

DSAB Vulnerable Adult Risk Management (VARM) meeting confidentiality statement

This statement should be read out or shared with attendees prior to, or at the start of every VARM meeting.

Purpose of VARM Meetings

The purpose of the VARM meeting is for agencies to share and discuss information which:

- is pertinent to undertaking a VARM risk assessment
- identifies serious risk of harm and its imminence
- requires specific action to support the vulnerable adult and minimise risk

The information discussed may include Personal Data and Special Category Data (as defined by the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation).

All agencies are required to have in place and adhere to policies and procedures in relation to Information Governance. This confidentiality statement does not seek to replace those.

When working with adults during the VARM process, the information discussed and recorded in the VARM meeting is shared in the overriding safeguarding interest of the individual and public safety, and, on the understanding that:

1. The VARM criteria are met.
2. Any requests for Minutes will be considered under the Data Protection Act 2018 and exemptions to disclosure will be applied as appropriate
3. The discussions and decisions take account of Article 8.2 European Convention of Human Rights, with particular reference to: public safety and protection of health; the prevention of crime and disorder; the protection of the rights and freedom of others.

Attendees are reminded of their statutory safeguarding responsibilities/obligations: any immediate risks identified during the VARM meeting that need to be escalated as a safeguarding concern or crime, should be done so without delay.

All VARM documentation containing personal data will be marked RESTRICTED and VARM minutes must be kept securely in accordance with their RESTRICTED status.

Recording of meetings

VARM meetings are minuted and are not video or sound recorded. Requests by a service user to video or sound record a VARM meeting should be made to the chair of the VARM and will be considered on a case by case basis in line with the Equality Act and the Data Protection Act 2018. If a meeting is recorded without the permission of the Chair, the chair has the right to terminate the meeting.

The VARM minutes must not be photocopied or the contents shared outside the meeting. Requests to share information outside the VARM meeting must be submitted to the VARM Chair who will seek advice where necessary from the safeguarding specialist within their organisation, and make a decision to share information based on: the purpose, consent, proportionality, necessity, 'need to know', public safety/interest. The information request and action taken must be recorded within the VARM documentation.

It is important for the VARM chair to note that individuals have the right under The Data Protection Act 2018 (GDPR) and the UK General Data Protection Regulation to be told whether an agency holds any personal data (records) about them and a right to receive a copy of that information. This is commonly referred to as Subject Access Request. Individuals can make a Subject Access Request verbally or in writing. If a Subject Access Request is made to an agency, they are legally obliged to consider whether the requested documents are disclosable and to respond according to the above Act

Diversity Statement

The work of the DSAB is committed to:

- Equal access to services for all groups, particularly in relation to race, gender, identity, age, religious belief, sexual orientation and disability, and
- Ensuring that policies and procedures do not draw on stereotypical assumptions about groups, or contain any elements that will be discriminatory in outcome.

In undertaking its work, the agencies involved in the VARM meeting will be sensitive and responsive to peoples' differences and needs; Agencies will integrate that understanding into the delivery of the VARM process to ensure nobody is disadvantaged.

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