

Cabinet

14 November 2012



Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report

Report of Corporate Management Team

**Rachael Shimmin, Corporate Director, Children & Adults Services
Councillor Morris Nicholls, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Adult Services**

SUBJECT OF REPORT

- 1 To present the County Durham Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report for 2011/12.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2 The report is to provide information in respect of the current position of the County Durham Safeguarding Adults Board, its achievements in 2011/12 and plans for 2012/13.

BACKGROUND

Safeguarding in its current context

- 3 In line with a national trend, the rate of safeguarding referrals has been rising for a number of years; this year however, has seen an unprecedented 88% increase in the referral rate. The on-going media attention fuelled by high profile cases such as Southern Cross and Winterbourne View has done much to shine the spotlight on the safeguarding agenda. Growing awareness and sensitivity across the care sector has undoubtedly impacted on the volume of cases now being addressed through safeguarding. Within County Durham effective management of safeguarding volumes continues with evidence of improvements in performance standards, this has been achieved within existing resources.
- 4 The local reconfiguration of the existing staff establishment to create a new Safeguarding Lead Officer (SLO) team has contributed significantly by dealing with 68% of all referrals during this period as well as improving practice standards. The SLO team work closely with the safeguarding practice officers to identify problems and improve standards of care provision. Their introduction has provided significant support to team managers, who also act as lead officers, by enabling them to commit more of their own time to providing strong leadership to their teams.

Achievements during the Year 2010 /11

- 5 The Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) continues to monitor performance in order to ensure that safeguarding is carried out to a high standard and in a timely fashion. Routine audits of practice are carried out to ensure compliance with procedures and there is a continued effort to obtain meaningful feedback from service users and carers following their involvement in the safeguarding adults process.
6. In addition to audits, safeguarding practice has been influenced in a number of ways including; the embedding of safeguarding principles in the roll out of personalisation. Practice guidance has also been implemented to enhance the interface between commissioning and safeguarding services.
- 7 Executive Strategies exist where a safeguarding response is required to address situations where more than one service user is affected or where institutional abuse is suspected. The Board has reviewed and updated its policy and procedures and improved arrangements when adopting this approach. Chairs and minute takers were consulted and they have been issued with updated guidance. The Board has led on a second regional awareness campaign comprising of an eight week radio campaign on Real and Smooth Radio and a ten week screening of awareness information in doctors' surgeries across the northeast provided by the 'Life Channel'. Following consultation with service user groups we have reviewed our literature to reflect the feedback we have received
- 8 The SAB has had an unprecedented year in rolling out training, with more than 5000 attendances at various training events by people from partner agencies and the private and voluntary sector. Twenty training modules have been developed and the first three have received accreditation from Teesside University and will be delivered alongside our standard free multi-agency training. Trainers from all organisations are now using the SAB training evaluation form, which will assist in ensuring consistency in the training that is being delivered. The SAB is working closely with the Local Authority work force development service to provide places for 25 students to participate in the accredited training modules as part of their post qualifying training.
- 9 Key partners have continued to work proactively as members of the Safeguarding Adults Board and have contributed significantly to practice development. Durham Constabulary has held a number of champions' events resulting in 80 uniformed officers being trained to develop understanding and awareness across the service. The implementation of a Central Referral Unit (CRU) with an officer from adult care working in the service has improved working relationships and the sharing of information concerning vulnerable people. Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV) held a 5 day improvement event to develop their standards in managing safeguarding cases in Durham and standards in respect of this provider have subsequently improved. County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust and NHS Co Durham and Darlington have both undertaken work to improve and strengthen governance arrangements within their respective organisations.

Key Actions for 2012 / 2013

- 10 As part of the performance management of the SAB there will be continued monitoring of the of the compliance levels of key performance targets linked to the completion of safeguarding investigations. Records relating to repeat victims will be audited to identify how to reduce the repeat referral rate and an annual data set has been established for statutory partner agencies to provide a multi-agency view of performance.
- 11 There will be a major reformatting the policies and procedures to make them more 'user friendly' and easier to navigate on the internet. A safeguarding operations framework is to be established for the Clinical Commissioning Groups to enable them to fulfil their obligations to adult safeguarding and there will be collaborative work with probation and the prison service to ensure that safeguarding is available to all sections of the community.
- 12 The Training Sub Group will look to gain accreditation with Teesside University for the remaining training modules and will explore the establishment of infrastructure to support the first Safeguarding Adult degree course in the Country. Collaborative work will take place between the local authority and Durham Constabulary to develop better ways to interview victims of and witnesses to safeguarding incidents.
- 13 The Communications & Engagement Sub Group will explore better methods of obtaining meaningful service user and carer feedback on the safeguarding service that they have received. The sub group will work collaboratively with service users and carer groups to obtain feedback to modify and improve safeguarding promotional materials and look to take the lead in any further regional publicity campaigns.

Perspectives of the Key Partners

- 14 The key partners on the Safeguarding Adults Board have continued to develop their systems and procedures to ensure that they fulfil their obligation and demonstrate their commitment to safeguarding adults.

CONCLUSION

- 15 A great deal of developmental work has taken place within the last three years in County Durham. This had included embedding effective and robust safeguarding systems and processes. Continued achievement of adult safeguarding performance standards is evident despite increasing demands. The annual report references these developments. The continuation of this work will not be possible without ongoing investment from the County Council and NHS County Durham.

RECOMMENDATIONS

16 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- a) Receive the annual report and note the ongoing developments achieved in this critical area of work.

Contact: Lesley Jeavons, Head of Adult Care, Children and Adults Services
Tel: 03000 267354

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance - Ongoing pressure on public service finance will challenge all agencies to consider how best to respond to the safeguarding agenda.

Staffing - Within DCC arrangements have been put in place for the redeployment of staff to assist with increased work loads of front line staff. This was achieved within existing resources. A new Safeguarding Lead Officer team is now in place and evaluation is taking place as to how they are coping with an increasing work load in line with a general increase in referrals.

Risk – Ongoing funding contributions are required from multi agency partners to ensure safeguarding interventions continue to be effective.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty - Adult safeguarding is intrinsically linked and this is covered in the SAB policy and procedures

Accommodation – No pertinent issues

Crime and Disorder - Adult safeguarding is intrinsically linked and this is covered in the SAB policy and procedures.

Human Rights – Adult safeguarding is intrinsically linked and this is covered in the SAB policy and procedures.

Consultation - Report available for all partner agencies and members of the public.

Procurement – No pertinent issues.

Disability Issues – The needs of disabled people are reflected within the SAB policy and procedures.

Legal Implications – The draft Care and Support Bill (July 2012) identifies new operational requirements for Safeguarding Adults Boards.