

Building Partnerships, Staying Safe

The health sector contribution to HM Government's *Prevent* strategy: guidance for healthcare workers



DH INFORMATION READER BOX

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Introduction to the *Prevent* strategy

The Government's counter-terrorism strategy is known as CONTEST. *Prevent* is part of CONTEST, and its aim is to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. The strategy promotes collaboration and co-operation among public service organisations. The Office for Security and Counter Terrorism in the Home Office is responsible for providing strategic direction and governance on CONTEST. You can read the CONTEST strategy in full at www.homeoffice.gov.uk

CONTEST has four key principles:

- **Pursue:** to stop terrorist attacks
- **Prevent:** to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism
- **Protect:** to strengthen our protection against a terrorist attack
- **Prepare:** to mitigate the impact of a terrorist attack.

The health service is a key partner in *Prevent* and encompasses all parts of the NHS, charitable organisations and private sector bodies which deliver health services to NHS patients.

What is *Prevent*?

The aim of *Prevent* is to stop people from becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism. Three national objectives have been identified for the *Prevent* strategy:

- **Objective 1:** respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat we face from those who promote it
- **Objective 2:** prevent people from being drawn into terrorism and ensure that they are given appropriate advice and support
- **Objective 3:** work with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation which we need to address.

The health sector contribution to *Prevent* will focus primarily on Objectives 2 and 3.

How does *Prevent* affect you in your work?

Healthcare professionals have a key role in *Prevent*. *Prevent* focuses on working with vulnerable individuals who may be at risk of being exploited by radicalisers and subsequently drawn into terrorist-related activity. *Prevent* does not require you to do anything in addition to your normal duties. What is important is that if you are concerned that a vulnerable individual is being exploited in this way, you can raise these concerns in accordance with your organisation's policies and procedures.

This guide provides information about *Prevent* and will help you to respond appropriately if you are concerned about a vulnerable individual, whether they are a patient, colleague or visitor.

The practical steps that follow will help you to decide what to do and whom to contact if you wish to raise your concern. The self-assessment tool is included so that you can assess your understanding of the policies, procedures and processes that your organisation has in place.

Working with others

Public sector agencies, charitable organisations and private sector bodies including health services need to work together to protect vulnerable individuals from being drawn into terrorism. Collaborative working also adds real value to patient care. Healthcare services cannot meet all of the needs of a vulnerable person and in many cases the wider range of support and services available from other public sector bodies, charitable organisations and private sector bodies will be required.

Developing an appreciation of the roles of others and understanding how they contribute to the safety of vulnerable people will help you to work more effectively. It is important that we all share a responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable individuals.

Practical steps for healthcare workers

In your work you may notice unusual changes in the behaviour of patients and/or colleagues which are sufficient to cause concern. It is important that if you have a cause for concern, you know how to raise it, as well as what will happen once you have raised it.

Contracts of employment, professional codes of conduct and safeguarding frameworks such as *No Secrets*¹ and *Safeguarding Adults: The role of health services*² require all healthcare workers to exercise a duty of care to patients and, where necessary, to take action for safeguarding and crime prevention purposes. Through *Prevent* this will include taking preventive action and supporting those individuals who may be at risk of, or are being drawn into, terrorist-related activity.

In order to do this it is important that you attend any *Prevent* training and awareness programmes sponsored or provided by your organisation, and also be sure that you are:

- aware of your professional responsibilities, particularly in relation to the safeguarding of vulnerable adults and children
- familiar with your organisation's protocols, policies and procedures
- aware of whom within your organisation you should contact to discuss your concerns

1 *No Secrets: Guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse* (Department of Health, 2000) www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_4008486

2 *Safeguarding Adults: The role of health services* (Department of Health, 2011) www.dh.gov.uk/en/publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_124882

- aware of the processes and support available when you raise a concern
- aware of current patient confidentiality policy.

What factors might make people vulnerable to exploitation?

Some of the following factors are already known to contribute to the vulnerability of individuals and could put them at risk of exploitation by radicalisers.

Identity crisis

Adolescents/vulnerable adults who are exploring issues of identity can feel both distant from their parents/family and cultural and religious heritage, and uncomfortable with their place in society around them. Radicalisers can exploit this by providing a sense of purpose or feelings of belonging. Where this occurs, it can often manifest itself in a change in a person's behaviour, their circle of friends, and the way in which they interact with others and spend their time.

Personal crisis

This may, for example, include significant tensions within the family that produce a sense of isolation of the vulnerable individual from the traditional certainties of family life.

Personal circumstances

The experience of migration, local tensions or events affecting families in countries of origin may contribute to alienation from UK values and a decision to cause harm to symbols of the community or state.

Unemployment or under-employment

Individuals may perceive their aspirations for career and lifestyle to be undermined by limited achievements or employment prospects. This can translate to a generalised rejection of civic life and adoption of violence as a symbolic act.

Criminality

In some cases a vulnerable individual may have been involved in a group that engages in criminal activity or, on occasion, a group that has links to organised crime and be further drawn to engagement in terrorist-related activity.

Any change in an individual's behaviour should not be viewed in isolation and you will need to consider how reliable or significant these changes are. Signs might include:

- parental/family reports of unusual changes in behaviour, friendships or actions and requests for assistance
- patients/staff accessing extremist material online
- use of extremist or hate terms to exclude others or incite violence
- writing or artwork promoting violent extremist messages or images.

You will need to use your judgement in determining the significance of any unusual changes in behaviour, and where you have concerns you should raise these in accordance with your organisation's policies and procedures.

The following are examples of vulnerable individuals who became involved in terrorist attacks:

Example 1 – a patient

Nicky Reilly received a life sentence having attempted to detonate an improvised explosive device at a restaurant in Exeter in May 2008. He was known to have mental health issues and learning difficulties and had regular contact with health and social services. During his trial it was revealed that Nicky was encouraged by radicalisers on the internet.

Example 2 – healthcare worker

Bilal Abdullah, an NHS doctor, and Kafeel Ahmed, a PhD student, were involved in staging the attack on Glasgow Airport in 2007. The academic died from the severe burns he suffered after driving a car bomb into the airport terminal. The NHS doctor was later convicted of conspiracy to murder and to cause explosions. They had both been involved in a previous bombing attempt in central London.

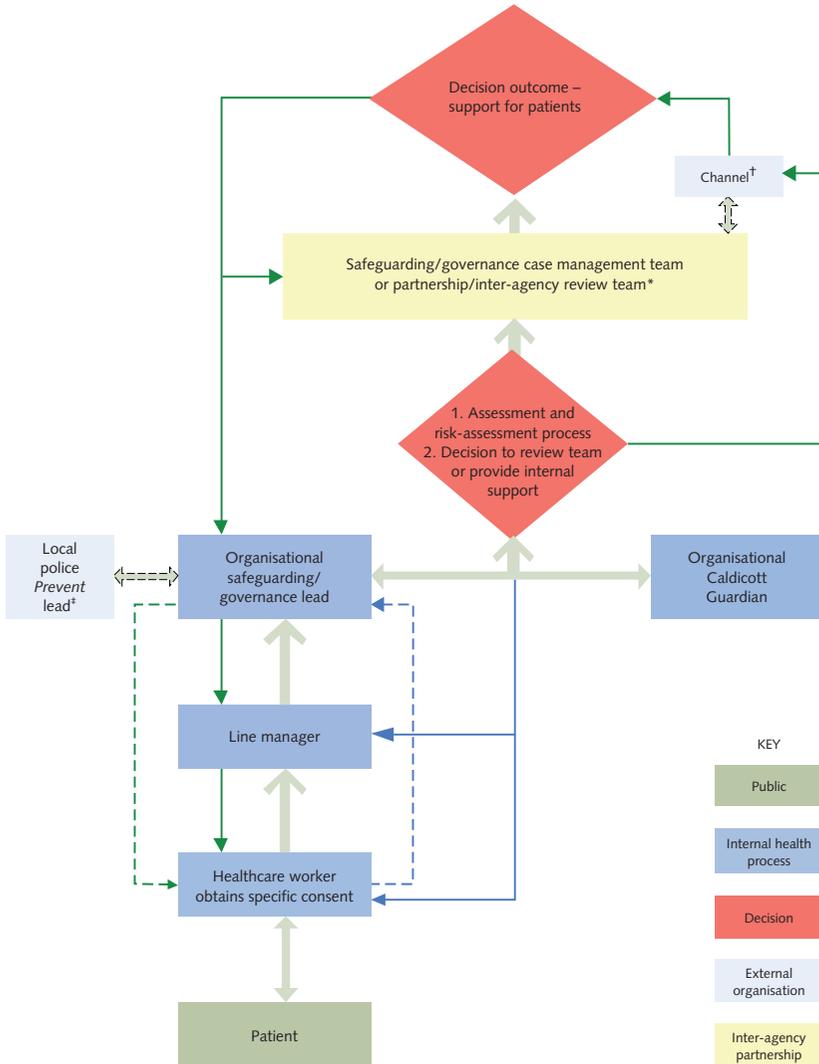
The individuals in these examples came from different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds and appear to have very little in common. However, they each became victims of radicalisation.

Raising *Prevent* concerns about patients

Every healthcare organisation will have in place existing arrangements for reporting concerns which comply with good governance and safeguarding practices. **If you find that you need to raise concerns, you should use your own organisation's policies and procedures that reflect the process.** If you are uncertain about what to do, speak with your manager as the first step, or another person with authority.

In the absence of any existing arrangements for raising concerns, the following flow chart is provided as an example of an escalation procedure.

Raising *Prevent* concerns



* To include representatives from other public sector services, such as local authorities, education, social care, etc.
 † Channel Groups provide a mechanism for supporting individuals who may be vulnerable to terrorist-related activity by assessing the nature and the extent of the potential risk, agreeing and providing an appropriate support package tailored to an individual's needs. Channel is a multi-agency panel (including the health sector) and the local Channel lead is normally located within the police or local authority.
 ‡ This is an advisory role and it will be at the discretion of healthcare practitioners and safeguarding leads to contact police *Prevent* leads for advice and support as necessary. Police *Prevent* leads can also assist safeguarding leads and Caldicott Guardians with advice on risk-assessment procedures.

Self-assessment tool for healthcare workers

The self-assessment tool below is for your personal use only, and is intended to help you assess your own understanding of what you can do and how you can escalate any concerns you have in relation to *Prevent* within your organisation.

You can also file this in your learning portfolio to demonstrate your own action learning.

Date of completion _____

Question	Y	N	What action do I need to take?	Date I took this action
Do I know where to access my organisation's protocols, policies and procedures?				
Am I familiar with my organisation's policies and procedures relating to <i>Prevent</i> ?				
Do I know what my organisation's policies and procedures say about staff use of the internet at work?				
Do I know what my organisation's policies and procedures say about the use of meeting rooms/public areas by staff, patients or visitors?				
Do I know what my organisation's policies say about the use of notice boards, canvassing and leafleting at work?				

Question	Y	N	What action do I need to take?	Date I took this action
Were any issues relating to <i>Prevent</i> included in recent training I attended?				
Am I aware of the issues that relate to the exploitation of vulnerable individuals which can lead them into terrorist-related activity?				
Am I aware of my responsibility to raise concerns I have about a patient or fellow member of staff?				
Do I know whom I can speak to in confidence within my organisation should I have any concerns?				

Note: This document has been produced for healthcare workers as a companion to *Building Partnerships, Staying Safe – The health sector contribution to HM Government’s Prevent strategy: Guidance for healthcare organisations*. This guidance and toolkit are covered by the Home Office Counter-Terrorism Bill Equality Impact Assessment/CONTEST Equality Impact Assessment to ensure a common narrative across government and public sector partners.



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