

## **SAR Panel Terms of Reference**

### **Purpose**

The West of Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) is committed to ensuring that all agencies work together to minimise abuse or neglect to vulnerable adults at risk and to safeguard effectively where abuse or neglect has, or may have, occurred.

The SAB aims to ensure that there are effective mechanisms in place, to ensure that there is a consistent approach to learning, and promotion of best practise.

### **Legislation**

Section 44 of the Care Act puts a duty upon the Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) to arrange for there to be a review of a case involving an adult in its area with needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority has been meeting any of those needs) if:

- I. There is reasonable cause for concern about how the SAB, its members or other persons with relevant functions worked together to safeguard the adult,
- and
- II. The adult has died, and the SAB knows or suspects that the death resulted from abuse or neglect (whether or not it knew about or suspected the abuse or neglect before the adult died).
- Or
- III. If the adult is still alive, and the SAB knows or suspects that the adult has experienced serious abuse or neglect.

Under the Care Act each member of the SAB must co-operate in and contribute to the carrying out of a review with a view to identifying the lessons to be learnt from the adult's case and applying those lessons to future cases.

### **Aims**

The aims of the SAR Panel are to ensure that:

- the SAB has in place sound mechanisms for identification of potential Safeguarding Adults Reviews;
- proper processes are followed in each case; and that
- learning from local, regional, and national cases is embedded across the partnership
- To commission thematic reviews to support local and national learning

Functions include:

- To consider, on behalf of the Independent Chair of the SAB, whether a SAR should take place.
- Where it is agreed a SAR is required to agree the most effective and proportionate type of SAR to commission.
- To consider, in the light of each case, the scope of the learning or review process, draw up clear terms of reference and identify any specific expertise needed for the Review Group, including nomination for independent Chair and lead reviewers,
- To commission, monitor and manage the SAR process and to ensure reports are completed in a timely way and are quality assured.
- Keep the SAB informed of any reviews and recommending to the SAB when the SAR process is completed.
- To keep abreast of any other local and national learning reviews (i.e. DHR's) and to identify ways to avoid duplication by working together to identify learning wherever possible.
- Provide information about key learning from SARs in the Board's Annual Report.

- Informing Care Quality Commission about all reviews involving regulated services, where appropriate, whether or not CQC have been involved.
- Develop a range of options/models for undertaking SARs.

### **Accountability**

The group is accountable to the SAB and will report progress on a regular basis. It will also provide relevant information to the SAB as necessary, including input into the Annual Report.

Any professional may refer a case to the SAB if it is believed that there are important lessons for multi-agency working to be learned from the case. It would be the SAB's responsibility to take note of any referral and make a decision as to what action is needed. Details of the SAR notification/referral process can be found here:

[Safeguarding Adults Reviews | West of Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Board \(sabberkshirewest.co.uk\)](https://www.sabberkshirewest.co.uk)

### **Decision making records**

In the event that criteria for a SAR has been agreed by the panel. The Business manager will inform in writing:

- Individuals and family members as identified of the decision to undertake to undertake a SAR. This will be in conjunction with the Lead LA for the commissioned SAR .
- Inform CQC when appropriate.
- Inform in writing all CEO or equivalent for partner agencies involved in the SAR and name their panel representative.
- Confirmation to any professional of the outcome decision of any notification that a SAR has been agreed or not agreed. This maybe through panel members or in writing.
- The business manager will maintain a data base of the notifications and outcomes
- Each notification received will be monitored through SAR Tracking Tool
- For all decisions made the panel must consider if the panel has the required knowledge to make this decision

### **Reporting and Governance Arrangements**

The group, through the Chair, will:

- Report to the SAB on a quarterly basis, including identified risks
- Present SAR reports to the Board for endorsement
- Review the panel's work plan annually
- Contribute to the SAB Annual Report
- Review the Terms of Reference and propose amendments to the SAB

### **Membership**

Core membership includes:

- Reading Borough Council
- West Berkshire District Council
- Wokingham Borough Council
- Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board
- Thames Valley Police
- Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust – not considered in terms of quoracy
- Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service – not considered in terms of quoracy
- Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust– not considered in terms of quoracy
- Emergency Duty Service – not considered in terms of quoracy

### **Other membership**

- Due to the large area South Central Ambulance Service covers their engagement with this subgroup will be supported by the representation of the Integrated Care Board.
- Voluntary Care Sector and Healthwatch engagement with this subgroup will be via the Voluntary Care Sector and Healthwatch Subgroup.

- A representative from the Joint Legal Team will attend as required on a case by case basis.<sup>1</sup>

Additional members from safeguarding teams from RBFH and BHFT and consultation will be sought and considered by the panel on cases where medical oversight on any review is required from the Consultant at the RBFH and /or the named GP for safeguarding.

Members will have appropriate seniority within their agencies to lead and coordinate the work on behalf of their agency. The Panel may co-opt other agencies and representatives to complete or contribute to specific pieces of work. To ensure consistency and timeframes, when members are unable to attend scheduled meetings, they will ensure a representative attend on their behalf.

All members must ensure that they have read the papers in advance of those panel meetings. For those panel members that have not read the papers they will need to alert the chair to this at the beginning of the meeting, and they will not be able to vote on any decisions made in relation to the case where the papers have not been read.

### **Operational arrangements**

The panel will be supported by the SAB Business Manager.

The Chair of the SAR Panel will be nominated every 3 years.

To ensure that discussions are thorough the Panel will discuss a maximum of three live SAR's per meeting.

The role of the Independent Chair in Safeguarding Adults Reviews is to provide a quality assurance role, receiving regular updates from the lead reviewers and ensuring the review fulfils the agreed scope and is conducted within agreed timeframes. The Independent Chair will not be expected to be part of any case review team, but will monitor the process and provide challenge, when necessary, in the panel process. The chair may be involved as required in undertaking joint partnership review as the chair with other partners to allow the flexibility of the panel in deciding types of review methodology and resources to promote the learning in a timely manner. This will depend on the training and experience level of any chair and there must be no conflict of interest or directly involvement in the case.

### **Duty of candour**

The panel will routinely ask any organisation to confirm any duty of candour or contact with a family has been made.

### **Quoracy**

The meeting will be deemed quorate if the Chair (or their substitute) and at least three other members of the Panel are present.

### **Frequency**

Standing meetings of the SAR Panel will be held on a monthly basis, but frequency can and will be amended based on the workload of the Panel.

### **Agendas and minutes**

Agendas and associated papers will be circulated at least a week in advance of the meeting. Minutes will be circulated within two weeks of the Panel meeting.

### **Confidentiality**

Panel members shall keep confidential any information obtained as a result of inter-agency co-operation, save to the extent that disclosure of the information is necessary in order to discharge the functions of the SAB.

**Observers**

To ensure an open culture in the SAB. Observers are able to attend meetings with the advanced permission of the SAR Panel Chair. On invite to the meeting the SAB Business Manager will make clear the confidentiality section of this TOR.

**Accessibility**

The Board will seek to ensure that any learning from Safeguarding Adults Reviews, as well as those not reaching the SAR threshold but where wider learning is identified, is disseminated using a variety of methods and is made available as widely as possible.

**Review**

The SAR Panel Terms of Reference will be reviewed 2 yearly. Any changes must be agreed by the Board.

**Sign Off Dates**

- SAR Panel – May 2024
- SAB - June 2024

**Review Date**

June 2026

See: [West of Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Board SAR Process for further information on the SAR Process.](#)