

Report to: East Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board

Date: 17th September 2020

By: Independent Chair, East Sussex Safeguarding Adults Board

Title of report: East Sussex Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) Annual Report 2019 - 2020

Purpose of report: To present the SAB Annual Report as required in the Care Act

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Health and Wellbeing Board is recommended to consider and note the report

1. Background

1.1 The East Sussex Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) Annual Report 2019-2020 (Appendix 1) outlines safeguarding activity and performance in East Sussex between April 2019 and March 2020.

2. Supporting Information

2.1 It is impossible to reflect on 2019-20 without reporting on the impact of the outbreak of Covid-19 in March 2020, which led to unprecedented challenges for the whole country, but also created a number of specific issues for safeguarding adults, including:

- A rise in Covid-19 related scams.
- A reduction in the number of safeguarding concerns being raised with the local authority during the lockdown period.
- An increase in instances of domestic abuse, along with a reduction in formal reports to the police.
- The impact on people's mental health and an anticipated increase in suicides.
- The impact upon the workforce.
- A national increase in deaths of adults with learning disabilities during the pandemic and more widely within the residential and nursing home sector.

2.2 Over the next year, the East Sussex SAB will ensure any lessons relating to safeguarding adults during the Covid-19 crisis are learnt.

2.3 As a consequence of the Coronavirus pandemic and the subsequent pressures this has placed on local authorities, NHS Digital has extended the deadlines for the Safeguarding Adults Collection 2019 – 20. As such the 2019 – 20 data included in this report may be subject to slight variations from what will be included in the final SAB return. Any additional updates will be added to this annual report as an addendum at a later date.

2.4 Highlights in the report are as follows:

Strategic Aim 1: Accountability and Leadership

- In accordance with the two-year cycle for undertaking the self-assessment process, a Sussex-wide peer challenge event was held on 9th July 2019. Several areas for development were identified, which have been incorporated into an action plan.
- An updated East Sussex SAB Information Sharing Guide and protocol was published in March 2020, providing specific guidance on sharing safeguarding information between partner agencies, including good practice principles on managing safeguarding meetings and discussions, record keeping and data quality.

Strategic Aim 2: Policies and Procedures

- Whilst no new Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs) were commissioned over this last year, work continued on the two SARs that commenced in 2018 – 19. The SAB published the report for SAR Adult B in February 2020. Despite the impact of Covid-19 causing delays in progressing some areas of work, good progress has been made in taking forward the recommendations within the action plan. This has included work to develop updated Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) guidance and a leaflet and developing a multi-agency protocol for investigating unexpected adult deaths where abuse or neglect is known or suspected. Another SAR in relation to Adult C is due to be finalised in the summer of 2020, and work has commenced to develop the Board response to the report.
- Four Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR) referrals were made in 2019 – 20 involving a range of adults with differing care and support needs, including self-neglect, substance misuse and working with multiple complex needs. In all cases, decisions were made that the case did not meet the statutory criteria for carrying out a SAR and the SAB was satisfied that appropriate learning had been identified through other mechanisms, such as Single Agency Reviews.
- Work commenced in 2019 to review and update the Sussex SAR Protocol with Brighton & Hove and West Sussex SABs. This has been published in August 2020, with further planned work to develop a shared and consistent approach to contracting SAR reviewers.

Strategic Aim 3: Performance, Quality and Audit and Organisational Learning

- The SAB participated in a University of Sussex research project to explore how learning from SARs involving self-neglect can be embedded. An action plan is being developed to take forward the findings and recommendations from the project.
- A multi-agency audit was undertaken in August 2019 in relation to young people at risk of exploitation, focusing on the effectiveness of safeguarding responses to this cohort of young people. Good practice included the application of an MSP approach, appropriate consideration of the Care Act and Mental Capacity Act, and a number of cases reflecting professional curiosity and understanding the importance of trauma-informed practice. An action plan is in place to address the areas for development, which includes reviewing the effectiveness of current processes to identify, manage and communicate risks for young people approaching the age of 18 and the need for greater awareness amongst agencies around recognising the different forms of exploitation that come under the abuse type of modern slavery.
- A second audit regarding multi-agency involvement in safeguarding was undertaken in February 2020, which was conducted jointly between the Brighton & Hove and East Sussex SABs. This was interrupted by the coronavirus pandemic in and there are plans to progress this in August 2020. A summary will be provided in next year's annual report.

Strategic Aim 4: Prevention, Engagement and Making Safeguarding Personal

- An easy read version of the MSP leaflet was developed by members of the East Sussex Learning Disability Partnership Board and the Safeguarding Community Network.
- The East Sussex SAB published the first edition of its newsletter in February 2020, with the aim of sharing news about the work of the Board, disseminating relevant learning and information, and to raise awareness for those who have an interest in adult safeguarding issues.

Strategic Aim 5: Integration, and Training and Workforce Development

- The SAB continues to deliver a comprehensive range of multi-agency safeguarding training which has evolved over 2019 – 20 in response to learning identified from SARs and multi-agency audits. The SAB training programme includes courses on modern slavery and human trafficking, domestic abuse, the Mental Capacity Act, self-neglect and coercion and control.

Multi-agency data

- The number of safeguarding contacts has decreased from 5,532 in 2018-19 to 5,033 in 2019 – 20. Of the total contacts received in 2019 – 20, 4,484 (86%) were considered safeguarding concerns.
- The number of enquiries completed has increased by 69% from 1,185 in 2018 – 19 to 1,998 in 2019 – 20. This increase can be attributed in part to changes made to the social care recording system in 2019 which has led to improvements in capturing safeguarding enquiries more accurately.
- In 2019 – 20, the most common form of abuse reported was neglect (as in 2018 – 19) with 36% of all enquiries undertaken comprising, at least in part neglect. Financial abuse was the second most common form of abuse reported, followed by psychological abuse, accounting for 24.5% and 25% respectively of the enquiries completed.
- The most significant proportional differences since 2018 – 19 are an 10% decrease in neglect from 46% to 36%, a 6% increase in domestic abuse from 13% to 19%, and a 4% increase in self-neglect cases 3% to 7%.
- Data from East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service (ESFRS) reflects that the number of home first safety visits completed in the second half of 2019 – 20 decreased from 1814 in quarter 3 to 1577 in quarter 4. This can be attributed to the usual trend of fewer visits over the festive period, but also was compounded by the outbreak of Coronavirus.
- Overall, there has been an increase of 36% in the number of Vulnerable Adult at Risk (VAAR) referrals made by Sussex Police into Adult Social Care and Health Department (ASCH), with the biggest variation in quarter one of 2019-20 with a 63% increase upon figures for 2018-19.
- The data from South East Coast Ambulance Service (SECAMB) highlights that there was a 12% increase in the number of safeguarding concerns raised to ASCH in the first half of 2019 - 20 compared to the same period in 2018 – 19. There was also another slight increase in safeguarding concerns being raised by SECAMB during the second half of this year.

3. Conclusion and recommendations

3.1 The annual report shows that the Board has continued to make significant progress in delivering the aims set out in the SAB Strategic Plan 2018 – 21, reflecting the hard work and commitment shown by partner agencies. The SAB will ensure that the learning and recommendations from the SARs undertaken in 2019 – 20 are progressed and embedded in practice.

GRAHAM BARTLETT
Independent Chair, East Sussex Safeguarding Adults Board