

Amelia – DHR – Summary, Key Issues and Recommendations

Amelia, a vulnerable elderly woman, died following a period of neglect and isolation. After losing close family members, she was targeted by Paul, a significantly younger man, who became her civil partner. Amelia was moved away from her support network, financially exploited, and ultimately found in a severely neglected state. Multiple safeguarding alerts were raised, but systemic failures across agencies meant that risks were not adequately addressed.

Key Issues

- **Predatory Marriage & Economic Abuse:** Amelia's civil partnership revoked her will and enabled Paul to gain financial control via a Lasting Power of Attorney (LPA).
- **Neglect & Isolation:** She was found in poor health, with signs of abandonment and lack of care.
- **Safeguarding Failures:** Missed opportunities to assess mental capacity and intervene.
- **Systemic Gaps:** Lack of coordinated response across agencies and insufficient understanding of abuse in later life.

Recommendations

Adult Social Care : Mandatory training on predatory marriage and LPA misuse, economic abuse in later life, self-neglect and coercive control. Improved safeguarding practice and enhanced induction for locum staff, stronger management oversight. Better use of Care Act assessments. Strengthen professional curiosity and multi-agency working

Police - Improve understanding of: Economic abuse and coercive control in older adults and predatory marriage as a safeguarding concern. Enhance coordination with social care and registrars

Health Services - Ensure mental capacity assessments are conducted when concerns arise. Improved documentation and escalation of safeguarding concerns

Registrars / General Register Office -Review procedures for registering marriages/civil partnerships where capacity is in question, share learning nationally to prevent predatory marriage

Office of the Public Guardian - Review LPA registration and oversight processes. Consider safeguards for vulnerable adults entering LPAs under duress

Multi-Agency / Strategic Partnerships Update Domestic Abuse Risk Assessment (DARA) to include: Triggers such as marriage, financial control, and isolation. Promote joint training and case reviews across agencies