



NEWSLETTER

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Who Should Read this Newsletter?

Everyone with an interest in safeguarding adults, enabling them to live their lives free from abuse and neglect, to access and receive appropriate care. We hope this newsletter is a useful resource for you to receive information regarding safeguarding adults, keeping you up-to-date, sharing good practice and important information. Please feel free to share this newsletter across your organisation.

Foreword

Welcome to the 9th edition of Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Board (SSAB) newsletter. Since the publication of our last newsletter, we, like everyone else have adapted to working in a different way. The work of the Board has returned to “business as usual”, with Board meetings and sub-committees now being held virtually. SSAB continues to focus on ensuring safeguarding plays a key role in everyone’s work to protect and support Adults in Need in Sunderland.

After two years as SSAB Independent Chair Sir Paul Ennals stepped down from his role. The Board would like to take this opportunity to thank Paul for his work during his time as Chair and wish him well for the future. In December 2020 SSAB appointed Vanessa Bainbridge as Independent Chair, providing independent scrutiny and support, working with partners to ensure effective safeguarding of Adults in Need and to oversee the delivery of the Board’s strategic priorities. Vanessa’s extensive experience includes Director of Adult Social Care as well as other senior roles within the NHS and Local Authority.

SSAB Annual Report

The Board’s [Annual Report](#), looking back over the challenges and achievements of 2019 - 2020 is available to read. The purpose of the report is to allow a wider audience to get an overview of the main work areas of SSAB and includes contributions from the statutory partners, demonstrating their key safeguarding activities and focus for the period. An [easy read version](#) of the report is also available.

[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. **Follow us on Twitter:** @SunderlandSAB

Focus on: Self-Neglect

Self-neglect covers a wide range of behaviour including where an adult neglects to care for their personal hygiene, health or surroundings, and includes behaviour such as hoarding. Adults who self-neglect are more likely to live alone, be an older person, experience mental ill-health, have alcohol or drug problems and have a history of poor personal hygiene or living conditions.

Three recognised forms of self-neglect include:

- **Lack of self-care** - this may include neglecting personal hygiene, nutrition and hydration or health (e.g. non-attendance at medical appointments)
- **Lack of care of one's environment** - this may result in unpleasant or dirty home conditions, and increased risk of fire due to hoarding
- **Refusal of services** that could alleviate these issues

Hoarding is distinct to the act of collecting and is different from people whose property is generally cluttered and messy. There are three types:

- **Inanimate objects** - most common, could consist of one type of object or a collection of a mixture of objects
- **Animal hoarding** - obsessive collecting of animals, often with an inability to provide minimal standards of care
- **Data hoarding** - new phenomenon of hoarding, could present with the storage of data collection equipment, a need to store copies of emails and other information in electronic format

Signs of possible self-neglect include:

- Not enough food, or food is unsafe for consumption
- Home is filthy, odorous, hazardous or unsafe
- Major repairs/maintenance to the home required
- Presence of human or animal faeces
- Accumulation of possessions
- A large number of pets, and/or abuse or neglect of pets

The adult may:

- Have dirty hair, nails and skin
- Smell of urine and/or faeces
- Have skin rashes or pressure ulcers
- Have a poor diet and/or hydration
- Show increased confusion, disorientation or dementia
- Have deteriorating health
- Be isolated

What to do

One of the first considerations should be whether the person has mental capacity to understand the risks associated with the actions/lack of actions. Any action proposed must be with the person's consent, where they have mental capacity, unless there is a risk to others (such as a fire risk due to hoarding, or public health concerns).

In most cases early intervention and preventative actions can result in positive outcomes. Consideration should be given to:

- Positively engaging the person from the beginning of your involvement
- Obtaining informed consent
- Carry out a mental capacity assessment where appropriate
- Use descriptive "plain English" when recording information
- Don't close case because the person simply refuses an assessment

Raising a Safeguarding Concern

Responding to self-neglect depends upon the level of risk/harm posed to the person and/or others, and whether the person is able to protect themselves and determine their own action.

Workers and volunteers should refer to the [threshold guidance](#) to determine whether a safeguarding concern should be raised.

Further Reading

For further information, the SSAB's [Self-Neglect Guidance](#) can be accessed via the SSAB [Safeguarding Adults Multi-Agency Procedures](#).

Safeguarding Adults Training

SSAB offers a range of safeguarding adults training, which is available to all employees and volunteers working in health and/or social care settings, care homes and home care service providers, and the voluntary and community sector within Sunderland.

Training includes online eLearning courses, provided on behalf of SSAB by Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE):

- **Safeguarding Adults:** suitable for all staff and volunteers who work with, support or come in to contact with adults at risk of abuse and/or neglect
- **Mental Capacity:** suitable for all staff and volunteers working with, supporting, or who come into contact with adults who may lack mental capacity to make their own decisions
- **Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS):** suitable for all staff and volunteers who work with, support, or come in to contact with adults who may/are being cared for under a DoLS decision

SSAB recently appointed Aspect Training to deliver safeguarding adults training on the following topics:

- **Raising a Safeguarding Concern:** suitable for workers who may receive an Alert from a member of staff. Typically for staff who act in a supervisory or managerial capacity and/or designated as having the Safeguarding Adults 'Responsible Person' role in their organisation
- **Multi-Agency Roles in the Safeguarding Process:** suitable for workers whose role requires them to be involved in cross-agency or inter-professional safeguarding enquiries. Such staff would normally be responsible for attending and contributing to safeguarding meetings
- **Mental Capacity Act & Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS):** suitable for anyone working with or caring for adults who may lack mental capacity to make their own decisions, anyone working in adult registered care homes or hospital in-patient settings, and anyone working with individuals being cared for in the afore-mentioned settings
- **How to Assess Mental Capacity:** suitable for 'frontline' staff working with adults who may lack capacity, and supporting decision making and safeguarding, such as Occupational Therapists, Social Workers, Nursing staff, Housing Officers, etc.
- **Self-Neglect & Hoarding:** suitable for anyone who works directly with people within the community. Housing, Social Work, Police, Fire Service, Ambulance Service, Domiciliary Care, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists, Environmental Health, Health Care Staff, and General Practitioners would find this course particularly useful. It is beneficial to have a good understanding of the Mental Capacity Act before attending

The above-mentioned courses will be delivered by Aspect Training using Microsoft Teams presently, moving toward a mix of face-to-face and virtual training sessions later in the year, dependent upon current Covid-19 guidance.

For more information or to book a place please contact [Learning and Skills North East](#)

telephone: 0191 5612620, email: info.twca@sunderland.gov.uk

CARM (Complex Adults Risk Management)

CARM (Complex Adults Risk Management) has been adapted by Sunderland for local purposes, from the nationally-used VARM (Vulnerable Adults Risk Management) model. The process has support of SSAB members and is scheduled to launch in September 2021.

What is CARM?

The CARM process provides a framework for professionals to facilitate effective multi-agency working with [adults at risk](#) who are deemed to have mental capacity and who are at risk of serious harm or death through self-neglect, refusal of services and/or high levels of risk taking activity.

The CARM process and guidance should be used for discussing, identifying, assessing, recording, planning and reviewing the management of risk, wherever possible with the adult and with their consent.

CARM should not be seen as a substitute to legislation and existing processes.

CARM Launch

In preparation for the launch of the CARM process, an Implementation Workshop was held in May 2021 and was well attended by practitioners from a range of agencies and disciplines. The workshop provided an overview of the process, criteria for the application of the CARM process and case study examples.

Further information regarding the launch of the CARM process in Sunderland will be circulated in due course and the CARM Policy, Practice Guidance and Referral & Risk Assessment form will be made available on SSAB's website.

Domestic Abuse Resources

Bright Sky App

[Bright Sky](#) is a mobile app and website for anyone experiencing domestic abuse, or who is worried about someone else. It's disguised as a weather app, and can be downloaded free of charge via the app stores. It is advised that the app is only downloaded if safe to do so and the mobile device isn't being monitored.

The app includes questionnaires to assess the safety of a relationship, plus a section on dispelling myths around domestic and sexual abuse. Spotting signs of domestic abuse, advice on supporting someone you're concerned for and ways to find help are available from the website. Both have access a unique UK-wide directory of specialist domestic abuse support services with contact details, and nationwide helplines that are available 24/7.

Hollie Guard

The [Hollie Guard](#) app can alert trusted contacts to a person's whereabouts if they are in danger, activated by a simple shake or tap of a smartphone. Deterrent mode tells others around the person that an alarm has been raised, to deter attack, Stealth mode allows a silent alarm to be raised. Audio & video can be recorded as evidence, if needed. The basic plan is free, with enhanced plans at a cost.

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 [SAC Form Guidance](#) and [Threshold Guidance Risk-Assessment Tool](#) before completing the [Safeguarding Adults Concern \(SAC\) form](#). Further information is available [here](#).

If your concern relates to a child, please call 0191 520 5560.

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