

Safeguarding Adults

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What does safeguarding adults mean?

Initially safeguarding adults responsibilities were governed by 'no secrets'- relying heavily on local authority's social care taking responsibility for responding to abuse.

In 2015 s42 Care Act widened this responsibility so duties are now owed equally by 'relevant partners' to:

- Prevent abuse and neglect
- Recognise and report
- Respond effectively in line with each organisations legal duties and multi-agency policies.

These duties were grafted onto existing organisational structures, most 'relevant partners' still follow a 'recognise and report' model.

This is not in line with Care Act obligations and not sustainable. '[Revisiting safeguarding practice](#)' sets out expectations for senior leaders across relevant partners to ensure their workforce is well trained and legally literate, embed collaboration in their organisation, promote trauma-informed practice, ensure workloads are reasonable and help practitioners to maintain a relational practice- build and promote positive relationships with local care providers

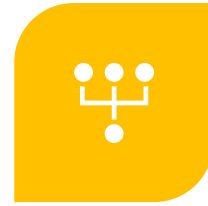
VCSF sector report 2023



74% OF VCSF IB
AFFILIATED
ORGANISATIONS
HAVE <5 FT
EMPLOYEES.



50% HAVE >10
VOLUNTEERS-
SUBSTANTIVE
CONTRIBUTION
TO CAPACITY IN
THE SECTOR



60% REPORTED
THEIR
ORGANISATION
WAS GROWING



STAFF WELLBEING,
REDUCED
FUNDING/CAPACITY
AND RECRUITMENT
ARE THE GREATEST
CHALLENGES



SECTOR ALSO
NEEDS SUPPORT
AROUND
MONITORING
AND EVALUATING
IMPACT,
CAPACITY
BUILDING AND
PEER SUPPORT



The role of BSAB

BSAB is a partnership of local authority, NCL ICB and NHS providers, police, fire service, housing, voluntary organisations and experts by experience. We are required to *'help and protect adults in its area by co-ordinating and ensuring the effectiveness of what each of its members does'*

The board provides opportunities to review practice and offer cross-agency challenges. This enables accountability and strengthens the culture of continuous improvement.

Our Statutory responsibilities are:

- I. publish a strategic plan;
- II. report on the work each member organisation does (individually and collectively as BSAB) to enact that plan;
- III. Commission safeguarding adult reviews and report on actions taken to shape practice to prevent future harm

Our challenge: creating a system approach that embodies the principle that safeguarding is everyone's business, but is also responsive to individual needs/risks and aspirations so that we make safeguarding personal.

Our structure



Learning from local SARs- enablers to good practice

- Understanding the legal duties to refer for multi-agency enquiry and protection plan, even without consent, where there is a persistent/ high risk or wider risk to the public e.g. fire safety or self-neglect (Fire safety thematic review).
- Access to advocacy or IDVA support for the adult at risk to enable a trusted relationship to develop. Advocacy should be available in a timely manner and clear guidance on how/ when to refer. (LD thematic review, Gabrielle)
- Ensuring Carers have clear information about how to care safely for their loved one and that their ability to provide this (and manage treatment plans/ meds) is properly assessed. (Ms A, Gabrielle, LD thematic review)
- Overview of risks in out of area placements, or to support information gathering and the delivery of protection plans, including civil legal powers (West Berks- Mr A)
- Be open to challenge regarding assumptions of a person's capacity to recognise risk or to protect themselves from harm arising from abuse, exploitation, neglect or self-neglect esp. where the adult at risk has co-occurring conditions. (Colin and Phil reviews)



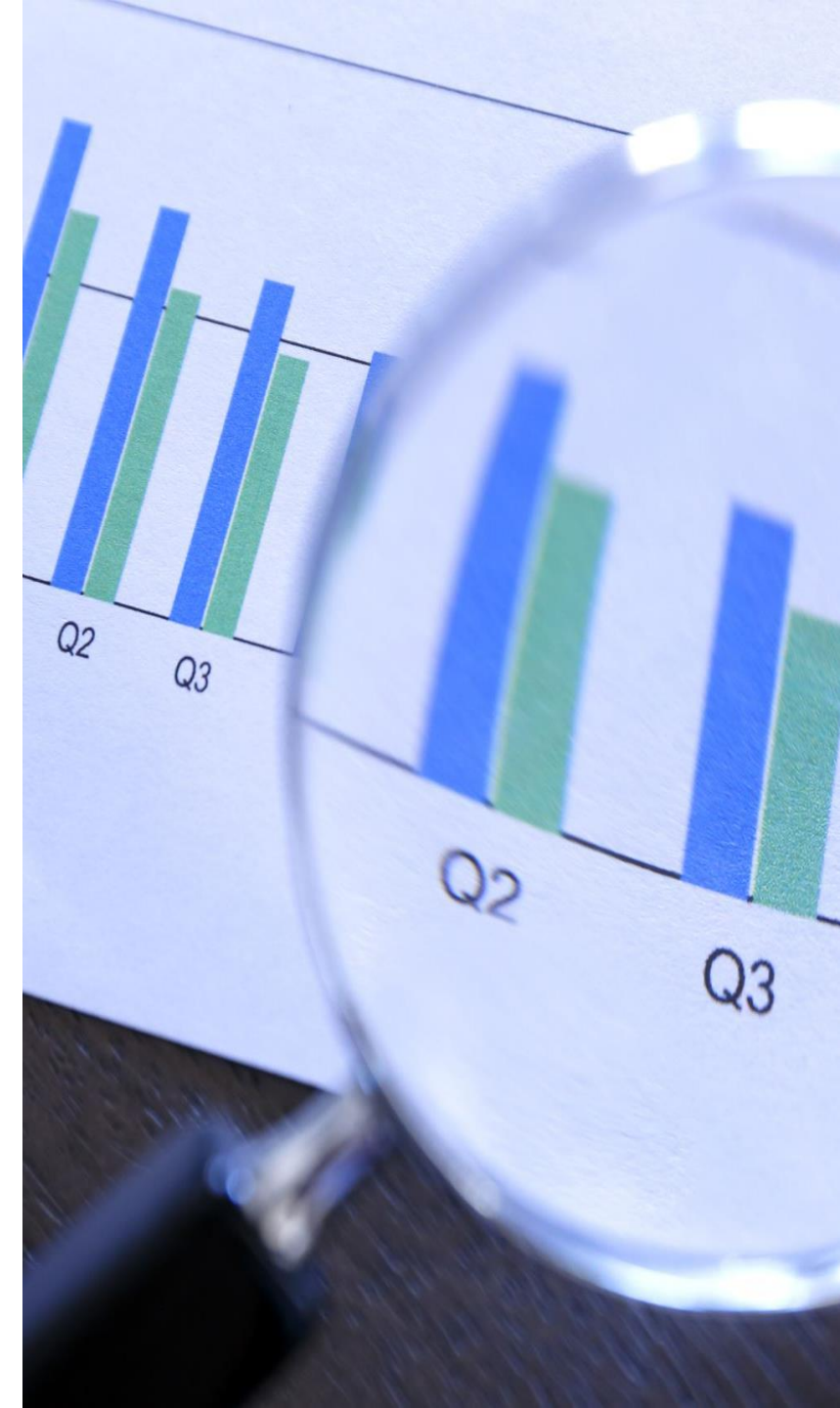
BSAB complies with our statutory responsibilities to publish a strategic plan and annual report.

We have agreed policy and practice guidance available to partner organisations' staff to support multi-agency safeguarding decision making and guidance on how practitioners can refer for MDTs before abuse/neglect occurs in high risk cases.

BSAB has mechanisms in place to track actions arising from SAR recommendations and report what each organisation has done to apply lesson (via their sub-groups) to the main board.

We receive some relevant data to assist members evaluate responses by MASH to concerns and completed enquiries. But there are too few performance indicators to demonstrate safeguarding adults activity of partner organisations.

BSAB partner agencies complete a self-evaluation each year, VCFS colleagues are encouraged to complete a checklist and return this to BSAB to demonstrate their compliance with safeguarding best practice and, if relevant, Charity Commission expectations.



Providing support on
legislative change or
topics relevant to
adults at risk

In 2022-23, working with our Experts by Experience, partners and national leaders, we responded to the Govt consultation highlighting significant risks re safeguarding practice of the proposed reforms to the **Human Rights Act** and **Mental Health Act reforms**.

We continue to track how partners are preparing for the implementation of new legislation, initiatives or guidance and provide updates to practitioners, carers and residents through out **BSAB lunch and learns**. In 2022-23 we covered a range of safeguarding topics including executive capacity and access to health care, domestic abuse, supporting carers, human rights, fire safety, cost of living, compassion fatigue, continuity of care and safeguarding, supporting those with ‘no recourse to public funds’.

We also contribute to **development of strategic objectives** across our three statutory partners. In 2022-23 BSAB’s members contributed to new strategies to address health inequalities and needs assessments, carers, dementia, autism and suicide prevention among others. Presently, our input is heavily reliant on ‘finding out’ through our networks about new developments. This means we are too often reactive. The work we do (including SARs/ audits and engagement with communities and EbE) should help shape strategies at the earliest opportunities.

Strategic plan 2023-26: Our priorities

Reducing severity and prevalence of abuse

- Develop early intervention support to de-escalate and change harmful behaviours
- Provide a clear local decision support tool on local pathways to tackle safeguarding risks, particularly for those experiencing multiple disadvantage
- Work with VAWG board to explore what more can be done to address risks of sexual exploitation for adults

Changing culture so safeguarding is a shared responsibility

- Act on recommendations from our Safeguarding adult reviews and BAME engagement project
- Apply good practice from Safe Care at Home review
- Upskill practitioners through lunch and learn

Demonstrating a whole system approach

- Revising pan-London policy
- Support network of volunteers and evaluate impact that VCFS