



## Escalation Procedure

# *Resolution of Professional Disagreements in Safeguarding or Self-Neglect Decisions*

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BCSSP Escalation Procedure

## Document Control

Title of Document	Escalation Procedure: <i>Resolution of Professional Disagreements in Safeguarding or Self-Neglect Decisions</i>
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## Version Control

Version	Date	Reviewer	Change Made
V2	June 2018	Leigh Zywek	Replaced previous single Board Escalation Policies from 2015 and 2016
V3	March 2019	Leigh Zywek	Change to email address
V4	July 2020	Kirstie Webb	Change from LSAB/LSCB to BCSSP
V5	June 2021	Leigh Zywek / Kirstie Webb	Complete review

## Purpose

To provide clear guidance for the resolution of professional disagreements that may arise in relation to safeguarding and self-neglect decisions, in a timely manner, that ensures the needs of the adult/child at risk are met.

## Introduction

The Bath & North East Somerset Community Safety and Safeguarding Partnership (BCSSP) believes that feedback is an important part of self-improvement and raising standards. Professional disagreements or differences of practitioner opinion can enable useful discussion and debate and provide opportunity for us to adjust and improve services and systems. Providing a formal and clear way for concerns to be expressed and heard is one way that respect for partners and stakeholders can be demonstrated. Challenge is a key part of effective and healthy partnership working and organisations should view and respond to challenges brought under this procedure in a positive manner.

## Principles

1. The procedure is designed to support the development of a shared understanding of thresholds within B&NES
2. It is for use among all staff working both in the statutory and voluntary sector, who work with children and/or adults with care and support needs
3. All workers should feel able to challenge decision making and view this as their right and responsibility to improve multi-agency practices
4. This procedure provides workers with the guidance to raise concerns they have about decisions made by other professionals or services by:
  - a. Avoiding professional differences that may hinder the progress of the child/adult, their care or put them at risk
  - b. Resolving the difficulties within and between organisations quickly and transparently
  - c. Identifying problem areas in working together where there is a lack of clarity
  - d. Promoting effective resolutions by considering required amendments to organisational protocols and procedures
5. The child/adult with care and support needs and their family or carer should be at the centre of all professional discussions

## Timeframes

Resolution should be sought within the shortest timescales possible to ensure the child/adult at risk is protected and improved outcomes planned for. Professional disagreements should be resolved at the lowest possible stage and from the outset of a concern being considered by any worker, it should take no longer than 10 working days for it to be either resolved or if not resolved, escalated to stage 4.

When a child/adult with care and support needs is thought to be at risk of immediate harm, everyone must take action to escalate to an appropriate level so that the required action is taken within 24 hours.

## Additional Requirements

1. At all stages of the process actions and decisions must be recorded in writing and shared with relevant persons, including the worker who raised the concern. See Appendix 2.
2. This must include written confirmation between the parties about an agreed outcome of the disagreement and how any outstanding actions will be pursued
3. A reflective debrief may be useful following the disagreement in order to promote continued positive working relationships
4. In order to find out who the appropriate manager or representative is of another service, please ask the practitioner, line manager or senior manager involved for who the next person would be and obtain contact details from them directly. All agencies **MUST** share this information with colleagues in the interest of resolving the disagreement swiftly.

Procedure			
<p><b>Stage 1</b></p> <p>Within 2 working days</p>	<p>Identifying the concern worker to worker</p>	<p>Recognition that there is disagreement over a significant issue/concern which impacts on the safety and welfare of the child/adult with care and support needs. Initially consult with supervisor or line manager to clarify thinking, identify the problem, be specific about what the disagreement is about and develop actions that need to be taken as a result. Evidence the nature of the concern and keep a record of any discussions on the proforma (<b>Appendix 2</b>). If possible, discuss the concerns directly with the other practitioner involved to agree a way forward.</p>	<p>Issue resolved no further action required.</p> <p>Issue not resolved, progress to Stage 2</p>
<p><b>Stage 2</b></p> <p>Within 3 working days of stage 1</p>	<p>Discussing the concern Manager to Manager</p>	<p>If the concern is not resolved at Stage 1, the concerned worker should speak directly with their line manager who should raise the concerns directly with the counterpart line manager in the other service and make every effort to resolve the concerns. Records must be kept and the resolution shared in writing with all parties. <b>Complete Appendix 2 to register use of Procedure for any professional disagreements beyond Stage 1.</b></p>	<p>Issue resolved. The manager who resolved the issue must notify the BCSSP Business Manager using Appendix 2.</p> <p>Issue not resolved, progress to Stage 3.</p>
<p><b>Stage 3</b></p> <p>Within 4 working days of stage 2</p>	<p>Raising the concern senior manager to senior manager</p>	<p>If unresolved, the issue should be referred to an appropriate level of senior management within the organisation, who will discuss with the appropriate manager in the other organisation. The senior managers must make every attempt to resolve the professional difference through discussion. Meetings/conversations should continue to be documented by each respective organisation in addition to completing <b>Appendix 2</b>. Once the issue is resolved, Appendix 2 should be sent internally to your organisations Stage 4</p>	<p>Issue resolved, the manager who resolved the issue must notify the BCSSP Business Manager who will notify the Assistant Director Children and Young People or the Director of Adult Social Care using Appendix 2</p>

		representative and the BCSSP Business Manager, who will share with either the Assistant Director Children and Young People or the Director of Adult Social Care as appropriate	Issue not resolved, progress to Stage 4
<b>Stage 4</b>  Within 5 working days of stage 3	Refer concern to BCSSP	If the concern can still not be resolved, the matter should be referred to the agencies nominated BCSSP representative who should contact either the Assistant Director Children and Young People or the Director of Adult Social Care as appropriate, who may chair a meeting of all parties to seek a resolution. If the matter remains unresolved, consideration will be given to referring to the Independent Chair of the BCSSP who will consider mediation or a resolution panel in more complex cases. The panel must consist of three BCSSP member agencies and include those agencies involved in the dispute. The panel will receive representation from those concerned in the dispute and make a decision on the next course of action.  The decision reached in mediation or at Dispute Panel is final and binding on all organisations involved.	Final binding decision made.

## Appendix 1 Flowchart: Guidance for Resolution of Professional Differences

### Stage 1

#### Worker to Worker – Identify the Concern

Professional is not happy with decision/response from any agency, at any stage. Professional discusses with their line manager and counterpart in the other agency, if appropriate.

Has the concern been resolved to both parties satisfaction?

No

Yes

Complete Appendix 2 for own records  
Concerned worker advised of outcome.  
Exit process.

### Stage 2

#### Manager to Manager

The manager should discuss the concern with their counterpart in the other organisation to try to resolve the issue

Has the concern been resolved to both parties satisfaction?

No

Yes

Concerned worker advised of outcome. Escalation Registration form sent to BCSSP Business Manager.  
Exit process

### Stage 3

#### Senior Manager to Senior Manager

If unresolved at Stage 2, the issue should be referred to a manager at an appropriate level within the organisation to discuss with their counterpart to seek a resolution

Has the concern been resolved to both parties satisfaction?

No

Yes

Concerned worker advised of outcome. Escalation Registration form sent to BCSSP Business Manager and shared with Director Children and Young People/Director Adult Social Care.  
Exit process

### Stage 4

If still not resolved, senior manager to refer to their agencies nominated BCSSP representative who should contact either the Assistant Director Children and Young People or the Director of Adult Social Care as appropriate and a meeting will be convened where necessary

Some matters will be resolved very quickly, and this will be determined by the complexity of the issues. In all cases, the matter should be resolved as speedily as possible and the primary focus will be the safety and welfare of the child/adult concerned. The decision reached at Stage 4 is final and binding on all organisations involved.

## Appendix 2: Registration of use of Escalation Procedure Pro-forma

This form is to be used to record the initial disagreement at Stage 1 and stored securely for your own records.

If the Escalation Procedure for any professional disagreements extends beyond Stage 1, then it can also be recorded here but the form should be sent to the BCSSP Business Manager to register the use of the Procedure.

Please send this form securely to the BCSSP Business Manager, [Kirstie\\_webb@bathnes.gov.uk](mailto:Kirstie_webb@bathnes.gov.uk)

Please password protect if not being sent from a secure email address.

For all Health commissioned services, the Business Manager will securely send a copy to the Designated Nurse CCG, who will disseminate to the relevant safeguarding lead in Health to keep an audit of the use of the escalation procedure in their organisation.

Case Details			
Date of Original Disagreement:			
Child/Adult Name:			
Date of Birth:			
Address:			
Agencies/ Workers involved			
Names	Designation	Agency	Contact Details
Nature of Professional Disagreement			
Attempts to Resolve the Disagreement at Stage 1			
Dates:			
Outcome:			
Unresolved Dispute and Referral to Stage 2			

Date of Referral:

**Attempts to Resolve the Disagreement at Stage 2**

Dates:

Outcome:

**Unresolved Dispute and Referral to Stage 3**

Date of Referral:

**Attempts to Resolve the Disagreement at Stage 3**

Dates:

Outcome:

**Unresolved Dispute and Referral to Stage 4**

Date of Referral:

**Final Outcomes**

Date:

Mediation or Dispute Resolution Panel convened?

Outcome: