

***Washkit* – A resource pack to support people in responding to self-neglect**



Written by Peter Bates

An incomplete project that incorporated the following stages:

- Background reading and reflection on the causes of dangerous self neglect and poor personal hygiene. This resulted in the online publication of *Vile Bodies*, available for free download [here](#). Other resources on this topic are listed under the heading 'Self Neglect' [here](#).
- Several workshops were held to combine the ideas from *Vile Bodies* with lived experience into the *Washkit* resource. This is envisaged as a card set that will help people create a personalised support plan. Each workshop used the outputs from the previous one to comment on and edit the text on the cards.
- The bulk of the development work was done in 2012, so updates are needed. The development work was unfunded and so never completed, so suggestions for improving the text are welcome.
- Anyone who wants to take the development process forward and publish *Washkit* is welcome to do so. As a courtesy, please contact me as the originator of the concept: peter.bates@ndti.org.uk.

Washkit includes four sets of coloured cards, as follows:

- Yellow: How to use this pack.
- Red: What is happening?
- Blue: Looking after yourself
- Green: How should I respond?

Each of the cards (apart from the yellow ones) is structured in the following way:

- Citations appear, with the full reference details in *Vile Bodies*, enabling readers to find out more.
- Each card is restricted to a maximum of 300 words.
- The language should be easy to understand and accompanied by images to maximise accessibility.
- Where it is relevant to do so, the content of one card can refer to another, but material will appear on one card only, rather than being repeated.
- Some contributors who are experts in particular fields (e.g. fire safety or environmental health) have helped to produce the content of individual cards, while an overall editor ensures a consistent 'voice' for the material.

Red: What is happening?

Personal Care

- 01: Diet
- 02: Body Odour
- 03: Clothes and bedding
- 04: Skin care
- 05: Hair and nails
- 06: Feet
- 07: Poor oral health
- 08: Incontinence
- 09: Falls
- 10: Wounds
- 11: Pain
- 12: Routine and mobility
- 13: Mental health
- 14: Physical health and disability

Environment and Home

- 15: Heating
- 16: Water, gas and electricity
- 17: Toilet
- 18: Basic amenities
- 19: Addictions or other high-risk behaviours
- 20: Hoarding
- 21: Post and bills
- 22: House maintenance and cleaning
- 23: Fire Hazard
- 24: Dangerous building
- 25: Rotting food
- 26: Rats or other infestation

Relationship with others

- 27: Views, beliefs and feelings
- 28: Social isolation
- 29: Neighbours complain
- 30: Abuse
- 31: Antisocial behaviour
- 32: The person will not visit the doctor
- 33: Refusing other healthcare or medication
- 34: Visiting staff are refused access
- 35: Children or vulnerable adults at risk
- 36: Animal welfare

Blue: Look after yourself

- 37: Cope with your own emotions
- 38: Reflect on your practice
- 39: Respond to smells
- 40: Respond to appearances
- 41: Touch
- 42: Sensitivity and resilience
- 43: Wash your hands
- 44: Supervision and support

Green: How should I respond?

Do the right thing

- 45: Assess and record
- 46: Mental capacity
- 47: Other legal frameworks
- 48: Autonomy and consent
- 49: Risk assessment
- 50: Follow safeguarding procedures
- 51: Plan
- 52: Withdraw
- 53: Detain
- 54: Evict, cleanse or destroy property
- 55: Report and share information

Engage others

- 56: Advocate
- 57: Community and Voluntary organisations
- 58: Relatives and friends
- 59: Environmental Health
- 60: Police
- 61: Landlord
- 62: GP and District Nurse
- 63: Social Worker, Occupational Therapist
- 64: Carer's Assessment
- 65: Debt advice
- 66: Fire Service
- 67: RSPCA

The goal of *Washkit*:

- *Washkit* has been written so that the cards can be shown to the person concerned. Used with sensitivity, this resource can help the person reflect on their current lifestyle, take control and make positive changes.
- It is useful for families and others who support the person
- It can be used in training exercises to help people learn more about self neglect
- It includes an explanation of how the pack came into being, who wrote it and which organisations sponsored the work
- It shows the most recent publication date.

How to use *Washkit*

- The Red Cards help with assessment – briefly review all the titles and discard cards that are not relevant. Choose the most important Red Cards – the ones that increase risk to the person and to others. Do this exercise with others involved, as they may prioritise different issues to the ones you think are most important. Discuss your differences of view.
- The Blue Cards come next, as it is important to recognise your own response to the person's self-neglect. Without doing so, there is a danger that you will set goals based on your needs rather than the person's best interests.
- In the same way as before, review the Blue Cards and consider which of them are significant for you. Acknowledge these human processes with the other stakeholders. Consider ways to manage your own responses. You may wish to keep any Blue Cards that are particularly important in view for the next part of the exercise, and continue to think about how you will handle that issue going forward.
- Now look at the Green Cards. These suggest some of the things that you might do in response to the difficulties you identified by using the Red Cards. In some situations it may be necessary to action a Green Card immediately in response to the severity of a Red Card issue. In other situations, you will decide to only action the Green Card when the Red Card issue passes a particular threshold of severity.
- Discuss this with others. You may find that the Social Worker has a different threshold for action compared to the Environmental Health Officer, or the Fire Officer is less worried than the neighbour. Decide with the person what action you will take together if certain thresholds are passed.
- Use *Washkit* to review the situation again if new issues come into play, or if the tolerance of stakeholders changes.

Section	What is happening? Personal Care
Card Ref & Topic	01: Diet
Definition	What has the person been eating and drinking? What would be the signs of dehydration and malnutrition?
Story	
Hints and Hazards	Can you get permission to look in the fridge – is it empty? The local authority has duties under the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970 regarding the provision of meals. Sweat can become smelly after eating curry, garlic or strong spices, or a lot of red meat. Obesity and alcohol or substance misuse can increase sweating. The majority of psychotropic medications cause weight gain and so increase sweating (Schwartz et al 2004) so people taking these medications should wash more often. Seek advice from a dietician.

Section	What is happening? Personal Care
Card Ref & Topic	02: Body Odour
Definition	The TELER assessment asks: is the smell apparent on entering the building, the room, getting close to the person, or when clothing or dressings are undone, and is the person aware, embarrassed, reluctant to socialise, put off their food or nauseated by the smell?
Story	
Hints and Hazards	<p>Some 3% of the population sweat excessively and hyperhidrosis can be diagnosed in those do so from certain parts of the body and at certain times. A rare, genetic disorder called Trimethylaminuria (TMAU) causes sweat and breath to smell like rotten fish. Many psychiatric and other medications increase sweating.</p> <p>Body odour can be reduced by improving diet, exercise and oral care as well as hygiene and laundry practices. Antibacterial body wash from the pharmacist can help. Poverty, lack of access to hot water or other reasons can prevent people making these changes.</p> <p>Brewer et al (1996) found that some people with schizophrenia had almost no sense of smell and this was not attributable to smoking or medication. Smoking is widely believed to reduce sensitivity to smell, but this is not confirmed experimentally.</p>

Section	What is happening? Personal Care
Card Ref & Topic	03: Clothes and bedding
Definition	
Story	Staff at the homeless day centre took George out to buy some new clothes. He was very proud of them, as he had very few possessions. During a short stay in the psychiatric unit, his belongings were spoilt and his personal space invaded. His new clothes were stuffed into a plastic bag as if they were rags, and a worker accompanied him into the shower room. George was offended, and withdrew his cooperation.
Hints and Hazards	How has the person managed their appearance throughout their life and has anything changed? What message do they aim to convey via their appearance – membership or rejection of a particular group? Heavy smoking stains fingers and teeth and will make clothes and body smell of stale smoke. Does the person have the money and the knowledge to buy breathable clothes (wool, silk or cotton rather than nylon etc) and shoes? Smith (2007) reports a study that found 82% of unemployed or manual workers changed their underwear every day, compared with 78% of the middle class. The wash temperature should be as high as possible, and then the clothes dried as quickly as possible to kill the bacteria. Does the person sleep in their clothes? Some people with disabilities seem unaware of their body temperature and so overdress and then sweat. Is the Victorian weekly washday for bedding and towels in vogue?

Section	What is happening? Personal Care
Card Ref & Topic	04: Skin care
Definition	Is the skin (a) neat and clean, (b) mildly or slightly dirty, (c) moderately dirty, flaking or greasy, or (d) filthy, peeling skin, old dry flaking skin, exposed sores, and infestation?
Story	
Hints and Hazards	Poor body surface hygiene increases the risk of staphylococcal, streptococcal and tetanus infections, especially through fluid transfer from and to skin lesions (Curtis 2011). What is the person's cultural, religious, family or personal heritage of hygiene practices that they learned as a child or developed in adulthood? Outside toilet, weekly hair wash, just washing 'what shows'? Does the person feel good about their bodily appearance or are they ignoring or punishing their body? Some self-neglecters have experienced major traumas. One survey found that more socially confident young men washed less often than their less confident peers. Deodorants work by masking the smell of sweat with fragrance, while antiperspirants reduce sweating. Some people mistakenly view deodorants as an alternative to washing.

Section	What is happening? Personal Care
Card Ref & Topic	05: Hair and nails
Definition	<p>Is hair (a) (a) mildly dirty, untidy, uncut and uncombed, (b) moderately dirty - greasy, overgrown, and uncombed or (c) filthy - overgrown, extremely dirty, matted and infested?</p> <p>Are finger nails (a) mildly dirty and ragged, (b) moderately dirty with nails poorly kept, long, dirty and nicotine stained, or (c) filthy - grossly overgrown with ground in dirt and very nicotine stained?</p>
Story	<p>Hairdressers can play a significant role as social contacts and informal counsellors - so around 5,000 working in the East of England were provided with mental health awareness and stigma combating information.</p>
Hints and Hazards	<p>Hair provides a greater surface area for sweat to adhere to and gives bacteria a fertile breeding ground. Shaving helps sweat to evaporate more quickly, giving the bacteria less time to break it down and generate odour</p>

Section	What is happening? Personal Care
Card Ref & Topic	06: Feet
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	<p>Sweat that lies on the surface of the feet or is absorbed by shoes and socks, lies under dirty and long nails or inhabits patches of dead skin will encourage the growth of bacteria and fungi which can lead to odour and athlete's foot. Keep toenails short and clean. Remove hard, dead skin with a foot file. See a chiropodist. Ensure that staff with personal care responsibilities are providing this basic foot care. Avoid trainers and shoes made of synthetic materials, and instead wear shoes made of leather, canvas or mesh. Do not wear the same pair of shoes two days in a row and remove insoles to help the drying process. Keep feet bare in open sandals as often as possible. Wear sports socks made of natural fibres.</p>

Section	What is happening? Personal Care
Card Ref & Topic	07: Poor oral health
Definition	Does the person have toothache, difficulty eating, decayed teeth, denture problems, dry mouth, ulcers, or halitosis?
Story	
Hints and Hazards	<p>Halitosis or persistent bad breath affects some 25% of the population to some extent. Do they own a toothbrush in good condition, know how to use it and actually do so? Are they registered with a dentist? Poor oral health (gingivitis, periodontal disease, bleeding gums) and reduced saliva flow can lead to halitosis, as well as difficulty swallowing, mouth infections, discomfort and reluctance to use a toothbrush. People with mental health issues or learning disabilities have comparatively poor oral health. Despite this, the survey by Mirza et al (2001) found that the few psychiatric patients had ever been asked about any dental problems by staff. 15% of Khokhar's (2011) inpatient psychiatric sample said that they would visit a dentist if told to. The UK General Dental Council has approved 'special care dentists' who have been trained to treat people with specific problems.</p>

Section	What is happening? Personal Care
Card Ref & Topic	08: Incontinence
Definition	Incontinence of urine or faeces may be a temporary problem linked with a disease such as prostate cancer, a response to a specific phase of life, such as childbirth or the menopause, or a lifelong difficulty.
Story	Simply talking about washing the body is a shameful violation of privacy. Some people respond by either ignoring the topic or generating an emotional 'energy burst' to overcome the shame, which can take them into a bullying or dominating mindset. These responses might apply in an even more marked way to discussions about incontinence. Psychiatric difficulties can follow if the person is surrounded by overly controlling, critical, hostile, or emotionally over-involved people (Van Humbeeck & Van Audenhove 2005)
Hints and Hazards	<p>Intermittent catheterisation is sometimes used and can lead to urinary tract infections and poor continence. Urinary tract infections, sexually transmitted diseases, and menstruation can increase body odour or reduce control, while use of other medications, such as antibiotics, can cause diarrhoea or vomiting. Incontinence can lead to very serious problems with odour and increase risk of infection</p> <p>Provide the person with hygiene gloves, sanitizer, incontinence pads and alcohol gel. General practitioners or specialist continence management nurses will be able to offer advice on treatment and management. Consider obtaining an assessment from an occupational therapist where the incontinence seems to be linked to specific activities.</p>

Section	What is happening? Personal Care
Card Ref & Topic	09: Falls
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	Does this need a referral to a GP or District Nurse? Hospital admission or domiciliary care service?

Section	What is happening? Personal Care
Card Ref & Topic	10: Wounds
Definition	Broken skin, ulcers, sores, wounds.
Story	
Hints and Hazards	<p>If the body surface is not kept clean, wounds can lead to infections, such as hepatitis A. Some wounds such as leg ulcers become malodorous (commonly referred to my medical staff as a fungating or malignant lesion or wound. Where do skin problems such as eczema fit into this? Waterlow screening tools can help to describe the number, size, grade and severity of pressure ulcers. What are the contributing factors and how are wounds being managed? The associated psychological problems include: body image alteration, denial, depression, embarrassment, fear, guilt, lack of self-respect and self-esteem, problems with sexual expression, revulsion or disgust and shame (Naylor 2002).</p>

Section	What is happening? Personal Care
Card Ref & Topic	11: Pain
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	Williams and Bendelow (1998) suggested that some people transcend the disappointments of the deteriorating physical body by focusing upon a sense of identity and purpose that is beyond the physicality of chronic illness and pain – and this might include ignoring personal hygiene. Brown (2010) suggested that refusing painkillers or assistance with incontinence is a marker that the person may need a best interests decision to override their autonomy.

Section	What is happening? Personal Care
Card Ref & Topic	12: Routine and mobility
Definition	The person rarely moves out of a chair or bed or is unable to walk.
Story	
Hints and Hazards	Has the person routine and time structure or are they omitting meals, medication and regular sleep? A healthy diet and regular exercise, sleep and social contact have the potential to improve wellbeing. Can relatives, neighbours or friends help with establishing routines? It has been suggested that living with unpleasant smells triggers daytime tiredness and an unwillingness to go outdoors.

Section	What is happening? Personal Care
Card Ref & Topic	13: Mental health
Definition	Is dementia or obsessional or psychotic thoughts distracting the person from self-care routines? Is the self-neglect an expression of self-loathing, depression, or perhaps even a kind of 'slow suicide' or might it increase the risk of these things occurring?
Story	
Hints and Hazards	Poor mental health may lead to withdrawal from social support and social isolation. Refer to mental health agencies for assessment or support. However, Halliday et al (2000) found 30-50% of people identified as self-neglecting had no psychiatric disorder or condition that could reasonably explain their behaviour. Refer to an Approved Mental Health Professional for assessment under Sections 2, 3 or guardianship, or to consider whether to move to a place of safety under Section 135 of the Mental Health Act 1983, as amended in 2007. Under section 135, the local authority can seek a warrant authorising a police officer to enter the premises and remove someone to a place of safety for the purpose of assessment if it is believed that the person is suffering from a mental disorder, is being ill treated or neglected, or, being unable to care for himself, is living alone.

Section	What is happening? Personal Care
Card Ref & Topic	14: Physical health and disability
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	<p>Naik et al (2008) found a correlation between restrictions in the ability to perform activities of daily living and damage to the frontal lobe of the brain, such as that caused by dementia, depression, diabetes mellitus and cerebrovascular accident. Poor vision and restricted mobility can inhibit cleaning and poor balance may make the person reluctant to get into the bath or shower. Even where movement is possible, it may be painful. Are wounds becoming infected as a result of poor hygiene practices and what are the medical implications? Puberty, pregnancy and menopause can cause excess sweating. Menopause can cause temporary loss of the sense of smell and ageing can permanently impair it. Excess sweating can be caused by diabetes, thyroid disease, respiratory failure, gout, tuberculosis, HIV and malaria, some types of cancer and neurological disorders such as Parkinson's disease.</p>

Section	What is happening? Environment and Home
Card Ref & Topic	15: Heating
Definition	Lack of heating or broken windows etc.
Story	Sue had not used the heating system for over a year and the gas was not connected. She did not seem to be aware of the squalid state of her surroundings. The psychiatric medication had been making her feel unwell and she had not been eating satisfactorily or looking after her hygiene and grooming. Pat worked with housing colleagues to arrange for Sue to move out so the flat could be cleaned up and she was then able to return. With improved living conditions and support to continue with medication she made progress.
Hints and Hazards	What are the signs of hypothermia that would suggest increased risk of death? Some voluntary organisations can help with winter warmth, fuel poverty and insulation. Are there financial problems that would be helped with debt advice? What can environmental health do? Report to landlord?

Section	What is happening? Environment and Home
Card Ref & Topic	16: Water, gas and electricity
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	How does the person wash, use the toilet and clean up food waste? Increased risk of falls, hypothermia and poor diet. Is the person using candles or another dangerous substitute? Consider weather conditions and the time of year. Utility companies must take all reasonable steps to avoid disconnection for vulnerable or disabled people.

Section	What is happening? Environment and Home
Card Ref & Topic	17: Toilet
Definition	
Story	After two years, the care team withdrew support from John as they offered a time-limited service and John showed little evidence of progress or co-operation. His leg muscles gradually wasted away and he lost the ability to walk, and began to use a bucket as a toilet. He continued to manage his personal budget and cancel appointments, thus demonstrating his mental capacity.
Hints and Hazards	Is the toilet working? Are there signs of excrement under finger nails, on clothes, walls or floors? Some 40% of public toilets in London have closed in the last decade (George 2011), leaving shops and restaurants to provide the service, which will exclude some citizens.

Section	What is happening? Environment and Home
Card Ref & Topic	18: Basic amenities
Definition	No bed, private space to wash, or space to prepare food
Story	
Hints and Hazards	Basic amenities (toilet, bath, cooker and so on) may be in place but not used. For example, the person may have a washing machine, but do they know how to use it? One person was afraid of the shower. Can they be taught or supported to use what is available? Would big controls, handrails or other adaptations help – the local authority has duties here under the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970) regarding the provision of practical assistance in the home and works and adaptations to the home.

Section	What is happening? Environment and Home
Card Ref & Topic	19: Addictions or other high risk behaviours
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	In one study (Halliday et al 2000) of 81 people who used a special cleaning service, 85% had one or more chronic physical health problems, 70% had mental disorders, and 32% were misusing substances.

Section	What is happening? Environment and Home
Card Ref & Topic	20: Hoarding
Definition	Clutter and excessive amounts of belongings or collections that prevent free movement around the home or using rooms for the purpose they were designed.
Story	Accumulators do not throw things away (either through ignoring the issue or chronic indecisiveness), Hoarders keep things because they might need them someday, while Collectors target specific possessions. The environmental health literature is generally pessimistic about the long term benefit of single actions to clean up. Where a longer-term plan can be agreed to support a person who wishes to change their behaviour, it may be possible to give them a clean start or make the mess manageable. Commercial businesses offer a de-cluttering service for a fee. Public sector austerity reduces the chance that domiciliary care staff will help clean up.
Hints and Hazards	Hoarding is a problem when living spaces cannot be used in the way that they were intended and the person's functioning is impaired because of it. It affects 1-2% of the UK population, can increase risk of falls and fire and may lead to eviction. Do you need to refer to fire service or environmental health? Does the person meet FACS? Some evidence suggests that imposing a radical clean-up may make the situation worse rather than better (Braye et al 2011). Assess with the Environmental Cleanliness and Clutter Scale (Halliday & Snowden 2009). 81 people received the services of a special cleaning service because of domestic squalor and 25% of them judged their home as 'clean' or 'very clean' (Halliday et al 2000)

Section	What is happening? Environment and Home
Card Ref & Topic	21: Post and bills
Definition	
Story	The older person's mental health team in Barnet in early 2011 has a specialist support worker who concentrates on working through client's piles of unopened post, where permission is given and relatives are not available to take on Lasting Power of Attorney or deal with mail.
Hints and Hazards	The Kohlman Evaluation of Living Skills assessment tool contains 17 items that cover the following five areas: self-care, safety and health, money management, transportation and telephone, and work and leisure. The measure is a combination of self-report items (i.e. hygiene, cooking, social engagements, transportation, monthly income) and performance based items (i.e. writing a cheque and balancing a cheque book, purchasing items and receiving correct change, reading a phone bill, identifying hazards in pictures, dialling a telephone, balancing a budget, finding a number in a phonebook). Burnett et al (2009) found it to be a good predictor of the ability to live safely and independently in the community.

Section	What is happening? Environment and Home
Card Ref & Topic	22: House maintenance and cleaning
Definition	Peeling paintwork and wallpaper, mould and other signs of damp, surfaces grimy, garden overgrown, accumulated rubbish, dirt.
Story	
Hints and Hazards	Threadbare or torn carpets and holes in floorboards can increase risk of falls. Are there any cleaning products or tools in the house? Are windows opened? Sometimes we clean for love or to assert our status, so has the person lost these reasons to maintain their home? Oakley (1974) found women spending an average of 77 hours a week on housework – so what is the person doing instead? Does the person recall a tidy front room or scrubbed front step? Section 92A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 allows the local authority to serve a Litter Clearing Notice if land which is open to the air is defaced by litter or refuse and is detrimental to the amenity of the locality.

Section	What is happening? Environment and Home
Card Ref & Topic	23: Fire hazard
Definition	The person or others are at risk of injury or death by fire
Story	Fred lives alone in a bedsit. His cooking stove was greasy and he was storing two year's worth of daily newspapers, but encouragement from care staff made no difference. A routine visit from the Fire Prevention Officer provided the breakthrough. The Fire Officer explained that the grease the large store of paper were fire hazards to other tenants. Fred accepted this and allowed a cleaner to visit. The firm but compassionate advice of the uniformed expert made a difference.
Hints and Hazards	The Fire Service can supply fire retardant upholstery, smoke detectors and sprinkler systems. Are candles used to save electricity or because electricity has been disconnected?

Section	What is happening? Environment and Home
Card Ref & Topic	24: Dangerous building
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	<p>Open to the elements. Service providers may refuse to enter the property. Increased risk of falls.</p> <p>Sections 83 to 85 of the UK Public Health Act 1936 requires Environmental Health officers to intervene (and, if necessary to override the person's refusal to cooperate) if a dwelling is 'filthy, unwholesome and verminous', with evidence of filth, usually faecal matter, and rodent or insect infestation. They can obtain a warrant to gain admission to assess, impose enforcement notices, cleanse or destroy property in the house or on open land. Section 84 of the Public Health Act 1936 requires cleaning or destruction of filthy or verminous clothing and furnishings. Environmental Health officers can demolish a house that is a severe hazard under the Housing Act 2004.</p>

Section	What is happening? Environment and Home
Card Ref & Topic	25: Rotting food
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	Do stomach problems indicate poor food hygiene practices? Are food containers in use?

Section	What is happening? Environment and Home
Card Ref & Topic	26: Rats or other infestation
Definition	This might include flies, body lice, scabies, nits, maggots, cockroaches and bed bugs as well as rats.
Story	
Hints and Hazards	<p>Have you seen them, or just the evidence? What do they look like? Does the person use insect repellents or traps? Have service providers or others arranged for the house to be cleaned or are they refusing to enter the property? Sections 83 to 85 of the UK Public Health Act 1936 requires Environmental Health officers to intervene (and, if necessary to override the person refusal to cooperate) if a dwelling is 'filthy, unwholesome and verminous', with evidence of filth, usually faecal matter, and rodent or insect infestation. They can obtain a warrant to gain admission to assess, impose enforcement notices, cleanse or destroy property in the house or on open land. Section 83 of the Public Health Act 1936 allows the use of gas to destroy vermin. Section 84 requires cleaning or destruction of filthy or verminous clothing and furnishings, and section 85 to compulsorily cleanse verminous persons. As most or all cleansing stations have now closed, the task usually now falls to the NHS. The destruction of vermin may be at the authority's expense, but other costs will be charged to the person. The Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949 requires steps to be taken to keep land clear of rats and mice.</p>

Section	What is happening? Relationship with others
Card Ref & Topic	27: Views, beliefs and feelings
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	What are the person's own ideas and beliefs on the following? (a) hygiene? (b) the fashion and cosmetic industry? (c) recent changes to hygiene practices and media representations of the home? (d) whether they can change their own behaviour or feel resigned to the status quo? (e) whether cleaning up will make them feel better? (f) their body, their home and appearance? (g) whether a 'peck of dirt' necessary to strengthen the immune system? (h) the need for privacy? (i) their ability to change themselves and the world around them?

Section	What is happening? Relationship with others
Card Ref & Topic	28: Social isolation
Definition	
Story	After wondering how to broach the subject of body odour, the worker suggested that Bob might like to visit someone who needed some company. He asked Bob to put on his best clothes and maybe have a shave. Bob followed the advice, smelt less strongly and the visit was a success. Bob started visiting on a regular basis.
Hints and Hazards	What level of hygiene does the person need to do what they want in life (e.g. work as a chef or find a partner)? Self neglecters are more likely to be isolated (Spensley 2008). Has the person access to friends, neighbours or relatives who might provide support? Can the person recall any grooming activities with others, such as experimenting with makeup with childhood friends or preparing for a wedding? Have they lost these connections and is this permanent – has the person outlived their support system? Self neglect is highly corrosive to social inclusion and can result in poor access to services also, as people are reluctant to serve or interact with the individual in shops and elsewhere.

Section	What is happening? Relationship with others
Card Ref & Topic	29: Neighbours complain
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	Why is the neighbour complaining now? Does the cause of complaint amount to antisocial behaviour? This might trigger an adult social care assessment to find out if the person meets FACS. Perhaps a referral to the Harm Reduction Forum. Does the person need advocacy support from the local voluntary organisation?

Section	What is happening? Relationship with others
Card Ref & Topic	30: Abuse
Definition	
Story	In Liverpool, 95 year old Olive Maddock lived with her daughter and grand-daughter in a house that was filthy and vermin infested. When she died of natural causes in early 2010 her relatives simply closed the door on her and continued to collect her pension for six months until neighbours raised the alarm. (<i>Metro</i> 14 June 2011).
Hints and Hazards	Other people stigmatise, shun and discriminate against people who do not look good. Ants, fish, bullfrogs, mice, lobsters and chimps, as well as humans shun those who show signs of disease (Curtis 2011). Persistent and unpleasant neglect of personal hygiene can generate dangerous levels of frustration amongst relatives. How do we overcome these primitive tendencies? People who have been abused may manifest their distress by obsessional washing or poor hygiene.

Section	What is happening? Relationship with others
Card Ref & Topic	31: Antisocial behaviour
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	<p>Under the Housing Act 1998 the court may evict a tenant if they are causing a nuisance to others. Consideration needs to be given to the person's rights under the Homelessness Act 2002.</p> <p>Consider prosecution under the Antisocial Behaviour Act 2003 or the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005. Both antisocial behaviour orders and antisocial behaviour injunctions create sanctions for non-compliance, including possible loss of tenancy.</p>

Section	What is happening? Relationship with others
Card Ref & Topic	32: The person will not see the doctor
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	People in residential settings may use their neglect of personal hygiene as a bargaining counter in reclaiming some power in a setting that they perceive as overpoweringly in control of their lives. Increasing freedom in other areas, such as taking up a personal budget and self-directed support may reduce their need to adopt a combative approach in areas such as hygiene.

Section	What is happening? Relationship with others
Card Ref & Topic	33: Refusing other healthcare or medication
Definition	
Story	Mr Jones feels that the only ways to express his preference is to say yes and then be unavailable, find fault with the service that is offered, or agree with the idea of help, but not at this time or from this person or agency.
Hints and Hazards	What do we know about what motivates people to stick to prescribed medication (known as concordance)? The general public only consult a doctor in 10% of potential situations when they could do so – so most people ‘refuse healthcare’ from time to time. People find it easier to refuse unwanted help in settings where they have more power, such as at home rather than in hospital. Will opening a discussion about hygiene or self-care lead the person to refuse further help and so increase risk? Being bathed by a stranger may strip the person of all protection, identity and autonomy – too great a price (Twigg 1999).

Section	What is happening? Relationship with others
Card Ref & Topic	34: Visiting staff are refused access
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	<p>How does the person feel about hearing comments about their personal hygiene from you or other people? Has raising the topic spoilt the friendship? Are they angry, in denial, humiliated, ashamed, defiant, embarrassed, suicidal, obsessional or anxious? Do they mind causing offence? Do they have a different relationship with the doctor, nurse, support worker, relative, housing officer, or landlord?</p> <p>Housing officers may apply for an access injunction in the case of tenant's properties by use of Part 8 of the Civil Procedure Rules, with or without formal notification to the tenant. Entry may be forced where there is an emergency situation, such as a flood or gas leak. Section 17 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 allows a constable to enter and search any premises for the purpose of saving life or limb or preventing serious damage to property.</p>

Section	What is happening? Relationship with others
Card Ref & Topic	35: Children or vulnerable adults at risk
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	May lead to family break up, slow normal child development or could lead to children being taken into care. Refer to children's services, make child protection referral and consider adult social care referral. Section 44 of the Children Act 1989 provides for an Emergency Protection Order to remove a child or young person from immediate danger. Has an assessment of mental capacity been undertaken?

Section	What is happening? Relationship with others
Card Ref & Topic	36: Animal welfare
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	This includes birds as well as small and large animals kept in the house or the garden. Animals neglected and at risk. Bites and infections – is there excrement in the property? Refer to environmental health or RSPCA. May increase health risk to the household and neighbours, as well as antisocial behaviour through smell and noise. A number of people who neglect their self care and environment also keep a large number of pets that may be protected by the Animal Welfare Act 2006 and the RSPCA and the Police can act to protect animals.

Section	Looking after yourself
Card Ref & Topic	37: Coping with your own emotions
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	<p>Some people who find it very hard to talk to another person about personal hygiene use their frustration and anger to give them courage. Disgust appears to be a universal response to 'bodily wastes, body contents, sick, deformed, dead or unhygienic people, some sexual behaviour, dirty environments, certain foods – especially if spoiled or unfamiliar – and certain animals.' (Curtis et al 2011). Staff may mirror the behaviour of the self-neglecting person, by becoming chaotic, feeling powerless, denying there is a problem, ignoring risk and withdrawing (Brandon 2009). Others react with overbearing dominance.</p>

Section	Looking after yourself
Card Ref & Topic	38: Reflective practice
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	<p>Are you too highly trained and well paid to spend your time helping someone clean themselves or their home? Is hygiene part of the 'old-school' philosophy of care that you have rejected? Do you feel helpless? Is keeping clean (a) none of your business, (b) an essential foundation for independent living, (c) conditional on your main life goals or (d) a negotiated part of relationship with others and society (Pols 2006)? How could you increase the chance that the person will continue with good hygiene practices once they have returned home? Buckingham et al (2008) found workers asked self neglecters less about their history, motives and intentions compared to other groups of service users.</p>

Section	Looking after yourself
Card Ref & Topic	39: Responding to smells
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	Unpleasant smells in the room can prompt people to take harsher moral judgements, even when they are not particularly conscious of the smell, so be cautious about your assessment decisions. Frustration about your inability to influence the person can make this worse, and research on Expressed Emotion tells us that an intrusive, controlling and overly critical approach will not effect positive change.

Section	Looking after yourself
Card Ref & Topic	40: Responding to appearances
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	<p>The pressure of social imitation is very strong for some people, and staff may find themselves mirroring the person's behaviour rather than looking after their own health and providing a positive role model. We experience both aversion and fascination toward unpleasant sights and sounds, and can grimace, feel nauseous and drop things that evoke feelings of disgust. Holding back on the grimace will reduce the intensity of these emotions (George 2012) and convey less of the highly contagious disgust response to other people. Moreover, Bediou et al (2005) found that people with schizophrenia were less likely to recognise facial expressions of disgust, leading to the conclusion that staff may need to speak rather than merely grimace if they wish to convey their feelings.</p>

Section	Looking after yourself
Card Ref & Topic	41: Touch
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	<p>Grooming requires gentle touching by ourselves or someone else, and touch evokes powerful responses. Men are more likely than women to interpret touch in a sexualised way and resent unwelcome touch as an expression of dominance (Whitcher & Fisher 1979). In contrast, a welcome caress increases endorphin levels that reduce heart rate and produce mildly narcotic effects (Smith 2007). The touch involved in all types of personal care, including washing, can be a way of establishing personal connection and communicating care without words getting in the way. For others, any touch (such as the hairdresser) generates acute self-consciousness and discomfort. Is barrier clothing needed?</p>

Section	Looking after yourself
Card Ref & Topic	42: Sensitivity and resilience
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	<p>After spending months dissecting bodies, medical students have been shown to become desensitised to disgust related to surgery (Rozin 2008), suggesting that people can become tolerant over time, if there is a substantial enough reason to do so. Reduced sensitivity leads to more infection (Curtis 2011), so staff may take more sickness absence. However, the process of adaptation is limited, as nurses have reported continuing to feel nauseous in response to malodorous malignant wounds.</p>

Section	Looking after yourself
Card Ref & Topic	43: Wash your hands
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	<p>What is the risk of MRSA or other infections? Does anyone outside the NHS know how to wash their hands thoroughly? UK surveys (Judah et al 2009) found that 43% of mothers washed their hands with soap after changing a dirty nappy and 32% of men washed their hands with soap after using a public toilet. People feeling disgust make more severe moral judgements, and hand washing can soften these judgements (Schnall 2008), so make a point of 'washing away' those negative feelings towards the person. While the NHS presses staff to wash, patients' requests for staff support to enable them to wash themselves have been ignored so often that NICE have been obliged to issue guidance directing nurses to heed these requests (CG138).</p>

Section	Looking after yourself
Card Ref & Topic	44: Supervision and support
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	<p>Do arrangements for support need to be separate from supervision? Ventilate your frustration and worry. Sometimes the task of supporting self-neglecters is unpopular work that is shunted on to the least competent staff member who ignores issues and fails to involve others. The language used about people can convey individual or team attitudes, and even the term 'self-neglect' locates the issue within the private individual and generalises it to all aspects of the person.</p>

Section	How should I respond? Do the right thing
Card Ref & Topic	45: Assess and record
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	<p>Focus on strengths – what is the person taking charge of, maintaining and communicating? How is their behaviour aligned with their goals? Use standardised assessment tools in order to move beyond your personal judgement and make defensible observations. Pals J (2006) Accounting and washing: Good care in long-term psychiatry <i>Science, Technology & Human Values</i> Vol. 31, No 4, pp409-430 explains how our approach to the recording of hygiene practices reveals our approach to the person and the purpose of helping.</p>

Section	How should I respond? Do the right thing
Card Ref & Topic	46: Mental Capacity
Definition	
Story	Mrs Jones could clearly choose who to admit to her home, and so was assumed to have mental capacity, although the pain of movement prevented her from attending to her hygiene needs and so she lacked executive capacity. (Braye et al 2011)
Hints and Hazards	Follow the provisions of the Mental Capacity Act 2005, including the duty to consult the Attorney Health & Welfare and relatives if they are available and decide on best interests of the person. The Mental Capacity Act Code of Practice recommends that a professional mental capacity assessment is undertaken in relation to persons who self neglect. Include the ability to act on intentions, known as executive function (the Wolf-Klein Clock Drawing Test is sometimes used to formally assess this). Does the person understand both the simple consequences of today's actions and their cumulative impact over time? The FACE Mental Capacity Assessment Tool may help. Where capacity is lacking, the worker must still find out and take account of the preferences of the person and apply the least restrictive practice.

Section	How should I respond? Do the right thing
Card Ref & Topic	47: Other legal frameworks
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	<p>Ensure that any actions taken are not considered as discriminatory under the Equalities Act 2010. The law covers impairments that have a substantial and long-term impact on the person's capacity to wash, amongst other activities of daily living. Disability (including mental health difficulties) must not be the sole reason for actions against nuisance or hazard, but rather the behaviour that causes the nuisance or hazard (LB Lewisham vs Malcolm (2008) UKHL43).</p> <p>Article 2 of the Human Rights Act 1998 protects the right to life, Article 5 the right to liberty and Article 8 to a private life free of interference by a public authority.</p> <p>If there is the prospect of a formal dispute on what constitutes the best interests of the person, then application may be made in law to the Court of Protection.</p>

Section	How should I respond? Do the right thing
Card Ref & Topic	48: Autonomy and consent
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	<p>Some people who appear to neglect themselves wish to remain independent and autonomous individuals. Where else can they take control, beyond these routines of self-care? Are people who choose personal budgets more or less likely to become self-neglecting? Does the person pay extra attention to their hygiene at the vulnerable times of life - birth, puberty, pregnancy and death, or for special social occasions? Adopting the view that the person has made a free choice to neglect their personal hygiene can be used as a justification for staff inaction, so that the person is left to 'rot with their rights on'.</p>

Section	How should I respond? Do the right thing
Card Ref & Topic	49: Risk assessment
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	<p>Self neglecters are at increased risk of death (Snowden and Halliday 2004). Is the person's personal hygiene getting better or worse and how quickly? What is likely to happen if you do nothing? What would need to happen to justify you referring the matter to a more senior person or taking more decisive action? Has anything changed, such as illness, bereavement, redundancy, loss of a home, relationship breakdown, trauma, loss or abuse that might have led to a change in grooming habits?</p>

Section	How should I respond? Do the right thing
Card Ref & Topic	50: Follow Safeguarding procedures
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	Self neglect currently falls outside the definition of abuse that is used in the government's No Secrets guidance issued by the government in 2000. Some Safeguarding Adults Boards have chosen to include self neglect within its procedures. Which findings from Serious Case Reviews have been taken up locally to improve service delivery and coordination?

Section	How should I respond? Do the right thing
Card Ref & Topic	51: Plan
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	<p>What would need to happen for you to take stronger action rather than continuing with watchful waiting? What theory underpins your intervention – illness or obsession; learning skills or finding occupation; autonomy or co-production; strengths, expert patient or person-centred approaches; loss, abuse or self harm; Stages of Change? You may need to make an inter-agency plan through the Harm Reduction and Vulnerable Victims Forum which is a parallel process to the safeguarding procedures that is interagency, external to adult social care and not restricted to those people deemed eligible to Fair Access to Care Services.</p> <p>The Forum may also may track population needs, as self-neglect occurs in approximately one in 2,000 over-60 year olds in the UK (Reyes-Ortiz 2001).</p>

Section	How should I respond? Do the right thing
Card Ref & Topic	52: Withdraw
Definition	Health and safety concerns for staff providing services
Story	
Hints and Hazards	<p>Have other agencies already withdrawn from supporting the person? Should you refuse to enter the property or transfer the work to a colleague? Can another colleague help you?</p> <p>The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and employer's lone worker policies set limits on the conditions that staff should tolerate in gaining access and working with the person concerned, and what to do if safe access is not achieved.</p>

Section	How should I respond? Do the right thing
Card Ref & Topic	53: Detain
Definition	
Story	Mrs Aycliffe refused all services because she feared being forcibly moved into a hospital.
Hints and Hazards	<p>There is a legal obligation to choose the least restrictive option. Section 47 of the National Assistance Act 1948 sets out the local authority's duty to remove a person from insanitary conditions of this is in their best interest and they are unable to devote proper care and attention to their self care due to chronic disease, age, infirmity or incapacity. A 'proper officer' from the local authority (usually a medical practitioner from the public health department) can make a S47 application to the magistrate's court. Section 1 of the National Assistance Amendment Act 1951 adds the power to act in an emergency. Braye et al (2011) found no examples of Section 47 actually being used, but coroners have criticised local authorities for not doing so. S47 is primary legislation and so may be prioritised over the Human Rights Act 1998.</p> <p>Lachs et al (1998) found that self-neglecting people admitted to nursing home care were more likely to die compared to people previously subjected to elder mistreatment, and people who had not been referred to Adult Protection services. Consider Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards, whether the person is in residential care, nursing or hospital care or in their own home and whether a court order is required.</p>

Section	How should I respond? Do the right thing
Card Ref & Topic	54: Evict, cleanse or destroy property
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	<p>Tenants who live in squalid conditions are usually in breach of their tenancy agreement, but there are fewer controls over homeowners.</p> <p>A tenant may be in breach of their tenancy contract, subject to eviction and consequently deemed to be intentionally homeless under the Homeless Persons Act 1977.</p> <p>Excessive or verminous property that is a public health hazard can be removed and destroyed under powers held by Environmental Health Officers (see Card 59).</p>

Section	How should I respond? Do the right thing
Card Ref & Topic	55: Report and share information
Definition	Health and safety concerns for staff providing services
Story	
Hints and Hazards	Have other agencies already withdrawn from supporting the person? Should you refuse to enter the property or transfer the work to a colleague? Can another colleague help you?

Section	How should I respond? Engage others
Card Ref & Topic	56: Advocate
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	General advocacy service, but also IMCA

Section	How should I respond? Engage others
Card Ref & Topic	57: Community and Voluntary organisations
Definition	
Story	An American charitable project gives out Just Add Water kits to homeless people, comprising soap, shampoo, a toothbrush, paste, washcloth, comb, razor, bandages and antibiotic ointment. A US project in the 1970s engaged postal staff, meter readers, landlords and others in identifying people at risk of self neglect.
Hints and Hazards	Can you find a supportive neighbour, mobile hairdresser and launderette, domestic help agency, chiropodist, plumber, infection control service, or house clearance agency? Can Age UK or Mind help? Some agencies have specialist services, such as the Orbit Hoarding project or Care & Repair or befriending schemes.

Section	How should I respond? Engage others
Card Ref & Topic	58: Relatives and friends
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	<p>Holroyd & Price (2004) studied 209 people known to the Environmental Health Department because of excessive hoarding and found that 21% were receiving help from family and friends – do not assume that the person is completely isolated. The Duke Social Support Index is a formal measure of this (Day & Leahy-Warren 2009).</p> <p>Are there responsibilities towards the next of kin?</p>

Section	How should I respond? Engage others
Card Ref & Topic	59: Environmental Health Officer
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	Environmental Health Officers have powers to remove and destroy property if it is a hazard to public health.

Section	How should I respond? Engage others
Card Ref & Topic	60: Police
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	Other agencies may contact the police.

Section	How should I respond? Engage others
Card Ref & Topic	61: Landlord
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	

Section	How should I respond? Engage others
Card Ref & Topic	62: GP and District Nurse
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	

Section	How should I respond? Engage others
Card Ref & Topic	63: Social Worker, Occupational Therapist
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	Children's services.

Section	How should I respond? Engage others
Card Ref & Topic	64: Carer's Assessment
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	Family carers may neglect their own needs and living situation through preoccupation in caring for their relative.

Section	How should I respond? Engage others
Card Ref & Topic	65: Debt advice
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	<p>For homeless people the battle of daily survival overtakes all else and they spend their money on what is absolutely necessary for their daily survival, so money is simply not available for clothing, laundry, cosmetics and grooming (Flick & Rohnsch 2007). Difficulty in attending to one's own physical cleanliness and need for adequate food are part of the criteria indicating whether a person is eligible for Disability Living Allowance and will continue to be supported when Disability Living Allowance is replaced by Personal Independence Payments in 2013. If a specific job is in view, Jobcentre Plus can use Access to Work funds to finance work-related grooming and clothing.</p>

Section	How should I respond? Engage others
Card Ref & Topic	66: Fire Service
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	

Section	How should I respond? Engage others
Card Ref & Topic	67: RSPCA
Definition	
Story	
Hints and Hazards	