

Review in Rapid Time Learning Briefing for a Care Home with COVID-19



About the residents of Darlington Court

This Review in Rapid Time, completed within three weeks, provides a focus on organisational and systemic factors that impacted on practice in the care home and provides learning in a timely way.

The Review looked into the circumstances surrounding the deaths of 13 residents at Darlington Court, and the wider outbreak and management of COVID-19.

Darlington Court is a residential care home which provides accommodation and support for older adults, some who have Dementia. They also provide respite and end of life care. At the time of the COVID-19 outbreak, there were 46 residents, both male and female with varying support needs.

The concerns at Darlington Court occurred during the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic and impacted over 70% of residents in the service.

The Review examined the actions of agencies that had been involved, to reduce the likelihood of a similar events occurring in the future and provided questions for the West Sussex Safeguarding Adults Board (WSSAB) to take forward to seek assurance.

The Review found: four key findings

- Ambiguous, inconsistent, and inaccurate information was not always clarified.
- Leadership and responsibility: the process for obtaining information and for making decisions was long-winded and insufficiently authoritative.
- The impact of resources, including operational pressures and the national context, are likely to have impacted on decision-making processes and practice.
- Safeguarding concerns may have been avoidable and preventable.

Resources you can use to ensure your practice is current

- [Information Sharing Guide and Protocol](#)
- [Escalation and Resolution Protocol](#)
- [Making Safeguarding Personal Learning Briefing](#)
- [Pan-Sussex Safeguarding Policy and Procedure](#)

Questions to ask yourself in relation to the recommendations

Our Review in Rapid Time raises eight questions for the WSSAB to take forward. In summary, these are the areas of practice that require your consideration:

Information-sharing and multi-agency working

- Are there any barriers in your agency to information-sharing?
- How can you communicate and develop a shared understanding of pressures, priorities, and capabilities across multiple agencies?
- Do you ensure that information shared is accurate, regularly updated and shared with those who need it?
- Are you aware of the multi-agency information-sharing protocol to support your practice?

Managing escalating concerns and crisis

- How do you identify escalating concerns and events and share these with multiple agencies, and do you have a process in place to share understanding and respond collectively?
- At times of crisis does/could your agency rapidly appoint one person with the authority to make decisions for all agencies and to lead the response?
- Do you know how to escalate concerns should there be a need to halt a process if this is ineffective or is exacerbating risk?

The needs of individuals

- If required, for safeguarding purposes are you able to carry out onsite visits (as opposed to telephone and video)?
- Does your agency, and your agency when multi-agency working, put the needs of people who use services first during times of pressure and crisis?