

Acute Training Solutions

Safeguarding of Adults - System Failures

1	<p>In 2007 MIND produced a report, Another Assault[6], which demonstrated that inequality in access to justice poised a serious threat to the dignity, rights and equal citizenship of people with mental health problems. In their submission to the No Secrets consultation they stated that, 'the predominant focus of the current No Secrets guidance is on reacting after abuse has already taken place. Respondents to Mind's consultation were clear that this approach is the wrong one. A strong message that came out of focus group discussions was that intervention by authorities already amounts to a failure of adult safeguarding policies. Respondents stressed that the focus of policy must be on prevention – reducing the risk of an individual being in a position of vulnerability in the first place'.</p>
2	<p>In 2008 the Commission for Social Care Inspection, which was then the regulator of Social Care, published a report entitled, Safeguarding Adults, a study of the effectiveness of arrangements to safeguard adults from abuse[7]. The publicly stated intention of this study was to contribute to the No Secrets review. The overall picture showed uneven progress in the development of effective arrangements by councils and care services to safeguard people; variability in the quality of support provided to individuals who experienced abuse, which CSCI stated was unacceptable given that abuse is a violation of a person's human rights; and that actions to help prevent abuse and support better outcomes for people in the long term who have experienced abuse were variable within and across council areas and within individual care services.</p>
3	<p>In 2007 Mencap produced a report, Death by Indifference[8], which catalogued the needless deaths of six young people with Learning Disabilities while in the care of the NHS. The Health Ombudsman's report was a damning indictment of their treatment. In their response to the No Secrets consultation Mencap stated, 'A number of high profile crimes against people with a learning disability in recent years have shown that current safeguarding policy is not working. Creating more guidance and updating and amending it every few years is overcomplicating a system that is already failing to provide protection for the most vulnerable adults'.</p>
4	<p>In 2008 SCOPE produced a report, Getting Away with Murder[9], which catalogued a series of murders of people with disabilities, including that of Christine Lakinski, a disabled woman, collapsed in a doorway on her way home. As she lay dying a man threw a bucket of water over her, covered her in shaving foam and urinated on her. One of his friends filmed the incident on a mobile phone. . In their response to the No Secrets consultation Scope stated, 'No Secrets already provides national guidance. Scope is clear that such guidance is not effective enough and that this needs to be moved onto a statutory footing'.</p>