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FEEDBACK

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What's New?

National Framework for Adult Support and Protection Learning and Development in Scotland

In February the Scottish Government published the first National Framework for ASP Learning & Development in Scotland. The framework is designed to strengthen the delivery of ASP learning by providing clear and consistent guidance nationally, and is intended for all staff and volunteers across agencies and sectors who may work with vulnerable adults. The framework helps individuals, teams, and organisations identify the appropriate level of training required for their roles and responsibilities.

In his foreword the Minister for Social Care and Mental Wellbeing, Tom Arthur MSP noted:

"I see this as a real opportunity for all staff and volunteers, regardless of discipline, organisation or level, to know their training expectations in relation to ASP such that appropriate training can be pursued and provided, ultimately benefiting both the workforce and adults at risk."

The framework introduces 5 workforce groups to ensure learning is accurately targeted and relevant. It also provides flexibility for employers to determine how their staff align with each group. The full framework can be viewed via this [link](#) and a 7 minute briefing is available [here](#).

this issue

What's New? P.1

Spotlight on Hoarding & Self Neglect P.2

Time to Reflect P.2

Recent ASP Learning Reviews P.3&4

Grampian Multi-Agency ASP Event P.4

Grampian ASP Training Catalogue & National Learning Opportunities P.5



In Grampian we are reviewing our multi-agency training offer against the national framework. Initial findings show we are well placed, already providing high-quality training that meets the needs of the different workforce levels. Further work will focus on aligning our terminology with the national groupings and updates will be shared in future issues of GrASP. In the meantime, if you have any queries about the new framework or training requirements for you or your employees, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

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Time to Reflect

In every edition we use this section to provide you with some thought provoking or inspiring content that we hope will encourage professional reflection, peer or multi-agency discussions. This might be in the form of a scenario, a question or simply a short quote.

In this issue we reflect on the voices of some people with personal experience of hoarding and self-neglect. These views were shared as part of the IMPACT project which is outlined in our Spotlight article.

Lived experience shared through the project offered some of the most meaningful learning. People told us that language matters—labels like 'hoarder' can deepen shame, while talking about 'attachment' supports more understanding conversations.

They emphasised the importance of workers taking time to understand personal history and why items hold emotional value. Trust, consistency, and empathy were essential; rushed clear-outs or inconsistent follow-up often left people feeling judged or unsupported.

People shared that what they need most is not rescuing, but support that helps them recognise their own strengths: 'People don't need saved—they need knowledge of their own power.'

These insights reinforce the importance of compassionate, coordinated, person-led approaches that prioritise dignity and meaningful connection.

Spotlight on: Hoarding and Self Neglect

Hoarding and self-neglect are complex, often intertwined issues that can have serious impacts on a person's health, wellbeing, and safety. Hoarding involves the persistent difficulty discarding possessions, which can lead to cluttered and unsafe living environments. Self-neglect occurs when an individual is unable or unwilling to care for their basic needs, such as hygiene, nutrition, medical care, or home maintenance.

Both issues are rarely about the objects or behaviours alone - these complex and often hidden issues are frequently linked to trauma, social isolation, mental illness, or major life changes. People experiencing hoarding or self-neglect may feel overwhelmed, isolated, ashamed, or unable to seek help. As a result, the situation can escalate gradually and go unnoticed until risks become significant.

Understanding these issues with empathy and recognising early signs is vital. A sensitive, person-centred approach - rather than judgement - helps build trust and encourages individuals to engage with appropriate support services. Sadly, the outcomes for an individual can be fatal and various ASP learning reviews and drug related death reviews have highlighted potential opportunities where services could have intervened earlier.

Locally, our ASP services have seen an increase in referrals relating to hoarding and/or self-neglect since the COVID-19 pandemic.



Aberdeen Health and Social Care Partnership recently completed a year-long IMPACT Facilitator project focused on improving support for people experiencing self-neglect and hoarding.

Key insights included:

- See the person, not the problem — relationships and non-judgemental practice are essential.
- Trauma-informed, person-led approaches matter — clearances without involvement can cause harm.
- Stronger pathways and shared responsibility are needed across services.
- Peer support reduces isolation and builds shared understanding.

Project outputs included:

- A practical toolkit
- multi-agency guidance
- training materials
- peer-support guidance

To view these and for more information on the work of IMPACT and the Self Neglect and Hoarding Project please click on this link [IMPACT](#) (Improving Adult Care Together)

Recent ASP Learning Reviews

An Adult Support and Protection Learning Review is a means for public bodies and office holders with responsibilities relating to the protection of adults at risk of harm to learn lessons by considering the circumstances where an adult at risk has died or been significantly harmed.

In Grampian the learning from these reviews is often what drives our Learning & Development agenda. Therefore, in every edition of GrASP Insights we plan to bring you a summary of some recent learning reviews.

Over the next 2 pages we are sharing a training briefing which has been developed following an ASP Multi Agency Review which took place in Aberdeen City, following the death of an individual identified as 'Mr K'.

The findings of this review prompted the development of our new ASP, Addictions and Bias training. Further details of which are included in the briefing with a booking link on page 5.

ABERDEEN CITY
ADP
alcohol & drugs partnership
www.aberdeencityadp.org.uk



Mr K
Mr K was in his early forties when he passed away. He had a complex history of significant adverse childhood events, periods in prison, significant substance and alcohol addiction and a diagnosis of Hepatic Encephalopathy, a condition that can cause symptoms including memory impairment and personality changes. He lived alone but had support from his family and contact with numerous services, including Community Mental Health, Justice SW, Drug and Alcohol services, Community Pharmacy, Police, Housing, Care Management, GP, Primary Care Link Worker and hospital staff. The cause of death was reported as bacterial peritonitis, alcohol related liver cirrhosis and Hepatitis C.

Learning Review
An ASP Multi Agency Review into the death of 'Mr K' has concluded that some professionals/services showed 'implicit' bias where they saw Mr K through the lens of his alcohol/substance use history, rather than his current vulnerabilities. This may have resulted in a delay in him entering the ASP process, despite concerns being noted from family and other professionals. The Learning Review recommended: *'There should be a review of the current training and awareness raising relating to bias – particularly bias in relation to individuals who have addictions. This area of learning and awareness raising should be highlighted and strengthened.... Particular care and emphasis should be taken that inpatient hospital staff within acute settings access this training.'*

Targeted Training
The Grampian ASP L&D Group in collaboration with Aberdeen City ADP have developed multi-agency bespoke 'live' training based around Mr K's story. Scheduled training is available via MS Teams to groups of staff but can also be delivered ad hoc at times/venues that fit with service demands. Further details on Page 4 and booking link on Page 5.

Substance Use Bias in Adult Support & Protection

Review of Current Training
This work was remitted to the Grampian ASP L&D Group in collaboration with the Aberdeen City ADP including Advocacy, Public Health, Aberdeen in Recovery and Alcohol and Drugs Action. This group identified and reviewed a variety of existing learning resources considering; accessibility, specificity and cost. The group found that the existing resources were excellent but difficult to navigate. There was acknowledgement that this was likely to be an even greater challenge for those working in acute settings. Similarly it was noted that 'live' training may not be easily accessible to this group of staff.

On Demand e-learning
On demand e-learning is ideal for professionals who have difficulties attending 'live' or face to face training due to working/ shift patterns. The resources detailed on Page 4 have been considered by the ASP L&D Group and Aberdeen City ADP and are recommended for any professional that is likely to come into contact with vulnerable individuals who are affected by substance use and addiction. These vary in length but allow the learner to progress at their own pace.

Scheduled 'Live' Training
'Live' training allows the learner to engage directly with the facilitator and other participants to enhance their experience and maximise their learning. The training detailed on Page 4 is delivered at scheduled times via MS Teams, minimising the time required by reducing travel, etc. Participants are required to book on to these courses and some of them require a simple registration with TURAS Learn.

Recommendations
The training review concluded that professionals would benefit from some clarity around which of the available training they should be prioritising. This should be promoted alongside the Charter of Rights for People Affected by Substance Use. It was also recommended that this briefing paper be prepared for use in team meetings to highlight the available training. Bespoke, targeted training would also be developed and offered to specific groups of staff.

Beyond the Checklist – Demistifying the ASP Criteria



The second in our series of Grampian Wide Multi-Agency ASP Events took place on Wednesday 18th March.

Focussing on some of the common challenges and dilemmas facing professionals when interpreting and applying the ASP criteria, this dynamic event brought together over 200 individuals including representatives from NHS, Police, Local Authority, Third Sector amongst others.

Attendees heard presentations from an expert panel covering:

Intro to the 3 point criteria

Evidence based practice

Capacity V Ability to Safeguard

Clarifying 'mental infirmity'

Personality Disorder

Attendees then had the opportunity to apply what they had learned to an evolving case study, feeding back to the larger group for further discussion and questions and answers from the panel.

The recording of the session can be accessed via this [link](#).

Our next event will take place in September. Make sure to subscribe to this newsletter to receive information straight to your inbox.

Scheduled 'Live' Training

Understanding Stigma: Promoting Inclusive Attitudes and Practices – This 1 day training is delivered by the Scottish Drugs Forum and will give participants a distinct set of knowledge and skills to help them understand and address alcohol and drug-related stigma.

By the end of the course you will be able to:

- Describe the impact of stigma on people who use substances, people in treatment or in recovery from substance use
- Recall language which de-stigmatises people affected by substance use.
- Describe how stigma and discrimination impact on the quality and effectiveness of service delivery.
- Identify institutional and structural stigma attached to people who use substances, people in treatment or in recovery from substance use.

This training can be booked by clicking [here](#).

Multi-agency Risk Assessment Workshop – This interactive workshop is delivered by the Grampian Adult Support & Protection Learning & Development Group. It has a focus on Adult Protection processes, Risk Assessment in particular, but looks at the impact of unconscious bias on decisions that are made about vulnerable individuals. The workshop encourages the use of professional curiosity as a tool to ensure that decisions are evidence based and the impact of bias and assumption are minimised. Booking link on Page 5.

Professional Curiosity – Also delivered by the Grampian Adult Support & Protection Learning & Development Group, the training aims to highlight the role of professional curiosity when dealing with vulnerable individuals who may be at risk of harm. This interactive session will explore the importance of being professionally curious and the impact it has on the professional's assessment of harmful situations. Participants will hear from ASP professionals and be offered some tips and tricks to help them develop skills in this area. It will reflect on the impact of unconscious bias and how professional curiosity is a tool to tackling this.

This session will also explore the role of professional curiosity in multi-agency discussion and promotes a culture where ASP professionals feel safe and confident to challenge each other and feel comfortable being challenged. Booking link on Page 5.

On Demand E-learning

Overcoming stigma through language – Developed by the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction. This short, easy read resource is designed to increase understanding of the stigma associated with substance use and addiction and the impact on the well-being of individuals affected. [Link](#)

Understanding Stigma – Complimenting the resource above this short video produced by the Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction covers what stigma is and how to recognise substance use stigma. It explains the different types of stigma and how stigma can affect people seeking and accessing care and support. [Link](#)

Scottish Recovery Consortium - 'Stigma and Me' is unique in that it offers Scottish perspective from people with lived experience. It examines the significant and harmful effects of stigma on the treatment that stigmatised groups receive when accessing health and social care services You are advised to allow 2-3 hours for completion. [Link](#)

Targeted Training

ASP, Addictions and Bias – Developed in Grampian in response to the 'Mr K' multi agency review, this training uses an unfolding case study to highlight the crucial role of key agencies in relation to information sharing and reporting of concerns. The interactive session encourages participants to examine any unconscious bias at each stage as more information is shared, exploring how this impacts on decision making and trajectory of the individuals journey through services and support. The virtual training is part of the Grampian multi agency ASP training programme. Booking link on Page 5. Bespoke sessions can be arranged, either virtually or face to face, for identified groups of practitioners by contacting the Joint ASP Learning & Development Coordinator Yvonne.davidson7@nhs.scot

National Learning Opportunities

National Adult Support & Protection Day 2026

This year, ASP day took place on and around the 20th February. The theme was ASP within Supported Care Settings.

In Grampian we hosted a very successful Lunch and Learn event where a panel of expert speakers from Police, Social Work, NHS, Care Inspectorate and the Care sector across Grampian provided insight and answered questions.

Nationally, there was a series of events to mark the day including a webinar providing a short general introduction to ASP. [Link here.](#)

In addition there was a webinar with presentations from Iriss and the Care Inspectorate looking at the new national guidance for Large Scale Investigations and emerging themes from inspection activity in supported care settings. [Link here.](#)

5 Nations series

The next event in the 5 Nations series is Domestic Intrafamilial Abuse (women,girls) on 17th April 2026. [Join mailing list.](#) Previous presentations are now available on the ASPIRE Hub via [this link.](#)

Grampian ASP Training Catalogue

The TURAS links below will only work once you are signed into TURAS.

Core ASP Training:

The Core ASP Training is delivered via modules. Which modules you should complete is dependant on your role.

Module/Level 1 – ASP General Workforce & Module/Level 2 – ASP Specific Workforce.

For dates and booking information please contact your organisation's ASP contact or Training Team.

Module/Level 3 – ASP Specialist Multi-Agency Workforce. Book via TURAS [here.](#)

Tuesday 2nd June 2026 09:30-13:00 via MS Teams.

Wednesday 26th August 2026 09:30-13:00 via MS Teams.

Thursday 12th November 2026 13:00-16:30 via MS Teams.

Module/Level 3 – ASP Specialist Lead Agency Workforce (attendees must attend the above Multi-agency Level 3 prior to coming on this course) – Book via TURAS [here.](#)

Thursday 4th June 2026 13:00-16:30 via MS Teams.

Tuesday 1st September 2026 09:30-13:00 via MS Teams.

Thursday 19th November 2026 13:00-16:30 via MS Teams.

Module/Level 4 – ASP Specialist Council Officer (attendees must attend the above Multi-agency and Lead Agency Level 3 prior to coming on this course). For dates, booking information and details of other support available for Council Officers please contact your organisation's ASP contact or Training Team.

Multi Agency Risk Assessment Training – Book via TURAS [here.](#)

Thursday 14th May 2026 13:00-16:00 via MS Teams.

Tuesday 18th August 2026 09:30-12:30 via MS Teams.

Thursday 3rd December 2026 13:00-16:00 via MS Teams

Professional Curiosity Training – Book via TURAS [here.](#)

Thursday 16th April 2026 13:00-15:30 via MS Teams.

Thursday 25th June 2026 13:00-15:30 via MS Teams.

Tuesday 6th October 2026 09:30-12:00 via MS Teams.

*****NEW***** ASP, Addictions & Bias Training – Book via TURAS [here.](#)

Thursday 24th September 2026 10:00 – 12:00 via MS Teams - **FULLY BOOKED – WAITLIST ONLY (please join the waiting list as spaces will be allocated if there are cancellations)**

Tuesday 16th June 2026 10:00 – 12:00 via MS Teams

Bespoke sessions can be arranged to specific staff groups contact yvonne.davidson7@nhs.scot to discuss

Bite-sized e-learning

We will be adding to our library of bite-sized learning over the next few months so watch this space, in the meantime we currently have the following available:

Grampian ASP Case Conference Standards, available [here](#)

Grampian Capacity Pathway for Protection Based Decisions, available [here.](#)

Introduction to ASP Interagency (or Initial) Referral Discussions (IRDs), available [here.](#) (although created for NHS staff, the advice and guidance in this video is relevant to anyone attending an IRD).

Please also check out the NHS Grampian Public Protection page on TURAS for details of other training available. Click [here.](#)