

West of Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Board

Briefing no. 3 – December 2016



Welcome to the third edition of the West of Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Board briefing.

The West of Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Board meets four times a year and discusses how agencies should work together to keep adults at risk of abuse or neglect safe in Reading, West Berkshire and Wokingham.

Among the topics discussed at our December Board meeting were: the importance of accurate and timely recording skills, ways to improve service user involvement, a community awareness raising event for safeguarding adults, a joint working protocol for local partnership boards and common themes arising from the Councils' peer reviews.

Recording Skills

Accurate, detailed and timely recording skills are essential to keeping people safe. It is every practitioner's responsibility to ensure that their own practice is accurately recorded. A recent case file audit highlighted that record keeping was an area of concern. Record keeping skills training is available and managers should consider prioritising this essential skill for staff development. Improvements in recording skills will be monitored through further case file audits next year.

Learning from practice

A separate briefing note summarising the lessons learnt from a local Safeguarding Adults Review into the case of Mr I, is available on the Board's website [here](#).

Survey

Thank you to all those who responded to our recent survey. We gained valuable feedback about the areas where we need to raise awareness and support staff. **[MORE BELOW...](#)**

Communication Strategy

The Board's Communication Strategy supports the messages that safeguarding is everyone's business and that good communication is the responsibility of all partner agencies represented on the Board. The Board has a responsibility to communicate with vulnerable people and the public about Berkshire's Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures and what agencies can do to support people through the safeguarding process.

In the event of a Significant Safeguarding Incident, communication with the media and other public communication around the case should be undertaken jointly by the agencies involved. The exception to this is any case where the police are involved in a live investigation, then Thames Valley Police would take the lead in the communications process.

Partner agencies must take account of the reputational impact on another agency and must ensure that any public communication does not comment negatively on another agency.

Board members are expected to share and promote the Communication Strategy within their organisations.

[Communication Strategy](#)

The Board's **[Annual Report 2015-16](#)** is now available on the website.

Service User Involvement

The Board aims to ensure that everyone who has been through the safeguarding process has an opportunity to provide feedback, and that this feedback is collected and understood. The Board has considered ways to improve service user involvement and the Effectiveness Subgroup will be developing these further in the coming months. They include:

- Accessible safeguarding leaflets for customers and staff on Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP).
- Improved access to the Board by individuals, community groups and providers. Contribution by service users is recognised and valued. Lay members on the Board, or a service user consultation group, would provide challenge and contribute to the Board's work.
- Functioning Service User Forums.
- Further training on MSP.
- A set of core questions to collect feedback from individuals who have been through the safeguarding process.
- MSP outcomes measured by a case file audit and reported to the Board twice yearly.
- Independent appraisal of feedback.

FIND OUT MORE... about Making Safeguarding Personal and outcomes in [Briefing Note 1](#) (July 2016).

CONTINUED....Results of the survey

Over three quarters of those who responded to the survey were aware of the West of Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Board but less than a third knew who represented their organisation on the Board. Only half were aware of the Board's website and only a third had used the online 2016 Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures.

About two thirds of respondents reported that they were aware of the principles of Making Safeguarding Personal and indicated that they gain feedback from individuals who have been through a safeguarding enquiry. Just over half of respondents indicated that they had used an advocate in safeguarding work and of those that answered no, seven said that an advocate was always considered, if not actually used.

Three quarters of respondents were aware that their organisation undertakes audits, but under half reported that they had received feedback.

Social care staff responsible for safeguarding enquiries were asked a number of questions in relation to the Mental Capacity Act. 100% reported that they understood the principles of the MCA and that they understood how they were relevant to safeguarding work. 87% reported that they felt confident in applying them in practice.

Next steps... Comments about specific services will be fed back (anonymously) to managers. The Communication and Publicity Subgroup will plan an awareness raising campaign in response to the survey.

The [Board's Directory](#) contains the names and contact details for Board members and other safeguarding adults' personnel in the West of Berkshire.

Need help with acronyms? This [Glossary](#) might help.

ADASS Peer Reviews

Reading, West Berkshire and Wokingham Councils took part in ADASS Peer Reviews between 2014 and 2016. In December, the Board reviewed common areas for development across the Councils, which included recommendations to:

Ensure that all services are **person centred and outcome focussed**. Embed Making Safeguarding Personal, ensuring that staff are supported and the voice of service users and their carers is heard. Consult and engage with groups and individuals.

Strengthen links with Safeguarding across the whole Council. Develop stronger links with HealthWatch, providers, voluntary sector and carers' organisations, Public Health, NHS England and Housing.

Provide feedback to the person who raised a safeguarding concern.

Increase knowledge about Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards.

Increase support for practitioners around the making of potentially risky decisions. Develop a system to work with people who have complex issues. Develop more opportunities for all staff to discuss with colleagues complex cases away from the decision making processes. Include risk assessment and risk management training for Social Care staff and providers.

Safeguarding self-assessment audit

Partner agencies are currently completing a self-assessment audit to assess their arrangements to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of adults at risk. The results will provide the Board with an overview of the safeguarding adult arrangements that are in place across the area so that we can identify strengths, common areas for improvement and single agency issues.

The Board will be holding its **annual Business Planning Day on the 6 February 2017** when the priorities for the coming year will be agreed. Using results from the audit, partners will give evidenced feedback about what they are doing well and where there are opportunities to work together to improve.

Independent Chair

Brian M Walsh OBE took on the role of interim Independent Chair for a year, and December's Board meeting was his last. Board members thanked Brian for his work and commitment over the past year and for his constant efforts to improve the Board.

A permanent Independent Chair will be in post early 2017.

FIND OUT MORE.....

The Board's website contains information for the public, practitioners and Board members and is regularly updated:

<http://www.sabberkshirewest.co.uk/>

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