

Report title: Norfolk Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report for 2021/22

Date of meeting: 21 September 2022

Sponsor

(HWB member): James Bullion, Executive Director, Adult Social Services, Norfolk County Council

Reason for the Report

Publication of a safeguarding adults board's annual report is a statutory requirement under the Care Act (14.136 Care Act Guidance 2021). This report is to be shared with the Chair of Health and Wellbeing Board (14.160), and it is expected that the HWB 'fully consider the contents of the report and how they can improve their contributions to both safeguarding throughout their own organisation and to the joint work of the board. (14.161)

In addition, a copy of the annual report is required to be sent to the chief executive and Leader of the local authority, the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Chief Constable and the local Healthwatch.

Report summary

The Norfolk Safeguarding Adults Board (NSAB) annual report provides key point summaries on adult safeguarding activity covering the following topics:

- The statutory duty to carry out Safeguarding Adults Reviews.
- Activity summaries from NSAB's three statutory partners: the local authority, Norfolk Constabulary and the Clinical Commissioning Group (now Integrated Care Board).
- NSAB's key achievements during 2021/22.
- Review of the business plan.
- NSAB's website and social media.

Recommendations

The HWB is asked to:

- a) Endorse the contents of the NSAB 2021/22 annual report.
- b) Promote the work of NSAB to partner organisations and stakeholders.
- c) Use media and communications channels to promote the safeguarding messages.

1. Background

1.1 The purpose of Norfolk Safeguarding Adults Board (NSAB) is to help and safeguard adults with care and support needs. It does this by:

- a) Assuring itself that local safeguarding arrangements are in place as defined by the Care Act 2014 and statutory guidance.
- b) Assuring itself that safeguarding practice is person-centred and outcome-focussed.
- c) Working collaboratively to prevent abuse and neglect where possible.
- d) Ensuring agencies and individuals give timely and proportionate responses when abuse or neglect have occurred.
- e) Assuring itself that safeguarding practice is continually improving and enhancing the quality of life of adults in its area.

1.2 The publication of the NSAB annual report is in order to fulfil the statutory requirement on safeguarding adults boards (14.136 Care Act Guidance 2016).

- 1.3 The NSAB leads adult safeguarding arrangements across Norfolk and oversees and coordinates the effectiveness of the safeguarding work of its member and partner agencies. The NSAB vision is for everyone to work together effectively to enable the people of Norfolk to live free from abuse and neglect, and to promote widely the message that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- 1.4 This requires the NSAB to develop and actively promote a culture with its members, partners and the local community that recognises the values and principles contained in "Making Safeguarding Personal". It also concerns itself with a range of issues which can contribute to the wellbeing of its community and the prevention of abuse and neglect, such as:
- a) the safety of people who use services in local health settings, including mental health.
 - b) the safety of adults with care and support needs living in social housing.
 - c) effective interventions with adults who self-neglect, for whatever reason.
 - d) the quality of local care and support services.
 - e) the effectiveness of prisons in safeguarding offenders.
 - f) making connections between adult safeguarding and domestic abuse.
- 1.5 Along with the three statutory partners the board has a wider membership covering a range of agencies who are active in safeguarding adults in the county. These include health provider organisations from both acute and community settings, Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service, Healthwatch, probation, CQC, prisons, district councils, representatives from the voluntary sector and from other partnerships such as the Learning Disability Partnership.
- 1.6 Safeguarding services sit within the adult social services department (ASSD), led strategically by James Bullion, Executive Director of Adult Social Services who takes a keen and supportive role in respect of NSAB. NSAB is also supported by Craig Chalmers (Director of Community Social Work) and Helen Thacker (Head of Service), who leads the ASSD operational safeguarding service.

2. Some of NSAB's key achievements and activity during 2021/22

- 2.1 During the year 2021/2022, 4,928 safeguarding concerns were reported to the local authority. This represents again a significant increase from 4,294 the previous year. There have also been some changes to the types of abuse being experienced across the county over the last three years. Neglect and acts of omission is the most reported category with 875 reports this year. Physical abuse has slightly reduced to 689 reports, but as experienced nationally there has also been an increase in the number of domestic abuse concerns being reported.
- 2.2 The number of referrals received by the board for consideration as a Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR) has also continued to rise. There have been 20 referrals to the Safeguarding Adults Review Group in the last year, again an increase on previous years. Twelve of the referrals resulted in some form of learning outcome and two have been commissioned as SARs with one also being commissioned as a joint SAR and Domestic Homicide Review.
- 2.3 The board resources increased in October 2021 with the addition of a shared communications officer with the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership which has enabled us to develop a board communications strategy. The refreshed NSAB website was launched in June 2021 with positive feedback and one of the most popular communications from the board remains the Board Manager's monthly blog.

Key highlights for 2021/2022

- 2.4 The Safeguarding Adults Review into the deaths of Joanna, Jon and Ben was published in September 2021 and focussed on the harrowing deaths of the three young people who were resident at Cawston Park, a private hospital in Norfolk. All of them had physical health needs and either learning disabilities, mental health issues or both. The publication of the review, the delivery of the recommendations and on-going work has been of national importance. Locally, recommendations were made to Norfolk County Council and the Clinical Commissioning Group (now Integrated Care Board) around the provision of services to people with behaviours that challenge, specifically in terms of moving away from medical admissions and social care discharges and adopting an ethical commissioning framework. The remaining patients at Cawston Park were moved and the hospital subsequently closed.
- 2.5 National recommendations were made to NHS England in respect of the oversight of commissioned services for people with behaviours that challenge which led to a national review of patients' safety and wellbeing. Recommendations were made to the Law Commission relating to the current legislation around corporate criminal liability, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) regarding aspects of their regulatory role and the Department for Health and Social Care in respect of the proposed changes to the Mental Health Act.
- 2.6 In December 2021 NSAB arranged for the Minister for Health and Social Care, Gillian Keegan MP, to visit Norfolk and meet with two of the families involved in the SAR and others whose children had also been accommodated at the hospital. She also met with the leader of the local authority, the Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care, Public Health & Prevention, the Executive Director for Adult Social Services, the Chief Nurse from the CCG, NSAB Independent Chair and Jerome Mayhew MP for Broadland.
- 2.7 Under the leadership of NSAB's previous chair the county has also developed a "Coalition for Change" core group whose main purpose will be to assist in co-producing a strategy to provide an improved service for people with behaviours that challenge.
- 2.8 A "Progress Summit" has been organised by NSAB for 6 September 2022 with invitations for all agencies responsible for the delivery of the SAR recommendations.
- 2.9 Other key highlights for the year 2021/2022 include the development of a three-minute animated film called "Tricky Friends". Developed by the board manager, this animation was designed for people with learning disabilities and autism to help raise awareness of exploitation. The animation has proved incredibly popular and is now being used across at least 30 other safeguarding boards. It has also been translated into Ukrainian in response to the "Homes for Ukraine" programme.
- 2.10 The board continues to deliver against its strategic aims of "Preventing abuse and neglect, Managing and responding to concerns and enquiries about abuse and neglect and Learning lessons and shaping future practice" (PML). It has used this framework to tackle the issue of consistency of the reporting of safeguarding concerns, which has led to several productive workshops between health and local authority colleagues and the on-going development of a safeguarding matrix document to provide guidance around a consistent approach. The PML approach has also addressed the issue of practitioners' understanding of Mental Capacity Assessments and following on from a well-supported on-line survey several NSAB led workshops are now being held.
- 2.11 A self-neglect and hoarding subgroup has also been developed by the board to address this specific area of concern and provide practical guidance and support to professionals faced with such challenges. A recent webinar attracted over 150 professionals and showcased the

specific journey of one individual who had been assisted through such challenging circumstances.

- 2.12 Under the leadership of the deputy board manager the Locality Safeguarding Adults Partnerships (LSAP) have grown significantly. They are the specific link between the strategy and operational practice. LSAPs have discussed a wide range of topics including safeguarding language, organisational abuse, domestic abuse and carers.
- 2.13 A key strength of the board is its ability to work together and with other partnerships to raise awareness of specific safeguarding issues, promoting various topics through different medias e.g., 7-minute briefings, webinars, face to face and virtual training. A joint event focussing on Professional Curiosity was delivered with our colleagues from the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- 2.14 The board has continued to see steady increases in visitors to its new website. As a result of promotion of the new site, the visitor numbers increased from 1,960 in May 2021 to 2,543 in July 2021. The highest number of users recorded was in visits to the SAR for Joanna, Jon and Ben. Twitter followers have also increased from 1,443 to 1,634. This social media platform is an excellent way to share safeguarding information publicly but also to share and identify best practice with other boards.

Officer Contact

If you have any questions about matters contained in this paper please get in touch with:

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