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**Telford and Wrekin Safeguarding Partnership**

**Safeguarding Adults Quality Assurance Framework**

**2022 - 2024**

**Introduction**

The Telford and Wrekin Safeguarding Adults Board is a multi-agency Partnership that provides leadership for adult safeguarding across the Borough. The remit of the SAB is to agree objectives, set priorities, and coordinate the strategic development of adult safeguarding. The SAB is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how the relevant agencies will work together effectively to safeguard and promote the safety and wellbeing of adults at risk of harm and abuse.

The SAB’s key priorities are to:

* **Raise the profile of adult safeguarding and ensure a culture that does not tolerate abuse** - actively engage people, raising awareness about safeguarding and to inspire people to take action to prevent abuse and neglect.
* **Work together in partnership to ensure that people are free from abuse or neglect** - Utilising available intelligence from all partners, including feedback from people with lived experience, to further develop partnership working with the aim of ensuring citizens are safeguarded.
* **Ensure that safeguarding is person centred and outcome focussed** - embed Making Safeguarding Personal across the Partnership.
* **Ensure effective safeguarding training and continual improvement** - support practitioners to develop their practice in line with changes in legislation and learning from reviews and audits. This also includes policy and procedure developments, multi-agency quality assurance work and multi-agency performance monitoring.

Successful delivery of our priorities will deliver the following outcomes:

* People feel and are safer, and their circumstances are improved as a result of safeguarding action.
* People are aware of safeguarding, the quality and safety of local services and what to do if they have a concern.
* People are able to report abuse and be listened to.
* Concerns about abuse and / or neglect are taken seriously and people can identify what desired outcomes they want to achieve.

The Performance, Quality and Data (PQD) subgroup of the Telford and Wrekin SAB has developed this performance and quality assurance framework (PQAF) to provide assurance about the effectiveness of our safeguarding arrangements in helping keep people safe from abuse or neglect. It is also the key mechanism by which the SAB will hold local agencies to account for their safeguarding work.

**Context**

The Care Act 2024 provides the statutory framework for adult safeguarding setting out the responsibilities of Local Authorities and their partners, and those with whom they work to safeguard adults with care and support needs from abuse and neglect.

Post Care Act, the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) provided guidance to SABs to support them to seek assurance of the effectiveness of safeguarding activity and ensure that safeguarding practice is continuously improving and enhancing the quality of life for adults with care and support needs and carers in its area, in line with Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP). This should address issues of quality as well as quantity, particularly from the perspective of those who have experienced safeguarding services. It should include arrangements for:

* data recording, analysis and reporting,
* case audits,
* SAB and agencies’ self-audits and peer review,
* Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs),
* practitioners’ forums to share lessons from case audits and local good practice, from research and from SARs, holding member and partner agencies to account,
* the management of large-scale investigations, serious incidents, complaints, grievances, disciplinary proceedings, whistleblowing and allegations of professional malpractice or unfitness to practice, and
* the implementation of Making Safeguarding Personal at a local level and its impact on engagement and outcomes.

SCIE advised that SABs need a range of approaches to quality assurance to monitor the effectiveness both of their own work and that of their partner agencies. These should include:

* use of data collection analysis for a quantitative perspective,
* self-audit tools, and
* qualitative reviews and audits.

**What is the Performance and Quality Assurance Framework**

The framework is for strategic partnerships and individual organisations with safeguarding adult’s responsibilities in Telford and Wrekin and enables each organisation to demonstrate their contribution to achieving our quality standards (Appendix1), and ensuring effective safeguarding across the Borough. It is based upon an outcomes approach that considers:

* **What we do**  – our activity
* **How well we do it** – are partners working together effectively to respond to safeguarding concerns
* **What difference have we made** – do people feel safer, and have safeguarding arrangements improved their outcomes

The Framework is underpinned by the 6 safeguarding principles:

* **Empowerment** - People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and give informed consent.
* **Prevention** - It is better to take action before harm occurs.
* **Proportionality -** The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.
* **Protection -** Support and representation for those in greatest need.
* **Partnership -** Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.
* **Accountability –** accountability and transparency in safeguarding practice.

**Elements of the framework**

**SAB self- assessment**

The West Midlands Safeguarding Audit tool is to help members of Safeguarding Adult Boards audit their safeguarding arrangements using a common framework which has been developed for use by a wide range of organisations from varying perspectives, and to improve and strengthen arrangements for safeguarding adults with care and support needs. The tool encourages an open and honest approach to enable organisations to get maximum benefit from the process.

The function of the tool is to provide SABs with an overview of the Safeguarding Adult arrangements that are in place within partner agencies identifying:

* Strengths, in order that good practice can be shared
* Common areas for improvement where organisations can work together with support from the SAB
* Single agency issues that need to be addressed
* Partnership issues that may need to be addressed by the SAB
* Issues that need to inform the Board’s Strategic Plan

**Multi agency Peer challenge**

Undertaken from the viewpoint of a critical friend, the peer challenge process allows partners to assess each other’s safeguarding arrangements and practice, and provides recommendations of how further improvements can be made. It is a constructive, collaborative and supportive process with the aim of supporting continuous learning and improvement. Peer challenge enables focus upon selected themes and compliments the West Midlands audit tool.

**Single agency audit**

Each partner agency must have in place auditing arrangements to assess the quality of their day to day safeguarding work.

**Performance data**

A range of data from all partners is required to inform the safeguarding performance dashboard.

The PQD subgroup will develop a multi-agency dataset which includes safeguarding performance data from all SAB partner agencies. Oversight and analysis of multi- agency data will help the SAB to:

* + Identify trends in abuse category reporting and responses required.
  + Evaluate the impact of safeguarding interventions.
  + Identify and target areas to address in a more informed manner.
  + Allow more robust decision making through the provision of timely, accurate intelligence.
  + Improve engagement and understanding between partner agencies to develop a better understanding of the work undertaken by each agency and their processes.
  + Identify opportunities to improve efficiency in the management of and reporting of concerns.

**Experience of people supported through safeguarding arrangements**

All partner agencies should have processes in place to understand the experience of people supported as part of the safeguarding process, and report this to the Board through the PQD sub group to inform the work of the SAB.

**Training competency**

All partner agencies have responsibility to ensure effective safeguarding training for their staff that positively impacts upon practice and improves outcomes people. This will be reported to the Board through the ARLT sub group.

**Safeguarding Adults Reviews**

Local partnership arrangements are in place to enable SAR’s to be undertaken when an adult at risk of abuse dies or is seriously injured and abuse and / or neglect is suspected or known to be a factor, and there is concern that partner agencies could have worked more effectively to protect the adult.

The SAB can also carry out other types of review where the criteria for a SAR are not met, but it is identified there is multi-agency learning to be had from reviewing the case. These include:

* + multi-agency reviews,
  + partnership reviews,
  + multi-agency case file audits,
  + single agency reviews or audits, and

The SAR subgroup considers all SAR referrals, and will come to a view about whether a case meets the criteria for a SAR and subsequently make recommendations to the Independent Chair of the SAB.

**Learning and Improvement**

Each partner agency will be responsible for briefing learning and taking forward recommendations from multi-agency activity and quality assurance across their respective organisations.

**Complaints and Compliments**

Each partner agency must have in place arrangements for monitoring complaints and a system for cross-referencing with safeguarding records. The SAB may ask partners to share complaints data. This information is used to identify strengths and areas for development in safeguarding enquiries.

The SAB has developed an escalation protocol. This is to inform the continuous development of service delivery by providing a process for the resolution of disagreements where an agency or professional considers decisions made by other professionals or another agency is not an appropriate decision in the context of a safeguarding concern or enquiry.

**Roles and Responsibilities**

Individual partner agencies are responsible for:

* Their own quality assurance activity with respect to adult safeguarding
* Supplying information and data as requires by this framework
* Ensuring appropriate representation on the PQD sub-group
* Notifying the SAB of any areas of concern
* Request a safeguarding adult review as appropriate

The PQD sub group will be responsible for the coordination and management of the performance quality assurance framework,