

**BOURNEMOUTH, DORSET AND POOLE  
ADULT PROTECTION COMMITTEE**



**TITLE OF:  
DOCUMENT:** GUIDANCE FOR MANAGING LARGER SCALE ADULT  
PROTECTION INVESTIGATION INVOLVING REGULATED  
AND CONTRACTED CARE SERVICES

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** JANUARY 2008  
**REVIEW DATE:** OCTOBER 2008

**PURPOSE:** TO PROVIDE GUIDANCE, IN ADDITION TO CURRENT  
PROCEDURES, IN RELATION TO MANAGING LARGE SCALE  
INVESTIGATIONS.

**ACTION:** THIS DOCUMENT SHOULD BE CIRCULATED TO ALL STAFF  
WHO CHAIR ADULT PROTECTION INVESTIGATIONS, HAVE A  
ROLE IN THE INVESTIGATION PROCESS OR MAY BE ASKED TO  
CONTRIBUTE TO THE PROCEDURES AT ANY STAGE.

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## **GUIDANCE FOR MANAGING LARGER SCALE ADULT PROTECTION INVESTIGATIONS INVOLVING REGULATED AND CONTRACTED CARE SERVICES**

### **INTRODUCTION**

- This protocol should be read in conjunction with the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Adult Protection Policy and Procedures.
- The additional guidance is provided to assist the investigation process when more than one vulnerable adult has been abused or is at risk of being abused in a regulated or contracted care setting. This will include both residential care and nursing homes and domiciliary social care services.
- This guidance may also be helpful in other circumstances where a number of adults have experienced abuse, or are at risk of abuse; for example in a hospital or where an individual, or group of individuals, have targeted a number of service users.
- Large scale investigations will involve a wide range of agencies concerned with both the protection of individual adults and quality of care issues.
- Careful planning and co-operative multi agency working is required at all stages of the investigation.
- This protocol aims to reflect the Department of Health's Agenda for "Dignity in Care"; as outlined in the following statement.

High quality care services that respect people's dignity should:

1. have a zero tolerance of all forms of abuse.
2. support people with the same respect you would want for yourself or a member of your family.
3. treat each person as an individual by offering a personalised service.
4. enable people to maintain the maximum possible level of independence, choice and control.
5. listen and support people to express their needs and wants.
6. respect people's right to privacy.
7. ensure people feel able to complain without fear of retribution.
8. engage with family members and carers as care partners.
9. assist people to maintain confidence and a positive self-esteem.
10. act to alleviate people's loneliness and isolation.

## **INDICATORS FOR LARGE SCALE INVESTIGATIONS**

At the point of referral, and throughout the course of an investigation, the investigating Team Manager will need to consider if the alleged abuse indicates that there could be a risk to others vulnerable adults. This may arise for example when:

- The abuse has taken place in a poorly managed service.
- The alleged perpetrator is a care worker (or group of care workers) and has contact with a number of vulnerable people.
- The alleged perpetrator is a service user who shares living arrangements or services with other vulnerable people.

## **PARTNERSHIP WORKING**

In these circumstances a number of different agencies are likely to be involved in the investigation so it is important that everyone involved is aware of their respective roles and responsibilities. All investigations will follow the guidance contained in the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Adult Protection Policy and Procedures.

Multi-agency knowledge, skills and information sharing are essential to sound decision making and securing positive investigation outcomes for service users.

## **LEVELS OF INVESTIGATION**

This protocol identifies two levels of large scale investigations.

On receipt of an adult protection referral / alert the Investigating Team Manager will consider the appropriate level of investigation; which will determine whether the Chair should be a Team Manager or Service Manager.

Large Scale Investigation Level 1 - Chaired by Team Manager

Large Scale Investigation Level 2 - Chaired by Service Manager

## **LARGE SCALE INVESTIGATION: LEVEL 1**

This level of investigation applies when:

- Allegations of abuse do not amount to “significant harm”
- The abuse has not been ongoing for a considerable time or previously referred.
- No more than 3 people are at risk and are easily identifiable.

The Service Manager should always be notified of a decision to carry out a Large Scale Investigation.

## **LARGE SCALE INVESTIGATION: LEVEL 2**

This level of investigation will be triggered by:

- Serious allegations of abuse made in respect of 4 or more people.
- The seriousness of abuse; including sexual abuse.
- The length of time over which abuse has taken place.
- Abuse carried out by a group of abusers.

When it becomes apparent that a Large Scale Investigation Level 2 needs to take place, a Service Manager should co-ordinate and Chair the Adult Protection Investigation.

The Head of Adult Community Care Services should be advised of all Level 2 Investigations.

## **ORGANISING LARGE SCALE INVESTIGATIONS (LEVEL 1 & 2)**

When an investigation involves a number of people who have experienced abuse, or are at risk of abuse, the issues are often complex; involving standards of service as well as a series of individual investigations.

It is essential that, whilst addressing concerns about the quality of service provision, each individual's civil rights are not compromised.

**NB.** A large scale investigation may require a series of individual adult protection investigations to address allegations of abuse specific to each individual.

The Local Authority have lead responsibility for adult protection. In carrying out this responsibility the Chair will co-ordinate the overall investigation and ensure that all relevant agencies are involved.

## **THE LARGE SCALE INVESTIGATION CHECKLIST**

The following checklist should be read in conjunction with the guidance provided in Chapter 3 of the Pan- Dorset Policy and Procedures.

The checklist is not exhaustive and not all issues will be relevant to every investigation; but it is important that consideration is given to all these issues to facilitate the detailed planning required in complex investigations.

Many of the above issues will need to be reconsidered as the investigation progresses and new information is received.

## THE LARGE SCALE INVESTIGATION CHECKLIST

### PLANNING ISSUES TO BE CONSIDERED:

- Joint response and decision making between agencies.
- Clarify issues to be investigated.
- Agree what is not to be investigated.
- Agree roles and responsibilities for each agency (e.g Local Authority, Police, CSCI, Health, Provider Services etc).
- Agree timing of investigation actions (including complaints and staff disciplinarys ).
- Ensure any intervention does not compromise any possible Police investigation (- unless there are overriding safety needs).
- Obtain background information.
- Identify all people affected by investigation (staff and service users).
- Consider whether concerns warrant a recommendation for suspension of staff, local authority placements or service contracts.
- Obtain documentary information e.g. protocols, care plans, plans of building and maps of area.
- Maintain a chronology of all incidents related to the investigation.
- Keep a clear record of all policy decisions related to the investigation, including copies of strategy and conference minutes.
- Legal advice, where appropriate, should be taken as early as possible.
- Identify Lead Adult Protection Investigator and agree information sharing arrangements.
- Preservation of evidence and preparation for medical examination.
- Joint response to risk assessment and management.

### **MANAGEMENT ISSUES TO BE CONSIDERED:**

- Identify key managers from all appropriate agencies.
- Clarify operational procedures and whether Police Major Incident procedures apply.
- Jointly agree staffing commitment and location of investigation.
- Ensure that staff involved do not, or are not seen to have any non-professional interest in the service or other elements to be investigated.
- Prepare for interview of vulnerable witnesses - specialist staff and interview facilities to be made available (Police & Social Services).
- Agree and prepare joint press release / liaise with press officer.
- Consider involvement of other Local Authorities.
- Consult on Management action and where appropriate agree on issues relating to disciplinary action and suspension.
- Plan for security of records.

### **PROFESSIONAL ISSUES TO BE CONSIDERED**

- Identify differing agency priorities
- Regular briefing and information sharing for relevant staff and managers; which may need to be daily for some cases.
- Support and protection for referrers.
- Care arrangements for vulnerable adults; including therapeutic support.
- Consideration of individual needs in relation to race, culture, age, gender, sexuality, religion and disability.
- Language and communication needs.
- Advocacy services; including IMCA.
- Help - line facilities or identified contact point

## **POST INVESTIGATION ACTION**

- Debriefing for all staff involved.
- Lessons learnt or 'best practice' identified from the investigation should be made available to all staff and agencies involved in the investigation so that any training issues can be addressed.
- A summary of all Large Scale Investigations Level 2 should be prepared and sent to Service Manager Lead For Adult Protection.
- If circumstances warrant referral for a Serious Case Review then this should be arranged.