

Learning Report – ALISON



What were the circumstances that led to this SAR?

Alison was a 55-year-old lady who lived alone. She had a history of mental ill health and alcohol abuse. Alison lived in a property that she owned which had fallen into significant decline and for a long period of time Alison did not have access to heating or lighting due to her non-payment of bills.

Alison sometimes behaved in way which led her into conflict with others and she was ultimately dealt with for a number of anti-social behaviour incidents, for which she received a term of imprisonment.

On her release from prison, she returned to her home address. After some time, she could not be contacted and when her address was checked in September 2021 she was found to be deceased.

What was the nature of the abuse?

Alison self-neglected her own care and her home. The level of this self-neglect at times was quite extreme with her home conditions being unsanitary and uninhabitable. Alison did not have access to heating and water for extended periods.

The Care Act 2014 sets out the local authority's powers and duties towards adults with care and support needs and provides the statutory framework for safeguarding adults.¹ The Care and Support Statutory Guidance² which supports the Care Act 2014 includes self-neglect as a category of abuse and neglect linking self-neglect to statutory safeguarding duties.

Agencies tried to support Alison, but the activity was often uncoordinated and did not consider the use of the procedures that were available at the time, such as the self-neglect policy which would have assisted in a more coordinated approach.

Agencies made a number of referrals for Alison's care and support needs to be assessed but this did not occur, mainly due to Alison's desire not to engage

What should you do?

- Make sure that you are aware of the Safeguarding Adults Board Policy for dealing with neglect and hoarding. Using this policy will help to understand the needs of the person, ensure that safeguarding is centred on the person and that there is a coordinated multi agency approach.

¹ [Care Act 2014 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

² [Care and support statutory guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)



Self-neglect policy (July 2022)

- The Safeguarding Adult Board has also developed the CARM framework (Complex Adults Risk Management framework). This guidance seeks to provide front line practitioners with a framework to facilitate effective working with adults who are at risk of significant harm due to their complex needs, and *where the risks cannot effectively be managed via other processes or interventions*, such as section 9 care and support assessment or section 42, safeguarding enquiry under the Care Act 2014.

CARM framework

There is a suite of documents to assist you with these processes.

- Consider the Wellbeing Principle in all your interactions. Promoting wellbeing involves actively seeking improvements in the aspects of wellbeing when carrying out a care and support function in relation to an individual at any stage of the process from the provision of information and advice to reviewing a care and support plan.
- When considering mental capacity consider a person's executive capacity, the ability of a person to execute their actions.
- When considering cases where self-neglect explore what tools or powers other agencies may have which may support the person. The application of the self-neglect policy and working closely with partners will assist this.

Learning identified	What will help?
That relevant policies are considered when supporting self-neglect	The recently reviewed Self-neglect and hoarding policy and CARM framework will assist in ensuring a co-ordinated approach, with agencies working together towards agreed and understood objectives that put the person at the centre of the support.
Self- neglect is complex and when considering mental capacity executive functioning should also be considered	A person may be able to verbalise that they have the mental capacity in certain areas but how able are take the necessary steps to see the actions through. Consideration of the history of the case will help to gain a better understanding of this.
Working with other agencies will be more effective when supporting person who is neglecting themselves	This will help coordinate the support, it should lead to there being a lead professional, multi-agency meetings and a jointly owner action plan.