

Norfolk Safeguarding Adults Board

Covid-19 Response and Resilience Plan

Thursday 3 December 2020
Version 1.0



Partnership Response/Resilience Planning

- The current global Covid-19 pandemic is unprecedented in living memory and the impact for individuals, families, communities and wider society is significant and will be long lasting. It has touched every part of our lives and required individuals and organisations to adapt to new daily interactions (social distancing, shielding, carrying out assessments/visits by telephone, or using digital solutions to continue essential business).
- Patterns of presenting needs are shifting as adults experience the impact of the pandemic.
- Many of the existing protective factors in the lives of adults at risk of abuse and harm have been temporarily absent or limited.
- How we all respond to these needs has and will continue to change, to take account of new and emerging needs, as well as the way in which adults and those supporting them access the support they need over the coming months.
- NSAB with the support of its partners needs to track the impact of the pandemic for adults and those who support them.

Partnership Response/Resilience Planning

- This plan is structured against response/resilience themes and is in two parts: themes identified for Norfolk Safeguarding Adults Board (NSAB), these themes are where we might expect changing or increased needs. Followed by themes which NSAB will support other boards/partners with.
- The NSAB has an obligation to ensure that partners are held to account when promoting the safety, protection and welfare of adults. This partnership response and resilience plan is held by the NSAB Business Group.
- [NSAB's position statement on Safeguarding Adults Reviews \(SARs\)](#) sets out how, to enable the best learning possible and to avoid duplication in relation to COVID-19 related SAR referrals, NSAB will meet its statutory duty to conduct a SAR for cases which meet the statutory criteria.
- At the end of this document you will find some trigger questions for your service / organisation, asking you to consider ongoing learning for adult safeguarding across Norfolk, arising from the pandemic. **Please copy and paste the four questions and provide your response to the following email: nsab@norfolk.gov.uk**

Themes identified for NSAB focus

01

Access to day services if localised lockdowns are reintroduced & risk and implications for both service users & carers

02

Carers experiencing increased pressure and worry

03

Volunteering & safeguarding

Themes where activity is already occurring

04

Mental health & emotional wellbeing of adults including concerns about C-19 and challenges at home

05

Needs around **domestic abuse & family relationships** and inability to escape abusive situations, particularly for older adults

06

Rough sleepers and homelessness

07

Impact on the **care provider sector** including support, market stability & potential loss of capacity to the system

08

Impact of **trauma** on the Norfolk workforce

09

Access to safeguarding **training & advice** to support the workforce

10

Discharge to assess process (D2A) and safeguarding and to what extent the establishment of new pathways will impact on safeguarding arrangements

Priority concerns for NSAB

01 Access to day services

Access to day services through Covid-19 restrictions – Inevitable increase in social isolation, less oversight / access to reporting mechanisms for those most vulnerable in our communities. NSAB is ensuring that service commissioners maintain active review of individual need and circumstance, including risk assessment, maximising prevention and minimising likelihood of abuse or neglect – this should include those where such (day service) needs are identified post March 2020.

02 Carers

Carers are not receiving the support / respite they need and pressures within families are increasing, especially for those coping with autism, anxiety, dementia, Alzheimer's. Carers access to support groups and networks has been changed. NSAB is engaging with carers organisations to identify what is the most appropriate support it can offer relating to adult safeguarding.

Priority concerns for NSAB

03 Volunteering

The volunteering response in support of those adults isolated or with increased vulnerability has been positive, but it has led to an increased opportunity for those who wish to exploit, to do so under the cover of volunteering. NSAB is ensuring that safeguarding information / advice is provided to those in a volunteering role in a way which is most useful & effective to them, and will seek assurance from partner agencies that appropriate background checks take place. This priority area links in with priority one to explore the role volunteers can play.

Areas delivered with NSAB support

04
Emotional and mental wellbeing, community inclusion
(Partnership preventative offers)

The pandemic has led to increasing anxiety and stress in the general population, and rising demand and limited capacity in mental health services. There is a need for flexible and responsive offers from wider services to support emotional wellbeing. NSAB has close links with the third sector, District Council help hubs and the community resilience cell, all of whom can be called upon to assure the Board of their offer to encourage opportunities for social engagement, contact within the community and preventative approaches towards maintaining wellbeing. The mental health trust (NSFT) is represented on the Board and gives regular updates on capacity and provision as required.

05
Domestic Abuse
(DASVG)

Adults and particularly older adults are experiencing increased conflict (including intergenerational abuse), and need support to cope. This includes those in caring roles. The early identification / disclosure of domestic abuse and conflict has been reduced with limitations on contact. The availability of refuge support or alternative housing is impacted by the pandemic slowing movement through accommodation options. The Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Group (DAVSG) is represented on NSAB, providing regular updates. NSAB actively supports awareness-raising campaigns and signposting in all partnerships, including across social media channels.

06
Rough sleepers & homelessness
(Norfolk Strategic Housing Partnership)

The success in Norfolk of the “Everybody In” initiative has demonstrated the powerful opportunities available to tackle this problem in the longer term. Many of those who are homeless are both victims and perpetrators of abuse. NSAB supports the “*No Homelessness in Norfolk*” strategic aim to build on recent work, with sustainable, system wide pathways, reducing the safeguarding risks to those experiencing multiple exclusion homelessness, as well as assisting those impacted by the economic challenges of the pandemic.

Areas delivered with NSAB support

07 **Impact on care providers** *(Integrated QA Service)*

COVID-19 has had a significant and sustained impact on the care homes and domiciliary care sectors, for both residents & staff. There is concern that both sectors are under pressure in terms of current sustainability and longer term financial viability, as well as issues around Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and the risks associated with a reduction in visiting. Much of the work direct with the provider sectors sits outside the immediate remit of NSAB and as such the Board has limited input. Working through key stakeholders NSAB has provided support to the safeguarding elements of the response and training support has been offered via established forums. NSAB is ensuring that service commissioners maintain active review of providers and ensure 'eyes on' is promoted minimising likelihood of abuse or neglect.

08 **Impact of trauma on the Norfolk workforce** *(Partner agencies)*

High potential for compassion fatigue as well as emotional and physical stresses among all those continuing to provide services in highly volatile times – increases safeguarding risks to the people being supported in a similar way to 'carer stress'. Main statutory agencies have well established workforce well-being services / offer to staff – NSAB will ask partners for confirmation these are in place and any particular issues as they arise. NSAB will consider how smaller organisations / groups recognise need in staff / volunteers and access support as required.

Areas delivered with NSAB support

09 **Training** *(Partner agencies)*

While the training needs of the Norfolk workforce remain, the pandemic has identified new topics (intergenerational abuse, mental capacity in relation to COVID-19 and those linked to the priority concerns identified above). NSAB will look to supplement the training offer delivered by St Thomas Training (via Norfolk County Council's training contract). This offer will be developed using alternative delivery (online webinars etc) and NSAB will seek opportunities for joint delivery with key partners including the Norfolk Safeguarding Childrens Partnership (NSCP). NSAB will also seek assurance from partner agencies who deliver their own in-house safeguarding training will do the same.

10 **Discharge to assess (D2A)** *(NCC and CCG adult safeguarding leads)*

Discharge to assess (D2A) was introduced in March 2020 and is a nationally stipulated process for hospital discharge. There have been concerns that the necessary speed of implementation has meant there was limited attention given to safeguarding issues within the framework, and operational and safeguarding structures across the three acute hospitals in Norfolk differ slightly in their configuration. A task and finish group of hospital and social care managers and safeguarding specialists, with representation from NSAB has developed a series of overarching principles to set the expectation of robust and empowering safeguarding practice within D2A pathways.

Factors in support of wider implementation

As well as focusing on the actions needed across the different themes, there are a number of enablers that need to be in place as part of working together as a system to support this response:

Supporting care home & domiciliary care providers on adult safeguarding

Ensuring there is access to wider support based on emerging safeguarding adults issues eg volunteering

Building community awareness of adult abuse & harm

Adult safeguarding as a shared workforce development objective

Informing adult safeguarding work from a trauma informed perspective

Locality Safeguarding Adults Partnerships (LSAPs) have a key role to play in wider implementation:

- Their local intelligence and understanding about the needs of adults and their carers needs to inform the partnership response for each of the themes
- Their role in supporting local partnership working on the above areas.

Partnership Trigger Questions

- As we come out of the second lockdown, it is vital that NSAB understands and responds to this 'changed' safeguarding landscape and in particular identifies what has worked well during the pandemic. Are there elements of practice that should be maintained going forward and if so, how will these now be integrated into practice?
- The following questions have been developed to enable partners to review their own COVID-19 safeguarding adults response plans and can give assurance to NSAB that they are fully sighted on and embedding safeguarding as part of these plans.
 - 1) Can you identify any good safeguarding practice used during the first and second lockdown periods which would be valuable for Norfolk's safeguarding network to learn from?
 - 2) Are you in a position to fully restore any gaps in you safeguarding service and/or responsibility that remain following the second lockdown?
 - 3) If not, what are the gaps and how and by when will you restore a fully functioning safeguarding service to meet your statutory responsibility?
 - 4) Thinking forward to the next phase of the pandemic response, are there any safeguarding practice issues which would help us improve our response (for example how to maintain safeguarding functions as localised restrictions continue).