



Aberdeen City Adult Protection Committee
Guidance on Service User and Family Involvement
in Case/Learning Reviews

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INTRODUCTION

The multiagency partners who make up the Adult Protection Committee (APC) within Aberdeen City have given an absolute commitment to there being a true 'learning culture' in relation to Adult Support and Protection (ASP). This is especially true in the area of **learning reviews** of all types which may require to be undertaken related to ASP activity.

For the avoidance of doubt, a **learning review**, in the context of this document, is any of the available mechanisms of review available to the Aberdeen City APC Case Review Sub-Committee – as set out in the Grampian APC's Serious Case Review and Case Review Protocol¹.

For a 'learning culture' to exist, one of the key features is an ability and willingness on the part of professionals and organisations to be open to the input and contribution of service users and their families. This is not only a key foundational component of the Adult Support and Protection legislation itself, but is also recognised that the best quality learning arises where services users and family are treated as integral to the review process.

Service Users themselves have indicated the value they put on being included along with their families in learning reviews. For this to be meaningful, adults at risk have stated that think that it is important that their views are considered in both an open minded and non-judgemental way.

Sometimes, this is straightforward, requiring no specialist input or expertise beyond the sensitive and empathetic communication skills which would be expected of all professionals liaising with individuals in what can be challenging circumstances.

¹ [ASP Grampian Procedures \(aberdeenshire.gov.uk\)](http://aberdeenshire.gov.uk)

However, the current National Guidance for Adult Protection Committees Undertaking Learning Reviews² states:

“The purpose of engaging with the family is to explore their perspective and to elicit their opinions about the practitioners and services who were involved in the lives of the adult...Inviting them to take part in the Review must be done sensitively.

Where and how to meet will be dependent on the wishes of the adult and others who will be involved and consideration should be given for the need for any communication aids.”

Learning review teams must therefore be aware of any special requirements that there may be when engaging with service users and their family members. Review Teams will normally be aware of such requirements via the initial direction/commission of the review from the relevant APC Sub-Committee. Such requirements may also be apparent to the review team from feedback from professionals who have been involved in a case; it may be clear from a review of the relevant case records; or it may only become clear as the team begins to engage with the relevant individuals.

Regardless, there is a clear expectation that learning review team members, once aware of any special measures, should proactively put in place any such arrangements. This would be the intention of maximising the quality, value and comfort (for the individual) of any contributions to the learning review process.

WHAT THIS GUIDE DOES AND DOES NOT DO

This guide is provided to learning review leads and the wider learning review team to support service user and family involvement. It is an inherently **practical** document that is focussed on signposting learning

² [Adult support and protection: learning review guidance - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot/publications/adult-support-and-protection-learning-review-guidance/pages/1-1-introduction.aspx)

review team members to the correct resources in Aberdeen City to assist them with engaging effectively with service users and their families.

This guide will **not** provide advice and guidance on the theories of communication and the general communication/social skills that are required to allow for effective liaison with service users and family members. There is an expectation that any review team leads and team members will possess such skills before their selection to participate in the process.

Rather, this guide's focus is on making it easy for those conducting a learning review to access the specialist resources that they may need to support active participation from service users and family.

A Note on Trauma

Service users and their family members who are involved in learning reviews may have (or are) suffering from the effects of trauma. Learning review members are encouraged to ensure they are familiar with the impact of trauma and seek appropriate support if needed.

A Note on Adult at Risk/Service User View

When we asked Service Users who had been subject to ASP arrangements what they wanted Learning Review Teams to be aware, they said the following:

- Consideration around emotional support as the person could find it difficult going back over previous events. They might need someone there with them who they know well.
- To have information provided before any meeting. This should indicate what questions may be asked and information on what to expect. This will give the person an opportunity to think about what they will say in advance.

- To be kept informed after any interview/contact, and in particular to be told of any learning/changes as a result of the process they participated in.

RESOURCES TO SUPPORT SERVICE USER AND FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

The table below sets out key areas where Reviewers may require additional support and assistance in engaging with service users and family members. Current contact information for review team members to access these resources is provided.

Area of Support	Name of Aberdeen City Service	Contact/Referral Information
Speech and Language Therapy Input – written materials and/or other specialist input	Mental Health and Learning Disability Speech and Language Therapy Service	gram.mhldslt@nhs.scot
Language Translation	InterTrans	InterTrans@aberdeencity.gov.uk
Advocacy Provision	Advocacy Service Aberdeen (ASA)	asa@advocacy.org.uk 01224 332 314
British Sign Language	InterTrans North East Sensory Services	InterTrans@aberdeencity.gov.uk BSL interpreting - North East Sensory Services : North East Sensory Services (nesensoryservices.org)
Audio formats	North East Sensory Services	Transcription services - North East Sensory Services : North East Sensory Services (nesensoryservices.org) Modern technology allows read aloud options on Word and PDF files – initially try to produce information supported by the

		inbuilt mechanisms to manage costs where possible.
Braille	North East Sensory Services	Transcription services - North East Sensory Services : North East Sensory Services (nesensoryservices.org)
Large Print	North East Sensory Services	This can be done by the officers themselves by increasing font size to 16+ or for more professional requirement, it would need to be discussed with Aberdeen City Council Communications Team or utilise Transcription services - North East Sensory Services : North East Sensory Services (nesensoryservices.org)
Easy Read	InterTrans Disability Equality Scotland	InterTrans@aberdeencity.gov.uk Easy Read Service - Disability Equality Scotland
Subtitling		New technology allows live captions and closed captions – consider options before creating info

FURTHER ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT

If further assistance and support (beyond what is contained in this document) is required to ensure effective communication please initially discuss with the Chairperson of the Case Review Sub-Committee.

Contactable via: APSW@aberdeencity.gov.uk