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Welcome

Foreword from Independent Chair SSASPB

This newsletter has been produced to coincide and contribute to national **Adult Safeguarding Week** which runs from **Monday 20 November until Friday 24 November 2023**. As in previous years the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board (SSASPB) and its connected partners will be playing an active part.

Adult Safeguarding Week will focus on the links between safeguarding and physical and mental wellbeing. Several of the SSASPB partners are facilitating events and these have been well publicised and promoted within partner organisations. **These events are designed to raise awareness of the issues and to offer practical guidance and perspectives from adults with lived experiences.** Feedback from events in previous years has been positive and I would again encourage you to get involved where you are able.

In the previous newsletter I mentioned the challenges for the SSASPB to demonstrate that there have been changes in safeguarding and working practice in response to the learning from Safeguarding Adult Reviews and other learning events. In this newsletter **I acknowledge the work of Anna Woodberry, Stoke on Trent City Council, who has been trialing different ways of gaining your feedback from our training events** so that we can better meet your learning needs in the future and to be assured that our events are having a positive impact on safeguarding practice. As you will read from the article that follows there has been some positive findings. **I take this opportunity to thank those involved in delivering and facilitating the training.**

I am pleased also to acknowledge the work of Francis Ciatii, the Senior Social Worker for ‘Homes for Ukraine’ at Stoke-on-Trent City Council who has a primary focus of helping to ensure the well-being of Ukrainian guests and their hosts and to identify any safeguarding risks. Many reading this newsletter may not know Francis so she has provided her details and extends an invitation to contact her on matters of mutual interest.

You will also read that there is a short article on the theme of **escalating concerns** that may have a safeguarding connection. The absence of an escalation of concerns continues to be a theme in learning reviews. The message from the SSASPB is that **constructive challenge is healthy**, within organisations and between organisations, with encouragement to act in the best interests to safeguard an adult experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect.

As always your suggestions on future content for the newsletter are most welcome - please use the email link ssaspb.admin@staffordshire.gov.uk.

Thank you for reading.

John Wood, Independent Chair

Making a Difference: Empowering Vulnerable Communities and Inspiring Social Work Practitioners

I am the Senior Social Worker for 'Homes for Ukraine' at Stoke-on-Trent City Council. My primary focus is to ensure the well-being of Ukrainian guests and their hosts and to identify any safeguarding risks. My role was created to ensure that Stoke-on-Trent is able to fulfil its safeguarding obligations to hosted Ukrainians who have left their country owing to the conflict there. I am part of the Adult Safeguarding Team at Stoke-on-Trent to maximise the opportunities for engagement with them.

Currently, there are 22 active sponsors and a total of 32 adults and 12 children benefiting from the scheme. Most of the guests are either

in education and or in employment or both. They are also keen on moving into their own accommodation and settling into life in the city. As a result, I'm working collaboratively with the Asylum Seeker Manager and colleagues in the housing team, to ensure the transition is as efficient and hitch-free as possible.

Over time, my responsibilities have expanded to include the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme. So far, this scheme has a single family and they have recently moved into their own accommodation. I work closely with the School Admission Team to secure school places for the children.

"I have started monthly "Asylum Seekers' Outreach Sessions" which aim to provide Asylum Seekers with a safe and open environment to raise any safeguarding concerns they may have.

Driven by my passion and a commitment to human rights approach to social work practice aligned with UK government legislation, I undertook the No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) training. The training has deepened my knowledge and expertise in supporting individuals with NRPF. Increasingly, social work colleagues now seek my advice and guidance when working with individuals with NRPF conditions imposed. I also have access to the NRPF-Connect, and this provides an efficient connection between the local authority and the Home Office's NRPF Team. Thus, facilitating immigration queries and hence avoiding unnecessary delays in providing vital support to

destitute individuals and or families with NRPF.

Beyond my primary role, I provide support and advice regarding migrant queries, particularly those who arrive unannounced at the Civic Centre Reception. Recognising the issues faced by these individuals, I have started monthly "Asylum Seekers' Outreach Sessions" which aim to provide Asylum Seekers with a safe and open environment to raise any safeguarding concerns they may have. More so, it will ensure that their voices are heard and that appropriate action(s) is/are taken to safeguard and protect their wellbeing.

My role with **Homes for Ukraine** has also provided opportunities to share my passion for social work and possibly inspire the next generation of practitioners. Recently, I had the privilege of accompanying my Strategic Manager to **facilitate an interactive learning session** for final-year social work students at a local university. The **discussions revolved around the key global/national challenges affecting the council** and, consequently, social work practice.

In summary, I am confident that my work with Homes for Ukraine, the Afghan Citizens Resettlement Scheme, and my dedication to supporting individuals with NRPF is an opportunity to make a tangible difference in the lives of vulnerable communities. Additionally, I have embraced the opportunity to **inspire social work practitioners**, encouraging them to **embrace their values, challenge prevailing ideologies, and champion social justice and human rights**.

Here's how I can be contacted:

francis.chiatii@stoke.gov.uk, 01782 234025.

Escalation

One of the most frequently found learning points from Safeguarding Reviews (SARs) is the **failure to raise and escalate concerns** about a course of action taken or not taken to safeguard an adult with needs for care and support. **The escalation of concerns is important**, and often **vital**, both **within and between organisations**.

Constructive challenge is healthy and actively encouraged through the SSASPB. Partner organisations are encouraged to **act in the best interests to safeguard an adult** experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect.

If a decision that you have made (or not made) is **challenged** – please **respond positively** and consider it as an **opportunity to see another viewpoint** and possibly learn. If you do want to escalate a difference of view, be open with the colleague and discuss with them the course of action you are going to take. It should be seen as an **opportunity to seek resolution and not as conflict**.

“The escalation of concerns is important, and often vital, both within and between organisations”

The SSASPB has an escalation policy link for guidance: **[Escalation Policy \(ssaspb.org.uk\)](https://ssaspb.org.uk)**.

Learning from Training Feedback – “You Said, We’re Listening”

One of the **SSASPB’s responsibilities**, as set out in the Care Act 2014, is to **monitor and review** the **implementation and impact** of **training sessions** delivered to practitioners.

In the past, this has been done at the training event or shortly after by asking people to leave feedback in the chat or to select from a list of adjectives which best describe their learning experience. Whilst this has been useful, **we have been trialling different ways of gaining your feedback** from our training events so that we can **better meet your learning needs** in the future

and to **be assured** that our events are **having a positive impact on safeguarding practice**.

This approach supports the SSASPB **strategic priority** that **seeks assurances from partner organisations** of Effective Practice in five recurring learning themes.

We wanted to share with you all the results from this feedback gathering exercise and how we are listening to what you have been telling us.

You Said:

The three learning events we have gathered feedback on have been:

- Trauma-informed Practice by Patrick Hopkinson (14 March 2023).
- ‘Voice of the Adult’ Practitioner Forum (20 July 2023).
- ‘Managing Allegations against a Person in a Position of Trust’ Practitioner Forum (3 October 2023).

Feedback revealed that knowledge in the subject area covered by each learning event improved from:

- 5.28 to 8.44 out of 10 for trauma-informed practice.
- 6.25 to 8.00 out of 10 for voice of the adult.
- 5.66 to 8.38 out of 10 for managing allegations.

The combined responses from attendees at the three sessions was that:

- 47.3% felt they were going to use the knowledge gained in every day of their practice.
- 21.8% every week.
- 12.7% every month.
- 18.2% less than every month.

Examples given for the circumstances where you would use the knowledge in practice included in conversations, referrals, assessments, critical reflection and supervision.

In terms of what worked well, the common themes were:

- You found the sessions engaging, with complex information broken down into easily digestible bits, and enjoyed hearing multi-agency viewpoints.

Common themes for improvement were:

- More time for reflection built into sessions.
- More hypothetical scenarios alongside real-life case examples to work through.
- A rolling training programme so new starters can access the sessions at a later date.

Other topics you would like to be covered at future learning events included:

- mental capacity;
- sexual abuse;
- self-neglect;
- compulsive hoarding;
- domestic abuse, and many more.

We're Listening:

Some of our learning events which form part of the SSASPB support for the Ann Craft National Safeguarding Adults Week (21 - 25 November 2023) include:

- Mental Capacity and Self-Neglect by Patrick Hopkinson (14 November 2023). This was attended by 191 practitioners.
- Mental Capacity and Sexual Safety by Dr. Laura Pritchard-Jones (22 November 2023).

We will also consider the topics you suggested as we plan our future learning events and practitioner forums. These will be widely publicised in due course.

This article concludes with a big thank you to everyone who took the time to complete our feedback forms. We encourage everyone who attends our future sessions to complete feedback forms – they really do help to pitch the events to make a positive difference in both meeting your learning needs and improving safeguarding practice.

Safeguarding Adults Week: 20—24 November 2023
Focus: Wellbeing

Safeguarding Yourself and Others

Safeguarding Adults Week
20 – 24 November 2023

WHAT IS SAFEGUARDING ADULTS WEEK?

Safeguarding Adults Week is a time for organisations to come together to raise awareness of important safeguarding issues.



A FOCUS ON WELLBEING

For the 2023 event, we're focusing on the links between safeguarding and physical and mental wellbeing

WHAT IS WELLBEING?

Wellbeing can refer to your mental and physical health, your relationships and connection with your community, and your contribution to society.



WELLBEING & SAFEGUARDING

Living free from abuse and neglect is a key element of wellbeing. Also, if someone's wellbeing is suffering, they may consider certain actions that put them at risk.



LOOK AFTER YOURSELF

Good safeguarding means looking out for others. But looking after yourself can put you in a better position to help and support others.

GET UPDATES & FREE RESOURCES

Visit
tinyurl.com/ACTSAW23
or scan here →



#SafeguardingAdultsWeek

ann craft trust
acting against abuse



Raising an Adult Safeguarding Concern

If you think that an adult with care and support needs is being abused or neglected:

If the adult lives in Stoke:

Telephone: **0800 561 0015** at any time

Minicom: 01782 236037

If the adult lives in Staffordshire:

Telephone: **0345 604 2719**

Monday to Thursday 8:30am to 5pm,
Fridays 8:30am to 4:30pm, excluding Bank
Holidays

0345 604 2886 at any other time

Contact SSASPB

SSASPB Team
Staffordshire Place 1
Tipping Street
Stafford
ST16 2LP

Phone: 01785 854071

Email: SSASPB.admin@staffordshire.gov.uk



stop adult abuse