Norfolk Safeguarding Adults Board

Top tips for using prevention in adult safeguarding

Prevention is key to protecting adults from harm. **A proactive, preventative approach recognises that safeguarding is not just about responding to incidents but about creating the conditions that minimise risk and promote wellbeing**. This means tackling issues like loneliness, poor mental health, or lack of support, which can make people vulnerable. When organisations do this, they help people stay independent, safe, and respected.

To make prevention work, everyone involved in safeguarding needs to work together. This includes spotting risks early, raising awareness, building resilience, and making sure staff and communities know how to act quickly if they see concerns. Preventing harm improves lives and reduces pressure on services.

Prevention is about putting people first - helping adults make informed choices, encouraging communities to look out for each other, and creating environments where abuse is less likely. Investing time in prevention is the right thing to do and helps build a strong, sustainable safeguarding system focused on safety and wellbeing.

The Norfolk Safeguarding Adults Board (NSAB) members has shared practical tips to help protect adults with care and support needs.

Try these tips in your work and share them with colleagues and your organisation.

Safeguarding is everyday responsibility for everyone.

Name	Organisation	Tip
Pauline Parke-Chatten	Norfolk Probation	It's good to talk – discussing concerns with other agencies can improve our understanding of what agencies can do and can't do and saves long email trails.
Kim Goodby	Norfolk and Norwich University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	To record everything! We all know good record keeping is essential, however often people don't accurately record incidents or disclosures, or delay doing so, and this can lead to misunderstandings or miscommunications in the future which can affect our ability to appropriately safeguard people.
Lisa Barraclough	Department for Work and Pensions	Encourage open, respectful communication where individuals feel safe to speak up about concerns, whether for themselves or others. When people know they'll be heard without judgment or repercussions, they're more likely to disclose early signs of harm or risk.
Amanda Murr	Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Norfolk.	Establish a culture of openness and trust where adults who are at risk, or vulnerable feel safe, respected and confident to speak up in their environment if something is wrong and where staff can take ownership of safeguarding them.
Judith Sharpe	Healthwatch	Foster a culture of open communication and support within teams about safeguarding concerns so staff feel able to raise issues for discussion, however small the issue seems
Chris Balmer	Norfolk Constabulary	My mindset on these things is very much that for every pound we spend on prevention we can expect to save twice over in demand avoided down the line.
Rebecca Hulme RN	NHS Norfolk and Waveney ICB and Norfolk Children's Services	To find a simple way to define and simplify the definition of 'safeguarding' so that it really is possible to make safeguarding everyone's business.
James Kearns	Build Charity	Don't just talk about safeguarding in a training session. Make sure posters and leaflets are visible in your workplaces, rest areas, receptions etc., so that staff, volunteers and members of the public can all see them regularly. (At the BUILD Charity – we have a dispenser on our public promotional stalls)

Name	Organisation	Tip
Daniel Childerhouse	Future Projects	At Future Projects we have recently integrated safeguarding as a standing item on our 'Support & Supervision' framework to ensure that managers go into depth on safeguarding and check that employees' knowledge and practice remain effective. This helps identify and address any gaps with training/support and ensures that safeguarding remains a priority – not just something in the background.
Helen Thacker	Adult Social Services	Find ways to track accumulating risk so you can see easily if the level of concern for someone is increasing and have a plan in place to take action to try and bring the risk back down before it escalates. Also, carry out regular risk assessment/Mental Capacity Act assessment for people where there are increasing risks.
Dave Freeman	Norfolk Constabulary	Use empathy and emotional intelligence to build trust. Listen without judgment and document concerns clearly.
Emyr Gough	Norfolk Fire and Rescue Service	Use the RAR model **Recognise** – open eyes, open ears, smells and vigilance to anything in the environment that doesn't appear to be right, indicators of neglect **Assess** – what is going on, condition of people (behaviour, appearance, property, facilities) **React** – find out what's happening, safety first for everyone, report detailed findings to referred pathways quickly to stop further harm or deterioration.
Vicky Aspinall	Norfolk Community Health and Care NHS Trust	Use reflective debriefs for near misses which highlight areas of concern early on