

Camden Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board

Multi-Agency Escalation and Resolution Procedure

“Safeguarding is everybody’s business”



Purpose and Scope of Procedure

All professionals working with adults who have care and support needs (Adult(s) hereafter) must be able to challenge each other appropriately. When they believe that others are not working well together and, as a result, the Adult remains at what is thought to be an unacceptable level of risk then escalation should take place.

The Camden Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board (CSAPB) is clear that there must be respectful challenge whenever a professional or agency has a concern about the action or inaction of another. Similarly, agencies/professionals should not be defensive if challenged. Practitioners and managers should always be prepared to review decisions and plans with an open mind and act proportionately.

This procedure applies to those working with adults in Camden and provides for the resolution of professional disagreements or issues in work relating to the safety of adults at risk of, or experiencing, abuse and neglect. Most disagreements should be resolved at an early stage between the parties involved, where this is not possible, this procedure should be followed.

This procedure aligns to, and is adapted from, the Camden Safeguarding Children's Board Escalation Policy which should also be followed where a professional disagreement involves adults with children. Agencies should ensure they have safeguarding adults policies and procedures in place which include escalation and align to this multi-agency procedure.

Principles

It is every professional's responsibility to 'problem-solve'. The aim must be to resolve a professional disagreement at the earliest possible stage as swiftly as possible, always keeping in mind that the adult's safety and wellbeing is the paramount consideration.

Professional disagreement is only dysfunctional if not resolved in a constructive and timely fashion

Differences of opinion should be resolved at the earliest stage possible with escalation to the next stage only taking place where a satisfactory resolution cannot be found.

The aim should be to resolve difficulties at practitioner/fieldwork level between agencies if necessary with the involvement of their supervisors/managers, engaging in open discussion with colleagues in other agencies.

Procedure

This process should only be followed where there is no concern for immediate risk of harm to the adult or any children at risk, with each stage taking no longer than one working week before escalating to the next stage if no resolution is found. Any immediate risk of harm should be reported to:

Police: Emergency **999** Non-emergency **101**

Camden Adult Social Care Safeguarding Team: **020 7974 4000**

Camden Child Protection Co-ordinator: **020 7974 6999**

NOTE: It should be recognised that differences in status and/or experience may affect the confidence of some workers to escalate this unsupported.

Clear Records should be kept by those involved at all stages and shared, where appropriate, in line with the Data Protection Act 1998.

Stage 1: Discussion between front line workers

Whenever a dispute arises, the professionals directly involved should attempt to resolve it in the first instance. Often, differences in professional opinion can be based on lack of communication or a misunderstanding of agency policy and procedures and may be resolved quickly. If the matter cannot be resolved at this stage, the parties should identify what the issues are and agree to move to the next step of the escalation process.

Stage 2: Discussion between frontline managers

The professionals involved in the dispute should contact their manager to consider the issues raised, what outcome they would like to achieve and how differences can be resolved. The front line managers should then contact each other to try to negotiate a settlement to the dispute or if this is not possible, clarify the issues before moving on to the next step.

Stage 3: Discussion between named/designated safeguarding leads/operational managers

At this stage, disputes should be passed to the relevant named safeguarding lead officer for the agencies involved. These named officers should discuss the issues identified and try to find a solution that is person centred and ensures their safety and welfare. If this is not possible, the matter should be escalated to the next stage.

Stage 4: Referral to a named senior manager/Assistant Director

Stage 4 disputes should be referred to named senior managers within the relevant agencies to negotiate a resolution to the dispute.

Stage 5: The CSAPB Dispute Resolution meeting

At final stage, a decision should be made that settles any dispute and ensures that there is a clear way forward for the case and that this solution ensures a continued high level of partnership working in Camden that safeguards and promotes the welfare of adults.

This decision will be made at a specially convened CSAPB Dispute Resolution meeting involving:

- the CSAPB Independent Chair
- the Director of Adult Social Care
- Senior managers of the relevant agencies/services involved

The meeting will consider the issues raised and look at earlier efforts to resolve differences. When deciding on the solution, the meeting will take into account the impact of their decision on future partnership working and service delivery. The meeting may also agree changes to policies, working practices and the operation of joint protocols in consultation with all board partners.

Monitoring

This procedure should be reviewed annually. Any data in relation to the use of the procedure should be shared quarterly to the Quality and Performance Subcommittee of the CSAPB to provide oversight of emerging themes around its use.

Appendix 1:-Camden Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board

Escalation and Resolution Procedure Flow-Chart

