



NEWSLETTER

Foreword



I am very proud to have been appointed to take on the role of chairing Sunderland's Safeguarding Adult Board. In particular, taking over from my friend Colin Morris sets a very high bar for what I expect of myself. Colin's sensitivity and understanding will be hard to mirror, but I promise to do my best. The partnership here in Sunderland is strong – partners work effectively together, and challenge each other properly when necessary.

When people talk about safeguarding, they tend to think about an activity which is delivered by professional staff – social workers, nurses, police officers and others whose job involves keeping people safe. It is true – keeping a vulnerable adult safe does require work from many professionals. But it also requires input from the vulnerable adults themselves and their families. In the past, public services have been too quick to try and carry the whole responsibility; instead, we should be thinking more about how we can help people to keep *themselves* and their friends or families safe.

Vulnerable adults living in the community are particularly prone to forms of abuse from strangers – scams on the internet, financial fraud from doorstep visitors. Is there more we can do to help people spot the fraudsters and the scammers? Can we give clearer advice to friends and families on what to look out for?

Can we use the power of people in the community more effectively, too, to spot those needing help, and to give them support? In recent months we have published a case review regarding self-neglect, where people have found it harder and harder to look after themselves or their homes, and living conditions have slid to such an extent that their homes are not fit to live in. It can become a vicious spiral of decline – getting harder and harder to cope, so caring less and less. Yet in most cases someone local had been aware that something was not right – they just might not have known what could be done to help. People have the right to decide how to live their own lives normally – and within reason we have to respect that right. But have we all become too prone to watch from the sidelines as things go wrong for a person, because of our fear of being thought an interfering busy-body?

During the coming year I hope we can develop our thinking in this area, and help everyone within Sunderland to become better neighbours to those around them.

Sir Paul Ennals CBE
Independent Chair, SSAB

[Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Board \(SSAB\)](#) is a multi-agency partnership providing strategic leadership for adult safeguarding across the City of Sunderland to promote the welfare of adults at risk of abuse and neglect and is responsible for ensuring the effectiveness of what partner agencies do to support this.

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Focus on Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs)

A Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) is a multi-agency review process, which seeks to determine what relevant agencies and individuals involved could have done differently that could have prevented harm or a death from taking place. The purpose of SAR is not to apportion blame but to enable lessons to be learnt from the case and applied to future cases to prevent similar harm occurring again.

SARs may also be used to explore examples of good practice, for example where staff have worked together effectively to achieve positive outcomes for adults at risk of abuse and/or neglect, to develop a growing understanding of what works well and identify learning that can be used in future.

Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Board (SSAB) has recently published a SAR concerning 'Eva' who died following admission to hospital due to infected pressure ulcers. The [Executive Summary](#) and a [7 Minute Briefing](#) are available on the Board's [website](#).

SAR Library

The Department of Health has commissioned an online library resource to maximise the learning from SARs. The website went live this month and can be accessed from the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) [website](#).

Introduction to Self-Neglect

Striking a balance between respecting a person's autonomy and the duty to protect their health and wellbeing can be a particularly challenging and complex issue for practitioners working within the area of self-neglect. Self-neglect is recognised in the Care Act 2014 statutory guidance as a category of abuse or neglect relevant to safeguarding adults with care and support needs, and can include neglecting to care for 'basic needs' such as personal hygiene, health or surroundings and hoarding behaviour.

It is important to understand that self-neglect not only affects adults that lack capacity to make decisions regarding self-care, but also includes decisions made by capacitated people.

Care management, effective multi-agency working and the establishment of relationships and trust can provide a good foundation of support to adults who self-neglect. In the majority of cases, early intervention and preventative actions can result in positive outcomes. Central to this is the need to understand the individual's wishes and needs, with workers engaging with the person regarding consent and recording desired outcomes. A referral into multi-agency safeguarding may be appropriate in cases where preventative approaches and positive intervention have not been successful.

For further information regarding good practice and guidance in relation to the management of cases involving self-neglect, the [SSAB Self-Neglect Guidance](#) is available to download.

Practitioner Workshop

Earlier this year, SSAB held a practitioner-focussed workshop on self-neglect. The purpose was to explore what SSAB could do as a partnership to support practitioners and give practitioners the opportunity to share their views of working with adults who self-neglect. The workshop was well attended by a range of front-line workers for a range of organisations. Several recommendations were identified from the workshop and brought to the attention of SSAB, which included: delivery of Mental Capacity Act (MCA) assessment training, development of common MCA assessment documentation across all partners, access to consistent legal advice for self-neglect cases and a Single Point of Contact in each service to improve communication.

Updates

SSAB Annual Report 2017-18

The Annual Report, looking back over the achievements and challenges of last year, is currently underway and will be available to read on the SSAB website in late autumn 2018. The purpose of the Report is to allow a wider audience to get an overview of the main work areas of the Board, which are covered by three themes: Challenge, Influence and Assurance.

The Report will include contributions from the Board's statutory partners, demonstrating their key safeguarding adults activities and focus for the period of 2017-18.

'Safetember' Public Awareness Raising: Safeguarding Adults Messages

In September 2018, many health and social care organisations, including statutory, voluntary and charitable organisations, will be engaging in public awareness-raising activities across Sunderland, to raise the profile of safeguarding adults and encourage the public to think of safeguarding as being 'everybody's business'.

'Safetember' began a few years ago as an initiative by City Hospitals Sunderland as a way of targeting both staff, patients and their families in raising awareness of safeguarding adults issues. The concept has been extended to include all agencies in Sunderland who would like to be involved.

A template for organisations to report on what awareness-raising activities they will be undertaking during Safetember has been circulated, with a return deadline of 31st July 2018. SSAB will publicise these activities to encourage as much public participation as possible.

For further details about what your organisation is planning, or if you have an idea for how your organisation could be involved in the Safetember initiative, please discuss with your organisation's safeguarding lead who will feedback to SSAB.

Report a Concern

Everyone has a responsibility to safeguard children, young people and adults who may be at risk of abuse.

If you are worried about someone:

- In an emergency call 999
- If there is no immediate risk, call the police on 101

If you are a professional wishing to report a safeguarding concern regarding an adult, please read the [guidance](#) and complete the [Safeguarding Adults Concern \(SAC\) form](#). Further information is available [here](#).

If your concern relates to a child, please call 0191 561 7007.

Future Articles

If you have an idea for an article for a future publication, please contact the Strategic Safeguarding Team: strategic.safeguarding@sunderland.gov.uk

Training

SSAB safeguarding training is available to all employees working within health and social care within Sunderland, click on the links below for more information and how to book a place.

[Safeguarding Adults 'Alerter'](#)

[Mental Capacity Act \(2005\) & Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards \(DoLS\)](#)

[Raising a Safeguarding Concern](#)

[Multi-Agency Roles during the Safeguarding Adults Process](#)

[Mental Capacity Act \(2005\) & DoLS \(classroom-based\)](#)