



Making Safeguarding Personal: Procedural Timescales

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1. Introduction

Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) is a national initiative which aims to keep the focus of safeguarding adults at risk of abuse firmly on the individual and not on the process.

As part of this initiative, it is proposed that timescales are applied more flexibly where it is safe and appropriate to do so. However any timescale extensions must be related to the context of the involvement of the adult at risk and the benefit of this.

Timescales continue to be important in ensuring that cases are dealt with promptly and effectively, but greater flexibility will allow variations to be made in some particular

The national MSP guidelines suggest that the timescale for investigations and subsequent meetings is 'individualised' and agreed at the initial Strategy Meeting according to the individual facts of the case.

The current B&NES Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures ('Policy and Procedures') set out specific timescales at each stage of the safeguarding process and the relevant B&NES Council performance measures require these to be met. It has been agreed that these timescales can now be exceeded in certain circumstances. Other than the changes detailed below, the Policy and Procedures will remain applicable in their entirety.

2. How will the new system work?

Decision Stage

Contact must be made with the Safeguarding Team within a maximum of 2 working days of the alert being received. In the majority of situations a decision regarding the need to progress to the Strategy Stage will be made at this point. However, there is now scope for this decision stage to be extended to a **maximum of 4 working days** in those cases where more time is required to have an initial discussion with the adult at risk. If an extension is required this will be agreed by the Chair in discussion with the Case Co-ordinator before the end of the 2nd day.

The reason for the extension must be recorded in observation record/ case notes on Care First or RIO by the Chair, stating why there had not been an initial discussion with the adult at risk. A record must also be made of the actions taken to reduce any risk of harm to the adult at risk during this period.

Strategy Stage

These should normally be undertaken within 5 working days of the alert being received. However, there is now scope for this to be extended to a **maximum of 10**

working days in those cases where more time is required to gather the views and desired outcomes of the adult at risk.

If an extension beyond 5 working days is required this must be agreed between the Case Co-ordinator and the Chair before the end of the 3rd working day from the date of the Alert.

The reason for any extension must be recorded in the Record of the Strategy Meeting or Discussion. It must explicitly state why the views of the adult at risk were not established within 5 working days. A record must also be made of the actions taken to reduce any risk of harm to the adult at risk during this period.

S42 Enquiry

A section 42 enquiry should normally be undertaken within 20 working days of the initial alert. However, there is now scope for this to be extended to a maximum of **30 working days** where the situation justifies it e.g. in order to complete a complex investigation.

This must be agreed with the Chair when setting the Terms of Reference for the enquiry at the Strategy Stage and the reason/s for it must be recorded in the relevant Record.

Planning Meetings

Planning Meetings should normally be undertaken within 30 days of the initial alert. However, there is now scope to vary this according to the requirements of the particular case. The scheduling of Planning Meetings will be agreed at the Strategy Stage and the reasons for any extension to the normal period must be clearly set out in the record of the meeting.

Review Meetings

Review Meetings are initially held within 3 months of the Planning Meeting, and within three months of any subsequent Review Meeting. The scheduling of Review Meetings will be agreed at the previous safeguarding meeting and the reasons for any extension over the three month period must be clearly set out in the record of the meeting.

3. Recording

In addition to the recording requirements set out above, it will be important to record the reasons for 'exceptions' to the existing targets in order to properly evaluate this proposal during the suggested six month trial period. Where there has been an exception, the Chair will record this in a stand-alone Excel spreadsheet which will provide brief details of the case / the exception / reasons for the longer timescale and the benefit to the adult at risk.