



Aberdeenshire Adult Protection Committee

Learning Together from Significant Case Reviews (SCRs): Mrs B

The Aberdeenshire Adult Protection Committee (APC) has recently completed a Significant Case Review (SCR) which explored the circumstances leading up to the death of a 65 year old woman, who is referred to in the report as Mrs B. This briefing summarises the key findings and improvement actions that the APC will be taking forward in response to this SCR. Click [here](#) for the full report.

Background

The events in this case took place over a relatively short timeframe. Mrs B had involvement with a number of adult protection partnership agencies including Social Work, Health and Police in the month prior to her death in June 2019. There were no family members to advocate for her although neighbours provided a lot of informal support in the weeks before her death.

Mrs B's husband died in 2017 and it was assessed by the review that Mrs B then became more isolated and found it hard to adjust to living alone. The contacts made to Housing, Social Work and Police Scotland in 2018 indicate a lack of confidence and anxiety about living alone. Mrs B was encouraged to seek support from her GP but there is no indication that she attempted to do this.

Mrs B was a proud and independent woman who neither sought help or readily accepted it. Mrs B had always had a reluctance to engage with people and organisations and it was difficult for people to reach her. Mrs B had been estranged from her family and had a history of conflict with neighbours.

Mrs B was representative of many people in the community living on their own, with potential for benefitting from support but not readily accepting it. An individual's right to choose, where they can, should be supported whilst we should assure ourselves that every effort is made to offer support in a way that is acceptable and non-threatening.

Good Practice Identified

- Practitioners documented their interventions comprehensively. In particular, the recording by SAS on 24 May and the GP on 21 June detailed their discussions with Mrs B about hospital admission and recorded their assessment of whether she was able to make informed decisions about her medical care and treatment.
- The medical practice had a comprehensive system in place for managing VPD reports: patients have a named GP so reports go to the same GP for review and are saved in the patient's file so historical reports can be referred to
- All agencies are busy with demand overtaking resources. Mrs B was prioritised by Care Management who had a waiting list for referrals
- Mrs B had asked for a GP home visit on 4 June then cancelled the request. A GP called her to query it because it was recognised that Mrs B seldom contacted the practice and it was out of character for her to approach them

Practice Improvements Implemented

- Scottish Ambulance Service introduced a system for ambulance crew to telephone a national contact centre who make an onward referral to Adult Support and Protection in the relevant local authority area in real time
- Guidance introduced by the Royal College of GPs recommends 8 hours of Adult Support and Protection training during each period of registration to be discussed with their appraiser
- Aberdeenshire Adult Protection Network introduced an Initial Referral Discussion (IRD) process for referrals that require further inquiry or investigation. The IRD is held within 2 days and involves an APN Senior Practitioner, Police Scotland (Public Protection Unit), the Social Work Team Manager and relevant health professional.

All staff and managers are encouraged to reflect on the issues outlined within this briefing. Together with your teams consider how you can challenge your own thinking and practice in order to support continuous learning and development.

Adult Protection Committee Significant Case Review – Mrs B

