

Health and Wellbeing Board

31 January 2023

Durham Safeguarding Adults Partnership

Annual update



Report of Lesley Jeavons, DSAP Independent Chair

Electoral division(s) affected:

Countywide

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To present to Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) the Annual Report for 2021/2022 of the Durham Safeguarding Adults Partnership (DSAP), which provides assurance of safeguarding adults activity across County Durham.
- 2 To present the accompanying suite of documents including the Annual Report on a Page (Appendix 2) and Easy Read version (Appendix 3). The full suite of reports can be accessed via the [Durham Safeguarding Adults Partnership website](#). The reports being supported by a presentation to HWB outlining the salient points.

Executive summary

- 3 The Care Act 2014 outlines the requirement upon Safeguarding Adults Boards (SABs) to publish an annual report.
- 4 This is the seventh Annual Report which provides information about the achievements and challenges during the year 2021/2022.
- 5 Key data relating to safeguarding activity is included and based upon 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022. Safeguarding adults data is also published within [NHS Digital Statutory Safeguarding Adults Collection](#).
- 6 The Annual Report outlines the DSAP progress in line with its vision and strategic priorities.
- 7 In July 2021, the DSAP agreed to produce the Annual Report conveyed as a You Tube video accessible via its [website](#). The aim was to increase the attractiveness and accessibility with to improving the uptake of key safeguarding messages for County Durham.

- 8 The Annual Report includes headline messages of the learning from Safeguarding Adult Reviews as well as partners' contributions to the work of the partnership.
- 9 Content of the Annual Report encompasses:
- Key points
 - Chair's foreword and introduction
 - The local picture
 - Our vision and partners
 - Safeguarding Adult Reviews
 - Strategic plan and priorities
 - Safeguarding issues relating to Covid-19 recovery
 - Professional and community engagement
 - Quality assurance and the Safeguarding Adults Collection data
 - Looking ahead
 - Partner assurance

Recommendation(s)

- 10 The Health and Wellbeing Board is recommended to:
- (a) Receive the Durham Safeguarding Adults Partnership Annual Report suite for 2021/2022 and note the progress made by the partnership.
 - (b) Note the future work of the Durham Safeguarding Adults Partnership.

Background

- 11 The DSAP regularly reviews its strategic plans. Its current plan was agreed in September 2020 and reviewed in 2021 with partners taking a renewed focus upon the Coronavirus (Covid-19) recovery. The plan has three agreed priorities:
 - (a) Reflect upon the learning from Covid-19 and inform new ways of working;
 - (b) Seek assurance from agencies and use that information to strengthen safeguarding;
 - (c) Share key messages with our community, our networks and work co-productively with adults.
- 12 The DSAP Annual Report is minded to its vision to support adults at risk of harm to prevent abuse happening and when it does occur, to act swiftly to achieve good outcomes, consulting with the Local Healthwatch as a source of support to inform DSAP activity. The Local Healthwatch were consulted in relation to its revised strategic plan.

Safeguarding Adults Assurance

- 13 The proceeding section outlines highlight messages that offer a level of assurance to HWB and of safeguarding activity during 2021/2022.
- 14 Under the Care Act 2014, the Partnership should undertake Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs) when certain criteria are met, for example, when an adult with care and support needs has died or been seriously harmed, and there are concerns about how partners worked together to protect the adult. SARs give a focus upon what can be learnt about improving practice, what worked well, and about cooperation between organisations. SARs are not about blaming any individual or organisation.
- 15 During the year four completed SARs were reported to the partnership. A further three SARs were completed during the period for onward reporting into 2022/2023.
- 16 Examples of emerging themes from the SARs include working with adults reluctant to engage and who self-neglect; application of the Mental Capacity Act; and effective Risk Assessment.
- 17 As a consequence, the DSAP held key events for practitioners in safeguarding week 2021/2022, dedicated sessions for partners, and a range of practitioner briefings, newsflashes and ebulletins. The DSAP is committed to and keen to hear the 'voice of practitioners' and we therefore issued a survey of practitioners to help inform our future offer.

- 18 Further activity related to the emerging themes from SARs has included a multi-agency training and workshop offer, partnership development days, and a range of published briefings such as professional curiosity, and 'The Mental Capacity Act: what good looks like' suite of resources. Dedicated and commissioned training was secured for Safeguarding Adults Week 2021 to take forward the learning from some of those reviews.
- 19 The DSAP has addressed other nationally emerging themes with briefings and awareness raising activity, covering a range of topics, including Do Not Attempt Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (DNACPR), Carers Week, Deaf Awareness Week and Closed/Toxic Cultures training to be delivered by the Independent Chair of the partnership. The Domestic Abuse briefing was revisited to include key messages for supporting adults with dementia who may be a victim of such abuse.
- 20 A key focus was given to the use and application of the Mental Capacity Act (2005), Covid-19 vaccination considerations, and embedding human rights into safeguarding adults training offers.
- 21 The DSAP held its second virtual safeguarding week in conjunction with the Safe Durham Partnership, with 259 attendances across 23 online sessions on a range of topics. The week-long event served as platform to launch a new animation '[Tricky Friends](#)'. The resource is a three-minute film to help people to understand what good friendships are, when they might be harmful, and what they can do. It raises awareness of issues such as exploitation, county lines, and home invasion (often known as cuckooing). The film aims to support and empower adults to speak to someone they trust when 'something is not right'.
- 22 During 2021/2022 there were 39,487 visits to the DSAP website and 1,227 visits to the 'report abuse' page.
- 23 The DSAP placed a focus upon identifying hidden victims during the pandemic. In March 2021, and with the support of the Association of Directors for Adult Social Services North East (ADASS NE) a regional (covering 12 local authorities) radio campaign with focus on financial abuse, psychological abuse, and physical abuse, took place designed to reach people who may not use or have access to social media.
- 24 There were 26 core training courses delivered through 2021-2022, with 289 delegates attending. The DSAP Level 1 Workbook (Raising a Concern) was completed by 818 delegates for the same period. With a revised version issued in March 2022.
- 25 Reported safeguarding concerns returned to levels pre-pandemic during 2021/2022 with an average of 181 reports a week. As a partnership this

offers assurance that reports have continued to be submitted. Not all reports require a safeguarding response.

- 26 When adults are at risk of or experiencing abuse Durham County Council Adult and Health Services may need to trigger the duty to undertake a safeguarding enquiry (Section 42 of the Care Act 2014). A key element of that safeguarding practice is to place emphasis upon the 'voice of adults'. People in receipt of safeguarding services are asked 'what they would like to happen'. The DSAP is assured that the voice of adults is central to its safeguarding practice. From the year end data of adults or their representatives who were asked and expressed desired outcomes, 93 per cent (1,420/1,525 concluded enquiries) had their outcomes fully (75 per cent) or partially (18 per cent) met.
- 27 The DSAP were further assured about practice where risk was identified, in that risk was reduced or removed for 85 per cent (1,700/2,010) of concluded enquiries. There will always be a percentage of enquiries where the 'risk remains' following a safeguarding intervention, and this can be linked to the autonomous decision making of adults who may choose to live with a level of risk.

Looking Ahead

- 28 The DSAP will continue its focus into 2022/23 on priorities of raising awareness and improving practice particularly in relation to self-neglect, professional curiosity, closed/toxic organisational cultures and proper use of the Mental Capacity Act.
- 29 The DSAP published the Executive Summary of the Whorlton Hall Safeguarding Adults Review in line with legal considerations on 6th December 2022. The review findings place a lens upon national learning. The DSAP will collectively explore the findings from that review early in 2023 and take forward any local activity.
- 30 The partnership will maintain its focus upon key learning opportunities and strengthening its safeguarding offer, inclusive of closed cultures training.
- 31 Furthermore, it will strengthen its wider community related activities inclusive of empowerment activity and will engage a community reference group for co-production work as well as delivering community-based engagement events in 2023.

Conclusion

- 32 The Annual Report provides a comprehensive overview of the work of the DSAP during 2021/22 and the priorities for 2022/23.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

The Care 2014 states that Safeguarding Adults Boards must publish an annual report and strategic plan, and that the report should outline its progress against that plan as well as learning from Safeguarding Adult Reviews.

Finance

Continuing financial pressures on public services remain a challenge for member agencies and contributory partners of the DSAP. The DSAP monitors and risk and challenges through its governance arrangements, including business continuity. Durham County Council ensure it includes any such areas in those arrangements.

Consultation

The annual report is consulted upon with all partner agencies. It consults with the local Healthwatch on its strategic plan. The DSAP offers opportunity to partner agencies to submit an annual overview of their own contributions to the work of the DSAP for inclusion within the annual report.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

Adult safeguarding is linked to and covered in DSAP policies and procedures with equalities impact assessments undertaken when and where appropriate.

Climate Change

The DSAP Business Unit is minded to the impact of climate change and aims to reduce its carbon footprint where possible. Emissions due to DSAP activity are in line with other County Council activity. For this report they include power use due to online processing and storage; and heating, lighting, and other emissions by use of staff both homeworking and office working in line with the Council hybrid working model.

Human Rights

Human rights is a fundamental element of the DSAP core activity. The DSAP and relevant partners within the context of safeguarding adults should continue to ensure that they are embedded in policy and practice.

Crime and Disorder

Adult safeguarding is linked to and covered within the DSAP policies and procedures. There is a close working relationship with the Safe Durham Partnership and working arrangements across agencies and broader

partnership including but not limited to the County Durham Anti-Slavery Network. Durham Constabulary is a statutory partner of the DSAP.

Staffing

The sustaining of adult safeguarding activities requires continued priority to staffing to ensure adequate resource is maintained. The continued contribution to staffing from partner agencies is supportive of a dedicated support function to the DSAP, there can be continued pressure for capacity within the staffing function when unforeseen situations arise.

Accommodation

Not applicable

Risk

The risks associated with not appropriately managing responses to safeguarding are extremely high and include risks of ongoing abuse and neglect and the risk of serious organisational and/or reputational damage to statutory and non-statutory organisations in County Durham.

The DSAP puts considerable effort into training and awareness raising to ensure that abuse and neglect is recognised and reported. Screening of all reported concerns takes place, and they are directed appropriately to ensure the most appropriate response is taken.

Any risks identified under the umbrella of the DSAP is updated within a risk and challenge log which is reviewed quarterly. The impact of training is regularly explored and is reported annually. Partner agencies of the DSAP are committed to improvement activity. In 2021-2022 Durham County Council and North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENCICB and formerly Clinical Commissioning Group, CCG) and wider partners participated and contributed to 'three reflective learning events' with a view to strengthening multi-agency working and prevention of risk to adults.

Procurement

The adoption of safeguarding principles in the procurement of health and social care services is essential. An example is the DSAP support for Durham County Council checking supply chains for modern slavery and a focus upon safeguarding within regionally agreed procurement frameworks for Safeguarding Adults Reviews.

Appendix 2: DSAP Annual Report on a Page 2021-2022

See attached (or [website link](#) to document).

Appendix 3: DSAP Easy Read Annual Report 2021-2022

See attached (or [website link](#) to document)