



# **North Tyneside and Northumberland Safeguarding Adults Board**

## **Communication and Engagement Strategy**

November 2018

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# 1. Introduction

## Our Vision

The vision of North Tyneside and Northumberland Safeguarding Adults Board is to promote the individual's human rights, their capacity for independence, ensuring each person is treated with dignity and respect and able to enjoy a sustained quality of life and improved wellbeing. That at all times they are afforded protection from abuse, neglect, discrimination or poor treatment and that their carers whether paid or unpaid, are safe.

As no single agency can act in isolation all constituent members of the Safeguarding Adults Board recognise the need for and give a commitment to work in partnership and collaboration, to ensure positive outcomes in the welfare and protection of all citizens at risk of harm from abuse.

In addition we agree to adhere to the Care Act principles which underpin all adult safeguarding work;

**Empowerment** – People are supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and their decisions are based on informed consent.

**Prevention** – It is better to take action before harm occurs.

**Proportionality** – The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.

**Protection** – Support and representation for those in greatest need.

**Partnership** – Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.

**Accountability**- Accountability and transparency in delivering Safeguarding

The Northumberland and North Tyneside SAB will develop and actively promote a culture with its members, partners and the local community that recognises the values and principles contained in '**Making Safeguarding Personal**'.

## Communication and Engagement Strategy Aims

The aims of this Communication and Engagement Strategy are;

- To raise awareness of the work of the boards including ongoing campaigns for the Board
- Promote awareness in our communities that everyone can contribute to safeguarding
- Promote the welfare and safety of residents of all ages in local communities

- Give reassurance and confidence regarding the safety of residents in across both areas
- Encourage the participation of local communities in the work of the boards where appropriate

To fulfil its statutory objectives and effectively carry out its functions, the SAB needs to raise awareness about how everybody can contribute to the Safeguarding Adults' agenda. This should involve listening to and consulting with service users and carers, and ensuring their views and opinions are taken into account in planning and delivering safeguarding services.

## **2. Communication responsibilities of the Board**

We want to ensure that the views of service users and their families contribute to developing best practice, and that frontline staff and managers are integral to informing learning and improvement.

The Board will aim to provide information that is accessible, of a high quality and that meets the needs of the public, service users, potential service users and staff working in partner agencies.

This approach is based on the following principles:

- Information is a service in its own right
- Making services and information accessible to everyone
- Communicating clearly and openly
- Using plain English (e.g. avoiding jargon and explaining acronyms) or giving clear explanations where this is not possible
- Promoting equality and valuing diversity is central to the provision of information
- Keeping information up to date and accurate
- Information may need to be delivered in the spoken word to be effective
- Consultation is a key feature to continuous improvement.

## **3. Key Messages**

It is important to prioritise our key messages to maximise impact. Our primary key message is the nationally recognised strapline for Safeguarding Adults:

**‘Safeguarding is Everyone’s Business’**

Other key messages we wish to promote are;

- What to do if someone needs help and who to signpost to eg. Adult Social Care, the Police, Mental Health Services, Health and/or the voluntary sector.
- Safeguarding training and resources, signposting for people who work with vulnerable adults

- Specific campaign weeks.
- Learning from local and national Safeguarding Adults Reviews and Domestic Homicide Reviews
- Making Safeguarding Personal
- The annual plan for the SAB

#### **4. How will we Communicate/ Engage?**

The general methods of communication used by the Boards will be:

- Board webpages/ minutes
- Newsletters
- Multi-agency training programme
- Market Place activities
- Conferences
- Annual reports
- Consultations – professionals, carers, families
- Leaflets
- Posters
- Advertising and press releases in local papers and newsletters
- Emails and Email briefings
- Briefings, meetings, seminars and workshops
- Banners and stalls
- Face to face work with service users and families e.g. safeguarding enquiries

#### **5. Who will we Communicate with?**

Who we will communicate with will depend on the messages being relayed and may include/ but not be limited to the following:

- SAB members via the agency representative who will distribute as required
- Staff
- Voluntary and community groups including churches and faith groups
- Service users
- Carers/ advocates/ family friends
- Members of the public
- Partnership Boards including Local Safeguarding Children's Boards, Learning Disability Partnership Board, Community Safety, and Health and Wellbeing Board

## **6. Media Enquiries**

Proactive use of the media to promote good safeguarding messages should be a routine part of any public awareness campaign. Responsive media statements may be required when there is a case issue involving a specific person or where there is negative media coverage of key safeguarding matters which needs to be addressed.

Any communication with the media in the name of the Safeguarding Adults Board should be undertaken by the Independent Chair or a nominated substitute where appropriate in discussion with the Local Authority Communications Team. In the event of a Safeguarding Adults Review, all communication should be directed to the Independent Chair of the Safeguarding Adults Board before any press releases are made.

Agencies should avoid responding independently and all press releases should be agreed by the Independent Chair and Local Authority Communications Teams to ensure a consistent response is delivered.

Partner agencies must ensure that any public communication does not negatively impact on a partner agency.

### **Dealing with media enquiries**

If you receive an enquiry relating to Safeguarding Adults, your Communication Teams and the SAB Managers should be notified immediately. If the enquiry relates specifically to the SAB, the response should come directly from the SAB Chair and Communications Team. Where possible, responses should be agreed by the SAB Chair and Local Authority representatives *before* it is sent to the journalist by the Communications Team. However, media deadlines means it is not always possible to wait for a response from each organisation before the response is submitted, although every effort should be made for this to happen.

The SAB commits to ensuring joint responses to media enquiries wherever possible. This should be established at the initial contact stage.

### **Proactive media / communications activity**

The SAB will issue proactive information to the media, as well as to staff, the public and other stakeholders via their Communications Teams or a nominated team from one of the agencies. SAB communications will normally be joint communications. All proactive activity will be planned jointly and in advance by the SAB. All proactive safeguarding related information issued directly by any one organisation in the SAB will be agreed by the SAB Independent Chair and Communication Teams before it is sent to the media.

## **Speaking to the Media**

When an immediate media response is required, this will be the responsibility of the Chair of the Board or whomever they designate this to. The Chair will have authority to talk to the media on all Board matters. In the absence of the Chair, this role will be taken on by the Deputy Chair. The Chair should consult with the Local Authority Communications Team before issuing a response.

## **Drafting and Publishing of News Releases**

Any news releases will be drafted by the Chair and SAB Managers in collaboration with communications officers from relevant agencies.

## **Communicating following a Safeguarding Adults Review**

The SAB Chair should be the key representative to speak to the media about a Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) and any actions following that review on behalf of the Board.

It is important to note that any news release will only be made once the SAR has been completed and published. If a media request for a statement is received prior to completion of a review, the SAB will provide a holding statement on the case. It is important that the families of those who have suffered the death of a relative or whose relative has been subject of a SAR is kept informed about the SAR process (as per SAR policy).

## **7. Evaluation**

The communication strategy will be evaluated through a number of means, and feedback will be provided by the SAB Board Managers to the Board Business Group and Board where necessary.

This may include all or some of the following:

- Conference and training evaluation forms
- Attendance database for conference and training – including numbers and breakdown of agency attendance
- Annual training needs analysis
- Monitoring of Board's websites
- Monitoring of social media contacts
- Audit inspections and peer reviews
- Consultations with focus groups