

Complex Adult Risk Management (CARM) Frequently Asked Questions

What does CARM mean?

CARM is an abbreviation for Complex Adult Risk Management. CARM is a simple acronym to describe the framework here.

Is the CARM framework an alternative framework for Section 42 Care Act enquiries?

No, the CARM Framework is for high risk in relation to concerns that do not meet the 3 statutory criteria Section 42 (1) Care Act 2014. If in doubt, please contact: South Tyneside Adult Services

- Email: safeguardingadults@southtyneside.gov.uk

What is the purpose of the CARM framework?

The CARM framework is an approach that brings together professionals from health, social care, the police, housing and other agencies/organisations. This also includes the adult, family members and friends who have a legitimate relationship with the adult. This framework will be useful to professionals working with Adults who are experiencing a high level of risk from events and circumstances that result in risk of harm to them.

Is the CARM Framework statutory?

No, the CARM framework is not in statute. It is a developed and agreed framework. It needs to be placed in a context of the broad safeguarding umbrella where people may have come to harm or are at risk of doing so. The six principles of adult safeguarding – empowerment, prevention, proportionality, protection, partnership and accountability should be considered in all cases where the CARM framework is utilised.

In most cases the expected outcome of a CARM meeting will be the formulation of an agreed risk assessment and management plan whilst identifying and highlighting any other needs or wishes the individual has.

The intention of all involved in the CARM meetings is to find solutions that are ideally agreed and accepted and work for the individual concerned. One essential outcome of a successful CARM meeting will be the clarification of expectations about what each agency can, or cannot, do. In each CARM meeting it is expected that agencies/organisations will be clear about how they are going to fulfil their responsibilities and accountabilities as recorded within the risk management plan.

Are there legal considerations within the CARM framework?

Yes, all agencies/organisations have a duty to uphold the law and the CARM framework should not be seen as a substitute to legislation and existing processes. Agencies should follow existing legislation and their internal processes, including the Human Rights Act 1998, Mental Health Act 2007, Mental Capacity Act 2005, Care Act 2014, Data Protection 2018 Act, Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA), Multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) etc. These processes will be seen as having primacy.

Can we share information?

Yes, information sharing is key to promoting an adult's rights and protecting from significant harm. The Care Act Guidance explains that if the adult has the mental capacity to make informed decisions about their safety and they do not want any action to be taken, this does not preclude the sharing of information with relevant professional colleagues. This is to enable professionals to assess the risk of harm and to be confident that the adult is not being unduly influenced, coerced or intimidated and is aware of all the options. This will also enable professionals to check the safety and validity of decisions made. It is good practice to inform the adult that this action is being taken unless doing so would increase the risk of harm.

Is the CARM framework a risk assessment?

No, CARM is a multi-agency risk management framework only for adults who are at risk of significant harm and where the risks are unmanageable. It is not a risk assessment tool and does not replace any other risk assessment tools that are being used in your agency/organisation. Partner organisations should ensure that they have the mechanisms in place to enable early identification and assessment of risk through timely information sharing and targeted multi-agency support.

Who should a professional discuss their concerns with?

All case discussions should be explored with the professionals' line manager in the first instance. It can then be decided whether or not the CARM framework should be applied, prior to referring to CARM. Advice can be sought from Adult Social Care and adult safeguarding professionals to determine if the concerns should be reported as a safeguarding concern.

Are there other more proportionate multi-agency responses to risk?

Yes, it is important that other approaches and frameworks are also considered, that support the adult and that information sharing is person centred and has a focus on risk management, for example, Care Reviews, Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements etc.

Who can lead the CARM meetings?

The CARM meeting will be Chaired by a professional from either the ICB or LA. Any agency/organisation can refer to CARM and they will be referred to as the Lead Agency. The Lead Agency will be responsible for co-ordinating the CARM meeting where there is a preference for it to be in person; CARM meetings will usually take place via MS Teams and the Lead Agency should ensure the Adult is able to attend should they wish. The CARM framework ensures that the adult remains at the centre of the process and the action plan has been agreed and circulated.

Do you need consent from the adult?

The adult and their representatives should be invited to the meeting, where possible. This needs to be demonstrated clearly and any decision not to seek consent, or to override the adult's consent should have a lawful basis and should be clearly recorded.

Is there a role for Advocacy?

There are many different types of advocacy, including:

- Self-advocacy
- Group advocacy
- Peer advocacy
- Citizen advocacy
- Professional advocacy
- Non-instructed advocacy.

Discussions should be had with the adult about advocacy, what it is and whether the adult wishes for someone to represent them, this could for example be a family member, friend. In some situations, the adult may be legally entitled to get the support of an independent advocate, if they have no family or friend that can undertake this role.

The Care Act 2014 provides a right to advocacy in relation to decisions about social care, if the criteria are met. If you think the adult has a need for advocacy discuss this with the local authority.

Why have I been asked to attend a CARM meeting?

You have been invited to come to the meeting because you play a key role in providing advice/information/support/services to the adult. The meeting is to talk about the high risks identified and decide what can be done to manage the risks and support and protect the adult. Your knowledge and expertise may be crucial to the adult and to joint working.

Does the CARM framework replace existing safeguarding policies and procedures?

The CARM framework does not replace any current policies and procedures. The CARM is a framework that sits within the Multi-Agency Adult Safeguarding Procedures and should only be applied if the criteria are met. The CARM Framework is for concerns that sit outside of the Care Act 2014 Section 42 enquiry decision.

Is a CARM meeting only for adults who have capacity to make decisions about the risks?

Yes, understanding a person's capacity to make a decision is a vital element in planning with the adult. Where it has been assessed that a person does not have capacity to make a decision with regard to their safety, a referral to the Local Authority should be made. In assessing a person's capacity to make a decision, the principles of the Mental Capacity Act 2005 should be followed. A person lacks capacity if at a specific time; they are unable to make a specific decision because of a temporary or permanent impairment of, or disturbance in, the functioning of the mind or brain. A person is deemed as unable to make a decision if they are unable to understand information relating to the decision, or unable to retain the information or use the information as part of the process of making the decision, or unable to communicate the decision.

How often can a CARM meeting be called?

CARM meetings can be called when there is a 'legitimate need' to do so. This is judged on a case-by-case basis by the professional and their agency/organisation.

Who should be the Lead Agency?

The lead agency is the agency referring into CARM. During the meeting the lead agency may change; this needs to be clearly recorded. This agency/organisation then becomes the lead agency for any future CARM meetings.

Who is responsible for organising any CARM review meeting?

The CARM administrator will arrange the date, time and venue and invite all parties that have a legitimate relationship with the adult.

How is the CARM governed?

Quality and practice assurance play a significant role in ensuring that the CARM framework is governed effectively whilst identifying trends and training needs. The Governance of the CARM framework will sit with the Safeguarding Adult Boards (SAB) and the SAB will receive reports from the Quality Assurance and Performance Subgroups. Data collection might include:

- Number of adults going through the CARM and review process
- Agencies holding CARMs
- Outcomes for adults
- Escalation processes

How and where is the CARM meeting information stored?

Current agency/organisation policies will apply