

North Somerset Council

Report to the Executive

Date of Meeting: 21 October 2021

Subject of Report: North Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board (NSSAB) Annual Report 2020/21

Town or Parish: All

Officer/Member Presenting: Tony Oliver (Independent Chair, NSSAB) and Hayley Verrico (Director Adult Social Services)

Key Decision: No

Reason: No direct financial implications and no specific impact of individual wards

Recommendations

Executive is recommended to:

Receive the NSSAB Annual Report 2020/21.

Note the developments, achievements, challenges, and areas for improvement in this critical area of work.

Note the future work of the NSSAB.

1. Summary of Report

To present to the Executive the North Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2020/21. To invite questions and scrutiny in relation to the NSSAB's activities

Further develop understanding of the role of Local Safeguarding Adults Boards (LSABs) and how the North Somerset LSAB operates locally.

Promote the importance of safeguarding of adults, ensuring that safeguarding is everyone's business.

2. Policy

The proposals support North Somerset Council's Corporate Plan of 'An open, fairer, greener North Somerset'.

The Care Act 2014 enshrined in law the principles of Safeguarding Adults and the Safeguarding Adults Board became a statutory body in April 2015 (as detailed below).

3. Details

North Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board is a statutory body, established by the Care Act 2014 and implemented in April 2015. The overarching purpose of a Safeguarding Adults Board is to help and safeguard adults with care and support needs from abuse and neglect. The board does this by assuring itself that local safeguarding arrangements are in place as defined by the Care act 2014.

Safeguarding Adults Boards have three core duties. They must:

- develop and publish a strategic plan setting out how they will meet their objectives and how their member and partner agencies will contribute
- publish an annual report detailing how effective their work has been
- commission safeguarding adults reviews (SARs) for any cases which meet the statutory criteria.

The annual report provides information about the achievements and challenges during the year 2020/21.

Provisional key data on safeguarding activity is included based upon 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021 (To note, full end of year data is not published until November 2021).

The NSSAB agreed a 3-year strategic plan in 2018 which includes four priorities:

- Ensure commissioners and providers develop and improve the availability and quality of care and support;
- Preventing abuse and neglect by ensuring that learning from reviews is embedded and best practice is researched and implemented;
- Robust governance scrutinising effective multiagency quality assurance and performance management processes;
- Effective transitions to adulthood.

The annual report details the board and the subgroups' activities, and outlines progress against the above strategic priorities.

Proposed strategic priorities for the next three years are detailed in the report as follows:

- *Preventative Safeguarding*: Develop and implement strategies for preventing abuse and neglect (including self-neglect) by ensuring that learning from quality assurance activity and reviews is embedded, and best practice is researched and implemented.
- *Quality of care and support*: Ensure commissioners and providers develop and improve the availability and quality of care and support;

- *Transitional Safeguarding: Tackling Adult Exploitation:* Make sure that all services have appropriate systems and processes in place and services in place to protect adults from exploitation;
- *Robust Governance:* To establish and maintain performance arrangements for the Board. Scrutinise effective multiagency quality assurance and performance management processes;
- *Safeguarding response: Recovery and the aftermath of a pandemic:* Develop robust multi-agency response for transition from the pandemic.

4. Consultation

The report is available for all partner agencies. Subgroups of the board submit an overview of progress for the annual report.

The NSSAB works with Safer and Stronger Communities across North Somerset since there is a range of areas of shared interest. Tackling Adult Exploitation, for example, features as a priority for the NSSAB.

5. Financial Implications

Financial pressures on public services, demand and capacity is a challenge for partner agencies of the NSSAB, particularly in relation to subgroup membership and activity. However, there are no financial implications as a direct result of this report.

Costs

The NSSAB has a budget built through the contributions of statutory partner agencies.

Funding

As a statutory partner, North Somerset Council contribute to the board.

6. Legal Powers and Implications

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

The Care Act 2014 requires North Somerset Council to have a Local Safeguarding Adults Board (LSAB) and provides for accountability of the Independent Chair to the Chief Executive of the council.

There is a statutory requirement for LSABs to meet the core duties as detailed in the above sections, in line with the Care Act 2014.

There is a statutory requirement to publicise the LSAB Annual Report from 1st April 2015 in line with the Care Act 2014. It is to include the number of Safeguarding Adults Reviews, lessons learnt and any actions incomplete.

The NSSAB assessed and addressed implications of the Coronavirus 2020 Act. Annex D safeguarding guidance, published on 1 April 2020, which sets out that the Coronavirus Act does not remove the Care Act Section 42 safeguarding duty, nor the need for safeguarding training.

7. Climate Change and Environmental Implications

The NSSAB is mindful of its impact and aims to reduce the carbon footprint where possible. Emissions – vehicle use for board activity is currently significantly reduced due to holding meetings remotely. Electronic systems are used for documents meaning paper use has decreased. With meetings held virtually, online processing and power use has increased.

8. Risk Management

The NSSAB monitors risks and challenges through its risk register. Since 2017 the register has included the risk of not having a Business Manager and, as a result, the limited capacity and resource in delivering the core duties.

Note, although not in the reporting period of the annual report, the NSSAB have now secured agreement from core member organisations (BNSS CCG, Avon and Somerset Constabulary and the Local Authority) to fund a Business Manager post. The post was recruited to in August 2021.

The risks associated with not appropriately managing responses to safeguarding, and risks of ongoing abuse and neglect, must be acknowledged. This includes the risk of harm to, and the death of, adults with care and support needs. Further, the risk of serious organisational and/or reputational damage to statutory and non-statutory organisations in North Somerset.

The NSSAB ensures multi-agency safeguarding training to raise awareness about safeguarding adults and to ensure that partner agencies are equipped to recognise and respond to abuse and neglect of an adult with care and support needs.

9. Equality Implications

No formal equalities impact assessment is carried out on the Strategic Plan. However, the performance data collected by the NSSAB includes reference to gender, race/ethnicity, disability and other protected characteristics to ensure that the profile of safeguarding data is tested and any related issues identified and acted upon.

How and in what ways we safeguard adults at risk must reflect the differing cultural values and norms within communities. Although the legal framework is universal, how we ensure adults at risk and their carers/families understand, recognise and respond to potential safeguarding issues varies and is reflected for example in our work to reach out to faith communities and voluntary sectors.

10. Corporate Implications

Adult protection became a corporate statutory duty on 1 April 2015. Improving the effectiveness and impact of the NSSAB will contribute to the Adult Social Services Directorate commitments to the North Somerset Council Corporate Plan.

11. Options Considered

The production of the annual report is a statutory requirement.

Author:

Hayley Verrico, Director of Adult Social Services.

Appendices:

North Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2020/21.

Background Papers:

As per Appendix above.

2020-2021 ANNUAL REPORT



1. Introduction

The North Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board's (NSSAB) Annual Report is designed to give an overview of the multi-agency work across North Somerset in pursuit of the Government's aims to:

- *Stop abuse or neglect wherever possible*
- *Prevent harm and reduce the risk of abuse or neglect to adults with care and support needs*
- *Safeguarding adults in a way that supports them in making choices and having control about how they want to live*
- *Promote an approach that concentrates on improving life for the adults concerned*
- *Raise public awareness so that communities as a whole, alongside professionals, play their part in preventing, identifying and responding to abuse and neglect*
- *Provide information and support in accessible ways to help people understand the different types of abuse, how to stay safe and what to do to raise a concern about the safety or well-being of an adult*
- *Address what has caused the abuse or neglect*

In line with statutory requirements and best practice this annual report will be shared with:

- *The Director of Adult Social Services*
- *The Chief Executive of North Somerset Council*
- *The Police and Crime Commissioner for Avon and Somerset Police*
- *The Safer and Stronger Communities Strategic Partnership*
- *The North Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership*
- *Adult Services Scrutiny Panel*

Should you require the report in any other format to support accessibility please contact the Business Manager for the NSSAB: SABmanager@n-somerset.gov.uk.

Message from the Independent Chair

I am pleased to present the North Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board (NSSAB) Annual Report for the period 2020 /21 in which I am delighted to report on all the good work which has been achieved during a very difficult year.

The role of the Board and the partner organisations who sit on it is to support and develop safeguarding of vulnerable adults who have care and support needs across North Somerset.

At the time of writing our 2019/20 report, Covid-19 was in its infancy, little did I know, or even contemplate, that 17 months on, the impact of this horrible virus would continue to be making worldwide news headlines.

I have had the luxury, if that is what it is, to have been working from home. All our SAB and SAB subgroup meetings have been held virtually but I acknowledge that a very large number of our colleagues in the care sector, the NHS, Police, indeed all our front-line partners who are represented on our Board and our SAB subgroups, have continued to “go into the office” and to provide as normal a service as possible in, sometimes impossible circumstances.

This year's report will mirror the format of our last report as it will lead the interested reader to specific web links where further reading will be available.

You will note that some of our priorities detailed in our Strategic Plan 2018 – 2021, were not fully achieved. This is as a direct consequence of the extraordinary pressures presented by Covid. These priorities will form part of our 2021 - 2024 Strategic Plan.

Attendance at our virtual Board meetings has been good but I long for a return to face-to-face meetings where so much business is conducted in the coffee break!

During the year, despite the pandemic, we have been able to recruit new members onto the Board including representatives from the voluntary sector and the Department of Work and Pensions. Their contributions to Safeguarding in North Somerset are already measurable.

Regardless of the additional workloads, I believe that the NSSAB and its subgroups have continued to effectively monitor and assist in the development of safeguarding practices across our area. That commitment to Safeguarding is evidenced within the body of this report.

Tony Oliver, Independent Chair, North Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board

Contents

About the Board

Local Demographics

North Somerset Safeguarding Year end Data

The work of the Board

Learning and Development Subgroup

Quality Assurance and Performance Subgroup

Policy and Procedures Subgroup

Mental Capacity Act (MCA) / Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) / Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS) Subgroup

Tackling Adult Exploitation Subgroup

Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR) Subgroup

Summary

- Review of Strategic Objectives 2018/21

- Key Strategic Objectives for 2021/24

Next steps

About the Board

Safeguarding Adults Boards have three main duties:

- Develop and publish a strategic plan setting out how they will meet their objectives and how their member and partner agencies will contribute.
- Publish an annual report detailing how effective their work has been.
- Commission Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs) for any cases which meet the criteria.

The North Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board has an independent chair, Tony Oliver. The board structure consists of quarterly full board meetings, quarterly meetings of the subgroup chairs and quarterly meetings of the board's six subgroups:

- Learning and Development
- Quality Assurance and Performance
- Policy and Procedure
- MCA/DoLS/LPS
- Tackling Adult Exploitation
- Safeguarding Adults Review

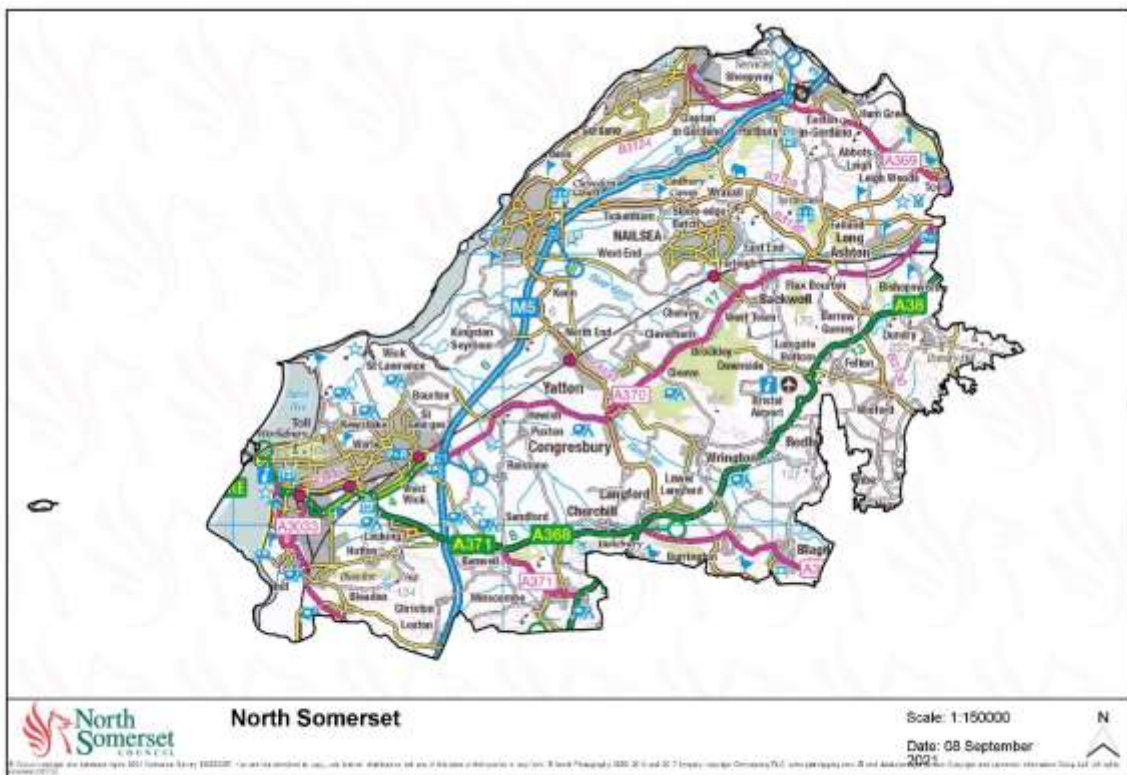
Local Demographics:

In North Somerset there are 171,754 adults over 18 (ONS 2020 Mid Year Estimates)

- 12,594 adults aged 65-69
- 14,136 adults aged 70-74
- 10,580 adults aged 75-79
- 14,693 adults aged 80+

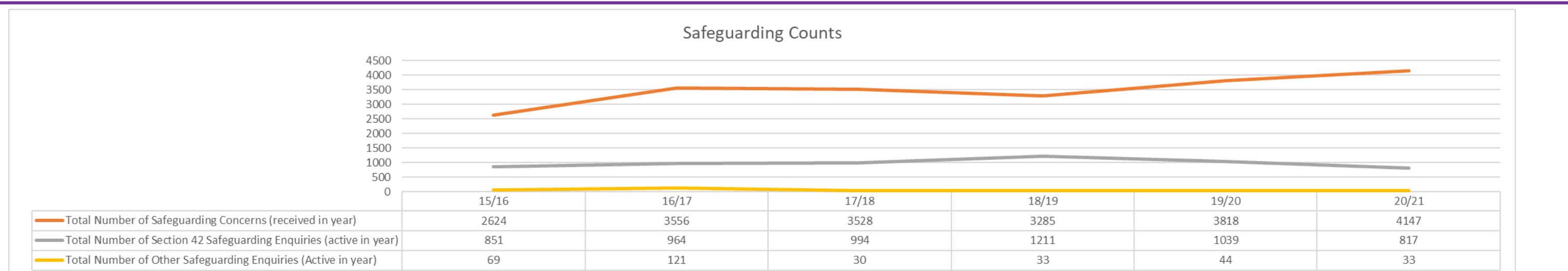
This means 30% of adults in North Somerset are 65 and over. With 8.5% of the adult population being 80 or over.

2018 population projections from ONS estimated that in 2018 that people aged 65 and over were 24% of the total population, this is predicted to rise to 26% in 2030 and 28% in 2043.



North Somerset Safeguarding Adults 20/21 Year End Data

The data recorded in this report is taken from the North Somerset Council Safeguarding Adults Collection (SAC) Statutory data returned to NHS Digital comparative data for 20/21 with other LA's not yet published.



The number of Safeguarding Concerns received for North Somerset in 20/21 was the highest recorded for the past 6 years at 4147, however there was a drop in the number of S42 Enquiries. The number of 'other' enquiries has remained stable after rise in 16/17. It is worth noting that concern to enquiry is not a hierarchy but rather an appropriateness of response in line with Section 42 1 and 2 of the Care Act 2014. A considerable amount of work is undertaken for concerns that do not progress to an enquiry.

Individuals Involved in Enquiries by Ethnicity			
Year	White	Mixed and Other Ethnic Groups	Ethnicity not recorded
20/21	73%	0.5%	26%
19/20	81%	0.4%	18%
18/19	77%	1%	22%
17/18	82%	1%	17%

* may not add up to 100 due to rounding

Ethnicity recording will again be a focus to improve on over the next year.

Individuals Involved in Section 42 Safeguarding Enquiries by Gender		
Year	Male	Female
20/21	42%	58%
19/20	41%	59%
18/19	39%	61%
17/18	38%	62%

The gender split is broadly similar to previous years

Individuals Involved in Section 42 Safeguarding Enquiries by Support Reason								
Year	Physical Support	Sensory Support	Support with Memory & Cognition	Learning Disability Support	Mental Health Support	Social Support	No Support Reason	Not Known
20/21	54%	1%	8%	8%	11%	5%	14%	0%
19/20	62%	1%	7%	11%	8%	4%	7%	0%
18/19	64%	0%	6%	10%	11%	9%	0%	0%
17/18	57%	0%	7%	10%	10%	3%	12%	1%

A support reason is not required for an enquiry to take place

Types of Abuse for Concluded S42 Enquiries (multiple types per enquiry may be recorded)				
Type of Abuse	20/21	19/20	18/19	17/18
Physical Abuse	13.8%	13.4%	16.0%	15.9%
Sexual Abuse	2.8%	3.4%	2.7%	3.4%
Psychological Abuse	15.6%	14.8%	13.6%	13.0%
Financial or Material Abuse	12.3%	11.7%	12.7%	12.5%
Discriminatory Abuse	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Organisational Abuse	2.4%	4.1%	4.3%	0.8%
Neglect and Acts of Omission	36.8%	41.3%	39.9%	46.7%
Domestic Abuse	4.5%	2.0%	4.5%	2.0%
Sexual Exploitation	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Modern Slavery	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Self-Neglect	11%	8.5%	5.1%	5.1%

There may be more than one type of abuse recorded per enquiry, and types of abuse are recorded against types of risk this data is taken from SAC table SG2a

Concluded S42 Enquiries by Source of Risk (multiple types of risk may be recorded per enquiry)			
Year	Service Provider	Other - Known to Individual	Other - Unknown to Individual
20/21	30%	65%	5%
19/20	32%	54%	14%
18/19	40%	55%	6%
17/18	48%	47%	5%

Counts of Concluded S42 Enquiries by Location				
Location	20/21	19/20	18/19	17/18
Own Home	49%	42%	46%	42%
In the community (excluding community services)	2%	0%	4%	4%
In a community service	1%	1%	0%	1%
Care Home - Nursing	14%	18%	22%	18%
Care Home - Residential	21%	19%	18%	25%
Hospital - Acute	4%	4%	4%	4%
Hospital - Mental Health	2%	4%	4%	3%
Hospital - Community	0%	0%	0%	0%
Other	7%	12%	2%	3%

Concluded S42 Enquiry Risk Outcomes: Where a risk was identified, what was the outcome / expected outcome when the case was concluded?				
	20/21	19/20	18/19	17/18
Risk Remained	7%	5%	9%	39%
Risk Reduced	63%	56%	56%	53%
Risk Removed	30%	38%	35%	8%
Risk Reduced and Removed (combined from above)	93%	95%	91%	61%

It should be noted that due to the nature of the measure and the Adult at risks own personal choices it may not always be possible to remove or reduce all risks.

For each enquiry, was the individual or individual's representative asked what their desired outcomes were?				
	20/21	19/20	18/19	17/18
Yes they were asked and outcomes were expressed	73%	86%	63%	63%
Yes they were asked but no outcomes were expressed	8%	1%	6%	7%
No	10%	3%	23%	29%
Don't know	5%	7%	0%	0%
Not recorded	4%	3%	9%	2%
Of the enquiries recorded as Yes in row 1 of this table, in how many of these cases were the desired outcomes achieved?				
Fully Achieved	66%	72%	66%	63%
Partially Achieved	25%	13%	7%	26%
Not Achieved	9%	13%	28%	9%
Fully and Partially Achieved (KCPI Indicator)	91%	85%	72%	89%

Due to the nature of the measure it may not always be possible to fully or partially achieve a person's desired outcomes.

Commentary:

Effects of the Coronavirus Pandemic

There are some changes that are likely due to the pandemic. Predictably, there is an increase in own home as a location of abuse. This is most likely because care homes have spent a significant proportion of the reporting period with visits restricted.

There is an increase where the source of the risk is someone known to the adult.

There is a definite rise in domestic abuse and self-neglect.

Data Recording:

We note that there is a lack of recording on ethnicities this is something that is being improved across all partner agencies and will be an ongoing message during 21/22.

Audits:

Organisational abuse shows a significant variation over the reported year. This needs to be understood.

The increase in self-neglect concerns requires better understanding and planning in preparation for the lifting of lock-down restrictions.

Comparative data:

At time of completing this report the National SAC data is not available for 20/21 as soon as this is published by NHS Digital comparative data will be reported to Board.

The Work of the Board

Much of the work of the board takes place in the subgroups. The chairs of the groups submit reports of their quarterly activity to the quarterly Subgroup Chairs Meeting. The meeting is chaired by the Service Leader for Strategic Safeguarding and Quality Assurance, North Somerset Council. The subgroup chairs discuss and analyse their work, developing a coordinated knowledge of each other's activity, and agree recommendations to the safeguarding board. An overall summary of the subgroup chairs' activity is circulated to board members and key areas of activity are considered at full board each quarter.



With regards reporting on subgroup activity, we are mindful not to place additional burdens on practitioners. Thus, subgroup chairs were asked to provide a summary of their achievements this year, as below.

Learning and Development Subgroup

Purpose: to coordinate matters arising from Board meetings and to carry out the actions identified in the Strategic Plan. This includes ensuring that all learning and development interventions that are offered are fit for purpose, well evaluated, properly embedded, inclusive, reflective, developed in partnership and up to date.

Learning and Development Subgroup Achievements:



- Strong training and peer support offering on-line
- L&D Subgroup Terms of Reference updated
- Approved Mental Health Professionals (AMHPs) have received some useful legal update training and have adjusted well to learning on-line
- Safeguarding adults video produced for care homes
- Majority Safeguarding assessments moved to telephone as a result of the coronavirus pandemic
- New recruits to the subgroup from Police and Provider Representatives.
- Safeguarding Enquiry Training for Social Workers trialed with mental health staff
- Safeguarding Update for Coordinators course now available virtually
- Action Plan created for subgroup that aligns work completed with that of the Strategic Plan
- Safeguarding Level 3 for Health Workers has gone on-line
- Safeguarding training for GPs is being rolled out across a wide group

Training Reviews:

"I was given the opportunity to reflect and continue to reflect on my day to day work all the way through the course"

"I personally found the use of up-to-date safeguarding case studies very helpful and have gained a lot of confidence when executing Care Act duties"

Feedback from training has been positive, although a lot of participants reported that they were looking forward to the return to face-to-face training. Overall, most participants commented that their confidence had increased with regards to how to record cases, when to communicate concerns and share them.

Internal training delivered:

- 4 on-line MCA and DoLS in Practice sessions to 87 participants
- 4 Safeguarding Update Sessions to 45 participants
- 3 in-depth Safeguarding Enquiry Training to 42 participants.
- 12 Safeguarding Adults Awareness half-day courses delivered within care home settings
- 6 Safeguarding Adults for Providers full-day courses delivered

A mixture of multi-agency peer support forums were also hosted in adult safeguarding (e.g. the Good Practice Forum) and external speakers were invited to internal peer support sessions for social workers at all levels. These included representatives from Avon and Somerset Lighthouse Unit, Gemini Domestic Abuse Support and Sirona Care and Health.

Quality Assurance and Performance Subgroup

Purpose: to develop and implement a Quality Assurance Framework which will enable the North Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board (NSSAB) to evaluate the effectiveness of the inter-agency safeguarding processes for safeguarding adults at risk in North Somerset. To establish and maintain performance arrangements for the Board.



Quality Assurance and Performance Subgroup achievements:

The subgroup have developed a multi-agency Quality Assurance Framework.

The subgroup have established a baseline of monitoring activity for local authority safeguarding data.

Local Authority safeguarding performance data is presented to the subgroup quarterly. The data is scrutinised and patterns and emerging trends are identified. This informs further analysis by way of quality assurance activity.

Within the reporting period the subgroup have examined the following:

Quality of Referrals

The group designed a survey to capture methods of referral into the local authority. The group examined each agency's method of raising a safeguarding concern.

The findings showed that the overall conversion rate for concerns to enquiries is around 20% with concerns from Sirona and Weston General Hospital being much higher, the Police had a conversation rate of 20%, NHS 111 was 9% and SWAST was 14%.

The group have recommended a review of the SWAST referral form; to include specific reporting criteria to distinguish what is safeguarding upon receipt:

- Welfare concern
- Request for assessment
- Safeguarding (Protection from abuse)

The subgroup is currently looking at repeat referrals. The aim is to identify patterns from the data that can inform the board on areas to focus in relation to preventative work, better use of risk management reviews and greater use of multi-agency risk management.

Adult Exploitation

The subgroup have devised a survey for all partner agencies to complete in respect of adult exploitation. The aim is to determine the level of knowledge and skills amongst staff. This will form a baseline to work to in terms of recommendations for

training. It will also be incorporated into the multi-agency Tackling Adult Exploitation Strategy under the auspices of the safeguarding board.

The current performance data reporting format has a category titled 'Others'. The category includes sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation, cyber-crimes, modern slavery. The group requested that data is broken down into each of the categories to provide a local picture. The performance data dashboard is being further developed to encompass each sub-category which will support the quality of data available.

Self-neglect

We have seen an increase in safeguarding concerns featuring self-neglect. The local authority have introduced more sub-categories to the wider type of 'Neglect' so that we can enhance our understanding of what is happening in the community. This will inform a strategic response in terms of early identification and response.

Policy and Procedure Subgroup



Purpose: This subgroup focusses on the revision and creation of policy, procedure and practice guidance, to support professionals from all organisations working with adults in North Somerset. The group takes into account learning from audits, Domestic Homicide Reviews and Safeguarding Adult Reviews to help embed learning into daily good practice and workforce development.

Policy and Procedure Subgroup achievements:

- Progressing Pressure ulcer protocol
- Increased group membership with sEap joining
- Published updated Threshold Support Tool
- Board member induction Handbook developed
- Updated Transitions/Safeguarding Adults position statement published
- Responding to safeguarding adults concerns (Local practice guidance for Local Authority Staff): Major update published
- Membership development with appointees from North Somerset Housing, and Environmental Health.

MCA/DoLS/LPS Subgroup



The subgroup's objectives were to monitor the implementation of Mental Capacity related legislation in the North Somerset locality. It also acted as a forum for the dissemination of relevant case law and consideration of MCA specific local practice and systems.

At the start of the 2020 financial year LPS (Liberty Protection Safeguards) was added to the group's title (MCA/DoLS/LPS subgroup, previously MCA/DoLS subgroup) in recognition of the imminent rescinding of the DoLS (Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards) legislation.

The group met on 3 occasions in this reporting period (30/6/20, 8/10/20, 1/2/21). It was subsequently disbanded with several of its local authority functions transferred to North Somerset Council's Performance and Quality Board. Other functions in regard to LPS implementation are being explored presently across all relevant partner agencies. Whilst the group was functioning it considered / explored the following areas;

- Completed and prompted initial scoping exercises for LPS implementation.
- Quality Assurance work with local advocacy provider.
- Dissemination of project considering MCA and assistive technology
- Explored developing flashpoints / tensions between public health restrictions (through Coronavirus) and MCA/DoLS (individual / human rights based).
- Considered MCA implications within context of new 'Coronavirus' initiated systems / issues (e.g. discharge to assess, capacity in regard to Covid-19 testing and vaccination)
- Monitoring and overview of DoLS function by partners.

Tackling Exploitation Subgroup



Purpose: Under the auspices of the board, agree the key elements of our strategic response to Adult Exploitation and how this will be achieved.

Unfortunately there has been inconsistency in chairing arrangements for the subgroup. This is due to demand and capacity across partner agencies. As an interim arrangement, the Service Leader for Strategic Safeguarding and Quality Assurance has coordinated and chaired two meetings this year.

Tackling Adult Exploitation Subgroup achievements:

The subgroup has assisted the board with the development of tackling exploitation priorities for the strategic plan.

The subgroup has begun for form links with other relevant groups to avoid duplication and to develop a joined-up approach to tackling adult exploitation.

The group has joint worked with the Quality and Performance subgroup to devise a survey to determine the level of skills and knowledge across the partnership in respect of adult exploitation (as reported above). The findings will underpin the development of the multi-agency Tackling Adult Exploitation Strategy.

Safeguarding Adults Review Subgroup



Purpose: The Care Act 2014, sections 44(1), (2) and (3), requires that a Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) is undertaken where an adult with care and support needs has died or suffered serious harm, and it is suspected or known that the cause was neglect or abuse, including self-neglect, and there is concern that agencies could have worked better to protect the adult from harm. Under section 44(4) a SAR can be undertaken in other cases concerning adults with care and support needs.

The purpose of a SAR is to promote effective learning and improvement action to prevent future deaths or serious harm occurring again.

The group's membership consists of the three key statutory partners; North Somerset Local Authority, BNSS CCG, Avon and Somerset Constabulary. The group meet to consider all referrals for potential SARs. Once a decision is made to conduct a SAR an independent reviewer is then appointed.

SAR Subgroup Activity:

- Recommendation agreed to create SAR Subgroup as alternative to convening panel on ad-hoc basis.
- Subgroup met on three occasions however the referrals did not meet the criteria for a statutory SAR to be commissioned. Subgroup was quorate on all occasions.
- Subgroup identified theme of Self-Neglect from referrals.
- In response to the identified theme, the Safeguarding Adults Manager, North Somerset Council, presented a learning briefing about Self-Neglect to board.
- Subgroup analysis completed in line with ADASS report on Safeguarding Adult Reviews.
- Report recommendations assessed as a benchmark to identify opportunities and report back to board. Action plan agreed to apply learning.
- Subgroup membership increased with Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership joining.

Summary



Revisiting our board vision and key priorities:

For everyone to work together effectively to enable the people of North

Somerset to live free from abuse and neglect, and to embed the message that
safeguarding is everybody's business.

Our Strategic Objectives

Ensure commissioners and providers develop and improve the availability and quality of care and support:

The board leads a learning culture where best practice is shared through presentations, and areas for improvement are communicated through briefings.

We continue to provide quality support through training and peer support groups for our frontline practitioners and care providers. Regular procedural updates have helped aid clear communication, and application of protocols.

We note that whilst feedback on training remains positive, there has been a reduction in this feedback. As we continue to navigate these uncertain times, we recognise the value of feedback in enabling our training to evolve to meet changing needs.

As part of our forthcoming review of subgroup membership, we intend to further extend invites for representation to the provider sector. The aim is to ensure the voice of providers is present in board activity and in the development and progress of the key priorities.

Preventing abuse and neglect by ensuring that learning from reviews is embedded and best practice is researched and implemented:

The Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR) Subgroup considered all referrals with a quorate and professionally curious approach. Whilst none of the referrals received in the reporting period met the criteria to conduct a SAR, where

necessary, the subgroup have ensured single agency actions as appropriate. The board have striven to identify quick wins in relation to existing processes and circulated successes as well as opportunities. The completion of our

learning briefing in relation to self-neglect continues to support staff in identifying early warning signs and suitable preventative action.

Increasing our ability to hear the service user voice remains a key part of our work to inform our services. A review of our existing processes will support the board to embed effective joint working.

Robust governance scrutinising effective multiagency quality assurance and performance management processes:

The key functions of the board continue to be met. During the year the board considered how best to develop interagency working. To this end the decision was taken to create the position of board manager. As a jointly funded position we are confident it will further enhance our partnership working across the core agencies; North Somerset Council, Avon and Somerset Police and the Bristol North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group.

Our business intelligence continues to provide us with valuable insights, and we are eager to consider new methods to build on this. Further utilising our partnership data will enable additional analytics and a further piece of the picture in making safeguarding personal.

Effective transitions to adulthood:

As a board we have identified the need for clarity on what we mean by 'transitions'. Traditionally 'Transitions' has related to care teams and services; CAMHS to AWP, disabled children's team to adult services' team. The term 'Transitional Safeguarding' coined by Research in Practice is relevant to the work of the safeguarding board. As a board it is acknowledged that a system wide multi-agency conversation is needed in terms of local safeguarding systems. This will inform our local priorities.

Final comment:

The Covid pandemic has had a significant impact on the work of all of the partner agencies. Effective remote working has enabled the board to continue to function effectively despite these challenges. We are encouraged by the progress of our board in this last year but remain conscious of the challenges and opportunities facing us moving forward.

Having reviewed the **performance data**, the achievements of the board and subgroups, and areas for development, the key strategic objectives for the next three years are:

Preventative Safeguarding: Develop and implement strategies for preventing abuse and neglect (including self-neglect), by ensuring that learning from

quality assurance activity and reviews is embedded, and best practice is researched and implemented.

Quality of care and support: Ensure commissioners and providers develop and improve the availability and quality of care and support.

Transitional Safeguarding: Tackling Adult Exploitation: Make sure that all services have appropriate systems and processes in place and services in place to protect adults from exploitation.

Robust Governance: To establish and maintain performance arrangements for the Board.

Safeguarding response; Recovery and the aftermath of a pandemic: Develop robust multi-agency response for transition from the pandemic

Next Steps

- As noted in our summary, the appointment of a board manager will be a pivotal step in our growth and development. Once appointed, the board manager will champion our processes as we look to achieve the key priorities of the board.
- Terms of Reference for each of the subgroups will be more focused to align with the three-year strategic plan.
- Review subgroup membership with a view to increasing multi-agency representation.
- Further develop board activity in accordance with the NSSAB Quality Assurance Framework to evaluate the effectiveness of the inter-agency safeguarding processes for safeguarding adults at risk in North Somerset.
- Once the NSSAB Strategic Plan is finalised, the Quality and Performance Subgroup will develop an annual audit plan based on the key strategic priorities.
- The Quality and Performance Subgroup will establish a baseline of monitoring activity for each strategic priority dimension. This will include a scoping exercise of each partner agency to determine accessible and relevant data.
- The increase in safeguarding concerns featuring self-neglect requires better understanding to inform strategic planning in terms of early intervention and response across the partnership. We will examine demographic data to ascertain if there are any identifiable inequalities. Our aim is to understand the lived experience of neglect of self-care which will inform our approach and policies and procedures.
- To complement the regional People in a Position of Trust (PiPoT) Framework the NSSAB will develop a local multi-agency protocol for managing cases where allegations have been made against a person in a position of trust.
- The board will drive recruitment for multi-agency representation on the Tackling Adult Exploitation Sub-group and ensure a permanent Chair is assigned to the group.
- The local authority will provide a quarterly summary report to the Board in respect of whole home investigations.
- The board will ensure close links with the development of the Adult Social Services Co-Production Charter and ensure that we have adults with lived experience contributing and influencing the board and its priorities.
- The board will establish links with partner agencies' frontline practitioner forums to ensure their experiences and views are known to the board and influence development and priorities.
- A standing item at the quarterly board meetings will be to review and update on respective partner agency activity in accordance with the key strategic priorities. This will feed into next year's annual report.
- Once recruited, the board manager will have oversight for the NSSAB budget contributions and expenditure.

What to do if you are Worried about an Adult.

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