



Stop adult abuse

Edition: 2021/2

Date: 17/11/21

In this edition

1. Welcome
2. Adult Safeguarding week
3. Safeguarding Adult Reviews
4. SSASPB Partner: SCC
5. Lasting Power of Attorney
6. SSASPB Annual Report
7. Raising an Adult Safeguarding Concern

# SSASPB Newsletter

Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board

## 1. Welcome by John Wood, Independent Chair

It is my privilege to write this introduction to the Autumn 2021 edition of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board (SSASPB) newsletter.

The range of challenges currently facing adult social care and health providers have been widely publicised. The challenges show no signs of abating as we approach what is beginning to look like another surge in demands for providers of services associated with the expected winter pressures.

It is important to remind ourselves that from experience, safeguarding concerns are often hidden and when do they come to light are difficult to substantiate due 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. These experiences should remind us of the need to be particularly vigilant and to look for the signs during these particularly challenging times.

This newsletter is published during Safeguarding Adults Week. As you will read below it is organised nationally by the Ann Craft Trust and in recent years it has been well supported by a wide range of organisations in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent. This year the range of local events and activities have increased under the theme of 'Creating Safer Cultures' and information on how you can become involved or find out more are given below.

In practical terms Creating Safer Cultures is about the development of a culture that promotes good practice; raises public awareness that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility; responds effectively and swiftly when abuse or neglect has been alleged or occurs; seeks to learn when things have gone wrong; is sensitive to the issues of cultural diversity and puts the person at the centre of planning to meet support needs to ensure that they are safe in their homes and communities. This is a key focus for the SSASPB.

As you will read below this newsletter provides information on reporting concerns and a recent change in practice in Staffordshire for dealing with reports of self-neglect. These referrals are increasing in line with reporting levels nationally.

SSASPB partners spend a considerable amount of time engaged in learning from the adverse experiences of some adults with care and support needs who have been subject of abuse or neglect. It is important that the arrangements for capturing the learning and responding to the findings are understood and acted upon, you may find the associated article below helpful.

## 1. Welcome Continued...

I conclude by mentioning that the Annual Report of the Safeguarding Adults Board has just been published and can be accessed through the link at the end of this newsletter. I would encourage you to read it and welcome any comments that you may have to [SSASPB.admin@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:SSASPB.admin@staffordshire.gov.uk)



John Wood, Independent Chair

## 2. Adult Safeguarding Week 15-21 November 2021

**Safeguarding Adults Week 2021 will take place from 15- 21 November 2021.**

Safeguarding Adults Week is a nationwide campaign held by the **Ann Craft Trust**. It provides a time and an opportunity for organisations to come together to raise awareness of important safeguarding issues. The aim is to highlight safeguarding key issues, facilitate conversations and to raise awareness of safeguarding best practice. We hope the week will enable more organisations and individuals to feel confident in recognising signs of abuse and neglect and recording and reporting safeguarding concerns. So we can all be better together.

**Safeguarding Adults Week 2021 Theme – ‘Creating Safer Cultures’**

### What do we mean by Safer Cultures?

Promoting safer cultures is about how organisations and individuals can take steps to minimise harm occurring in the first instance, whilst simultaneously ensuring correct policies and procedures are in place so that safeguarding concerns that are raised, are recognised and responded to effectively.

### What do Safer Cultures Look Like?

- **Listening-** organisations should listen to members and create an environment where people’s concerns are listened to and addressed appropriately (be that service users, participants, volunteers or employees). Individuals should feel confident about how to respond to, report and refer any safeguarding concerns either within their organisation or community.
- **Leading-** organisations should ensure they have the correct policies and procedures in place to minimise the risk of harm and to respond effectively should concerns be raised. This could include having a detailed safeguarding policy and ensuring that staff and volunteers receive regular safeguarding training.
- **Learning-** it is important that organisations, and individuals within them, take the time to learn from safeguarding incidents and reflect on what actions could be altered in the future to facilitate best practice and minimise the risk of harm.

Through its partners the SSASPB is actively supporting Safeguarding Adults Week and there is a broad programme of awareness raising events and activities arranged.

### 3. Safeguarding Adult Reviews

An article on learning from Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs) was included in the October 2020 edition of the SSASPB newsletter. However, the messages are so important that they have been included in this edition.

Safeguarding Adult Boards have a statutory responsibility under Section 44 of the Care Act 2014 to conduct reviews in certain circumstances. For more information about the criteria please click [here](#).

The purpose of undertaking the reviews is to determine what the relevant agencies and individuals involved in the case could have done differently to prevent the abuse, neglect or death. The review identifies areas of good practice and also lessons to be learned so that improvements can be made to prevent similar occurrences. Since 2013 there have been several SARS and Multi-agency Learning Reviews conducted by the SSASPB. There are three recurring lessons to learn:

- Practitioners should expect their decisions to be challenged and, in turn, challenge others - whether they are part of their own or another organisation. Challenge is healthy and will be encouraged. If agreement cannot be reached, the Board has an Escalation Policy explaining how to escalate professional disagreement.
- Complex cases which involve the engagement of many organisations benefit from the appointment of a 'lead professional' to assist with clear focus and multi-agency planning. This person may be from any organisation connected with the adult about whom there are concerns and will usually be the one who is best placed to achieve the engagement of the adult.
- Practitioners should always fully document the reasons for their decisions. These must be recorded in clear language and acronyms explained when first used.

Professor Michael Preston-Shoot is an academic with a focus on Adult Safeguarding and an Independent Chair of two Safeguarding Adult Boards. In September 2020 he published his findings following extensive research into over 200 SARs. His findings were difficult to hear, saying that there is little evidence to suggest that lessons have been learned from the Serious Case Review of the murder of Steven Hoskins (Cornwall, 2006). His work led to the production of several briefing notes one of which is specifically for Adult Safeguarding Practitioners. Please have a look at it to support your understand of Safeguarding Adult Reviews and the lessons to learn from them. One of his findings supports the recurring lesson to learn from local SARs i.e. the need to appoint a lead professional in plans to safeguard an adult. This doesn't always have to be a Social Worker, there are many good examples where the lead has been taken

### 3. Safeguarding Adult Reviews continued...

by the Fire Service, Housing or Police. The importance of a multi-agency response and appropriate information sharing is paramount to keeping adults with care and support needs safe from abuse and neglect.

The [SSASPB website](#) is a great source of information about local and National SARs, Professor Preston-Shoot's research and the recurring lessons to learn.

### 4. SSASPB partner: Staffordshire County Council—a change in practice for self-neglect concerns

Staffordshire County Council Safeguarding service have been completing audits of safeguarding concerns to identify ways in which the service can improve. This has focused on looking at concerns that are closed at the early stages without a section 42 enquiry being required. Through these audits we identified a high number of self neglect concerns that were delayed in having an assessment response due to initially coming via safeguarding. These concerns were primarily to do with deterioration in living conditions, or in an adult meeting personal care needs, quite often a previous social care assessment has not been completed.

As a result of this we are now ensuring that the initial route for self neglect concerns is for an assessment via our First Contact Team. We would like to assure everyone that where there are high risks or where there is history and pattern of refusal of assessments a section 42 enquiry will be implemented. These assessment requests are all reviewed by a qualified social worker within the first contact team who will refer straight for a safeguarding section 42 enquiry if that is deemed appropriate.

This change in process does place Staffordshire more in line with The Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent's Adult Safeguarding Board Procedures. This does state that other responses should be explored before instigating a section 42 enquiry. This change should ensure that adults in our communities do get the appropriate response in a more timely way.

We would ask that if you are concerned that a person may be at risk of self neglect that you consider if an assessment is appropriate, however, we will still accept a safeguarding referral but may decide that the assessment route will be followed and will inform referrers as appropriate.

This will also be regularly reviewed through audits should you have any questions or concerns about this then do please make contact with the Adult Safeguarding Team Leader, Ruth Martin [ruth.martin@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:ruth.martin@staffordshire.gov.uk)

## 5. Lasting Power of Attorney

An article produced by Stoke-on-Trent City Council Legal team.

There can be a lot of misunderstanding about Lasting Powers of Attorney (LPA) which replaced Enduring Power of Attorney (EPA) on the 1st October 2007.

A lasting power of attorney (LPA) is a legal document which allows a person, who is referred to as the 'donor' to appoint one or more people known as 'attorneys' to help them make decisions, or to make decisions on their behalf when the time comes where they do not have the ability ( Mental Capacity) to make their own decisions.

An LPA requires that the person making the LPA is certified to have the mental capacity to do so, and that they are doing so without being subjected to any pressure, undue influence, coercion or fraud. It gives a person more control over what happens to them if they have an accident or an illness which means they cannot make their own decisions anymore.

A person must be 18 or over and have mental capacity at the time when they make the LPA.

There are 2 types of LPA and you can choose to make one type or both.

- Decision surrounding health and welfare
- Decisions surrounding property and financial affairs

When it comes to the use of the LPA regarding to Health and Welfare decision, this gives an attorney the power to make decisions about things like:

- The donors daily routine, for example washing, dressing, eating
- medical care
- moving into a care home
- life-sustaining treatment

It can only be used when the donor is unable to make their own decisions, as stated above and the attorney must tell people involved in the donor's care when the LPA starts. This includes the donor's friends and family, doctor and other healthcare staff care workers, social worker and other social care staff.

When it comes to Property and financial affairs lasting power of attorney this gives the attorney the power to make decisions about money and property for you, for example:

- managing a bank or building society account

## 5. Lasting Power of Attorney continued...

- paying bills
- collecting benefits or a pension
- selling your home

It can be used as soon as it's registered, with the donor's permission.

A person must choose their attorney and they can have more than one. They are then required to complete the relevant forms to appoint them as an attorney and then register the LPA with the Office of the Public Guardian, however this can take some time and can take up to 20 weeks.

In order to register an LPA and make it official a fee of £82 will need to be paid at the time of registering it, unless a person qualifies for a reduction or exemption. If the person who made the LPA (the donor) receives certain means-tested benefits, then when they apply to register it, then they won't have to pay anything this is known as an 'exemption'. The benefits are listed on the LPA forms. If the donor's income before tax is less than £12,000 a year, you'll only have to pay half this is known as a '50% remission' therefore a reduction. The LPA is registered when the Office of the Public Guardian (OPG) has stamped it with 'VALIDATED-OPG'.

When the appointee starts making decisions on behalf of the donor, the appointee must, follow any instructions the donor included within the LPA , consider any preferences the donor included within the LPA and help the donor make their own decisions as much as they can. They also must make any decisions in the donor's best interests and respect their human and civil rights

If there is more than one attorney then the LPA will tell you whether you must make decisions 'jointly' (this means all the attorneys must agree) or 'jointly and severally' (this means you can make decisions together or on your own)/ The LPA may tell you to make some decisions 'jointly' and others 'jointly and severally'.

For more information relating to LPAs: click [here](#)

## 6. SSASPB Annual Report

The SSASPB has recent published its 2020-21 Annual Report in compliance of a requirement under the Care Act 2014. It includes case studies of safeguarding in action, an overview of the work of the Board during 2020-21 and key safeguarding data. Please find a link to the website where the document can be found. [Annual Report.](#)

## 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

We hope you have found this newsletter both informative and interesting and welcome any suggestions for future articles. The next edition is planned for late Spring 2022, contact us using [ssaspb.admin@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:ssaspb.admin@staffordshire.gov.uk)



Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent  
Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board

**Abuse must stop**