



# **Cheshire West and Chester Local Safeguarding Adults Board (LSAB)**

## **Annual Report 2022-23**

‘Our vision is to promote partnership working by working together to help people feel safe and free from abuse and neglect.’

‘Our mission is to put the adult at risk of abuse or neglect, at the heart of everything we do.’

**[www.cheshirewestandchesterlocal-safeguarding-adults-board](http://www.cheshirewestandchesterlocal-safeguarding-adults-board)**

## Welcome from our Chair – Ian Cardwell

I am pleased to present the Annual Report of the Cheshire West & Chester Safeguarding Adults Board for 2022/23.

The Board is a statutory requirement of the Care Act 2014, is made up of a range of statutory and non-statutory Board partners, bringing together a wide range of agencies and community groups (set out on page 5 of this report).

As I seem to have reported in every Annual Report over recent years, the Board and its partners have faced unprecedented demands on their services. Whilst the shadow of the COVID pandemic may have receded somewhat, other challenges have arisen which have had a disproportionate impact on those members of our community who need care and support and find themselves at risk of neglect or abuse. These challenges, amongst others, include the ongoing 'cost of living' crisis, the increasing stress placed on the health & care systems, and the increasing demands placed on all services due to the recruitment and retention of staff.

It is a testament to the commitment and professionalism of the professionals, volunteers, and carers, across Cheshire West, that the Board and partners have continued to deliver high quality support to adult service users.

A particular responsibility of the Board throughout the year is to ensure that, whilst all partners face significant resource challenges, safeguarding adult services deliver 'business as usual' to those in need of care and support and continue to champion safeguarding across the wider community, including the Board's contribution to National Safeguarding Week.

The Board has continued to carry out its scrutiny and governance functions, seeking assurance from partners that their organisation is delivering its services effectively and challenging partners to ensure they are making an impact on the lives of those who use our services. The Board is continually focused on ensuring that partners apply the principles of 'Making Safeguarding Personal', ensuring that service delivery is person centred and the service user is at the heart of decision making throughout.

The Board has focused on other key areas of safeguarding adults, particularly raising awareness, so that safeguarding risks can be identified

and addressed. This work has included reaching out to our communities, so that the risks facing adults at risk is understood right across the community. There is more work to do here, and the Board will continue to focus on this important area of business.

As part of that ‘awareness raising’ commitment, as well as the development of good governance, the Board utilised the knowledge and experience of our own in-house expertise – particularly our Service User Group - to develop a streamlined, easy-read, version of key documents, including our Annual Report.

This Report will look in detail at what has been achieved more widely over the last 12 months and, importantly, what improvements are needed. We will examine the data we have collected and analysed it to understand trends and tackle the safeguarding challenges we face. Additionally, we will report on the work we have done to review cases where needed to improve service delivery, particularly Safeguarding Adult Reviews.

At the conclusion of this Report, we will briefly look ahead. We will set out our revised 3-year Strategic Priorities for 2023/25 as well our Business Plan focused on the coming 12 months.

Finally, I should like to thank all members of the Board, particularly the Chairs of the sub-Groups, for their continued professionalism and commitment and the Safeguarding Unit for their hard work and support throughout 2022/23.



Ian Cardwell - Independent Chair

## The Board

### Cheshire West and Chester Safeguarding Adults Board – Who we are

The overarching purpose of the Safeguarding Adults Board is to help and safeguard adults with care and support needs. It does this by:

- assuring itself that local safeguarding arrangements are in place as defined by the Care Act 2014 and statutory guidance
- assuring itself that safeguarding practice is person-centred and outcome-focused
- working collaboratively to prevent abuse and neglect where possible
- ensuring agencies and individuals give timely and proportionate responses when abuse or neglect have occurred
- assuring itself that safeguarding practice is continuously improving and enhancing the quality of life of adults in its area.

The Safeguarding Adults Board must lead on adult safeguarding arrangements across Cheshire West and Chester and oversee and coordinate the effectiveness of the safeguarding work of its member and partner agencies. Under the provisions of the Care Act 2014, the Board is required to:-

- Develop and publish a strategic plan setting out how they will meet their objectives and how their member and partner agencies will contribute.
- Publish an Annual Report detailing how effective their work has been.
- Commission Safeguarding Adult Review (SARs) for any cases which meet the criteria for these and where there is opportunity for multi-agency learning.

The focus of the Safeguarding Adults Board is to ensure that in the borough safeguarding arrangements work effectively so that adults at risk can live their lives free from abuse or neglect.

An adult at risk is a person aged 18 or over who has needs for care and support and as a result of those needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect. In this report we will call an adult at risk the 'adult'.

## **The Partners of Cheshire West and Chester Safeguarding Adults are made up of representatives of:-**

[Age UK Cheshire](#)

[Cheshire Police](#)

[Cheshire Fire and Rescue](#)

[Cheshire West and Chester Public Health](#)

[Cheshire West and Chester Adult Social Care](#)

[Cheshire West and Chester Elected Members](#)

[Cheshire West and Chester Children's Social Care](#)

[Cheshire West and Chester Community Safety Partnership](#)

[Cheshire West and Chester Domestic Abuse Board](#)

[Cheshire Wirral Partnership NHS](#)

[Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust](#)

[Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board](#)

[Disability Positive](#)

[HealthWatch Cheshire West](#)

[Mid Cheshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust](#)

[National Probation Service - Cheshire](#)

[North West Ambulance Service](#)

[NHS England](#)

[Weaver Vale Housing Trust](#)

### **The purpose of the Board**

Our overall purpose is to help and safeguard adults with care and support needs. The Board ensure that, locally, abuse is prevented and that, when it does occur, partners respond in line with the needs and wishes of the person experiencing harm.

A key role of the Board is to ensure that there is a partnership approach to safeguarding by promoting collaboration between all the partners for effective communication, information sharing and awareness raising.

### **Our aims**

Working together and with adults at risk of abuse the Board aims to ensure people are: -

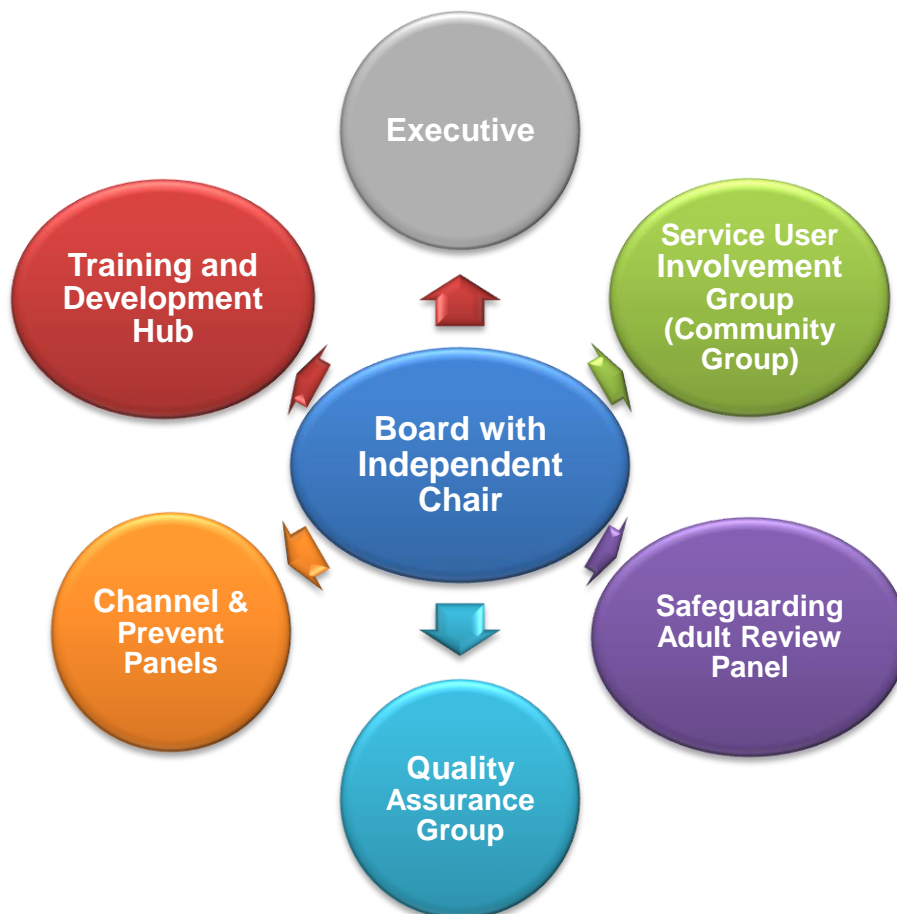
- safe and able to protect themselves from abuse and neglect
- treated fairly and with dignity and respect
- protected when they need to be
- able to easily get the support, protection and services that they need.

### **What is Safeguarding?**

Safeguarding means protecting people’s health, wellbeing and human rights and enabling them to live free from harm, abuse and neglect.

The work of the Board is driven by its vision to promote partnership working by working together to help people feel safe and free from abuse and neglect.

### The structure of the Board – how we work?



Each group has its own terms of reference and work plan based on the strategic priorities of the Board and the objectives in the Business Plan and provides quarterly updates to Board in respect of progress on these objectives. The Safeguarding Adult Review Panel convenes when a safeguarding adult review referral is received.

### What impact did the Board make in 2022-23?

The Boards Strategic Plan 2020-23 sets out the priority areas over the next 3 years. To deliver those priorities several annual objectives are agreed. What we have done to achieve our objectives for 2022-23 are set out below:

**Objective 1** – Ensure the delivery of effective safeguarding services, with a focus on Making Safeguarding Personal, informed by the voice of adults who are at risk of neglect and abuse.

**Our Impact** – Domestic Abuse Audit September 2022, increased understanding of key issues affecting service user. The theme of the audit was Adults who are aged 65 and over who have been subjected to Domestic Abuse. This audit was chosen for the following reasons: -

- The LSAB conference in June 2022 focused on domestic abuse and older people and highlighted those older adults who experienced domestic abuse were sometimes treated differently based on age and perceptions.
- The QA subgroup felt that an audit would provide us with a local picture of our response to people who experience domestic abuse as an older person.
- Domestic Abuse covers both Adults and Children's services, the audit will enable a good overview.

Our Service User group produced an easy read executive summary of our Annual Report and updated the safeguarding booklet with additional forms of abuse which improves practice by ensuring we are providing people with information about safeguarding in an accessible format so that they can understand forms of abuse and what they can do.

The partners provide evidence of Making Safeguarding Personal via the Data Scorecard submitted to our Quality Assurance group. This is also evidenced by case studies submitted to the board, for example in the annual report. Other examples are Cheshire Police and the Domestic Abuse Board Facebook seminars, which allow the public to understand Domestic Abuse in more detail, where to go for support and assistance and these seminars usually attract approximately 2,000 views per seminar.

**Objective 2** – Maximise the impact of delivering safeguarding services, in collaboration with other key partners (including the Safeguarding Children's Partnership), to develop a cross cutting approach to safeguarding adults, children and families at risk of neglect and abuse.

**Our Impact** - We work closely with the Safeguarding Children's Partnership, Community Safety Partnership and the Domestic Abuse Board with representatives attending the Board and a joint executive with children's which has led to effective collaboration between partners which has resulted in improved outcomes for service users through maximising the impact of resources and reduced duplication of work or missed opportunities. We have also worked with our Pan Cheshire colleagues to produce and All Age Exploitation Strategy and joint activities as part of Adult Safeguarding Week along with joining up and sharing good practice around Safeguarding Adult Reviews.



**Objective 3** – Raise awareness of safeguarding adults during the cost-of-living crisis and the increasing demands of service providers.

**Our Impact** – We offer a range of safeguarding training courses which has led to increased skills & knowledge for partners resulting in more effective safeguarding services and improved outcomes for service users, this has been demonstrated due to the number of increased safeguarding concerns.

We continued to produce regular e-bulletins to ensure people understand the impact of the work of our partners of the Board who provide content for the e-bulletin, and we also produce a quarterly training bulletin for partners so that people know what training is on offer and any learning updates or changes.

The website continues to be developed with revised policies and guidance updated, increased training opportunities and any safeguarding updates both locally and nationally. The highest number of views are in relation to the training page and the professional's area, where policies and procedures can be located.

**Objective 4** – To continuously improve the effectiveness and culture of the Board, through a range of development tools, including self-assessment, peer review and benchmarking.

**Our Impact** – We held our annual boards development day in May 2022, the focus of the day was to look at our journey over the last two years and Covid recovery, getting the basics right and partnership, leadership and governance as well as priorities for 2022/23. Our objectives included:

- Self-assessment development day 'Check in and challenge' for Board members.
- Provide an opportunity to reflect on the previous year's achievements.
- Provide an opportunity to consider the impact of Covid-19 on the Board and the Boards priorities.
- Consider how to proceed in the Covid-19 recovery phase.
- Consider future challenges, including Care Quality Commission assurance regime.
- Reflect on partnership leadership style and governance.

The impact of the day allowed us to identify what we are doing well, what else do we need to do and what do we need to get good at for the future Care Quality Commission inspection which formed part of our ongoing business plan.



## Adult Safeguarding and Dignity Awards September 2022

We held an Adult Safeguarding & Dignity Awards ceremony which provided us with an opportunity to celebrate and recognise good practice in organisations, teams, individuals, and volunteers with regards to supporting and protecting adults at risk from abuse, harm or exploitation. All the nominees were worthy winners but the ones the judges felt went the extra mile to support and protect adults at risk was: -

- Team of the Year – (two recipients) Cheshire Wirral Partnership & Cheshire West and Chester Adult Safeguarding Unit
- Respect and Dignity - Siobhan Moffit-Lunt, Disability Positive
- Outstanding Contribution - Dr Andy George, Mid Cheshire Hospital Trust
- Public Community Award - St Werburgh's Medical Practice for the Homeless
- Special Recognition - Paula Foster Local Safeguarding Adults Board & Judith Griffiths, Surecare
- Leadership and Management - Paula Wedd, NHS Cheshire & Merseyside Integrated Care Board
- Service User Award - Advocacy Team, Disability Positive
- Partnership Working - Kim Christopher, Community Safety Team, Cheshire West and Chester Council.

More details about the winners can be found on our website [LSAB Safeguarding and Dignity Awards](#)

## National Safeguarding Adults Week

We took part in the National Safeguarding Adults Week which ran from the 21<sup>st</sup> to the 27<sup>th</sup> November 2022. The theme for the week was '**Responding to Contemporary Safeguarding Challenges**'. The week is a time for organisations to come together to raise awareness of important safeguarding issues. The aim is to highlight key safeguarding issues, facilitate conversations and raise awareness of safeguarding best practice.

Partners undertook a range of activities within their settings and a variety of events and useful resources including webinars focusing on various forms of abuse and exploitation was promoted.

## Training and Development

We are committed to a culture of continuous learning and improvement. There are large numbers of people working with adults both employed and as volunteers, and it is important that they are sufficiently skilled to spot the

signs of abuse and understand safeguarding issues. We need to know who in the workforce needs to be trained, hold their organisations to account to ensure that they receive appropriate training and to seek evidence that the training and learning opportunities have made a positive difference to safeguarding practice.

The importance of multi-agency training is reinforced through research and reinstated through local and national case reviews. Effective safeguarding is underpinned by strong multi-agency working and professionals understanding and acting upon their respective roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding adults.

In addition to the range of e-learning courses available we also provided training in Provider Led Adult, Leadership in Adult Safeguarding, Prevent and Far Right Extremism and Domestic Abuse. We have seen an increase in safeguarding referrals and quality concerns and put some of that down to staff attending the various training courses.

## **Policies and Procedures**

The following safeguarding policies have been revised and updated to keep people informed of what they are expected to do.

- North West Association of Directors of Adult Social Services, Young People and Adults Complex Safeguarding Strategy
- Contest Strategy for Counter Terrorism
- Home Office Serious Violence Duty

## **Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR)**

Safeguarding Adult Reviews are a multi-agency process that considers whether serious harm experienced by an adult at risk of abuse or neglect could have been predicted or prevented. The purpose of Safeguarding Adult Reviews is set out in the statutory guidance (Section 44) within the Care Act 2014. The reviews seek to 'promote effective learning and improvement action to prevent future deaths or serious harm occurring again'. The aim is that lessons can be learned from the case and for those lessons to be applied to future cases to prevent similar harm re-occurring. The purpose of a

Safeguarding Adult Review is not to hold any individual or organisation to account as other processes exist for that purpose.

During this period the Safeguarding Adult Review panel received five referrals.

Referral one concerns relate to a lack of collaborative working & escalation of an adults known risks self-neglect/disengagement by involved professionals to evidence/rationalise decisions made in relation to Mental Capacity and care arrangements.

Referral two was around the lack of engagement by professionals with the family prior to the adult's death, however the referral did not meet the criteria for a review as there was no cause for concern on how partners with safeguarding functions worked together.

Referral three involved the sudden death of an adult who suffered with their mental and physical health and 'self-neglect lifestyle', however the referral did not meet the criteria for a review as there was no link to the death and suspected abuse or neglect.

Referral four was around the care of an adult with a learning disability and how the lack of appropriate care and agency involvement led to them being admitted to hospital with a life-threatening injury.

Referral five was a discretionary SAR looking at how well did agencies work together to safeguard the adult and issues around the management of medication in the community and hospital discharge protocols and the impact of any delays on a terminally ill patient.

Safeguarding Adult Review reports on completion are published on our website.

## **Performance Activity**

There continues to be an increase in safeguarding concerns reported to the Local Authority from 672 in 20/21 to 1270 in 21/22, this increase was due to improved recording on the system and changes to the process. However, the concerns continue to rise to 1770 in 22/23. The volume continues to increase due to changes in recording practices that are now more in line

with other local authorities. There is often a debate about whether a high number of concerns is a negative or positive sign. Generally, we welcome a rise as it indicates that any training and awareness raising is having an impact on numbers.

## **Section 42 and Other Enquiries**

There has not been a significant increase from last years of Section 42 and Other Enquiries, over the past three years the numbers have been 340 in 20/21, 670 in 21/22 and 680 in 22/23, which is similar to the previous year.

As in previous years Neglect and Omissions and Physical Abuse continue to be the highest reported risk factors in Section 42 and Other enquiries, making up for 48% of concluded cases in 2022/23. Neglect encompasses many factors which is the reason it is recorded as the highest form of abuse. Physical abuse also encompasses moving and handling, needing assistance etc. More than one form of abuse can be reported. Financial Abuse became the third highest reporting factor, accounting for 19% of concluded cases. These are similar proportions to previous years.

The main location of abuse is the client's own home with 46% of concluded cases this is similar as in previous years. Again, followed by care homes with 33% which is consistent with previous years. There have been no reported incidents taking place in services in the community this year.

## **Making Safeguarding Personal**

At the commencement of a Section 42 and Other enquiry the client/ advocate is asked to identify what they want from this enquiry. The number of clients who expressed their wishes at the commencement of support was 86% which is a slight increase on the previous year. Of these, 96% had their outcome fully or partially achieved, which is a slight decrease on the previous year. The overall satisfaction with the enquiries has slightly decreased from 76% last year to 73% this year. This evidences that Making Safeguarding Personal is central to the support provided by the Partnership.

## **Cohort of Gender and Age**

Females continue to be the highest ratio of clients open to Section 42 and Other enquiries, with 63% compared to males with 37%. The two highest age groups continue to be the 18-64 group (36%) and the 85+ age band (22%). The 18-64 group has a slight decrease of 4% compared to last year and the 85+ group has a 1% 4% increase decrease compared to the last financial year. Age 18-64 age range includes adults with a disability and

mental health. Age 85+ reflects a higher concentration of need, fragility and people living longer.

## News from some of our partners

### Community Safety Partnership (CSP)

The strategic aim is to work in partnership to reduce crime, disorder and Anti-social behaviour within Cheshire and West Chester, including protecting adults at risk from harm. The Partnership has seven priority areas of work which protect people:

- Preventing & reducing re-offending
- Exploitation & Serious Organised Crime
- Anti-social behaviour
- Substance misuse
- Domestic Abuse
- Violence against women and girls
- Serious Violence

**Serious Organised Crime Board (SOC Board)** develop strategies based on the 4 P's plan (Pursue, Prevent, Protect, Prepare) to safeguard communities from organised crime, including exploitation and human trafficking.

**Anti-Social Behaviour Board (ASB), case review and operations** – ASB has a broad definition and where it occurs can cause serious harm to our communities and even result in fatalities in the most serious of cases. The ASB Board delivers on the Partnerships Anti-social behaviour Strategy within the CSP Plan and commissions interventions or projects to meet identified needs. The ASB Case Review provides an important safety net for victims of ASB to have their cases reviewed at a senior level where the necessary thresholds are met.

### Cheshire Wirral Partnership NHS Trust

CWP has a designated safeguarding team who provide a responsive and supportive safeguarding service to all the clinical teams and staff across the entire CWP footprint. The professional experience and knowledge of the team members is what makes it so unique and successful. With a plethora of experience across mental health, physical health and learning disability the team work cohesively, drawing from each other's skills and knowledge on a daily basis to consider the optimum way to support adults at risk. Whether it be through informal discussions, advice to colleagues, safeguarding meetings or discussions, the team are passionately strong advocates for our service users and are willing to challenge where they believe that their voice is being lost.

The Trust actively participate in Safeguarding Adult Reviews, Domestic Homicide Reviews and Multi-Agency Learning Reviews and disseminate lessons learnt, which are integrated into our safeguarding training and briefings. As a partner in the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, the trust is able to embed working practices which ensures that the welfare of adults, young people and children is paramount.

Our approach to safeguarding aims to enhance service user/patient involvement, choice and control whilst improving quality of life, safety, and well-being, which acknowledges the different levels of support that our service-users/patients need, and the personalised information required to enable them to make choices and manage risks.

### **Disability Positive**

Disability Positive is a representative organisation of people with lived experience of disability, long-term conditions and caring responsibility: 100% of our members have lived experience and we are majority governed and staffed by people with lived experience. By its very nature, we are driven by the needs and aspirations of people with lived experience of disability and long-term conditions.

We have a robust review process for all services delivered which captures the wishes and feelings of the service user. Service users are asked to complete benchmarks of outcomes at point of access to a service which are then reviewed on a quarterly basis, to measure customer journey. All referrals made to the local authority include the service users requested outcome. We complete a record of concern before any referral made to the local authority; this record includes the wishes and feelings of the service user.

Safeguarding referral process includes the requirement to follow up all referrals and outcomes shared with the individual at potential risks.

Highlights of some of the work we have done during the year to support safeguarding include annual safeguarding training delivered for all Disability Positive staff which includes how to recognise the signs of abuse. The LSAB service user and carers involvement group met regularly through the year to share experiences and further develop the adult abuse leaflet. The Chief Executive Officer was asked by the UK Covid Inquiry to write a witness statement on the experiences of people with lived experience during covid, with reference to preparedness for the pandemic – she submitted a 12-page witness statement to record people’s experiences and the impact.

### **North West Probation Service**

The North-West Probation Service manages all People on Probation (PoPs) who are serving prisons sentences, licences, and community sentences.

Whilst some of our PoP's are perpetrators, many are also adults at risk, who have care and support needs. Probation Practitioners frequently make referrals to Adults Services to assess and support the needs of adults at risk.

The partnership working between Probation and Adults Services has resulted in robust risk management of the most at risk individuals. Safeguarding Adults training is mandatory for all Probation Practitioners and Managers and our staff are trained regularly in this area with a requirement to repeat this training every 3 years. The role of Probation is to keep people safe. This includes working with other Partners to ensure robust risk management plans are in place. Throughout 2022/23, the Service has delivered a range of other services which play a critical role in safeguarding adults in Cheshire West & Chester. These include:-

Safeguarding adults through Neurodiversity support:

The Service has commissioned a Neurodiversity service offer which includes:

- 1:1 Support for People on Probation
- Case Consultations for Probation Practitioners
- Reflective group practice sessions
- Awareness training for all staff
- Supporting probation leaders to work towards Neurodiverse Accreditations
- Advising on communications and environmental adaptations at a strategic level

Mental Health / Dual Diagnosis team

The Probation Service are piloting a project where we have a mental health nurse based within the Probation Delivery Unit working with Probation Practitioners to assist them navigate the complexities of managing people with multiple needs.

Dependence & Recovery services

The Service provides three specialist practitioners across Cheshire West, co-located within the Service, to improve the continuity of care rates for prison leavers, including Drug Rehabilitation & Alcohol Treatment services.

Resettlement of Offenders

The Service provides an Intervention and Risk Management Service for individuals who are on prison licence and have links to the North-West. Resettle places value upon the individuals and the staff team in creating a safe and supportive culture to help lasting change.



## NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board

Since 1st July 2022 NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board has held responsibility for planning NHS services for the population of Cheshire and Merseyside. The Integrated Care Board delivers its safeguarding responsibilities through leadership structures that are aligned to each of the nine local authority boundaries in Cheshire and Merseyside. The Director of Nursing and Care is supported in Cheshire West to discharge our adult safeguarding duties by the Associate Director of Quality and Safety Improvement and the Designated Nurse for Adult Safeguarding.

In Cheshire West our Designated Nurse for Adult Safeguarding has sustained visible leadership at statutory meetings, including the Safeguarding Adult Board and associated subgroups, the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements Board, the Domestic Abuse Partnership Board and our Community Safety Partnership. The Designated Nurse role provides expert advice to our NHS and local authority and police partners.

NHS Cheshire and Merseyside strives to ensure that the services we commission have robust safeguarding arrangements in place that safeguard and promote the welfare of adults at risk. We have developed the Cheshire and Merseyside Commissioning Standards for Safeguarding Adults, which describe what we expect from our health care services, such as: a named safeguarding adult lead within the organisation, safeguarding adult policies which detail when and where to report abuse or neglect, training for staff, checking staff and volunteers are suitable to work with adults at risk, and appropriate ways to report serious incidents.

Throughout 2022/23 Cheshire West Place have continued their funding of a national domestic violence and abuse programme called IRIS which stands for Implementation and Referral to Improve Safety. It is a specialist training programme designed to improve the response by General Practice staff once a patient shares they are a victim of domestic abuse. The dedicated training and referral process improves the safety, quality of life and wellbeing of survivors of domestic abuse. The training and referral process is done in partnership with Cheshire West and Chester Council Domestic Abuse Team.

The IRIS programme resulted in an increase in the number of general practices who made referrals for their patients to domestic abuse services in 2022/23. The training has helped GP's and their practice staff gain a better understanding of the impact of coercive control as an act of abuse and the effect this can have on adults at risk. This increased awareness led to a number of their patients being referred for specialist advice and support, which was then instrumental in stopping the abuse.

## Weaver Vale Housing Trust (WVHT)

WVHT have a Safeguarding Steering Group that meets bimonthly who regularly review a self-assessment against the Care Act duties. We have the specialist role of a Safeguarding and Quality Practice Advisor who advises and supports colleagues, delivers training to staff at all levels from volunteers to Board Members and our key contractors, cascades learning from SARS/DHRS/IMRS etc, creates links with partners and monitors compliance with procedures.

WVHT founded and chair the Northwest Safeguarding in Housing Practitioner Group and newly formed CWAC Housing Safeguarding Group. We have an internal case management group for complex or at risk new tenants. We offer our customers support from a tenancy sustainment team, this is for tenants whose tenancy is at risk of failure due to property conditions, not feeling safe in their home due to domestic abuse or anti-social behaviour, or generally struggling due to their wellbeing and need linking with the relevant services.

## Public Health

Brio Wellbeing forms part of Brio and our fundamental aim is to champion the health and wellbeing of our residents and reduce health inequalities and tackle preventative diseases by working alongside our shareholder (Cheshire West and Chester Council), the NHS and other health and care providers.

Brio delivers a health and wellbeing service to Cheshire West and Chester residents known as the Cheshire Change Hub, a one stop shop for good health. The hub supports those needing help with different health conditions, including mental health problems, and offers services for stopping smoking, weight loss, exercising safely and falls prevention. The Wellbeing team received over 6000 adult referrals into our programmes during 2022-23 and due to the eligibility criteria for our programmes we support many people who have a physical or learning disability or an enduring mental health condition. Therefore, the safeguarding of all our clients is a priority and is reflected within our policies and procedures.

During 2022-23, the Wellbeing team had 35 safeguarding concerns which were reported via Brio's Safeguarding policy and procedures pathway. All our safeguarding concerns were relating to welfare with disclosures of self-harm and/or suicidal risk, with one actively suicidal which was raised via the Police Welfare check. All internal investigations were deemed non-reportable as clients had existing safety measures in place and had already being

supported by appropriate services. All clients GPs were made aware of their risk and clients were issued with the Crisis Team contact number, national support numbers and told to present at A&E should they become actively suicidal.

We have developed an Assessing Risk and Safeguarding Call Handling Guidance document for our staff as they receive calls from people in distress, who could be at risk to themselves or others, or where there might be a safeguarding concern. Brio has a duty of care to help keep our staff and clients safe while also getting them the help they need. To support our staff to manage these types of calls, the guide covers: How to assess risk, Safeguarding, Callers with suicidal thoughts, managing your wellbeing, and provides a checklist for initial disclosures and for any further action.

Other examples of what we do include Pregnancy Loss Pledge, coordinated by The Miscarriage Association – supporting staff who have experienced the loss of pregnancy.

The Age-friendly Employer Pledge is a nationwide programme for employers who recognise the importance and value of older workers. Employers commit to improving work for people in their 50s and 60s and taking the necessary action to help them flourish in a multigenerational workforce.

## **Case Studies**

### **Disability Positive**

Service User Award: for going above and beyond to continue to deliver advocacy in the community, ensuring that service users health and welfare are safeguarded as a priority. The team have dealt with several supported living services and a clinical setting during the pandemic where ‘blanket’ do not attempt to resuscitate (DNAR’s) were placed on the service users which should only be authorised where the service user has significant co-morbidities, which would preclude the option of Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation. The team approached the setting and engaged a lawyer who wrote to the setting. As a result, the blanket DNAR’s were all lifted, and we supported the decision makers to assess the service users appropriately and individually for DNAR’s.

Respect and Dignity award: for dealing with an extremely complex case over several years. A member of the advocacy team supported a service user, who required surgery, which would change their life. Unfortunately, they were being denied the surgery due to their learning disability. The service user was supported through 3 best interests processes, supported to lodge two formal

complaints. The service user has now had surgery with further surgery planned later in the year. The client is overjoyed at their improved mobility, which will only improve further in the coming months. a fantastic outcome for the client!

## **Weaver Vale Housing Trust (WVHT)**

Case A – A tenant in their 80s had been living in fear of their resident adult child and had not left their home for 3 years. WVHT worked with the allocated social worker to safely support the tenant to decide about their future. WVHT offered a new home and working together with adult social care the tenant was supported to flee to a respite home where they chose to remain. When visited to end the tenancy, the improvement in the customers wellbeing was remarkable, they had new well-fitting clothes, was socialising, had their hair done and said they felt like a new person.

Case B – A tenant with a history of trauma, alcohol and mental health issues stopped communicating with WVHT and their GP. WVHT attended multi-disciplinary meetings and referred the tenant to be discussed. WVHT and Westminster Drug Project alongside the GP and Police worked together to contact the tenant who has now started to engage with agencies.

Case C – WVHT electricians identified a tenant living in a hoarded property, self-neglecting and recognised as at risk by the electricians. Initially hard to engage however due to the diligence and persistence of a tenancy sustainment officer, using a hoarding workbook and clutter image rating, the tenant worked with them, adhered to a property action plan, agreed to a social work referral who organised a reablement package and an Occupational Therapy assessment, and Headway supported the tenant with completely clearing the flat. The tenant is in a much better place mentally and is now being supported to move to a more appropriate property.

## **Strategic Priorities 2021-24**

This year we undertook a review of our governance and scrutiny procedures, resulting in the publication of revised Governance Arrangements. This work was done to ensure the Board is equipped to deliver its statutory and local commitments and to add value to partnership working in safeguarding adults through effective oversight and scrutiny.

It is important to add that, in setting revised Strategic Priorities & Annual Objectives, the key aspects of the previous year's work have (where relevant) been incorporated into the new priorities and objectives, so that good practice, learning and ongoing work is not 'lost' going forward.

It is proposed that the high-level Strategic Priorities for 2020/23 remain unchanged to continue to the progress we have made over the last 12 months. These Priorities remain relevant to the activity of the Board and represent a clear framework on which to assess progress. They form a comprehensive framework that captures all the key functions of the Board, focusing on three areas of equal importance; effective operational delivery; good governance; and active communication & community engagement.

Whilst the Strategic Priorities effectively remain the same, it is important to demonstrate that each has been properly reviewed in the context of the current operating environment. Each priority is set out below together with the rationale for its selections.

**Strategic Priority 1: People and Outcomes** – Ensuring Safeguarding services are delivered effectively and professionally, with Making Safeguarding Personal at the heart of how those services are delivered. This priority continues to be relevant, so that the Board’s focus on adult safeguarding remains firmly on the needs and expectations of the individual at risk.

**Strategic Priority 2: Governance, Systems & Processes** – Ensuring that there are effective governance, scrutiny and business processes in place to ensure that the safety and well-being of adults who are subject to, or at risk of, abuse and neglect is at the heart of Board members organisational priorities. This includes ensuring that the findings from Safeguarding Adult Reviews published during 2022-23 and other key areas of Practice improvement are implemented. The Board will continue to develop and strengthen its governance arrangements, it is important to maintain the focus on systems and processes.

**Strategic Priority 3: Partnerships and Community Engagement** - We will promote safeguarding adults in the community by listening to their concerns and raising awareness to prevent neglect and abuse before it happens, with a focus on diverse, isolated and under-represented communities. It is critical that effective communication and engagement with the community is maintained and that the concerns of adults at risk of abuse and neglect are listened to. We will also continue to work with other key groups, committees and partners, to build on our effective partnerships. We will continue to deliver training and development in areas where awareness and understanding needs to be improved.

## **Our objectives for 2023-24**

To deliver those Priorities, several annual objectives are proposed that will ensure we move towards delivering our Strategic Priorities, which are:-

**Objective 1:** Ensure the delivery of effective safeguarding services, with a focus on Making Safeguarding Personal, informed by the voice of adults who are at risk of neglect and abuse.

**Objective 2:** Maximise the impact of delivering safeguarding services, in collaboration with other key partners (including the Safeguarding Children's Partnership), to develop a cross cutting approach to safeguarding adults, children and families at risk of neglect and abuse.

**Objective 3:** Raise awareness of safeguarding adults during the cost-of-living crisis and the increasing demands of service providers.

**Objective 4:** To continuously improve the effectiveness and culture of the Board, through a range of development tools, including self-assessment, peer review and benchmarking.

## **Stop Abuse Stay Safe**

Speak up if you are worried about something that is happening to you or someone else.

Don't just talk about it. Report it.

If you have a concern or need advice, contact the Community Access Team

- [Report a safeguarding concern](#)
- Phone: 0300 1237034
- Out of hours phone: 01244 977277 (EDT)
- Alternatively call Cheshire Police: 101 for non-emergencies or 999 in an emergency.

If you are scared, tell someone you trust who can report it for you.

We must work together to make sure people feel safe and stay safe.

For information search online for the Adult Safeguarding Board at [Local Safeguarding Adults Board](#)

Responsible officer: Dawn Lewis  
[dawn.lewis@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:dawn.lewis@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)