raising, swift response to safeguarding alerts, multi-agency working and the wide range of information available. Our toolkit for practitioners has been recognised by the Metropolitan Police, as good practice for non-criminal investigations. In terms of improvement, CQC identified the need to continue the programme of training social care staff in the private and voluntary sectors and this may lead to an increase in referrals from those providers.

The strategy has been developed in partnership with service users, and service user organisations, statutory voluntary and private organisations during an engagement event last year, where key areas were agreed in the development of the first Croydon safeguarding strategy.

Our aim

Identifying abuse requires awareness on the part of both professionals and people within the general population, our aim is to :

- Prevent abuse or neglect from happening
- Take a robust approach to reported incidents
- Let people make choices, and take risks which is balanced with support & protection
- Provide protection and support when and where it is needed

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The development of this strategy includes service users, statutory, voluntary and statutory agencies; a service user group will enable the strategy to be implemented, a follow up engagement day will be enabled to monitor progress.

Safeguarding services protect some of the most vulnerable members of society from abuse or neglect through discrimination or harassment. The service also promotes equality and cohesion through its awareness events, publicity, promotions and the provision of support to vulnerable adults and carers.

Promotion of equality of opportunity is created by supporting vulnerable adults to live with dignity, respect and free from abuse with greater independence and be able to develop their full potential. Safeguarding principles promote positive attitudes towards vulnerable adults and ensure the maintenance of independence and ability to participate in public life. Whilst safeguarding does not directly relate to the promotion of good relations, the protection of vulnerable adults from discrimination may contribute to maintaining the status quo or preventing deterioration in relations.

The outcome of safeguarding investigations is monitored for information relating to both the alleged victim and the person who may have caused harm within ethnic groups.

The strategy: how we will achieve our aims

The strategy brings together the many elements within the work of safeguarding vulnerable adults and will enable the multi agency safeguarding board to effectively monitor these key aims to ensure their implementation and effectiveness.

1. Increasing awareness of abuse and safeguarding within the community

We have developed posters, booklets and leaflets with information on how to recognise abuse and how to report it. We have developed specific summary guidance on the investigation process and what to expect from it for the person who has reported abuse and those who have been alleged to have committed abuse or neglect.

We will target information to those at risk, for example via the meals on wheels service and to direct payment and personal budget recipients. We will publish and circulate a quarterly newsletter, and regularly update information on the council's website. We will complete a programme of awareness events across the borough each June, with the engagement from statutory, voluntary and private agencies.

The development of a named nurse safeguarding post within NHS Croydon has enabled increased safeguarding awareness training for primary health care staff.

In conjunction with Croydon University Hospital, community health service and NHS Croydon, we have developed a protocol setting out when a reported incident in a

health setting should give rise to a safeguarding alert, and when issues such as wound care or pressure sores should be referred for investigation within the safeguarding adult's process.

2. Working with people to arrange their own care safely

Giving vulnerable people choice and control over who they employ to provide their care may have associated risks, particularly when recruiting their own personal assistants without the completion of usual checks including CRB records.

Disability Croydon is commissioned by the council to help people manage their direct payments and the council's finance and brokerage staff are available to provide guidance. We will provide training to staff who give advice and information so that they can help people to understand the consequences of their choices and ensure they are aware of how to recruit support assistants safely. We will also provide guidance and support for personal assistants and carers working within the direct payment scheme.

3. Investigating reports of abuse

The development and implementation of the investigation toolkit has enabled practitioners to have a consistent approach to gathering recording and analysing evidence abuse or neglect. It enables the decision within the safeguarding process, and there has been an increase in those investigations which have a 'substantiated' or 'not substantiated' outcome with a decrease in those 'inconclusive' outcomes during the past year.

We will seek feedback through a tool we will develop, from people who experience abuse, in order to identify how we can improve process and procedures and we will embed best practice in the various ways in which we work.

A serious case review subgroup has been developed with clear procedures now in place which provide guidance through the process together with the opportunity to capture learning from individual cases and incorporate it into practice.

We will use learning from casework presentation to identify good practice and areas where practice can be improved; and ensure this information is cascaded to practitioners through bespoke training and specialist workshops.

4. Ensuring high quality care services to prevent abuse

Commissioning & Contracting

Work is being completed to update the principles and purpose of processes for contracting services so that they are consistent and include specific reference to the updated versions of the safeguarding policies.

A protocol has been developed for the suspension or termination of commissioning placements in the event of safeguarding concerns. Closure of a care home requiring the removal of a resident can be traumatic and have severe consequences for the vulnerable person.

Residential care and nursing homes

Croydon's work to prevent abuse in care homes is evident in the drive to improve dignity and quality of care provision within residential provision by :

- Multi agency funding for the Care Support Team
- Commissioning of specialist advanced safeguarding adults course targeting care home senior staff
- Quality development forums for care home managers & staff
- Safeguarding requirements to be included within commissioning and contracting terms and conditions
- Development of the serious concerns protocol
- Joint response with NHS Croydon and South London & Maudsley Trust to provide support and expertise to enable care homes to improve quality and avoid abusive situations.

Dignity in care

The aim of the multi agency funded Care Support Team (CST) is to

- Improve the quality of care within Croydon care homes
- Enable staff in care homes to sustain improved quality.
- Prevent safeguarding incidents from happening.

Domiciliary care agency provision

There is continued commitment to ensuring quality of care within the community; all domiciliary care is provided through the brokerage team who commission care from some of the 53 private domiciliary agencies registered within Croydon.

Supported Housing

Adults can be at risk of abuse wherever they live which includes supporting housing. The Croydon Supporting People Strategy Refresh 2010 identified specific actions relating to safeguarding vulnerable adults:

- Providers to submit annual Quality Assessment Framework reviews
- Refresh Supporting People services risk assessment tool
- Promote training opportunities to providers
- Start a programme of unannounced spot checks

Supported housing is not regulated by the Care Quality Commission, and this may have implication for vulnerable people living in unregulated environments, particularly when the supported living unit is outside of their funding authority.

5. Supporting informal carers

A person's own home is the environment where abuse is most likely to happen; the person who harms or neglects a vulnerable adult is most likely to be a member of the family or the main family carer.

Of the 29,000 informal carers in Croydon (2001 census) over 5,000 are providing more than 50 hours of caring a week and a further 3,000 between 20 and 50 hours of care per week. A recent survey found that over half were over 65 years of age, 21% have some worries, or are extremely worried about their personal safety.

Abuse or neglect by an informal carer may be a deliberate act, or it may be the impact of the burden of a caring role on the carer's own health, life style and aspirations. Safeguarding awareness will continue to be promoted through the carer's partnership and carer's awareness events. The Croydon carer's strategy 2008-11 recognises that carers may themselves be subject to mistreatment from the person they are caring for. Actions identified within the carers' strategy identify carers' assessments; information, advice and support for carers are key elements to enable carers to continue positively within their caring role, and thereby prevent potential abusive situations from developing.

We need to ensure that all adults have knowledge to enable them understand the signs of abuse and the situations which pose a potential risk, and the information on how to report abuse and get support where necessary. We will continue to campaign and provide information in a variety of ways. Each year, we will hold a series of events to coincide with the national safeguarding adults awareness week and the world elder abuse awareness day. We will use a range of materials and run information stands in a number of locations including libraries, the Pop Bus (a mobile information service for older people), day centres and Croydon University Hospital.

Self neglect or vulnerable people who refuse eligible support/services

For individuals at risk of self-neglect, we will carry out assessments of their ability to make the best decisions for themselves (under the Mental Capacity Act 2005). We will also foster joint working with professionals who come into contact with vulnerable people as part of their general duties (housing, health and environmental health staff for example) in order to maximise the opportunities for identifying self-neglect.

6. Continuing to review local practice

No Secrets review : The recommendations from the consultation will be reviewed by the safeguarding board & sub group once they are confirmed.

The Law Commission review of adult social care legislation: A training programme will be developed to ensure the implications of any changes to social care legislation are understood and disseminated to all practitioners.

7. Pan London adult at risk: London multi-agency policy and procedures to safeguard adults from abuse: will be launched on 19 January 2011 and will be implemented in Croydon on 1 April 2011.

The good practice guides and toolkits developed within Croydon will not be lost but linked to the new procedures.

Practice forums and workshops will be held to ensure the new procedures are shared with practitioners, and that practitioners have the opportunity to discuss

Measuring success and monitoring progress

Croydon has a well attended multi agency safeguarding board, with clear policy and procedures and an extensive programme for training and awareness raising.

There is currently a service user survey being developed the information gathered in this survey will identify clear actions we can take to improve outcomes for vulnerable people.

However, it is recognised that vulnerable people may not wish to engage or recount their experience. Many of the victims are frail elderly people, and / or lack capacity to inform the survey. Families are also being asked to engage within the survey.

The safeguarding adults board and subgroups will monitor the actions within this strategy on an annual basis and will provide support and guidance to enable their completion.

THE SAFEGUARDING STRATEGIC KEY ACTIONS FOR 2010-2015

KEY TARGET	TASK	LEAD OFFICER	DATE
Increasing awareness of abuse and safeguarding within the community	<p>Have events throughout the borough during safeguarding week incorporating World Elder Abuse Awareness Day on 15th June</p> <p>Provide safeguarding newsletters</p> <p>Develop an electronic resource pack of information and training materials available for use at meetings workshops/promotional gatherings.</p> <p>Make the newsletters and resource pack available on the intranet</p> <p>Develop posters with key information, how to report abuse, key telephone numbers, mental capacity act 2005 principles, independent mental capacity act advocacy service</p>	<p>Head of service & QA officer</p> <p>SVA administrator</p> <p>SVA administrator</p> <p>SVA administrator</p> <p>Head of service</p>	<p>June each year</p> <p>Twice a year</p> <p>July 2010</p> <p>July 2010</p> <p>January 2011</p>
Working with people to arrange their own care safely	<p>We will provide training and support to the direct payment support team, Disability Croydon.</p> <p>Provide information for potential direct payment and self direct support service users.</p> <p>Provide information through service user forums</p>	<p>SVA coordinator</p> <p>SVA coordinator</p> <p>SVA coordinator</p>	<p>September 2010 then annually</p> <p>ongoing</p> <p>quarterly</p>

<p>Investigate reports of abuse</p>	<p>Provide a strong message that abuse or neglect is not acceptable.</p> <p>We will ensure practitioners engage with service users to gather intelligence following a safeguarding investigation</p> <p>We will complete a feedback process following safeguarding investigations</p> <p>We will complete a specific survey of alleged victims to gather intelligence.</p> <p>We provide the learning to practitioners groups to ensure improved practice thorough bespoke training</p>	<p>Head of service</p> <p>SVA coordinator</p> <p>SVA coordinator</p> <p>Psychology student with SVA coordinator</p> <p>Head of service & subgroup chairs</p>	<p>Annually</p> <p>ongoing</p> <p>March 2011</p> <p>September 2010 for 30 weeks</p> <p>quarterly</p>
<p>Ensuring high quality care services to prevent abuse</p>	<p>We will provide information and advice through the safeguarding newsletter and MCA newsletter to all care homes.</p> <p>We will provide direct support to care homes within the serious concerns process through the deployment of the Care Support Team</p> <p>We will provide expertise advice and bespoke training to care home staff and managers.</p> <p>A protocol will be developed to ensure good practice when a client needs to be removed from a care home where concerns have been identified</p> <p>Training will continue to be available for all care home staff and managers</p> <p>Care home forums will be held each year focusing upon safeguarding issues</p> <p>Two care home forums will be held each year focusing upon mental capacity and deprivation of liberty safeguards</p>	<p>SVA administrator</p> <p>MCA/dols administrator</p> <p>Care support team</p> <p>SVA coordinator & commissioning manager JCLDT</p> <p>L & D consultant</p> <p>SV A coordinator</p> <p>MCA/DoLs manager</p>	<p>Twice yearly</p> <p>Twice yearly</p> <p>On request</p> <p>February 2011</p> <p>SVA training strategy</p> <p>Twice a year</p> <p>Twice a year</p>

Supporting informal carers	<p>Work closely with the carer's service to provide information and advice to carers to prevent stressful caring situations which may create an abusive environment.</p> <p>Attend the carers partnership and carers day</p> <p>Encourage carers to have a carers assessment.</p> <p>Provide information regarding support available to carers in their caring role.</p>	<p>SVA coordinator</p> <p>SVA coordinator</p> <p>Carers service</p> <p>Carers service</p>	<p>annually</p> <p>ongoing</p> <p>ongoing</p>
Continuing to review local practice	<p>We will implement the multi agency safeguarding training steps model</p> <p>We will enable team managers to use the competency matrix for staff who have completed training</p> <p>We will provide summary guides for practitioners and managers which support the multi agency procedures.</p> <p>We will take the learning from casework presented at the Case Review & Audit subgroup to the Best Practice group and the lead practitioners group.</p> <p>We will provide tools for practitioners for recording and investigating of safeguarding incidents.</p> <p>We will take the learning from serious case review to the Safeguarding board and subgroups and ensure cascade learning to practitioners through newsletters and workshops.</p> <p>We will ensure the safeguarding audit strategy is complied with</p>	<p>L & D consultant</p> <p>SVA coordinator</p> <p>Head of service</p> <p>Head of service & QA officer</p> <p>Head of service</p> <p>Head of service</p> <p>QA officer</p>	<p>April 2010</p> <p>March 2011</p> <p>February 2011</p> <p>Quarterly</p> <p>January 2010</p> <p>Quarterly</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

	We will develop and deploy an action plan with timeframes to enable the smooth implementation of the Pan London safeguarding adults procedures	Head of service	Jan 2011 to April 2011
No Secrets Review	<p>The key recommendations and messages will be presented to the Safeguarding Board</p> <p>The safeguarding board will be kept informed their requirements under the no secrets review</p>	Head of service	When immediately available from the D o H
Enhance professional practice within the safeguarding process	Ensure all professionals and practitioners undertaking safeguarding investigations are conversant with the principles of the Mental Capacity Act 2005, and understand the significance of capacity assessments within their work.	Heads of service, managers and practitioners	April 2011