

7-minute Briefing

01 Background

Alison died aged 32. She lived alone. Her daughter, aged 7, lived with extended family. Alison had a long history of alcohol misuse and mental health issues. Alison and her family were supported by several services (Mental Health, Children's and Adult Social Care, Police, GP, Substance Misuse Service, Domestic Abuse Services). Alison's drinking impacted on her capacity to parent, her relationships with family, friends and neighbours and her engagement with agencies. Alison had periods when her drinking was more manageable and her outlook more positive.

07 Raising your awareness

All information is found at:

<https://www.llradultsafeguarding.co.uk/>

Mental Capacity Act

Application of the Vulnerable Adults Risk Management (VARM)

Self-Neglect

Children's Safeguarding Procedures



06 Reviewing your own practice / cases

Is self-neglect an issue?

Have I looked beyond the presenting issues?

What other agencies are involved?

Am I clear what the plans are?

I have been invited to a multi-agency meeting – am I clear what the purpose is? (Section 42 Strategy, VARM, JAG etc.)

Are there any children involved?

05 Findings Summary

Children's Services and Adult Social Care reviewed established processes and procedures where adults with social and health care needs have children who are receiving services from Children's Services.

Alison met the criteria for inclusion in the CPA, but care and support was not managed under this framework which would have enabled the coordination of the services offered/provided to her. Clarity needed on the purpose/actions and review process of multi-agency meetings.

02 Safeguarding Concerns

Alcohol Misuse

Domestic Abuse

Inconsistent engagement with support services

03 Key Learning Themes

Assessments need to demonstrate 'professional curiosity' in looking beyond the 'presenting issues'

Self-Neglect – Consider the use of the Vulnerable Adults Risk Management (VARM) process when the service user has mental capacity, refuses services but is at risk of significant harm

Mental Capacity Act (MCA) – Consider application of the MCA where capacity may be compromised by substance misuse

Care Programme Approach (CPA) would have offered a pathway for planning and review

04 Findings Summary

The coordination of support services to Alison was compromised by the number of individuals, agencies and forums involved with her or monitoring her situation, lack of linkage, terminology purpose of meeting action review.

Responses to changes in Alison's situation and behaviour were made to the 'presenting issues' rather than to a holistic and multi-agency assessment of her social and health care needs, situation and desired outcomes.