



Safeguarding older people case file audit and staff survey

Why did we carry out the case file audit?

- To evaluate and reflect on practice
- To learn from experience
- To inform multi-agency practice development and strengthen multi-agency working

Criteria for the audit

The audit was carried out for ten adults:

- Adults must have been aged 65+
- Adults must have been involved in a safeguarding enquiry
- Enquiries must have been closed/completed in the previous 12 months
- There must have been multi-agency involvement with the adults at the time of the concern/enquiry

About the ten adults audited

- 6 were male, 4 were female.
- 3 were aged 65-74, 4 were aged 75-84, 2 were aged 85-94, and 1 was aged 95+.
- 9 identified as White English/Irish/Welsh/Scottish and 1 as other white background-Hungarian.
- Support needs were; physical support for 6, mental health for 1, and not known for 3.

The areas found where improvement is needed

- **Making Safeguarding Personal:** including feedback being sourced about the safeguarding process from the adult after the conclusion of the safeguarding.
- **Risk assessment:** including, a multi-agency meeting/communication to jointly assess risk/agree a safeguarding plan.

- **Accountability:** including if the roles of professionals involved in the enquiry made clear to the adult and others involved in the enquiry.
- **Partnership:** including if the adult was supported by the partnership with all relevant others working with them.
- **Protection:** including, whether the adult was supported with measures to protect them from harm and abuse, such as a clear process to identify and respond to emerging risk, consideration of mental capacity and best interest, and use of advocacy services where required.
- **Multi-agency working:** including, effective multi-agency working being evidenced throughout the concern/enquiry and involved agencies being informed of the outcome of the enquiry/risk management plans.

Staff survey

We also carried out a survey to understand from you what the issues, barriers, and positive factors are when working with older people. We found:

The top three issues are:

- Increased need for support
- Mental capacity
- Self-neglect

The top three barriers are:

- Operational pressures
- Lack of knowledge/availability of support services
- Issues with multi-agency working/coordination of support

The top three positive factors are:

- Support/guidance from colleagues
- Support/guidance from other professionals or agencies
- Positive outcomes for adult

Themes from Safeguarding Adult Reviews relating to older people

In 2022/23 we also reviewed practice themes from Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs) for older people. The most common themes where improvement is needed are:

- Knowledge/implementation of the Mental Capacity Act
- Multi-agency working, including risk management
- Making Safeguarding Personal

To read more about our SARs please visit [our 'Statutory publications' page](#) on our website.

Making sure your practice is current and takes on board this learning

Please consider the areas for improvement identified and reflect on your learning needs including training, supervision support with cases which feature these areas, practice reflection and/or use of learning resources.

We have a range of learning resources, including learning briefings and podcasts, produced as a result of our SARs and audits which will help your learning, and can also contribute to Continual Professional Development (CPD) activities.

Our resources

Please see our '[Policy and Protocols](#)' page on our website which should be underpinning your practice in safeguarding older people. These include:

- **The Sussex Safeguarding Policy and Procedures:** these represent the standards for good practice in adult safeguarding in Sussex
- **The Safeguarding Thresholds Guidance:** this provides professionals with examples of the different categories of abuse and neglect and the best course of action to take.
- **The Multi-Agency Self-Neglect Procedures:** this contains detailed guidance on supporting those who self-neglect this included information on the Mental Capacity Act.

- **Multi-Agency Risk Management Protocol:** this gives advice on referring to MARM for cases where an individual is putting themselves or others at significant risk by refusing services, and all options have been explored and the level of risk is still high.
- **The Sussex Information Sharing Protocol:** sets out how information between partner agencies should be shared.
- **The Sussex Safeguarding Escalation and Resolution Protocol:** this supports consistent and timely decision-making where there may be disagreements or issues between professionals.

On our '[Learning and Podcasts](#)' page of our website we also have a range of other learning resources which can support your practice with safeguarding older people. Relevant to the learning from this audit are:

- The Mental Capacity Act
- Self-neglect
- Multi-agency working and communication
- Risk assessment
- Making Safeguarding Personal
- Person-centred approaches

Other available resources include:

- Professional curiosity
- Safeguarding early warning signs
- The difference between quality and safeguarding
- What is safeguarding?
- Shared learning from reviews
- Learning from other SAB audits

Please note that these resources are updated and added to regularly.

Learning resources



To support your Continual Professional Development (CPD) we have created a [CPD Reflective Log](#) for your use. Please feel free to use this to track, and reflect on, the professional development that you complete using our resources.

Feedback



This briefing is designed to bring key issues to you, to support your learning and keep your practice current and in line with policy and procedure.

We constantly review what we are doing to improve what we produce to make sure it's helpful to you. So, we would very much welcome your comments/views please to SafeguardingAdultsBoard@westsussex.gov.uk