

Topic:	Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board (SSASPB) Annual Report 2013/14
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Report Type	For Information

Purpose of the Report

1. The Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board (SSASPB) underwent a significant transformation during the reporting period and the reasoning and process by which this took place is fully documented in the Annual Report. The Annual Report is presented to the Board for information and to enable Board members to identify themes relevant to its prevention priorities.

Background

2. In January 2013 the Board appointed Jackie Carnell as its independent chair. She is currently also the independent chair of the Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board and Stoke on Trent Safeguarding Children Board. This facilitated a fresh look at the structure and function of the SSASPB. The Care Bill was gaining momentum towards receiving Royal Assent and new statutory footing for Safeguarding Adult Boards; both of these drivers lead to a full review of the core functions and governance of the Board resulting in a new Constitution, Structure and Governance arrangements.

Role and Function of the SSASPB

The role of the SSASPB is currently to:

- a) be the decision making body for multi agency adult safeguarding policies and procedures,
 - b) ensure the effectiveness of what each of its members does, and
 - c) lead a commitment to improve outcomes for vulnerable adults at risk of harm from others.
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The core functions of the SSASPB are to

- Play a strategic role in holding organisations to account where practice leads to abuse.
 - Ensure policies and procedures promote engagement with vulnerable adults throughout the investigation process.
 - Ensure staff are competent in working with people and have the authority, skills and knowledge to use the full range of interventions/legal powers.
 - Collect hard data, qualitative data and the views of service users, carers and family members to inform commissioners of service requirements and to improve practice.
 - Conduct multi agency Safeguarding Adult Reviews where:-
 - An adult in the area covered by the Board (whether or not the local authority was meeting any of these needs) was, or the Board suspects, that the adult was, experiencing abuse or neglect, and
 - The adult dies or there is reasonable cause for concern about how the SASPB, a member of it, or some other person involved in the adult's case acted.
 - Ensure lessons are learnt to improve practice.
 - Be accountable to the public by publishing an Annual Report on its achievements, members' activity and the findings from any Safeguarding Adult Reviews.
 - Communicate the importance of adult safeguarding widely to communities and all those delivering services with guidance on how to seek help and support.
3. The core functions of the SSASPB are to be delivered through five sub-groups (District sub-group, Learning and Development sub-group, Policies and Procedures sub-group, Performance, Monitoring and Evaluation sub-group and Safeguarding Adult Review sub-group) and an Executive Sub-group each of which produces an annual business plan. The plans are driven by the Executive Sub-group and overseen by the Board itself whose responsibility it is to monitor progress and unblock inhibitors to progress.
4. The strategic priorities for the reporting period and continuing into the following year (2014/15) were: a) to embed the revised structure, constitution and governance of the SSASPB, through establishing strong partner relationships, clear accountability and transparency of operation and purpose. b) to prepare the SSASPB for a smooth transition into the statutory footing created by the Care Act 2014. c) To consider and monitor the SSASPB response to National Publications and Reviews. d) To
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ensure that the prevention of adult abuse is evident within the work plans of the SSASPB sub-groups and e) To develop and deliver an SSASPB Communication Plan.

Terms of reference and membership

5. During the reporting period the Board and its sub-groups have developed agreed terms of reference and a consistent membership which reflects the broadness of the partner agencies. Together with the (soon to be) statutory partners (Local Authorities, Health and Police) there are representatives from Healthwatch, Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service, West Midlands Ambulance Service, Staffordshire and West Midlands Probation Trust, District Councils, VAST, Staffordshire Association of Registered Care Providers, Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board, Stoke on Trent Safeguarding Children Board, Domestic Abuse and Hate Crime fora.

Budget

6. The SSASPB is reliant on the contributions it receives from member agencies and the SSASPB is funded through a multi-agency budget. The agreed budget allocation for 2013/14 was £96,668. Staffordshire County Council makes a contribution equivalent to £51,776 through the provision of multi-agency Adult Protection training.

Next Challenges

7. Forthcoming challenges include a) to respond to the Care Act 2014. National Guidance was published on 15th October 2014 which has led to a complete review of current Inter-Agency Policies and Procedures. b) to ensure that partner agencies continue to support the SSASPB through appropriate levels of funding. c) to produce strategic priorities which will have focus on the prevention of adult abuse.

Adult Protection data

8. Owing to the transfer to a new case management IT system in October 2013 the data produced in the Annual Report covers the six month period from 1st April 2013 to September 30th 2013. The data shows that the number of referrals has stopped increasing and has levelled out. This is unexpected as the historical trend has been for a consistent rise in the number of referrals. We will look at the trend next year to see if this is a temporary position, or one effected by only having 6 months of data. Referrals continue to come predominantly from professionals (86%). Of the referrals made 48% relate to vulnerable adults with a physical
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disability, a 15% increase on the previous reporting period and 14% relate to vulnerable adults with dementia compared to 18% in 2012/13. If you separate the vulnerable adults by age: over 65s tend to have a physical disability, frailty and dementia whilst those under 65 have a learning disability or issue with substance misuse. Physical abuse still tends to be the main reason for a referral, however Neglect referrals are increasing with a steady 16% increase since 2009/10 figures. This could be as a result of raising the awareness of neglect and will be monitored through the Performance, Monitoring and Evaluation sub-group. 54% of alleged abusers are non- professionals (e.g. family/other service users) and 40% are professionals (e.g. carers). 42% of alleged abuse took place in a care home whilst 38% took place in the vulnerable adult's own home. This is very similar to the figures reported in the previous year.

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1. Appendices/Background Papers

Appendix 1 – The Annual Report of the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board 2013/14