

Learning Point: Accurate Recording & Reporting:

There is a critical need for clear, specific language when documenting and reporting sexual safety concerns. Vague terms like “sexualised behaviour” hinder risk assessment and information sharing. All partner agencies should advise staff to use precise language to enable effective safeguarding.

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Concern

Violet, an elderly care home resident, was sexually assaulted by another resident, Steven, who had a history of sexually inappropriate behaviour linked to cognitive impairment.

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History

Steven, diagnosed with dementia and other mental health conditions, had multiple safeguarding referrals and incidents of sexualised behaviour in previous care settings. Despite these, risk information was not consistently shared or recorded as he moved between care homes and health units. Violet, previously independent, entered care following a fall and was assaulted shortly after admission.

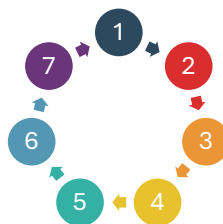
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Learning Point: Consistent Risk Management

Incidents of peer-on-peer abuse must be recorded as safeguarding referrals for the victim and recorded as a potential risk factor for the alleged perpetrator. Risk assessments and management plans should be shared across agencies and care settings to ensure continuity and effective mitigation of risk, especially during transfers.

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SAR Sexual safety in Care Settings 7-point Briefing



Good practice

- The care home where concerns about Stephen’s behaviour were originally identified conducted mental capacity and risk assessments.
- Following the assault, police officers showed compassionate, victim-centred care. Violet received exemplary support from an Independent Sexual Violence Advocate
- Some agencies demonstrated persistence in seeking reassessment and appropriate care for Steven

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Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR)

The review was commissioned under the Care Act 2014 by the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adult Board (HSAB) due to the death of an adult with care and support needs linked to abuse. It covered a review of the period between 2023-2024 and involved key partners across Hertfordshire. An action plan has been developed and is being implemented by the HSAB

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Learning Point: Multi-Agency Coordination

Early multi-disciplinary strategy meetings are essential following incidents to explore all care options, ensure person-centred responses, and involve specialist advocates. Hospitals should not be default places of safety unless medically necessary, and alternative care should be considered in consultation with the victim and family.

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