

1. Self-Neglect Guidance & Escalation Protocol

Endorsed by the Safeguarding Board in June 2021.

Available at [Adult Policies and Procedures | Safeguarding Board, Cwm Taf Morgannwg \(cwmtafmorgannwgsafeguardingboard.co.uk\)](#)

Consists of a toolkit for practitioners & a protocol for standard single and multi-agency working, with an escalation process for high or critical risk cases to a newly established Multi-Agency Partnership Panel.

7) Support for Practitioners & Agencies

In cases of low or medium-risk, standard case management and multi-agency working is sufficient and can manage risk effectively.

In cases of high or critical risk where risks are not reducing despite best efforts of the agencies involved. Referrals can be made to the SELF-NEGLECT PARTNERSHIP PANEL – a multi-agency panel of senior officers in a variety of relevant agencies and be able to release resources to assist and support agencies already involved.

The referral form is available as an attachment at the end of the Protocol.

Referrals should be submitted by email to ctmsafeguarding@rctcbc.gov.uk

2) What is Self-Neglect?

Self-neglect involves any failure by an adult to take care of him or herself which causes, or is reasonably likely to cause, serious physical, mental or emotional harm, or substantial loss of assets.

Self-neglect may also involve living in squalid conditions and/or hoarding behaviour.

3) What are the indicators of Self-Neglect?

Neglect of self may include: Poor hygiene/ Dirty/inappropriate clothing/ Malnutrition/ inadequate hydration/ Poor dental hygiene/ Medical / health needs unmet/ Alcohol / substance misuse/ Social isolation/ Situations where there is evidence that a child is suffering or is at risk of suffering significant harm due to self-neglect by an adult .

Neglect of the environment may include: Unsanitary, untidy or dirty conditions which create a hazardous situation that could cause serious physical harm to the individual or others/ Hoarding/ Fire risk (e.g. smoker with limited mobility / hoarder)/Poor maintenance of property/Keeping lots of pets who are poorly cared for/ Presence of vermin/Lack of heating/No running water / sanitation/ Poor finance management (e.g. bills not being paid leading to utilities being cut off, unexplained money drawn from bank/savings account).

The above are often accompanied by a refusal to engage with services.

4) Hoarding

Hoarding is the persistent difficulty in discarding or parting with possessions, regardless of their actual value.

Indicators of a serious hoarding issue include where the level of hoard poses a serious health risk to the person or neighbours, there is a high risk of fire or infestations by insects or animals. Hoarding is connected with other concerns of self-neglect, such as neglect of physical health, lack of adequate nutrition. Hoarding may be linked to serious cognitive decline and lack of capacity to self-care and care for the environment. Hoarding is threatening a person's tenancy and they are at risk of being made homeless through closure orders or possession orders.

5) Working with People who Self-Neglect

The 3 Principles: **1. 'Knowing'** the individual, their unique history and the significance of their self-neglect. **2.** Understanding is achieved through ways of **'being'**: personal and professional qualities of respect, empathy, honesty, patience, reliability and care – the ability to 'be present' alongside the person while trust is built. **3. 'Doing'** professional practice in a way that combines hands-on and hands-off approaches: seeking the tiny element of latitude for agreement, doing things - often practical things - that will make a small difference while negotiating for the bigger changes, and being clear about when enforced intervention becomes necessary.



6) Risk Assessment and Mental Capacity

Using the risk indicator tool will help to establish some objective assessment of the degree of risk. This is crucial.

Equally vital is an understanding of the person's mental capacity to make decisions about their health and well-being needs and their living environment.

This is challenging for professionals as often the person will refuse or only partially engage.