



Newsletter: Spring 2019

Message from the Chair

Welcome to the first quarterly newsletter of 2019. We saw 2018 to be a busy but productive year and I anticipate this will continue going forward. We have a great many plans for the work of the Board for 2019; the first large piece of work is the production of our strategy for 2019 – 2021. This is currently being developed with partners and citizens in earnest and I hope to be in a position to publish in April. So watch this space for more details, as a partner of the Board, we will of course let you know as soon as we publish.

In other news, we have ran a number of events in our first quarter of the year, these include; a multi-agency practitioner forum focusing on domestic abuse and a partnership event on the city's homeless prevention strategy. Both were very well attended and more details about these events can be found later in the newsletter. The Homeless event followed the sad news of a death of a Homeless man in Birmingham; there is so much we can do to help prevent further deaths if all agencies work together to the same aim.

I continue to be grateful to all partners involved in safeguarding adults, our work together is really making a difference to those most in need. I remain committed to working harder to reach all groups across the city and feel it's our duty to make sure we are flexible and innovative in our approach to communicate. Our 'Health and Wellbeing for carers' event is being designed to provide advice, information and support to carers about safeguarding of themselves and those they care for. I am delighted that this event is being jointly coordinated through one of our member organisations, Forward Carers, to ensure that we meet the needs of the carers in Birmingham.

Progress continues on our involvement of citizens in co-producing services and policies in a number of areas of the work of the Board. This increased involvement is because more activity offers up the opportunity to really hear the voice of citizens in all areas of work that we do. I am proud of the work we have done so far, and I look forward to continuing our work to safeguarding adults in 2019 and beyond.

Cherry Dale, BSAB Independent Chair

Multi Agency Practitioner Forum

The theme of the January BSAB multi-agency practitioner forum was: **Domestic Abuse of Older Adults by Family Members**

This was an extremely popular theme; the session became fully booked within a short period of time, it is clear that there is high demand for the opportunity to have multi-agency discussion in relation to this subject area.

As such, BSAB has made a decision to re-run this session in the near future using the same case material and will publish the learning and feedback from these sessions once the second session has taken place.

In the meantime, feedback from the professionals who participated in the January session included:

“Allowed for comprehensive discussion around domestic abuse/coercive/ controlling behaviours.”

“Really insightful to gain an understanding from different individuals in different roles”

“It was interesting to attend a forum of this kind to support and increase understanding of safeguarding”

“It was good to be given time to have a discussion with other professionals”

If you would like to be e-mailed directly once the date of the repeat session has been finalised, please e-mail: Laurie Warrilow: laurie.warrilow@birmingham.gov.uk

Birmingham Safeguarding Adults Board (BSAB) Update

The Board hasn't met since our last update in December; however, we are meeting again on 26th March in the afternoon. This meeting is following a joint meeting in the morning with members of the Scrutiny and Governance Committee where we will discuss future plans for working together going forward and reviewing our governance arrangements to date to see where improvements can be made. More information will follow in our next update!

Partnership Meeting

The theme of the Partnership meeting which took place on 12th February was 'Working together to end homelessness'. It was a very well attended event and the details of what was discussed features in the spotlight on homeless article which follows.

Spotlight on Homelessness

In May 2018, The Guardian reported that 'Hundreds of deaths of vulnerable homeless people in England and Wales are going unexamined...'

Having identified an increase in the number of deaths of homeless people; including rough sleepers, those registered as statutorily homeless with their local authorities and hidden homeless; the Bureau of Investigative Journalism embarked upon a process of identifying and documenting the number of homeless deaths in the UK through their project 'Dying Homeless: Counting the Deaths on UK Streets'. This project prompted the Office of National Statistics to begin compiling figures and in December 2018, the ONS released its first official estimate of homeless deaths in England and Wales, they estimated:

'597 deaths of homeless people... in 2017, a figure that has increased by 24% over the last five years.'

The data also reveals that the 'mean age at death of homeless people was 44 years for men, [and] 42 years for women... in comparison, in the general population of England and Wales... the mean age at death was 76 years for men and 81 years for women.'

The Bureau of Investigative Journalism's Dying Homeless project also established that Safeguarding Adult Reviews 'have almost never been set up after homeless people's deaths'.

Safeguarding Adults Boards are required to conduct Safeguarding Adults Reviews when the individual concerned meets the criteria set out in The Care Act 2014; these are:

- When an individual had care and support needs (whether or not the local authority had been meeting those needs)
- There is reasonable cause for concern regarding how [agencies] worked together to safeguard the adult
- Abuse or neglect is known or suspected to have occurred

Under increased media attention, there have been calls for reviews to be held to identify any lessons that can be learned from all of the deaths of homeless individuals regardless of meeting the above statutory criteria.

However, it is known that the causes of homelessness can be a variety of social circumstances such as lack of affordable housing, deprivation and poverty, low income and unemployment. Homelessness can also be related to life experiences such as leaving the care system or prison, escaping violence, mental health problems, drug and alcohol dependency. And in turn, homelessness also makes many of these problems harder to resolve.

The impact of being homeless is also well known to include severe health inequalities, poor health and a lower life-expectancy than the general population.

The Birmingham Safeguarding Adults Board held a partnership meeting with a number of its partners on Tuesday 12th February 2019 to discuss 'Working Together to Prevent

Homelessness'. Slides from the event can be found here: <http://www.bsab.org/about-us/partnership-meetings/>

Colleagues from Birmingham City Council presented their 'Homelessness Prevention Strategy 2017+' developed in partnership with a number of organisations.

The key aims of this strategy are to:

1. Ensure that people are well informed about their housing options
2. Prevent people from becoming homeless
3. Assist people as soon as possible if they do become homeless so that their homelessness can be relieved by securing sufficient accommodation and support
4. Support people to recover from their experience and stay out of homelessness
5. Enable people to secure homes that they can afford and maintain

Birmingham City council recognises that homelessness is a complex issue and that no agency has the resources to address this issue alone. Approximately 20,000 households a year are affected by homelessness. Not all homelessness is visible, there are approximately 2500 households in temporary accommodation including bed and breakfast accommodation, individuals living in precarious housing circumstances to sofa surfing.

We also know that certain cohorts of population are more vulnerable such as families with a history of domestic abuse, people adversely affected by welfare reform changes, young people including those leaving care, people with multiple or complex needs, those leaving institutional settings such as prisons or forms of statutory care. Targeted and tailored approaches are therefore important.

The Birmingham homelessness prevention strategy uses 'the Positive Pathway... a whole system approach built on collaboration, best practice and service integration... First developed by St Basil's and implemented locally with young people at risk of or experiencing homelessness [it] has seen much success...'

BSAB partners were asked to identify how they already support homelessness prevention and recovery and identify what else we as a partnership can do to respond to homelessness prevention.

Sources

https://www.theguardian.com/society/2018/may/24/hundreds-of-deaths-of-homeless-people-going-unexamined?CMP=tw_t_gu

<https://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/stories/2018-04-23/dying-homeless>

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/bulletins/deathsofhomelesspeopleinenglandandwales/2013to2017>

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/file/2531/birmingham_homelessness_prevention_strategy_2017

Scrutiny and Governance Committee Update

The BSAB Scrutiny and Governance committee is currently working on the partner assurance process for this year, 2018-2019. We are really pleased to have three citizens supporting us with this process, and helping us draw up the assurance statement questions, and have agreed to be part of the assuring, It is really valuable to get the citizens perspective on the work that the committee does. We are aiming to send out the requests for partner's assurance in April.

Co-production in BSAB

The plans for asking citizens to co-produce plans and strategies with BSAB continue to grow. Working with the Birmingham Citizen Involvement Team, we now have over 15 citizens with different backgrounds, life experiences and skills working on three areas of activity.

The citizens are involved with commenting on and shaping the Strategic Plan, working with the Scrutiny and Governance Committee and came, observed and took part in the partnership meeting mentioned earlier which focused on homelessness.

Simon Furze, Citizen Involvement Officer has been working with citizens and members of the BSAB board and stated:

"I believe that citizen involvement has had a very positive impact. Their knowledge by experience has played a key role in reshaping the structure of the Third Sector Safeguarding Quality Assurances Forms as part of the Scrutiny and Governance Committee. Their willingness to openly discuss their lived experience has helped officers to learn and see our processes from a very different perspective. This can only be a positive experience for all."

What is the Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) library?

The SAR library is an evolving sector resource. It was funded initially by the Department of Health and Social Care, with some subsequent funding from the LGA Care and Health Improvement Partnership (CHIP) to support the use of tools and embedding of processes for submitting coded SARs to the library. Developed by Research in Practice for Adults (RiPfa) and the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE), SCIE is hosting and maintaining the library while seeking sustainable funding. Part of the library includes a repository of SAR reports.

The SAR library is a mechanism for bringing together SAR reports and collating the learning they contain. The purpose of the SAR library is to facilitate the analysis and use of learning from SARs by others. SCIE facilitates the collection of SAR reports and collation of learning undertaken by Safeguarding Adult Boards (SABs).

The library is not a mechanism for quality assuring SARs. The statutory duty for SARs lies with SABs. SABs carry out their own quality assurance processes. The fact that a SAR is located in the library is no guarantee of its quality. The SAR library has no responsibility or authority for the quality of SARs it brings together.

How are SAR reports submitted to the library?

SABs are the commissioners of SARs. SAR reports are only included in the SAR library repository after they have been published by the commissioning SAB. The goal is for SABs themselves to upload the SAR reports. The process for this will be completed by end February 2018.

What to do if you have concerns about a SAR report being in the SAR library.

If for any reason you do not think that it is appropriate for a particular SAR report that is currently contained in the library repository to be there, please contact the commissioning SAB directly. You can find contact details on SAB websites or local authority websites of the area a SAB relates to. The SAB will inform SCIE of any changes required. SCIE will keep a log of any such incidents for the purposes of learning.

If you are unhappy with the response from the SAB to your concerns you should follow the SABs complaints process. The final stage for such complaints is the Local Government and social care Ombudsman. You can find details here <https://www.lgo.org.uk/>

Raising awareness

Visit to Birmingham Institute for the Deaf (BID)

Cherry Dale visited BID to meet staff and users to raise awareness of safeguarding adults. Some of the topics she covered included what is safeguarding and how it affects citizens and what the Board does and who it works with. Cherry really wanted to know how it felt to live in the city and be Deaf, how people kept themselves safe and what we as a safeguarding partnership could do to support.

Forthcoming Events

BSAB Meetings

The next full Board meeting will take place on 26th March 2019. More information about the meeting will feature in the next newsletter along with details of the next partnership meeting (30th April) and multi-agency practitioner forum (12th March).

Contact us

We are keen for you to contribute and make a contribution on any of the content in this newsletter. Please don't hesitate to get in touch with our safeguarding team at:

BSABsupportteam@birmingham.gov.uk