

Disengagement by Services

The SAR notes that it was good practice to arrange the April 2024 multi-agency meeting but that the rapid disengagement by services from working with Joe in the weeks following was particularly striking. Joe's GP practice (which had not been invited to the April 2024 meeting or advised of the outcome) decided to remove Joe from their patient list in April 2024 as a result of non-attendance at appointments and as he had "not been raised by any stakeholder as a concern". The GP practice was aware that Joe was under the care of the Early Intervention Team (EIT). On the same day that the GP de-registered Joe, he was discharged from the EIT on the grounds that there was no evidence of psychosis without the use of illicit substances. There was no indication that the EIT

Resources

Partner agencies in Oldham work together to safeguard individuals through the sharing of relevant information; for guidance see a [separate briefing](#). There is practitioner guidance available to support effective recognition and responses to exploitation concerns including [Cuckooing Guidance](#) and a [Financial Exploitation Toolkit](#) and places to attend 'Understanding Exploitation' training can be booked via the [OSAB website](#). Resources are also available to support utilisation of the [TRAM Protocol](#) including a [Summary Guide](#) and [Flowchart](#).

Multi-Agency Working

There were several opportunities to consider utilising the [Tiered Risk Assessment and Management \(TRAM\) Protocol](#) to work with Joe but there is no indication that this approach was actively considered. The closest partner agencies working with Joe came to initiating the TRAM Protocol was the April 2024 meeting which was variously described as a 'professionals meeting', a 'Team Around the Adult (TAA)' meeting, and a 'multidisciplinary team' meeting. The TRAM Protocol advises that cases should be managed through TAA meetings in cases of 'moderate risk'. Joe largely met the criteria for this support approach in that he was deemed to have capacity to make his own decisions (although there was an absence of formal assessments of his mental capacity); his behaviours put himself at risk (drug and alcohol misuse) and others at risk (alleged domestic abuse of family members and physical assaults on practitioners); his self-care appeared to deteriorate significantly; agencies experienced long term challenges in engaging with him; and he had experienced homelessness. Had the professionals meeting adopted a TAA approach and completed the [Risk Assessment and Management Tool](#), this may have helped them to clarify the risks of abuse and/or neglect.

Silo Working and Absence of Escalation

From July 2024, Joe's contact with agencies indicated that he was either 'in crisis' or approaching that state. The SAR found that silo working and an absence of single agency escalation was evident. Probation applied a nationally mandated change which limited their further contact with Joe however, he made unplanned visits to their office, and any ongoing concerns could have raised for management oversight. Greater Manchester Police did not complete a care plan (includes onward referrals) after Joe was found after an earlier missing person report. Joe was offered support from the First Choice Homes Oldham (his housing provider) tenancy support scheme, but they experienced difficulties engaging with Joe and ultimately closed a referral because it was thought they would duplicate support being provided by Sanctuary Trust. It would have been better for them to joint work. Turning Point held Joe's case until late August 2024 but closed a referral after non-engagement with two offers of an assessment.

Potential Exploitation

From July 2023, there were concerns Joe may be being financially exploited by people he lived near or who visited his home although they were due to move out. In September 2023, Joe's aunt raised concerns about his phones being stolen and "people going into his room". Also in September 2023, Joe reported being threatened with a knife by a peer to Turning Point. From April 2024, there were concerns about two males staying in Joe's flat which suggested possible evidence of cuckooing.

Responses to Potential Exploitation

There were plans made for concerns in relation to potential cuckooing to be shared with First Choice Homes Oldham as Joe's housing provider but there was no evidence this happened. In July 2024, Joe stated to the Liaison Mental Health Team that he had been "scammed for his benefits" and had reported this to police. There is no indication that he had made any such reports. A safeguarding referral in respect of financial abuse could have been made. In July 2024, Joe told Probation that he had been arrested "trying to report someone being in his flat" and that he did not feel safe at home. Probation advised the SAR that this and other concerns should have led to an immediate crisis response. When Joe attended A&E in August 2024, he reported feeling suicidal "due to having no money" which had been "going on for three months". No explanation of why he had no money appears to have been documented.

Joe's Presentation

Joe presented as aggressive and threatening; his particular hostility to women made it challenging for some agencies to work with him. Despite the frequency with which Joe presented in this way, practitioners attempted to work with him as effectively as possible whilst being mindful of personal safety. It is unclear to what extent the underlying causes of Joe's presentation were fully explored when opportunities presented themselves such as during assessments. There was the risk of unconscious bias in the way that practitioners made sense of Joe's behaviour. Aggression was frequently perceived as stemming from not accepting the consequences of his behaviour and not taking responsibility for it. The opportunity to reframe Joe's behaviour as a defensive or protective response to past Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), trauma and feelings of shame was generally overlooked.

This is a second briefing concerning further learning from the SAR in relation to Joe. Access the initial briefing.

