



# Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Board: Annual Report 2023 - 2024

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*Foreword: Vanessa Bainbridge, SSAB Independent Chair*

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I am pleased to present the Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report (2023/24). I hope you find the report informative and useful to the work of your organisation and for future planning. The report includes, in numbers and narrative, the work of the Board and its members over the last year. It sets out our future priorities, which we have agreed, based on the data and intelligence from our member organisations and also from feedback from those who know the most - the people with lived experience.

A highlight of the year was Safeguarding Learning Week held in November 2023, the Board has built on the success of previous years and once again we increased the attendance at all sessions and

received positive feedback from attendees. We used the learning from our surveys and audits, and recommendations from reviews to ensure that the week addressed areas for improvement and ensured learning for individuals and organisations.

Complementing the theme of learning for staff and individuals – we also ran a Safeguarding Adults Campaign in the Autumn, to target the public with key messages. We have listened to what the public have told us – and whilst the campaign was successful, it has also given us a basis for future campaigns and areas of focus.

*For the first time, in a number of years, we have seen a decrease in the number of adult safeguarding concerns and Section 42 notifications, this is the result of the revised Threshold Guidance Tool implemented in December 2022 in combination with training on the application of the tool across partner agencies.*

You will read in the report of the learning we gained from the Safeguarding Adult Reviews that were referred to the Board and from which we will continue to embed the recommendations into 2024.

I would like to thank all organisations who have contributed to the report and also all those organisations, as part of the wider SSAB network, that have ensured staff are appropriately trained - we have once again increased attendance on our training programme.

I wish to give special thanks to the Safeguarding Adults Board Business Unit who have ensured the Board is meeting its duties, and have successfully delivered reviews, training, policy oversight and have kept learning and outcomes as an integral part of the Board's work.

Finally, thank you to those with lived experience who have contributed to the annual report with their feedback and case studies, which really amplify the importance of safeguarding work and how it can have a significant impact on individual lives – to quote 'Carol' "[you] helped me come from darkness to a much brighter place".

## Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Board



Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Board (SSAB) is a statutory body which brings together partner organisations in Sunderland to safeguard and promote the welfare of adults at risk of abuse and neglect. SSAB leads and holds partners to account for safeguarding adults in the city. SSAB has a strong focus on partnership working and has representation from the following organisations across the City:

- Sunderland City Council
- Northumbria Police
- North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (Sunderland)
- South Tyneside & Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust
- Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne & Wear NHS Foundation Trust
- Healthwatch Sunderland

SSAB works closely with other statutory partnerships in Sunderland, including:

- Sunderland Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB) - responsible for producing the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and HWBB Strategy. A 'Framework of Cooperation' is in place between SSAB, HWBB and Sunderland Safeguarding Children Partnership, setting out the role and remit of each Board/Partnership and their inter-relationship with each other.
- Safer Sunderland Partnership (SSP) - SSP and SSAB work in collaboration on cross-cutting themes, including domestic abuse, violence against women and girls, sexual and criminal exploitation, migration/asylum and modern day slavery. SSAB receives updates regarding

Domestic Homicide Review activity and seeks to implement learning applicable to safeguarding adults.

- Sunderland Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) - SSAB and SSCP have worked jointly on a range of common workstreams, and also hold, and contribute towards, learning events and workshops, highlighting both safeguarding children and adults issues, such as domestic abuse, suicide & self-harm, and exploitation.

## Our Vision



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*In order to improve the effectiveness of SSAB in accordance with its statutory responsibilities, the Board has the following vision:*

***People in Sunderland are able to live safely, free from neglect and abuse***

*SSAB's vision for safeguarding adults in Sunderland can only be delivered effectively through the support and engagement of a wide range of partner agencies and organisations across the City. SSAB continues to work toward achieving its vision through the committed local partnership working between a range of organisations that comprise the membership of SSAB, the SSAB's Partnership Group and Sub-Committees, working together with common objectives and commitments.*

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## Strategic Delivery Plan



SSAB's [Strategic Delivery Plan](#) details key focus areas for the period of 2019-2024, and identifies how SSAB will ensure its statutory responsibilities are met in accordance with the [Care Act 2014](#) and embedded in practice across the partnership. The Plan is underpinned by SSAB's [Multi-Agency Memorandum of Understanding](#), which describes the Board's remit and governance arrangements.

**SSAB established strategic priorities for 2019 - 2024; these were revisited and refreshed in 2022, and continued into 2023-24:**

- **Prevention**
- **Local areas of risk (identified through local performance data, outcomes from Safeguarding Adults Reviews and emerging issues as a result of Covid-19):**
  - **Self-neglect**
  - **Mental capacity**
  - **Homelessness**
  - **At risk/vulnerable/complex cases (including substance misuse), who don't meet statutory thresholds: development of Complex Adults Risk Management (CARM)**
  - **Domestic Abuse (supporting the work of the lead body, Sunderland Domestic Abuse Board)**
  - **Suicide prevention - particularly in light of the effects of Covid-19 (supporting the work of the lead bodies, Sunderland City Council's Public Health Team and the Suicide Prevention Action Group)**

These priorities inform the Board's local actions to safeguard adults in Sunderland, and are underpinned by the [Care Act Statutory Guidance's](#) six key principles of adult safeguarding.

The strategic priorities have been progressed through the work of SSAB's Partnership Group and Learning and Improvement in Practice, Safeguarding Adults Reviews, and Quality Assurance sub-committees.

## Progress and Achievements



### Prevention

- In November, SSAB held a successful local campaign *Safeguarding Learning Week*, in line with National Safeguarding Adults Week 2023, repeating the joint activity offer with Sunderland Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Safer Sunderland Partnership (Community Safety). The week featured a range of face-to-face and online events (webinars, briefings, training and a conference) covering a range of safeguarding topics, including: Our Role in Safeguarding, Leading on Safeguarding in our Organisations, Secondary and Vicarious Trauma, Adopting a Trauma-Informed approach to Safeguarding, and Co-Production with Experts by Experience. Sessions were very well received, and feedback was gathered to inform the planning of next year's Safeguarding Learning Week event taking place in 2024. The week's activities were promoted widely using social media using **#SafeguardingSunderlandTogether**. The safeguarding message was further strengthened and supported by a range of networking events hosted across the partnership.
- A safeguarding adults awareness-raising campaign was conducted in Sunderland in Autumn 2023, targeting the general public. This included safeguarding messages on petrol pumps, bus shelters & buses, local radio and local press (paper and online). Looking at the outcomes

from this, whilst some messages are being absorbed, there is room for improvement for the next year and this will be taken account of in the SSAB's Communications & Engagement Plan.

- Key safeguarding adults information continues to be shared with partners through the ongoing development of the SSAB website, the SSAB X (formerly Twitter) account, quarterly newsletter, and our email distribution.
- Building on the work of previous years, there has been continued development of a range of safeguarding adults resources available to public and professionals in various formats, including animations, leaflets, posters and guidance. Examples include: 7-Minute Briefings on What is SSAB?; Predatory Marriage; Hypothermia; Preventing Fire Deaths.
- Review and refresh of SSAB's Prevention Strategy and Multi-Agency Safeguarding Adults Procedures completed.
- Partner agencies have engaged with an assurance exercise to record what service user surveys they had undertaken and how the results have improved services and outcomes for individuals at risk of abuse and/or neglect.
- Other examples from across the partnership include:
  - Continued learning from local, regional and national Safeguarding Adults Reviews
  - Continuous improvement and update of safeguarding adults policies and procedures.

## Local Areas of Risk

### Self Neglect

- Self-neglect has again continued to be a strong theme in SSAB communications with partner agencies. The SSAB's Self-Neglect suite of resources, plus the regional Self-Neglect resources where SSAB was a member of the work group that developed them have continued to be regularly shared/highlighted to partner agencies, and it has been fed back that partner agencies have used these in staff training sessions and briefings.
- The Complex Adults Risk Management (CARM) process that was developed in 2022 has continued to be applied in cases where self-neglect is an issue, and where the adult is capacitated and doesn't meet the Care Act safeguarding adults thresholds for interventions and support.

### Mental Capacity

- In 2023-24, SSAB continued to have the training courses 'How to Assess Mental Capacity' and 'Mental Capacity and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards' as part of its training offer for professionals working in Sunderland with people at risk of abuse and/or neglect. These continue to receive good feedback from attendees, viewing them as a valuable support to their daily work and practice.

### Homelessness

- Homelessness updates and data continue to be routinely shared with SSAB – this has allowed SSAB to see what the main issues are and recommend courses of action that have enabled the Housing Team to make wider connections with other strategic groups and partner agencies, to support their ongoing work, as tackling homelessness needs a multi-agency approach.

- SSAB members continue to contribute to the work of the Strategic Housing Group, demonstrating SSAB's support of this key priority.
- SSAB received updates on the work to support refugees and asylum seekers in 2023-24, providing assurance that support is adequate to meet those people's needs.
- The Council's Housing Team received a briefing from SSAB to update them on the Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) process and how to make a SAR referral, as two cases where homeless people who were in contact with the Housing Team for support had died.

### **At Risk/Complex Cases - Complex Adults Risk Management (CARM)**

CARM was launched in February 2022. The CARM documentation is easily accessible to professionals, via the [SSAB website](#). CARM data was collected from the outset and has been routinely fed into the Quality Assurance sub-committee on a quarterly basis, and is now integrated as part of the SSAB's Performance data report.

A review of the CARM process, to audit its effectiveness and identify any necessary improvements, took place in 2023 – this had two parts: an internal review of cases, and an external reviewer being commissioned to review the process. The external reviewer produced a report, which will be presented in full to the Quality Assurance Sub Committee in May 2024, and showed the CARM process has value and enabled some positive outcomes. The report also included some recommendations for improvement, some of which have already been implemented, such as reframing the process as a stepped or staged process, with the initial stage still being within CARM rather than a triage process. and additions to the partners represented on the CARM Panel.

### **Domestic Abuse**

- SSAB members continued to be represented throughout 2023-24 on the Sunderland Domestic Abuse Board and Domestic Abuse and Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Operational Group, and contributed to this work.
- An update on the work of the Domestic Abuse Board and Operational Group and its links to SSAB priorities was shared with SSAB in December 2023.
- The Domestic Abuse Health Advocate Project, funded by NENC ICB, continued to develop in 2023-24 across Sunderland, with its progress continuing to be monitored on a monthly basis and supported by Wearside Women in Need. There have been positive outcomes for individuals, and all 36 GP practices in Sunderland are fully committed to routine enquiry about domestic abuse and having Domestic Abuse Champions in place.

### **Suicide Prevention**

- Partners continued to represent SSAB on the Suicide Prevention Action Group in 2023-24 and contribute to this work, demonstrating SSAB's support of this key priority.
- The Suicide Prevention Action Plan has recently been refreshed for the period of 2023-2026 and was endorsed by Living Well Delivery Board in November 2023; the plan is aligned to priorities within the national suicide prevention strategy 'Suicide Prevention Strategy for England: 2023 to 2028'. A suicide prevention update was given to Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Board in December 2023.
- During this period, a significant amount of work has been delivered against the plan, including:

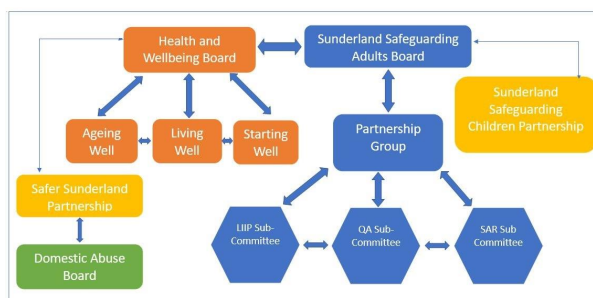
- The Suicide Prevention Partnership has continued to operate, widening its membership to ensure there is appropriate partnership representation. The partnership has supported a range of prevention interventions including Ray's Corner, Game of 2 Halves, Save A Life Z cards and A LIFE Worth Living/Samaritans promotional materials, as well as uplifting the advocacy service delivered by NERAF (Northern Engagement into Recovery from Addiction Foundation).
- Washington Mind continue to deliver Sunderland's A LIFE Worth Living suicide prevention training, with 22 training courses having been delivered during year 1 of the contract reaching a total of 304 participants, with overwhelmingly positive feedback received.
- Sunderland's city-wide mental health training offer launched in March 2024, providing anyone working or living in Sunderland with the opportunity to be trained in mental health awareness and/or emotional health and resilience, and therefore building the City's resilience.
- Significant progress has been made on the development of the North East North Cumbria (NENC) Near Real Time Surveillance System (NRTSS) for suspected suicides in Sunderland, with the live dashboard having gone live in October 2023. The dashboard enables Public Health leads to explore place-based trends concerning suspected suicides in a timely manner, including the identification of suspected suicide clusters.
- Significant work is currently underway to identify high frequency locations in Sunderland and ensure there is effective prevention plans in place to prevent suicides in public places.

## The Work of SSAB and its Sub-Committees



## Governance

- SSAB meetings have continued to mainly operate on a virtual platform, which has maximised resources and attendance and has worked very well, with sub-committees continuing to meet on a quarterly basis, and SSAB twice-yearly, as planned. Some meetings have taken place as a hybrid mix in-person and virtual, where this has been the right option to facilitate in-depth discussions on a key topic.
- The Partnership Group continues to meet 4 times per year and retains the responsibility for setting the strategic SSAB agenda as well as addressing and developing ongoing SSAB operational business.
- The SSAB Newsletter continues to be published and distributed to a wide range of stakeholders on a quarterly basis. Key messages, service developments and articles from SSAB partners were communicated throughout the year on a range of safeguarding topics. Examples include a safeguarding podcast from STSFT, and information on the Health Navigator role to support homeless people achieve better health outcomes, which was funded by NENC ICB.
- SSAB has continued to interface with other statutory processes where required, such as Domestic Homicide Reviews.
- Following the establishment of the Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR) sub-committee in June 2022, this group has now firmly embedded into the governance of SSAB, overseeing the SAR scoping process for the increasing number of SAR referrals received by SSAB for consideration against the Care Act criteria.



## Quality Assurance

- Refreshed the terms of reference in February 2024, to enable a better alignment with the SSAB's priorities going forward.
- Continued to receive performance data and themes/trends from SSAB's partner agencies, enabling SSAB to better monitor emerging themes and decide if further audit, assurance or other safeguarding activity needed to be undertaken.
- Conducted an assurance exercise as a follow up from the 'Alan' SAR to establish how agencies had continued to embed their actions and learning from this case.
- Conducted a number of audit exercises, including:
  - Safeguarding concerns linked to an open, ongoing Safeguarding episode (increased numbers): data was reviewed for a sample of concerns received that had been linked to an open safeguarding episode. Some had multiple duplicate linked concerns - these were made over a number of consecutive days and the nature of the concern

was the same. As a result, agencies were asked to check their recent existing records when raising a concern. Also, to liaise with other agencies they know are working with the individual, to agree who will raise the concern where this course of action has been agreed via a multi-agency meeting or discussion. A casefile audit was also completed on 6 selected cases. For some of these, the linked concern was inappropriate as it did not refer to the same issue as the original Safeguarding episode. Action was undertaken within Operational Safeguarding to learn from this audit and ensure practice changed so concerns are only linked where appropriate to do so.

- Safeguarding concerns that didn't meet the safeguarding threshold (increased numbers): data was reviewed on a sample of contacts received by the Safeguarding Adult Team. A case file audit was also undertaken to look at the detail around the referrals made and these 2 exercises found the same results: high volumes of concerns being received that did not meet the thresholds for a Safeguarding Episode. The majority of these were classified as 'no further action'. To support improvements in this area, a revised threshold guidance tool was implemented and highlighted via the SSAB's training courses, and also when additional training was offered to partner agencies and providers on how to use the new Safeguarding Adult Concern (SAC) Portal.
- Increase in concerns about those in mental health inpatient settings (completed cases): data was reviewed on a sample of completed cases that involved a mental health inpatient setting. This led to increased information being shared with the Quality Assurance Sub Committee about inpatient safeguarding concerns, which allowed triangulation of data to occur and increased assurance to SSAB that these cases are being dealt with appropriately.
- Increase in concerns about Organisational Abuse: data was reviewed on a sample of cases where this was the alleged abuse type. The review showed there was no indication that any particular provider had a pattern of reports or issues that would be a cause for concern. However, the number of 'no further action' cases were high - this links into the case file audit above re: cases not meeting the threshold and has been addressed through the actions described above.
- Physical Abuse Case File Audit: Data Review: this audit was carried out as a checking exercise, as there had been a previous rise in physical abuse cases. Data was reviewed for the period 1st April 2023 – 31st December 2023. This showed physical abuse concerns were decreasing, therefore no further action was required by SSAB.
- 10+ Safeguarding Concerns (for same individual) Audit: data was reviewed for the period 1st April 2023 – 31st December 2023. All cases were either already open to Safeguarding or brought into safeguarding by being linked to an existing enquiry. A high number of the concerns regarding open enquiries resulted from Police submitting Adult Care Notifications (ACNs) which had been reassigned as Safeguarding contacts and linked to the original enquiry. Audit results showed that: case were dealt with in safeguarding in a timely manner, 'no further action' cases sampled were appropriately dealt with at that time; there was evidence of safeguarding oversight throughout all the enquiries; in all cases there was evidence of multi-agency working; referrals to other appropriate forums such as CARM were

considered; SSAB can be assured that repeat concerns received were not due to a lack of safeguarding intervention; a process was implemented whereby a Safeguarding Alert is triggered if x3 safeguarding concerns are 'no further action' without an enquiry being started – these are then reviewed by Team Manager/Senior Practitioner and progressed to Safeguarding if assessed as being required to do so. It was found that in some cases the concerns had been discussed in MASH several times, however not referred into Safeguarding, therefore a recommendation was made from this audit to undertake a further audit of these cases, to gain assurance that actions were appropriate – this audit has been added to the 2023-24 audit cycle.

- Continued to monitor the SSAB training offer and facilitated continuous improvement.
- Jointly planned Safeguarding Adults Week (November 2023) activity with Sunderland Safeguarding Children Partnership and Safer Sunderland Partnership to deliver a 2nd successful Safeguarding Learning Week.
- Undertook a survey (via Healthwatch) in early 2024 of members of the public to gauge what they know and understand about safeguarding adults. The results were reported in February 2024 and showed the public understand some aspects of safeguarding, but not all, e.g. Self-Neglect is an area for further awareness-raising work to be done, as is making where people go to report a concern more easily understandable. Further repeat surveys using the same questions are to be conducted by Healthwatch in 2024 on behalf of SSAB, to enable the cumulative results to further inform SSAB's Communications & Engagement activity.
- Undertook another survey (via Healthwatch) in March 2024 of people who had been through the safeguarding adults process (or their representative, where they lacked capacity) – the final results will be collated and fed back to the Quality Assurance Sub Committee in May 2024. Early indications show that most people felt the safeguarding adults process worked well and that their voice was heard and their views were taken account of throughout the process.
- Continued to have the CQC Inspection Framework of Adult Social Care as a standing agenda item, to monitor what this will mean for Sunderland and keep partner agencies updated.

### Safeguarding Adults Reviews

- Scoped 5 potential SAR cases against Care Act criteria:
  - two were determined as discretionary SARs due to the opportunity for multi-agency learning
  - one case was referred to Sunderland Safeguarding Children Partnership for consideration as a learning review, with support from SSAB members as appropriate
- Received assurance, on behalf of SSAB, following the outcome of a Serious Incident Investigation.
- Supported the review process during the 'Joseph' SAR, due for publication Summer 2024.
- Reviewed and refreshed SSAB SAR Referral Form and supporting guidance.
- Contributed to the planning and delivery of Safeguarding Learning Week (November 2023) activity.

## Learning and Improvement in Practice

- Supported the establishment of SAR sub-committee
- Supported embedding of CARM process
- Progressed learning and actions resulting from the 'Alan' SAR
- Provided evidence of ongoing improvements across partners following 'Alan' SAR
- Considered learning from local and national SARs
- Supported Safer Sunderland Partnership with multi-agency process regarding deaths of under 25 year olds
- Shared learning regarding a range of topics, including Capacity and Choice, Domestic Abuse and Health Advocacy, Executive Function, and Learning from Whorlton Hall (a Durham Safeguarding Adults Partnership SAR)
- Supported Safeguarding Learning Week
- Received training and development updates from SSAB partners

## Training

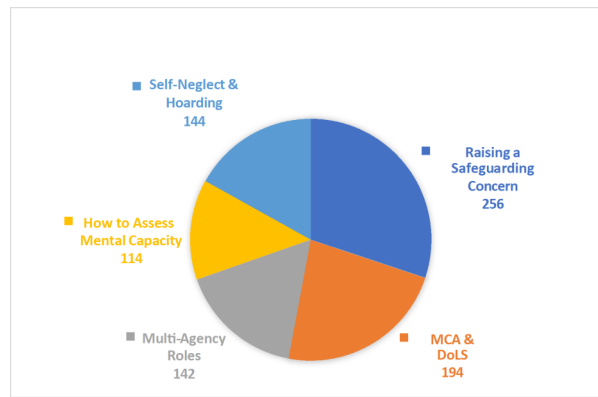
SSAB provides multi-agency safeguarding adults training in trainer-led and e-learning formats. As a Board we continue to embrace alternative ways of working and new technology to support the delivery of adult safeguarding, and following delegate feedback have continued to offer a hybrid training programme with both classroom-based and virtual trainer -led training in 2023-24, and will continue to use this hybrid delivery model into 2024-25.

Training content is regularly reviewed and refreshed to ensure that it reflects current themes and trends of adult safeguarding in Sunderland. Over the course of 2023 -24, **850** delegates received trainer-led training provided by SSAB - ***an increase of 137 from the previous year.***

In partnership with Sunderland Safeguarding Children Partnership and South Tyneside Safeguarding Children and Adults Partnership, SSAB continues to provide a range of safeguarding e-learning courses to organisations working with adults and children in Sunderland, including the following which are aligned with SSAB's strategic priorities:

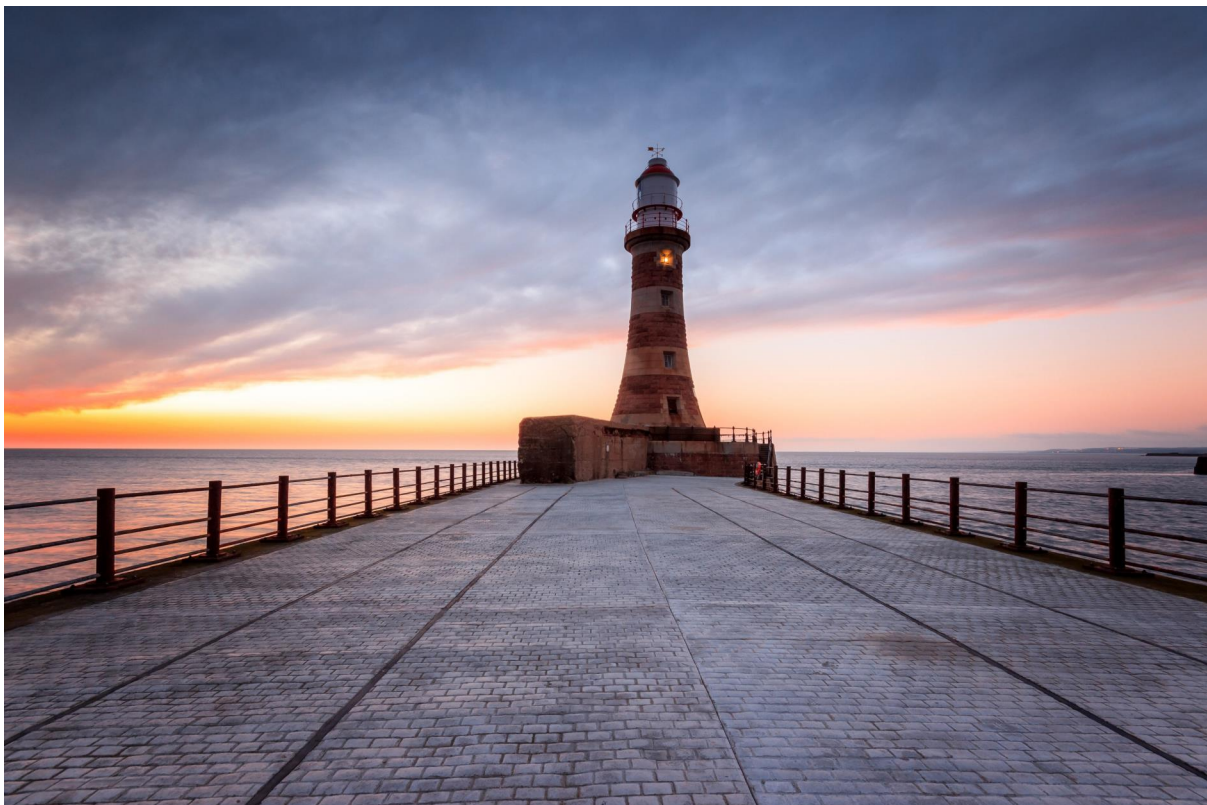
- Self-Neglect and Hoarding
- Understanding the Importance of the Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards
- Suicidal Thoughts
- Awareness of Domestic Violence and Abuse

In Autumn 2024 SSAB will collaborate with Sunderland Safeguarding Children Partnership in implementing a new Learning Management System that will allow for enhanced data collection and analysis.



1 - Attendance Figures for Trainer-Led Safeguarding Adults Training 1st April 2023 - 31st March 2024

## Statutory Partners' Contribution to Safeguarding



### Key Achievements

*SSAB partners continue to support the safeguarding adults' agenda, meeting key statutory responsibilities and contributing to the work of the sub-committees and Board. Partners have proactively engaged in local and national campaigns, and continue to share good practice and learning. Partners also undertake regular governance and assurance activities.*

### South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust (STSFT)

- The safeguarding team have continued to work in collaboration with multi-agency partners to ensure safeguarding measures are in place and learning is shared to support and protect adults at risk and their families. Focus for 23/24 has been to further raise awareness around MSP, self-neglect, fire safety, trauma informed practice, mental capacity, executive

dysfunction and professional curiosity. These themes have been shared via attendance at governance meetings, 7- minute briefings, quarterly Safeguarding link forums and bi-monthly safeguarding newsletters.

- Following findings from a staff survey, safeguarding adult and children supervision delivery has been amended, alongside the safeguarding supervision policy. Amendments aim to provide clarity on supervision requirements and the support the safeguarding team can offer to staff.
- The safeguarding team have maintained core business in relation to providing staff advice, support, supervision, and training. This includes hosting a single point of contact and ensuring enhanced visibility upon wards and departments to increase face to face presence in areas. This is to further support staff in their safeguarding practice and offer safeguarding supervision in action.
- The MCA / DoLS team, alongside the MCA Corporate Lead have continued to embed MCA into practice. Improvements include progression of an internal Launchpad to enable both internal and external data being readily available, contributing to robust Informatics and metrics. Furthermore, the expansion of Launchpad has led to a digitally enabled workforce, in line with recommendations within the NHS long term plan (2019). All the data is fed through internal governance processes and reported to CQC as part of CQC action plan.
- STSFT now host an MCA “good practice forum”, which enables the dissemination of good MCA practice amongst staff.
- Training - All levels of safeguarding training have been reviewed to ensure they are aligned to both adult and children intercollegiate document and include reference to the NHS Sexual Safety Charter. Level 3 face to face “Think family” training has been refreshed to reflect learning from recent scoping’s, SAR’s, DHR’s, CSPR’s and learning reviews. Slido continues to be used to ensure sessions remain interactive. Slido enables evaluations of sessions in “real time”.
- MCA training has been refreshed. CPD modules have been devised which include Executive Dysfunction, MCA in Children 16–17-year-old, Capacity and DoLS, LPA/Deputyship and ADRT.
- A safeguarding podcast has been published to promote awareness of the safeguarding team role, function and support that can be offered to STSFT staff and how staff can take measures to look after their patients and their own well-being.
- The Domestic Abuse Health Advocates (DAHA) continue to work alongside the safeguarding team to support staff in the identification and response to any disclosure of DA. The DAHA’s are specialists working with victims of DA, targeting ward areas, ED, maternity, and community in supporting staff to recognise and respond to DA. The increased visibility of the DAHA’s across the Trust has resulted in increased DA referral activity. The senior DAHA has recently been shortlisted for an “unsung hero” award at the annual staff recognition awards.
- The safeguarding Intranet page has been refreshed to provide staff with information and support 24/7. There is now a stand-alone Domestic Abuse section.
- Recent DAHA feedback from patients include:
  - “I feel very supported and am grateful for the help you have given me”.

- “Thank you so much, it is good that I have been able to get “stuff off my chest” and so feel a lot better now”.
- “Thank you so much for taking the time to listen to me”.
- “Thank you for understanding what I am going through”.

### **North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB) - Sunderland**

- Complex Adult Risk Management (CARM) is now firmly in place and has had an independent audit review, the framework has identified some significant positive outcomes for health and social care including improving access to primary care services, identifying unmet needs, referral to specialist services, clients supported to reengage with housing services, medical screening and GP home visits arranged as a result of CARM actions, safety factors improved and risk management / communication improved as a result of CARM. CARM has helped bring the voice of high risk individuals forward and hear the complex concerns. Self-Neglect is a significant area of CARM referral, the process had helped to identify high risk community cases and improve partnership working. CARM training has been delivered at safeguarding week and to probation services, LIIP and primary care services.
- Domestic Abuse Health Advocate service is now embedded across all Sunderland practices, thus enabling practices to have specialist training for domestic abuse, domestic abuse champions, support for complex cases / MARAC referrals and improvements in liaison and risk management for domestic abuse victims. This service has enabled Sunderland practices to evidence routine enquiry embedded in practice, establish early intervention and preventive intervention for domestic abuse and evidence close liaison with voluntary services, as specified in the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. The voice of the victims has been heard by previous user surveys with a positive message given as to the support received from this programme.
- Embedding of executive dysfunction and Mental Capacity Act training across partner agencies via the SSAB’s Learning & Improvement in Practice (LIIP) Sub Committee.
- Development of ICB and providers Mental Capacity Act (MCA) analysis to identify key areas of development required for MCA across the region of NENCICB. Development of MCA Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) Oversight and Development Group incorporating ICB, providers and LA regional leads.

### **Northumbria Police**

Northumbria Police have recently moved to a six-area command operating model which means that Sunderland is now a standalone area command with the Chief Superintendent for Sunderland now being the Police representative at the executive board. This allows sole focus on Sunderland as a community and a locality approach.

The creation of the prevention department has seen the introduction of a missing from home investigation team to work alongside the missing from home coordinators. They also own the MSET portfolio and have introduced a dedicated Inspector for this area of business. There has been no formal evaluation as yet but early signs have shown real positive impact on the reduction of missing people with Sunderland having a 13% reduction of missing incidents compared to the previous 12 months.

We have also introduced an Inspector for mental health and problem solving to oversee the street triage team and continue to drive 'Right Care Right Person'.

We have utilised the expertise of SafeLives to deliver Domestic Abuse Matters training to over 1500 of our front line practitioners to ensure a greater awareness and focus on domestic abuse – particularly on recognising the signs of coercive and controlling behaviour and emotional abuse.

### **Sunderland City Council**

- In 2023-24 the Safeguarding Adults Team received 5159 concerns.
- Concerns progressing to a new S42 enquiry has decreased in 23/24 to 15.1% (compared to 44.3% in 21/22 and 22.7% in 22/23), also those progressing to Other Enquiries has decreased to 2.9% (compared to 9.4% in 21/22 and 4.7% in 22/23). 62.7% of concerns did not progress to a safeguarding episode.
- The introduction of Sunderland City Council Safeguarding Portal (a central online form used to submit safeguarding referrals) continues to be embedded across the City with the Department of Work and Pensions being the latest partner to sign up to making use of it to make safeguarding referrals. The portal allows for a more streamlined process for raising a safeguarding concern, and also improves the quality and consistency of information shared by referrers.
- For the last two years the Safeguarding Adults Team have used a revised threshold tool and guidance. The purpose is to assist our partner agencies in their decision making as to whether or not a safeguarding adult concern is required. The safeguarding adults team has undertaken training with care providers, discussing the low level returns that were dealt with by the provider and did not require further Section 42 enquiry.
- The implementation of the threshold tool and guidance, as well as supporting training and the introduction of the safeguarding portal has resulted in an overall decrease in the number of concerns received over this past year.

### **Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust (CNTW)**

- A second Named Nurse is now a permanent post in CNTW Safeguarding and Public Protection Team. The post has increased the Trust's senior safeguarding resource and supported improved partnership working.
- Safeguarding Level 3 training has remained compliant with 85% or above throughout 2023-24.

### **Good Practice**

*Examples of good practice across the partnership include attendance at multi-agency safeguarding training and dissemination of learning throughout organisations using a range of media, including bulletins, conferences and 7-minute briefings. Assurance of safeguarding compliance is provided through rigorous audit programmes, internal agency reporting mechanisms and regular reporting to commissioners and regulating bodies, such as the [Care Quality Commission](#).*

### **South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust (STSFT)**

- The STSFT safeguarding 23/24 annual audit cycle has been completed to provide assurance alongside the recognition of any actions to be taken to further improve safeguarding practice

within the organisation. Audit activity included ED attendance and asking of safeguarding questions, MCA/DoLS procedures adherence (inclusive of when a medic has felt there were no concerns about capacity), safeguarding policy compliance (inclusive of routine & selective enquiry), procedural self-neglect guidance and threshold tool compliance and chaperone policy compliance.

- The safeguarding visibility model has been reviewed to further ensure increased face to face presence on wards and departments to further support staff and offer safeguarding supervision. This includes daily attendance at Emergency Department (ED) huddles and Paediatric ED (Monday-Friday).
- The safeguarding team continue to complete a daily audit of ED attendances to ascertain if there are any missed opportunities and to gain assurance that safeguarding questions are being asked at each individual attendance. Any learning to arise from missed opportunities are Incident reported. The Named Nurse continues to attend ED Clinical Governance meetings to discuss any reported missed opportunities. The annual audit of ED attendance activity continues to be part of the safeguarding annual audit cycle.
- Safeguarding link forums and “Hot Topic” sessions are held regularly. A bi-monthly safeguarding newsletter is disseminated across STSFT and held on the Intranet. The key aim of the newsletter and link forums is to share any safeguarding learning, training courses and 7-minute briefings following SAR’s, DHR’s and CSPR’s. In 23/24, learning has been shared in relation to MCA assessment, executive dysfunction, professional curiosity, self-neglect awareness (inclusive of the use of the self-neglect toolkit), trauma informed practice, MSP, ICON Safe sleep, Caring for Migrant women, The Findaway project, Unaccompanied asylum seekers, Transitional safeguarding and preventing fire deaths. Positive feedback has been received from staff in relation to content and information within the safeguarding newsletter and following link forums, particularly in respect of the 7-minute briefings.
- Further funding has been sourced for the DAHA resource, enabling STSFT to support local DA priorities, ensuring patients, visitors and colleagues are safeguarded from DA.
- STSFT has signed up to the NHSE Sexual Safety Charter. The charter aims to take a systematic zero- tolerance approach to sexual misconduct and violence, keeping patients and colleague’s safe, recognising that sexual misconduct can happen to anyone anywhere.

#### **North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB) - Sunderland**

- Embedding self-neglect training in primary care level 3 training as well as incorporating domestic abuse, CARM, SAR key points of learning, elder abuse, MCA, Prevent, Modern Slavery and other specialist areas.
- Identifying areas of risk in primary care after a request/concern raised from the SAT. This was via significant event analysis (SEA) process and developing action plans with the practice to address areas of concern. This identified areas of advocacy, carers assessments/unmet needs/safeguarding (neglect) and raising awareness regarding practice communications.

#### **Northumbria Police**

Northumbria Police now review every domestic abuse incident for opportunities in relation to Claire’s Law disclosure to ensure safeguarding advice is given in all appropriate situations and at the earliest opportunity. This is above the national guidance.

Northumbria Police actively look for opportunities to utilise out of court disposals where appropriate for the transitional age group, particularly for those in the early adulthood age group of 18-24, to look for alternative pathways to criminalisation.

We have rolled out face to face training in relation to adult concerns, with a particular focus on when NOT to submit, thresholds and signposting.

### **Sunderland City Council**

- For the last year we have seen the widening of the remit of the role of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Officer based within the Safeguarding Adults Team. If, following the daily MASH triage, it has been identified that an adult could benefit from a social care welfare check, it is now the responsibility of the MASH Officer to carry out some of these initial checks and refer onto Adult Social Care or Safeguarding Adults Team if required. It is planned that referrals from the Fire Service and North East Ambulance Service be triaged in MASH as it is felt this is best practice.

### **Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust (CNTW)**

- Learning from local cases continues to be disseminated to Trust staff via Trust Bulletin.
- The Safeguarding Adults & Public Protection (SAPP) team have worked closely with locality care groups attending weekly safety meetings to support the management of safeguarding issues.
- The Trust has commenced the Safeguarding Adults Audit 2024 in Quarter 4. This will be monitored via the Trust Clinical Effectiveness Committee and SAPP group.
- An assurance exercise has been completed in response to Norfolk SAR Joanna, Jon and Ben. Further work is planned for 2024-2025 to overlay learning from the Durham SAR from Whorlton Hall.
- A part of the NHS Patient Safety Incident Response Framework (PSRIF), CNTW have set up the Patient Safety Learning and Improvement Panel (PSLIP). This panel will join up outcomes from Statutory Safeguarding Reviews with outcomes from internal patient safety reviews to help embed all learning Trustwide.

### **Working with Partners**

*Partners continue to contribute to multi-agency working, in particular by representation at a wide range of multi-agency safeguarding fora, which includes CARM, [MAPPA](#) (now [MOSOVO](#)), [MATAAC](#), [MARAC](#), [CONTEST](#) Board and [Channel](#) Panel.*

### **South Tyne and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust (STSFT)**

- STSFT Safeguarding Team continue to be active members of local partnerships ensuring representation and contribution across all sub-group meetings.
- The Safeguarding Team are active participants within the Complex Adult Risk Management (CARM) meetings within the Sunderland locality and are a central point of contact for the MASH Health Navigator.

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“South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust continues to prioritise the delivery of the safeguarding agenda as part of everyday business. The agenda continues to grow year on year with engagement from board to frontline. The collaborative working with Sunderland Safeguarding Adult Board is strong and 2023/2024 achievements demonstrate effective working together”.

*Melanie Johnson - Executive Director of Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professionals, STSFT*

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### **North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB) - Sunderland**

- Development of Alan SAR overview report via the Learning & Improvement In Practice Sub Committee which incorporates ongoing actions from partners across the area and has evidenced real improvements in attitudes, culture, training, policy and procedure for self-neglect, alcohol dependence, complex health needs and homelessness.
- Development of discharge/safeguarding/risk report with partners which evidenced how safeguarding is considered throughout the patient journey and identified risk/concerns.
- Ongoing dashboard review of providers’ compliance with training, policies, referral figures, PREVENT stats, supervision, Mental Capacity Act training/referrals and all statutory areas which gives clear assurance regarding health providers compliance and ongoing developments in all statutory areas. Data shared with SSAB.

### **Northumbria Police**

Sunderland Area Command have worked in collaboration with Sunderland City Council to implement three multi-Agency hubs:

- SARA (Sunderland Altogether Raising Aspirations) – Southwick
- HALO (Hetton Aspirations Linking Opportunities) – Hetton
- SAIL (Sunderland Altogether Improving Lives) – Sunderland City Centre

The multi-agency hubs have been created with a similar structure to one another in terms of partnership working, each working against bespoke objectives to each hub. SARA and HALO have been established in high harm areas of traditionally low community confidence and engagement, the SAIL team provides a dedicated city centre resource to address adult related anti-social behaviour (ASB) emanating from an adjacent estate, complimented by a youth focused deterrence approach. The results from all three hubs have been extremely positive so far with significant increase in stakeholder confidence. All three hubs take a multi-agency approach to problem solving within their areas of responsibility to tackle issues relating to those victims, offenders, and locations of most concern.

The SAIL team includes a dedicated Police team working alongside four funded Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) Focused Deterrence Youth Workers, Community Safety, Environmental Services and Housing. Sunderland City Council have successfully applied for funding through the Substance Misuse Treatment & Recovery Grant for a Drug and Alcohol Assertive Outreach worker who is now embedded within the hub. The project was implemented to reduce adult and youth ASB, serious violence and issues associated with houses of multi-occupancy and the Night Time Economy. The team have focussed activity in the City Centre to tackle issues around those adults sleeping in the

City and attend the rough sleepers action group (RSAG) to monitor issues and trends. The team has reported significant reductions in crime and ASB in the city centre.

Serious Violence and Anti-Social Behaviour:

On 29th April 2024, the Home Office GRIP serious violence funding was relaunched as the 'Hotspot Response Fund' which combined Anti-Social Behaviour and Serious Violence - Operation Shield. Sunderland have agreed three mapped hotspot areas; Houghton, Easington Lane and Sunderland City Centre to tackle issues of Serious Violence and ASB. The focussed activity within the multiagency hubs in these mapped areas have contributed to reductions of violence and improved problem-solving around our most vulnerable individuals and communities, , focussing on a cohort of high harm offenders.

### **Sunderland City Council**

- The Safeguarding Adults Team attend the re-introduced Preventing Exploitation meeting chaired by the police. It also continues to be part of other statutory meetings with partners such as, MAPPA, MARAC etc. In addition, the Safeguarding Adults Team continues to manage the Complex Adults Risk Management (CARM) process and captures all activity and outcomes. A recent independent review of CARM has highlighted its benefits and is looking to implement the recommendations for further improvement.

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"Our dedication to collaboration is one of Sunderland's greatest attributes in working to achieve better outcomes for our residents. The achievements presented in this Annual Report demonstrate the ongoing commitment of Sunderland City Council, working in partnership with SSAB members, to support and empower adults to live fulfilling, safe lives free from abuse and neglect".

*Graham King - Director of Adult Services, Sunderland City Council*

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### **Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust (CNTW)**

- The Trust has provided assurance via the Learning & Improvement In Practice Sub Committee to SSAB regarding service user involvement and the Alan SAR action plan.
- Data provided to the SSAB has been reviewed to allow for a clearer understanding of the types of referrals being made to the Local Authority.
- Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Team have provided support into our in-patient services to support submission of appropriate referrals in line with SSAB Safeguarding Adults Policies and Procedures.
- The Trust is involved in Northumbria Police pilot focussed on Hate Crime. New incident classifications have been added to the Trust reporting system and incidents are reviewed by SAPP team when identified as a safeguarding issue.

### **Making Safeguarding Personal**

*Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) has been embedded across the partnership. Partners incorporate the principles of MSP into their policies and procedures, staff ways of working, staff communications and single-agency training opportunities.*

## South Tyneside and Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust (STSFT)

STSFT safeguarding team continue to contribute to both National and local safeguarding campaigns. These include:

- Successful roll out of events to celebrate Safeguarding Adults / Learners Week 2023 where the key theme was 'how you can prioritise the welfare and wellbeing of yourself and others. A robust programme of activity was shared with STSFT staff and partners.
- As part of "Think family" the team also participated in the Child Sexual exploitation awareness campaign 18th March 2023.
- The DAHA team launched the 16 days of Activism and the 2023 White Ribbon campaign. STSFT buildings were lit up purple / orange and white to represent the colours of Domestic Abuse and Safeguarding.





### **North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB) - Sunderland**

- Review of homeless outreach worker role (funded by ICB) hosted by Sunderland City Council, which has evidenced significant improvements for homeless people in health outcomes such as engagement with GP, engagement with housing services and improved outcomes for specialist referrals.

The service user voice: Feedback from people accessing the Wearside Women in Need (WWIN) counselling

- My GP Surgery referred me to Wearside Women in Need. The Surgery also supported by letting WWIN meet with me at the Surgery initially before I felt able to attend appointments elsewhere. I was referred to WWIN's Counselling Service and completed my sessions.
- I was able to access Counselling Support which I found helpful. I feel in a much better place now, but I have kept all numbers for WWIN if I ever did need help again. I feel confident to contact the service.
- I found the help from WWIN useful but was really pleased that somebody at the surgery had taken time to ask me the question so that I could get the right help.
- "I feel safer now and am going to go on to do the Freedom Programme and have Counselling.
- K accessed first counselling session and "loved it" (K is a 7-year-old boy).
- I have found it extremely difficult to reach out for support, however I had a Risk Assessment a few weeks ago with a lovely lady.

### **Northumbria Police**

Northumbria Police actively promote Making Safeguarding Personal, and this is reflected in our Policy and Procedures, along with the Victims' Code of Practice, whereby the views of our victims are recognised and considered when decisions are made regarding safeguarding and any investigation. Vulnerability Matters training continues to be mandatory for new joiners to the service and safeguarding continuous professional development (CPD) highlights the voice of the victim.

### **Sunderland City Council**

- The Safeguarding Adults Team provided a sample of names of people who had been through the safeguarding process to Healthwatch to complete a Service User Survey. The purpose of

the survey is to determine our customers' views regarding best practice and areas for improvement. The feedback will be reflected in the team's work going forward.

- The Safeguarding Adults Team have completed focused work around outcomes for customers and ensure the customer voice is present in safeguarding enquiries.

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### *Case Study*

*Carol (pseudonym) is a lady who at the time of referral, was only 45 years old and had been in Hopewood Park Hospital for far too long.*

*Many professionals were involved including from various levels of the CNTW trust, due to the complexities of the case.*

*Carol needed to be allowed to develop and achieve her own wishes and dreams – be discharged, be well and eventually live on her own.*

### *Action taken to achieve this:*

- 
- *A number of safeguarding adult meetings held over the course of a year*
    - *Many MCA assessments completed*
  - *Senior consultant involved agreed to extend the after-care provided to further “scaffold” Carol’s transition*
  - *Case also had involvement of the Police and legal teams*

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*Carol has moved to a supported care home in Sunderland with support from CNTW trust and staff and advocate.*

*This poem by Carol says it all – shared with her permission:*

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My life has been one big battle.

And on many a door we did rattle.

Trying to get help from any source.

That would help me go on a to a better course.

Experiences in the past I'd rather forget.  
Ending my life was no ill threat.  
Eventually I came to Ryhope town.  
Hoping these people won't let me down.  
Entering the ward gave me the creeps.  
Then I was shown where id sleep  
Slowly but surely, I settled in  
Sometimes there was such a din.  
Sometimes I know I wasn't nice.  
There were times I shouted not once but twice.  
Doctors, nurses, and everyone there  
Reminded me that they really did care.  
Named nurses I've had a few.  
Some still there, someone to pastures new.  
Sometimes I know they must really despair.  
But always there ready to care.  
Now after many days  
Medication, treatment patience it pays.  
Time to move on less than a mile.  
Hope I can go out with a smile.  
Time has come to thank you all.  
For all you've done both big and small  
And as I move from here to there.  
Ill never forget all your care.  
A very grateful thanks to one and for all you've done.  
And helped me come from darkness to a much brighter place.  
With a life of hope ahead  
A million thanks will never be enough.  
But just a small token of appreciation and gratitude.

Colin (pseudonym) lives alone and is someone who has had no formal care and support previously. Colin has had no prior adult social care involvement. Colin has limited family support networks.

A Safeguarding referral was received from the Fire Service as Colin lives in a communal block of flats and it was felt his significant hoarding was a significant fire concern to himself and others in the block of flats.

Colin was admitted to hospital not long after this referral, following a fall and was visited in hospital by an allocated social worker. The safeguarding concerns of the risks of falls and fire risks due to significant hoarding was discussed with him and he agreed to support to improve his living conditions. Whilst in hospital an on-line Financial Assessment was done with him so Colin had an indication of what his contribution fee may be, based on the financial information he had. He accessed a Hospital Discharge grant to support with the clean-up of his property.

Following Colin's discharge home, he was supported by Occupational Therapy and equipment was provided to promote his safe transfers around his home.

He accesses a home care package with daily visits and support with shopping as well as linking in with the local Age UK Sunderland services.

He was contacted for comments on the referral to the Safeguarding Team and stated, "I did not realise at the time when the fireman said he was getting in touch with you how my life would be turned around and how much better my life would be living in my own home. Thank you".

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### **Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust (CNTW)**

The Trust has commenced the Safeguarding Adults Audit 2024 in Quarter 4. This will be monitored via the Trust Clinical Effectiveness Committee and Safeguarding Adults & Public Protection (SAPP) group. The audit will also review how service users have been involved in safeguarding decisions.

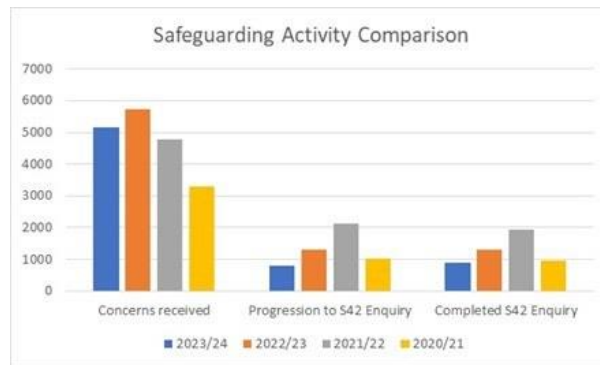
## 2023 - 24 In Figures



**5159** Concerns were received in 2023-24, this is a 10% decrease compared to 5732 concerns received in 2022-23, although the number of concerns received in 2022-23 was a significant increase compared to 2021-22 (20% increase). Of these concerns, (802) 15.5% were progressed to Section 42 Enquiries, (154) 3% progressed to 'Other Safeguarding Enquiry', (21) 0.4% Safeguarding Concern (where progressing to a safeguarding episode, i.e. those where action had already been taken by the referrer/others), and (3221) 62.4% did not progress to a safeguarding episode.

961 concerns were linked to already open episodes (which could be a Section 42 Enquiry, Other Enquiry or a Safeguarding Concern), these were concerns that were considered to be so similar to the cases to which they were linked that they should be part of the same episode e.g. generally the same location and categories of abuse.

There were 899 completed Section 42 Enquiries in 2023-24, a 30.8% decrease on 1300 completed in 2022-23.



### Desired Outcomes

Of those customers with a completed Section 42 Enquiry or Other Enquiry, 83.4% of these individuals, or their representatives, were asked what their desired outcomes were. Of those asked what their desired outcomes were, 85.7% expressed a desired outcome, 95.7% of which were either fully or partially achieved.



### Primary Support Reason

Individuals with physical support needs represented 34.8% of all concerns received, followed by mental health needs (17.8%), and learning disabilities (14.8%).



### **Mental Capacity**

In 32.7% of completed cases, the customer was identified to lack mental capacity. 100% of these individuals were supported.



### **Main Location of Abuse**

Individuals' own homes: 58.2%

Residential/nursing home: 23.3%

Health setting 14% (acute hospital 11.4% and mental health inpatient setting 2.6%)

Alleged perpetrator's home: 1.4%



### **Main Categories of Abuse**

Neglect: 28.5%

Physical abuse: 24.3%

Self-neglect: 26.8%

Psychological: 14.6%

Financial: 13.5%



### Age/Gender

Females account for 56% of all concerns raised, with 39.5% of these being aged 75+

Males account for 44% of all concerns raised, with 62.5% of these being aged 18 – 64.

### Learning Lessons



Five cases were submitted for consideration against the Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR) criteria in 2023-24. Of these scoped cases, two have progressed to a be discretionary SARs (where they do not fully meet the SAR criteria in the Care Act, but the Safeguarding Adults Board feels there is still sufficient grounds to progress it as a SAR because there is significant multi-agency learning that can be taken from the case) which will be published later in 2024; the headlines from this these will be included in the 2024-25 SSAB Annual Report.

The other 3 scoped cases did not meet the SAR criteria, however one case concerning an individual who had just entered adulthood when they died, the case has been passed to the Sunderland

Safeguarding Children Partnership with a recommendation to consider conducting a learning review, as all contact/support had been through various Children's Services. SSAB will then receive the outcome of this learning review, to examine if there is any transferable learning that can be applied to any services that support adults.

In November 2022 the SAR sub-committee undertook a scoping exercise regarding information known to partner organisations in relation to 'Joseph'. The exercise concluded that the Care Act criteria to undertake a Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) had been met.

The review involved a number of partner agencies who operate in Sunderland and Stockton-upon-Tees. As part of the review frontline staff who worked with Joseph participated in a workshop, which provided valuable insight and supported the SAR process.

Learning from the review will be published in Summer 2024, and has resulted in a detailed multi-agency action plan, monitored by the SAR sub-committee before being shared with the Quality Assurance sub-committee. The learning from this review will be included in the 2024-25 Annual Report.

## What Does 2024 - 25 Hold?



- Continuing to closely monitor the impact of the Cost of Living Crisis on the most at risk and vulnerable residents of Sunderland, and the measures being taken by all SSAB partners to mitigate against the effects of that.
- Continue to make positive, meaningful progress on the objectives and actions identified against the SSAB priorities, which have been refreshed in 2024. The Strategic Priorities going forward for 2024-25 and beyond are:

- User Engagement (people with lived experience)
- Communication (high quality, consistent, targeted where necessary, celebrates good practice as well as sharing learning)
- Multi-Agency Training (the right professionals receiving the right training)
- Measuring Success (audit & assurance activity, performance data)
- The agreed local areas of risk that SSAB will concentrate on are:
  - Homelessness and asylum seekers/refugees/immigrants
  - Self-neglect
  - Mental capacity
  - Responding to organisational changes: understanding impacts
  - Focus on Safeguarding and Presentation of Younger Adults (up to 25 years) (linked to care experienced cases)
  - Substance misuse (Alcohol & Drugs)
  - Independent providers' market: changes and consequences for safeguarding: working together as a system
  - Understanding the changing demographics in Sunderland and what this means for SSAB - working towards communications and activity reaching the right people.
- Progressing the Safeguarding Adults Review process regarding three complex cases with themes of learning disability, physical health problems, and cross-boundary working, and publishing the learning from these cases.
- Continuing to advance the excellent partnership working which has characterised the last year, to enable individuals who are at greater risk due to a range of vulnerabilities and issues to live their lives safely, free from neglect and abuse.