



Annual Report 2008/09

<u>Contents</u>	<u>Page</u>
Foreword from the Chair	1
Introduction	2
Strategic Overview	2 – 3
Safeguarding Adults in Durham	4
National Developments	5 - 6
The Safeguarding Adults Board and Sub Group Objectives	7
Reporting and Interface Arrangements	8
Key Milestones Achieved in 2008/2009	9 - 10
Key Actions 2009/2010	11 - 12
Perspectives of Key Partners	13 - 15
Safeguarding Activity in Durham	16 - 21
Conclusion from the Safeguarding Manager	22
Abbreviations / Glossary of Terms	23
Contact Details	24

Foreword from Lesley Tickell, Chair, County Durham Safeguarding Adults Board

Safeguarding adults at risk within our community is a high priority for all of our multi-agency partners. Safeguarding is a shared responsibility and is the prime focus of the County Durham Safeguarding Adults Board. The partnership works to improve safeguarding services and ensures that the profile of adult protection is raised to increase awareness of our countywide zero tolerance policy on abuse.

Whilst reflecting on the past year of the Board's work, it has been pleasing to note the strengthening of elements of its work, specifically performance management, the revision of multi-agency policies and practice development programmes and raising the profile of safeguarding through our communications strategy.

Furthermore the development and implementation of the adult safeguarding practice officer's role has resulted in much success in terms of tackling issues linked to standards of care within residential and nursing provision. More detail on the role of this team is included in the Perspectives of Key Partners section on pages 13 - 15.

The effective management of Executive Strategy processes and the adoption of our Dignity in Care Action Plan have also resulted in better outcomes for service users across County Durham.

The Board plays a critical role in co-ordinating direction and support for practitioners and providers as well as ensuring that safeguarding systems across all partner organisations are working effectively.

In terms of challenges for the future, as demographic trends project that a greater number of adults will require care and support, it is critically important that all agencies with a safeguarding responsibility ensure their organisation is equipped with a fully skilled and committed workforce who are fully conversant with safeguarding processes and procedures and are adequately resourced to respond to incidents requiring intervention.

Furthermore, as the focus of care provision shifts towards self directed support and personalisation there will be a need to ensure service users, whilst being actively encouraged to make choices and exercise autonomy, remain effectively protected and supported when at their most vulnerable.

I am encouraged by the Board's progress over the past 18 months in strengthening safeguarding processes and I look forward to working with partners to ensure that all vulnerable adults are appropriately safeguarded in County Durham.

Lesley Tickell, Head of Adult Social Care

Introduction

This Annual Report presents an overview of the work that has been undertaken in 2008/09.

Following the introduction of the Department of Health's 'No Secrets' guidance in 2000, Durham County Council has worked in partnership on safeguarding issues with a number of partner agencies. In September 2006 the County Durham Safeguarding Adults Committee reviewed their membership and remit. A decision was taken at this time to reconvene as the County Durham Safeguarding Adults Board, which met for the first time in May 2007. The Board is currently chaired by the Head of Adult Care, Durham County Council and consists of representatives at Senior Officer and Director level from each partner agency. The main aims of the Board are:

- To safeguard and promote the welfare of vulnerable adults in County Durham through inter-agency collaboration.
- To coordinate the safeguarding activity undertaken by each organisation represented on the Board.
- To provide strategic direction to partner agencies and organisations across County Durham in relation to safeguarding activity

The profile of Safeguarding Adults work nationally and locally has continued to rise since the introduction of 'No Secrets' and subsequent Safeguarding Adults ADASS document. Work has been ongoing in County Durham to enable adults with community care needs to live safer lives, both in their own homes and communities and also within services such as hospitals, care homes and day resources.

In recognition of the importance of Safeguarding Adults work, Durham County Council created the Safeguarding and Practice Development Team in December 2007. This team receives contributory funding from partner agencies, which has helped create a number of strategic posts aimed at developing practice and improving standards in this area of work.

Strategic Overview of Safeguarding Adults

Safeguarding adults at risk within our community is one of Adults, Wellbeing and Health's key priorities, and Adult Care leads on this issue. Safeguarding is a shared responsibility and a high priority for all County Durham agencies and DCC is leading and supporting effective partnership working through our County Durham Safeguarding Adults Board.

The future direction for the Adult Care Service Area includes:

- A continued focus on safeguarding service users and ensuring excellent practice standards.

The safeguarding function has been strengthened with a full review of multi-agency vulnerable adult policies and procedures. This includes a safe and effective recruitment process, which enables the Council to meet its statutory duties (e.g. the Independent Safeguarding Authority).

Durham has adopted a clear 'zero tolerance' approach to in respect of protecting adults at risk from abuse. This reflects standard 4 of the ADSS 2005 national framework document 'Safeguarding Adults'. This has resulted in a significant and progressive increase in the number of safeguarding adults referrals received by Adults, Wellbeing and Health in the last 2-3 years (see page 16).

It will be of particular importance to focus upon training and skills development for staff in the forthcoming year. Effective co-ordination of training activity with a focus upon person-centred approaches to safeguarding victims of abuse will be central to the Board's training strategy.

Although seen in the wider context of vulnerability, domestic abuse is another area of priority for the Service. This includes participation in Multi - Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) and the move towards achieving the Local Area Agreement (LAA) target of 100 percent of the population to be covered by MARAC by 2010/11.

The revised structures within the Safer Durham Partnership, including the links between the Vulnerability Thematic Group and Safeguarding Adults Board have ensured that there is effective linkage between a number of strategic functions that will promote safeguarding as a priority in its wider sense. The structure diagram on page 8 illustrates how these functions join together.

Safeguarding Adults in Durham – Strategic Context

‘Safeguarding Adults’, a document published in October 2005 by the Association of Directors of Social Services, is a national framework of standards for good practice and outcomes in adult protection work - now known as ‘safeguarding work’. This term means all the work that enables an adult who is or may be eligible for community care services to retain independence, well-being and choice, and to access their human right to live a life that is free from abuse and neglect. It builds on the sound foundations already established by many multi-agency groups, who in response to the launch of ‘No Secrets’ devised and implemented shared protocols for protecting ‘vulnerable adults’ from abuse.

The commitment of Durham’s Multi-Agency Safeguarding Adults Board to these standards is reflected within its policy statement (also referred to as ‘the red document’) and accompanying procedural framework (‘the green document’) and supplementary guidance (‘the blue document’), which are in turn influenced and underpinned by the evolving legislation and guidance relevant to safeguarding work. These documents are currently available on Durham County Council’s website at: www.durham.gov.uk . Follow the links by searching on ‘Safeguarding Adults’.

Moreover, in response to the Government’s emerging ‘personalisation agenda’ the Board is additionally committed to shifting towards an approach to tackling issues of abuse which more strongly recognises individuals’ human rights and their rights as citizens, and has a greater emphasis on prevention.

“Abuse is a violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by any other person or persons.” *No Secrets (DH 2000)*

The Durham Multi-Agency Safeguarding Adults Board has agreed to adopt a clear policy of **zero-tolerance of abuse** within each of its component organisations.

- The Board recognises that it is every person’s right to live their life free from violence and abuse.
- It takes seriously its duty placed on public agencies under Human Rights legislation to intervene proportionately to protect the rights of citizens.
- It embraces the principle that any adult at risk of abuse or neglect should be able to access public organisations for advice, support and appropriate individualised protection and care interventions, which enable them to live without fear and in safety.

National Developments

The review of No Secrets

In 2000 the Government published a national framework guidance, 'No Secrets' so that local councils' social care responsibilities, local NHS bodies, local police forces and other partner organisations could develop local multi-agency codes of practice to help prevent and address adult abuse. In spring 2008 Care Services Minister, Ivan Lewis commissioned a consultation to review this guidance. Durham contributed to this review by consulting with partner and user led organisations. Our response represented a wide range of views and will help to inform the Department of Health's review and subsequent revised guidance, due later in 2009.

Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards

Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DOL) came into force April 2009 as an amendment to the Mental Capacity Act. This measure brings into effect legal safeguards to ensure that people suffering from a mental disorder and who lack capacity to make their own decisions about their care cannot be detained in an arbitrary manner without a proper assessment and legally valid process being followed.

Much work took place in Durham in preparation for implementation. Policy, procedures and operating systems were developed. Numerous awareness raising and training sessions were arranged with a wide range of stakeholders. A number of staff were trained as Best Interest Assessors to ensure we have sufficient capacity to respond to applications. A small team was formed to specifically focus on Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards and ensure there was a smooth implementation period.

Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act

Following the murders of Jessica Chapman and Holly Wells by a school caretaker, Ian Huntley in 2002, public attention was focused on the way we vet people who work with children. The resulting Bichard enquiry recommended a new vetting and barring scheme under which everyone working with children and vulnerable adults should be checked and registered. Subsequently, the Safeguarding and Vulnerable Groups Act introduced a new Vetting and Barring Scheme due to be launched in October 2009. This is for all those who work with children and vulnerable adults.

An Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) has been formed to administer the scheme. Every person who wants to work or volunteer with vulnerable people will need to register with and be vetted by the new Authority.

The scheme will work in conjunction with the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) who collects data, including relevant criminal convictions, cautions, police intelligence and other appropriate information. It will replace the current Protection of Vulnerable Adults (POVA) arrangements.

The information that the ISA will securely store will be accessed by employers and voluntary organisations when they are recruiting. Only applicants who are

judged not to pose a known risk to vulnerable people can be ISA-registered. Once the scheme is fully rolled out, employers who work with vulnerable people will only be allowed to recruit those who are ISA-registered.

CSCI Study of the Effectiveness of Safeguarding Adults Arrangements

CSCI (now the Care Quality Commission) carried out a study in November 2008 into how well people are protected from abuse and neglect in adult social care. The study focused on the quality of regulated adult social care service delivery, including local authority services and residential home care providers.

The study considered:

- How well people are supported by current safeguarding arrangements and how effective care services are at responding and intervening.
- Leadership arrangements and the effectiveness of local partnerships.

This document was widely circulated in Durham and a summary report was produced to highlight the key findings with view to further developing Safeguarding practices within the multi-agency partnership.

The Safeguarding Adults Board and Sub Group Objectives

The Safeguarding Adults Board has the following key objectives:

- To establish and maintain an effective, accountable county-wide Safeguarding Adults Board.
- To establish robust governance and accountability arrangements.
- To make strategic decisions concerning the development of key processes and systems.
- To create a sub group structure to support the Board's activity and agree resources and sub groups.
- To agree business planning and reporting mechanisms.

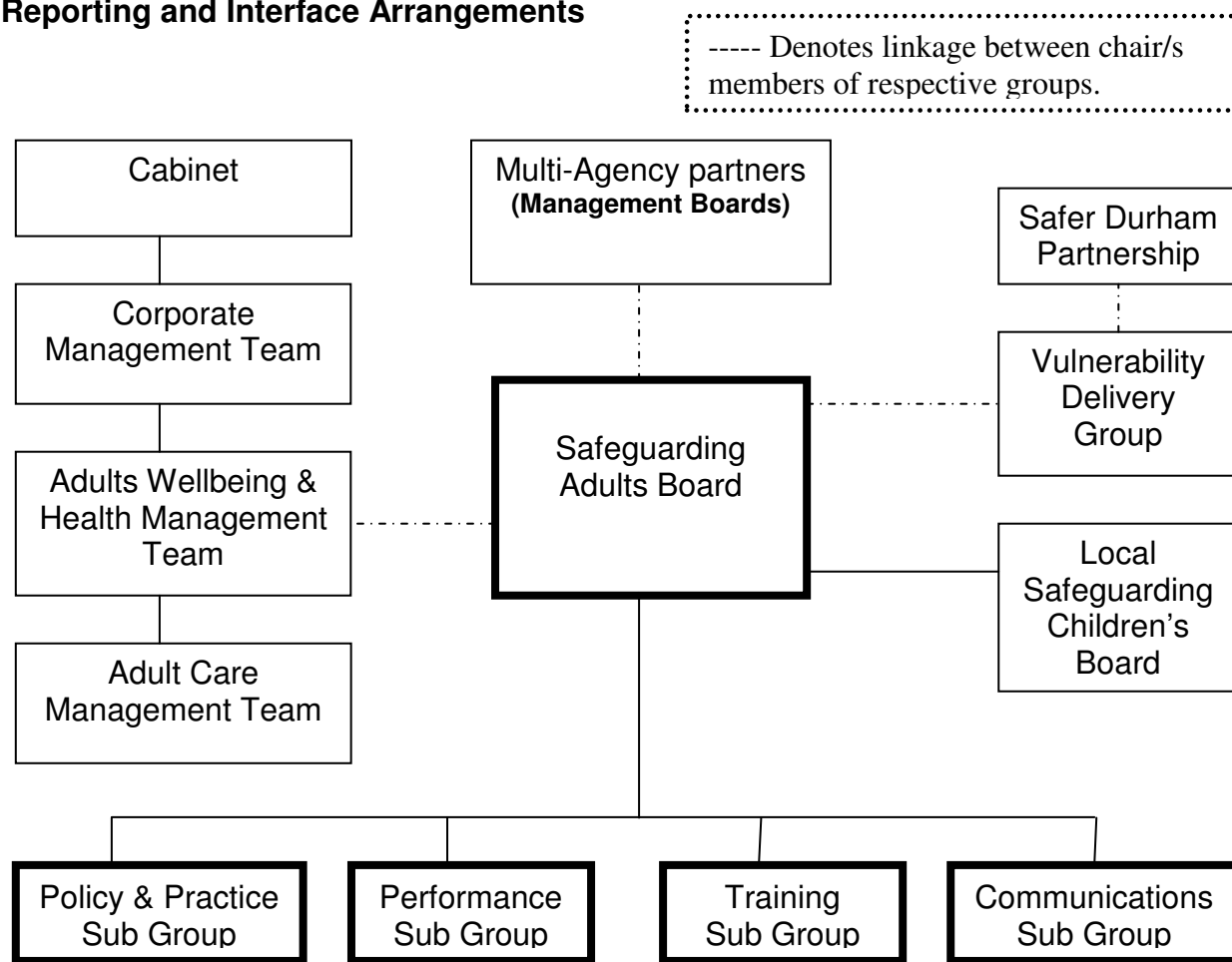
The Board is made up of senior representatives from the following Agencies:

Durham County Council, Adults, Wellbeing & Health
Durham County Council, Children & Young People's Services
NHS County Durham (Primary Care Trust)
NHS Darlington (Primary Care Trust)
Tees, Esk & Wear Valley Foundation NHS Trust
County Durham & Darlington NHS Foundation Trust
Durham Constabulary
Prison Service
National Probation Service
Care Quality Commission

Four Sub Groups of the Safeguarding Adults Board meet 4 times per year. They carry out much of the development work on behalf of the Board and aim to achieve the following:

- The **Performance group** focuses on identifying appropriate performance measures and setting and monitoring quality standards.
- The **Policy and Practice group** aims to improve practice through developing practice guidance, sharing best practice and agreeing standards across partner organisations.
- The **Training group** works to develop, deliver and monitor the effectiveness of multi – agency training across the partnership.
- The **Communications group** develops the 'safeguarding brand' and aims to make use of a range of media to develop awareness and understanding of the public and care professionals.

Reporting and Interface Arrangements



Working with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)

The chair of the Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) is a member of the LSCB. Similarly the chair of the LSCB is a member of this Board. This ensures effective information sharing and learning between the two Boards and has allowed SAB development to be informed by the experience and successes within Children's Services that have developed over a longer period. A specific area of activity during 2008/09, which will progress as a key action into 2009/10, is that of the working together information sharing protocol. This ensures the appropriate sharing of information between those services delivering services to Adults and Children.

The Board and its Sub Groups have undertaken a significant amount of work in the past year with progress being made across all functional areas.

Link to the Vulnerability Delivery Group

The Vulnerability Delivery Group is a thematic sub group of the Safer Durham Partnership. It meets bi-monthly, is chaired by the SAB Chair and is concerned with safeguarding issues that ordinarily fall outside of the definition of safeguarding linked to vulnerability. Some examples of its work include Honour Based Violence, Suicide Prevention and Sexual Violence.

Key Milestones Achieved: April 2008 - March 2009

The following represents the key milestones achieved by the Board's thematic sub groups:

Performance

- Apr-Jul 08 - Developed new Safeguarding module in line with national data set requirements
- July 2008 - New Safeguarding I.T. module adopted.
This enables performance that complies with national data set requirements to be collected
- Sept 2008 - New data reports produced and regular communication with safeguarding teams commenced to address performance issues
- Mar 2009 - First Safeguarding audit completed of 100 cases. Audit focused on standards of recording and decision making throughout the safeguarding process.

Policy and Practice

- Apr-Sep 08 - Development and recruitment of multi-agency funded Safeguarding Posts
- Aug 2008 - Development of multi-agency Serious Incident Review procedure and process established to convene multi-agency meetings as and when triggers are met to instigate such reviews
- Sep 2008 - Safeguarding practitioner post became fully operational and commenced work in engaging with Residential and Nursing care providers in developing standards linked to safeguarding
- Dec 2008 - Completion of review and rewrite of the Multi Agency Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedural framework
- Dec 2008 - Development of Risk Support Tool to support key decision making
- Jan 2008 - Darlington Borough Council agrees to adopt our Policy and Procedural framework with some minor alterations. In doing so, simplifies interfaces with the Health Trusts and the Police.
- Feb 2009 - Revised safeguarding measures implemented into provider contracts
- Mar 2009 - Safeguarding Conference held at County Durham Cricket Club, attended by 102 local social care and health delegates.

Training

- Apr 2008 - Implementation of revised Alerter (Level 1) training
- Aug 2008 - Implementation of Managing an Alert (level 2) training
- Nov 2008 - Competency standards incorporated into training schedule and matched to professional roles
- Dec 2008 - Completion and introduction of Training Strategy
- Jan 2009 - Agreement to extend training, to include voluntary and private sector providers
- Mar 2009 - Development of new training schedule, which extends access to a wide range of private and voluntary sector organisations.

Communications

- Jun 2008 - Communication sent to all contracted providers in Adult Care, reminding them how to raise a safeguarding alert
- Sep 2008 - Partner agencies gain direct access to the Durham County Council Safeguarding web pages via their own internet sites
- Nov 2008 - Communication Plan developed
- Dec 2008 - Development work commenced to develop a new Safeguarding Adults website
- Feb 2009 - New 'Safeguarding Adults' brand designed
- Mar 2009 - Production of 2 new information leaflets containing the new brand imagery.

Key Actions: April 2009 - March 2010

The following provides a summary of the key actions planned for development in 2009/10. These actions reflect the core business of the Safeguarding Adults Boards thematic Sub Groups previously described on page 7. The Board provides governance in overseeing the progress of the subgroups and in making key decisions and providing strategic direction. Our business plan describes these key actions in more detail. A copy of this plan can be made available on request by contacting the Safeguarding and Practice Development Manager. Please see contact details at the back of this document.

Performance

- Embed Safeguarding Adults performance into general performance management processes
- Produce quarterly Performance Reports and target key areas for improvement and development
- Modify Performance monitoring and collection systems as necessary to respond to changing requirements
- Increase Performance targets for timescale from referral to strategy (5 days) & completion of investigation.
- Improve response times for the completion of strategy meetings and investigations and increase Performance targets.
- Develop Performance and consistency of reporting in respect of completing safeguarding investigations.
- Develop procedures to ensure appropriate interface between an unauthorised Deprivation of Liberty and Safeguarding Adults procedures.

Policy and Practice

- Implement actions in respect of safeguarding audit
- Repeat the audit
- Prepare for forthcoming CQC inspection
- Complete action plan in respect of the key learning to emerge from the Baby P joint review where parallel issues may exist for Adult Safeguarding in Durham
- Develop multi-agency action plan in respect of the CSCI document 'Rights, Risk and Restraint'
- Continue to develop relationships with care providers in respect of best safeguarding practices
- Commissioning Strategies to refer to safeguarding and its importance in the delivery of quality services
- Development work to ensure appropriate safeguards are built into the personalisation agenda reforms
- Annual review of Policy and Procedural guidance
- Incorporate provider responsibilities that are consistent with Safeguarding Procedures in contracts
- Complete review and update Working Together Protocol with CYPS

- Review operational capacity associated with the increasing volume of Safeguarding Adults cases.
- Develop Seriously Vulnerable Persons Protocol, Potentially Dangerous Persons Protocol and Honour Based Violence Policy.
- Incorporate effective safeguarding measures in the development of self directed care and individual budgets (personalisation agenda).

Training

- Agree the implementation of new administrative systems to support the multi-agency training programme
- Promote and roll out Levels 1 and 2 Safeguarding Adults training to the widest possible audience
- Ensure this roll out targets the voluntary and independent sector and increases the provision of training to this staff group.
- Develop investigation training (level 3) in conjunction with Durham Constabulary
- Roll out Managing the Process training (level 4) to safeguarding lead officers
- Explore further training developments in line with emerging needs
- Increase training audience to include service users and local colleges
- Consider additional investment to support the continuing development and roll-out of training.
- Further develop promotional material/activities in respect of Safeguarding Adults training.

Communications

- Complete a new Safeguarding Adults Board Website
- Launch 'Dignity' a new quarterly newsletter aimed at health and social care professionals promoting good practice in respect of Safeguarding and Dignity in Care
- Develop the 'safeguarding brand' extending the imagery used in our new literature
- Develop a new Safeguarding Adults Board logo to replace the individual agency logos currently in use
- Develop communication methods with service users to ensure their perspective is heard and considered
- Programme and action promotional activity to highlight the availability of information
- Consider additional investment to support the continuing development and distribution of promotional materials linked to safeguarding.

Perspectives of Key Partners

The following represents a brief summary of the developments that have taken place within the key Safeguarding Adults partnership organisations.

Durham County Council, Adults, Wellbeing and Health - In response to the developing Safeguarding agenda, a dedicated Safeguarding unit was established with the aid of partnership agency funding in July 2008. This unit consists of two senior nurses and two senior social work practitioners known as Safeguarding Practice Officers. It also includes a Senior Development Officer and dedicated administrative support. Collectively, their work helps to support the business objectives of the Safeguarding Adults Board. These posts are based within the service's Safeguarding and Practice Development Team, managed by the team's manager.

The Safeguarding Practice Officer's role is to work proactively with care homes throughout County Durham with the aim of improving standards and reducing risks that may lead to Safeguarding Adults concerns. Where serious safeguarding concerns do occur, they implement action plans and work intensively with the identified care home until risks are reduced and the required practice standards are implemented and sustained. This work takes place within an executive strategy process. In such circumstances improvements are evidenced within the action planning and review processes within executive strategy meetings.

This work not only involves collaboration with provider services, it encompasses a wide range of organisations and services including; CQC, the Police, PCT services such as Clinical Governance and District Nursing.

During 2009/ 2010 a senior Occupational Therapist will join the unit to add to the range of skills and expert knowledge, providing a more holistic service to support further development in this area.

Durham Constabulary - The protection of vulnerable people is a key priority for Durham Constabulary. In recent years there has been increasing emphasis placed on Safeguarding Adults who are at risk of abuse. This is reflected by a significant increase in referral rates to the Police Vulnerability Units across County Durham.

In response to this, additional investment has been identified to create dedicated Adult Abuse Investigation teams. These teams will be in place by the end of 2009. There will be a North and a South team, each consisting of four officers, including a detective sergeant. They will work alongside the safeguarding partners with the aim of ensuring a seamless service.

Tees, Esk & Wear Valley Foundation NHS Trust - In order to support the commitment to the development of robust safeguarding arrangements, the Trust has identified an Executive Lead supported by an Operational Lead Associate Director, as well as two Senior Nurses to support this agenda.

A Trust wide Protocol was implemented in November 2008 to support the Safeguarding Adults Multi-Agency Policy and Procedures.

More recent developments include 'Alerter' training's inclusion in our mandatory training schedule. The role of a 'link professional' has also been developed. This role is seen as key to the delivery of this important agenda across the organisation and will ensure there is an identified individual in each clinical area to act as a designated member of staff. This role is expected to be fully implemented by the end of 2009.

NHS County Durham - NHS County Durham has introduced its own internal 'safeguarding adults' procedural guidelines, consistent with the multi-agency policy and procedure, and clearly describes the responsibilities of all providers, including independent contractor services such as GPs and dentists, commissioned by NHS County Durham. The guidelines describe the process from raising concerns and making a referral to convening strategy meetings or executive strategy meetings to scope the range of investigation, development of action plans and ongoing monitoring.

NHS County Durham has joint funded the Safeguarding Adults Practice Officers team along with Durham County Council. The team consists of four Safeguarding Practice Officers as described above. They have joint accountability to both organisations through the Head of Adult Care and Associate Director of Nursing and Clinical Quality. Regular information sharing meetings have been established between the Associate Director, the Safeguarding and Practice Development Team Manager and the Practice Officers. These meetings aim to influence service improvements through the sharing of information link to clinical governance and safeguarding activity.

A schedule of those providers who are currently under executive strategy is kept and updated by the Practice Officers when work with the provider is undertaken. This schedule is shared with the Safeguarding Adults Board and the Safeguarding Adults Lead for NHS County Durham regularly provides the NHS County Durham Board with updates on the number of safeguarding executive strategies that are currently in progress.

NHS Darlington – It is NHS Darlington's policy that there is zero tolerance of abuse within the organisation.

In order to achieve this, the PCT have invested in a new dedicated Safeguarding Adults Lead post. This new role will commence in October 2009 and work closely with the already established Executive Lead and Operational Lead Assistant Director.

There is also a network of local Safeguarding Adult Leads within each service area who make up the NHS Darlington Safeguarding Adults Steering Group and provide advice and support to front line staff.

The PCT is also committed to delivering multi-agency training programmes and 'Alerter' training is included in the mandatory training schedule for all staff.

The PCT has appointed a Safeguarding Adults Trainer who will delivery training at all levels for our staff.

County Durham & Darlington Foundation Trust - The Trust has established a Safeguarding Adults Committee to mirror their Safeguarding Children Committee. The Committee will look at incidents related to adult protection, assurance that policies and protocols are being followed, training requirements and achievement, and follow up action plans arising from incidents to ensure learning across the Trust.

The Deputy Director of Nursing is taking the Trust lead with a lead physician and a matron on each acute site. It is their plan to establish nurses on each ward to be equipped with enhanced knowledge and skills to be the experts for each ward and department.

Safeguarding Adults updates are provided on mandatory training for all staff, an e-learning package has been purchased and Training and Development deliver multi-agency training through the lifelong learning portfolio. All Accident and Emergency and Medical Admissions Unit staff will have completed the multi-agency training in the next 6 months. Monitoring of the uptake of training will be provided to the committee by Learning and Development.

Safeguarding Activity in Durham

A new safeguarding module and data collection system was launched on the Durham County Council I.T. system in July 2008. This was in response to our revised procedures and the new national reporting requirements for data and performance.

This module is fully compliant with the Safeguarding Adults procedures and key processes from referral through to debrief and closure. Much of the activity data contained below is therefore based on 6 months from August – March.

Table 1 (referral rates)

There has been a continual increase in the number of Safeguarding Adults referrals received in Durham since 2002. There has been a sharp increase in referral rates since 2007. There are numerous factors that may help to explain this, including;

- The adoption of a 'zero tolerance' policy
- The roll-out of training and awareness raising
- National development and political drivers
- Local policy and partnership developments
- Increased public and professional awareness
- National and local publicity

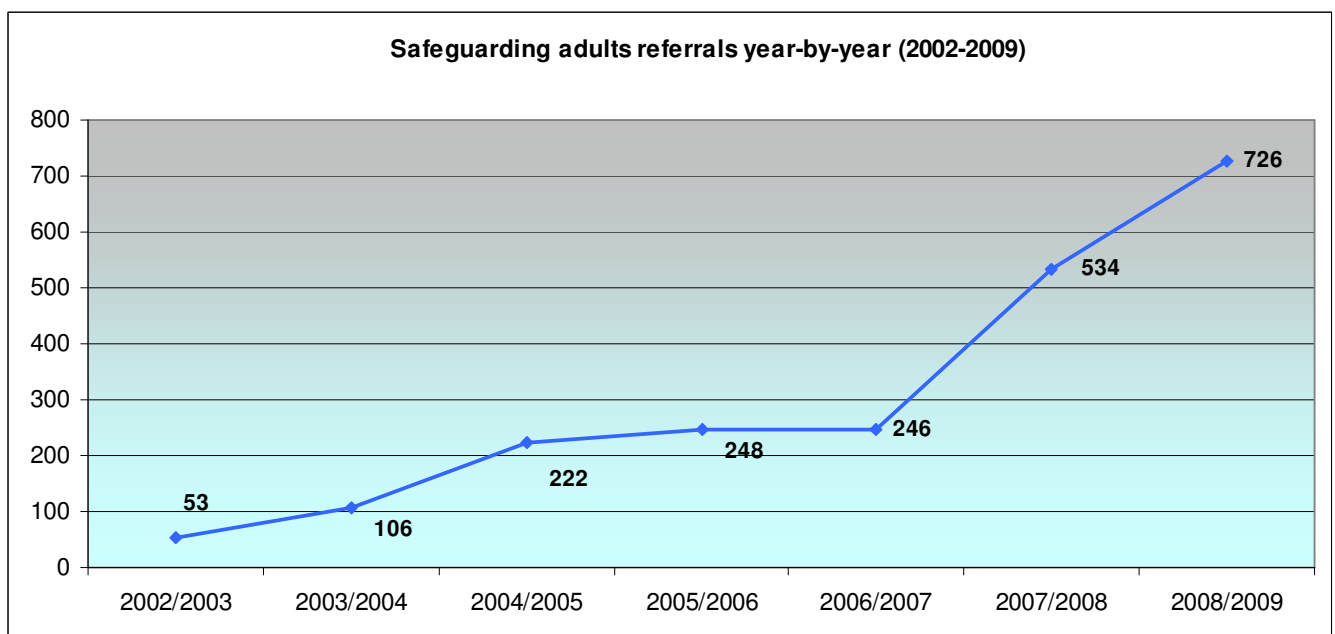


Table 2 (referral source)

The majority of referrals are received by independent provider agencies and from internal referral sources. Many of the internal referrals result from direct communication between social care staff and a variety of partner organisations, professionals and members of the public.

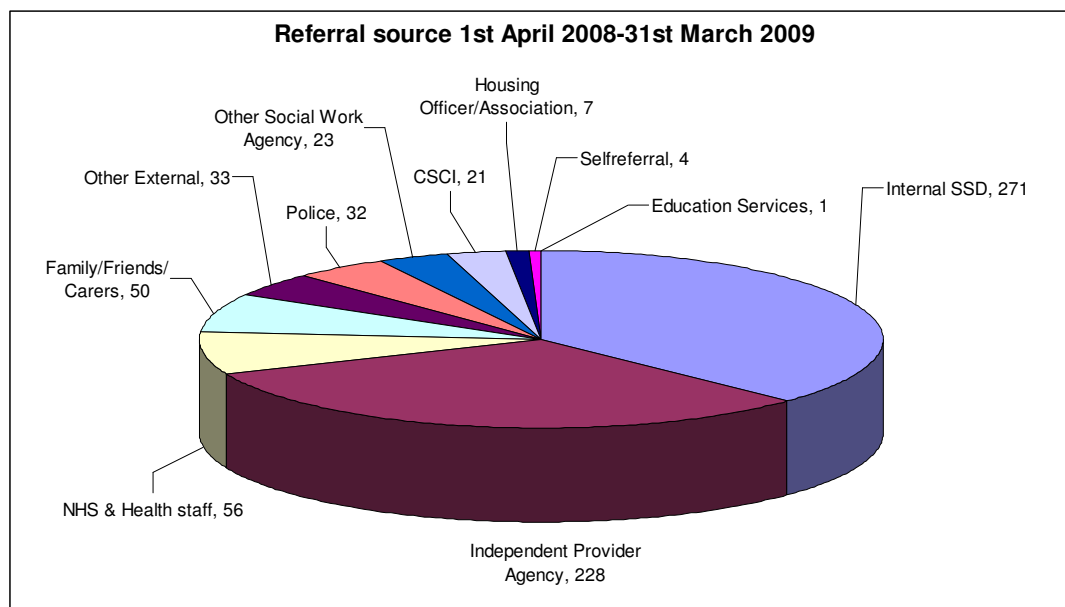


Table 3 (location of abuse)

The majority of referrals received involve incidents that have occurred in the home or in care homes. This is perhaps unsurprising considering where most social care services are delivered to the most vulnerable adults. As a result of the prevalence of alleged incidents taking place in care homes, Durham County Council and County Durham PCT have joint funded four safeguarding practitioner posts. These posts provide multi-disciplinary support to improve quality and reduce risks associated with safeguarding concerns in care homes throughout County Durham (see pages 13 and 14 for further information).

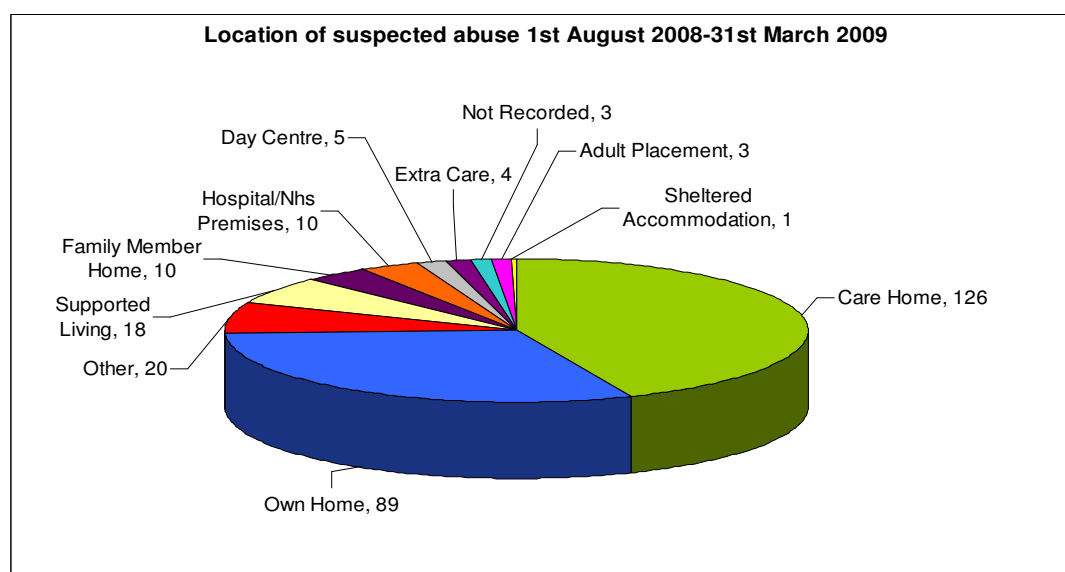


Table 4 (type of abuse)

Abuse can take many different forms. The two main forms of alleged abuse identified in County Durham between August 2008 and March 2009 were Physical Abuse (33%) and Material or Financial Abuse (20%). A referral can have more than one form of abuse listed against it, and those who are victims of abuse may be abused in several different ways. Recording in this area has improved as a result of the implementation of the new data collection system.

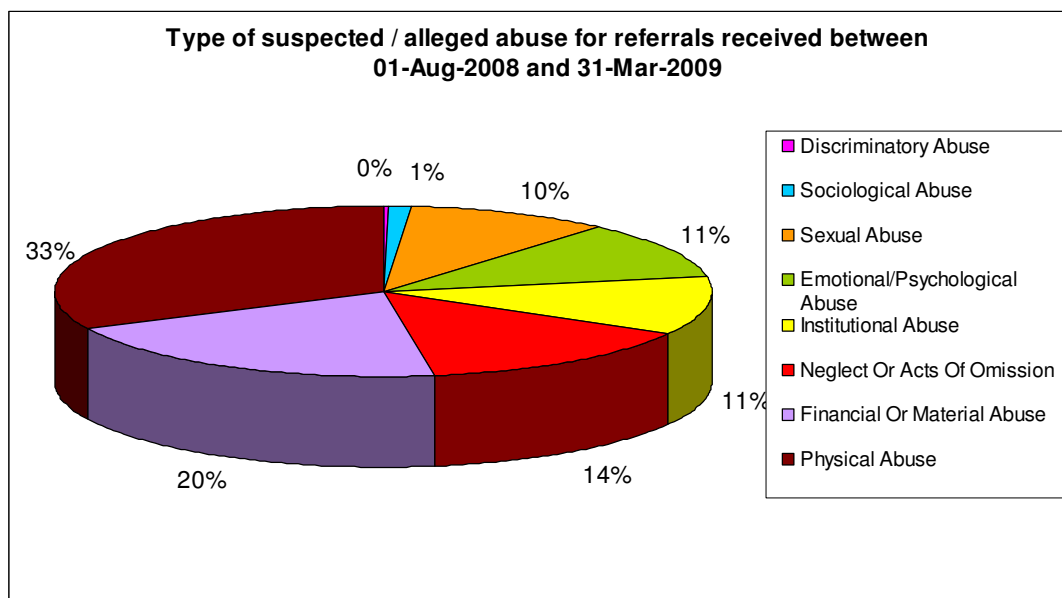


Table 5 (victim category)

64 percent of alleged victims recorded in safeguarding adults referrals are older people. This is proportionate to the prevalence of older people who are recipients of social care services in County Durham, as 65 percent are 65 years of age or older.

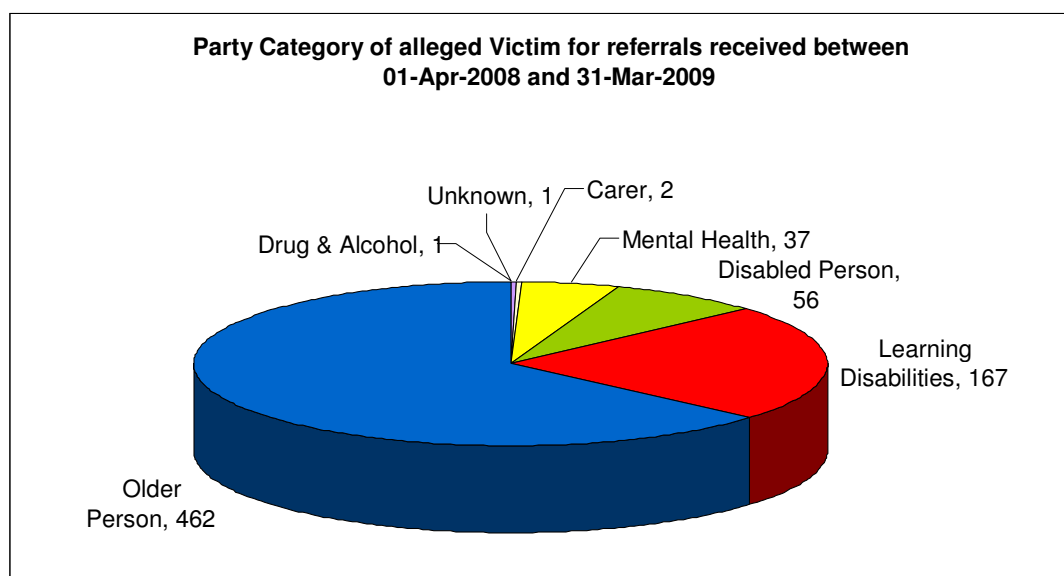


Table 6 (perpetrator category)

Family, friends, care staff members and carers appear as the most common alleged perpetrators. Perhaps unsurprisingly there is a clear correlation between people who are in close contact with adults at risk and incidents of alleged abuse.

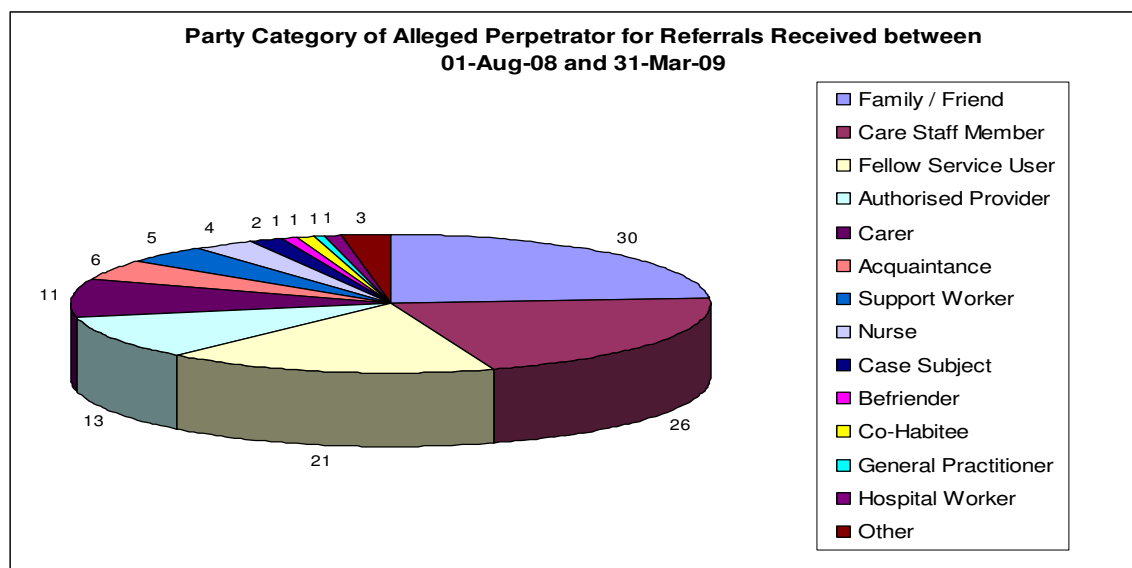
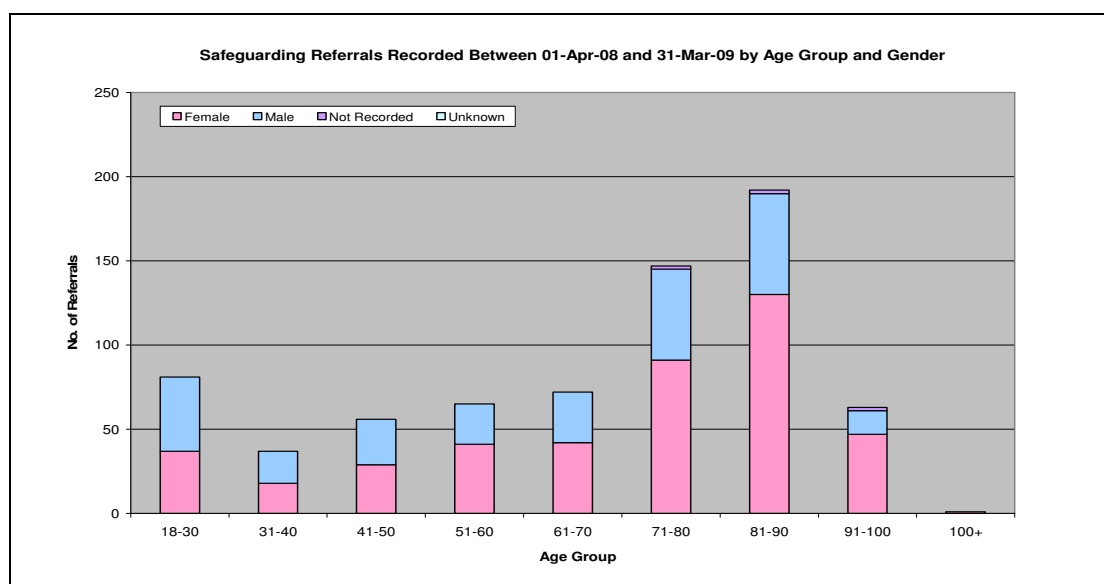


Table 7 (gender)

62 percent of referrals have a female victim compared to 38 percent for males. The gender ratio increases with age. This is likely to reflect a number of factors, including;

- Women live longer and spend more years living on their own and are therefore more vulnerable.
- Women are likely to experience ill health for longer.
- Men may be less likely to report allegations.
- Referrals for adults with learning disabilities represent a significant proportion of those under 65. There is an even gender balance of referrals for this group.



Tables 8 & 9 (outcomes)

It is recognised that current outcomes identified for alleged victims (shown in table 8) require further development work. This work will be carried out by the end of 2009 in response to national data set information requirements. It is concentrated on separating out outcomes for the alleged victim from the outcomes for the alleged perpetrator and will result in reporting that is more clearly defined in future years.

The overall outcomes of safeguarding investigations are categorised as **substantiated**, **unsubstantiated** or **inconclusive/not determined** as shown in table 9. Inconclusive/not determined cases often mean it has not been possible to determine exactly what happened due to there being no witnesses, a lack of evidence or the victim lacking mental capacity. For example, it may be alleged that money has been stolen but following investigation it is unclear whether it has been stolen, lost or is simply a mistaken claim.

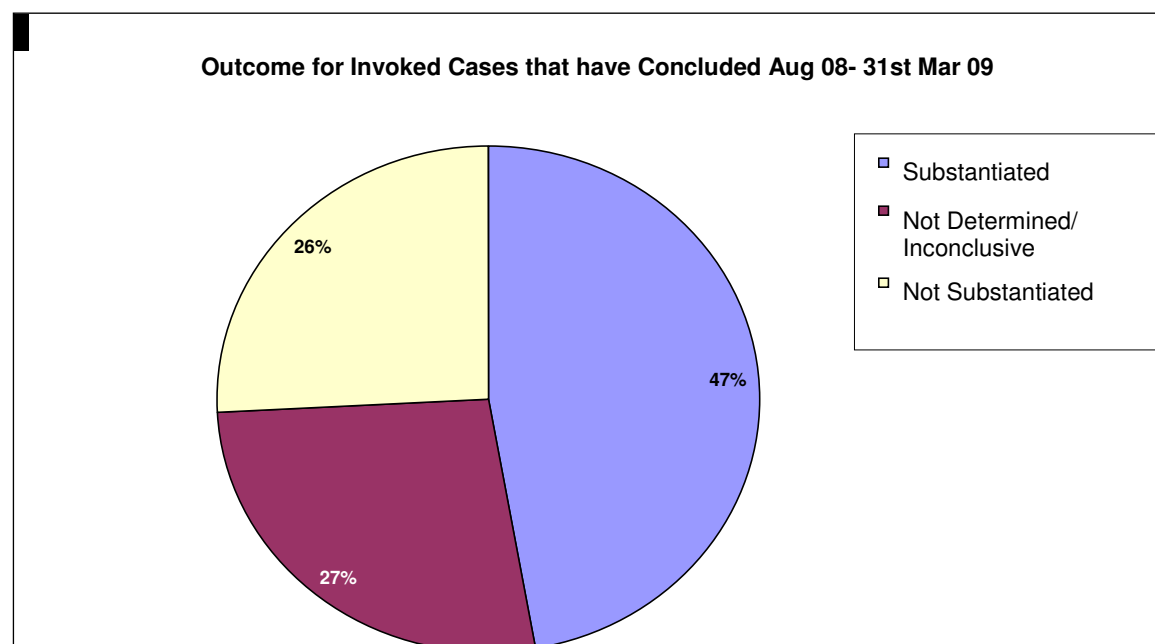
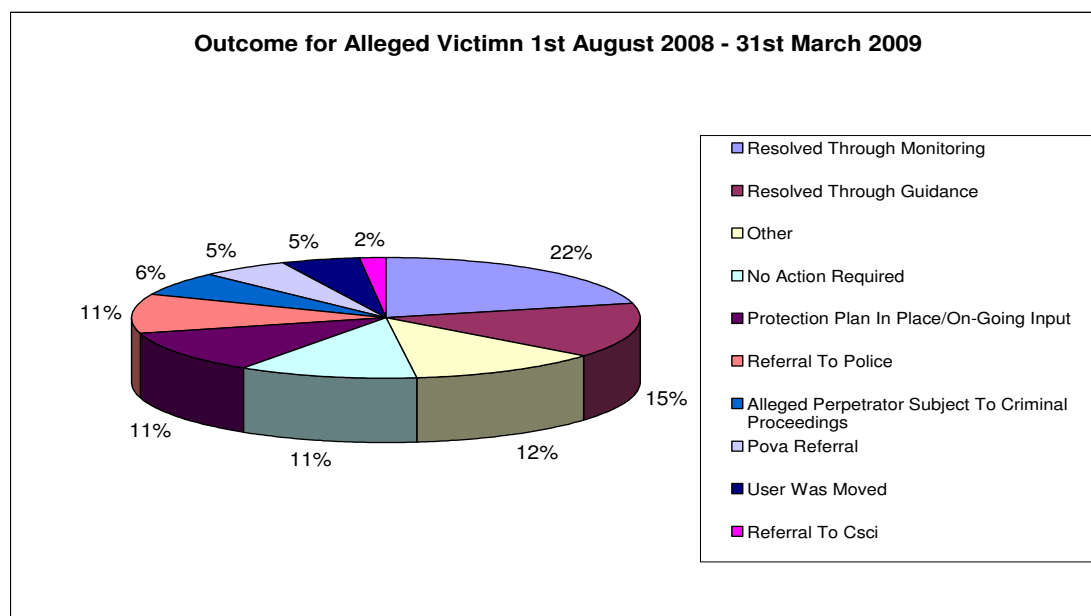


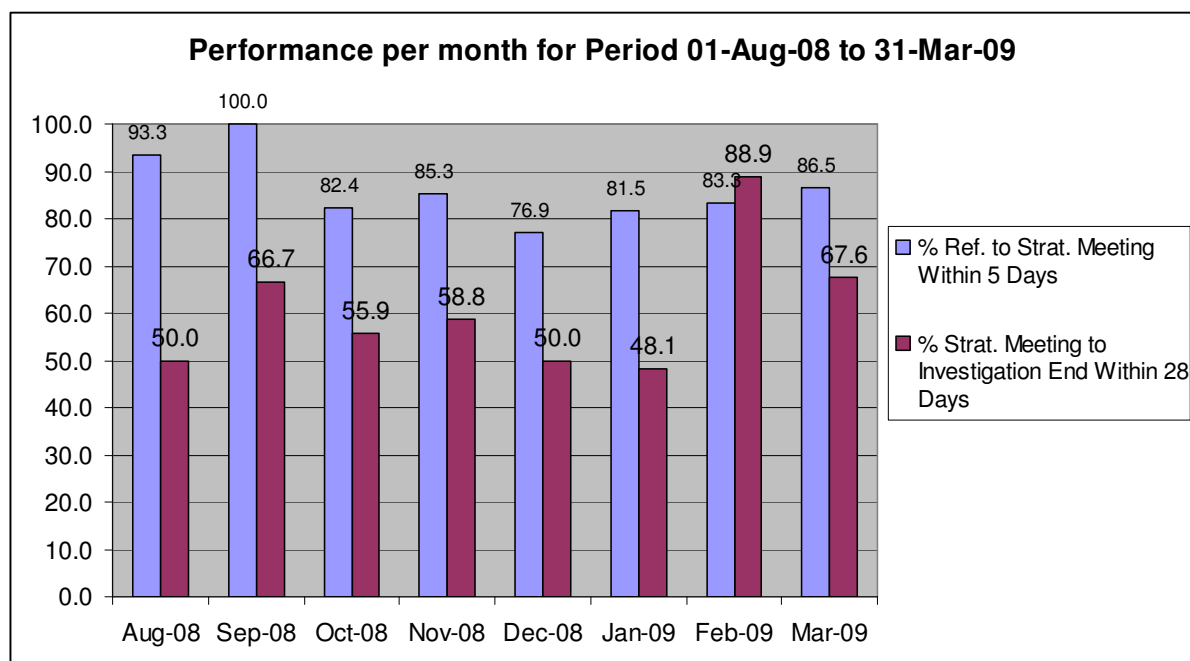
Table 10 (local performance)

For the period 01-Aug-08 to 31-Mar-09 Overall Performance for:

- (a) Referral to Strategy Meeting Within 5 Days = 85.7%,
- (b) Strategy Meeting to Investigation End = 59.4%

The 5 day strategy target was set at 80 percent in April 2009. It is to be extended to 100 percent during 2009/10. This is to reflect the important nature of this work and the associated risks. For cases that exceed this timescale, periodical evaluation work will be carried out to establish the reasons why. The work will result in further development work associated with improving practice and performance.

The 28 day investigation target was set at 60 percent in April 2009. This is currently under review. Work is being carried out to establish if there is a correlation between cases that exceed this timescale and the complexity of such cases e.g. cases subject to police investigation and human resource processes. Procedures will be revised when they are next reviewed and interim guidance is being issued to describe circumstances where safeguarding investigations can be closed within the safeguarding module. This will improve performance in this area.



Conclusion from the Safeguarding and Practice Development Manager

This report presents the achievements and key areas of work completed in respect of Safeguarding Adults in 2008-2009. It builds upon this work and sets out the development priorities for 2009-2010. These priorities reflect those contained within the Safeguarding Adults Training Strategy (2009-2012) and the Business Plan (2009-2010).

Durham County Council and the Safeguarding Adults Board are confident that the processes and structures put in place in respect of adult safeguarding over the last 2 years are more robust than they have ever been.

The work undertaken and the resources put in place are reflective of the growing profile of this critically important area of work. As a result of developing education and understanding of adults at risk of harm and the need to effectively safeguard them, there are growing demands placed upon our services. As the lead agency the Council will therefore need to review its key processes and available resources to ensure we continue to effectively manage these demands.

This area of work is and will remain a key priority for Durham County Council, Adults, Well-being and Health. In 2010 we will receive our Care Quality Commission (CQC) key inspection. The theme of this inspection is safeguarding, the outcome of which will help to determine our overall performance rating. This together with growing political and public expectation means we will face intense scrutiny in respect of our ability to meet our responsibilities and demands associated with 'Safeguarding Adults'.

The hard work completed, which is reflected in this report represents significant progress by the Council and the Safeguarding Adults partnership agencies. Our intention is to continue with that progress to ensure adults who are at risk, residing in County Durham are protected from all forms of abuse. Where people do become victims of abuse they receive support and protection to enable to live their lives free from subsequent harm.

Lee Alexander

Abbreviations / Glossary of Terms

ADASS - Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (formerly ADSS)

CQC - Care Quality Commission (Formerly CSCI)

CRB - **Criminal** Records Bureau

CSCI - **Commission** for Social Care Inspection

CYPS - **Children** and Young People's Service

DOL - **Deprivation** of Liberty

ISA - **Independent** Safeguarding Authority

LSCB - **Local** Safeguarding Children Board

MARAC - Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference

POVA - Protection of Vulnerable Adults

SAB - Safeguarding Adults Board

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