

ADASS Yorkshire & Humber

Involving People in Safeguarding Adult Reviews Protocol

A Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) looks at how local organisations worked together to support the adult at risk at the centre of the review. Safeguarding Adults Boards will carry out a SAR whenever an adult at risk has been seriously harmed or died in circumstances where abuse or neglect is suspected or confirmed and there are concerns that agencies did not work effectively. The following sets out a set of principles based on good practice regionally and nationally that Safeguarding Adult Boards should consider when involving families as part of the SAR process. They should be read in conjunction with the SCIE SAR Quality Markers Checklist (available at <https://www.scie.org.uk/safeguarding/adults/reviews/library/apply>). Each case will be unique, and it is therefore important that careful consideration is given to the best way of notifying and involving the adult, family and friends.

Consideration

- Safeguarding Adult Boards must have an agreed and documented process for identifying, considering and making decisions on undertaking a Safeguarding Adults Review.
- As part of this process clear consideration should be made at the outset on the potential involvement of families and the Board should be notified of this and clarify how they are to be involved.
- The involvement should be clearly documented in the Terms of Reference for the SAR. It would be expected that the report author is the lead liaison with the family for matters concerning the review process.
- If a decision is taken to not involve the adult at risk and/or their families, the reasons should be informed by legal advice and clearly documented.

Notification

- It will be a very sensitive time for everyone, and consideration should be given at an early stage to the following:
 - How notification will be done
 - The ongoing identified support to those involved (how and who will provide it)
 - Informing the adult or family/friends about how the process works and what role they will have in shaping this?
 - How they will want to be involved
 - The purpose, process and parameters of the SAR been communicated in the most appropriate setting or method to ensure that these can be understood and convey respect to those involved
- Early notification needs to take place with the adult at risk, family/friends to agree how they wish to be involved and how they should be supported. Where appropriate, as a Care Act 2014 requirement, an independent advocate to represent and support the adult through a SAR.
- The timing of such notifications is crucial particularly where there are ongoing police investigations – this decision should be considered by the Board with the Police representative present.
- Involving the adult, family and friends can range from formal notification only, to inviting them to share their views with the Independent Author in writing or through interview.
- Be clear to the adult, family and friends who is likely to be involved in the whole process.
- Appoint a key contact, separate from the report author, for the adult, family and friends.
- Provide notification in a way that is appropriate to the individual case i.e. face to face or by letter. (see example letter in Appendix 1).
- This should be accompanied by a plain English explanatory leaflet (see example in Appendix 2) that sets out the following:

- A description of the Board and its arrangements
- What is a Safeguarding Adults Review
- Why you are carrying out a Safeguarding Adults Review
- Who will carry out the review or how it will be completed if an independent author is not appointed
- What to expect during the review – what will they have to do
- What will happen after the report is finished
- How long the review will take

Involvement

- The Board must put in place sufficient assurances that there is appropriate involvement in the review process of people affected by the case including where possible the person subject to abuse and their families/significant others.
- Updates must be given at key stages of the review and before the publication of the report. An appropriate person who is connected to the Board and the review must fulfil this role. It is advisable that this person becomes the key contact for the adult, family and friends for any questions and clarification during the process.
- Provide the adult, family and friends with contact details of people with the facility of asking questions, queries or clarifications through the process.
- Provide the adult, family and friends with a clear idea of what to expect from the final report, the types of learning and outcomes it will likely to conclude, how it will be reported and how it will be used.
- Ensure that the adult, family and friends are given details of how their personal information will be treated and how confidentiality will be adhered to. Written consent must be obtained which also sets out how this will be carried out.
- Where there are criminal investigations and family members are witnesses or suspects, the police senior investigating officer must understand the focus and scope of the review to help discussions about when and how family members can be involved.

Conclusion

- Put in place mechanisms to allow the adult and/or their family to feedback on the report before it is completed. (this may not result in significant changes)
- The key contact must arrange to meet up with the adult, family and friends to discuss the contents of the executive summary.
- Be clear on how families are to be represented in the final report.
- When sharing draft versions or executive summaries of the report be clear with those involved that this is not the final report and ensure they understand that implications of sharing these.
- Provide the adult, family and friends a copy of the executive summary of the report. This will include the key findings and recommendations of the review
- Ensure that you provide clarity to those involved on who owns the final report, the timescales for formal release and how wide its contents will be shared. A conversation about media attention may be necessary. It is the Boards decision if a SAR is published.
- Inform the adult, family and friends of next steps of how the report will be presented and who will be involved.
- Explain that an action plan will be developed to respond to the recommendations made by the report and that its delivery will be overseen by the Safeguarding Adults Board.
- The Safeguarding Adults Board may wish to provide the adult, family and friends an update on progress against the action plan in agreed intervals

Appendix 1: LETTER – Notification to Family Member or Friend

Date:

RE: XXXXXXX SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD: SAFEGUARDING ADULTS REVIEW

(In the case of a death) First of all I would like to offer my sincere condolences on the death of (adult's name).

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that because of **(insert circumstances)** ***** and the circumstances surrounding this. XXXXXX Safeguarding Adults Board (XSAB) will carry out something called a Safeguarding Adults Review.

I would like to reassure you that this Safeguarding Adults Review will not influence any ongoing police investigations, or any work that may be happening at the moment between your family and professionals such as a social worker. This is a separate process, involving senior managers from all Health and Social Care Services that make up the DSAB.

The purpose of the Safeguarding Adults Review is:

- To establish whether there are lessons to be learned about the way in which local professionals or organisations work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of adults at risk
- To identify clearly what those lessons are, how they will be acted upon and what changes might be necessary
- To improve inter agency working and better safeguard adults at risk.

I have enclosed a leaflet which outlines the process for the Safeguarding Adults Review.

Please do not hesitate to contact xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx if you want to make some comments or observations to the Safeguarding Adults Review or if you would like any further information.

You may want to take independent legal advice before making any decisions about all of this. If your solicitor has any queries, he or she is also welcome to contact the above mentioned person.

Yours Sincerely

Copy To:
Independent Author

Appendix 2: – Leaflets for Families

Safeguarding Adults Reviews: Information for Families

If you need this information in another format, please contact
XXXX Safeguarding Adults Board Support Unit on XXXXXXXXXX

What is XXXXX Safeguarding Adults Board (XSAB)?

XXXXXX Safeguarding Adults Board brings together all the main organisations who work with adults at risk and their families in XXXXXX to keep them safe.

What is a Safeguarding Adults Review?

A Safeguarding Adults Review looks at how local organisations worked together to look after the adult at risk at the centre of the review. It may also look at how they are working with other adults at risk in the immediate family or care settings. The review considers what was done, what lessons can be learned for the future and what changes may need to be made. It is not a Criminal Investigation or Public Enquiry and its aim is not to place blame but to learn.

Why Are You Carrying Out A Safeguarding Adults Review?

XXXXXX Safeguarding Adults Board will carry out a SAR whenever an adult at risk has been seriously harmed or has died in circumstances where abuse or neglect is suspected or confirmed.

Who Will Carry Out the Review?

A panel of professionals from Community and Adult Care Services, the Health Service, the Police and sometimes other organisations are led by an independent person (the 'Author'). They will meet to review reports from each organisation or agency which has worked with or provided services to the adult at risk or their family. The Independent Author will prepare a report. This report will say what lessons have been learnt and make recommendations for XXXXXX Safeguarding Adults Board.

What Will Happen after the Report is Finished?

XXXXXX Safeguarding Adults Board will write an action plan to make sure improvements are made to the way organisations work together to keep adults at risk safe. Each individual organisation involved in the review will also write an action plan. XXXXXX Safeguarding Adults Board will make sure the actions are carried out and have a positive effect.

What Will I / We Have To Do?

You do not have to do anything. However, you will have the opportunity to give your views if you would like to. We will make sure that there is someone who can help you to do this (see contact details below).

Who Will See the Report?

Normally the Report will be kept confidential to those people who represent their organisations at XXXXXXXX Safeguarding Adults Board or have contributed to the review and the staff within those organisations who worked with the adult at risk and their family. The Executive Summary sets out the key findings and recommendations of the review. It does not give any personal details or information which would identify the adult at risk, family or anyone else involved. It is available to anyone who wants to read it and will be on our web site. Your personal contact will meet with you and tell you what is in the Executive Summary before it goes on the website.

How Long Will the Review Take?

It usually takes six to nine months from the start of the review to publication of the Executive Summary.

In this leaflet we have answered some of the most frequently asked questions families have about Safeguarding Adults Reviews. Of course, each case is different, and you may have other questions you would like to ask. If so, you can call your personal contact.

Your personal contact (insert name).....