

Who was Jack?

Jack, white British male, was 32 years old when he completed suicide by hanging, in his home. Jack was unemployed at the time of his death and lived alone. Jack's brother had also completed suicide prior to Jack's death. Jack had children and a supportive mother.

The full report can be found here:
<https://www.lbbd.gov.uk/adult-health-and-social-care/barking-and-dagenham-safeguarding-adults-board/safeguarding-adult>

Jack's experiences

Jack suffered from anxiety, depression and had a history of ADHD. He had been known to Mental Health Services, for many years but his engagement was inconsistent and largely driven by crises. Jack had co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders. He was accused of domestic abuse offences against an ex-partner and was prevented from seeing his children but pursued visitation rights through the family courts. Jack had many attendances at hospital including for overdose and suicidal ideation. Jack refused to engage with Alcohol and Drug Services. He showed many risk factors associated with completed suicide. Jack was threatened with eviction towards the end of his life.

Key Findings

- Lack of robust risk assessment.
- Jack was difficult to engage constructively in interventions.
- Non-engagement as an indicator of someone who is struggling and needs more assertive intervention.
- Recognition of the impact of impulsivity or impulse control disorder did not inform the work undertaken with Jack.

Recommendations

- Assertive outreach capacity in Alcohol and Drug Services to support the engagement of hard to engage substance misusers.
- Raising safeguarding concerns about people with substance misuse and/or co-occurring disorders.
- Guidance or training to support professionals to consider the use of the Mental Capacity Act in the context of difficult to engage clients.
- Training on working with, and pathways for, individuals who have both substance use disorders and mental disorders.
- Training to enable professionals to understand the impact of impulsivity in complex clients.
- Frontline services to be aware of and able to use, robust alcohol and drug screening tools such as the AUDIT tool to identify and record the level of substance related risk for clients.

Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR)

Jack

7 Minute Briefing

Key Findings

- Consistent drug and alcohol screening tools should be routinely used by all relevant professionals.
- Jack would have benefited from being discussed at a multi-agency forum.
- There was a lack of safeguarding concerns raised.
- Assessing the mental capacity of people with substance use disorders can pose challenges.

Recommendations

- Robust local training on risk assessment which includes evidence about key predictors of a risk of suicide
- Local procedures on how to respond to clients who are hard to engage in services.
- Escalation of the more vulnerable, hard to engage clients, to the Safeguarding Adults Complex Cases Group for joint management.