

2 Critical Years in Review

How the Board Has Overseen and Led on Safeguarding in Sandwell during a Pandemic

Sandwell Safeguarding Adult Board

Bi-Annual Report

2020 – 2022

Reporting Period March 2020 – March 2022

www.sandwellsab.org.uk



Highlights

- Board Members continued to work together, and maximised the use of Microsoft Teams technology to enable more frequent 6 weekly meetings. This timescale and frequency still continues and has supported a continued culture of problem solving and maximising opportunities in Sandwell.
- SSAB undertook a board development session in October 2021, in which the commitment to learning from Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SAR) was re-affirmed and the priorities were agreed.
- The SSAB Bi-Annual Report is coproduced with all partners. A shorter film based report is also available.
- Continued representation at both a regional and national level by SSAB Operations Manager, Independent Chair and business team staff members ensuring Sandwell has every opportunity to showcase and lead best practice and assurance with reference to safeguarding adults with needs for care and support.



Highlights

- SSAB Business Team employed a SAR Co-Ordinator with a specific focus on setting up and planning panel meetings, ensuring partnership attendance at SAR discussions and decision making panels continues to be robust.
- The Board is supported by three of sub groups who continue to work on identified priorities and there is evidence of progress within the Bi-Annual Report.
- Introduced the VARM process as a direct consequence of learning from SARs (This is a practice change)
- Participated in a regional SAR group taking learning from national SAR review undertaken by Professor Preston-Shoot
- Sponsored a project with Alcohol change UK looking at the impact of alcohol use and acquired brain injury.



What is Our Data Telling Us?

- The bi-annual report gives us the opportunity to consider data over a 2 year time period.
- 2020 – 2021 the number of safeguarding referrals being made were increasing with over half of those referrals going onto become full safeguarding enquiries.
- 2021-2022 possibly unsurprisingly the number of safeguarding referrals being made went down, fewer referrals went on to become full safeguarding enquiries.
- Over the 2 year reporting period the breakdown of completed enquiries shows us that over half of all enquiries were female and the majority of those were older people.
- Over the 2 year period, as an average, 48% of all abuse in Sandwell happens in a person's own home. 40% of this abuse is committed by someone the person knows.
- In 95% of safeguarding enquiries the risk to the individual/s was reduced or removed.
- 85% of people asked said that the support services they used helped them to feel safer.



Learning from Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SAR's) across the partnership

We are committed to embedding the learning as identified in the review undertaken earlier in the year and the ongoing SAR's. During the reporting period, we have commissioned 7 SAR's this year and the emerging themes are identified as:

- Failure to appropriately identify risk and record it
- Lack of clarity about how to escalate concerns regarding risk or no clear evidence that this has happened
- Absence of multi-agency working or understanding about when/how to convene a multi-disciplinary meeting
- Absence of evidence supporting assumptions or decisions that individuals have capacity



Learning from Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SAR's) across the partnership

(emerging themes)

- Challenge in building relationships where individuals are seen as 'difficult to engage'
- Use of language that does not support engagement, for example, 'it's a lifestyle choice'
- Information sharing (understanding what information to share and who with)
- Not recognising self-neglect



Learning from Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SAR's) across the partnership

In the two year reporting period SSAB have commissioned a thematic review in partnership with Mike Ward from Alcohol Change u.k and Professor Michael Preston-Shoot who has recently undertaken a national review of all SAR's and is a recognised expert in his field. This is a really exciting opportunity for Sandwell.

SSAB have introduced key practice changes highlighted in SAR reports and learning. Principally the introduction of the Vulnerable Adults at Risk Procedure enabling any professional who has significant concerns about an individual to call risk management meeting involving all key stakeholders including the adult themselves and or families.



Learning from Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SAR's) across the partnership

SSAB have supported National and place based work on effective engagement and how to build positive relationships supporting people in a person centred way and building on strengths.

SSAB have also supported authors to undertake learning briefs with frontline staff and have planned and participated in learning events that have happened across the system.



Looking Forward in 2022 - 2023

What a challenging 3 years!

As the reporting period ends for this report we are all still considering what is the new normal and adapting to hybrid working and returning to some face to face activity.

- As a Board we continue to meet on teams and have welcomed some new members. We are planning some face to face meetings and we had our first face to face board development afternoon in July 2022.
- As a board we are keen to ensure that all feel able to contribute and have planned a hybrid learning event with a focus on learning from Statutory Reviews that have been undertaken in the borough over the last 2 years in October 2022.
- We have reviewed our priorities and agreed key activity.



Looking Forward in 2022-2023

Key Strategic Priorities

- Listening to the voices of people who use services and front-line practitioners
- Develop more inclusive Performance Data
- Embedding learning from Safeguarding Adult Reviews
- Board Governance



Looking Forward in 2022-2023

What we have agreed we will do

- Continue to involve and engage with citizens and partners maximising opportunities using existing systems and link to specific workstreams.
- Undertake work using a multi-agency Task & Finish approach exploring the effectiveness of the current Safeguarding Pathway in Sandwell outlining areas for improvement and recommending alternative models.
- Understand what is happening in care homes provision in Sandwell as a priority those homes that have no CQC rating. Hear about peoples experience who live there and hear from employees who work there.



Looking Forward in 2022-2023

What we have agreed we will do

- Undertake a baseline audit with partners using the care act compliance audit tool in September 2022. Update SSAB on progress and establish a challenge event in the spring of 2023.
- Safeguarding Adult Review action plans will be developed in partnership using a task and finish approach and agencies will be held to account for their actions.
- SSAB will work with other statutory boards to agree key priorities and who will lead on them.

