

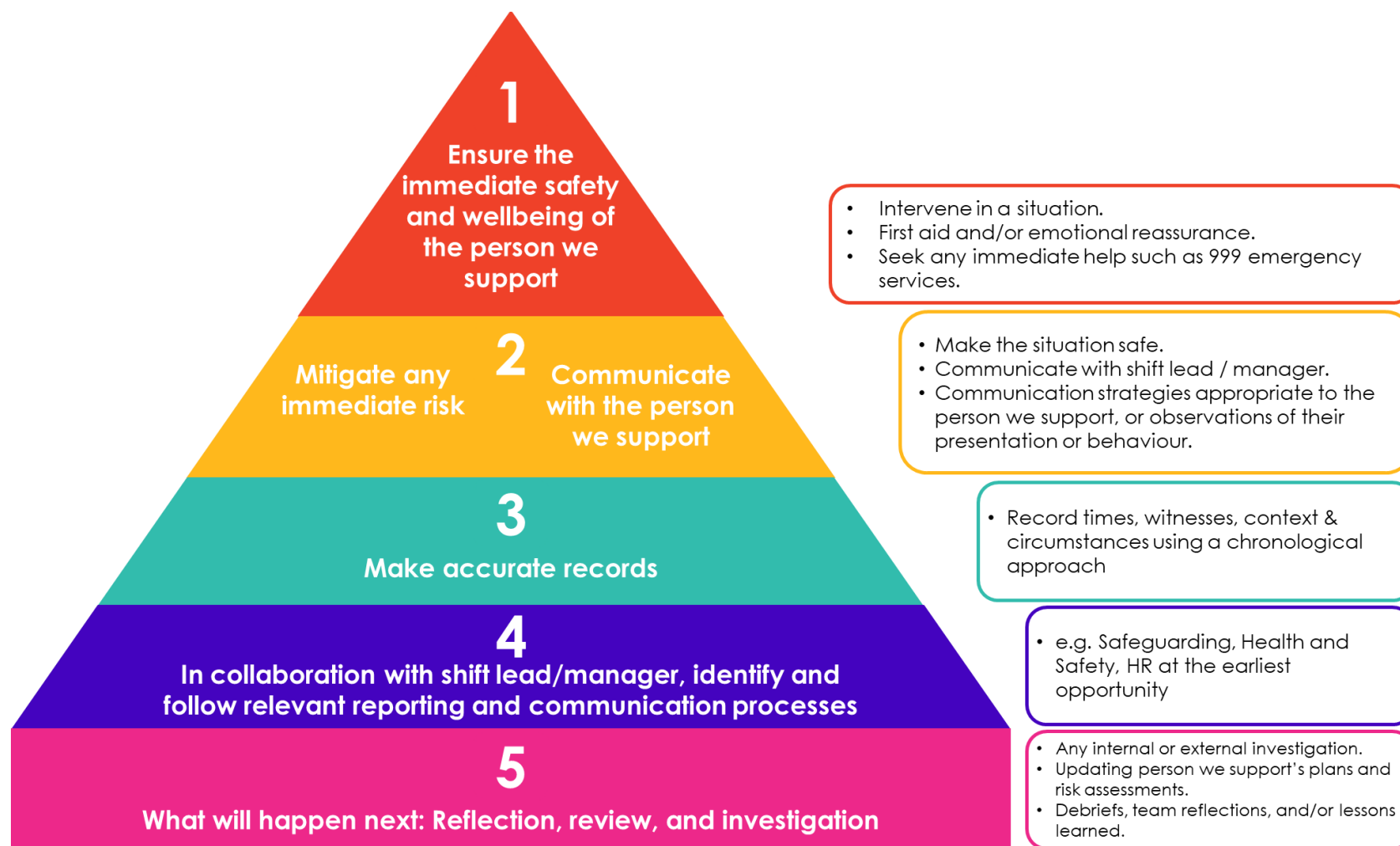
National Autistic Society Adult Safeguarding Procedure

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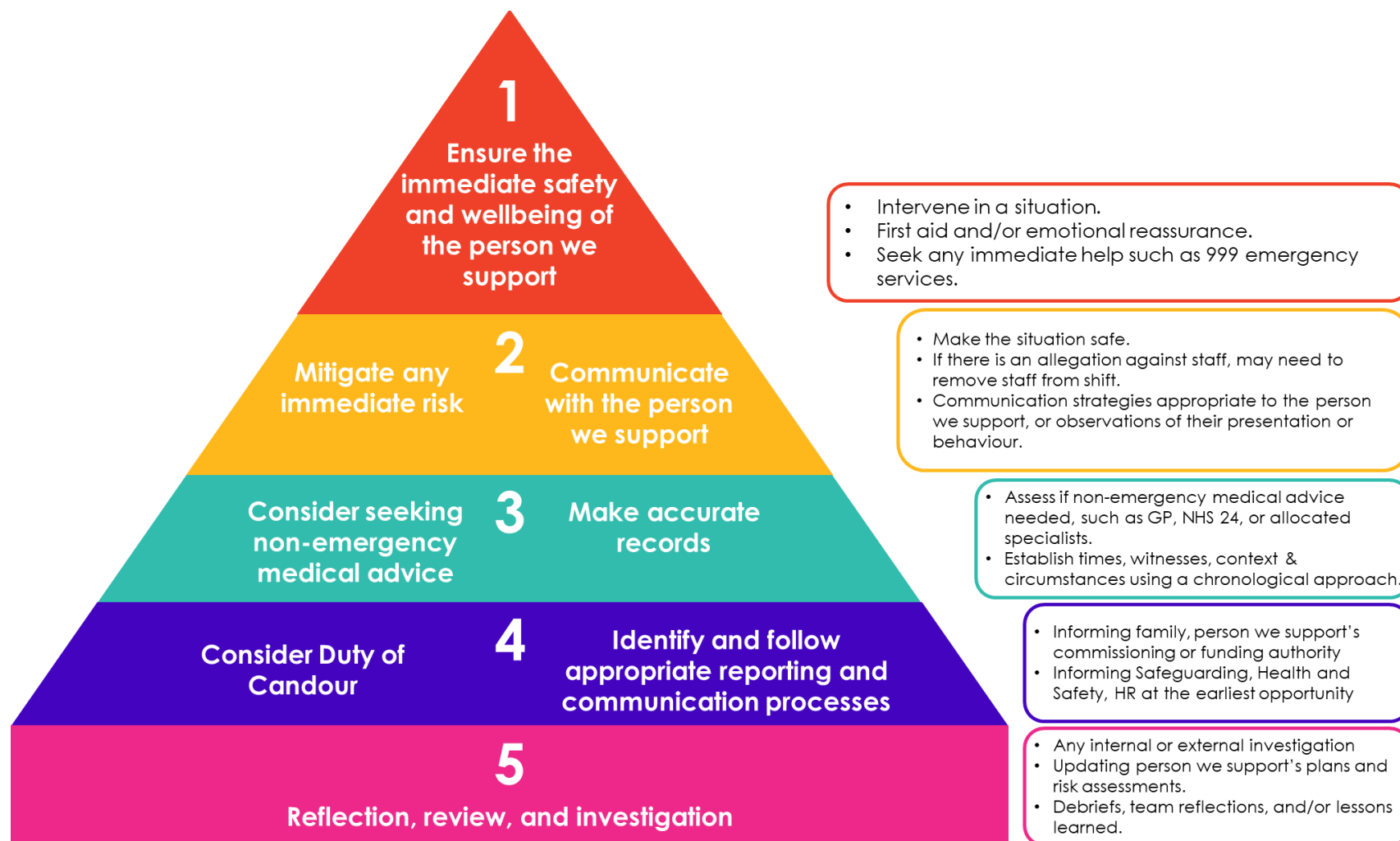
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Safeguarding Process for Support Workers



Safeguarding Process for Shift Leaders and Managers



Step by Step Process

Step One

Ensure the Immediate Safety and Wellbeing of the Person we Support

- Any concern about harm or risk of harm to a person we support must prioritise the immediate safety of the person and of other people we support in the service.
- First aid should be provided if relevant.
- Emergency services should be contacted if needed.
- Photographs should **not** be taken of any injuries to a person that we support, unless specifically requested by Police, health professionals or the Local Authority safeguarding team. Instead, Body maps should be completed along with specific description (eg 'bruise the size of a 50p coin on the crest of the right hip bone, dark purple in colour').
- On no account should staff make physical examinations or pursue enquiries beyond making their initial report.

Step Two

Mitigate any Immediate Risk

- All staff have a responsibility to ensure any immediate risks are mitigated.
- Where there is an allegation against a member of staff, staff should ensure that member of staff does not come into contact with any other people we support.
- As soon as possible, concerns must be reported to management verbally if they are working on shift, or contact on-call if there is no management present.
- A written record must then be produced by the person who has observed or witnessed the incident or concern either first hand or been told by the person that we support.
- Where multiple staff have been involved or witness to a concern, only one report form or incident record should be created, but where necessary other involved staff should make additional written statements.

Communicate with the Person we Support

- Where there is a safeguarding concern about a person, staff must consider the person's wishes and feelings, however these are communicated.
- A person considered to lack capacity in relation to safeguarding still has a right to have their wishes and feelings taken into account. An assessed lack of

Mental Capacity should not be considered a justification to not involve a person in decisions about their life.

- People we support should be given the tools and opportunity to:
 - be fully involved in decisions about their lives.
 - to tell staff what they would like to happen and who they would like to know about a concern (staff should not promise people we support confidentiality, see below).
- There may be times when it is necessary to go against the wishes and feelings of a person we support who does not want other people to be informed of a concern, for example where there is criminal concern or a wider risk to other people we support or the public. If so, this must be explained to the person.
- Where the intervention of an external agency is needed, this intervention is far more likely to be successful if the person we support is engaged with and consents to this involvement.

Step 3

Make Accurate Records

When recording concerns or incidents, staff should:

1. **Be clear**

- Reports should communicate the concerns as clearly as possible.
- Initials should be avoided.
- The relationships of the people involved in the concern, such as staff or other people we support, should be indicated.
- Would someone who does not know the person, service or situation understand the concerns?

2. **Highlight the key concern**

- Do not bury the significant information in long text.
- If it is a lengthy incident, a summary sentence at the beginning can help readers.

3. **Be factual**

- Records should not contain staff's own opinion or a summary of what someone said.
- Staff should record *exactly* what someone said or state that they cannot recall.

4. **Remember your audience**

- Staff should consider the language being used and ensure reports are respectful and person-centred.

- Remember that the report is a legal record and could be discussed or shared with the person we support and/or their family and shared with external agencies.

Establish the Basic Facts

In some circumstances, managers should conduct a basic fact finding to help to determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation or concern, being careful not to jeopardise any future Police investigation.

The fact finding may consider:

- Was there any harm to the person we support?
- Was the alleged perpetrator at the alleged location at the day/time?
- Did the alleged perpetrator come into contact with the person we support as alleged?
- Are there any witnesses or CCTV?

Step 4

Involving Families and Deputies

- Families and other legal representatives (such as Deputies or Appointees) should be communicated with as soon as possible about concerns of harm, unless this would put the victim at further risk of harm or the person we support has capacity and chooses not to inform family members.

Identify and Follow Relevant Reporting Process

- The manager or shift leader should identify the relevant reporting processes and who needs to be informed of the concern.
- The National Autistic Society Safeguarding Team should be informed using the relevant reporting process.
- The manager or shift leader should identify necessary next steps in collaboration with the Head of Service and Safeguarding Team.
- The safeguarding concern should be assessed for any immediate actions necessary to protect the person or people we support, and shared with the appropriate external statutory agencies such as:
 - The person we support's commissioning or funding authority or trust.
 - The local authority social work team.
 - The Police.
 - The relevant regulator such as the CQC, CIW, or RQIA.
- For serious or critical incidents, the Service Manager must follow the procedure detailed in the Adult Services Escalation Protocol and the

Safeguarding Team should be notified immediately via an email marked as 'URGENT' sent to notifications.safeguarding@nas.org.uk

Whistleblowing and Escalation

- Staff reporting a safeguarding concern should be advised that matters are being followed up as appropriate.
- Those reporting a concern need to be made aware they may not know the details or stages of an investigation due to confidentiality and data protection but may be advised of the outcome on conclusion of an investigation.
- Where staff do not feel able to report harm using the reporting procedures detailed above, or where concerns have been reported but not appropriately acted upon, they are able to whistleblow.
- Whistleblowers are given protection under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998.
- All staff have access to SafeCall as an alternative independent whistleblowing method to raise a concern about the action or inaction of a member of staff or the organisation. SafeCall can be contacted confidentially via phone: 0800 915 1571 or email: nas@safecall.co.uk.

Step 5

Reflection, Review and Investigation

- Risk assessments, PBS plans, and support plans for the person we support should be reviewed following any incident or concern.
- Any proposed changes to these documents should be discussed with the person we support, their family and/or deputy and the multi-disciplinary team involved.

Internal Investigations

- The decision to undertake an internal investigation will be made in collaboration with the external agencies involved, the Head of Service, Service Manager, Safeguarding Team, HR, and the Incidents and Complaints Team.
- Where concerns have been reported to external agencies such as the Police, internal investigations will only start once they have authorised this. This ensures that an internal investigation will avoid any risk of compromising evidence or witnesses needed to pursue a criminal investigation or prosecution.
- If further safeguarding concerns or criminal activities are identified during the course of an internal investigation, these should be reported immediately to

the investigation's commissioning manager and the Safeguarding Team, to share with the Police or Local Authority as appropriate.

- Where an investigation relates to a staff member, staff members are owed a duty of care and should be treated fairly, honestly and without discrimination. They should be provided with support, by an appropriate senior member of staff who is not involved in any part of the investigation throughout the process and all staff have access to the [Employee Assistance Programme](#).
- Staff must respect the confidentiality of investigations but are reminded that they must co-operate fully with any enquiry that may be necessary.