



ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
4 NOVEMBER 2024

UPDATE ON ADULT SAFEGUARDING ACTIVITY

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ADULTS AND COMMUNITIES

Purpose of report

- 1 This report provides Committee members with an update on adult safeguarding activity.
- 2 The report outlines the Care Act 2014 duties and strategic arrangements in place to meet these duties, safeguarding enquiry adults process overview, the performance data for Quarter 1 for the 2024/2025 financial year, and the Safeguarding Adults Reviews that have been published in the last 12 months.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

- 3 The Care Act 2014 at Section 42(1) places a duty on Local Authorities to make (or cause to be made) whatever enquiries it thinks necessary to enable it to decide whether any action should be taken in the adult's case (whether under this be part or otherwise) and, if so, what and by whom. where there is "reasonable cause to suspect" an adult in its area (whether or not they are ordinary resident there):
 - Has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs);
 - Is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect;
 - As a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

Background

- 4 Safeguarding is protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse and neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted, including where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action.

Strategic arrangements

- 5 To carry out its safeguarding duty, the Adults and Communities Department has arrangements in place to ensure that it is safeguarding and promoting the welfare of adults at risk in Leicestershire within the parameters of the law. These include:

- a) A Safeguarding Adults Governance Group, which oversees and sets strategic priorities in relation to safeguarding practices and processes within the Department.
- b) Robust links to the Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) through the Governance Group. The group is chaired by an Assistant Director, who is a SAB member, and a SAB officer attends all meetings to update on SAB priorities and also to ensure that the policies and procedures in place for safeguarding within the Department are consistent with SAB priorities.
- c) Policies and procedures are in place to support staff to effectively safeguard adults at risk. The policies and procedures in place include (but not limited) the following:
 - i. The Multi-Agency Policy and Procedures (MAPP): These outline 'the context, principles, policies and definitions in relation to safeguarding adults who have care and support needs.
 - ii. Safeguarding Adults Thresholds Guidance: This guidance (designed to be read in conjunction with the MAPP) is a framework to support practitioners to use a consistent approach in applying their professional judgement when identifying the kind of incidents that may require a safeguarding response and those that may be addressed through alternative processes.
 - iii. Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) Practice Guidance: This guidance supports practitioners to embed the principles of MSP into safeguarding adults' practice.
 - iv. Management/undertaking a statutory safeguarding adults enquiry under section 42 of the Care Act 2014: This guidance supports staff to manage or undertake a section 42 enquiry once a decision has been reached that the criteria for a section 42 enquiry has been met.
 - v. Organisational Safeguarding Adults (OSA) Enquiries Process Guidance: This helps practitioners to complete safeguarding enquiries where the concerns relate to a provider service.
 - vi. Guidance for Safeguarding in Health Settings: This guidance clarifies the local authority's oversight arrangements for safeguarding enquiries where the alleged abuse or neglect occurs in an NHS in-patient setting.
 - vii. Managing Allegations against People in Positions of Trust (PiPoT): This guidance supports staff on how to manage allegations against people in a position of trust as required by the Care Act.
 - viii. Domestic Abuse and Violence Process Guidance: This guidance outlines the process that practitioners need to follow regarding domestic abuse and violence concerns, particularly where these concerns fall within the Safeguarding Adults remit.
 - ix. New Guidance: The LLR Procedures Subgroup, has played an active part in developing a new Self-neglect guidance to replace the current

Vulnerable Adults Risk Management (VARM) guidance called “Responding to Self-Neglect (including Hoarding)”. The guidance will form part of the Safeguarding Adults MAPP (for LLR) from 1 December 2024. The aim of the guidance is to support front line professionals to work with people who are at risk of self-neglect or hoarding with a risk assessment tool to identify whether the risk is low, moderate, or high, and what to do if a person is assessed as low or moderate risk (work flexibly with the person and colleagues in a multi-agency approach to achieve the best outcomes for them).

The guidance will be launched via three 15-minute briefing sessions on 19, 20 and 21 November 2024 (during National Safeguarding Adults Week) and include:

- a short introductory video to the procedures;
 - two seven-minute briefing documents (one on hoarding and one on self-neglect);
 - a video for people explaining what self-neglect is.
- x. Safeguarding Adults’ Reviews (SARs) Referrals Oversight Process: This guidance ensures that staff at all levels check to see if the criteria for a review under Section 44 of the Care Act 2014 has been met for a referral to be made to the SAB Case Review Subgroup where agencies have not worked well together to safeguard an adult at risk.
- xi. In addition, there is also a strong safeguarding learning and development package for staff. This includes:
- an e-learning module on ‘Raising Concerns of Abuse’ (training that supports staff understanding on how to recognise and report signs of abuse, and is a prerequisite for all staff to complete prior to attending the safeguarding core training);
 - Safeguarding Core training (face to face/Teams training that provides staff with an in-depth understanding of the safeguarding processes from alerting to undertaking a Section 42 enquiry under the Care Act 2014);
 - Organisational Safeguarding Adults training (training that provides staff with the knowledge on how to complete safeguarding enquiries where the concerns relate to a provider service);
 - and currently, Vulnerable Adults Risk Management (VARM) training, (training that support staff to manage self-neglect cases where the adult at risk has the mental capacity to make decisions about their care and support but is at serious risk of harm or death if their circumstances do not change). The VARM guidance is due to be replaced this December 2024 with new guidance, aptly named Responding to Self-Neglect (including Hoarding), a category of abuse in the Care Act.
- xiii. Safeguarding Enquiry Adults Process Overview: When safeguarding referrals are received into the Care Pathway, mostly through the Adult Social Care Customer Service Centre (some through internal staff), information is gathered to consider whether there is reasonable suspicion that an adult with care and support needs is at risk, or experiencing abuse or neglect, and cannot protect themselves as a result of their

needs. The views of the adult are sought on the nature, level and type of risk and support they may need to mitigate the risk (Section 42 (1) of the Care Act 2014 - information gathering). The guidance states this should be within 24 hours of receiving the referral.

- xiv. After proportionate fact finding, a decision is made whether it is necessary to continue to a Section 42(2) enquiry, which is the duty to decide whether action is necessary, and if so, by whom. If the answer is 'yes' then, a strategy meeting or discussion is held to plan the enquiry, assign tasks, and an interim protection plan is put in place within five working days.
- xv. Following the completion of actions identified in the strategy meeting, a case conference is held to review actions, put a protection plan in place, and end the enquiry if all involved are satisfied that the risk has been reduced or removed.
- xvi. If the response to continuation to a Section 42(2) is a 'no', then alternative responses are considered, which could include, a section 9 Care Act 2014 assessment, a section 10 Care Act 2014 Carers assessment, care management, quality of care concern, complaint, a Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) referral, signposting for advice, or no further action.
- xvii. In summary, the process is that when alerts are received; the Care Act criteria is applied and decision made regarding continuation to a full enquiry or another route. For full enquiries, a strategy meeting or discussion is held, an interim protection plan is put in place; an enquiry is completed, followed by a case conference, protection plan, and review.

Safeguarding Performance Data

- 6 This section will look at the performance data in respect of Quarter 1: April to June 2024. This includes the number of safeguarding alerts received, enquiries opened from the alerts, enquiries completed, and the number of people who had their desired outcomes met.

Alerts

- 7 521 safeguarding alerts were received for this quarter (as opposed to the 457 in the last quarter). Although the alerts have slightly increased by 64, they are moving in the right direction as they used to be over 1,000 in previous quarters. The change in the reduction of concerns being raised was a direct result of an operational form change that more accurately collected safeguarding concerns as opposed to including welfare concerns in the process. There was a separation between the concern for welfare form from the safeguarding referral form made in August 2023.

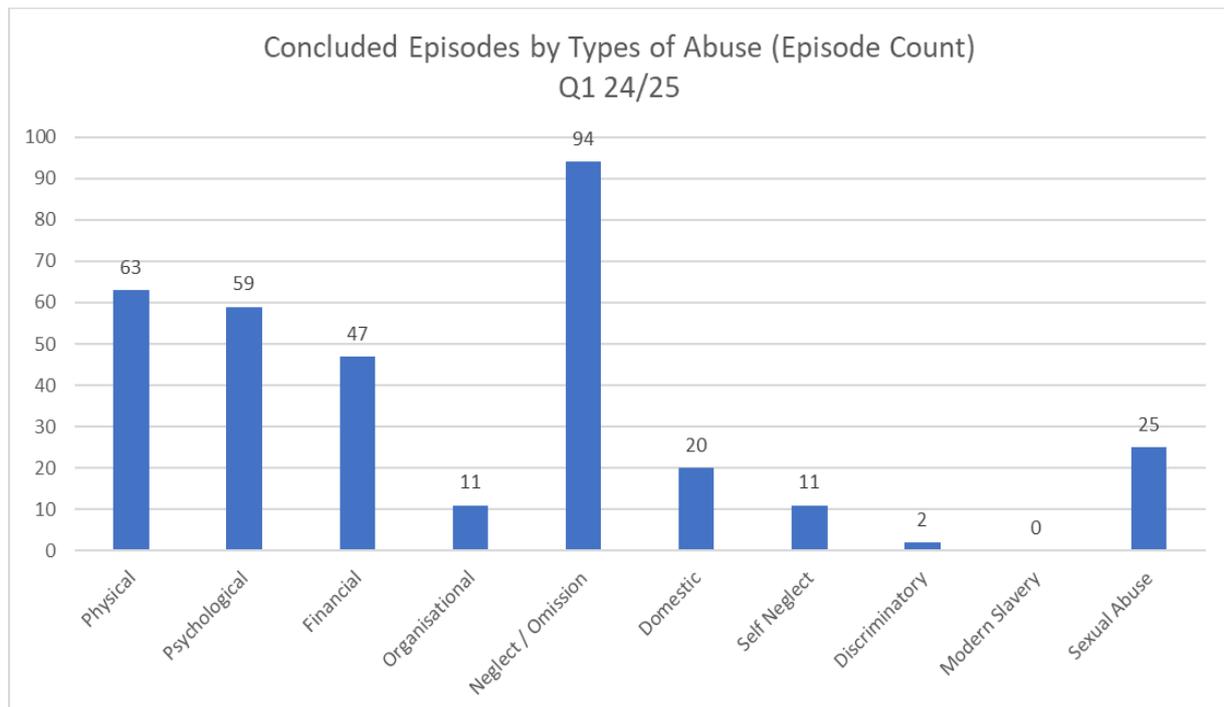
Enquiries

- 8 From the 521 safeguarding alerts, 237 safeguarding enquiries were started in this quarter, which is a decrease of 29 enquiries compared to 266 in the previous quarter. More enquiries will be started and completed from the remaining alerts as a result of

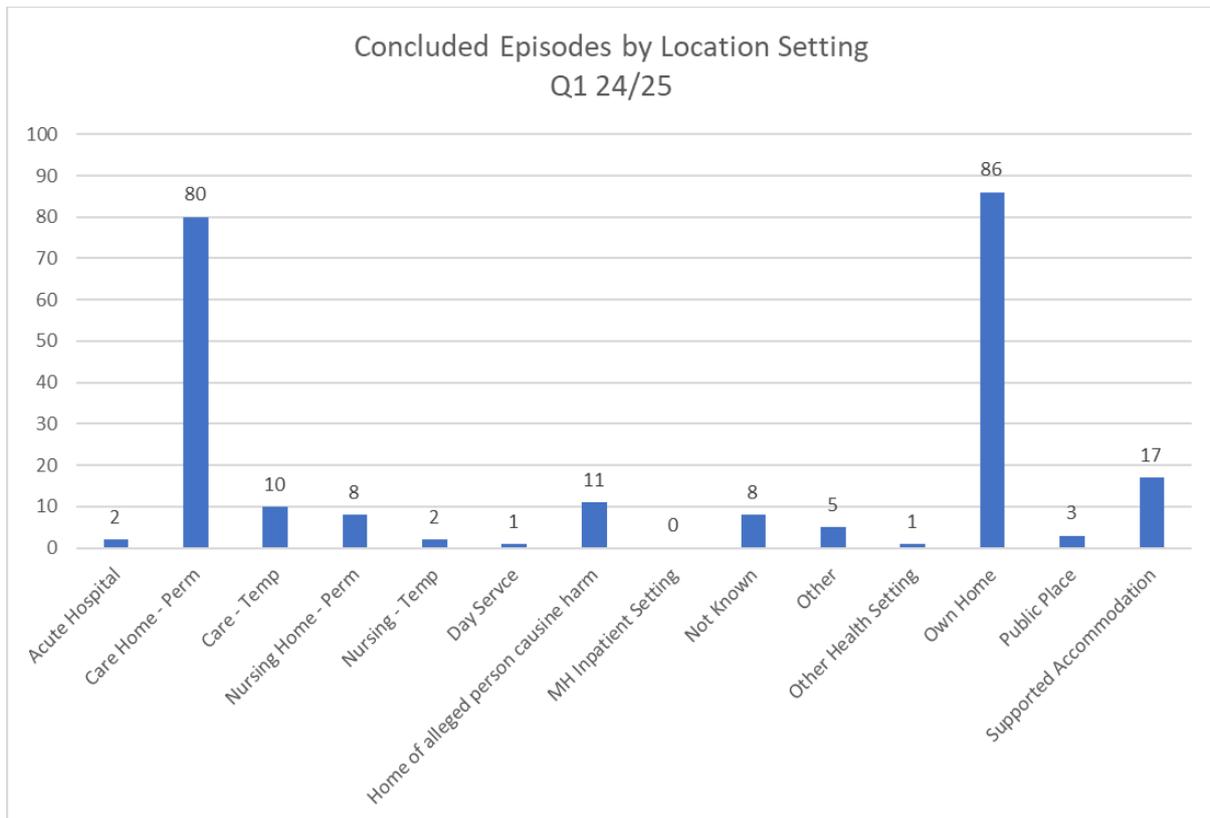
the benefits of the changes made last year to when a Section 42 safeguarding enquiry should commence. Following changes made last year to how responses are recorded to safeguarding referrals on the system, staff are now starting enquiries on the system when they answer, 'yes' to the question 'Are safeguarding adults issues indicated or safeguarding concerns raised?' This complies with the Care Act 2014 duty, where the Local Authority 'must make enquiries, or ensure others do so, if it believes an adult is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect'. The proper application of the law in this way (where staff are completing safeguarding enquiries following reasonable cause that an adult is experiencing or at risk of abuse or neglect), is ensuring that more people at risk of abuse or neglect in Leicestershire are safeguarded.

Completed Enquiries

- 9 Out of the 237 safeguarding enquiries started, 234 were completed in this quarter (as opposed to the 277 safeguarding enquiries completed in the previous quarter). This shows that there has been a completion rate of 99% within the quarter.
- 10 The charts below show the types of abuse by episode council and location respectively, ending in Quarter 1:



- 11 Neglect and acts of omission remain the highest reported type of abuse followed by physical and psychological abuse.



- 12 A higher degree of enquiries located within a person's own home and in a 24-hour residential are more speedily concluded.

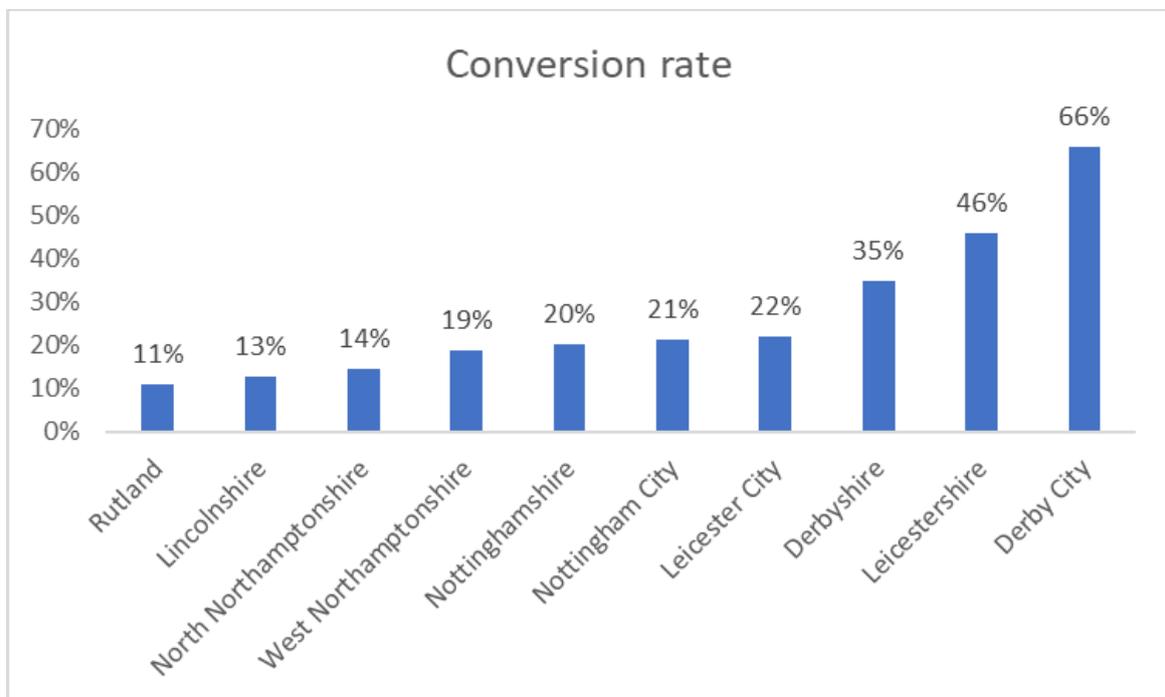
Making Safeguarding Personal

- 13 The number of people who had their desired outcomes met continues to fluctuate above 90%. It has dipped slightly in this quarter from 96% in Quarter 4 to 93% in this quarter.
- 14 The percentage of people who were asked for their desired outcomes in this quarter was 76%, a drop from the 82% recorded in the previous quarter; and the percentage of people whose mental capacity was considered in relation to making safeguarding personal also fell from 38% in the previous quarter to 35% in this quarter.

Conversion rate

- 15 The conversion rate (this is calculated by dividing the total number of enquiries, 237, by the number of alerts, 521 received) for this quarter is 45.48% as opposed to 58.20% in the previous quarter. This indicates the benefits of the changes made in August 2023, by separating the portal Safeguarding Referral Form from the Concern for Welfare Referral Form as already mentioned.
- 16 At the time of making the changes, the national safeguarding performance data for 2022/2023 showed that the County Council's conversion rate was at 10% with only 10 other local authorities out of the 147 measuring at 10% or lower. By adding the question 'are safeguarding adults issues indicated?' on the Contact Form completed by staff when a safeguarding referral is received, this has ensured that only safeguarding issues are counted as safeguarding alerts.

- 17 The recently released national safeguarding performance data for 2023/2024 shows that the County Council's conversion rate is no longer at 10%, but at 46%, a great improvement from last year. In comparison to local authorities in the East Midlands region, the County Council's conversion rate is second highest, as can be seen in the table below:



Leicestershire Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs)

- 18 Three Leicestershire SARs are currently published on the LLR SAB website; two of them under the pseudonyms of Claire, and Godavari, and the last one (Angela) under the first name of the subject of the SAR.
- 19 Continuous Professional Development (CPDs) days for staff in the Care Pathway have been held on the 7, 11, 14, and 21 March this year and focused on learnings from these SARs. These CPDs days are focused workshops enabling staff to expand upon their knowledge, skills and experience in relation to safeguarding. One of the SARs, Claire, was used as a case study and all the recommendations from the review were shared with staff as part of what could work better going forward.

Conclusions

- 20 The Committee is asked to comment on the update now provided on safeguarding Quarter 1 performance data and conversion rates.

Background papers

Leicestershire and Rutland Multi-Agency Policies and Procedures (MAPP)
Safeguarding Adult Reviews

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

- 21 None.

Equality Implications

22 There are no equality implications arising from this update.

Human Rights Implications

23 There are no human rights implications arising from this report as it is an update only.

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