

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE MULTI-AGENCY ADULT RISK MANAGEMENT (ARM) PROCESS

1. Introduction

Where a person has needs for care and support, or they may be experiencing abuse or neglect (or at risk of), and they are unable to protect themselves, then a safeguarding concern should be made via the local authority for consideration under section 44 (1) or 44 (2). However, where the person does not have care and support needs and is not experiencing abuse or neglect, but whose behaviour is putting them at serious risk, then the ARM process should be followed as they may fall outside the safeguarding process. Serious risks might include self-neglect, hoarding, fire risk, alcohol & substance misuse, or not engaging with services that are trying to help them to reduce their dangerous behaviours. Please refer to [Inter-Agency Policy & Procedures](#), the [Decision Making Framework Guidance](#) and the [ARM Toolkit](#) for further information.

The Adult Risk Management (ARM) process provides professionals from all agencies with a framework to facilitate effective multi-agency working with individuals aged 18+ who are deemed to have capacity for specific decisions that may result in serious harm/death through severe self-neglect, risk taking behaviours.

An ARM is **NOT** a substitute to legislation, assessment and/or all other existing processes (such as Mental Health Act (1983; 1999); Mental Capacity Act (2005), Safeguarding Adults (Care Act, 2014), Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA), Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) or Channel (framework around counter Terrorism). Whilst these processes take precedence, an ARM could be considered alongside if it is felt that it may also support the individual.

2. What is an ARM?

- Works with the adult's strength to formulate an action plan for an adult for whom there are significant concerns about the capacitous decision(s) they are making and the impact that this could have on their safety or the protection of others.
- An opportunity to ensure that all agencies have offered support and options to the adult whose life is at serious risk of harm.
- Identifies responsibility for specific actions and a mechanism for review and re-evaluation of the action plan.
- A multi-agency approach to risk enablement, identifying actions for individuals and agencies to reduce or remove risk for the adult whilst considering which professional is best placed to successfully engage with them for the implementation of the Risk Enablement Plan.
- Can be used prior, during or after a safeguarding enquiry, linking with the inter-agency Safeguarding procedures.

Each agency should identify a lead(s) within their organisation. Agencies include, but are not limited to:

- North Northamptonshire Council & West Northamptonshire Council - Adult Social Care & Housing
- Environmental Health
- Health Economy including hospitals and mental health services
- Northamptonshire Fire and Rescue Service
- Northamptonshire Police
- Probation Service
- Alcohol and Drug Services
- East Midlands Ambulance Service and NHS England

3. Criteria for ARM

In order to consider an adult for an ARM **ALL** four criteria should apply:

1. The adult must have the capacity to make decisions regarding the specific decision(s) that is causing concern;
2. The practitioner has no reason to doubt the adult has capacity and should state the reasons and provide proof, where applicable.
3. There is a risk of serious harm/death through severe self-neglect; fire; deteriorating health condition; declining to work with services; hate crime or anti-social behaviour; sexual violence;
4. There is a public safety interest or there is a high level of concern from partner agencies.

4. Establishing Capacity

The consideration and assessment of an individual's capacity to make a specific decision is a vital element in care planning with adults with additional care and support needs. The framework of the [Mental Capacity Act \(2005\)](#) and Best Interests decision making should be used to support and safeguard individuals who are found to lack capacity for making decisions about specific decisions.

5. Definition of Serious Harm

For the purpose of this policy, "serious harm" refers to the death or injury (either physical or psychological) which is life threatening and/or traumatic and which is viewed to be imminent or very likely to occur.

6. Definition of Self-Neglect

The Social Care Institute of Excellence (SCIE) defines self-neglect as having three possible strands:

1. **Self-care** – lack of care over personal hygiene, health, nutrition or hydration leading to potentially severe harm or death.
2. **Environment** – lack of care leading to squalor or hoarding.
3. **Refusal of services which may mitigate harm** - such as help with alcoholism, or risk-taking behaviour.

The Care Act (2014) includes self-neglect within adult safeguarding and some self-neglect cases will be managed through the safeguarding procedures under a section 42 enquiry. However, not every case of self-neglect will meet the criteria for a safeguarding enquiry. The critical factor is likely to be if an adult is able to manage their own behaviour to prevent harm to themselves.

7. The ARM Process

- Any agency can initiate an ARM meeting, not just Adult Social Services.
- The lead agency is responsible for initiating, co-ordinating and leading the ARM process (this includes arranging the ARM meeting, collating partnership comments, circulating the minutes and completing the Risk Enabling Plan.
- The lead agency is responsible for seeking consent from the adult to hold the ARM and they (or their advocate/family/carer), should be encouraged to participate in the process. If this is not possible, the reason should be recorded in the meeting minutes – see Pro Forma 1.
- A lack of consent would not prevent an ARM from taking place. Under common law and the Care Act 2014, a person may act to prevent serious harm from occurring if there is a necessity to do so.
- Children's Services should be invited to the meeting if there are children living in the household, or linked to the adult being considered under an ARM, and a referral **MUST** be made via the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) via the [Internet](#).

- Non-statutory, voluntary sector and local community groups should be encouraged to attend where possible if this presents an opportunity to positively engage with the individual.
- An agency can request attendance of another agency even if the adult is unknown to them.
- All partner agencies must ensure appropriate staff are allocated to the ARM with the appropriate seniority required to make necessary decisions on behalf of their agency.
- The adult's GP should always be notified, even if the case is deemed as 'no further action required' during the process.

8. Recording the ARM Process

The Chair of the ARM is responsible for agreeing the meeting minutes (Pro Forma 1) and the Risk Enabling Plan (Pro Forma 2) to ensure they are an accurate reflection of the meeting. These should be distributed to all agencies involved in a timely manner. Having a minute taker is the best practice but this depends on the capacity of the lead organisation. There is an expectation that the completed ARM minutes (Pro Forma 1) and Risk Enablement Plan (Pro Forma 2) will be circulated within a period of 3 working days to all interested parties, including the GP.

Each agency is expected to manage, record and hold their own records when an adult is considered under the ARM process. Actions agreed at the ARM need to be initiated immediately by all partners and must not rely on the minutes being distributed.

When initiating an ARM, ensure you allocate a unique ARM Reference No. for your organisation. This should be pre-fixed with your organisation i.e. NHFT- North Northants Council- Police- West Northants Council- etc.

Ensure you inform your agency's designated ARM lead when you initiate and close an ARM so that a true record is obtained

Your designated ARM lead will submit a quarterly monitoring form to West Northamptonshire Council by the 7th of the month following the quarter i.e. Q1 - April-June (by 7th July), Q2 – July-September (by 7th October) etc. This should include the initial risk score, dates of the meetings and a final risk score when completed (see the [ARM Toolkit](#)). A nil return should also be sent. **The monitoring form should be completed in full and emailed to ARM.NCC@westnorthants.gov.uk** Please also refer to the Lead Agency checklist in the [Adult Risk Management Toolkit](#).

9. Reviewing the Risk Enabling Process

The lead agency and/or Chair will need to reconvene the meeting at appropriate intervals to review the Risk Enabling Plan. Each member of the ARM has the responsibility for reporting back to the lead agency if they feel a further meeting needs to be convened at an earlier time.

10. Closing the ARM

A decision to exit the ARM process can be made at the multi-agency meeting if the risks have reduced and the individual is no longer felt to be at serious harm. If circumstances change, the adult can be re-considered for the process.

11. ARM Oversight Panel

The ARM Oversight Panel has been developed from the need to establish an improved system to facilitate multi-agency working in Northamptonshire to support complex high-risk cases that fall outside of the safeguarding process. The panel will consider cases for adults aged 18+, where existing mechanisms for resolving or minimising risk have not been achieved.

The panel will enable a more proactive approach via a forum for professionals who are supporting people with chronic and entrenched risk taking behaviours. The forum will provide necessary guidance for professionals on how to commence an ARM and which agencies should be involved.

The panel will act in an advisory capacity and will make recommendations on what would be reasonable in terms of managing risk while balancing the rights of all concerned.

Guidance may include:

- Determine whether the individual in question meets the need for ARM or a different intervention.
- Improve information sharing between agencies to identify, clarify and agree the most appropriate pathway to reduce risk.
- Improve multi-agency communication pathways.
- Promote the safety and wellbeing of adults in high risk situations.
- Provide advice and guidance to the referring agency.
- Identify the most appropriate agencies and practitioners to be involved in the ARM.
- Improve agency accountability.
- Identify a lead agency.
- Support agencies in their work to lower and manage risk.
- Monitor and evaluate the success of the ARM.

12. Information Sharing

The NSAB Information Sharing Protocol exists to remind professionals of their duty to share information about individual's who may be at risk of harming themselves and/or others with a view to safeguarding all involved. At all times, practitioners required to be mindful of their duties under appropriate legislation and [GDPR](#).

13. Human Rights

Human rights are the basic rights and freedoms that belong to every individual in the world, from birth to death and apply regardless of where an individual from, what they believe or how they choose to live their life. Based on shared values of dignity, fairness, equality, respect and independence, they are defined and protected by the [Human Rights Act 1998](#). Whilst an individual's rights can never be taken away, restrictions can be applied under certain circumstances (such as criminal acts or in the interests of national security).

Balancing an individual's right to self-determination and personal freedom with the acknowledgement of the potential of harm that could come from the decisions they are making is a real challenge for all services. Involving the individual is an essential part of the ARM process.

14. Quality Assurance

Each agency is required to maintain records of an ARM and assure the quality of referrals. West Northamptonshire Adult Social Services Business Unit will collate the data by the 10th of the month following the quarter (see above) and share it with the NSAB Business Manager. Quality will be assured through audits completed quarterly as part of NSAB's Quality & Performance Sub Group.



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