



Person-centred care: the importance of discussions and recording

Findings from our reviews

Some of our recent Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs) have highlighted the importance of ensuring a person-centred approach is adopted when working with adults with care and support needs.

Where possible, agencies are encouraged to actively involve the adult in discussions, and to ensure that written evidence of the adult's views and thoughts are recorded.

When working with adults for prolonged periods of time, or where there are fluctuating or changing needs/risks giving rise to different decisions or services being needed, accessing the adult's views at these points will also be important.

To demonstrate that these discussions have taken place, agencies are encouraged to review their internal records, ensuring there is a specific section where evidence of the discussion with an adult can be explicitly recorded.

Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP)

To ensure we are making safeguarding personal, it is important to have and record conversations with the adult, and/or their families/carers/friends/advocates throughout safeguarding processes, including at the start, when reporting a safeguarding concern.


The voice of families and carers

If a discussion with the adult is not possible or has not taken place, it is vital that the reason for this is also recorded. In these instances, where appropriate or possible, the views of families/carers/friends and advocates should be sought, and these should also be clearly recorded, evidencing that a person-centred approach to supporting the adult has been taken.

Recording in a trauma-informed way

When working with adults who have experienced trauma, it is important that your practice is trauma-informed. Trauma-informed care ensures services are delivered in ways which prevent further harm and re-traumatisation. To do this, it is necessary to make sure that the person is at the centre of practice and the person is empowered in making choices being the expert of their own care, support, and safety planning.

As part of this practice, it is important to be mindful of the language we use and consider carefully how best to communicate to support an adult to engage and receive help.



“We know that language matters. Our words are powerful. The way we communicate with and about people reveals and shapes attitudes and behaviours. Some words lift people up and build bridges. And some words build walls and bring people down or exclude them altogether”

– Think Local Act Personal



For further information, please see the section on trauma-informed safeguarding in practice, in our Sussex Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures, and also our learning resources on language and terminology.

Tips for recording discussions

- Be clear, concise, accurate and objective
- Use speech marks for statements made by the adult or their families/carers/friends
- Record facts
- Record professional views
- Do not use emotive or biased language, value judgements, opinions, or street language/jargon

Learning resources

To extend your learning, please refer to the following learning resources:

- [Person-Centred Approaches resources](#)
- [Making Safeguarding Personal resources](#)
- [Language and Terminology resources](#)
- [Trauma-informed practice, care and approaches in adult safeguarding](#)