



Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board (SSASPB)

Escalation policy, principles and procedure

Team	SSASPB	Author(s)	SSASPB Executive Sub-Group
Document	SSASPB Escalation policy, principles and procedure		
Date Created	January 2019	Version	2019 Draft
Revised	March 2017 Revision November 2017 Revision January 2019		
Status	For publication		
Review Date	Feb 2020		

Metadata for this document

Name	Content
Subject Category	Multi-Agency Policy
Description	Escalation Policy for use by front line staff and managers of SSASPB Partner agencies
Audience	For use by SSASPB Partner agencies/ Public facing
Creator	Executive sub-group Members
Contributors	Consultation via SSASPB Board Members
Publisher	SSASPB
Protective Marking	Unclassified

Revision History

Revision Date	Revised by	Description of revision
March 2017	Executive Sub-group	Minor content revision throughout
November 2017	Executive Sub-group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removal of timescales in the process (p4) • Expansion of the scope of the Policy to include Board activity (p4) • Addition of escalation into the complaints process of the Local Authorities (p6)
January 2019	Policies and Procedures sub-group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No amendments made to content

Governance This document requires the following approvals:

Approving Body/Group	Approved on	Status
Policies and Procedures	Agendered for 09:01:19	Approved
Executive sub-Group	To go to 26.02.19 meeting	Approved

Contents

	Page
1. Introduction	3
2. Policy	3
3. Where disagreements may arise	4
4. Principles	4
5. Procedure (Stages 1 – 4)	4
6. Complaints made against the Board	6
7. General principles	6

1. Introduction

Throughout this document there is reference to 'adult(s)'. The following definition is taken from the Care Act 2014 Statutory Guidance (March 2016).

The safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and;
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

2. Policy

- 2.1 The Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board (SSASPB) expects frontline staff who work directly with adults to share information within guidelines outlined within the SSASPB Information sharing agreement and work together to deliver the desired outcomes through inter-agency working.
- 2.2 Good practice includes the expectation that constructive challenge and professional challenge amongst colleagues within and between agencies provides a healthy approach to the work. Where members of staff from any agency feel that concerns regarding an adult are not being addressed it is expected that the escalation procedure should be used until a satisfactory resolution is reached.
- 2.3 The process of resolution should be kept as simple as possible and the aim should be to resolve difficulties at a professional practitioner level wherever possible. It should be recognised that differences in status and experience may affect the confidence of some workers to pursue this course of action and support should be sought from the nominated Adult Safeguarding lead in that agency.
- 2.4 If there is immediate risk presented to the adult the Police should be contacted immediately although in many cases there will be time and opportunity for the practitioner to discuss the case with their line manager before making that decision. Each agency should also follow their individual escalation procedures.

3. Where disagreements may arise

Disagreements are most likely to arise in terms of differing views regarding thresholds and eligibility criteria, a lack of understanding about respective roles and the need for action and communication e.g.

- Where one professional disagrees with the action of another in relation to a particular course of action, such as closing involvement;
- Where one professional or agency considers another professional or agency has not completed an agreed action for no acceptable or understandable reason;
- Where one agency considers that the proposed action plan is inappropriate and that the adults' needs and wishes are not being addressed or met. This could include where one agency feels that they do not need to be involved and another agency disagrees.
- A partner agency of the Board may disagree with a Policy or procedure approved by the Board.

4. Principles

- 4.1 Professionals providing services to adults and their families should work co-operatively across all agencies, using their skills and experience to make a robust contribution to safeguarding adults and promoting their welfare within the framework of discussions, meetings and case management.
- 4.2 All agencies are responsible for ensuring that staff are competent and are supported to escalate appropriately intra and inter-agency concerns and disagreements about an adult's wellbeing.
- 4.3 Professionals should attempt to resolve differences through discussions and/or meetings acknowledging and giving consideration to any increase in risk from delaying any activity.
- 4.4 If professionals are unable to resolve differences within a reasonable timescale their disagreement must be addressed by more experienced and more senior staff.
- 4.5 Advice may be sought directly from the agency's nominated Adult Safeguarding lead at any stage of the process.
- 4.6 All activity in relation to dispute resolution must be undertaken as soon as possible. It is expected that all stages will usually be completed within two working days to minimise disruption to operational or Board activity.

5. Procedure

Stage 1

- 5.1 In the first instance workers should raise the matter as soon as possible with their fellow professional, either verbally or in writing (by email) and they should provide clear evidence based reasons for their disagreement.
- 5.2 The receiving professional must read and review the case (file), speak to the referring professional as soon as possible and attempt to find a mutually agreeable way forward via

a meeting or discussion. If agreement is reached the receiving professional will advise the agency of the outcome and will confirm this in writing.

5.3 The professionals involved in this resolution process must make detailed notes of each intra-agency discussion they have and record this on the adult's file.

Stage 2

5.4 If the professionals are unable to resolve the disagreement following consideration of the facts they should raise their concerns with their respective line managers who should attempt to resolve the differences as soon as possible.

5.5 Each agency will need to define, through their respective scheme of delegation, who their appropriate line equivalents are.

5.6 It is acknowledged that some agencies, particularly in the Third Sector, may not have extended schemes of delegation. In these cases peer support should be considered as a means of additional advice and support.

5.7 Most day to day inter-agency differences of opinion will require professionals to liaise with their first line manager or equivalent and they should always seek advice from their inter-agency's nominated Adult Safeguarding lead.

5.8 If agreement can be reached the responsible line manager will advise the agency of the outcome in writing.

Stage 3

5.9 If agreement cannot be reached following discussions between line managers the issue must be referred without delay to the appropriate Head of Service, Safeguarding Lead, Department Head or equivalent and by the agency line manager to their equivalent service manager.

5.10 The Head of Service or equivalent will contact their relevant peer and attempt to resolve the disagreement.

Stage 4

5.11 Where a resolution is still not agreed the Head of Service will raise the disagreement with their Assistant Director or equivalent.

5.12 The respective SSASPB member should be alerted that a disagreement has reached this stage and any learning identified to be considered and forwarded to both the SSASPB Manager and the Learning and Development Sub-group chair.

5.13 The relevant Assistant Directors or equivalents will attempt to agree a resolution between them, but if not - this will be finally escalated to the Independent Chair of the SSASPB who will liaise with whoever is necessary to help to make the final decision and will inform the professional who raised the disagreement of the decision in writing.

5.14 It will be highly unusual for many situations to reach this stage and in such instances there must be consideration of any learning points by the SSASPB.

6. Complaints made against the Board

6.1 Where a complaint is made against the Board as a body or a Board owned policy or procedure it will seek to resolve any complaints informally in the first instance and then, if necessary, escalate the matter as appropriate to the circumstances.

6.2 Where a complaint is made about a partner agency of the Board the complaint will be directed to the appropriate individual agency's internal complaints process and the Board will seek assurance that this has been addressed.

7. General Principles

Professional judgement should be applied at any time when there are potential delays due to line management absences or unavailability and the issue needs to be addressed more promptly. It should also be used to identify the most appropriate line managers as it is acknowledged that line management structure between the many agencies in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent are unlikely to be perfectly aligned.

SSASPB Communication Plan (v1)

Policy Checklist

1. Is this a new policy?	No
Aims	
2. Have the aims, objectives and intended outcomes been identified?	Yes
Impact	
3. Does the policy affect any of the following groups in terms of their protected characteristic? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender (incl trans gender) • Disability • Age • Sexual orientation • Pregnancy and maternity 	No No No No No
4. Please explain how the policy will ensure that the groups identified above have equal access to this policy.	This document is available via the SSASPB website www.SSASPB.org.uk
5. Are there any other groups whom the policy may have a differential impact on? If so, please explain.	No
Data & Evidence	
6. What data/evidence has been collated to inform the development of the policy?	N/A
7. Does the policy respond to the needs that were identified from the data, evidence and consultation? If not, please briefly explain why.	N/A
Consultation & Involvement	
8. Has consultation been carried out with partners?	Yes – SSASPB Partners
9. Were the consultation activities carried out inclusive and accessible?	Yes
10. Briefly outline the findings from the consultation and whether the policy needs to be adjusted/amended as a result of the consultation.	Please see minutes of Policies and Procedures and Executive sub-group meetings
Monitoring	
11. How will the policy be monitored and reviewed for any potential future impacts?	Annual review to be completed by Executive sub-group.
12. In what ways does the policy promote equal opportunities?	N/A – there are no equal opportunity implications within this document.
13. Has any inequality impact been identified? If yes, what action/has will be taken to remedy?	No

UNCLASSIFIED