**01 Background**

Self-neglect is defined as covering a wide range of behaviours – neglecting one’s personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviour such as hoarding. Examples of self-neglect include:

•Lack of self-care – examples: neglect of personal hygiene, nutrition, hydration, health, thereby endangering safety and well-being

•Lack of care of one’s environment – examples: squalor and hoarding.

•Refusal of services that would mitigate risk of harm.

Halton [SAB website](https://adult.haltonsafeguarding.co.uk/professionals/) for up to date policies.

**Safeguarding Adults**

**7 Minute Briefing– Self Neglect**

**02 Why it matters**

Without early intervention, existing health problems may be exacerbated.

Neglect of personal hygiene may mean that the person suffers social difficulties and isolation, physical and mental health breakdown.

Dilapidated property or excess rubbish can become infested and be a risk to the adult, family, neighbours and others.

Self-neglect has been linked to physical health problems, mental health issues, substance misuse, psychological and social factors, diminished social networks, personality traits, traumatic histories and life changing events

**03 Self neglect includes**

Living in grossly unsanitary conditions, suffering from an untreated illness, disease or injury, Suffering from malnutrition to such an extent that, without an intervention, the adult's physical or mental health is likely to be severely impaired, creating a hazardous situation that will likely cause serious physical harm to the adult or others or cause substantial damage to or loss of assets.

**06 What works?**

Practice in self-neglect work is more successful where practitioners:

\* take time to build rapport and a relationship of trust

\*try to understand the meaning of their self-neglect in the context of their life, rather than just the particular need you are seeing them for

\*work at the individual’s pace, but are able to spot moments of motivation that could facilitate change

\*understand the nature of the individual’s mental capacity in respect of self-care decisions

\*are honest, open and transparent about risks and options

\*engage in effective multi-agency working to ensure interdisciplinary and specialist perspectives, and coordination of work towards shared goals.-practitioners/

\* have an in-depth understanding of legal mandates providing options for intervention or seek support with this

**04 Information**

Self-neglect is a safeguarding issue when the person who self-neglects has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and is experiencing or at risk.

It may also be a safeguarding concern if the adult who is self-neglecting is a carer for an adult at risk.

Be **“Professionally curious”** and use yourcommunication skills to explore and understand what is happening within a home rather than making assumptions or accepting things at face value. Applying critical evaluation to any information you receive and maintain an open mind.to really explore what the adult wants and their perspective on their situation.

Call an MDT with all agencies involved with the individual.

**07 What to do**

If you are concerned about self-neglect then please discuss the concerns with Adult Social Care within your Borough and the Named Lead for Adult Safeguarding within your service (see below).

In the event of an emergency contact the Police on 101 or 999

**05 Mental Capacity**

Understanding and assessing the adult’s **mental capacity** is crucial.

A capacitated person, who understands the consequences of his /her decisions, may make a conscious and voluntary decision to engage in acts that threaten his/her health or safety as a matter of personal choice. A person without capacity may not understand the consequences of their actions and we have a duty of care to support them.

If the person has capacity it is important to try to maintain engagement.

Where there is very high risk of harm to the person or to others there are legal routes that can be explored

Safeguarding lead in your service. Tel:........................................................ Email:……………………………………………

Halton Safeguarding Adults Unit: 0151 907 8306

**7 Minute Briefing action plan – Self Neglect**

**Organisation ……………………………………… Service……………………………………………………………………….**

**Lead………………………………………………. Contact details ……………………………………………………………..**

**What learning or recommendations are relevant to your team, please give details:**

**1 …………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………**

**……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………**

**2 ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….**

**……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………**

**3 ………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….**

**……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………**

**Use this discussion to help plan development/service improvement**

**Action Plan: What actions have been agreed following group discussion ?**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **What need to happen?** | **Who will do it?** | **By when?** | **How will you know when this has been done?** | **How will you know if it has worked?** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

**Please ensure you keep a copy of this discussion and plan for your records**