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## Background

The Care Act (2014) Care and Support Statutory Guidance brought self-neglect into focus and it has been defined by Braye et al (2015) as including:

**Lack of self-care** - neglect of personal hygiene, nutrition, hydration and health

and/or

**Lack of care of one's environment** – squalor and hoarding and/or

**Refusal of services** that would mitigate risk of harm to safety and wellbeing.

When a person's self neglect and/or hoarding poses a risk to their health and safety or that of others, professional intervention may be required.

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## Why it matters

Cases of self neglect and hoarding can be very complex and challenging. The appropriate legal frameworks must be applied to support decision making and act in the best interests of the adult. The principles of the Mental Capacity Act (2005) must be considered and any intervention or actions proposed must be with the adults consent. In accordance with the Human Rights Act (1998), any interference with a person's life must be lawful, necessary and there must be a legitimate aim.

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## Information

Under the Care and Support Guidance self-neglect and hoarding may not prompt a section 42 enquiry and assessments should be made on a case by case basis. If a section 42 enquiry is not a proportionate response then the LSAB Multi Agency Self Neglect and Hoarding frameworks can be used. **The Lancashire Self Neglect Framework** should be referred to for the management of cases where

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the adult is at risk of severe injury and even death due to their lifestyle and refusal to engage with services (examples of this is in appendix 1 of the framework).

**The Hoarding Framework** should be referred to for a collaborative multi-agency and person centred approach to achieve the best outcome for an adult who hoards.

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Short term intervention is unlikely to be successful and it requires practitioners from agencies involved to build up a trust with the adult in order for the adult to acknowledge there is a need for support and what kind of support is required. Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) supports an outcomes focus to safeguarding work; it is about engaging with people about the outcomes they want at the beginning and middle of working with them, and then ascertaining the extent to which those outcomes are realised at the end.

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## Questions to consider

How would you recognise the signs of self neglect and hoarding?

Have you read the Pan Lancashire Adult Safeguarding Policy and Procedures and Self Neglect and Hoarding Frameworks?

[www.lsab.org.uk/policies](http://www.lsab.org.uk/policies)

**Advice should be sought from safeguarding or governance leads if in doubt.**

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## What to do

A multi-agency meeting may be required to share information and decisions on how best to intervene and support to assess the level, aspects and management of risk. Practitioners must always seek consent of the adult before taking action and sharing information. If this is refused you must consider that information can still lawfully be shared if it is in the public interest to do so. This may include protecting the adult from harm.