

Partnership Safeguarding Information & Data

Adult Social Care and Health

The Care Act 2014 sets out statutory duties and responsibilities for safeguarding adults including the requirement to undertake enquiries under section 42 of the Act. Below is a summary of key safeguarding activity during 2023/24 for both concerns raised, and enquiries undertaken by Adult Social Care and Health (ASCH) in East Sussex County Council.



A safeguarding concern is when someone reports an adult is being abused, neglected, or exploited.

The total number of safeguarding concerns received in 2023/24 was **5,408, an increase of 5.1%** compared to 5,145 in 2022/23.



A section 42 enquiry relates to the duty of the Local Authority to make enquiries, or have others do so, if an adult may be at risk of abuse or neglect.

The total number of safeguarding enquiries (S42 and Other) that commenced in 2023/24 was **2,969, an increase of 7.2%** compared to 2,770 enquiries in 2022/23.

The table below illustrates the number of concerns raised in the year and enquiries started 2017/18 to 2023/24.

Year	Total Concerns	Concerns not progressed to enquiry	Enquiries started (S42 and Other)
2017/18	4873	3309	1546
2018/19	4841	3711	1119
2019/20	4465	2433	2021
2020/21	4931	2910	2002
2021/22	5820	3397	2419
2022/23	5145	2353	2770
2023/24	5408	2437	2969

Type and location of risk reported nationally in 2023/24¹ in completed section 42 enquiries.

East Sussex data in 2023/24 is similar to the national data from 2022/23.

The most common type of risk in Section 42 enquiries that concluded in the year was Neglect and Acts of Omission, which accounted for 34% of risks (32% nationally in 2023/24) and the most common location of the risk was the person's own home at 43% (compared to 47% nationally in 2023/24).

Outcomes for completed Safeguarding Enquiries (S42 and Other)

 The desired outcomes are the wishes of the adult at risk or their representative which have been expressed at some point during the information gathering or enquiry phases.

	Fully achieved	Partially achieved	Not achieved
2022/23	47%	47%	6%
2023/24	53%	42%	5%

Making Safeguarding Personal – outcomes for completed S42 enquiries.

- The total outcomes fully or partially achieved has increased to 95% in 23/24, from 94% in 22/23.
- Of those cases over 80% (1783) were asked and outcomes were expressed.
- 54% of outcomes were fully achieved, 41% partially achieved and 5% not achieved (2 cases did not have outcomes achieved recorded).
- There will be cases where outcomes will not have been achieved - where desired outcomes are beyond the remit and control of the enquiry, or where the situation has changed from the initial desired outcomes that were recorded.

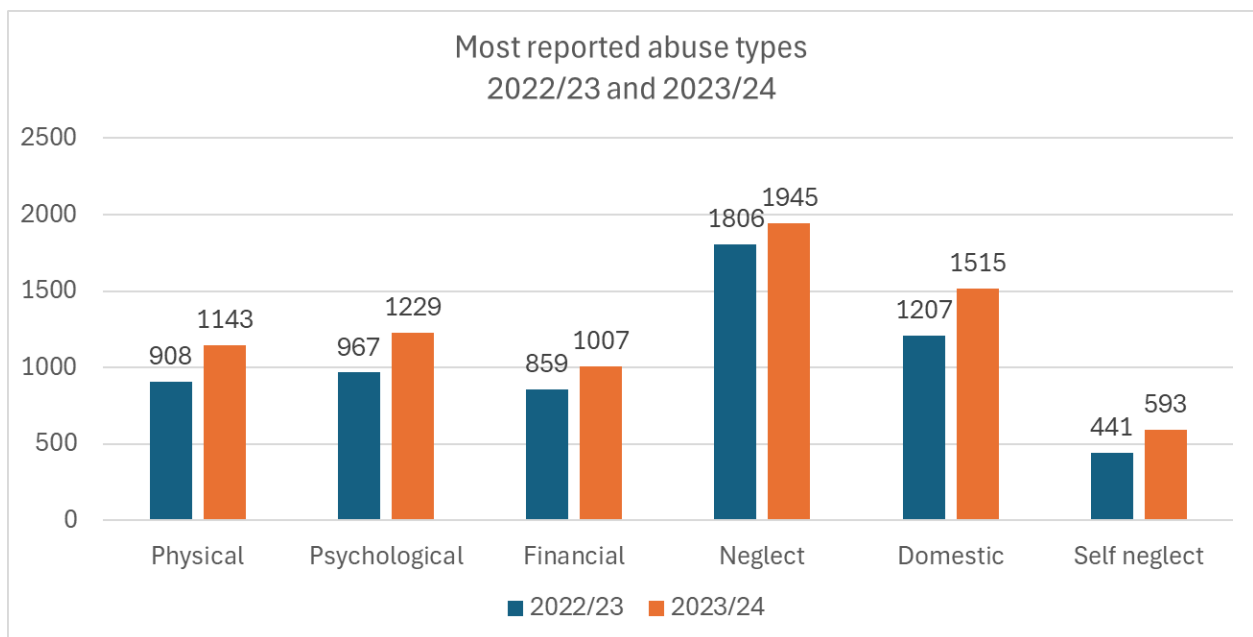
¹ [Safeguarding Adults, England, 2022-23 - NDRS \(digital.nhs.uk\)](https://digital.nhs.uk)

Mental capacity for completed Safeguarding Enquiries (S42 and Other)

	Adult has capacity	Adult lacks capacity	Not Known
2022/23	71%	28%*	1%
2023/24	70%	29%*	2%

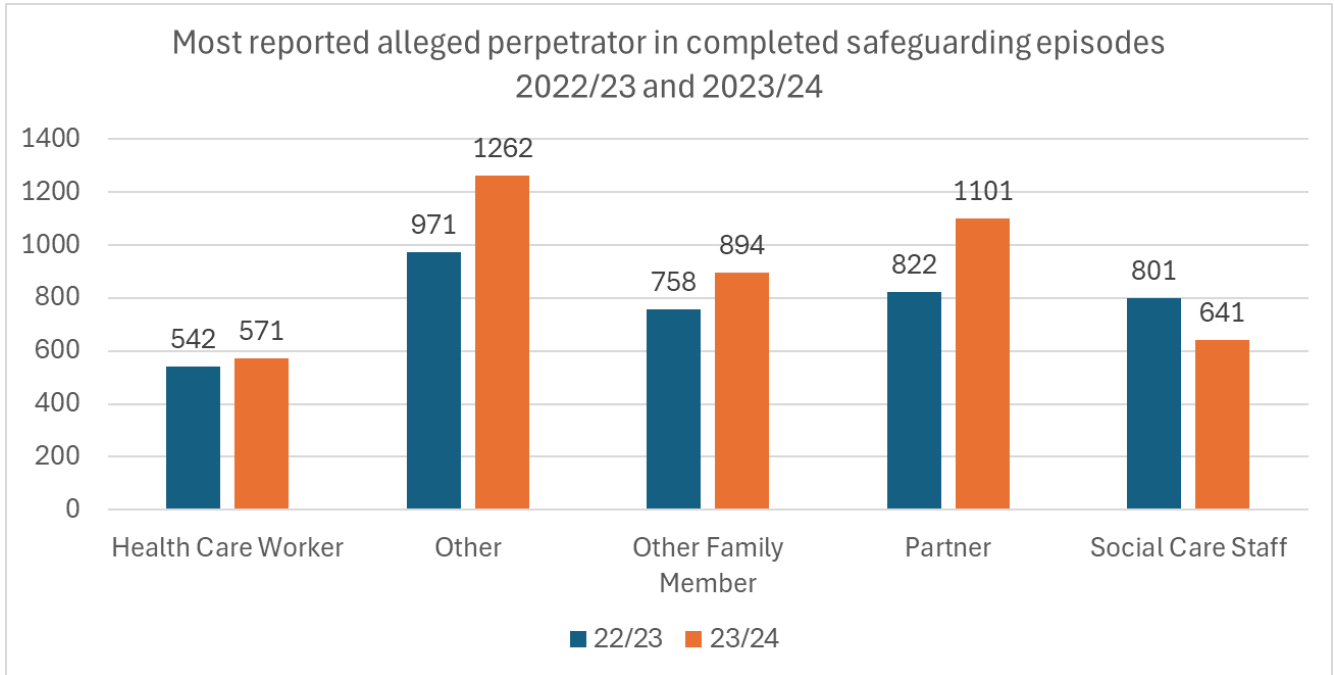
Of the adults who lacked capacity, 98% were supported by an advocate in both 2022/23 and 2023/24.

Most reported abuse types by completed safeguarding episode.



- The most reported abuse types in 2023/24 remain the same as 2022/23. All abuse types have increased this financial year.
- The most significant changes in these abuse types are physical abuse with a 26% increase, psychological with a 27% increase and domestic with a 26% increase.

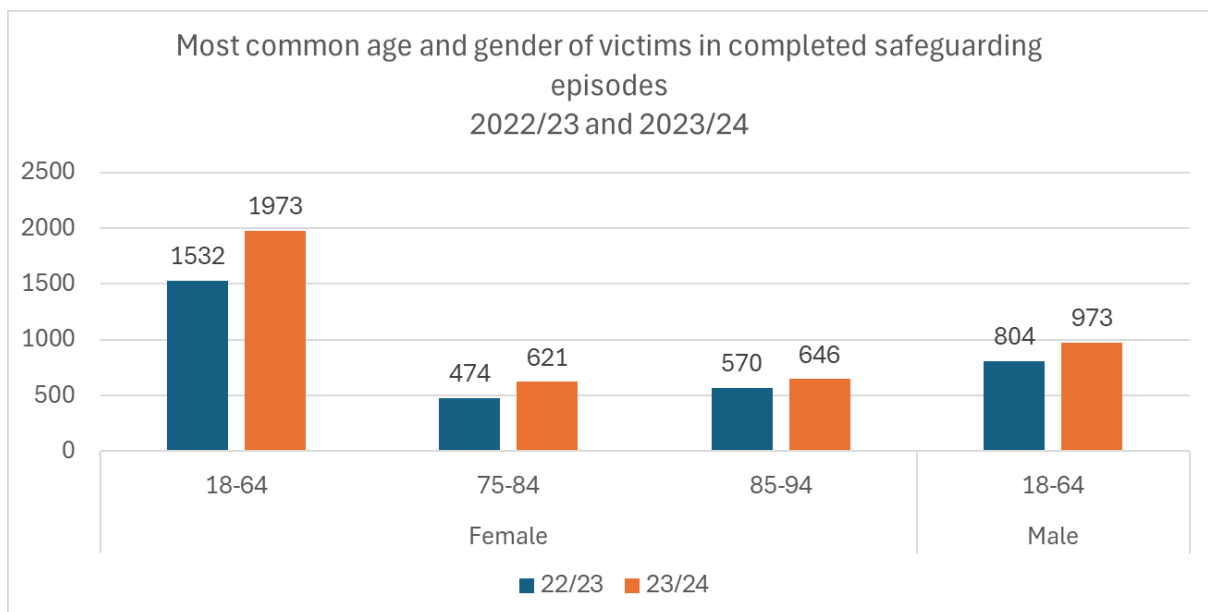
Most common locations of abuse in completed safeguarding episodes.



- The most common reported location of abuse in completed safeguarding episodes is in the adult at risk’s own home (2925). This has increased by 15% compared to last year’s figures (2537).
- The second most common location continues to be Care Homes. This has increased this year from 1124 to 1236, an increase of 15%.

Most common age and gender of victims in completed safeguarding episodes.

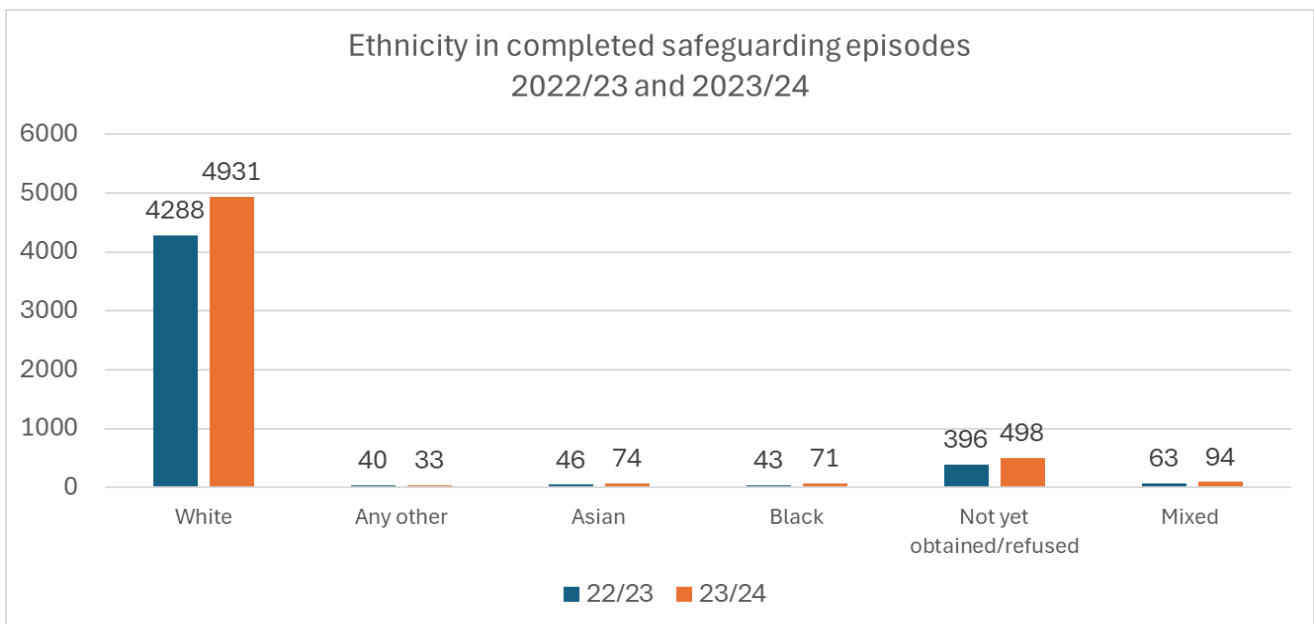
Alleged perpetrator type in completed safeguarding episodes.



Safeguarding episodes by ethnicity

The table below shows a breakdown of the ethnicity categories in completed safeguarding episodes.

- Adults of white origin continue to be the largest group, accounting for 86% of all completed safeguarding episodes in 2023/24 which is a slight decrease from 88% in 2022/23.
- The second largest group is Mixed that has increased from 63 in 2022/23 to 94 in 2023/24.





Sussex Police

The table below shows the number of Crimes per Category of Abuse Risk reported between 1st January 2023 to 1st January 2024).

Physical	741
Institutional	2
Neglect	37
Discriminatory	12
Psychological	221
Sexual	320
Financial	55



Operation Signature² is the force campaign to identify and support vulnerable victims of fraud. The campaign aims to combat fraud and scams with a particular focus on protecting the more vulnerable and elderly.

- In 2023/24 Operation Signature supported 623 victims in East Sussex who were either standard, medium, or high-risk victims of fraud and scams.
- Across East Sussex vulnerable people have been targeted by scammers who have stolen £568.60K through courier fraud.
- The majority of the 266 reports of courier fraud in East Sussex reported to Op Signature have been targeted at women aged 75yrs or over. Of those cases 91 suffered a financial loss, leading to the fraudsters walking away with £414.13K.
- East Sussex residents lost £869.41K to dating scams in 2023.

² <https://www.sussex.police.uk/advice/advice-and-information/wsi/watch-schemes-initiatives/os/operation-signature/>

How Sussex Police tackle fraud.

Sussex Police have prevented 2.5 million pounds falling into the hands of criminals this year through their banking protocol.

Sussex Police marked World Braille Day on 4 January with the release of a braille version of **The Little Book of Scams** is the first edition nationally to be converted to braille.

You can hear more about how police are tackling fraud through this short Interview with Sussex Police's Financial Abuse Safeguarding Officer: **How Sussex Police tackle fraud - interview with Sussex Police's Financial Abuse Safeguarding Officer**

Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Harassment and Honour-based violence.

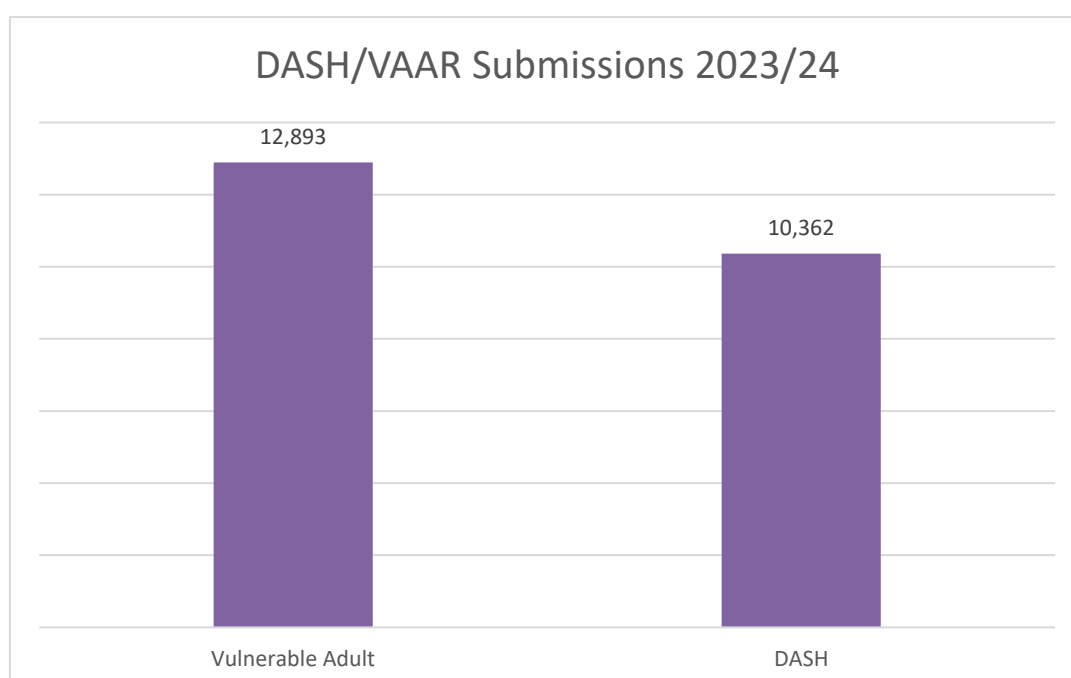


Risk forms (DASH) are for use by specialist domestic abuse and other non-police agencies for identification of risks when domestic abuse, 'honour'-based violence and/or stalking are disclosed.



The Vulnerable Adult at Risk (VAAR) section of the Single Combined Assessment of Risk Form (SCARF) is completed by the police for every safeguarding concern.

Submissions for both the VAAR and DASH have increased over the past 12 months. In 2022/23 VAAR submissions were 10,214 and DASH forms 9,455.



Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust

Sussex Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (SPFT) records safeguarding incidents within its incident recording system. This provides a central database for the storage and analysis of the Trust's safeguarding data.

The table below shows the number of safeguarding adult incidents that were raised by SPFT teams working in East Sussex in 2023/24. Numbers were in line with the previous year however there was an increased recording of domestic abuse but is believed to be due to increased awareness and identification of domestic abuse rather than a proportionate increase in the levels of domestic abuse.

Adult Safeguarding Concern Incident Numbers 2023/24

Categories of Abuse	Number
Physical	73
Sexual	37
Financial	32
Discriminatory	3
Domestic	59
Psychological/emotional	46
Neglect & acts of omission	59
Self-neglect	26
Organisational	6
Modern slavery	0
Total	341

Section 42 Enquiries

Trust safeguarding enquiry information records forty-two Section 42 enquiries within East Sussex where the Trust was believed to be the cause of risk.

Safeguarding Adult Reviews

SPFT safeguarding enquiry information recorded forty-seven Section 42 enquiries within East Sussex where the Trust was named as the cause of risk. The majority of these enquiries were linked to inpatient mental health settings where patients at risk of harm to themselves or others are together in a confined space. The most common category of abuse for these enquiries was neglect / acts of omission.

Enquiries focussed on issues related to delays in admission and incidents on the wards. Concern continues to exist about safeguarding risks arising from hospital admission delays following mental health act assessments. The issues leading to this situation are complex and relate to the number of hospital beds as well as available health and social care support in the community to enable discharge of patients who no-longer need to be in hospital.

Safeguarding Adult Reviews

SPFT was integral to three East Sussex Safeguarding Adult Reviews which were published in the last year. These were:

- **SAR Charlie**- SPFT is working to address recommendations linked to safe transfer of care for young people moving between local authority areas, child, and adult services and where there are concerns about hospital discharge.
- **SAR Finley** - SPFT is working to address recommendations to improve dual diagnosis assessment, support planning, and ensure mental capacity considerations are fully considered in these situations.
- **SAR Gwen & Ian** - SPFT has made changes to its processes where people with dementia require referral to adult social care.

Safeguarding Initiatives & Projects

- **Domestic Abuse** - The Trust implemented new domestic abuse training in December 2023. The training was developed in conjunction with Safelives³ and addresses recommendations from safeguarding adult and domestic homicide reviews. The new training includes an increased focus on the importance of routine enquiry of domestic abuse as part of patient assessments.
- **Digital Device and Internet Access Policy for Service Users in Inpatient Settings** - Safeguarding service staff with Prevent⁴ responsibilities have contributed to the development of this policy which will be published in 2024/25. The Trust has recognised the risks to patients' mental health and their susceptibility to radicalisation through the internet when acutely unwell within inpatient settings.
- **Quality Reviews** - The Trust Safeguarding Adult Team is now an integrated member of its internal services' quality review process. In the last year it has contributed to quality reviews of community and inpatient services. These have provided opportunities to promote the pan Sussex *Safeguarding Adults Thresholds: Guidance for Professionals*. This SAB document is key to guiding staff about when to contact the local authority with safeguarding concerns.
- **SPFT Safeguarding Service**- SPFT's Safeguarding Service is fully staffed and allows the Trust to deliver its safeguarding adult training in line with NHS requirements. It also enables the Trust to support its frontline services to respond to safeguarding concerns and enquiries, and to play its part in the work of the Sussex Safeguarding Adult Board. The challenge for the Trust is delivering core services at a time of increasing demand and continuing pressure on health and social care resources.

³ [SafeLives - Ending domestic abuse](#)

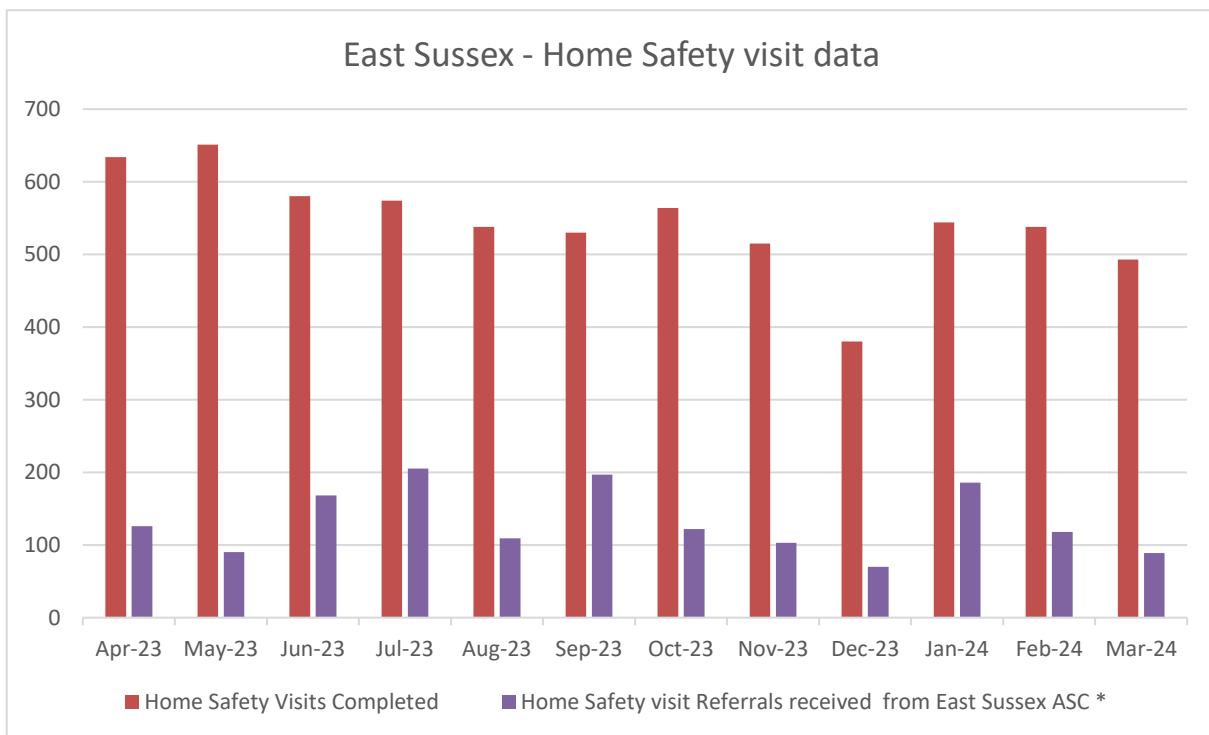
⁴ [Prevent duty guidance: England and Wales \(2023\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service

Home Safety Visits

East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (ESFRS) provide Home Safety Visits (HSV's) to members of the community with essential information on safety in their home, escape plans and what to do in the case of a fire.

ESFRS also works with GP surgeries to deliver home safety visits to those most at risk from accidental dwelling fires.



- In 2023/24 over 6,000 home safety visits were completed in East Sussex

Coming to Notice (CTN) forms

- 418 CTN forms were submitted in 2023/24 in relation to safeguarding concerns.
- Hoarding represented 25% of all concerns.
- Additional support represented 19% of all concerns.



There were 2827 cases (As of the 31st of May 2024) managed by the Brighton and East Sussex Probation Delivery Unit.

In 2023/24, there have been increases in safeguarding enquiry requests and responses, as well as an increase in the number of police intelligence requests, with a small decrease in the number of police intelligence responses.

- The percentage of cases with a safeguarding enquiry requested was 76.44%, which is an increase of 19.29% on 2022/23.
- The percentage of cases with a safeguarding enquiry response was 71.74%, which is an increase of 7.87% on 2022/23.
- The percentage of cases with a police enquiry requested was 81.18%, which is an increase of 8.89% on 2022/23.
- The percentage of cases with a police enquiry response was 56.77%, which is a decrease of 2.63% on 2022/23.

Safeguarding and Police Requests Within the Last 12 Months by Gender

PDU	Type of Safeguarding Check				Total
	Safeguarding Enquiries Requested	Safeguarding Enquiries - Response Received	Police Intelligence Enquiries - Requested	Police Intelligence Enquiries - Response Received	
Female	260	213	279	124	876
Male	2018	1535	2513	1228	7294
Total	2278	1748	2792	1352	8170

- 89.76% of requests and responses are for males on the Brighton & East Sussex caseload.

Safeguarding and Police Requests Within the Last 12 Months by Age Group

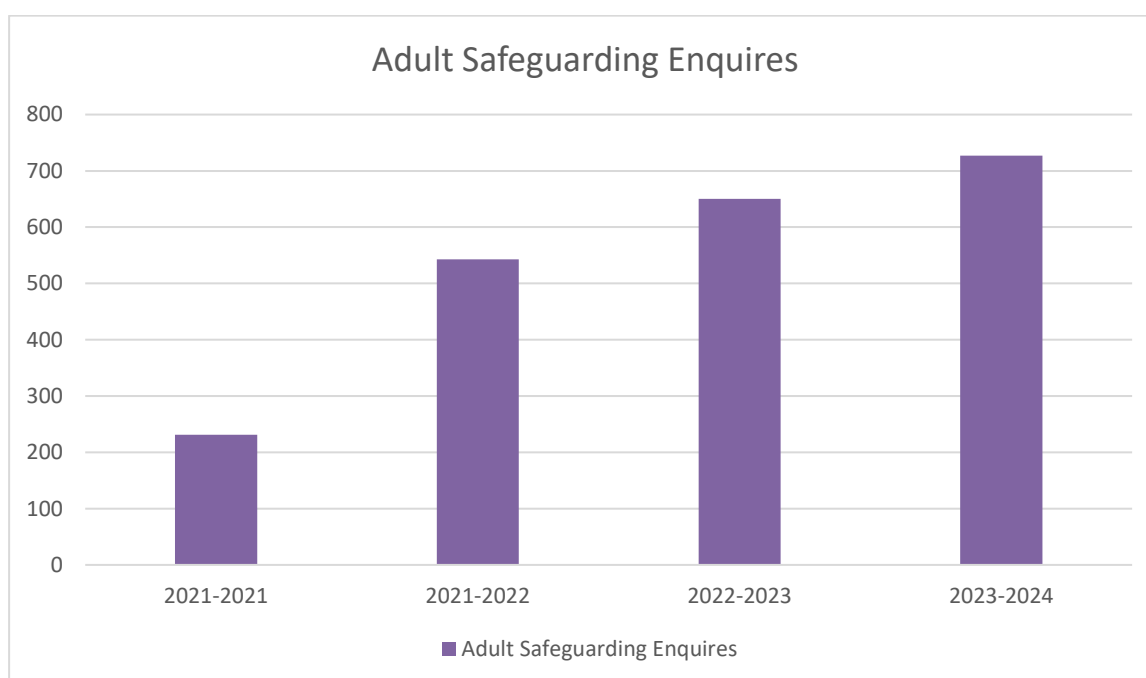
PDU	Type of Safeguarding Check				Total
	Safeguarding Enquiries Requested	Safeguarding Enquiries - Response Received	Police Intelligence Enquiries - Requested	Police Intelligence Enquiries - Response Received	
18-20	117	75	133	53	378
21-24	185	134	220	99	638
25-30	386	303	481	249	1419
31-40	810	614	917	476	2817
41-50	421	333	550	245	1549
51-60	235	187	332	162	916
61-70	80	70	101	41	292
71-80	34	21	47	22	124
81-90	9	10	9	4	32
91-100	0	0	1	1	2
Deceased	1	1	1	0	3
Total	2278	1748	2792	1352	8170

- 34.47% of requests and responses are for the 31-40 age group of the Brighton and East Sussex caseload.

East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust (ESHT) continues to see high numbers of Safeguarding Adults enquiries, with 727 recorded in 2023-2024.

Data from 2022-2023 identified 722 cases but exception reporting extracting referrals that referenced historic events has reduced this figure. Improved data collection systems for 2023-2024 have reinforced the picture of a year-on-year increase in the number of Safeguarding Adults enquiries. This covers both acute and community services and includes enquiries raised by ESHT and those about ESHT.

The predominate themes continue to be neglect, self-neglect, and domestic abuse.

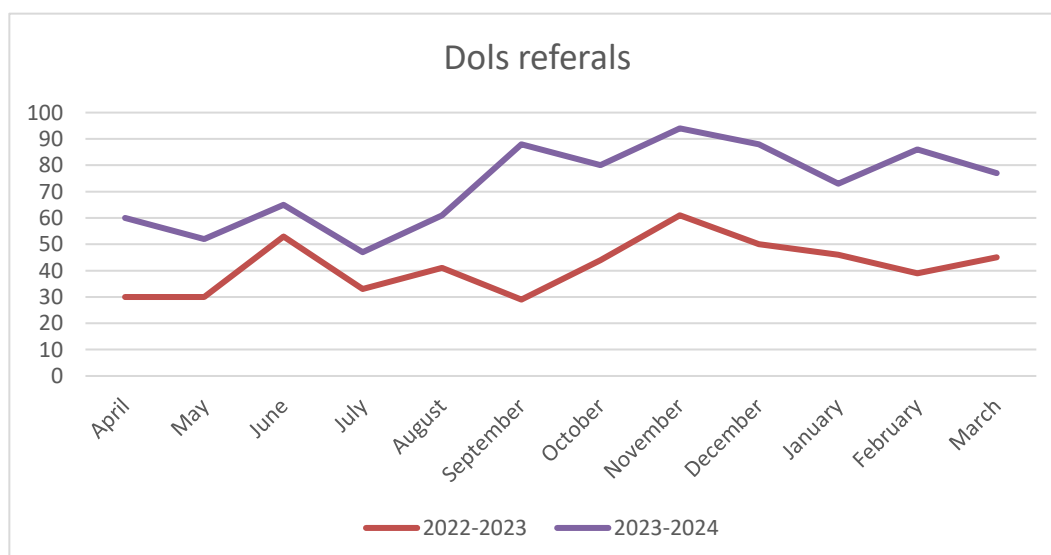


Significant work has been and continues to be undertaken with regard to discharge and members of the team participated in discharge events, discussing key themes such as the importance of robust documentation and communication. A quality improvement aspect of work was the development of a weekly tracker which has continued throughout 2023-2024.

- Several discharge events were facilitated last year providing staff with an overview of differing agencies role in supporting the journeys of complex patients. This includes safely balancing patient choice whilst also trying to mitigate the risk of harm from deconditioning. In trying to ensure that patients do not rapidly decondition; the culture and approach to falls prevention is changing as a result.
- Systems have developed to improve data collection for adult safeguarding.

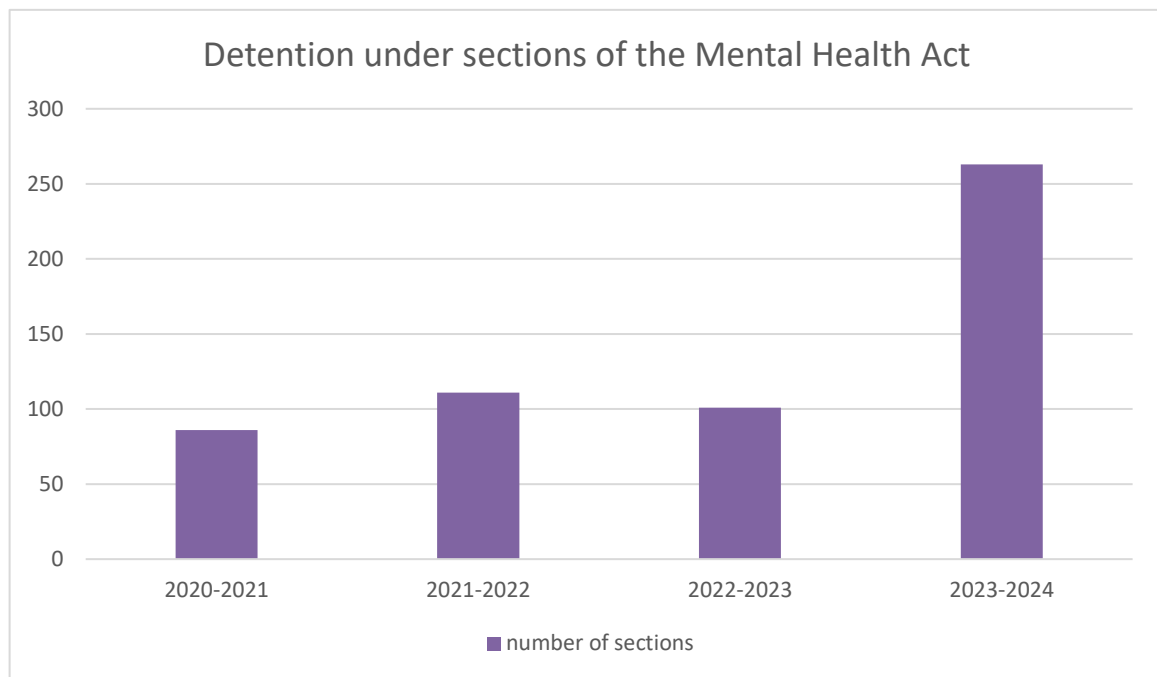
Appendix 1

- A piece of work to embed a 'rapid assessment tool' to undertake the routine enquiry of domestic abuse has progressed with a process now mandated for all patient's over 16 attending the Emergency Departments. Further work will be undertaken progress routine enquiry across the organisation.
- The safeguarding team participated in three learning events for Community Health and Integrated care division, the topics covered were self-neglect, domestic abuse, and weapons.
- There has been an additional and significant challenge with the very high numbers of patients with a very extended length of stay many of whom are frail, complex and at high risk of harm e.g., falls, pressure damage and psychological distress.
- The presentation of some cases is increasingly complex. An area where this is continued to be a feature is within Maternity Safeguarding, for example domestic abuse considerations have also to encompass any risks to new-borns and other families.
- ESHT facilitate level 3 training as a Think Family Safeguarding model. The training was updated in 2023-2024, staff access an assessed e-learning package prior to joining a facilitated session which is either a virtual training platform or a classroom setting.
- The Health Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (HIDVA) facilitates Domestic Abuse training within the trust. In 2023 the HIDVA also facilitated a second cohort of training for Domestic Abuse champions within the trust.
- The trust employs a Mental Capacity Lead who has facilitated workshops across the organisation. The impact of her work is demonstrated through the increase in Deprivation of Liberty applications.



Appendix 1

- The safeguarding team commenced daily safeguarding huddles within the Emergency Departments to enable a process to support staff to recognise and manage safeguarding concerns in real time.
- The numbers of people that have been cared for within ESHT under a section of the Mental Health Act has significantly increased in 2023-2024.



- In 2023/24 there were 28,748 plaudits/ compliments received.

“I was having a CT scan with an injection beforehand. After the scan I became unwell and the lovely staff were so kind, so reassuring. They held me and helped me onto a bed until I felt better. Their kindness restored my faith in people and really helped me to feel better.”

“My mum was admitted to Surgical Assessment Unit in February. The nurses & Drs were wonderful and caring. I had travelled over from Spain and didn’t know what to expect but my mum was treated with respect and dignity at the end of her life. They not only cared for my mother, but my well being too.”

NHS Sussex Integrated Care Board

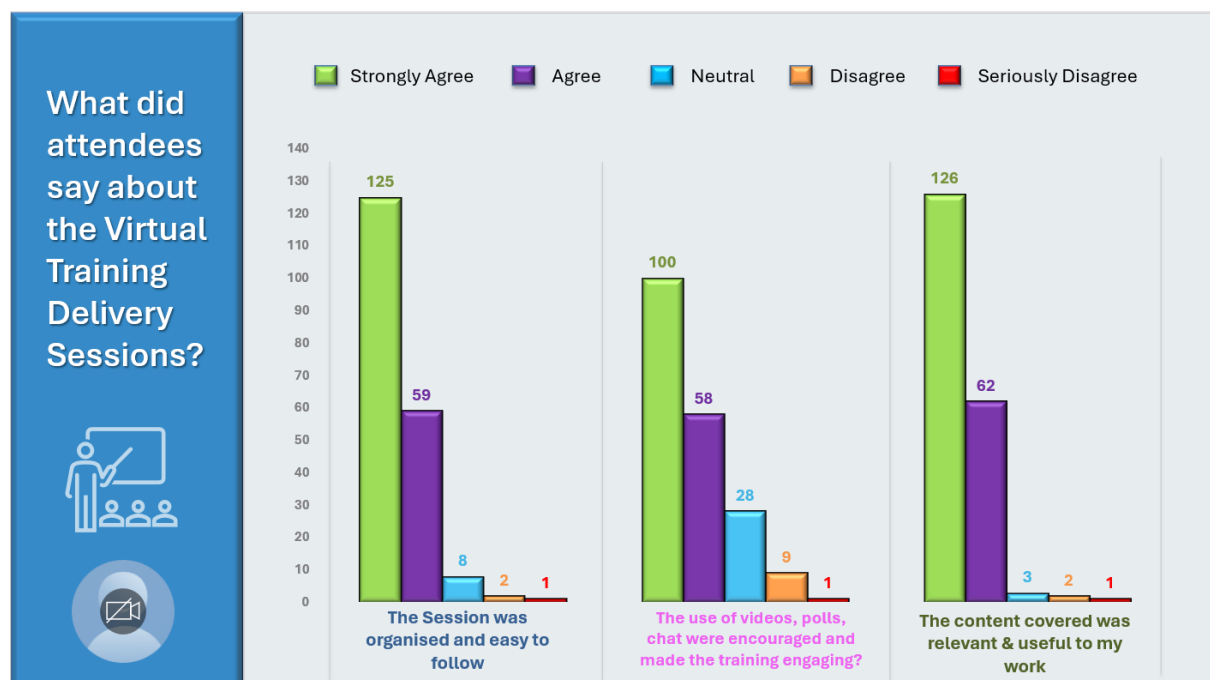
NHS Sussex (also known as the local Integrated Care Board, or ICB) continues to work alongside both statutory and the wider partners of the Safeguarding Adults Board to safeguard the local population.

NHS Sussex is represented on all SAB subgroups and leadership groups and supports all key decision-making functions of the SAB as one of three lead partner agencies alongside adult social care, health and police.

In addition to fulfilling its statutory obligations, as per the NHS: Safeguarding accountability and assurance framework, during the 2023-24 year, NHS Sussex have continued to support strengthening Health safeguarding practice and arrangements, across East Sussex, with some notable highlights this past year including:

- Following on from the success in the previous year, during November 2023 NHS Sussex once again co-ordinated a “**Safeguarding and Children in Care Fortnight**” and an in-person conference. Across the two weeks thirteen virtual events were held, attended by over 900 multi-agency workers from a wide array of organisations.

The conference focused on the links between health inequalities and safeguarding and children in care. Many of the session themes related to areas within the East Sussex SABs Learning and Development Priorities and included transition (children to adults), sexual safety, exploring extreme right-wing narratives, safer sleep, self-neglect, fraud, intimate partner violence, adversity and mental health, crimes of honour and learning from the lives and deaths of people with a learning disability/autistic people.



- **Strengthening partnership working between Safeguarding Leads from NHS Provider organisations and those within the Independent Health sector** (many of which who provide NHS care). As a result of feedback from members, an NHS Sussex led supportive Pan-Sussex forum (which meets quarterly) extended its membership to support increased partnership working across the Health Sector, notwithstanding recognising all are working with our communities within East Sussex, along with the relevancy learning from SARs across the Health landscape.

- **Strengthening Safeguarding Assurance Across all Commissioned Services.**

NHS Sussex have continued to improve the quality of safeguarding assurance across our health services, and during 2023/24 a set of safeguarding standards were included within all standard contracts, in addition to the exceptions laid out in the NHS standard contract and these provide the baseline for our exception reporting. For 2023/24, NHS Sussex set a corporate target to ensure that all commissioned services are benchmarked against the Sussex Safeguarding Standards, with the team supporting providers to develop action plans against for areas of development. Compliance targets were met across the NHS providers.

As part of this work, training audits have been undertaken across providers, and site visits have been undertaken across all NHS Trusts to identify areas of learning and consolidate the data received from the initial provider self-assessment.

The team have identified appropriate stretch targets for all providers in relation to the Sussex Safeguarding Standards to help further improve quality of safeguarding practice across Sussex in 2024/25 and this will be a continued priority for the team and a focus of our ongoing work plan.

- NHS Sussex launched the **Safeguarding Standards for Registered Care Home and Domiciliary Care Providers**. The safeguarding standards were co-produced with providers and other key stakeholders providing them with a resource tool to evidence compliance with safeguarding legislation and statutory guidance and supporting them to demonstrate that people with care and support needs can feel safe within their care.

- **Development of training portal in East Sussex**

Work has been undertaken with NHSE colleagues to develop a regional portal for all health partners/ providers to upload and share their existing training packages, with the aim of improving the shared information and quality of training provision across the region. The pilot was launched in February 2024 and is accessible for staff across the South East region. Early feedback regarding the pilot has been positive, with providers advising that it saves time

and resource to access and use the available training and supports to assure themselves and benchmark against their existing training packages. The full launch of the portal is scheduled for early autumn 2024.

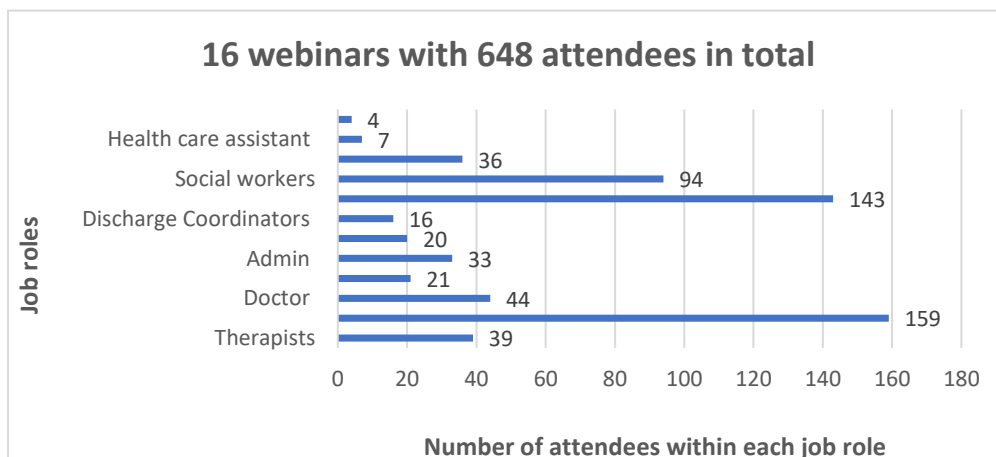
- **Mental Capacity Act – upskilling programme**

Through triangulation and analysing Care Act (2014) Section 42 enquiries, learning from Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs) and Serious Incident Investigations (SI) it was identified that clinical and social care front line staff often lack confidence or competence to use the Mental Capacity Act (MCA) (2005) in decision making, care planning and patient care. This was particularly notable due to the planned implementation of Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS) under the Mental Capacity (Amendment) Act 2019 (which has since been suspended) and the impact this would have on NHS organisations.

To enable development and delivery of a comprehensive MCA education programme across Sussex Integrated Care System (ICS), a successful bid for funding was made to the NHS Health Education England (HEE) Community Upskilling programme (NHS Long Term Plan 2023). The funds received enabled the development of **a comprehensive MCA training programme of 16 webinars for 648 delegates from across Sussex Health and Social Care with training delivery completed during 2023/24.**

A nationally respected expert legal trainer/ Court of Protection lawyer was commissioned to work alongside a number of safeguarding and MCA professionals across all NHS organisations in Sussex. The following topics were delivered over a series of 16 three-hour workshops using anonymised real life case studies provided by NHS and Social Care colleagues:

- Hospital Discharges – Capacity and Best Interests
- Unwise Decision? Self-Neglect and the Mental Capacity Act (2005)
- Medical Intervention – How to approach delivering treatment where capacity is in question
- MCA and the use of restraint in care delivery
- Mental Capacity Act/Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) for 16–17-year-olds



Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust (SCFT) serves a wide geographical area which includes West Sussex, Brighton & Hove, and High Weald, Lewes, and Havens, and provides health services in the community to both adults and children.

Safeguarding is a fundamental part of our recruitment process, ensuring appropriate checks are in place to ensure all staff are employed within SCFT services to contribute to the delivery of excellent care within the community. All staff have access to mandatory and statutory safeguarding training for adults and children appropriate to their role and position within the Trust including higher-level training for those in specialist roles.

SCFT has a safeguarding team which provides specialist advice for both adults and children across all services and supports staff to recognise signs of abuse and how to report it. The Trust works effectively with all safeguarding partnerships to ensure a multi-disciplinary and cross agency approach.

The safeguarding team works closely with new service developments to ensure high quality and effective health services. The team is part of a Quality and Safety Department, which enables close working both with specialist safety teams and clinical staff. This ensures a focus on learning for improvement and strengthens a personalised approach to safeguarding.

A SCFT Safeguarding Strategy has been produced and is underpinned by a commitment to providing excellent care at the heart of the community.

The aim of the strategy is to ensure that everything they do, wherever it takes place, ensures the safety, security, and well-being of children and adults who are involved with SCFT services. This will be achieved through the following goals, which reflect the priorities of the Trust Strategy:

- **Our People** - *We will provide effective safeguarding advice and guidance to our staff, volunteers, and carers to enable them to support people with any safeguarding concerns.*
- **Inclusive** - *We will recognise and respect diversity to meet the safeguarding needs of marginalised and seldom-heard groups, reducing inequalities and deprivation within our communities.*
- **Learning** - *We will continue to promote a culture of continuous safeguarding improvement and learning in the face of economic uncertainty.*
- **Partnerships** - *We will build on internal and external partnerships to strengthen our safeguarding practice.*

Developed with the help of the Safeguarding Adult Board partners, the strategy sets out how we will deliver our commitment to safeguarding and our strategic priorities for the next three years.

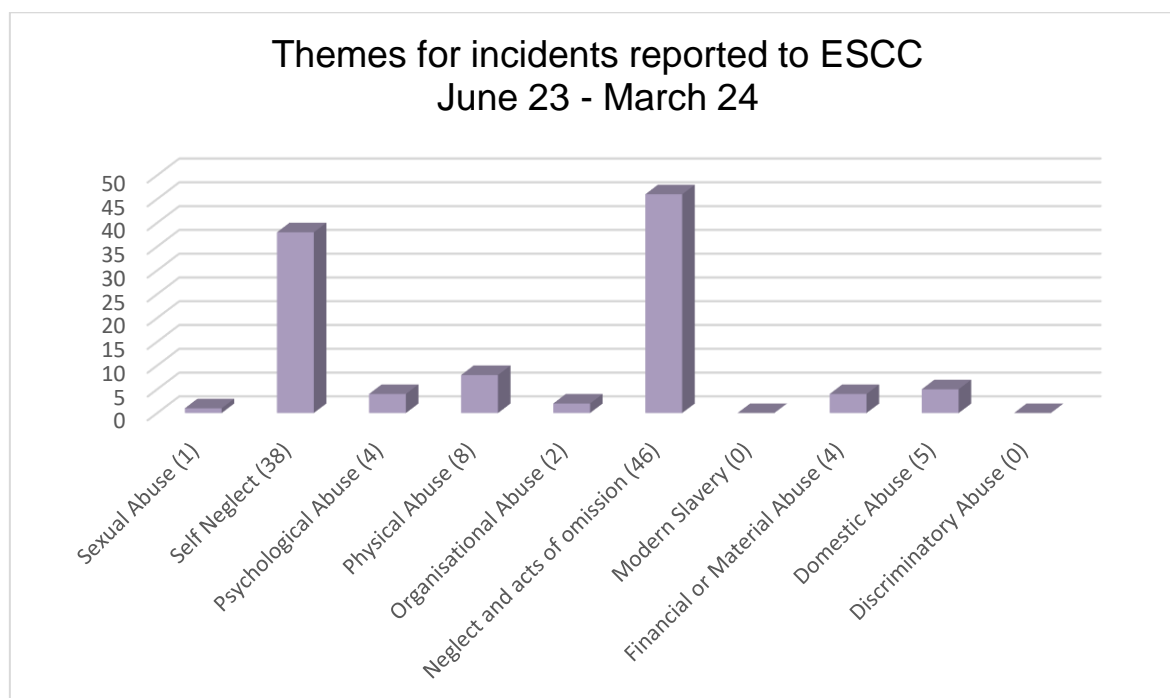
Safeguarding adults training

Level	Target Cohort	Target Compliance	2023-2024 Data	Analysis of Variance
Level 2	Mandatory for all staff	85%	97.4%	Compliance remained above SCFT compliance target of 95%
Level 3	Mandatory for all Adult and Specialist Services registered nursing and staff Band 5-8a	85%	92.4%	In line with the NHS Intercollegiate Guidance (the annual target is 85%)
Level 3 Prevent Duty/ WRAP	Mandatory for Adult and Specialist Services staff that require Adult Safeguarding L3, and Childrens Services.	85%	97.1%	Compliance shows the third-year target of 85% by Q4 23-24 has been met.
Level 3 Mental Capacity Act	Mandatory training for all new starters (in L3 cohort) and is also accessible to all staff should they chose to complete it.		Staff completion: 1341	Assessing Mental Capacity. Completion will fluctuate depending on new staff flow into SCFT, and substantive staff choice to complete.

Raising safeguarding concerns

SCFT staff show they are considering risk and escalating adult safeguarding concerns to enable support to the adults involved. Safeguarding concerns raised to East Sussex County Council are as follows: (due to a change in SCFT internal reporting systems the period covered is June 2023-March 2024).

Adult safeguarding concerns raised by SCFT to ESCC 2023-2024	
ESCC	104



The table above shows the different safeguarding themes captured within the concerns raised to ESCC, and the key theme of neglect/acts of omission is as expected given the wide range of health and social care delivery that can be captured with the neglect domain. Concerns raised may be in relation to SCFT care delivery, care delivery from another health or social care provider, or unpaid carers (including family and friends).

SCFT internal Safeguarding Adults Advice Line

The advice line provides access to specialist advice, is fundamental to good safeguarding practice and supports better outcomes for adults who need care and support. The advice line enables SCFT staff to improve their knowledge, confidence, and competence in safeguarding. This also supports the organisations culture to improve outcomes in the promotion of safeguarding adults from harm and abuse in line with the visions and values that are expected from every healthcare professional.

SCFT: Safeguarding Adults Advice Line	2023-2024	Variance against previous year
Contacts (Trust-wide):	519	↑7

The number of contacts shows how staff are discussing concerns directly with the patient (when it is appropriate to do so and following consideration of mental capacity), mitigating risks where able, providing safety-net advice and care-planning, and liaising directly with Adult Social Care where a more urgent approach is required. In addition, the SCFT Adult Safeguarding Team escalates potential quality issues within other provider services (care homes and care agencies) to the NHS Sussex Integrated Care Board (ICB) Safeguarding Team for consideration of wider discussion.

South East Coast Ambulance Service



NHS
South East Coast
Ambulance Service
NHS Foundation Trust

South East Coast Ambulance Service (SECAmb) responds to 999 calls from the public, urgent calls from healthcare professionals and provide NHS 111 services across Brighton & Hove, East Sussex, West Sussex, Kent, Surrey, and North East Hampshire (a geographical area of 3,600 square miles).

SECAmb employs over 4,000 staff with almost 90% of the workforce being operational staff - those caring for patients either face to face, or over the phone at our emergency dispatch centre where we receive 999 calls.

Safeguarding

SECAmb reinforces the principle that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and develops a culture of continuous learning and improvement to promote the safety and welfare of adults at risk, children and young people and looked after children.

- In 2023/24, a total of approximately 35,000 referrals were received across the NHS111 and 999 services: 28,000 for adults and 7,000 for children. This equates to an increase of 17 per cent compared to the previous year.

Embedding Learning

Over the past year there has been challenge to the Trust's Mental Capacity Act (MCA) practice which has come from Coronial Inquests and a recent Safeguarding Adult Review. The safeguarding team will work closely with operational colleagues to further develop the Trust's practice and knowledge of the MCA which will include:

Training

- A focus on the capacity of a patient to make a decision and whether they can carry out what they say they want to do.
- A 2-minute briefing on *Executive Functioning* will be developed to raise the profile of assessing capacity.

Awareness Raising

- Working in partnership with students at Bexhill College to produce a short film focusing on *the principles of the MCA and executive function*.
- Regular attendance at local operational meetings to raise the profile of MCA and Best Interest decision making.

MCA Monitoring

- The electronic Patient Care Record now includes the ability to better evidence MCA assessment and best interest decision making.
- During 2024/25 the Trust's Clinical Audit team will undertake a review of current MCA practice.



Healthwatch East Sussex

Healthwatch is the independent consumer champion created to gather and represent the views of the public on issues related to health and social care. They have a legal footing, as they were created under the 2012 Health and Social Care Act

Healthwatch published a number of reports in 2023/24. The reports include findings and recommendations in relation to health and social care concerns and experiences of East Sussex residents.

- Healthwatch conducted 'Enter and View' visits at 19 care homes settings across Rye and Rother District. The report **Enter and View Findings: Care Homes in Rye and Rother** includes findings and recommendations.
- Throughout September 2023, Healthwatch East Sussex conducted various activities to engage with people from Rye and the surrounding villages to hear their experiences of health and social care. The report **Rye residents have their say about local health and care services: What we heard in our 2023 Listening Tour** sets out the conclusions for local health and care services and other local partners.
- Healthwatch staff and volunteers carried out a 'mystery shopping' exercise of six GP surgery websites in and around Rye. The report **Reviewing GP practice websites in and around Rye, East Sussex** includes findings and recommendations.
- In August 2023, Healthwatch East Sussex undertook two 24-hour 'Enter and View' sessions in the Emergency Departments (EDs) and Urgent Treatment Centres (UTCs) located at Eastbourne District General Hospital and at The Conquest Hospital. They observed their operation, reviewed the physical settings, and engaged with staff and patients to understand their experiences, so we could identify what worked well and where changes may be helpful. The report **Enter and View 2023: ESHT Emergency Departments and Urgent Treatment Centres** includes findings and recommendations.

You can view further information on all the reports Healthwatch have published [here](#).