

WSAB Learning Briefing

The Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR) for a 68-year-old man named Robert, who died in a house fire. It covers his background, the process and scope of the SAR, family involvement, key events in Robert's life, and findings and learning outcomes.

Background: Robert was a 68-year-old homosexual man with a history of mental health illness, physical health conditions, and alcohol dependency. He experienced significant self-neglect and lived in severely neglected conditions.

Family Involvement: Robert's relative provided valuable insights into his life, including his achievements, mental health struggles, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on his well-being.

Learning from the Review	Action to take in Practice
<p>Professional Curiosity: Practitioners did not fully understand Robert's history, which could have provided keys to supporting change. Professional curiosity could have helped in understanding the dramatic change in his lifestyle.</p> <p>Alcohol Dependency: Robert's alcohol use was problematic, and practitioners found it challenging to support him as he did not want to reduce his intake. Strategies to identify and manage risks and reduce harm were suggested.</p> <p>Physical and Mental Health: Robert engaged with health services for his physical health but did not recognize the impact of his alcohol consumption on his frailty. His mental health struggles were linked to trauma and bereavement.</p> <p>Safeguarding and Self-Neglect: Practitioners acknowledged Robert's self-neglect and made referrals, but there was a lack of coordinated agency working. The episodic approach to his care increased risks.</p> <p>Barriers to Support: Barriers included Robert's self-funding status, lack of multi-agency collaboration, and disguised compliance. These factors contributed to the revolving door of episodic care.</p> <p>Good Practice: Several practitioners exceeded expectations in building trusting relationships with Robert and providing support. This good practice should be built upon to motivate change in similar cases.</p>	<p>Professional Curiosity: Practitioners should use professional curiosity to understand the triggers behind self-neglecting behaviour, as this can provide keys to supporting change.</p> <p>Alcohol Dependency: Identification and brief advice regarding the impact of alcohol may benefit those who are resistant to change. Denial of alcohol being a problem may be a façade for internal conflict regarding change.</p> <p>Building Relationships: Practitioners who spent time building relationships with Robert were able to support him over and above expectations.</p> <p>Resources and Escalation Protocols: Practitioners benefit from resources available but need time and regular signposting to these. Understanding and using escalation protocols can benefit people with care and support needs.</p> <p>Disguised Compliance: Recognizing disguised compliance may identify increasing and cumulative risk.</p> <p>Holistic Approach: A holistic and multi-agency approach is required to reduce harm from excessive alcohol use.</p> <p>Multi-Agency Collaboration: Working as a single service with those who self-neglect is unlikely to be effective. Referral to multi-agency frameworks with collaborated support plans can improve a person's motivation to change.</p>

Conclusion:

The SAR identifies systemic issues and barriers to effective support for individuals who self-neglect. It emphasizes the need for continuous learning, improvement, and collaboration among agencies.

These learnings emphasize the importance of understanding the individual's history, using a multi-agency approach, and building trusting relationships to effectively support individuals who self-neglect.