PREVENTING

RADICALISATION

# INTRODUCTION

To ensure that the health and social care sector maintain the delivery of the highest standards of health, safety and welfare of its service users, visitors and care providers, organisations are having to implement policies and guidelines in line with the *PREVENT* agenda incorporated in the Government’s counter terrorism CONTEST strategy. Its aim is to reduce the risk of threats to the United Kingdom and to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting the act of terrorism

# LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this module, the learner should be able to:

* Understand what extremism and radicalisation are and why it is important to discuss and address such issues
* Know the objectives of the PREVENT agenda and the health sector contribution to the CONTEST strategy
* Recognise your own professional responsibilities to the safeguarding of vulnerable adults, children and young people
* Know your responsibilities and recognise indicators that radicalisation may be taking place
* Understand vulnerability factors that can make individuals susceptible to radicalisation

Extremism and terrorist attacks are rarely out of the news and media. Who can forget the 9/11/2001 Twin Towers attack in the USA, Glasgow Airport in June 2007, London bombings on 7/7/2005 and most recently Paris and Tunisia in 2015 and Germany 2016. Following these events, the UK government advise ‘a threat to the UK and our interests from international terrorism is severe. This means that a terrorist attack is highly likely’ in accordance to its *CONTEST* strategy publication which was first developed by the Home Office in early 2003 with a revised version which was made publicly available in 2006. Further revisions were further published on 24 March 2009 and, most recently, on 11 July 2011.

An Annual Report on the implementation of CONTEST was released in March 2010 and, most recently, in April 2014. It’s primarily organised around 4 key principles *Pursue, Prevent, Protect and Prepare.*

Work-­‐streams contribute to 4 programmes, each with a specific objective.

**PURSUE:** to stop terrorist attacks

**PREVENT:** to stop people becoming terrorists and 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 the **Prevent** principle and encompasses all parts of the NHS, charitable organisations and private sector bodies which deliver health services to NHS patients however primarily focuses on the 2nd and 3rd objectives. The latter is also applicable to those in community and receiving other means of care.

The THREE national objectives of the Prevent principle are as follows:

Objective 1: respond to the ideological challenge of terrorism and the threat we face from those who promote it.

Objective 2: deter people from being drawn into terrorism

Objective 3: work with sectors and institutions where there are risks of radicalisation that need to be addressed.

# DEFINING TERRORISM, EXTREMISM AND RADICALISATION:

**Terrorism:** *an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people, causes serious damage to property or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use of threat must be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public, and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause* (Terrorism Act 2000)

**Extremism:** *Vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of the law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. Calls for the deaths of members of the armed forces are also included in this definition*

(HM Government Prevent Strategy, 2011)

**Radicalisation:** *the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and forms of extremism leading to terrorism* (HM Government Prevent Strategy, 2011)

***The Preven*t** agenda aims to protect individuals who are vulnerable to the exploitation of those who seek to get people to support or commit acts of violence. As a health or social care provider and working with individuals who are considered vulnerable including adults, women and young children, and therefore more susceptible to radicalisation by extremists or terrorists, it is your ‘duty of care’ to safeguard, protect and support them. To uphold this responsibility, health and social care professionals are required to contribute to the prevention of terrorism and work alongside its partner organisations.

Objective 1 of the PREVENT strategy advises that we should respond to the ideological challenges of terrorism and the threat that we face to promote it.

*Ideology* is defined as a central factor of radicalisation where the message to vulnerable individuals indicates that its purpose is based on the values of religion and beliefs; in reality it only offers distortion and extremist views. By challenging ideology, this affects the ability of terrorists to promote it and is a fundamental part of Prevent.

Vulnerable individuals may be exploited in many ways by radicalisers who target their vulnerability. Contact with radicalisers is also variable and can take a direct form i.e. face to face, or can happen indirectly through the Internet, social networking or other media sources. More commonly, this will occur through a combination of the aforementioned.

With the advances in technology and communications, this has made an immediate way for terrorists to communicate and radicalise those who are vulnerable, and in many instances, they are difficult to trace

due to the ability to encrypt and hack security on devices. Whilst access to extremist material is often through leaflets and local contact, the Internet plays an important role in the communication of extremist views. It provides a platform for extremists to promote their cause and encourage debate through websites, Internet forums and social networks and is a swift and effective mechanism for disseminating propaganda material.

# Contact with Radicalisers

It is generally more common for vulnerable individuals to become involved in terrorist related activities through the influence of others. Initial contact may be via peers, siblings, other family members or friends, the process of radicalisation often being a social one. Such social interactions take place in a range of unsupervised environments such as gyms and cafes, in private homes, through a faith leader, co-­‐ workers and via the social networks online.

Evidence suggests that radicalisation has a tendency to occur in places where terrorists’ ideologies are not challenged. Such examples include education centres (schools, colleges etc.), health care environments such as Mental Health Institutions, Community Services, prisons/youth offender units and less likely charity organisations/social work and voluntary groups.

# The Channel Process

In October 2012 the Government published “Channel: Protecting vulnerable people from being drawn into terrorism – a guide for local partnerships” which set out advice for local partnerships on how to deliver Channel projects.

*Channel* is a multi-­‐ agency approach to safe guard people at risk from radicalisation. Its aims are:

* Identify individuals at risk of being attracted or drawn into terrorism
* Assess the nature and extent of its risk
* Develop the most appropriate support plan for the individuals involved.

It is a government-­‐supported initiative that aims to stop people becoming terrorists or supporting terrorism through an integrated multi agency approach. It is a process that relies on close collaboration between police, partners and other key stakeholders, providing a mechanism for evaluating referred individuals who are perceived to be at risk of being drawn in to terrorism.

Channel operates in the pre-­‐criminal space and aims to support vulnerable individuals, through targeted intervention relevant to the individual’s vulnerability and risk, to prevent them from committing criminal acts.

# THE RADICALISATION PROCESS:

In order to prevent vulnerable individuals from becoming terrorists, early detection of identifying someone who is an extremist, but this is impossible…. What does an extremist look like? People of any age, race, gender, ethnic group or faith can be considered vulnerable. However, it is important to try and identify potential indicators where an individual may be susceptible or at risk of involvement of acts of terrorism.

Certain changes in behaviour, choices and opinions can be an indicator of a person becoming radicalised, and this can be more easily spotted by those in regular contact with them such as spiritual leader, teacher, care provider, parents, family, GP, work colleagues etc. Observing such changes in behaviour, emotional and external vulnerabilities could be the initial signs that someone is susceptible to radicalisation. However, it must be emphasised that this cannot be immediately assumed that this may lead to terrorism. There may be other rationale or explanations to any changes in behaviour/attitudes/emotions such as an underlying health or social need that requires intervention.

Below are some examples of person’s needs, susceptibilities and motivations that could indicate radicalisation:

# 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 feeling of belonging.

# Personal Crisis

This may for example include significant tensions within the family that produces a sense of isolation for the vulnerable individual from the 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. Rejection of civic life and adoption of violence is a symbolic act.

# Criminal Activities

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.

# Emotional and Physical Indicators:

* Upset
* Anger
* Lack of Role Model
* Lack of confidence
* Peer pressure
* Desire for political changes
* Misinterpretation of religion
* Influences by family member/friends involved in extremism
* Access to social media
* Increase use of internet
* Changes in appearance
* Self-­‐ harm
* Speaking someone else ideas/language
* Fixation on specific subjects/ideology

Vulnerabilities mentioned in the previous section can offer a potential hint at what might be someone’s intention of starting out on the path to extremism and should this be identified at this stage, then early intervention would most likely prevent a crime from happening-­‐ hence *prevention*. By intervening when identifying a vulnerable individual susceptible of terrorism, support and positive strategies can be implemented to try and bring the individual back down to what is considered to be ‘their norm’ before the process of converting to extremism.

# WHEN SHOULD YOU REPORT CONCERNS?

Having concerns and reporting a vulnerable individual of which you believe may be influenced by extremism is no different to raising the alarm of a victim of domestic abuse, being used in drug trafficking, raped, misuse of drugs/alcohol etc. You have a professional duty of care and responsibility to safeguard patients/service users. As previously discussed earlier in the module, many signs and symptoms can also be key indicators of an underlying health or social need that requires to be addressed so by raising your

concerns you have either prevented the risk of someone becoming radicalised and committing a terrorist act or you have identified an individual who requires help and support for a personal or health crisis.

A concern that an individual may be vulnerable to radicalisation does not mean that you think a person is a terrorist, it means that you are concerned they are prone to being exploited by others, and so therefore have a safeguarding concern. Staff should also escalate their concerns to their Manager and safeguarding leads.

The Prevent strategy recommends a three-­‐step process of raising concerns to the appropriate personnel, who will then assess and decide the best course of action.

The **3-­‐step** guide is as follows;

*NOTICE*:

* + Is the behaviour witnessed out of character?
	+ Is the individual using the Internet more than normal?

*CHECK*:

* + Seek opinion from a trusted individual such as your Line Manager, family member or colleague
	+ Discuss with allocated Prevent Officer

*SHARE*:

* Share the concerns if both you and your trusted person feel there is sufficient evidence that potentially indicates radicalisation of a vulnerable individual.
* Follow local guidelines/Trust policies and contact relevant personnel such as Prevent Engagement Order (Police), Prevent coordinator, Channel coordinator etc.

A record should be kept by the staff member of the concerns and the escalation/ reporting. The Safeguarding team will keep a record of all contacts in respect of Prevent and the outcome. Out of hours’ staff should report concerns to the Clinical Site Manager on duty who will then contact a Safeguarding Professional at the earliest opportunity. The Safeguarding Professionals will make contact with local Police Services and feed relevant information into the Channel Process.

If anyone has immediate concerns that an individual is presenting an immediate terrorist risk to themselves, others or property, they should contact:

* National Counter Terrorism Hotline 0800 789321 or
* The Police 999

# Information Sharing:

*Guidance for practitioners and managers* (2008) supports frontline practitioners working in children or adult services, who have to make decisions about sharing personal information on a case-­‐by-­‐case basis. Different organisations and Trusts will have their own in house policies in regards to confidentiality, safeguarding and Data Protection so ensure that you familiarise with same.

By following the Government’s **Prevent** initiative, you are able to do something proactively to prevent the risk of vulnerable individuals being radicalised and preventing the risk of extremism and potential terrorism within the UK. Should you become concerned or identify possible signs in someone’s behaviour that is out of character and may not be ‘quite right’ and excluding all other possible indications such as health or social needs, then you are encouraged to follow the process of;

**NOTICE-­‐ CHECK – SHARE.**