

## The Story of 'Roy'

**This personal safeguarding story/case study was presented by Kingston Hospital to the KSAB in 2018/19. One of many such stories presented to each of the quarterly Board meetings with the purpose of learning across partner organisations and focussing the Board on the day to day issues faced by vulnerable people who use safeguarding services. Learning points are included at the end.**

Roy (aged 44) was admitted to a local hospital early one morning after being found in the town centre very unwell. He presented with slurred speech and was unsteady on his feet so initial thoughts were that he was intoxicated. Roy was very thin and unkempt; his teeth were in poor condition and he was wearing dirty clothes. Roy was carrying a bag containing a dirty jumper, some chocolate and a month old bus ticket.

Roy was encouraged to stay in hospital until staff felt confident he was no longer under the influence of alcohol. However he remained agitated and continually asked to leave. Roy was not able to speak English and he refused to speak via an interpreter on the telephone. Staff remained concerned as they no longer felt he was intoxicated but that he was unable/unwilling to provide any information on where he had come from or how he had got to Kingston. He remained unsteady on his feet, visually appearing drunk as he was staggering; but in assessing the whole picture a more likely diagnosis was Cerebral Palsy as Roy also displayed fidgety, jerky and clumsy movements; random uncontrolled movements; muscle spasms and had weak arms and legs. Roy continued to ask to leave and was able to communicate that he had no money or passport. The Police were contacted and advised they had no knowledge of him. Social Care agreed to provide emergency overnight B&B accommodation, though due to Roy's physical disabilities he needed to remain in hospital until further information could be gathered.

The following morning staff were able to establish a brief background using a Health Care Assistant who was Romanian and with whom Roy agreed to speak. He stated that the police had taken his passport and his physical unsteadiness was due to a stress condition which had started 5 years ago. He was on medication but was unable to recall the name of the medication. Roy continued to insist that he wanted to leave the hospital and go to his Embassy. The hospital called the Embassy on behalf of Roy. However, on becoming aware of the Embassy's limited opening hours and lack of a guarantee of being able to see Roy on this day the hospital felt they needed Roy to remain with them whilst they attempted to gather more information and to try to put a plan together.

Staff became concerned that Roy may have been a victim of Trafficking/Modern Slavery. The Local Authority Safeguarding team were called for advice and they recommended calling the police.

The police felt that as Roy had not disclosed that he had been trafficked, they did not have grounds to come to the hospital and investigate. Roy was becoming extremely anxious, agitated and began banging his head repeatedly against the wall with such force that he inflicted several traumatic wounds to his forehead. Security was called to restrain Roy, in his best interests, to ensure he did not inflict further harm on himself.

Due to the hospital's concern for this level of self-harm, the psychiatric liaison team were asked to review Roy. They were concerned that Roy's behaviour indicated a learning disability and/or a mental health condition. An Interpreter was asked to attend to support this assessment. Although Roy was not answering any of the direct questions, he did disclose:

- He had been living in an area in London and had previously been seen at another hospital but was unable to say where.
- He spoke about a lady who met him when he got off the coach in England (he had a bus ticket on him), he lived in a building in her garden but then retracted this and said he had a room in her house. He reported that sometimes she fed him but sometimes not and that the lady does control him (when asked if he was afraid of her, he said no 'she is a nice person').
- He refused permission for us to contact the lady on his behalf.
- He stated that he had been beaten up when he arrived in England but he later retracted this on questioning.
- He said the police had taken his travel documents and money from him at a London police station (we did find a piece of paper on him which indicated that he was due to appear at a court the following day).

- When asked how he knew it was the police who had taken his money and passport he stated it was because they were in uniform.
- He advised that he did not feel safe in England and wanted to return to Romania as it was better than England.

The hospital's psychiatric team did not feel there was an acute psychiatric issue to support and they felt Roy had capacity to make decisions about his care and discharge although they did agree that he was incredibly vulnerable.

The hospital multi-disciplinary team discussed the conversation held with Roy and felt strongly that he was potentially a victim of trafficking. The Romanian interpreter also stated that due to past experiences translating for the Romanian community she also felt that Roy was a victim of trafficking. She explained that those with a disability are much more likely to be a victim. The hospital advised Roy they were worried about his safety and Roy consented to the hospital calling the police on the grounds they would still support him to get to the Romanian Embassy the following day (the embassy was closed by this time).

The police visited Roy on the ward and were thoroughly briefed by staff prior to speaking to Roy via an interpreter. This was a difficult conversation as due to the patient's slurred speech the interpreter found it difficult. Roy was very closed and again refused to answer many questions. He provided them with a bus ticket (seen earlier) which indicated Roy had arrived in the country a month ago but he told the police he had only been in England a week. He said he had money through a £400 a month pension from Romania but wasn't able to explain what this was for. Roy was able to repeat his date of birth but was unable to say how old he was. He confirmed he had been living within London but was unable to say exactly where. He confirmed that he had a sister in Romania but was unable to say where she lived or provide any contact details for her.

The police ran background checks on Roy, including on the court date and established that he was known to them but they did not provide any details to the Safeguarding Team. It was also established that his bag had a police tag on it, further indicating that he was known to them. They advised the hospital that they had no reason to detain him based on prior knowledge and there was no further action for them to take as the patient himself was not making any allegations.

Roy remained in the hospital overnight and social care was called in the morning to see what assistance they could provide. As the police were not taking the issue any further and they were unable to assist.

Roy was repeatedly trying to leave the hospital; the hospital did not have a reason to doubt his capacity and therefore they had no legal basis to hold him. Kingston Hospital provided Roy with a taxi to take him to the Romanian Embassy and asked the driver to ensure that he was escorted through the door at the embassy. We provided him with contact details for several agencies he could contact once he had his travel documents who may be able to help him return home.

### Learning Points for consideration:

- Organisations to enquire if there is follow up action that can be taken in a case of suspected human trafficking in the borough to further investigate concerns if a victim does not want to participate?
- Is there a need for further training in the borough to support health and social care professionals and police to manage cases of suspected human trafficking?
- Are there resources in the borough that the professionals involved in this case need to be aware of in a similar situation?
- How do you navigate obtaining support for a victim who is not known to the borough and therefore his "care needs" are difficult to establish?
- If a victim has capacity and does not want support is there any further action which can be taken?

Learning from this case is being used to focus learning over the 2019/2020 year in the Board's continued work on Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking