



KNOWSLEY
SAFEGUARDING
ADULTS BOARD

PREVENTION THROUGH PARTNERSHIP

**Knowsley Safeguarding
Adults Board**

**Guidance for Missed
Appointments of Adults with
Care and Support Needs
accessing Health and Social
Care Services**

February 2024

This document will
be made available
in other formats
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Document Control	
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Glossary of terms

Did not attend (DNA)	This stands for 'did not attend'. The term should be applied to events when an adult does not present for a pre-arranged appointment. Organisations should identify, capture, and respond where there may be a pattern of missed appointments.
Was not brought (WNB)	Where the adult relies on someone other than themselves to bring them to their appointment(s) who isn't brought
Appointment	Where an arrangement is made to see an adult at a certain time, date, and place
Cancellation by self or others	Refers to appointments where a service receives prior notification that an adult will not be attending, or the service needs to cancel the appointment
Disengagement	Is when an adult or carer does not respond to requests from health or social care professionals. Behaviours of disengagement are usually cumulative and may include – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disregarding appointments • Lack of trust/relationship with professionals • Social circumstances preventing attendance at appointments including domestic abuse, coercion and control, illiteracy • Lack of understanding about the appointment
First Appointment	An appointment made to see an adult who is newly registered to a service.
Follow up Appointment	An appointment given to a known adult at risk who is receiving ongoing support or reviews.
Visit	An appointment that has been arranged by a professional or team and may take place in the home of an adult or another appropriate community setting.
No Access Visits (NAV)	Is an appointment made with an adult or carer and when the professional or member of staff attends their place of residence or another setting within the community at the prearranged time and place, they are not present, and no contact is made.
Mental Capacity Act 2005	The Mental Capacity Act 2005 provides a statutory framework for people who lack capacity to make decisions for themselves. Mental Capacity Act 2005 (legislation.gov.uk)
Safeguarding	Systems and practices to protect and prevent all adults but those considered most at risk with care and support needs, from suffering abuse or neglect and self-neglect.
Section 11 Refusal of Assessment	This section of the Care Act 2014 (legislation.gov.uk) can be used when there are concerns around abuse/ neglect and the adult has mental capacity to refuse an assessment. Section 11 enables a multi-agency assessment to still take place about someone, but without them being involved if they don't wish to be, to obtain a full overview of needs/ risks/ next steps.

Context

This guidance outlines the roles and responsibilities for organisations in respect of adults who have care and support needs who do not attend, are not brought, or are unable to attend their appointments.

The guidance applies to staff who are directly employed within all organisations who act in a professional capacity to support the needs of adults who do not attend or are unable to attend their appointments.

This document provides a clear pathway on how to apply safeguarding principles and procedures for adults with care and support needs who are not attending or are unable to attend appointments.

This guidance is for all professionals and staff who have contact with adults with care and support needs and applies to anybody over the age of 18 years old. For people who are aged 16-17 discuss with your organisations children's safeguarding lead.

Introduction

This guidance was developed in response to recommendations from Safeguarding Adult and Domestic Homicide Reviews and safeguarding incidents which were escalated to multi-agency safeguarding partners. The issue of managing missed appointments is therefore not an isolated matter and it has become apparent that organisations require support on how to manage missed appointments, particularly for adults with care and support needs.

There is a need to consider and manage any known risks and respect individual's choices whilst applying the safeguarding principles and procedures to these situations. The reasons for non-attendance must be considered from a safeguarding perspective, whilst ensuring reasons are recorded, and necessary support, signposting and escalation are undertaken.

It is also important to acknowledge that safeguarding reviews have recognised good practice by organisations and where professionals have supported adults when their engagement was low, worked with other agencies to gain access for home visits, and liaised with partners to find the best ways to communicate with the adult.

Disengagement with services is a frequent finding in reviews therefore practitioners must analyse, and risk assess situations where disengagement is a feature.

Purpose

The aim of this guidance is to support adults to attend appointments where possible, and ensure that where appointments are missed, that this is followed up in line with the [Care Act 2014 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/16) and this guidance to:

- Ensure that the safety and wellbeing of adults who miss an appointment or home visit is considered and responded to
- Consider whether referral pathways to other services need to be taken
- Support services to meet their safeguarding responsibilities and to provide evidence of how they manage missed appointments of adults at risk
- Support early intervention which is fundamental to the prevention of safeguarding incidents

- Promote effective communication and information sharing with multi-agency professionals and services when adults do not attend appointments and there are suspected, or known, safeguarding concerns identified

Responsibilities

Organisations need to ensure:

- a) That they meet their safeguarding responsibilities outlined in the [Care Act 2014](#)
- b) That their organisation complies with the [Care Quality Commission \(cqc.org.uk\)](#), [National Centre for Post-Qualifying Social Work and Professional Practice](#) and Safeguarding minimum standards included in the [National Competency Framework for Safeguarding Adults](#).
- c) Best practice is to provide as much information as possible in relation to the adult's care and support needs prior to an appointment, so reasonable adjustments can be made.
- d) By law [Section 250 Health and Social Care Act 2012](#) all organisations that provide NHS care or adult social care must follow the Accessible Information Standard. The Accessible Information Standard aims to make sure that people who have a disability, impairment or sensory loss get information that they can access and understand, and any communication support that they need from health and care services.
- e) That practitioners understand the impact of factors that can reduce engagement with services including physical and mental health issues.
- f) For adults with care and support needs practitioners should be aware of the risks and impact that non-attendance at appointments can pose to the individual.

Potential reasons for missed appointments

Adults who are more at risk of non-attendance often have multiple pressures and demands because of physical and/or social challenges such as:

(This list is not exhaustive)

- Reliance on others to support them to their appointment
- Difficulties travelling to appointments
- Domestic Abuse particularly where there is coercive control by the adult who causes harm
- Adult abuse and neglect and self-neglect
- Lack of Trust in Organisations
- Literacy
- Language and cultural difficulties barriers
- Learning disabilities/difficulties/autism
- Physical health barriers
- Mental ill health
- Cognitive impairments and capacity issues
- Under the influence of substances
- Homelessness
- Poverty
- Experience discrimination
- Adverse Childhood Experiences
- Caring responsibilities

Organisations should recognise the importance of providing services which are accessible, relevant, user friendly, engaging, and equitable to all. Therefore, when arranging appointments and visits, services should consider reasonable adjustments and steps to prevent or reduce the potential for non-attendance.

Reasonable adjustments and steps to increase engagement may include:

- Offer information that is in an accessible format e.g. easy read documents, advocacy, carer support, British Sign Language using an interpreter and Brail. Try to establish the adults preferred method of communication and record this for any future appointments.
- Ask the adult or advocate about the location of the appointment – where could the appointment best be provided? Can the adult with care and support needs afford the travel costs, could transport be considered and arranged?
- Ask the adult or advocate what reasonable adjustments should be made - for example time of day, coordination of appointments, quieter area to wait before appointment, ground level consulting rooms, where possible reminders for appointments be provided, flexibility to plan around the carer/family availability.

If any of the adjustments above are required (including accessible information), then they should be communicated to other services involved with the adult for example within referral letters. This will enable all agencies to work together to engage the adult in the most appropriate way and may help reduce missed appointments.

Carers assessment

Where it appears that a carer/family member may require or request support in their role, including financial support, a referral should be made for an Assessment under the Care Act 2014. Links to Carer support and assessment:

[Knowsley Adult Social Care - Requesting a care assessment](#)
[Knowsley Adult Social Care - Social Care Needs Assessment](#)

Responsibility of the provider of the appointment

Providers of appointment should make reasonable efforts to enable access to appointments as stated above where an adult has identified care and support needs. If an adult does not engage in appointments, the provider should contact the referrer to advise of the missed appointment where possible. In addition, the provider should follow their agency internal policies and procedures for missed appointments.

Responsibility of the Referrer of Appointments

The referrer of missed appointments should follow the directions included in the flowchart below in addition to their agency internal policies and procedure for missed appointments.

Flowchart for referrer of the missed appointments of Adults with Care and Support Needed

Adult with care and support needs did not attend a prearranged appointment or engage with a service you have referred to



Document missed appointment in adult's records then:



Review the adult's records:

- Check contact details are correct
- Consider any potential factors which may have prevented attendance, consider risk factors
- Consider known cognition issues, mental ill health, substance misuse and the effect on attendance
- Determine the level of risk that non-attendance/engagement causes to the adult and/or others
- Check if all **reasonable adjustments** and steps to support have been made

Contact and discuss reasons for non-attendance with the adult/advocate or carer.

Repeated cancellations and non-attendance at appointments should be discussed with the adult/advocate or carer, your line manager (or safeguarding lead if you have one).

Consider which other agencies are involved, consider calling a multi-agency risk management meeting ([MARAM](#)) to share information and agree how best to support the adult/carer to engage in appointments.

Complete the brief risk assessment (**Appendix 1**) and follow up actions.

NOTE

Always consider if a safeguarding referral is required

Contact MASH for advice if needed

0151 443 2600

The Safeguarding referral form can be found here:

[Knowsley Safeguarding Adults](#)

Yes

Is a further appointment required?

No

The completed Brief Risk Assessment (**Appendix 1**) should be recorded in the adult's record.

Follow up on actions highlighted in the Brief Risk Assessment Document.

Arrange a further appointment: If adult fails to attend, recommence the flow chart.

Update your Line Manager/Safeguarding Lead.

Make a further appointment if required.

The completed Brief Risk Assessment (**Appendix 1**) should be recorded in the adult's record.

NB: Record any action taken/referrals made or discussions undertaken.

Close case down.

Appendix 1 – Brief Risk Assessment for missed appointments of Adults with Care and Support Needs

			Record outcome
1	Does the individual's physical or mental ill health impact their ability to attend appointments?	Y/N/Unknown	
2	Are there any identified or suspected safeguarding risks for example self-neglect, substance misuse, risks of falls, control and coercion from others, domestic abuse, child protection plans etc.	Y/N/Unknown	
3	Have all reasonable adjustments been made to support attendance at appointments	Y/N/Unknown	
4	Has there been a recent period of ill health/ hospitalisation/significant life event?	Y/N/Unknown	
5	Does the individual have a carer or family member, friend or advocate?	Y/N/Unknown	
6	Is there a history of missed appointments?	Y/N/Unknown	
7	Could this adult be at risk of immediate harm if not located/not seen? If yes, refer urgently to appropriate service e.g., mental health, police, Adult Social Care	Y/N/Unknown	
8	Has contact been made with all relevant agencies to gather/share information and inform your next steps?	Y/N	
<p>In summary of the number of yes/no's or unknowns, the following outcomes should be considered. In all cases your decision should be recorded.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No concern/risk 2. Is a safeguarding referral required? Discuss with your line manager (safeguarding lead if you have one) or is advice from MASH needed? 			

3. Do you need to call a multi-agency risk assessment meeting ([MARAM](#)) to discuss the case with other agencies who are or who could be involved to reduce the risks to the individual?

4. Are additional adjustments required?

Record outcome of your decision making, rational and actions:

Name

Date

Signature

Links to sources of Support

- For referral of adults at risk - [Knowsley Safeguarding Adults](#)
- Adult Social Care Community Access Team (9am to 5pm) 0151 443 2600
- For Adult Social Care emergency support, contact the Emergency Duty Team 0151 443 2600
- For help for adults moving out of care [Local offer for Knowsley care leavers | Knowsley Council](#)
- [Benefits and grants | Knowsley Council](#) (funding provided by the Government to help vulnerable households)
- [The Knowsley Offer | Knowsley Better Together](#) (package of support, services and facilities that the Council and partners offer to residents)
- If you think that you are eligible for free school meals but have not applied, go to [School meals and menus | Knowsley Council](#)
- To apply for help with Housing costs you can apply for [Housing Benefit | Knowsley Council](#)
- For additional emergency support with food, please ask for a referral to your [Knowsley Foodbank | Helping Local People in Crisis](#)

Useful resources:

[The Care Act \(2014\)](#)

[Mental Capacity Act \(2005\)](#)

[Health and social care | Knowsley Council](#)

Procedures and guidance for related issues are on the [Knowsley Safeguarding Adults Board](#) including:

- [Safeguarding Adults Procedure](#)
- [Self-Neglect Toolkit](#)
- [Criteria for a Safeguarding Referral](#)
- [Mental Health, Self-Harm and Suicidal Ideation Guidance](#)
- [7-minute briefing on professional curiosity](#)
- [7-minute briefing on financial abuse](#)
- [MARAM \(Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management\) Guidance](#)