

# Spotlight on Self-Neglect and Hoarding

3<sup>rd</sup> May 2023

Adult Self-Neglect is a Strategic Priority for Swindon Safeguarding Partnership

## Why do you need to know about self-neglect?

**Nationally:** Self-neglect was the most prevalent type of abuse featuring in 45% of Safeguarding Adult Reviews between April 2017 and March 2019. [Analysis of 231 Safeguarding Adults Reviews \(SARs\) between April 2017 - March 2019](#)

**Locally:** Self-neglect is a theme in several Safeguarding Adult Review’s Terry, Kieran and Brenda.

### Do you know?

- ✓ How to spot the signs someone is at risk of self-neglect?
- ✓ How to respond if you have concerns that someone is at risk of self-neglect?
- ✓ What learning was identified in those local SAR’s?

To find out more please read on and access some of the useful resources we have collated to assist you.

## What is self-neglect?



This short video clip (2020, duration 3:54 minutes) provides an overview of the definition click on this link to view [Safeguarding Adults - Self Neglect 2020 - YouTube](#)

### What is self-neglect?


The Care Act (2014) guidance advises that ‘self-neglect’ covers a wide range of behaviour including neglecting to care for one’s personal hygiene, health or surroundings, and includes behaviour such as hoarding.

‘Hoarding’ is only one of the behaviours that fall into this category but it is often used almost as a synonym for self-neglect.

Some examples include:

- Lack of self-care to an extent that it threatens personal health and safety
- Neglecting to care for one’s personal hygiene, health or surroundings
- Inability to avoid harm as a result of self-neglect
- Failure to seek help or access services to meet health and social care needs

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inability or unwillingness to manage one’s personal affairs</li> <li>• Lack of self-care to an extent that it threatens personal health and safety</li> <li>• Neglecting to care for one’s personal hygiene, health or surroundings</li> <li>• Inability to avoid harm as a result of self-neglect</li> <li>• Failure to seek help or access services to meet health and social care needs</li> <li>• Inability or unwillingness to manage one’s personal affairs</li> </ul> <p>For further information:  <a href="#">Self-neglect: At a glance   SCIE</a>  <a href="#">What is Self-Neglect? - Ann Craft Trust</a>  <a href="#">Care Act 2014 (legislation.gov.uk)</a></p>
<p><b>Research tells us...</b></p>	<p>Self-neglect is a spectrum of behaviours, with mental, physical, social and environmental factors interacting and affecting an adult’s ability to care for themselves.</p> <p>The adult may initially be fully able to care for themselves, but as problems such as chronic illness develop, the person may gradually lose the ability to perform activities of daily living.</p>
<p><b>Reasons for Self-Neglect and the impact on an adult’s life</b></p>	<p>Reasons for self-neglect are often complex but so is the impact on the adult’s life.</p> <p>Self-neglect may impact on a person’s health, wellbeing or living conditions and may have a negative impact on other aspects of their life. Without <b>early intervention</b>, existing health problems may worsen.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Neglect of personal hygiene (<b>physical factor</b>) may lead to social difficulties and isolation (<b>social factor</b>), or physical/mental health breakdown and cognitive difficulties (<b>mental factors</b>).</li> <li>• Dilapidated property or excess rubbish (<b>environmental factor</b>) can become infested and can be a fire risk, which is a risk to the adult, family, neighbours and others.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Barriers to good practice</b></p>	<p>This is not an exhaustive list:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with people who self-neglect can be alarming and very challenging.</li> <li>• People who self-neglect may refuse support or fail to acknowledge the problem.</li> <li>• The risks associated with self-neglect can be high and the options for intervention are limited.</li> <li>• There can be pressure on professionals to take action, but often very little they can do.</li> <li>• There is often a lack of clarity about who should take responsibility for supporting people who self-neglect.</li> <li>• Work patterns and resources don’t support long-term, relationship-based work.</li> <li>• Individuals don’t always have care and support needs – so safeguarding responses may not be appropriate.</li> <li>• Information sharing is sometimes problematic, particularly when the person refuses help.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited legal literacy – professionals may not have a good understanding of the law that can be utilised in relation to self-neglect.</li> <li>Application of the Mental Capacity Act can be very complex in relation to self-neglect.</li> <li>Lack of resources can prevent appropriate service responses.</li> </ul> <p>Source: <a href="#">Self-neglect: At a glance   SCIE</a></p>
<p><b>Engaging with people who self-neglect</b></p>	<p>Professionals can find working with people who self-neglect extremely challenging. Partner agencies should think broadly on what may constitute self-neglect and what pathways may be available to address concerns.</p> <p>The nature of self-neglect cases means there is an increased likelihood that the person may refuse support when it is first offered. Initial non-engagement should not result in no further action.</p> <p>Consider different ways to engage the person, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Go on a joint visit with someone that the individual knows, trusts and feels comfortable with. This could be a family member, friend or another professional.</li> <li>Contact other professionals who are in contact with the person (GP, day centre workers, cleaners, etc.). They may have suggestions about how best to engage with the individual.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><i>Remember be Professionally Curious!</i></b></p> <p>See the SSP Practice Brief <a href="#">Resource pack - Professional Curiosity - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership</a></p>
<p><b>Local Procedures and Guidance – Self-Neglect</b></p>	
<p><b>SSP Multi-Agency Policy and Guidance on Responding to Self-Neglect</b></p> 	<p>There is comprehensive guidance available which will help you to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define different types of self-neglect</li> <li>Feel confident in identifying self-neglect</li> <li>Know what you can do to support people who self-neglect</li> <li>Know your responsibilities when working with someone who self-neglects.</li> </ul> <p>Click on this link to access the guidance:  <a href="#">Self-neglect – Multi-agency policy and guidance on responding to self-neglect - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership</a></p> <p>The appendices include useful resources such as risk assessment tools, clutter scale ratings, legal frameworks and agenda templates for professionals meetings – click on this link to access: <a href="#">Appendices – Self-neglect – Multi-agency policy and guidance on responding to self-neglect - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership</a></p> <p>Hoarding Guidance can be accessed via this link: <a href="#">Hoarding guidance - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership</a></p>
<p><b>Multi Agency Meetings</b></p>	<p>Agencies have a duty to respond to abuse and neglect under the Care Act 2014. Key professionals from any agency or organisation can call Multi-</p>



Agency meetings for a person who self-neglects and who they are concerned about in their service.

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss risks, identify the most appropriate lead, and implement a plan which provides the most appropriate person-centred response to manage risk to the person.

Click on this link to access the guidance: [Multi agency meeting guidance working with adults - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)

### SSP Useful Resources and Training

Below we have highlighted some resources and training that is available to support professionals.

#### Learning from Safeguarding Adult Reviews



Three recently completed Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs) have occurred in Swindon in which self-neglect was a major point of concern. Recommendations from these place an emphasis on the importance of multi-disciplinary risk management and professionals working together at an early stage to support adults experiencing self-neglect.

The SAR reports and learning leaflets for Terry, Kieran and Brenda can be accessed via the [Safeguarding Adult reviews](#).

**Please familiarise yourself with the learning from the reviews.**

#### Self Neglect Webpage



There is now a dedicated Self-Neglect web page on the SSP website for professionals and contains useful information, resources, procedures and guidance. Click on this link to access the webpage: [Self neglect - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)

#### SSP Training



We offer a range the following courses which may be useful – please click on the link to find out more information and to book a place:

- ✓ [Safeguarding and self-neglect/hoarding \(core module\) - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)
- ✓ [Safeguarding and self-neglect/hoarding \(specialist module\) - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)
- ✓ [Legal training 1 - Consent, capacity and information sharing - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)
- ✓ [Legal training 2 - Best interest decisions, self-neglect and liberty protection safeguards - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)

Please visit our training page for other training offered [Training Information - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)

#### 7 Minute Briefs and Practice Briefs

There are a range of further resources such as:

- ✓ [Resource pack - Professional Curiosity - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)
- ✓ [7-minute brief on self-neglect includes information on referrals to Risk Enablement Panel](#)
- ✓ [SSP Practice Brief – Safeguarding is for everyone – know your role](#)
- ✓ [Analysis of Safeguarding Adults Reviews from April 2017 to March 2019 - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)
- ✓ [Mental capacity act - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership](#)

Some useful links and toolkits regarding Capacity

- ✓ [Home - Capacity guide](#)
- ✓ [The Toolkit - Mental Capacity Toolkit](#)

<p><b>Video Archive</b></p> <p><b>Spotlight Webinar</b></p>	<p>The Spotlight on Self Neglect and Hoarding Webinar was on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2023. The format of the webinar included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• reflection on the learning in relation to self-neglect and hoarding identified in local SAR's</li><li>• the overview of relevant local Multi-agency policies, procedures and guidance implemented</li><li>• case examples identifying good practice and multi-agency response</li></ul> <p>The recording of the webinar is now available to watch on our website. Follow the link to access the recording: <a href="#">Video archive - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership</a></p> <p>A previous webinar – 'Learning themes from safeguarding adult reviews and audits' can be accessed via this link: <a href="#">Video archive - Swindon Safeguarding Partnership</a></p>
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