

Training and support

Reflective practice and regular supervision are ways to support professional curiosity and support professionals to implement this non-judgemental and holistic approach. More information about training can be accessed in the [NHS Rotherham CCG Safeguarding Supervision Policy](#)

Further information:

Virtual College have published a helpful [YouTube video on professional curiosity](#) covering disguised compliance and the importance of professional curiosity

Things to Remember

- ◆ Professional curiosity is key to Safeguarding.
- ◆ Fully explore rather than making assumptions.
- ◆ Be aware of your own values affecting judgements.
- ◆ Triangulate information you receive.
- ◆ Seek independent confirmation of individuals' accounts and weigh up details from a range of sources
- ◆ Focus on the need, voice and "lived experience" of the person
- ◆ Ask relevant questions and be prepared to have difficult conversations.

During Covid: [Safeguarding in Virtual Consultations](#)

What is Professional Curiosity?

Professional curiosity is the **capacity and communication skill to explore and understand what is happening within a family** rather than making assumptions or accepting things at face value.

Professional curiosity is a golden thread through all Safeguarding Partnership learning reviews and audits and is an essential part of safeguarding. Nurturing professional curiosity is a fundamental aspect of working together to keep children, young people and adults safe.

Professional curiosity can require practitioners to think 'outside the box' and consider families' circumstances holistically.

Think Family

A Think Family approach to our safeguarding work with children and adults and their families is essential. When completing assessments we need to take opportunities to see, feel and recognise risk and enquire deeper. Being open minded and curious will help to make an informed decision about the child's, adult's or families' lived experiences.

Barriers

It is important to note that when a lack of professional curiosity is cited as a factor in a tragic incident, this does not automatically mean that blame should be apportioned. It is widely recognised that there are many barriers to being professionally curious ...

Poor supervision, complexity and pressure of work, changes of case worker leading to repeatedly 'starting again' in casework, closing cases too quickly, fixed thinking/preconceived ideas and values, and a lack of openness to new knowledge are also barriers to a professionally curious approach.

Be Self Aware

Professionals need to have a degree of caution in their judgements and triangulate information. This means seeking independent confirmation of individuals' accounts and weighing up details from a range of sources or practitioners, particularly when there appear to be discrepancies. Professionals need to be aware of their own values without letting them influence their decision making and practice in a way that is non-judgemental and anti-discriminatory

Having Difficult Conversations

Professionals need to enquire about the significant people in families' lives that influence them. This may be someone who provides care, or supports the family or individual (eg another family member, a friend, someone from the community or father of any children and so on. Professionals need to be brave and have what are often difficult or awkward conversations about the issues affecting families. These could be domestic abuse, inadequate housing, self-neglect, social isolation, mental health, drugs and alcohol, or issues between a person and carer.