

Report to HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

Oldham Safeguarding Adults Board: 2019/20 Annual Report

Portfolio Holder:

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Date: 10th November 2020

Purpose of the Report

The Oldham Safeguarding Adults Board (OSAB) is a statutory partnership set up to safeguard adults who are at risk of experiencing abuse, neglect or exploitation. As part of its statutory duties the Board produces an Annual Report setting out the safeguarding concerns it has dealt over the last year, along with the actions it has taken to help keep people safe in Oldham. The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to consider the OSAB 2019/20 Annual Report and priorities for 2020/21.

Background

Over the last year The Oldham Safeguarding Adults Board (OSAB) has introduced a series of measures designed to remodel adult safeguarding arrangements across Oldham. The new arrangements are designed to strengthen and improve multi-agency working through a combination of new safeguarding structures, greater alignment with the Children's Safeguarding Partnership and integrating safeguarding structures across Community Health and Social Care.

This 2019/20 OSAB Annual Report is the first under these new arrangements. It reflects the Boards ambition to develop a more outward facing role to ensure there is 'no wrong door' to reporting safeguarding concerns across communities and most importantly to ensure the work of the Board is held publicly accountable.

Current Position

The role of the OSAB is to assure itself that organisations and agencies across Oldham are working together to protect and enable adults to live safely. This means helping people to make decisions about the risks they face in their own lives as well as protecting those who lack the capacity to make these decisions.

The OSAB has a statutory duty to:

- Produce a **Strategic Plan** setting out the changes the Board wants to achieve and how organisations will work together.
- Publish an **Annual Report** setting out the safeguarding concerns it has dealt with in the last year as well as plans to keep people safe in the future.
- Undertake a **Safeguarding Adult Review** where it believes someone has experienced harm as a result of abuse, neglect or exploitation.

The attached Annual Report provides information on the number and type of safeguarding concerns reported in Oldham during 2019/20. It also sets out the actions taken to ensure that lessons learnt from the Safeguarding Adult Reviews have been used to change front line practice and improve the way services work in Oldham.

Key Issues for the Health and Wellbeing Board to Discuss

During 2019/20 a total of 1580 safeguarding referrals were made for residents in Oldham and of these referrals 556 became the subject of a formal safeguarding Enquiry. The number of referrals received in 2019/20 show that the figures have almost doubled in the last two years, however this may be due to a combination of improvements in the recording of data and campaigns designed to encourage people to report safeguarding concerns.

During 2019/20 a total of 1543 safeguarding referrals and enquiries were dealt with and closed which is a significant increase on the previous year's total of 960. Of the cases closed in 2019/20 48% were complex cases involving people who lacked capacity to make their own decisions. The breakdown by sex, age and ethnicity suggests that White British women aged between 18 and 64 were more likely to be the subject of a reported safeguarding concern in 2019/20 compared to any other group.

The types of abuse recorded saw an increase in the number of safeguarding concerns relating to self-neglect, acts of omission and domestic abuse which can include psychological abuse, violence, physical abuse and financial abuse. Some of the increase in domestic abuse cases coincided with the start of the Covid-19 lockdown where those living with an abusive partner may have experienced an escalation in abuse, coupled with restricted access to community contacts and professional support.

During 2019/20 the OSAB conducted five Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs) compared to two in 2018/19. For each SAR the Board has adopted the recommendations put forward by the independent reviewer and overseen changes to services designed to prevent similar cases happening again. These changes have also been informed by Making Safeguarding Personal conversations with local people who have first hand experience of safeguarding issues relating to mental health, learning disability, addiction and long-term conditions.

Developing Oldham's All Age Safeguarding Offer

For 2020/21 a key ambition for Oldham's new safeguarding arrangements include an effective 'all age' safeguarding offer. Over the last year progress has been made to align the work of the OSAB with Oldham's Safeguarding Children Partnership. Joint working arrangements between the children's and adults Safeguarding Business Units has resulted in the creation of a joint Safeguarding Oldham website, bi-weekly newsletter and Self-Neglect Practice Learning Seminar.

The new Learning Hub model being developed by the Safeguarding Children Partnership also involves representation from adults' services and ensures that cross cutting themes are identified and responded to quickly and effectively. The aim is to continue to build the all age safeguarding offer through joint pieces of work focusing on safeguarding transitions and complex and contextual safeguarding where success depends on effective multi-agency contributions across children's and adults' services.

Adult Safeguarding and the Coronavirus Pandemic

Like other areas in Greater Manchester the challenge for adult safeguarding in Oldham is the ongoing impact of the Coronavirus Pandemic. For some people lockdown restrictions and social isolation have created the perfect conditions for new forms of safeguarding concerns to emerge as well as escalating existing safeguarding issues. Whilst organisations in Oldham were quick to reconfigure services across health, social care and the criminal justice system at the start of lockdown in March 2020, we now face further change as services come together to decide what a good Covid-19 recovery model looks like in practice.

Oldham's recovery model also needs to reflect the disproportionate impact that Covid-19 is having on some adults and broaden our scope and understanding of groups who fall within a safeguarding remit. These groups include people shielding who remain isolated from family, friends or professionals, those in care homes, BAME communities, and households facing increased poverty and lower incomes. As part of its bi-weekly Covid-19 Assurance meetings the OSAB is actively exploring the additional safeguarding needs for these groups.

The challenge going forward is to manage future waves of lockdown restrictions whilst putting plans in place to enable services to come back to full capacity. This will also involve managing surges in safeguarding demand as we regain visibility of people hidden during lockdown restrictions. We are already starting to see a trend in Safeguarding Adult Review referrals for people experiencing neglect or abuse compounded by the first wave of Covid-19 restrictions. OSAB is prioritising the sharing of lessons from these cases as quickly as possible to inform current and future waves of restrictions.

Recommendation

Members of the Health and Wellbeing Board are asked to consider and comment on the Oldham Safeguarding Adults Board 2019/20 Annual Report

Appendices

1. The Oldham Safeguarding Adults Board 2019/20 Annual Report