



Stop adult abuse

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In this edition

1. Welcome
2. Ann Craft, Adult Safeguarding week
3. SSASPB Annual Report
4. SSASPB Partner: ASIST
5. Key messages to practitioners
6. SSASPB Strategic Plan 2022/25
7. Raising a safeguarding adult concern

SSASPB Newsletter

Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board

1. Welcome

It is again my privilege to write the introduction to this Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board (SSASPB) newsletter. It is produced as part of the ongoing plan to develop and enhance SSASPB communications to broaden awareness of:

- What constitutes abuse and neglect of adults with care and support needs who are at risk and unable to protect themselves
- When and how to report abuse and neglect
- What happens after a report is made
- Concerns that are not abuse and how these should be reported
- Practical things that can be done to prevent or reduce the risk of abuse or neglect occurring

As you will read below this newsletter provides information on:

- Publication of the SSASPB annual report. This is the full version that provides an overview of the wide range of matters that safeguarding partners have been engaged with. The report extends to 46 pages and helps to provide an answer to the question 'What does the Safeguarding Board do?'
- Publication of the Strategic Plan – that outlines the focus of the SSASPB. In this Strategic Plan there is a new priority relating to Effective Practice that has been developed from the key learning themes from experiences from recent years.
- Work of ASIST a safeguarding partner - providing important advocacy services to adults with care and support needs unable to speak for themselves. The article helps to raise awareness of what ASIST does and how to refer to their services.
- Key messages for practitioners – including recurring themes from learning reviews and events.

It is important to continue to remind ourselves that from experience, safeguarding concerns are often hidden and when do they come to light are difficult to substantiate due often to the capacity and vulnerabilities of the adult concerned. When adults with care and support needs have experienced abuse or neglect it usually occurs in their home, whether their own or a care home, and perpetrated by someone who they know and should be able to trust - either a member of their own family, or friend, or someone working in a position of trust.

Looking ahead as we approach the anticipated seasonal winter pressures, coupled with the challenges for many facing difficulties associated with the increasing cost of living, it is a reminder of the need to be particularly vigilant and to look for the signs of abuse and neglect – and how to access help.

I once again take this opportunity to acknowledge that the Safeguarding Adults Board is well supported and commitment from partners is strong not only in terms of individual's personal and professional commitment to driving ongoing outcome focused activity but also the ongoing partnership resourcing for the vital work of the Board.

This newsletter provides an opportunity for you to request content in future editions that you may find of interest and help please email ssaspb.admin@staffordshire.gov.uk

I conclude by mentioning the SSAPB website that has been refreshed to better comply with Accessibility legislation. The website can be accessed through the [link](#).

Thank you for reading.



John Wood, Independent Chair

2. Ann Craft, Adult Safeguarding Week 21st to 25th November

The SSASPB are supporting adult safeguarding week which will be held this year between 21st and 27th November. Ann Craft have identified several 'contemporary' adult safeguarding related topics which include Exploitation through County Lines, Domestic Abuse in a Tech Society and self-neglect. They have produced information on their website and SSASPB partners are encouraged to use this and any other material to promote adult safeguarding through training, lunch and learn events and internal communications. The Board has resources to assist with raising awareness of adult safeguarding, including what it is and how to report it, which can be accessed via the SSASPB website. These can be sent out to your teams as a link or printed off to suit your needs. Please find the link here.

The SSASPB are hosting a Practitioners Forum covering the use of the Mental Capacity Act on 25th November 2022 presented by Dr Laura Pritchard-Jones Senior Lecturer in Law, Programme Director, MA Safeguarding Adults: Law, Policy, and Practice from Keele University. Practitioners can sign up to attend the event through the below Eventbrite link.

3. SSASPB Annual Report

The SSASPB has a statutory duty under the Care Act 2014 to produce an Annual Report. The report covering 2020/21 has recently been published and can be found here.

4. SSASPB partner: ASIST

Asist is an independent advocacy service with a local focus, providing a range of advocacy in Staffordshire since our inception in 1994. Asist work in partnership with people, groups, organisations, and statutory agencies in our local community and beyond.

We are the current advocacy provider within Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. Advocacy is a catalyst, enabling people to live a life with their human rights respected, protected, and fulfilled. We support all individuals to exert influence in the decisions that affect their lives, leading to greater autonomy and inclusion.

There are several different types of advocacy services that we offer;

IMHA Advocate – People have a right to free, independent advocacy support relating to care and treatment when detained under the Mental Health Act, on a CTO or Guardianship in the community.

The person must be in a Staffordshire / Stoke-on-Trent hospital or care facility.

IMCA Advocate – People have the right to free, independent advocacy support if the person lacks capacity following a two-stage capacity assessment. IMCAs will support the person to stay involved in decisions about a serious medical treatment or change of accommodation where there is no one else to consult with (un-befriended)

The person must be in a Staffordshire / Stoke-on-Trent hospital or care facility.

NHS Complaints Advocate - Advocates support people to make a complaint using the NHS complaints procedure. The complaint must be about care and treatment provided or funded by the NHS services. Complaints can be in regard to themselves or someone close to them.

The person must be a Staffordshire or Stoke-on-Trent resident

The complaint be within 12 months.

Care Act Advocate – People have the right to free, independent advocacy support relating to their care and support assessment, planning, reviews and safeguarding processes where there is no one appropriate to support them. The local authority has a duty to instruct advocacy support where the person has substantial difficulties to; understand and remember information, weigh up information, make decisions.

The referral needs to be made by the local authority (Staffordshire County Council or Stoke-on-Trent City Council).

How to refer for an Advocate

Call Asist on [0300 800 1000](tel:03008001000)

Visit our website: www.asist.co.uk

Email: referrals@asist.co.uk

5. Key messages to practitioners

The Board believes that whilst much of its work is of a strategic nature it is crucial to engage with those who work with and/or support adults with care and support needs. This newsletter is an opportunity to communicate key messages which have been identified through multi-agency audits and Safeguarding Adult Reviews.

Key message 1: The most frequently seen lessons to learn

The need for escalation. If you disagree with a colleague or partner, it is expected that you will try to resolve it with them in the first instance and if unable to resolve the matter to escalate it to your supervisor or manager. This professional challenge is to be encouraged and will be supported.

Rationale for decision making must be recorded clearly.

Where a multi-agency response is believed to be beneficial to a set of circumstances, consideration must be given to the **appointment of a lead professional**. This person will be the one with the best engagement with the adult.

Key message 2: Recording of ethnicity

Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent both have diverse communities. In the SSASPB Annual Report 2021/22 it was noted that in Stoke-on-Trent 9.8% and in Staffordshire 6.2% of the ethnicity of adults reported in Section 42 safeguarding enquiries was 'not known'. This is in addition to 0.4% and 2.3% respectively which were categorised as 'not stated'. It is important that there is the most accurate data available to partners so that themes and trends may instigate prevention activity.

Key Message 3: Organisational abuse

The Care Act 2014 defines ten categories of abuse or neglect (link), one of these categories is organisational abuse. However, it appears that this category is under recorded. One reason for this may be that another category is chosen in preference, for example if an adult was inappropriately restrained by a care worker due to inadequate training may be recorded as physical abuse rather than organisational abuse. Careful consideration should be given regarding the type of abuse when reporting concerns.

Key Message 4: Discriminatory abuse

Discriminatory abuse is nationally recognised as being under recorded. As in the above example of organisational abuse it may be that other types of abuse are recorded rather than discriminatory abuse. Discriminatory abuse could include depriving someone of access to a communication aid. More accurate recording of the type of abuse and neglect will better support targeted prevention work of the Board.

6. SSASPB Strategic plan 2022/25

The Care Act 2014 provides the statutory requirements for adult safeguarding. It places a duty on each Local Authority to establish a Safeguarding Adults Board and specifies the responsibilities of the Local Authority, and connected partners with whom they work, to protect adults at risk of abuse or neglect.

One of the statutory requirements is to publish a strategic plan that sets out the Board's objectives and how these will be achieved. In 2022 following consultation with Board partners and considering the learning from audits and Safeguarding Adult Reviews the SSASPB revised its strategic priorities. Engagement will continue to be a strategic priority for the Board in 2022/25 and a new priority, Effective Practice, will now be included. Effective practice has several strands; the Board will seek assurance that:

1. Making Safeguarding Personal is meaningfully implemented and embedded in practice by all partners, (other than in exceptional circumstances when it may be less appropriate) and that its effectiveness is measured to give confidence.
2. The assessment and reviews of mental capacity and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) is of a good standard and includes the perspective of service users/carers, with appropriate skilled advocacy in place.
3. Safeguarding partners commit to improve our response to self-neglect, including that we will explore what experiences led, and sustain, a person to live in this way rather than judge self-neglect and substance use to be a lifestyle choice and we will consider wider social, physical and mental health factors rather than rely on substance use to explain a person's circumstances. We will recognise the impact of trauma, substance use, and the coercive and controlling effects of addiction, on a person's mental capacity to make decisions about their self-neglect and substance use.
4. There is awareness and understanding that there can be increased risks in relation to safeguarding when a person moves between services, such as when a person is discharged from hospital to their home or other community settings.
5. Amongst connected partners professionals and leaders are alert to the sources of risk for vulnerable adults in the communities and residential settings particularly the hidden voices and people falling between the eligibility gaps.

The Strategic Plan covers the period 2022/25 and the Board will receive quarterly updates regarding progress. The full document can be found [here](#).

7. Raising an Adult Safeguarding Concern

If you think that an adult with care and support needs is being abused or neglected:

If the adult lives in Stoke:

Telephone: 0800 561 0015 at any time

Minicom: 01782 236037

If the adult lives in Staffordshire:

Telephone: 0345 604 2719

Monday to Thursday 8:30am to 5pm, Fridays 8:30am to 4:30pm, excluding Bank Holidays

0345 604 2886 at any other time