

Lessons Learned



Chris's story....

Chris had a history of alcohol misuse and had frequent falls and was being supported by services. Chris was referred to a local specialist service, where he attended drop-in sessions and made good progress; Chris stopped drinking alcohol and it was mutually agreed that due to such good progress, the intervention could close.

Chris presented regarding his welfare benefit payments at a local service, bringing his bank statements; large amounts of money had been withdrawn from his bank account over a short period of time to an unknown company placing his account into overdraft.

A few weeks before Chris died, someone telephoned Chris's GP practice and told them they were calling on behalf of the patient, sharing their concerns about his health. This information was passed on and a request for a call back to be made to the caller. The call back was not made as there was no record or documents stating that this person had authority to act for the patient. Within the next few days, Chris was at home and felt unwell. Chris was taken to hospital by ambulance and admitted. The paramedics were worried about the bruising they saw on Chris and made a referral to Adult Social Care. Sadly, Chris died shortly after being admitted to hospital.

What we have learned....

- Chris presented at a local service where he showed staff his bank statements regarding his welfare benefit payments. The staff member who served him was vigilant and noticed that large amounts of money had been withdrawn from his bank account over a short period of time to an unknown company which had placed his account into overdraft. The staff member later searched for information about this company and was worried that the company may be involved in financial scamming.
Learning for practice: If you are worried about an adult with care and support needs who may be experiencing financial and material abuse, you should follow West Midlands Adults Safeguarding Policy and report your concern to the Adult Safeguarding Team.
- Someone contacted the surgery and expressed their worries about Chris. The call handler listened to these concerns and appropriately shared them in a timely manner with the GP.
Learning for practice: Good practice would be to ensure that when a concern is reported to the GP, the practice should contact the patient and pursue the concern.

Lessons Learned (cont.)



What we have learned (cont.)...

- Staff observed that individuals had attended the hospital with Chris, however the records did not contain any information regarding these individuals or the nature of their relationship with Chris.

Learning for practice: This information would have assisted the hospital with any follow-up enquiries. This was a missed opportunity to be able to identify and record the names and contact details of these individuals. Good practice would be to ensure that hospital records contain the full name and contact details of any individuals who accompany an adult to hospital and clear identification of their relationship to the presenting patient.

What do I need to do....

Advice for professionals

1. Familiarise yourself with the appropriate ways to [report abuse](#) make a referral to Social Care and Support.
2. Familiarise yourself with [West Midlands Adult Safeguarding Policy & Procedures](#) for the protection of adults with care and support needs in the West Midlands.
3. Consider refreshing your knowledge on [financial or material abuse](#) and read Warwickshire Safeguarding Adults Board's [7 minute briefing on financial and material abuse](#).
4. Ensure you record the full name and contact details for adults who escort/ accompany an adult to hospital or agency and their relationship with the adult. Always record this information clearly in the adult's records. This information may be needed in any follow-up enquiries.

Advice for communities

1. Family members, relatives, friends and neighbours all have an important part to play in keeping adults with care and support needs safe from abuse and neglect. If you are worried or concerned about someone, please don't keep it to yourself, report your concerns. It doesn't matter if you're not sure whether an action or a situation is abuse or neglect, get in touch so that staff can help you know what, if anything, needs to be done to keep someone safe from harm.