

# Foreword, vulnerability-related risks

The guideline chair on how this guidance will help police officers and staff to recognise and respond to vulnerability-related risks

First published 18 November 2021

2 mins read

These guidelines focus specifically on the policing response to vulnerability. Vulnerability-related demand has increased for the police service, and a proportionate and effective response is required to manage it. The police are one part of a broader system that is responsible for protecting vulnerable people. Senior leaders across the system should work together, to make sure that people receive help from professionals with the right skills. Policing should contribute in circumstances when policing skills are most appropriate.

The guideline committee strongly supported the articulation of clearer roles, responsibilities and parameters – for policing and for other organisations – in responding to vulnerability-related risks and harm. This has already been explored and articulated across different public protection strands, for example, when considering [missing people](#) or the police response to wider [mental health](#).

To support the implementation of these guidelines, it is important for chief officers to work collaboratively with the following organisations and groups, to recognise where other agencies have a primary or supporting responsibility:

- National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC)
- Association of Police and Crime Commissioners
- College of Policing
- the wider police service
- relevant partners and academics
- the government

This has the potential to influence the wider system in a way that enables a more effective response at an individual level, while also helping the police service to manage demand.

The interaction between the responder and individual is central to these guidelines. The four guidelines that follow will help officers and staff to recognise, understand and respond to vulnerability. They set out the actions that chief officers should take at the organisational level to enable their staff to respond effectively, including the requirement to develop strong partnerships and to champion the role (and limits) of the police.

These guidelines, in combination with the College risk principles, provide officers and staff with a framework that will help them to make confident assessments and decisions in a complex area of policing. This will contribute to a more appropriate and holistic service for vulnerable individuals, which aims to ensure that the right agencies can provide the right services at the right time.

## Tags

Vulnerable people