

SAEB AUTUMN BULLETIN



Top articles in this bulletin



National Safeguarding Adults Week 2024



7 Minute Briefing: "I am someone, please see me"



What is Professional Curiosity? Interview with Louise Butler

National Safeguarding Adults Week 2024



Safeguarding is Everybody's Business

"I am someone, please see me"

A warm welcome everyone. This month we are excited to launch our powerful video campaign titled "[I am someone, please see me](#)". The video highlights critical issues affecting adults at risk in our community to include:

- **The Role and Challenges Faced by Unpaid Carers:** highlighting the struggles of unpaid carers, emphasising the importance of Carers Assessments and the support they can provide, such as additional financial aid and respite care.
- **Familial Abuse** and the need for a Think Family Approach, which involves understanding the unique circumstances of an individual within the family context and identifying additional support needs
- **Professional Curiosity** and looking beyond the surface and understand the wider family dynamics, rather than making assumptions.
- **Prevention in Safeguarding:** Early intervention and support are key to preventing situations from escalating into abuse or neglect. The video emphasises the importance of proactive measures in safeguarding.

We invite everyone to watch this [video](#) and join us in raising awareness during National Safeguarding Adults Week 2024. Please also take the time to read our short 7-minute briefing on page 2 and help us to promote awareness by sharing it forward across your networks. Together, we can make a difference and ensure that every individual is seen, heard, and supported.

Warmest Wishes

Mariya Stoeva

Chair, SAEB Safeguarding Ambassadors

7 Minute Briefing – “I am someone, please see me”

Carers play a significant role in preventing the needs for care and support for the people they care for, which is why it is important that local authorities consider preventing carers from developing needs for care and support themselves.

1. Did you know? the Home Office reported in March 2022 that in 8% of Domestic Homicide Reviews analysed, the victims were carers, and in just over half of these cases, the perpetrator was the person being cared for. None of these carers had undergone a carer's assessment. You can read the full report [here](#)

2. [The Care Act 2014](#): The core purpose of adult care and support is to help people achieve outcomes that matter to them, with a focus on promoting wellbeing, emphasising the importance of prevention, early intervention, and empowering individuals through information, advice, and assistance. Our campaign aligns with the wellbeing principle, which puts the individual's wellbeing at the heart of care and support.

3. Needs Assessments: A needs assessment or carer's assessment is an opportunity to explore the person's circumstances and consider support to prevent abuse or neglect. For more information and guidance you can contact Adult Social Care or Carers Network.

Kensington and Chelsea

T: 020 7361 3013

E: socialservices@rbkc.gov.uk

Westminster

T: 020 7641 2176

E: adultsocialcare@westminster.gov.uk

Visit the [Carers Network](#) website

4. Risk of Abuse: The risk of abuse increases when the carer is isolated and not receiving support from family, friends, professionals, or paid care staff. This briefing [Carers and safeguarding: a briefing for people who work with carers - Local Government Association](#) provides an update of the ADASS Advice note 'Carers and Safeguarding Adults' for frontline workers.

5. Think Family Approach: This approach helps understand the unique circumstances of an individual within the family context and identifies additional support needs. This document aims to provide practical guidance for practitioners working in adult social care in relation to carrying out assessments and developing plans which consider the needs of the whole family [The Care Act and Whole Family Approaches](#).

6. The Principle of Proportionality is highlighted in this video. This principle involves responding to risks with the least intrusive measures, considering the needs of the vulnerable person to prevent further harm. It emphasises subtle and effective steps to address issues, ensuring that actions are proportionate to the severity of the situation. [This guidance](#) from the Chief Social Worker for Adults, principal social workers and principal occupational therapists sets out Proportionate assessment approaches.

7. Professional Curiosity: Professionals should use professional judgment alongside visible risk and demonstrate curiosity to understand family dynamics. Research in Practice published this briefing on [Professional curiosity in safeguarding adults: Strategic Briefing \(2020\) | Research in Practice](#).

Please note: you will need to be signed up to RiPFA to access the whole briefing but you can read the overview from this link.



The interview Room: *The Power of Professional Curiosity in Safeguarding Adults*

5-Minute Interview with Louise Butler, *Head of Safeguarding, Quality Assurance and Engagement, Bi-borough Adult Social Care*

We asked Louise **What exactly is professional curiosity and why is it so important to making safeguarding personal? and this is what she told us.**

We know that Professional curiosity is a vital skill that can make a significant difference in identifying and addressing abuse and neglect. But we also know it is a word which has possibly been overused and lost some of its initial impact.

What is Professional Curiosity? Professional curiosity is being able to look beyond the surface of a situation. The ability and willingness to explore and understand what is happening in a person's life. Using a bit of empathy rather than making assumptions or accepting things at face value. It involves looking, listening, asking direct questions, and being able to hold difficult conversations. It is a skill which is crucial in helping to identify less obvious signs of abuse and neglect, ensuring that the right questions are asked in order to obtain information to support the adult at risk with what they want to happen as a result of the suspected abuse or neglect.

Developing Skills in Professional Curiosity

To nurture professional curiosity, practitioners need to develop specific skills:

- * **Look:** Observe how the adult at risk interacts with their family or friends. Are there any signs that make you feel uneasy or just don't seem right. Do you see behaviours indicating abuse or neglect, including coercion and control. What is the immediate impact of that behaviour?
- * **Listen:** Pay attention to what is being said, how it is being said. Observe what is not being said. Are there any statements that need further clarification? Is someone trying to tell you something but finding it difficult to express themselves?
- * **Ask:** Try asking open questions which don't require a yes or no answer. Direct questions can help uncover hidden issues but be smarter and ask questions which will give you more. For example a direct question "Do you feel safe living here?" Could be "How do you feel about living here?". These questions invite more detailed responses and encourage the person to share their feelings and experiences.
- * **Clarify:** Ensure that you have all the necessary information by checking with other professionals involved. Are they seeing the same things as you? Are there any discrepancies in the information being shared?

Holding Difficult Conversations: Tackling disagreements or hostility, raising concerns, and giving information that may not be well received are incredibly challenging tasks. **Here are some tips to support practitioners in holding difficult conversations:**

- * Plan in advance to ensure there is enough time to cover essential elements of the conversation.
- * Keep the agenda focused on the topics that need to be discussed.
- * Be clear and unambiguous in your communication.
- * Show empathy, consideration, and compassion throughout the conversation.

Professional curiosity is not just a skill, but a mindset that requires continuous development and practice. By being curious, practitioners can better understand the situations and risks faced by adults, ultimately helping to keep them safe from harm.

To ensure that we keep up to date with all our safeguarding activities, we would love to continue to hear from you! Please send your news, updates and comments to share in upcoming bulletins to:

makinsafeguardingpersonal@rbkc.gov.uk

The SAEB Safeguarding Ambassadors