



Northumberland Strategic Safeguarding Partnership

Briefing in a minute: Joint Serious Case Review Concerning Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adults in Newcastle

Newcastle Safeguarding Children and Adults Boards published their joint Serious Case Review on the 23rd February 2018. The review concerned the sexual exploitation of children and adults with needs for care and support in Newcastle.

The narrative in the review highlights the calculated and persistent determination of perpetrators over a long period of time to exploit women and girls through horrific acts of abuse, violence and manipulation and the targeting and grooming of some of the most vulnerable young people and adults with a dismissive disregard for the criminal justice system.

Some of the key learning points which have already been carefully considered include: the complex nature of sexual exploitation; the extreme and long-lasting impact it has on victims; that sexual exploitation happens to adults as well as children; and difficulties in identifying and preventing exploitation. Working with victims has also reinforced the importance of intense and long-term support for them to regain trust and to help them understand their experience so they can talk about this. The primary aim being to support and protect victims from further exploitation and to help them so far as possible to rebuild positive lives.

Learning from this Review and from Operation Sanctuary has already been embedded in Newcastle through the development of enhanced service provision, particularly the development of the Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation Hub. The learning has also raised awareness and the development of a greater understanding of the nature and impact of sexual exploitation. Actions taken have made a positive difference to the way agencies identify, respond and prevent sexual exploitation and to how best to support victims, which has led to exceptional victim focused practice. This practice is being acknowledged independently and nationally.

One of the strongest messages emerging from the Review is the need to have a better understanding of perpetrators, not only in preventing their activities but also understanding their motivation. A common theme in reviews of this kind is the lack of meaningful engagement of perpetrators and often when they do it is to protest their innocence and derogate the victims. This however will not prevent us attempting to develop an understanding of what has led them to offend and what might have helped prevent their offending in the first place.

The full report is available on the Newcastle LSCB website <https://www.nscb.org.uk/joint-serious-case-review-concerning-sexual-exploitation-newcastle>

For North and South of Tyne Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures go to https://www.proceduresonline.com/nesubregion/p_ch_sexual_exploit.html

Safeguarding Adults <http://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Care/Support/Safeguarding.aspx>

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01670 536400 open 24hrs 7 days a week**

Local Recommendations

Number	Recommendation
1.1	Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board and Newcastle Safeguarding Adults Board should make arrangements to review the progress and impact of the actions taken and intended to be taken as a result of carrying out the Joint Serious Case Review
1.2	A report should be made to Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board and Newcastle Safeguarding Adults Board on the arrangements to take forward the initiative to establish a process for discussion with communities about the issues that have arisen from the Joint Serious Case Review.
1.3	Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board and Newcastle Safeguarding Adults Board should continue to work with relevant partners to try and encourage conversations with perpetrators to better understand the Newcastle context of their offending.
1.4	When considering national guidance or advice Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board and Newcastle Safeguarding Adults Board should ensure that expectations for engagement with a national agency that is not a local partner are addressed and kept under review.
1.5	Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board and Newcastle Safeguarding Adults Board should identify services in the community that are not routinely involved with local safeguarding arrangements and consider how best to engage with them on safeguarding issues.
1.6	Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board should arrange to carry out an audit of a sufficient number of cases to form a judgment about whether regulatory and guidance expectations concerning pupils who change educational settings are consistently followed.
1.7	Newcastle Safeguarding Adults Board should carry out an audit of a sufficient number of cases to form a judgment about the effectiveness of arrangements to interview vulnerable adults following a period of missing.
1.8	The outcome of audits carried out in Newcastle to review the processes of assessment of capacity of patients to receive sexual health services should be reported to Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board and Newcastle Safeguarding Adults Board.
1.9	Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board and Newcastle Safeguarding Adults' Board should consider what arrangements can be made to monitor the numbers of patients who are identified as sexual exploitation victims and have received sexual health services.

1.10	NHS Newcastle Gateshead Clinical Commissioning Group should arrange a forum for discussion about how potential and actual victims of grooming and sexual exploitation might be more likely to be identified in health settings and report to the Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board and Newcastle Safeguarding Adults Board.
1.11	Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board should arrange a forum for discussion about collaborative working between the school nursing service and teaching staff.
1.12	There should be reports made to Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board and Newcastle Safeguarding Adults Board on the outcomes of the actions taken to improve information sharing in the region when vulnerable children or adults move administrative areas.
1.13	Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board and Newcastle Safeguarding Adults Board should consider how access for practitioners to advice on cultural attitudes when assessing and managing risks might be improved.
1.14	Northumberland Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust should report to Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board and Newcastle Safeguarding Adults Board on the arrangements being made for local delivery of the Governments ambition to improve access to Mental Health Services for all children and young people, including those sexually exploited.
1.15	Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board and Newcastle Safeguarding Adults Board should arrange for guidance to be issued to practitioners on the differences between learning disability and learning difficulties and the relevance for safeguarding judgments and services.
1.16	When reviewing the training strategy Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board and Newcastle Safeguarding Adults Board should have regard to the issues raised at the Learning Events.
1.17	Partner agencies should report to Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board and Newcastle Safeguarding Adults Board on the arrangements for supervision of staff and how they measure the effectiveness and impact on outcomes.
1.18	Newcastle Safeguarding Boards, involving the Northumbria Police, the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Crown Prosecution Service, should arrange for discussions to take place with Newcastle Crown Court to consider how practical arrangements at court can be improved to ensure protection of the interests of victims giving evidence.

Joint Board Draft Strategy

Statement of Intent

Sexual exploitation of vulnerable people is abuse and is unacceptable. It can have a serious long-term impact on every aspect of the person's life, health, education and work. It damages the lives of families and carers and corrodes relationships across communities.

In 2017, the Government emphasised the devastating, long-term consequences, impacting on every part of life and future outcomes – physical, sexual and mental health and well-being, education, training, future employment prospects, family relationships, friends and social relationships and relationships with their own children.

Strategy Principles

The Northumberland Boards are committed to keeping potential victims safe from sexual exploitation through the following key principles:

- Sexual exploitation is a form of abuse which can involve sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse as well as neglect
- Vulnerable people do not make informed choices to enter into or remain within sexually exploitative situations, as they do so via coercion, manipulation, grooming and/or other forms of enticement
- Children under 16 years cannot consent to sexual activity with an adult, and sexual activity with a child aged less than 13 years or an adult who lacks the capacity to consent is statutory rape
- People who are sexually exploited will experience difficulty and/or confusion around their autonomy to make choices, and their understanding around sex, sexuality and the sexual activity into which they have been coerced
- Sexually exploited people must be treated as victims of abuse and not as offenders
- Law enforcement efforts must involve disruption of sexually exploitative activity and target offenders as sexual abusers, who may be an adult but could also be a child's peer and/or other young people

Nationally, our understanding of vulnerability was also increased through the Bradford Serious Case Review regarding Jack in 2017. Jack, a teenage boy living in the Bradford area, had been sexually abused by multiple adult males; this abuse commenced when he was 13 years old after he came out as gay.

Agencies first became aware of the risk of sexual abuse in August 2010. Two separate Police investigations resulted in thirty-six adult male suspects being identified, twenty of whom have been convicted of various sexual offences and grooming offences against Jack. Whilst there was significant multi-agency support for Jack, services were not effective in keeping him safe from abuse. Consequently, there is evidence that Jack has experienced serious sexual, physical and emotional harm.

However, sexual exploitation of boys and men is complex and hidden with different models to those identified with female victims. The low incidence of identified cases is likely to be a significant under-representation of the abuse occurring.