

<b>RISK ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK &amp; GUIDANCE ADULT SOCIAL CARE</b>	Reference:	*
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## Document Control

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## Change History

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0.2	October 05	Risk Assessment Framework and Guidance Community Care and Housing	
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## Related Documents

Reference	Title	Tier
	Safeguarding Adults in West Berkshire	
	Mental Capacity Act procedures	

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## 1. Purpose

- 1.1. The procedures provide guidance to staff who are trained in risk assessment to complete the 'Corporate Risk Assessment Form (April 10)' – hereafter referred to as the 'risk assessment'
- 1.2. The procedures provide guidance to ensure that risk assessments are suitable and sufficient for their purpose.
- 1.3. The procedures set out an overarching framework to risk assessment, including the need to identify and coordinate specialist assessments (e.g. Mobility Assistance, Lone Working, COSHH) that are covered within other related procedures and guidelines.
- 1.4. The procedures ensure that the approach to managing risks within adult social care is one that enables service users to undertake activities whilst reducing harm and hazards and that risk assessments are not used to prevent activities taking place unless the assessed risks are in the 'intolerable' range

## 2. Applicability

- 2.1. The procedures apply to all workers who may be involved in completing risk assessments. This includes Council employees, agency staff, volunteers and others contracted to work within Adult Social Care, as long as they have been trained in risk assessment
- 2.2. The procedures also apply to care managers and other professionals involved in risk assessment of potential service users as part of the admission process, such as Occupational Therapists.
- 2.3. **The processes within care management are currently under review and they will not be providing risk assessments as a norm unless specifically requested for an individual**

## 3. Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1. The **Service Manager for Longer Term Care** is responsible for reviewing these procedures in accordance with the published schedule
- 3.2. **Managers** of adult services are responsible for ensuring that risk assessments are completed and in place for relevant activities in their services
- 3.3. They are also responsible for checking and countersigning all risk assessments in place
- 3.4. They are also responsible for ensuring that risk assessments are reviewed on a regular basis by those staff trained to complete risk assessments
- 3.5. The **Health and Safety Team** is responsible for the development of corporate policies and procedures to promote effective health and safety communication and compliance with the council.
- 3.6. They are also responsible for coordinating and implementing planned Health and Safety audits to an agreed schedule of audits, and subject to other demands, undertaking unplanned Audits when complaints or events dictate

- 3.7. Investigating work environment complaints, making recommendations to improve working conditions
- 3.8. Overseeing the Investigation of accidents and provide action and advice to prevent re-occurrence.
- 3.9. **All staff** who are trained in risk assessment are responsible for completing risk assessments in accordance with the procedures and for passing them to their manager for checking and signing
- 3.10. All staff are responsible for familiarising themselves with, and ensuring that they comply with these procedures

#### 4. Definitions

- 4.1. A risk assessment is a careful examination of what, in your work place, could cause harm to people, so that you can weigh up whether you have taken enough precautions or should do more to prevent harm. The aim is to make sure no one gets hurt or becomes ill
- 4.2. **Line Manager** = anyone who is managing a service or who has responsibility for services in their role as part of a management team

#### 5. Principles and Standards

- 5.1. A robust approach to risk assessment should be taken, covering the following areas:
  - **LOCATION:** in all cases where the Council provides a service or operates a risk assessment should be in place covering the environment and associated risks.
  - **ACTIVITIES:** including any specific equipment used and additional hazards that are not covered within the location assessment
  - **PEOPLE:** To cover specific risks to or for the individual concerned, consideration should be given to the location and activity assessment and address issues that are not covered within them.
- 5.2. **Service Users:** An initial risk assessment/s must be provided as part of the overall assessment process for the provision of a service. This will usually be provided by the care manager carrying out the assessment.
- 5.3. Once a service user is receiving a service the relevant manager has a duty to ensure that there are specific risk assessments in place that cover all activities they will be undertaking.
- 5.4. **Staff:** as part of the induction process for each new member of staff a risk assessment should be carried out with them, where appropriate.
- 5.5. **All Others:** the Council has a duty to the health and safety of all who enter Council managed properties or are affected by council functions (including contractors, partnership organisations and members of the public).
- 5.6. This may either be met through Council prepared risk assessments and safe working practices or by requiring that they conduct and action their own

assessments. In all cases the council has a duty to monitor health and safety and take appropriate action as necessary.

- 5.7. **Property:** The Safety and security of property and equipment need to be comprehensively covered. The impact on a service from faulty or poorly maintained premises, equipment, poor security arrangements can be severe. Personal injury, arson, theft, vandalism, litigation and complaints are costly and time consuming. Risk assessment should contribute to a proactive approach to reduce the number and severity of incidents.
- 5.8. A risk assessment is to be completed for each activity – multiple activities should **not** be recorded on one form e.g. falls / mobility / using transport etc should all be on separate forms
- 5.9. Any concerns regarding the suitability of a risk assessment or ability to provide a safe service in accordance with the risk assessment must be reported to the manager without delay and action taken to address the concern, minimise immediate risks

## **6. Specialist Risk Assessments**

- 6.1. Where specialist risk assessments have been identified (e.g. Fire, Asbestos, Mobility Assistance and COSHH) the procedures and guidance relevant to that area should be followed
- 6.2. In all cases the corporate risk assessment form should be used to record the risk assessment.

## **7. Expectant Mothers**

- 7.1. A separate policy and assessment form exist to ensure that the risk of personal injury, accident or ill health to pregnant employees is both controlled and manageable.
- 7.2. Managers need to ensure that women who continue to work once their pregnancy is confirmed are not exposed to occupational risks which may affect the development of their baby, their confinement or, if they choose, their return to work.
- 7.3. The maternity guidelines policy and assessment form can be found on the intranet or by contacting the Human Resources Dept.

## **8. Accident & Incident Reporting**

- 8.1. An incident report must be completed on Webrisk for all accidents/incidents and near misses that occur.
- 8.2. Where appropriate the risk assessment should be reviewed and updated as part of the lessons learned following an accident or incident

## **9. Safeguarding**

- 9.1. Any staff member who identifies a service user who is potentially at risk of abuse has a duty to inform both their line manager and to report the matter as detailed in the 'Safeguarding Adults Process in West Berkshire Council' procedures.

9.2. Risk assessments must be in put place to ensure that the service user is protected from harm

## **10. Training:**

### **Completing risk assessments**

10.1. All staff members who are required to complete risk assessments must first undertake appropriate training.

10.2. The corporate training focuses on risk assessment from a generic view point e.g. office environment whilst the Adult Social Care Training Dept. provide training specific to risk assessment in Adult Social Care e.g. services provided to West Berkshire Adult Social Care service users.

### **Safe systems of work**

10.3. The Manager should identify any training that is required for staff to undertake to ensure that there are safe systems of work in place. This should be done when the manager is checking risk assessments and signing them off as suitable and appropriate

## **11. Care Practice**

11.1. The Manager / duty officer must ensure that all staff providing care are kept informed and updated of any changes required to care practice as a result of revisions to a risk assessment

11.2. The Manager / duty officer should communicate these changes using systems in place to include: handover meetings, staff meetings, supervision, updating care plan etc

11.3. Any concerns raised by staff regarding the risk assessment / care practice should be addressed by the Manager / duty officer to ensure that practice is carried out safely

## **12. Contractors working in Council buildings**

12.1. Contractors are required to undertake their own risk assessments which must be shared with the service / unit they are working in where applicable. The contractor and local risk assessor may need to undertake further assessments as a result of specific hazards that are unique to that area (e.g. challenging behaviours, sensitivity to noise, vulnerability of clients)

## **13. Transition between services**

13.1. Where an existing service user receives additional services, moves from one WBC service to another or receives a service commissioned by WBC, it is vital that their risk assessments should be handed over to the new service provider.

13.2. An immediate review should be undertaken to ensure that they are still valid and that any risks are appropriately managed. Care should be taken to avoid unnecessary "labeling" of a service user and careful consideration should be given to how long past risks should be considered if they are no longer deemed relevant.

## **14. Non Council Premises**

14.1. Where staff work in premises owned / managed by other agencies (e.g. health) they should refer to that agencies risk assessments and procedures, they should then supplement these as required with assessments/ procedures of their own.

## **15. Joint/Partnership working**

15.1. Details around effective joint working should be agreed before any activities start. This applies to both major contractual agreements and one off commissioning arrangements for therapeutic sessions or consultations.

15.2. The agreement should cover:

- information sharing
- roles and responsibilities
- financial implications

15.3. Risk Assessments may be completed to ensure that all parties contribute, have access to and are committed to the risk assessment process and the agreed outcomes.

## **16. Data Protection**

16.1. All information sharing must be lawful under this act and carried out in line with WBC "Data Protection Policy" and "Data Protection; a brief guide for staff".

## **17. Service User Involvement**

17.1. Wherever possible the service user should be involved in drawing up the risk assessment and their fears and concerns (e.g. feeling unsafe when using hoist sling) must be recorded on the 'Record of Risk Assessment' form in the appropriate section

17.2. Service users should also be involved in discussions relating to the control measures that are agreed to be put in place to remove / reduce the hazards

17.3. Where a control measure is deemed to be the safest option but the service user declines this option, further advice may need to be sought in order to resolve the matter. This may include involvement of health care professionals, line management etc

## **18. Mental Capacity Act 2005**

18.1. Where there are concerns regarding the capacity of the service user to make decisions about managing risks the manager should refer to the procedures under the Mental Capacity Act to ensure that any decisions made are in the 'best interests' of the service user

18.2. An assessment of capacity should be completed in accordance with the procedures

## 19. Procedures

### Completing Risk Assessments

19.1. When completing a risk assessment a full risk history should be taken and appropriate action taken for any identified ongoing risk, patterns of risk or exceptional individual circumstances.

19.2. The corporate risk assessment must be used when completing risk assessments (Appendix A). **All sections must be filled in with no gaps.** Each stage of the process is reflected on the form and in the guidance below.

#### STAGE 1 – List Significant Hazards and Effects

19.3. Identify all hazards and their potential effects. **Services can use Appendix A as a checklist.** Checklist also serves as a record that all hazards listed have been considered even if they have not been ticked. Specific details of the hazards should be noted on the form (using additional sheets as required)

19.4. Record each hazard separately in the boxes on the form

#### STAGE 2 – Additional Assessments

19.5. Identify relevant legislation, policy and guidance in relation to the hazards and follow as appropriate. In the case of mobility assistance, COSHH this will mean a separate assessment is required by specifically trained staff

19.6. **Tick all boxes that apply.**

#### STAGE 3 – Who/What could be harmed

19.7. Identify who/what could be harmed. **Tick all boxes that apply.**

#### STAGE 4 – Control measures in place

19.8. Record all control measures, systems, procedures, guidance, numbers of staff, equipment, training that is already in place to remove/reduce the hazard /s.

19.9. Record how effective the control measures are.

#### STAGE 5 – Evaluation

19.10. This initial evaluation of the current controls should be based on the Likelihood and Severity, using the ratings at the bottom of the form.

19.11. Once complete they should be plotted on the matrix to reach a risk classification and appropriate action taken according to the "Risk Classification in action" table.

#### STAGE 6 – Further controls required

19.12. All hazards above 'Tolerable' will require additional controls. It is the assessor's responsibility to take any immediate action necessary to make the area, activity or person as safe as possible, and to record these on the form

19.13. Where the assessor still has concerns they should seek advice or make referrals to line managers or specialists as appropriate, and detail the actions agreed on the form and in other appropriate records such as the care plan

## **STAGE 7 – Evaluation**

19.14. The second stage evaluation of additional controls should then be completed to demonstrate that the risks for each hazard have been reduced to a 'tolerable' level.

19.15. Should any remain at Moderate or above then seek clarification with the line manager. Some activities may have to continue in the knowledge of the risks that exist.

## **STAGE 8 - APPROVAL**

19.16. The Line Manager must check, sign and date each completed Risk Assessment

19.17. Before signing the Risk Assessment, the Line Manager must be satisfied that the measures in place to manage the risks are suitable, sufficient and appropriate

19.18. The Line Manager must identify any additional training required for staff to ensure that there are safe systems of work in place, and ensure that the training is provided

## **STAGE 9 – DISTRIBUTION**

19.19. The Line Manager must ensure that all staff are made aware of any changes to systems of work, care practice etc. This can be communicated through the following means: supervision, handovers, writing in communication books, care plans etc to ensure all staff are kept informed

19.20. All completed risk assessments must be held on an appropriate file (e.g. service users care plan) and be easily accessible for all staff and service users

19.21. Where appropriate, risk assessments of a generic nature can be shared on the I: drive – see the weblink below for details

## **20. Reviewing Risk Assessments**

20.1. A review schedule should be agreed and adhered to for each completed risk assessment. This will be agreed locally by each service.

20.2. Once all the controls have been implemented the review schedule should be set according to the likelihood for change within the activity.

20.3. All assessments should be reviewed at least annually and initialed / dated at this time by the assessor, along with a record of any amendments or additions.

20.4. An immediate review of the assessment is required in the following circumstances:

- Concern is raised by any staff member, service user or member of the public.
- Significant changes to the activity, environment or person are noticed / planned
- Following any incident, accident or near miss

20.5. The review should consist of a check of each stage of the process against the current circumstances. Where an amendment is required a new risk assessment should be completed

## **21. Archiving**

21.1. It is a legal requirement to keep all copies of risk assessments. Where they are replaced by more up to date versions the old assessment should be filed / archived according to each unit's locally agreed practice.

## **22. Documents and further information**

- 'Corporate Risk Assessment Form (April 10)' – see Appendix A
- Further information can be found on the following section of the intranet: <http://www.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=19486>