



# Clement Guerin

Head of Adult Safeguarding, SCC

# Amy McLeod

Manager, Surrey Safeguarding Adults Board

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- Nuclear power
- Air transport
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# Which of these industries has an effective safety culture?

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# The challenge

- To increase the chances that adult safeguarding enquiries get to the bottom of
  - What happened
  - Why it happened
  - What we need to do differently
- To do this by rewriting policies and procedures

# Confirmation bias

- Our tendency to cherry-pick information that confirms our existing beliefs
- Happens subconsciously, and much more quickly than our conscious thinking

# Confirmation bias: Example 1





# Confirmation bias: Example 2

“Analysts’ presumptions were so firm that they simply disregarded evidence that did not support their hypotheses ... When confronted with evidence that indicated Iraq did not have WMD, analysts tended to discount such information”

“Commission of the Intelligence Capabilities of the USA regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction” (2005)

# How to prevent confirmation bias

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# ASC Safeguarding P&S

## “Plan” stage

### 17 Plan

- What are we worried about?
- What are the different explanations for what might have happened? What information would help us choose between them? What information have we got? Where might we get any information that we are missing?
- What contextual information do we need? Have there been concerns before about this adult, this source of risk, or this type of issue. What do we need to take account of from that work?
- What do we want the enquiry to achieve? What outcomes does the person want? What outcomes do other people want?
- What will need to happen for us not to be worried any longer? What are the strengths and the protective factors in this situation?
- What will the enquiry consist of?
- What other processes will contribute?
- How do these processes relate to one another?
- What do I need from other people? Do they know what is needed from them, how to do it, and when to do it by?
- Have I got actions for each of the objectives of an enquiry?
  - Establish the facts
  - Ascertain the person's views and wishes
  - Protect from abuse or neglect
  - Assess needs for protection, support and redress
  - Enable resolution and recovery
  - Decide on follow-up actions for the person or organisation responsible for the abuse
- Have I applied RASCI to each action? Is everyone clear for each action who is
- Does the Mental Capacity Act have any relevance?
- Does the adult have the support they need? How will the person be involved in the enquiry? Is there a need for advocacy?
- Do I need to let anyone else know?
  - Is there a possible crime that needs to be reported to the police?
  - Is there an issue for the Coroner?
  - Does anything need to be escalated? Who to, why, who by, and what do I need from the person this is escalated to?
  - Have I let the person who made the referral know what is happening?
- Have I done what I need to do to manage?
  - Confirmation bias
    - Have I considered all the alternatives?
    - Have I asked someone to act as "Devil's Advocate"?
  - Optimism bias
    - Have I identified and understood all the risks?
    - Have I done a robust risk assessment? Are there particular risk assessment tools I should be using?
  - Groupthink
    - Have we all gone along with the same ideas and missed other ideas we should be thinking of?
    - Have we involved other people whose expertise would be useful? Have we listened properly to what they say, particularly if we don't agree with them?

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# What difference has it made?

- Early days, but
  - Increase in number of concerns referred to Adult Social Care
  - Increased proportion of those lead to adult safeguarding enquiries
  - Increased proportion of adult safeguarding enquiries relating to domestic abuse

# What next?

- Develop shared expectations of what good looks like in practice
- Improve systems to support the practice we want to see
- Measure what we are doing to check it is what we expect we should do