

Tackling Beneficiary Disengagement to Strengthen Safeguarding Practices

Colin D S Gordon
Head of Safeguarding



Agenda

- **Who do we help? – Commonalities and approaches**
- **Casework and safeguarding – finding the line within complexity**
- **The components of disengagement**
- **The disengagement cycle**
- **Disengagement – the impact**
- **Engagement – is there a right approach?**



Who do we help? – Commonalities and approaches

- **Military Veterans**
- **Serving Personnel**
- **Families and Dependants (Royal Charter defines)**
- **Regulated environment versus non-regulated environments – Risks**
- **6 Care Homes**
- **Community based welfare and advice work**
- **Approaches – person centred versus process driven**



Casework and safeguarding – finding the line within complexity

- Voluntary engagement
- Person centred approaches
- Disclosure
- Presenting need versus identified issues
- Recognising a safeguarding concern
- Capacity decisions – risk enabled safeguarding practice
- Suicidal ideation – contextualised safeguarding



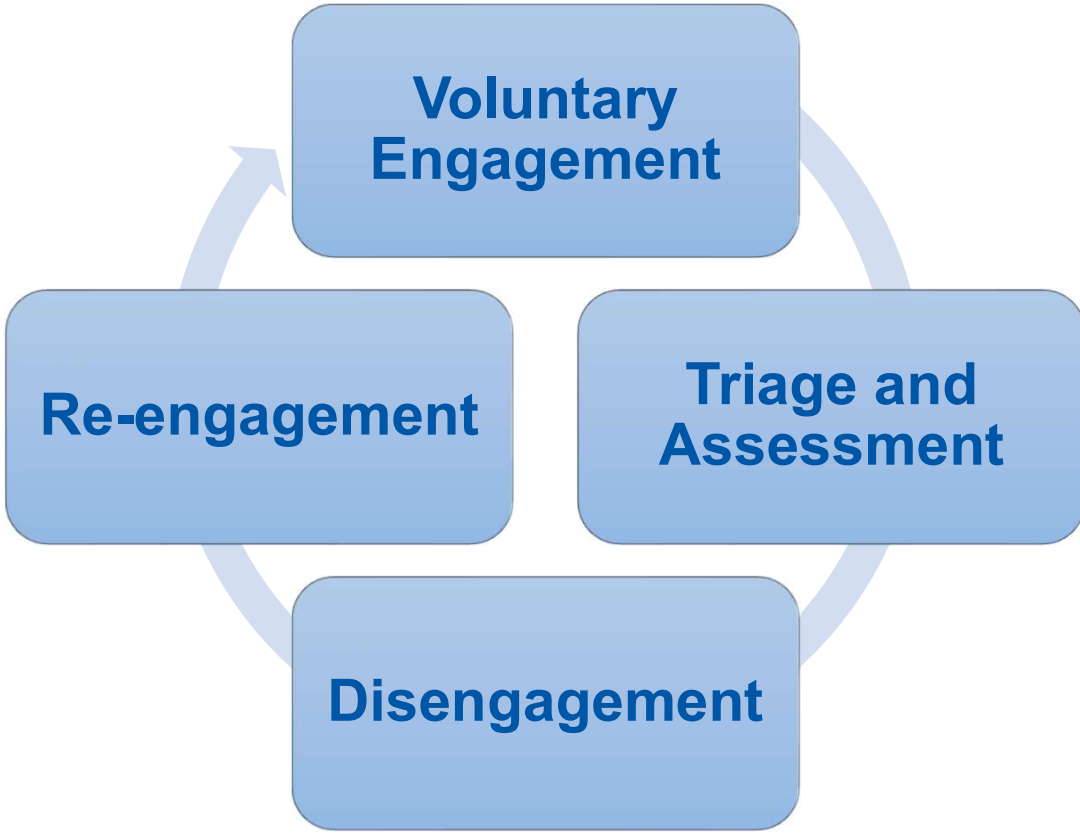
The Components of Disengagement

3 Major Components

- **Psychological –**
 - Mental Capacity (decision making)
 - Emotional Capacity (resilience)
 - Stigma (pride, attitude to MH)
- **Sociological -**
 - Forms and application processes (DLA, PIP etc)
 - Presentation in person
 - Assumes a level of competence and compliance (advocate)
- **Methodological (Organisational Efficiency)**
 - Communication style/type/frequency – whose choice is it?
 - Response times
 - Process centred -



The Disengagement Cycle



Disengagement – The Impact

- Increased risk of beneficiaries not receiving support – needs not addressed
 - Increased safeguarding risk – think family, ripple effects
 - Likelihood of future re-engagement can decrease
 - Re-engagement at a later stage can see an escalation in the safeguarding risk from the initial or previous presentation – does risk increase over time?
 - Vicarious trauma for staff – worry/stress, unresolved concerns, no ability to mitigate known or perceived safeguarding risks
 - Risk to organisation’s reputation through no, or poor service delivery
- Beneficiary**
- Staff/Volunteers**
- Organisation**

Engagement – Is there a right approach?

- How well do we know our beneficiary/acknowledge their journey and adjust accordingly?
- Maintain a person centred approach – pace, disclosure, resolution
- Staff bias – need to ignore all previous dis-engagement, start from afresh
- Timely delivery – do what we said we would do. Avoid delay.
- Consistent communication – reference actions, follow ups, delays
- If you cannot do something tell the beneficiary and explain why. Refer to a more appropriate organisation and make sure the beneficiary “gets there”. Hand over the beneficiary if that’s appropriate.
- Courageous conversations – if there is a safeguarding concern discuss it openly, honestly. Give your rationale.
- Unwise decisions are a result of the beneficiary having ALL the information.



Questions?