

RCT Adult Services (Pseudonyms are used throughout)
Adult at Risk Lisa's Case Study

Lisa: Adult of Risk and diagnosed with LD and Autism	Julian: Father and alleged perpetrator	Bev: Mother is vulnerable but not an Adult at Risk	Karen: Sister is vulnerable but not an Adult at Risk
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During May 2025, two A1 referrals were received from the long-term Learning Disability Social Work Team and from Karen's Access to Work service. Concerns included:

- Julian putting up barriers re Lisa accessing services.
- New behaviours shown by Lisa, it was unclear, but it appeared as if she was trying to communicate distress. Lisa has a severe learning disability, no formal verbal communication and lacked mental capacity in relation to making decisions about her care, accommodation and support needs.
- Concerns of domestic abuse in the home.

Initial information gathering / s126 enquiries were completed. Historical Information was gained that Julian had a history of domestic abuse and alleged sexual offending. There had been a previous allegation of Julian being sexually inappropriate with Karen which was closed by Children's Services. There was information that Karen had allegedly witnessed a sexual assault on her mother by her father as a child. Threshold was met for safeguarding. A strategy meeting was held in accordance with WSP with multi-agency attendance and agreed actions were put in place for a coordinated social service and health response.

Social work and Health tried to engage with Julian, and he appeared to work with services. However, it was evident that he was controlling any discussion and contact with his family. Bev and Karen would immediately leave the home for a "walk" when workers visited to prevent them from speaking. Julian appeared to agree with plans for Lisa but put continual barriers in place. LD Specialist Behavioural Team were engaged to offer intensive behavioural support to Lisa. Advocacy were completing visits with social worker to see Lisa.

A number of multi-disciplinary safeguarding meetings were held, but progress was slow. There were concerns, but no significant evidence to support these. Work was also being completed with Bev and Karen outside of the home. S126 enquires for Karen led to a period of support by a social work team. Bev and Karen were extremely fearful of Julian and more information about the situation within the home started to emerge, when a trusting relationship was built. With Bev's agreement the social work team made a referral to a specialist domestic abuse service, who become involved with Bev and Karen. It was through this work that further disclosures were made, about the domestic abuse being perpetrated by Julian within the home. Although disclosures were made, Bev was not able to share the full extent and was not in agreement/able to work with the Police at that time because of trauma. A Domestic Abuse Multi-Agency Risk Assessment referral was made and was heard within that forum. It was now evident that Lisa was living in an environment where she was being exposed to domestic abuse. There was also information that there was likely neglect and abuse of Lisa by Julian (meal restrictions/clothing/finances/access to services and health input).

There had been ongoing contact with legal services during the safeguarding process and following the above clarification, the case was heard in the Court of Protection. Lisa also had her own Litigation Friend and legal team representing her. A Court of Protection Welfare Order was made for Lisa to be removed from the home to respite. The timing of moving Lisa from the home was coordinated with domestic abuse services to support Bev and Nicola into refuge for their safety. Lisa is now well settled into long term supported accommodation. Bev and Nicola are living together independently with support from Domestic Abuse Support services.

Key points:

- Case showed how disguised compliance can impact on progress in the safeguarding process.
- Case showed the effective use of professional curiosity when working with families.
- Case highlighted how there can be multiple barriers to communication that need to be overcome.
- Case showed the effective use of multi-agency working (safeguarding team, third sector services, advocacy, social workers, LD health colleagues, domestic abuse services, police, legal and court process) achieving safe and positive outcomes for both the adult at risk and other vulnerable adults within the home.