



# Safeguarding Adults Communication and Media Protocol

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Guidance

May 2015

**This guidance sets out how communication relating to enquiries and statements about specific safeguarding cases, the role of the LSAB's and general safeguarding adult topics will be managed.**

## **Hampshire and Isle of Wight Safeguarding Adults Communication Protocol**

**The Local Safeguarding Adults Boards (LSAB) in Hampshire, Southampton, Portsmouth and Isle of Wight have agreed the following communication protocol regarding the management of communication relating to enquiries and statements about specific cases, the role of the LSAB and general safeguarding adult topics.**

### **Aim**

- 1) To coordinate safeguarding communications across the four Local Safeguarding Adults Boards (LSAB's) operating in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight and their partner agencies through the agreement and implementation of the joint Safeguarding Adults Communication Protocol.
- 2) To agree key safeguarding messages and communicate them in a coherent, consistent and timely manner through a variety of channels whilst recognising the need for partners to maintain their organisational integrity and decision-making.
- 3) To ensure communication and statements issued in response to serious cases are co-ordinated and consistent across agencies.

### **Key Messages**

*1) Key messages about the role of the Local Safeguarding Adults Board (LSAB):-*

- The LSAB is a partnership committee, co-ordinated by the local authority, which gives strategic leadership for adult safeguarding across the local authority area.
- The LSAB's remit is to agree objectives, set priorities and co-ordinate the strategic development of adult safeguarding and it acts as the key mechanism for agreeing how agencies will work together effectively to safeguard and promote the safety and well-being of adults at risk and/or in vulnerable situations.
- The LSAB aims to promote awareness and understanding of abuse and neglect among service users, carers, professionals, care providers and the wider community and works to generate community interest and engagement in safeguarding to ensure "Safeguarding is Everyone's Business".
- The LSAB is responsible for ensuring that the systems in place locally to protect people at risk are proportionate, balanced and responsive.
- The LSAB will commission Serious Case or Safeguarding Adults Reviews in cases where there have been poor outcomes to ensure that lessons are learned.

2) *Key messages about safeguarding adults at risk or in vulnerable situations:-*

- The well-being and safety of local people is our main concern and we adopt a zero tolerance stance on the abuse, neglect or discrimination of any person but particularly people at risk or in vulnerable situations in whatever setting.
- We are encouraged by the increasing number of reports highlighting concerns because this indicates that people are growing more confident to report abuse which previously may have been hidden and unreported.
- The local authority has the lead co-ordinating role for safeguarding adults and it works in partnership with local agencies and organisations to safeguard people at risk. Safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone including the wider community.
- There is good partnership working at the local level when concerns are raised and agencies work together effectively to ensure a co-ordinated approach.
- We work proactively with care providers to address any concerns raised about their service to ensure that local people have access to good quality and safe care when they need it.
- Any suspicion of abuse or neglect should be reported either to the local authority adult services on the relevant local authority contact numbers or to the police on 101.
- In an emergency, if it is suspected someone is in immediate danger, 999 should always be called.

These messages will be used as appropriate by the LSAB and its partner agencies in any communication about safeguarding adults in general or when commenting on a specific case. These will also be provided as 'Notes for Editors' in any press release.

### **Communication leads network**

- 1) A Hampshire, Southampton, Portsmouth and Isle of Wight safeguarding adults communication leads network will be established which will meet twice a year in order to ensure consistency of approach is maintained. Other meetings will be convened as needed. However, it is anticipated that the majority of discussions can be held via email and/or telephone conference.
- 2) An up to date contact list will be maintained and it is the responsibility of the named person on the joint communication protocol to notify the host LSAB of any staffing/role changes.

## **Media releases**

- 1) Arrangements will be agreed on a case by case basis but will broadly reflect the following process:-
  - Boards will plan early and consider communications from the outset of any issues that will require a co-ordinated response across agencies; for example serious case safeguarding adult reviews, domestic homicide reviews, etc. and a communications lead appointed as soon as possible.
  - A communications lead will be nominated from the network to formulate of a communication strategy on behalf of the board and co-ordinated between the agencies including a meeting with the LSAB chair, board manager and relevant partner agencies.
  - Key messages will be agreed between the parties and this will form the basis of the communications strategy to be adopted and eventual statement.
  - The LSAB chair will sign off the final version of any communications to be issued on behalf of the board.
  - The media release will be shared with all contacts in the network so that every organisation has a copy in case the press approaches other organisations for a comment once the release has been issued – this is a heads up mechanism that will ensure continuity of message.
- 2) The nominated communications lead will be acting on behalf of the relevant LSAB and not his/her own organisation. However, if input or comment is also required from the nominated lead's parent organisation, then this role will be undertaken by a separate named individual so as to avoid any conflict of interest.

## **Media enquiries**

- 1) LSAB partners will endeavour to keep to the relevant key messages outlined in this protocol channels whilst recognising the need for partners to maintain organisational integrity and decision-making.
- 2) The communication officers will ensure their organisation's spokesperson has been briefed, or are at least aware of the agreed key messages in case they are contacted directly by the media for a comment.
- 3) Communication officers will alert their counterparts in partner organisations when they are approached to comment on a story of potential mutual interest.
- 4) Where appropriate, consideration will be given to partner agencies appearing together to make a joint statement. However, this should be highlighted and agreed at the strategy setting stage.

## **Raising the profile of the work of the LSAB**

- 1) The Safeguarding Adults Communication Leads Network will also advise on and undertake activities to raise the profile of the role and work of the LSAB. A proactive communication strategy and programme will be agreed annually .
- 2) The Safeguarding Adults Communication Leads Network will also advise and support the LSAB in engaging the local community in the development of its Safeguarding Adults Strategy and publication of its Annual Report.

## **Accountability:**

- 1) To provide (via the LSAB Board Manager) regular updates on progress to the LSAB on the implementation of the Joint Safeguarding Adults Communication Protocol. the LSAB managers/representatives will also be responsible for reporting exceptions to their LSAB chair and for escalating any unresolved issues which have the potential to undermine the achievement of stated objectives.
- 2) The joint Safeguarding Adults Communication Protocol will be reviewed annually.

## **Hampshire and Isle of Wight Safeguarding Adults Communication Network**

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