7 minute briefing

Safeguarding ENFIELD

Risk Assessment/ Communication when closing a case.

In the last months of her life, Ms C was clear that she did not wish to work with a member of Adult Social Care staff. The case was closed – however, it wasn't clear to Ms C or other professionals what the plan was.

When closing a case where there may be on-going risk, but the adult doesn't appear to be working with professionals, there should be a clear risk assessment – including all the professionals involved and highlighting what decisions have been made and why.

Who was Ms C?

Ms C was a 57-year old transwoman who died in her home (in Enfield) in late 2022. She suffered from heart disease and diabetes – and had also been diagnosed with a personality disorder.

Ms C's GP was working to reestablish a number of medications at the time of her death but she died of natural causes in her home. Ms C's relationship with professionals was difficult and the ESAB decided a review was necessary. You can find the Executive Summary of this review here.

Support for Transgender Adults in Enfield and beyond.

Research in Practice published a guide to Working with Older Trans People in 2022 which professionals may find helpful

The Prevent team presented to the ESAB in March 2025 about LGBTQ Hate Crime which sadly affects many LGBTQ adults.

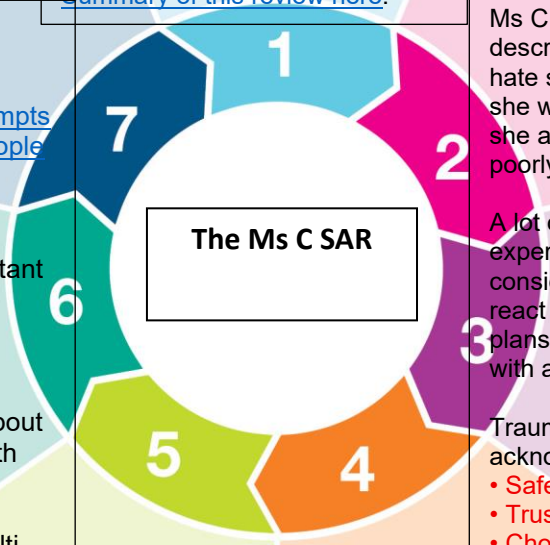
The Enfield LGBT Network has a number of groups and resources which might be useful. Galop also provides advocacy & support for those who have experienced abuse.

Working with adults who appear to be declining services.

In 2023, the Enfield SAB produced Prompts and Considerations for working with people who appear to decline services. People have a right, assuming that they have capacity around that decision, to refuse help from professionals – but it is important to consider risks and why they might be doing so…

Are they nervous about having professionals in their home? Worried about money? Have had a bad experience with your profession in the past?

Again, professional curiosity and a multi-disciplinary approach are key. Forums like the High Risk Advisory Panel or MARACs can help professionals discuss such cases.



Working in a Trauma-informed way.

Ms C found it hard to trust professionals and described a number of experiences of prejudice, hate speech and unfair treatment. Sometimes she was reluctant to accept support because she assumed that professionals would treat her poorly and call her names.

A lot of adults we work with will have experienced trauma, and it's important that we consider its impact (for example, someone may react very strongly to professionals changing plans last minute) and how we can build trust with adults.

Trauma informed practice should incorporate 6 acknowledged principles:

- Safety
- Trustworthiness
- Choice
- Collaboration
- Empowerment
- Cultural consideration.

The danger of 'splitting' professionals/ Professional Curiousity.

Ms C often felt strongly that professionals weren't helping her and reported this to others. This sometimes led to professionals being 'split' rather than bringing information together.

Professional Curiousity can help us avoid this – please see training given to the ESAB in December 2024 for some tips and things to consider.

Working with Personality Disorders.

In 2024, the NHS produced some guidance called 'Meeting the Challenge, Making a Difference' around working with someone with a personality disorder diagnosis. This is excellent guidance for all professionals. It is important to remember that professionals may note 'traits' of a personality disorder but you should not assume someone has one without a diagnosis.

There is no medication for personality disorders (though talking therapies can be useful for some) so adults may not always be seen by the Mental Health Trust. However, you can always reach out to the Trust or the person's GP to ask for advice.

The same principles for trauma informed practice apply to people with personality disorders. Staff should also be very aware of professional boundaries – people with PD are likely to have a lot of anxieties around relationships and react strongly if you don't seem to be doing what they think you should; so ensuring your role is clear is very important.

Managers also need to consider how they can support staff.