

Dealing with Emergencies or Serious Incidents in Adults Social Care

Scope

This document provides guidance and details the actions that should be taken by adult social care teams when an emergency or critical incident arises for a customer

Associated Guidance

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• London Multi-Agency Adult Safeguarding Policy, Practice Guidance and Procedures, November 2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Redbridge Safeguarding Adult Board (RSAB) Safeguarding Adults Local Protocol
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Missing Person Procedure
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Serious Incident Policy

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Procedure for No Reply from Customer at Home

The nature of the client group that Adults Social care teams support often means that we are assisting clients who have recently been discharged from hospital or have experienced deterioration in their core function and abilities. This can mean that any risk level is higher and therefore the importance of ensuring a client's safety is paramount throughout our interventions and service delivery.

The management of such issues as a no reply will depend on the service undertaking contact and will therefore require a differing intervention, however, look to achieve the same outcome of understanding where or what has happened to the individual and understanding if they are safe.

Social Worker, Social Care Assistant, Care Manager, Occupational Therapist roles and responsibilities:

If undertaking a visit staff should give the individual enough time to come to the door (Between 5-10 minutes)
If there is no answer at the door ring the individual on their home/mobile number (Again giving them sufficient time to answer)
Check the immediate area for a keysafe
Contact a neighbour to enquire as to whether they have seen the individual or have any information regarding their whereabouts.
Contact the NOK/Emergency contact to establish if the individual is known to be away
Put a missed visit slip through the individual's door identifying the time and date of visit and providing the contact details for them to contact us.

If the individual's whereabouts are not established after the above has been carried out, contact is to be made to the Duty Senior of the day in the office (between 9am-5pm) to inform them of the situation.

Information from the checks that have been completed should be passed to the Duty Senior, Senior Social Worker and team manager escalating the situation and actions taken to them.

Role of the Duty Senior

Following contact from the relevant worker, the Duty Senior for the day, should undertake a risk assessment that considers the safety of the customer, which takes the information already known into consideration.

Risk factors should include:

• When was the individual last seen
• Who last saw the individual last?
• Did the individual appear unwell when last seen
• Does the individual have limited mobility

• Is the individual known to go out
• Does the individual have a history or has recently been known to wander.
• Does the individual have a history of falls
• Does the individual suffer from diabetes, epilepsy, confusion, alcohol abuse, depression, Sensory impairments visual impairments, deafness, or any other medical or mental health issues that could place them at risk if not supported.
• Are we aware of any Safeguarding Adults concerns

The Duty Senior should then inform the worker whether they should make any more attempts to trace the individual.

The relevant worker should check all sources of information (electronic and hard copy records) and carry out the checks outlined on the No reply checklist and escalate the outcome to the Duty Senior.

No reply checklist:

Check emails and voicemails	Email and voicemails should be checked in order to ascertain if any messages have been left in regard to the individual.
CM2000 Visits	Worker to check with Reablement if providing intervention to review the visit logs and tags that relate to this individual.
Check Liquid Logic for case notes	Case notes should be checked in order to ascertain as to whether we were notified of any appointments or reasons the individual is not answering.
Contact Case manager	If the contacting worker is not the case manager they should make contact with the allocated case manager to establish if they are aware of individuals whereabouts and to support in the risk assessment
Contact Locality District Nurse Team	To establish if they are aware of the individual and if they have visited them recently to support in the risk assessment
Contact Redbridge Lifeline team	Telephone contact should be made to Redbridge Lifeline Control centre to ascertain as to whether they have had any interaction with the individual if applicable
Contact the GP	Telephone contact should be made the GP in order to ascertain if there has been any contact with the individual.
Contact the local A&E Departments	Telephone contact should be made to, King Georges, Queens, Whipps Cross Newham University Hospital, Homerton and Royal London Hospital A&E departments to see if individual has been or is there.
Contact local hospitals	Telephone contact should be made to, King Georges, Queens, Whipps Cross Newham University Hospital, RLH and Homerton Hospitals bed states to see if individual has been admitted.

If the individual's location has not been established following all the required checks and the individual is associated with increased risk factors, it must be assumed that the person is still within the property and that something is wrong.

At this point the Duty Senior of the service should be informed and the relevant worker will be required to contact the Police - by telephoning the CAD room of the nearest police station - to ask them to gain entry.

When contacting the police:

Relevant details will need to be provided to the Police; therefore the worker should ensure that they have the individual's information ready. Once all information is provided the worker should ask for a CAD reference number and make a note of it onto Care First also providing the information to the relevant Social Work team or allocated worker for them to follow up accordingly. (This will prove that the police have logged the request onto their computer and will take some action).

Police visit

Wherever possible: arrangements should be made by the Duty Senior for a member of staff to be present when the Police attend the individual's home.

If there is no member of staff present when the Police break in, the relevant worker should check the outcome of the visit with the Police by contacting them and quoting the CAD reference number and provide an update to the Duty Senior.

Please note:

It is important that regular updates are provided to any relevant family/friends or professionals and that any actions undertaken are clearly documented on the relevant electronic recording systems, (Liquid Logic & Rio).

2. Missing Persons

In the eventuality that an worker gains access, to a property via keysafe and the client is not there, they should immediately leave the property and immediately implement the no reply actions

If the individual is not located following the forced entry by the Police, the Missing Persons procedure to be followed.

3. Procedure for a Medical Emergency

This section of the guidance will highlight the relevant actions that are required where a medical emergency or accident takes place or is discovered.

- Falls where the individual is not able to get up by themselves
- Scalds
- Head injuries
- Collapse/ non responsive

Role and responsibilities of the Workers

All Workers are required to use the skills gained through any first aid training undertaken in order to ensure that the individual receives the initial treatment that may be required until medical professionals arrive, this includes ensuring the immediate area is free from further risk of harm.

Staff are required to ensure that:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If an individual has fallen or collapsed, They Do Not lift or move the individual.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• They phone for an ambulance immediately and wait with the individual for the ambulance to arrive.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• They stay right next to the individual so that workers can notice any changes in their condition.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• They try to engage the individual in conversation and offer as much reassurance and comfort as workers can.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• They call the office and inform Duty Senior as soon as possible.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• They keep the individual warm.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• They Do Not give the individual anything to drink or eat.

Where the worker has discovered, assisted, provided first aid or called for an ambulance they must complete an incident accident report and ensure the Duty Senior is aware.

Role and Responsibilities of the Duty Senior of the day

If the worker has not already done so, the Duty Senior involved should tell them to phone for an ambulance immediately by dialling 999.

The Duty Senior should also discuss with the worker if there is any action that can be taken to assist, e.g.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contacting friends or relatives of the individual
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Informing other individual that there may be a delay (If other visits/meetings were scheduled)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Arranging cover from other workers
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Any other means of supporting the worker
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ask the worker to let you know the outcome and to keep in touch

If the Duty Senior considers it necessary, the worker should be reminded to do the following:

- A) Keep the individual warm
- B) Not to give the individual anything to drink or to eat
- C) To be as reassuring as possible
- D) Make sure that the individual takes the following items to hospital

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• House Keys
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Handbag or Wallet
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Spectacles
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nightwear
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Toiletries

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medication |
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E) To write down the following information and give it to the ambulance crew or to tell the ambulance crew

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name and Address
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Telephone Number
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date of Birth
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medication
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Next of Kin
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who is present

F) To ensure the property is secure and let the Duty Senior know any outcomes. Please note that workers must not remain in the property alone.

Duties under the Care Act 2014 s47

This section of the act sets out the local authority's responsibilities in relation to the protection of a person's property where they have been:

- Admitted as an inpatient to any hospital
- Admitted to accommodation such as care homes.
- Is removed to any other place under an order including the Mental Health Act.

In instances where a customer has been removed from the property for any of the above reasons and an LBR worker has been present they should ensure that:

- The property is secure before they leave
- Not to stay on their own in the property
- Alert case manager who is responsible for monitoring the customer during their hospital admission and making decisions regarding the customers property

4. Procedure if Body of Customer Found

This part of the guidance sets out what actions should be taken by both the workers and the Duty Senior in the eventuality that an individual is discovered or thought to be dead.

The workers should not automatically assume that the individual is dead. Workers should dial 999 immediately and ask for an ambulance and carry out any action requested by the operator, always keeping in liaison with the office

Workers must not attempt to move the body or anything else in the property. They should immediately telephone the office and speak with the Duty Senior or another manager immediately and tell them what has happened. Workers should not wait to get through to their own line managing Senior and should not leave a message! If the Duty Senior is not available ask to speak to another manager or Senior.

The Duty Senior should ask the worker to wait outside the property for an office based member of staff to attend

The Duty Senior of the day should also call the police by telephoning the CAD room of the nearest Police Station, asking for a CAD reference number and making a note of it. This will prove that the Police have logged the request onto their computer and will take some action.

The Police should be asked to go to the property immediately.

The Duty Senior should inform and liaise with their line manager and if they are not available, the Head of Service. The Team Manager should be advised of any serious incidents, injuries or death and will be required to alert the Senior Manager on call.

When attending the individual's home, the attending worker should take any information with them about the individual, which may assist the Police to contact the next of kin.

If the worker will be delayed because of this emergency, the Duty Senior should check the details of their next appointments and arrange with a colleague for cover. If this is not possible, then the Duty Senior should arrange for the individuals to be informed that there is a delay or the need to reschedule.

Please Note:

It is the responsibility of the Police to break the bad news to the relatives unless a senior member of staff is competent in doing this. (Senior Social Worker or Team Manager)

The attending Duty Senior should wait outside the address until either the relatives have arrived or until the Police arrive. S/he should not enter the property on his or her own.

If the relatives are not present, the attending Duty Senior should go into the property with the Police and act as a witness while the Police take out any valuables.

When the attending Duty Senior leaves the premises, the Police will secure the property. The attending Duty Senior should place the keys in the office safe for collection by the relatives. If relatives arrive at the property, the attending Duty Senior should give them the keys ensuring that they sign a receipt. If there are any doubts about the identity of the relatives, they should be invited to the office to pick up the keys.

The line manager for the worker that discovered the body should discuss with the worker if they would like time off, a supervision session or counselling and arrange for this if necessary.

The Duty Senior/line manager should also arrange for any other services, e.g. the service provider, District Nurses, Day Centre, Social Worker, to be informed.

S/he should ensure that Liquid Logic & Rio are updated.

5. Service user at risk of harm from others

Every individual has the right to live their life with privacy, dignity, independence and choice, and be free from abuse or fear of aggression and violence

All staff are responsible for the protection of vulnerable adults

Alerting and Reporting Abuse

The following steps must be taken if an abuse has been witnessed or reported:

- Listen calmly to the person
- Talk reassuringly to the person
- Explain that you must inform your line manager
- Tell them that help and support is available with their consent
- Make an accurate report of the allegation using person's own words
- Describe the circumstances in which it occurred
- Keep person informed of all follow-on proceedings.

If the individual is at immediate risk of harm communication must be had with the Duty Senior in regard to ascertaining if the Police must be called. In all instances where the Police are called the Team Manager must be informed at the earliest opportunity.

Serious injuries

Relevant professionals or Duty Senior must notify the relevant Team Manager whenever any injuries occur.

Role of the service

Where serious injury or the abuse of an Adult At Risk has been identified and an alert raised, the Duty Senior or Relevant Manager must be informed about the alleged abuse involving a person(s) using our service. This includes where the person(s) is either the victim(s) or the abuser(s), or both. Discussion must be had with the Duty Senior who will require that the worker completes a Safeguarding Adults concern form.

6. Useful numbers

Please note that all involved and/or Duty Seniors should ensure that all contacts, conversations and actions are clearly recorded onto LAS (Liquid Logic) and all other record keeping data bases used by the teams.

Telecare	
King George Hospital admissions	01708435000 ext 4278
Queens Hospital admissions states	01708435000 ext 4278
Whipps Cross Hospital bed states	
Newham University Hospital bed states	
RLH	02073777000
Homerton	
King Georges Hospital A&E	01708435000 ext 8696
Queens Hospital A&E	01708435392
Whipps Cross hospital A&E	02085395522
Newham University Hospital A&E	
Homerton	020851045555

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