

Gateshead Safeguarding Adults Board

Strategic Plan 2016-2019

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Introduction

This is the first Strategic Plan for the now statutory Gateshead Safeguarding Adults Board post implementation of the Care Act (2014) on April 1st 2015.

This three year Strategic Plan will be supported by annual Business Plans to enable the Board to prioritise and focus activity over the three year period. Of course, the national and local policy landscape is constantly changing and it will be important to review the Strategic Plan on an annual basis to ensure that the Strategic priorities remain right for Gateshead.

The Gateshead Safeguarding Adults Board is committed to make Safeguarding in Gateshead person-led and outcome focussed by adopting and implementing a preventative model. The Board have worked hard to ensure that within Gateshead we are Care Act compliant and have demonstrated via internal and independent scrutiny that we deliver quality services.

We face new challenges however ranging from the inclusion of new categories of abuse, the removal of thresholds, an important emphasis upon the empowerment of those Adults at risk of or experiencing abuse and neglect and unprecedented organisational changes for many of our partner organisations as a result of continual austerity.

The Gateshead Safeguarding Adults Board also continues to provide strategic leadership for our approach to responding to statutory duties detailed within the Mental Capacity Act, including the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards.

The Gateshead Safeguarding Adults Board has a strong commitment from its members to implement the Strategic Priorities identified within this plan. Some of these we can address and deliver quickly. Others will need commitment and further development throughout the three year period.

Policy Context

The Care Act 2014 has enshrined in law the principles of Safeguarding Adults, which will not only ensure that the most vulnerable members of society are afforded appropriate support and protection, but will also help them to live as independently as possible, for as long as possible.

Chapter 14 of the Care and Support Statutory Guidance issued under the Care Act replaces the No Secrets document as the statutory basis for all safeguarding activity. This was updated in March 2016 by the Department of Health.

The Care Act sets out the Safeguarding Adult responsibilities for Local Authorities and their partners. It places a duty upon Local Authorities to establish Safeguarding Adults Boards.

A corner stone of the Care Act is the general responsibility placed on all local authorities to promote wellbeing. Significantly, the Care Act emphasises the importance of beginning with the assumption that the individual is best placed to judge their own wellbeing. Under the definition of wellbeing, it is made clear that protection from abuse and neglect plays a fundamental role.

The Care Act identifies six key principles which underpin all adult safeguarding work and, which apply equally to all sectors and settings:

- **Empowerment** – people being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and give informed consent
- **Prevention** – it is better to take action before harm occurs
- **Proportionality** – the least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented
- **Protection** – support and representation to those in greatest need
- **Partnership** – local solutions through services working with their communities
- **Accountability** – accountability and transparency in safeguarding practice

Schedule 2 of the Care Act (2014) stipulates that Safeguarding Adults Boards must publish a Strategic Plan each financial year, which identifies how the Boards and their members will protect adults in their respective areas from abuse and neglect.

Gateshead Safeguarding Adults Board

Our vision

Our vision for adult safeguarding in Gateshead is:

‘Everybody in Gateshead has the right to lead a fulfilling life and should be able to live safely, free from abuse and neglect – and to contribute to their own and other people’s health and wellbeing’

In Gateshead we believe that safeguarding is everyone’s business. This means, whoever you are, wherever you are and whatever position you have - you have a responsibility to take action to help protect our local residents when you hear about allegations of abuse or neglect.

We believe that our vision is shared and practiced by all our partner organisations. Safeguarding cannot be fully delivered by agencies acting in isolation – and can only be achieved by working together in partnership to help protect and support adults at risk of, or experiencing, abuse or neglect.

Governance arrangements

The Gateshead Safeguarding Adults Board became a statutory body in April 2015. The Board is responsible for assuming the strategic lead and overseeing the work of Adult Safeguarding and Mental Capacity Act/Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards arrangements in Gateshead.

Within Gateshead we have commissioned an Independent Chair to enhance scrutiny and challenge. The Board has a comprehensive Memorandum of Understanding which provides the framework for identifying roles and responsibilities and demonstrating accountability.

The Safeguarding Adults Board has developed strong links with the Local Safeguarding Children’s Board, Health and Wellbeing Board and the Community Safety Board.

In law, the statutory members of a Safeguarding Adults Board are defined as the local authority, the local police force and the relevant clinical commissioning group. However, in Gateshead, we recognise the importance of the contribution made by all of our partner agencies and this is reflected by the wider Board membership (correct as of March 2016):

- Gateshead Council
- Northumbria Police
- Newcastle Gateshead Clinical Commissioning Group
- Lay Members
- Gateshead NHS Foundation Trust
- South Tyneside Foundation Trust;
- Northumberland Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust
- Gateshead College
- The Gateshead Housing Company
- Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service
- Healthwatch
- Northumbria Community Rehabilitation Company
- National Probation Service
- Oasis Aquila Housing

The Safeguarding Adults Board is supported by four sub-groups:

- **Practice Delivery Group** (Chaired by Local Authority)

The role of the Practice Delivery Group is to ensure that the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Adults policy and procedures and the Mental Capacity Act / Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards policy and procedures continue to be fit for purpose.

The Group has responsibility for the production of the Strategic Plan, annual Business Plans and keeping up to date with national policy changes that may impact upon the work of the Safeguarding Adults Board. The Group also has responsibility for the development and implementation of the engagement strategy and implementation of the Dignity Strategy.

- **Quality and Assurance Group** (Chaired by Clinical Commissioning Group)

The primary role of this group is to develop an oversight of all activity that is undertaken by Board member agencies and relevant services or organisations in order to safeguard those adults in Gateshead who are subject to the Safeguarding duties as stated in Section 42 of the Care Act 2014. Core activities include co-ordinating Safeguarding Adult Reviews and monitoring performance.

The group monitors and scrutinises the quality of activities to ensure that the interventions offered were and continue to be person-centred, proportionate and appropriate. As well as retaining a strategic oversight of all safeguarding activity across Gateshead, the Quality and Assurance Group is responsible for considering any lessons learned that are identified nationally, regionally and locally from any cases requiring a Safeguarding Adults Review, Serious Case Review or any other review process relevant to the Safeguarding Adults agenda.

- **Training Group** (Chaired by Local Authority)

The role of the Training Group is to coordinate and develop Safeguarding Adults training and Mental Capacity Act / Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards training that is accessible for practitioners and managers in a multi-agency setting.

For the purposes of quality assurance data is monitored regarding attendance, cancellation as well as evaluation of training courses. The group develop and implement ad-hoc bespoke training courses to meet evidenced demand in addition to core training courses.

- **Strategic Exploitation Group** (Chaired by Police)

The Strategic Exploitation Group is a new sub-group of both the Safeguarding Adults Board and the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. The group is responsible for overseeing all work with respect to sexual exploitation, modern slavery and trafficking in Gateshead.

The Board and the four sub-groups regularly commission time limited task and finish groups to undertake specific pieces of project work.

Developing the Strategic Plan

The Gateshead Safeguarding Adults Strategic Plan has been developed in consultation with a variety of stakeholders, and underpinned by performance information and feedback from members of the general public, safeguarding adult service users, advocates and professionals from a range of service users.

Stakeholder consultation included:

- Safeguarding Adults Board partner organisations
- Practice Delivery Group
- Health Partners Network
- Healthwatch – via inviting members to a consultation event
- General public – via eight events during the Safeguarding Adults For Everyone (SAFE) week in November 2015
- Commissioned providers – via two workshops
- Practitioner feedback – via training courses, self neglect workshops, housing conference

Information gathered:

- Performance information
- Independent case file audits
- Partner inspection processes

Strategic Priorities

The Gateshead Safeguarding Adults Board has established five strategic priorities for 2016/19:

- Quality assurance
- Prevention
- Community Engagement and Communication
- Improved Operational Practice
- Implementing Mental Capacity Act/Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards

These will all be underpinned by the six Principles of Safeguarding identified within the Care Act (see page 4).

Quality Assurance

The Safeguarding Adults Board would like to continue to prioritise Quality Assurance in its widest sense. This will enable the Board to demonstrate quality and effectiveness at both strategic and operational levels. It aims to support a better understanding of how safe adults are locally and how well local services are carrying out their safeguarding responsibilities in accordance with the Care Act and the Gateshead Multi-Agency Policy and Procedures.

Key challenges include:

Short term (within year one)

- Improve data collection from all partner organisations reflecting the revised Policy and Procedures post Care Act implementation.
- Devise enhanced comprehensive performance management framework.
- Revise Safeguarding Adults Review Practice Guidance Note to introduce greater flexibility of approach.
- Improve efficiency of Safeguarding Adults Review process.
- Continue to learn from, and respond to, best practice/inspections/audits and reviews.

Longer term (by year three)

- Develop and implement a self assessment process to monitor effectiveness of the Board and partner organisations.
- Develop and implement programme of peer reviews at strategic and operational levels.
- Revise the Quality Assurance Framework, with a focus upon effectiveness and recognising and responding to risk.
- Improve reporting mechanisms from partner organisations to the Board. To include single agency safeguarding governance arrangements, inspections, safeguarding performance, workforce development and training strategies, complaints and compliments.

Prevention

Prevention is one of the six Principles of Safeguarding. Within Gateshead we have prioritised preventative work and have produced a range of practice guidance notes and bespoke training courses to support our front line practitioners.

Challenge has also been encouraged at Board level to develop services that are preventative and proactive rather than reactive. Nonetheless the policy landscape is changing, along with operational practice, and it is important that the Safeguarding Adults Board continue to focus on the prevention agenda.

Key challenges include:

Short term (within year one)

- **Self Neglect** – Revise the Self Neglect Practice Guidance Note to reflect updated Care Act statutory guidance and deliver updated practitioner training.
- **Exploitation** – Work with the LSCB to develop action plan for the Strategic Exploitation Group which focuses upon sexual exploitation, trafficking and modern slavery.
- **Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)** – Work with LSCB to produce Practice Guidance in relation to FGM.
- **Housing** – Complete the ongoing project work to understand and embed the role of housing practitioners within the Safeguarding process.

Longer term (by year three)

- **Financial Abuse** - Revise the Self Neglect Practice Guidance Note to reflect updated Care Act statutory guidance and deliver practitioner training.
- **Develop an understanding of the safeguarding implications for integration of health and social care.**
- **Enhance operational response to the Prevent agenda** – work with Community Safety Board to improve operational response to Prevent Cases.

Community Engagement and Communication

The Safeguarding Adults Board have prioritised empowerment, personalisation and making safeguarding personal to ensure that those adults involved within the safeguarding process have their wellbeing promoted and, where appropriate, that regard is given to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action.

Everyday practice however has demonstrated that there is a lack of understanding about safeguarding adults with the wider community which can impact upon the effectiveness of safeguarding adults as a whole.

Key challenges include:

Short term (within year one)

- Develop a comprehensive Community Engagement and Communication Strategy.
- Develop and disseminate key Safeguarding Adult messages to the wider community.
- Deliver focussed engagement activity ie expand activities during SAFE week and Dignity week.

Longer term (by year three)

- Harness partner/community resources to support with community engagement activities
- Continue to develop Safeguarding Adults Board identity.
- Work with the community and Healthwatch to develop a rolling programme of consultation.
- Develop and implement a Safeguarding Adults Champion scheme to raise awareness about the safeguarding adults agenda.

Improved Operational Practice

While this is a strategic plan, the Safeguarding Adults Board must ensure that operational practice is fit for purpose and delivering person-centred outcomes.

Following implementation of the Care Act on 1 April 2015 and the subsequent implementation of revised Multi-Agency Policy and Procedures in Gateshead feedback from adults who have been through the safeguarding process and from practitioners has identified a number of key challenges that the Board must ensure are addressed.

Key challenges include:

Short term (within year one)

- Ensure feedback is provided, where appropriate, to those who raised the safeguarding concern at the beginning/end of safeguarding process.
- Work with partners and providers to encourage swifter responses from single agency investigations.

- Focus on consent
 - Raise awareness about importance of seeking consent prior to concern being raised
 - Clearly document why, in certain circumstances, consent is over-ridden and explain to the adult and/or their advocate the reason why.
- Enhance quality of concerns – develop practice guidance for raising a concern.

Longer term (by year three)

- Improved user engagement mechanisms utilising recommendations from the national Making Safeguarding Personal programme.
- Improve the implementation of Mental Capacity Act assessments and Best Interest Decisions within the safeguarding process.

Implementing Mental Capacity Act/Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards

The Mental Capacity Act, including Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards, has been subject to significant legislative changes resulting in an unprecedented increase in resource demands nationally and locally.

The agenda will continue to evolve as new ways of working and case law is embedded into practice. There is an increasing need to improve the knowledge base of the MCA and DoLS agenda and to further enhance engagement with partner agencies and service users in relation to the MCA to enable the successful incorporation into everyday assessment and care provision.

Key challenges include:

Short term (within year one)

- Raise awareness and improve understanding of MCA across partner agencies
- Agree an approach to manage the increase in DoLS applications
- Understand and respond to impact of Domestic DoLS

Longer term (by year three)

- Focused awareness raising with professionals with respect to 16/17 year olds and the MCA
- Community engagement with respect to MCA and DoLS
- Develop a targeted approach to MCA and finances
- Practitioner training with respect to court processes
- Continue to raise awareness of full DoLS process



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