



Salford Safeguarding Adults Board

Quality Assurance Framework



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**Safeguarding
Adults Board**

Introduction and Background

This Quality Assurance Framework has been developed by the Safeguarding Effectiveness Group subgroup of the Salford Safeguarding Adults Board ('SSAB') to outline methods used to provide assurance of safeguarding effectiveness to the SSAB and its multi-agency partners.

The Safeguarding Effectiveness Group ('SEG') consists of representatives from the SSAB and statutory and non-statutory partners. The SEG use qualitative and quantitative data gathered from its own quality assurance activities, alongside data provided by partners, to analyse trends and themes, identify areas of good practice or emerging risks and work together to discuss areas where the effectiveness of adult safeguarding can be improved or further developed for positive change. This framework will help analyse if safeguarding activities across Salford are effective in their purpose of protecting adults at risk of abuse and neglect and in improving their wellbeing and quality of life.

The SEG collaborate with partners across Salford to review the quality of safeguarding provided to adults at risk of abuse and neglect and to better understand how effective processes are in protecting those at risk of harm and in achieving the desired outcomes of the adults (and / or their representatives) involved.

Examples of good and excellent agency safeguarding practice gathered from audits, reviews and other assurance activity will be shared at subgroup meetings to identify if the methods used can become standard practice across the agency in question, or if there is also scope to transfer aspects of this safeguarding excellence to the wider work of other Salford agencies. Findings, considerations and recommendations from quality assurance for future safeguarding preventative or practical improvements will be passed across by the SEG for discussion by the Impact and Implementation Network ('IIN') subgroup, who are responsible for proactive work around multi-agency safeguarding operational change.

National Context

Local authorities have specific safeguarding duties under The Care Act 2014 and are responsible for protecting adults in their area who are at risk of abuse or neglect.

They must lead a multi-agency local adult safeguarding system that seeks to prevent abuse and neglect and stop it quickly when it happens, and this system includes the establishment of a Safeguarding Adults Board ('SAB'). Members must include the local authority, NHS and police who must develop, share and implement a joint safeguarding strategy.

The SAB are responsible for seeking assurance that safeguarding activity is effective, that practice is continuously improving and that the quality of life for adults with care and support needs (and their carers) in its area is being enhanced. Qualitative and quantitative methods should be used, with the experience, feelings and desired outcomes of the adults at the centre of the safeguarding process being considered. The [Social Care Institute for Excellence](#) state that Quality Assurance should include arrangements for:

- data recording, analysis and reporting
- case audits
- SAB and agencies' self-audits and peer review
- Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs)
- practitioners' forums to share lessons from case audits and local good practice, from research and from safeguarding adults reviews
- holding member and partner agencies to account
- the management of large-scale investigations, serious incidents, complaints, disciplinary proceedings, grievances, whistleblowing and allegations of professional malpractice or unfitness to practice
- the implementation of 'Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP)' at a local level and its impact on engagement and outcomes.



Local Context

It is a statutory requirement of the Care Act 2014 that each Local Authority has a Safeguarding Adults Board. The Salford Safeguarding Adults Board is made up of statutory and voluntary agencies who oversee the safeguarding of adults at risk across Salford.

The SSAB must be assured by multi-agency partners across the city that their safeguarding activities - whether individual or collaborative efforts - are effective, that they are continuously analysing practice in order to drive improvement to service and improve the quality of life of Salford adults and that they are providing adults at risk with a personalised approach to safeguarding which centres around their individual needs and desired outcomes.

The SSAB have five overarching priorities:

1. Prevention
2. Communications and Engagement
3. Person-centred Approach
4. Safeguarding Effectiveness
5. Exploitation.

All quality assurance activities completed by the Safeguarding Effectiveness Group will be completed in consideration of these priorities.

The diagram below outlines the elements of the Safeguarding Effectiveness Strategy that helps to provide us with this assurance. It sets out how people are at the heart of all we do; the five activities we will undertake to be effective, and the six safeguarding principles that underpin these.



Aims of SSAB Quality Assurance

- To be assured that Salford adults are protected from abuse and/or neglect
- To consider how agencies can improve the quality of life of adults living in Salford by driving effective, excellent and progressive safeguarding practice
- To consider how quality of service delivery directly affects the adults involved
- To consider how effective multi-agency collaboration and communication is and whether it can be improved
- To ensure equality and diversity are considered
- To ensure safeguarding is made personal to each adult and considers their wishes and desired outcomes.

Quality Assurance Structure

In order for the Salford Safeguarding Adults Board to be successful in assuring the effectiveness of safeguarding across Salford agencies, we must:

- Have the support of all agencies involved
- Follow methodical, structured and well-defined processes as outlined in this document
- Have input from all agencies concerned regarding their own Quality Assurance
- Have open, honest communication, critical thinking and constructive dialogue across agencies
- Discuss any patterns, trends, themes, training gaps, emerging risks, areas for improvement and areas of good practice
- Consider any equality or diversity issues

Audit Toolkit

Audits: Introduction

The Salford Safeguarding Adults Board ('SSAB') complete quarterly multi-partner quality assurance projects, based on various safeguarding themes, areas of practice and priorities as agreed by Board members. These contribute towards analysing the effectiveness of safeguarding practices across Salford partner agencies in improving the lives of adults and making a positive impact with the support they receive. It is important to obtain information from, and consider the lived experience of, adults (and/or their carer, advocate or representative, as appropriate) who have been through the safeguarding process, asking them for their honest feedback and how the process made them feel.

Audits involve agencies making honest, evidence-based ratings and assessment of specific aspects of their own safeguarding. These audits evaluate the effectiveness of the safeguarding processes of individual adults and/or across wider safeguarding themes, identify any development needs or - in the spirit of continuous improvement - areas where practice could be strengthened further, and outline considerations / make recommendations for progressing these operationally. Audits are carried out objectively and systematically and purely from a position of learning, rather than focussing on the actions of individual practitioners involved – any knowledge/training/competency gaps, risks or other vital feedback areas identified for practitioners should be fed back by their own agencies.

There are two types of audit completed by the SSAB:

1. In 'case-based' audits of individual adults, adults are independently selected based on theme/demographic criteria. Involved agencies are identified, then asked to assess their involvement, looking at the impact of their intervention, how well they collaborated with

other agencies (if relevant) and how effective this collaboration was in supporting the adult to achieve their personal outcomes.

2. Some audits do not involve auditing the effectiveness of the safeguarding of individual adults. These instead involve a wider range of statutory and non-statutory partner agencies self-assessing their own practices based upon a specific safeguarding theme. In these audits, agencies are asked to complete a self-assessment form involving aspects of the theme such as their policies, processes, practice and practitioner training offer.

Data from both audit versions is collated and processed by the SSAB, who consider any recurring themes, trends, training gaps, risks, issues, concerns or areas for potential improvement, along with any examples of good or excellent practice. A Multi-Agency Audit Group session may then be held to discuss findings for each individual adult / the overall theme in more detail, before an Outcome Report is written.

Outcomes are presented to and discussed at the next Safeguarding Effectiveness Group quarterly meeting, with any operational recommendations passed to the Impact and Implementation Network to consider for viability / progression and to take action as appropriate. Finally, the Outcome Report will be presented / provided to the quarterly Board meeting for oversight. Following Board approval, a 7-Minute Briefing on the Audit is written, and if authorised for public reading, this is then published on the SSAB website's Quality Assurance page.

Audits: Structure

In order for Audits to be successful in achieving their purpose, they must:

- Have the support of all agencies involved
- If appropriate, ask any adults involved, and/or their family members or carers, to complete a short survey/be given the opportunity to feed back with their lived experience, to include how they feel they were supported by agencies involved and if their desired outcomes were achieved
- Follow a methodical, structured and well-defined audit process as outlined in this document
- Use an independent party to select data of adults for audit according to set, pre-agreed criteria OR in any circumstances where an individual is not independently selected, for the reasoning for this to be made clear within the corresponding Outcome Report
- Have input from all agencies concerned regarding their roles in audited cases, via completion of an Agency Self-Assessment Form, and for this to be completed within the timescale set
- Use the Multi-Agency Audit Group Session to discuss objectively how actions taken or support provided impacted the adult and if or how the safeguarding process could have been made the best it can be. Was excellence in safeguarding practice and agency collaboration achieved, and if not, identify actions which could have made it so
- Involve open, honest communication, critical thinking and constructive dialogue
- Discuss any patterns, trends, themes, training gaps, emerging risks, areas for improvement and areas of expected and good practice
- Consider any equality or diversity issues

- Consideration for the quality of record keeping for each adult audited; if this was clear, free from jargon (or jargon/acronyms explained), factually accurate, informative and effective, providing clear rationale for professional decision making, with any expressed professional opinions justified and evidenced. Recording on electronic records should be of appropriate and relevant quality and detail. Agencies should appropriately record when an adult has been involved in a safeguarding enquiry (and include the outcome/status)
- Discuss how audit outcomes can positively impact wider safeguarding practice and improve the quality of safeguarding for Salford adults
- Be followed by a structured Outcome Report using constructive, objective and critical analysis
- Be followed by a SEG meeting, with members having the opportunity to discuss Outcome Report findings openly and honestly centred upon the evidence of safeguarding effectiveness, along with any considerations or recommendations identified to improve safeguarding effectiveness across agencies which can be passed to the IIN.
- Hand over any findings (via the Outcome Report) and any suggested for operational improvement to the IIN. The IIN can then discuss any resulting operational agency change actions and complete and monitor progress within their own Action Log.
- The Outcome Report and any agreed actions will also be presented to the next SSAB Board meeting for their oversight.

Audits: Criteria

Criteria for each audit should be agreed in advance. Examples of criteria considerations:

- Safeguarding reason or theme, e.g.:
 - Domestic Abuse
 - Self-Neglect
 - Homelessness
 - Exploitation
- Living or deceased
- Living arrangements of adults at the time, e.g.
 - Living alone and independently
 - Living alone with support
 - Living with family
 - Living in a 24-hour setting e.g., care home, nursing home, supported accommodation
 - In hospital
 - In prison
- By Council Ward/Locality/Neighbourhood
- By specific consideration of protected characteristics, as per the Equality Act 2010, and other Equality, Inclusivity and Diversity considerations, e.g.:
 - Heritage
 - Ethnicity
 - Nationality
 - Gender identity

- Religious belief
- Sexual orientation
- Language (spoken or signed)
- By agency involved, or with a specific combination of multiple agency involvement
- By specific consideration of a set combination of criteria in relation to an incident, national or local safeguarding focus.

Audits: Pen Portraits

A 'Pen portrait', or 'pen picture', is a form of qualitative research which is used to help those involved in a project to keep the person at the forefront. This is usually a paragraph or two briefly describing the person, in this case, each adult featured in our audits, including variables such as their age, health status, background, employment, religion, housing and family environment and also (if available) the 'softer' variables that help shape individuals such as their lifestyle, interests, attitudes, appearance and personality traits.

Where possible, a pen portrait will be written for audited individual adults to help with our 'Personalised Approach' priority and 'Making Safeguarding Personal'.

Audits: 'Voice of the Adult' Feedback Tool

It is vital that any adults (or their carers / advocates / representatives) who at the centre of our multi-agency audits have the opportunity to contribute and give their valuable input and feedback on their first-hand, lived experience of safeguarding. Knowing the impact of the safeguarding these individuals received will ensure the feelings, wishes and desired outcomes of the adult are considered throughout the process, as well as helping identify areas where improvements to policy, process or practice could be made. This is in line with the SSAB 'Person Centred Approach' and 'Communication and Engagement' strategic priorities.

The adult (or their carer, advocate or other representative) should be risk-screened as appropriate for safety / to avoid any distress, and contacted by the Engagement Officer via their preferred contact channel to ask if they would be willing to share feedback on their safeguarding experience. The Engagement Officer should briefly explain what the information they provide will be used for, and then if the adult agrees, either take them through a simple questionnaire (including information-sharing consent questions) or arrange a suitable appointment time and date or method to use to complete this. This may follow existing adult feedback processes, or contain the following rating scale questions (e.g. scale of strength of agreement from 1-5) as below, plus the opportunity for 'free rein' qualitative feedback:

- I feel confident my concerns were taken seriously and I was listened to
- I felt that I was given the information I needed to help me feel safe
- I had someone around me I trust to support me and help me stay safe during this time (e.g. friend, family member, an advocate or other representative)
- I know how to get help if anything similar occurs in the future
- I feel safer as a result of my experience.

Audits: Agency Self-Assessment Tool

- Self-assessments to involve RAG rating by the agency along with their justifying comments/evidence, with measures as follows:
Green = Quality standards exceeded statutory requirements, fully embedded process, no issues to report, not applicable to your organisation
Amber = Satisfactory; minimum statutory requirements or quality standards met, process in place but not fully embedded
Red = Unsatisfactory; minimum statutory requirements or quality standards not met, process would be beneficial but is not currently in place, process in place but not satisfactorily embedded
- Example Ratings Scale:
Outstanding: 14 GREEN outcomes
Good: 9-13 GREEN outcomes with 1-4 AMBER outcomes
Satisfactory: 6-8 GREEN outcomes with 5-7 AMBER outcomes
Requires Improvement: 6 or less GREEN outcomes or 1 or more RED outcome
- Self-Assessment forms and associated Ratings Scales change depending on questions asked of agencies based on each audit's theme.

Audits: The Multi-Agency Audit Group Session

Multi-Agency Audits based around the safeguarding of specific adults include a 'group session' which gathers local agency safeguarding representatives together to discuss self-assessment responses and any initial findings made by the SSAB. Two questions should remain central in these sessions:

1. Did agencies work effectively, both individually and collaboratively, to safeguard these adults?
2. Were the adult(s) involved made safer as a result?

The selection of agencies for involvement in each audit based around the safeguarding of specific adults should be proportionate and relative to their resource and capacity demands, with an option for them to 'opt out' of attending the session if they had no involvement with the safeguarding practices of any of the adults selected.

Agency representatives have prior access to information about each involved adult. Each agency involved with the safeguarding processes of these adults are sent a version of the Pre-Audit Agency Self-Assessment Tool in advance to complete and return to the SSAB.

During a Multi-Agency Audit Group Session, each adult is presented one by one. The Pen Portrait is highlighted first, to outline the background of the adult and to ensure the group has an understanding of who the adult is (in line with the 'Making Safeguarding Personal' approach). Key agency responses to the questions outlined on the Pre-Audit Agency Self-Assessment Tool are then relayed, with opportunity for feedback, analysis, further questioning from the SSAB, group discussion and peer challenge, followed by the related open Audit Questions. Representatives then have the opportunity to ask any related additional questions, comment or make suggestions. The

sessions are recorded to ensure that all valuable qualitative feedback is captured for inclusion and review in preparation of the associated Outcome Report.

Spotlight Reports

Spotlight Reports are another form of assurance used by the SSAB. These reports focus a 'spotlight' on one specific safeguarding area, and may feature national and local research, safeguarding-related data and information gathered from policies and processes, good practice, interviews, questionnaires and more.

'Voice of the Practitioner' Feedback Process

'Voice of the Practitioner' is a piece of assurance completed once every two years. Practitioners who work with adults with care and support needs are key to preventative safeguarding and are perfectly positioned to inform the SSAB about the effectiveness of safeguarding adults in practice. This assurance takes the form of an online survey which asks practice-based safeguarding questions to a wide range of practitioners working directly with adults at risk of abuse and neglect across Salford. Practitioners are asked about topics including safeguarding-related policy, process and training provision, awareness, engagement and communication, good practice and suggestions for improvement in safeguarding effectiveness, alongside questions about any relative SSAB priorities and themes chosen by the Board for assurance that year.

Quantitative and qualitative practitioner responses are collated and analysed, with key findings written in an Outcome Report and presented to members of the SEG, IIN and Board, with discussion including any plans for action and operational change to be taken as a result of practitioner feedback. A 'You Said, We Listened' document is then created to respond to practitioners. This thanks them for their much valued efforts and explains that their feedback has been taken into account and where viable, what specific actions have been - or are planned to be - taken as a result of the insight they have provided.

'Voice of the Adult' Lived Experience Feedback Process

'Voice of the Adult' is a process whereby adults who have been through the safeguarding process in Salford are given the opportunity to provide feedback on their experiences. Each adult participant is asked a series of set quantitative and qualitative questions, with their answers being recorded in a database, along with key data relating to their safeguarding type, reason and some protected characteristics (as per the Equality Act 2010). This helps with identification and analysis of any trends, patterns or outliers as this dataset grows.

Where it is identified that there is good practice to be highlighted, lessons to be learned or areas of safeguarding-related practice to be strengthened, a pseudonymised document of the adult's feedback is created. This document is distributed to members of the SEG, IIN and Board and added to the agenda of their meetings to discuss insight gained and any appropriate action that would be beneficial/is needed.

Outcome Reports

Outcome Reports are written for each piece of assurance (apart from Spotlight Reports, which meet the same aim) to summarise and discuss findings including:

- any background / context
- quantitative and qualitative analysis,
- good practice,
- 'Making Safeguarding Personal' evidence,
- considerations / recommendations
- wider research
- relevant resources.

These reports are distributed to SEG members to read in advance of the following quarterly SEG meeting, where a summary is presented by the SSAB Quality Assurance Officer. Outcomes, lessons and actions can then be reflected upon, discussed and next steps agreed, including recommendations from by the SEG to the IIN with any suggestions for operational change to further improve safeguarding practice.

Actions From Assurance

The Action Log managed by the IIN includes any viable operational changes identified by members as a result of recommendations / considerations from SSAB assurance work, and the actions or steps agreed by the agencies concerned to put these into effect.

Accountability is vital to successful implementation, therefore action owners and timescales are set by this subgroup's members so that progress can be effectively monitored. Completed actions can then be updated by the IIN to the Board and relevant Subgroups where relevant, including feeding results back round to the Safeguarding Effectiveness Group.

Seven-Minute Briefing

Following assurance completion and Outcome Report oversight by the Board, Seven-Minute Briefings are produced. These one-page documents summarise the key and headline information relating to each piece of completed assurance work. Contents may include key facts, statistics, qualitative findings, themes and trends identified, considerations, concerns, risks, areas for development, recommendations / considerations from findings, outcomes and related resources.

Once completed, Seven-Minute Briefings are approved by the SSAB Business Manager on behalf of the Board and then, if appropriate, are published on the SSAB website's Quality Assurance page for Salford professionals to access.

Agency Assessments and Self-Assessments

In addition to the regular assurance work detailed above, other audit tools are also used for assurance of safeguarding effectiveness in Salford:

Bi-Annual Agency Self-Assessment Tool

This written self-assessment is distributed to agencies working with Salford adults with care and support needs every other year. The self-assessment helps the SSAB to gain assurance on a range of safeguarding-related agency activity including policies and procedures, governance, performance management, training, safeguarding-related practice and recruitment. Agencies must provide evidence to confirm they have relevant internal documentation such as Safeguarding and PiPoT / Whistleblowing policies and procedures and Escalation Process.

Results from the completed and returned Self-Assessments will be collated, analysed and written up in an Outcome Report and 7 Minute Briefing summary. Any themes, trends and key information will be flagged for discussion and consideration by the SEG, IIN and Board, at any related SSAB Assurance Events and also summarised within the following SSAB Annual Report.

Bi-Annual Practitioner Self-Assessment Tool, aka 'The Voice of the Practitioner'

This is a wide-reaching, anonymous online survey sent out every two years to individual practitioners across agencies providing support to adults in Salford with care and support needs. This aims to gain predominantly quantitative results about the effectiveness of multi-agency governance, from the perspective of frontline practice. It is also important to utilise the opportunity to gain valuable qualitative information directly from these Subject Matter Experts ('SMEs') regarding their daily use and working knowledge of internal safeguarding measures when working with adults at risk of abuse or neglect, along with their insight into current SSAB assurance themes or safeguarding priorities from their perspective.

Results from the Practitioner Self-Assessment survey will be collated into a One-Page Summary and Outcome Report. Any themes, patterns, trends, suggestions or examples of good practice will be identified and flagged for discussion at the following SEG meeting, along with key qualitative feedback. Gaps between feedback from those using agency safeguarding measures in practice and the measures outlined by the agency will be considered, with any recommendations for operational change, focus, and/or improvement to be passed by the SEG to the IIN. Agencies will be asked to respond directly to their practitioners' key comments and suggestions via a multi-agency 'You Said, We Listened' document, which will be published for their reading on the SSAB website.

Version Control

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