



Angus Adult Protection Committee

Draft

Multi Agency Strategy (v5)

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Foreword

In 2008 new legislation was introduced in Scotland to protect adults at risk - The Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007. Local authorities now have a duty to inquire into the circumstances of adults who may be at risk of harm and to investigate instances of harm against adults at risk. Public bodies such as the NHS, the police and the Care Commission are required to assist in any investigation, to share relevant information and to work in partnership to protect adults.

This adult protection strategy is relevant to all frontline staff, service users and carers as well as the people who are involved in setting policies and planning services. Adult protection is everybody's business; all of us have a part to play in the support and protection of adults who, because of ill health, disability or age, are less able to protect themselves from harm or neglect.

The Angus Adult Protection Committee

The Angus Adult Protection Committee oversees the development of interagency practice, policy and training relating to the protection of adults at risk of harm. Social Work and Health, housing, Tayside Police, NHS Tayside, voluntary agencies and the Care Commission are represented on the committee.

The committee has been in existence since 2006 and was formed in anticipation of the introduction of the legislation to ensure that agencies were ready for its implementation. Since that time there have been a number of achievements, including the publication and distribution of public information, training for council officers, a CD for awareness training, and protocols for significant case reviews are now in place.

Three sub committees have also been established to undertake key tasks focussing on policy, training and practice.

The action plan outlines the work which is proposed in Angus for 2010-2011. This allows the adult protection committee the opportunity to build on past activity and develop new initiatives and actions in line with national policy and local need.

The changing demographic profile in Angus, with increasing numbers of adults with disabilities, older people and an increased prevalence of mental ill-health, presents a significant challenge for the future if we are to consistently respond within the resources available. The only way we will meet this challenge is if we are able to work effectively together as partner agencies within the adult protection agenda.

Margaret Wells
Independent Chair
Angus Adult Protection Committee

ANGUS ADULT PROTECTION STRATEGY 2010 - 2013

Introduction

In general adults with mental health problems, physical or learning disabilities or ill health manage to live their lives comfortably and securely. In most cases people live independently or with help from caring relatives, friends, neighbours, professionals or volunteers.

A small number of adults may however experience harm, such as:

- Physical harm
- Sexual harm
- Emotional harm
- Financial harm
- Neglect
- Institutional harm
- Self harm or self neglect
- Discrimination
- Human rights abuse

The circumstances of harm

Harm can happen anywhere including a person's own home, in a care home, in a support facility, in hospital, at work or at college or other educational setting.

Harm can be caused either intentionally or unintentionally by the following people:

- a partner
- a relative
- a friend
- a professional member of care staff
- a health worker
- a neighbour
- a volunteer
- a solicitor or financial advisor
- a member of the community
- a stranger

Adult Protection is everybody's business

In order that adults at risk are protected and are given appropriate support it is necessary that the Angus community and local and national agencies co-operate to identify adults who may be in need of support and protection and share information about risk. Therefore this strategy is relevant to all employees in the partner agencies and to everyone living in Angus.

Legislative background

The Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 (ASPA)

The ASPA has attempted to strike a balance between enabling individuals to lead independent lives that involve a degree of risk whilst also protecting those who may not be able to do so themselves. It enables intervention in the lives of adults who are deemed to be at risk of harm. Intervention requires consent of the adult at risk, if that consent is freely given and if the adult has capacity to give consent.

The Act:

- provides greater protection for adults thought or known to be at risk of harm
- places a duty on councils to make inquiries and undertake investigations to establish whether or not further action is required to stop or prevent harm occurring
- places a duty on public bodies to co-operate in investigating suspected or actual harm
- introduces a range of protection orders including assessment orders, removal orders and banning orders, and
- provides a legislative framework for the establishment of adult protection committees across Scotland

The Act requires public bodies to share information to protect adults at risk. The code of practice says that this duty also extends to include voluntary and private sector care providers.

An “adult at risk” is someone:

Aged 16 or over;
and is at risk of harm;
and has a disability, ongoing mental or physical health problem or is infirm because of age;
and because of their disability, health problem or infirmity is less able to protect their own interests.

The Angus Adult Protection Committee

The Angus Adult Protection Committee has been in existence since 2006 in anticipation of the introduction of the legislation. The partners represented on the adult protection committee are as follows:

Angus Council Social Work and Health
Angus Council Housing Division
NHS Tayside
Tayside Police
Care Commission
AAVO (representing voluntary agencies)
Angus Independent Advocacy (representing the voluntary sector)

Governance

This strategy has been drawn up and agreed by all the adult protection committee partners. It has been approved by the Angus Adult Protection Executive Group chaired by Angus Council chief executive and including chief officers from NHS Tayside, Tayside Police, Angus Council Housing Division and Angus Council Social Work and Health.

Angus interagency staff guidance

The adult protection committee has developed staff guidance detailing the roles and statutory responsibilities of employees in all agencies who are in contact with the public in Angus. It is a step-by-step guide through adult protection procedures and is in a similar format to the Tayside Adult Protection Multi Agency Protocol.

Multi agency training and development

The adult protection committee has drawn up a training strategy and delivers multi agency training to all employees in the partner organisations. A basic adult protection awareness CD has been distributed throughout Angus, which can be used as a foundation to the “core” adult protection training. Induction in Social Work and Health and also NHS Tayside includes a module on adult protection.

A summary of statutory responsibilities

- The council has a responsibility to inquire where it appears that an adult at risk is being harmed or is at risk of harm and take protective action as appropriate.
- The police have a general duty to protect the public and to investigate on behalf of the procurator fiscal where they believe that a criminal offence may have been committed. They will give the procurator fiscal any information which will assist him/her to decide whether a criminal prosecution should take place.
- Health professionals have a responsibility to examine medical records on behalf of a council officer who is taking action to protect an adult at risk and to undertake medical examinations, provided the person has given consent.
- The procurator fiscal has a duty to investigate the circumstance of any crime or suspected crime brought to his or her attention. He or she acts in the public interest and decides whether to bring criminal proceedings.
- The Care Commission must inform Social Work and Health when reports are received that one or more service users may be or are at risk of abuse or neglect within registered establishments and work jointly with Social Work and Health services where residents require protection.
- All the above public bodies and officers of public bodies are required to share information in relation to adults at risk and co-operate with each other to protect adults. The code of practice says that this duty also extends to include voluntary and private sector providers.

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Vision statement

Working together to protect adults at risk of harm in Angus.

Aims of the strategy

- To promote the awareness of adult protection
- To ensure that partner agencies work together to protect adults at risk
- To ensure the provision of support and protection for adults at risk of harm
- To ensure that staff in partner agencies know how to recognise and respond to adult at risk concerns
- To ensure that agencies share information about risk to adults and work co-operatively to prevent further harm

Core Principles and Values

This strategy is underpinned by certain guiding principles.

Protection of adults at risk is of paramount importance and interventions should aim to secure their safety and respond to their needs.

All adults who have capacity have the right to make choices about their lives and we should respect these choices if they are made freely.

In order to address the needs of adults at risk, coordinated multi agency planning and action is needed.

The views of adults who are at risk or potentially at risk of harm are vital in helping to shape services.

Relationship with Scottish Government's national outcomes

There are 15 national outcomes against which all partner agencies are expected to deliver services. The outcomes which relate to adult protection include:

- We live our lives free from crime, disorder and danger (Outcome 9)
- We have strong, resilient and supportive communities where people take responsibility for their own actions and how they affect others. (Outcome 11)

Angus has developed local adult protection outcomes and indicators to support the delivery of the national outcomes. The local adult protection outcomes are as follows:

- Improved safety for adults at risk (National Outcome 9)
- Frontline staff are supported to undertake their duties to protect adults at risk (Outcome 9)
- Improved inclusion in adult protection processes for adults at risk (Outcome 11)
- Improved public awareness of the duty to protect adults at risk (Outcome 11)

These outcomes are underpinned by standards measures, outcome indicators and activity measures.

Action plan

The strategy will be delivered through an action plan, based upon a number of key strategic priorities, linked to the outcomes framework. This action plan will be reviewed at each adult protection committee meeting which take place quarterly.

Strategic aim

Ensure that adults who experience or are at risk of harm are safer as a result of the support, protection and services they receive.

Priority objectives

To develop and review local policies, protocols and procedures in relation to adult protection

To raise public awareness of adult protection issues

To support staff to undertake their duties to protect adults at risk

To develop and improve systems to identify and share information about adults at risk

To develop a quality assurance system to ensure that services meet the needs of adults at risk

To involve service users, carers and the public in the work of the adult protection committee

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