

## Case Summary

This Safeguarding Adult Review concerns three males, known for the purposes of the review as David, George and William. The men were known to have alcohol dependence and suffered from various physical illnesses and mental health problems, they were all in receipt of health and social care support.

David, George, and William lived together in accommodation provided by an independent social housing landlord. Each had their own agreed levels of support provided by a private company, but no staff were permanently resident at the premises.

In July 2019, a fire was discovered at the house. David was discovered deceased within the property and William suffered burns and smoke inhalation but managed to exit the property safely. George was found close by with a note which made clear his intentions to end his own life by setting fire to himself. It appears his mental health had deteriorated in the weeks prior to the fire. George was convicted of manslaughter and is serving a custodial sentence.

The review highlighted key themes and areas of learning which are explained below.

## Key Themes and Learning Points

Placement process:

Living arrangements and compatibility were a key feature in this case; both in terms of initial placement decisions and changes to placement suitability over time. Initial placement decisions should have taken cognisance of the compatibility of residents and trial periods should be used to assess the impact of new placements.

In terms of ongoing compatibility, it is important that service providers have management structures and review processes in place that can recognise any changes in behaviour, compatibility, and risk. Once recognised, any concerns should be shared with the placing local authorities so that they can revisit the placement decisions, whilst also taking in to account the views of the service users within this process.

Placing professionals / organisations should also be proactive in ensuring that compatibility is considered at the outset and throughout.

Timely reviews and risk assessments:

The importance of conducting reviews and updating risk assessments has been identified by agencies as an area of learning during this review. Staff providing support to people in their own homes should record their concerns, and managers should then take appropriate action in response to those concerns. Commissioning local authorities can't respond to developing situations and risks if they are not aware of them.

Reviews should not be limited to being scheduled annual events. They should be updated in response to new and unfolding incidents. This will ensure that risk to the individual and others is considered and where appropriate cases are escalated. This would ensure that managers and professionals from other agencies are fully informed and able to contribute to the management of risk.

Management oversight and escalation

Managers in all agencies must have oversight of risk and ensure that whenever appropriate incidents and cases are escalated and discussed with other involved agencies and departments. There should be clear escalation processes to deal with conflict.

Information Sharing

In the months before the fire, George's mental health deteriorated, and he presented to various services in a state of emergency. Although the sequence of events were challenging for professionals to respond to, it appears that each incident was dealt with in isolation. No one ever connected and escalated the information to ensure a coordinated response to meet George's needs. It is important that information is shared in a timely and responsive fashion to enable risk management plans to be updated and escalation to take place as appropriate. As the commissioning agency, adult social care are the appropriate agency to respond to any changes in risk/presentation or circumstance, but to do this they required accurate and timely sharing of information

Involvement of Primary Care

Doctors' surgeries should be integral to processes and decisions surrounding a patient's treatment and management. Relevant information should be shared with them, and their professional guidance should be sought. Patients need to also understand communications and potential available treatments available to them.