



Escalation Procedure

Resolution of Professional Disagreements in Work Relating to the Safeguarding of Adults at Risk

Version 6

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Document Control

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Version Control

Version	Date	Reviewer	Change Made
1	/	/	Document created
2	May 2016	BSAB	Wording: "If unresolved, the problem should be referred to the worker's own line manager who will discuss with their opposite number in the other agency. Support will be given by the agency Safeguarding Lead for this process.
3	March 2017	BSAB	Following a BSAB audit, references to the use of the monitoring form have been moved from stage 3 to stage 1. The monitoring form has been embedded into the document and clarification has been added regarding who is responsible for submitting the monitoring form to the BSAB.
4	January 2018	PISG Sub-group	Timeframes added after revision by PISG group. Amendments made to wording. Accepted by PISG Group, no amendments to wording apart from within working day.
5	July 2020	KBSP PPO	Review of full policy. Accuracy of required timescales checked. References to BASB

			replaced with KAS in line with new local arrangements. Final stage 5 escalation to Chair of KAS changed to reflect new KBSP arrangements. KAS chair will refer more complex cases to BSAB Executive resolution panel changed to KBSP Executive resolution panel.
6	21/12/2022	KBSP PPO	Full review of document.

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Introduction

The Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership (KBSP) recognises that when working together to safeguard adults there may be times when practitioners have differences of opinion or concerns about the professional practice of others. If you feel that a practitioner, or an agency, is not acting in the best interests of an adult, you have a responsibility to respectfully challenge and escalate your concern if a resolution is not achieved.

Difference of opinion, or concerns about practice between practitioners and agencies can arise at any stage in the safeguarding process. The purpose of this procedure is to ensure practitioners and partner agencies have a simple way to resolve any concerns they may have in safeguarding adults. It augments the Bristol Multi-agency Safeguarding Adults Procedures which can be found on the [KBSP Website](#).

Effective partnership working depends on an open approach and honest and positive relationships between the adult at risk and those practitioners and agencies which seek to support them. The early resolution of issues and professional co-operation is integral to effectively to safeguard adults at risk.

Key Principles

These procedures support the Care Act (2014) principles of adult safeguarding. These six principles should be considered in line with these procedures.

Empowerment: People are supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent

Partnership: Agencies and professionals work effectively together looking for local resolutions at the earliest opportunity to deliver the best outcome for the person

Prevention: It is better to act before harm occurs. Responses should be timely and ensure the safety of the adult

Protection: Support and representation for those in greatest need

Proportionate: Actions taken are proportionate and the least intrusive response to the risk presented

Accountability: Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding

Procedure

The safety of the adult is paramount, and any professional disagreement should be escalated within a timely manner and with due consideration to the risks that might exist for the adult. The following stages set out the steps that should be taken to resolve a professional disagreement. Disagreements should be resolved urgently and may require quicker escalation through the stages to senior management

depending on the risk to the adult. The timescales given are a guide to assist in timely communication and resolution and these should be discussed and set at all stages. Delay can be used as a reason to escalate concerns to the next stage if agencies are failing to respond and prioritise resolution. Should the case require longer investigation at any stage, the receiving organisation should express this clearly and set out their intended timetable for resolution in collaboration with the escalating agency.

Stage 1 – Supervisor/ Line or Team Manager formally raising the concern with the equivalent Supervisor/ Team Manager in the other agency

Initial attempts should be taken to resolve the problem between practitioners. If the disagreement is not resolved professionals should contact their supervisor/ line manager/ team manager within their own agency. It is then the responsibility of the supervisor/ line manager/ team manager to discuss the concerns with the equivalent supervisor/ line manager/ team manager in the other agency and take steps to resolve the issue. A response must be received from the organisation who receives the escalation within a maximum timescale of 24 hours of escalation (1 working day).

Please note: If the escalating organisation does not receive a response or requires a quicker response due to the safety of the adult, it is their responsibility to make all reasonable proactive contact with the organisation to ascertain the availability of the relevant supervisor/ line manager/ team manager within the organisation.

Stage 2 – Raising concern between Service Manager/ Designated Adult Safeguarding Lead

If the problem is not resolved at stage one, the supervisor/ line manager/ team manager of each agency should report to their senior manager or the named designated adult safeguarding lead. They will liaise with the equivalent representative in the other agency who will attempt to resolve the professional differences through discussion.

If the escalating organisation does not receive a response or requires a quicker response due to safety concerns for the adult, it is their responsibility to make all reasonable proactive contact with the organisation to ascertain their availability manager or designated safeguarding lead within the organisation. A response must be received within a maximum timescale of 48 hours of escalation (2 working days).

Stage 3 – Referring concern to the KBSP Keeping Adults Safe (KAS) Delivery Group Member and KBSP Business Manager informed of escalation

If the matter cannot be resolved, contact must be made with the relevant agency's KAS group member. The details of members if needed can be obtained via emailing KBSP@bristol.gov.uk. The KBSP Business Manager must also be informed of all Stage 3 escalations and will formally record the issue. Once Stage 3 is reached the monitoring form should be completed to detail the issue requiring resolution and recording the agreed outcome. A response will be provided within a maximum timescale of 5 working days from receipt of the escalation.

Stage 4 – Refer concern to the Chair of KBSP Keeping Adults Safe (KAS) Delivery Group and KBSP Executive

If the matter remains unresolved, consideration will be given to referring the matter to the Chair of KAS who will consider whether the matter can be resolved through mediation. Mediation will be offered as soon as possible bearing in mind the impact on the adult. The decision reached in mediation is final and binding on the agencies concerned.

In more complex matters the matter maybe escalated to the KBSP Executive which will form a panel consisting of representatives of three statutory agencies (Local Authority, Police and Health) and will include those agencies involved in the dispute. The Executive panel will receive representation from those concerned in the dispute. The decision of the Executive panel is final and binding on all agencies involved. Receipt must be acknowledged within 48 hours (2 working days) setting out a timescale for resolution.

A flowchart for the escalation of concerns can be found at Appendix 1 of this document.

Appendix 1 – Escalation Flowchart

<p>STAGE 1 - Worker to Worker A response must be received within 24 hours (1 working day). Any Worker who feels that a decision is not safe/ inappropriate should identify with their fellow Worker what their concerns are. It is every professional's responsibility to 'problem-solve' at the earliest possible stage.</p>
<p>STAGE 2 - Supervisor/ Team Manager to Supervisor/ Team Manager A response must be received within 24 hours (1 working day) of escalation. If the problem is not resolved at stage one, both workers should contact their supervisor/ team manager within their own agency. They should then raise the concerns with the equivalent supervisor/ team manager in the other agency.</p>
<p>STAGE 3 - Senior Manager/ Named/ Designated Safeguarding Representative to Senior Manager/ Named/ Designated Safeguarding Representative Within 5 working days of escalation. If the problem is not resolved at stage two, the supervisor/ team managers should report to their senior manager or KBSP Keeping Adult Safe Delivery Group representative. They will liaise with an equivalent representative in the other agency. The KBSP Business Manager must also be informed of all Stage 3 escalations and will formally record the issue. Once Stage 3 is reached the monitoring form should be completed to detail the issue requiring resolution and recording the agreed outcome.</p>
<p>STAGE 4 - KBSP Keeping Adults Safe (KAS) Delivery Group Receipt must be acknowledged within 48 hours (2 working days) setting out timescale for resolution. If the matter remains unresolved, consideration will be given to referring the matter to the Chair of KAS who will consider whether the matter can be resolved through mediation. In more complex matters the matter may be escalated to the KBSP Executive which will form a panel whose decision will be final.</p>

Remember....

If an adult is thought to be at risk of immediate harm call 999.

Professional disagreements should be resolved urgently.

Timescales apply for safeguarding only NOT for case management which should be resolved promptly in line with the assessed level of concerns.

An acknowledgement by receipt of the Escalation within timescales is essential. If you have concerns about the timelessness - this is a reason to escalate further.

If you do not have a structure that reflects all stages, please use the next stage as appropriate.

All conversations must be recorded in writing. Decisions must be shared with the relevant people and must include the worker who raised the initial concern.