

Report by Head of Performance, Commissioning and Change, Graham King

Safeguarding Adults: A Consultation on the Review of the 'No Secrets' Guidance

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to present to the Board the Safeguarding Adults: A Consultation on the Review of the 'No Secrets' Guidance and to request that the Board consider responding to the document.

2. Safeguarding Adults: A Consultation on the Review of the 'No Secrets' Guidance

- 2.1 The consultation document is about how society enables adults to be safe from abuse or harm. It asks for views on how Government need to change and develop the No Secrets guidance and how to combine keeping people safe within the three sets of wider Government policy goals:
1. Independence, choice and control
 2. Access to meaningful community empowerment and safer housing in wider society
 3. Access to criminal justice for all
- 2.2 There are three main reasons for the review of the No Secrets guidance:
1. The major changes in the government's vision of the kind of society it envisages for the future
 2. There are weakness in the implementation of the No Secrets guidance and various parts need to be reviewed and strengthened
 3. It has been suggested that there is a need for legislative powers in the area of safeguarding
- 2.3 Keeping people safe is a universal government objective and applies equally to all adults. Therefore the consultation focuses on all citizens and also on those groups where practice and research have shown that specific public policy and professional responses may be needed in order to keep them safe.
- 2.4 The document covers 9 chapters, each with a set of questions for debate:

- 2.4.1 Chapter 1 describes the main messages about No Secrets and sets the scene for mainstreaming safeguarding – making it everyone’s business
- 2.4.2 Chapter 2 describes the policy background against which the review takes place and looks at personalisation, empowerment and access to criminal justice
- 2.4.3 Chapter 3 examines three important issues – leadership, prevention and outcomes
- 2.4.4 Chapter 4 both reflects and invites a debate about what aspects of safeguarding can be built into safeguarding
- 2.4.5 Chapter 5 identifies some of the levels which are leading to the development of safeguarding in health services and asks what more needs to be done to integrate safeguarding into high quality healthcare for all
- 2.4.6 Chapter 6 asks whether safeguarding, housing responsibilities and community empowerment should be better integrated and what housing providers should do to enable tenants and residents to live safer lives
- 2.4.7 Chapter 7 reflects the questions asked about how safeguarding vulnerable adults can become core police business and what more the courts can do to increase access to justice
- 2.4.8 Chapter 8 asks whether more guidance is needed and if so what kind and/or whether new legislation is needed and if so what would make the big difference to making safeguarding more effective
- 2.4.9 Chapter 9 raises questions of definitions, eligibility criteria, language and principles

3. The Consultation Process

- 3.1 Nationally, the consultation period ends on 31 January 2009.
- 3.2 Within Sunderland, a response is being co-ordinated by the Safeguarding Adults Team within Health, Housing and Adult Services (HHAS). The Team will be engaging a wide range of stakeholders through the Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board, which will agree the response, prior to sign off by HHAS Directorate. The timescale for views to be submitted as part of this response is 21 November in order that it is discussed and agreed at the December Safeguarding Adults Board.
- 3.3 The Board is requested to discuss whether it would like to contribute to HHAS response. However, given the short timescale the Board may

wish to submit a separate response directly to the Department of Health or not respond and be assured that the Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board response will be sufficient.

- 3.4 It is requested that the Third Sector representatives on the Board do respond either as part of HHAS response, as this will ensure that the views of users of services, carers and the public are included in the overall response or directly to the Department of Health. The timescale for comments to be submitted as part of the HHAS response is Thursday 11 December, in order that they are received before the December Safeguarding Adults Board.
- 3.5 All contributions to HHAS response should be sent to Joanne Pell, Safeguarding Adults Co-ordinator at joanne.pell@sunderland.gov.uk.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 The Board are requested to receive this report and consider:
- Whether to respond to the consultation as part of HHAS response (timescale 21 November)
 - Whether to respond directly to the Department of Health (timescale 31 January)
 - To not contribute to the consultation and be assured that the Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board response will be sufficient
 - Third Sector representatives contribute to the HHAS response (timescale 11 December)
 - Third Sector representatives to respond directly to the Department of Health (timescale 31 January)

Joanne Thynne
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