

Start as early as possible

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Starting your investigation as soon as possible will help prevent risks to people using services.

Starting early means you'll be able to gather detailed evidence while it's still available, and take statements from people while their recollections are still fresh.

You may need to take immediate steps to ensure safe care for people using services before or [while you conduct the investigation.](#)

Sometimes the start of your investigation may depend on the outcome of a third party investigation, such as a police investigation. In these cases, it's important to manage any risks while you wait for an outcome. Also consider whether it's appropriate to keep the professional involved regularly informed about timescales and progress.