

SAFEGUARDING ADULT REVIEW (SAR) INFORMATION FOR FAMILY MEMBERS

WHAT IS A SAFEGUARDING ADULT REVIEW (SAR)?

Safeguarding Adult Reviews are a requirement under Section 44 of the Care Act 2014 and became law from 1st April 2015.

Safeguarding Adult Boards (SABs) must arrange a SAR when an adult with care and support needs in its area dies as a result of abuse or neglect, whether known or suspected, and there is concern that partner agencies could have worked more effectively to protect the adult. SABs must also arrange a SAR if an adult in its area has not died, but the SAB has been made aware that the adult has experienced serious abuse or neglect¹.

A SAR is a process undertaken with organisations that were involved in the care and support of the person that has died (or been harmed), and is usually led by an independent author (a commissioned consultant) who has no involvement with the Safeguarding Adults Board. The organisations involved in the review might include social services, the police, health services such as the GP, hospitals, the probation service, and housing providers.

A SAR will examine the events that led to the person's death (or their abuse/neglect) and explore how the various agencies worked together. The SAR will try to identify what practice improvements need to happen and provide learning to those particular organisations to help prevent similar incidents from happening to someone else in the future.

The SAR process is completely separate from any investigation that may be undertaken by the police or the Care Quality Commission (CQC), a Care Act section 42 enquiry by the local council, or a Coroner's inquest.

A SAR will not seek to blame an individual or organisation but considers what happened, what could have been done differently and whether organisations could have worked better together. The review will recommend actions to improve future practice.

WHO WILL UNDERTAKE THE SAR?

An independent person will be appointed to lead the SAR and produce a report of the findings. This could be an author, a chair or both. They will be supported by a review team called a 'panel'. The panel will be formed from members of organisations such as the local authority (North or West Northants Councils, Northamptonshire Police or the Northamptonshire NHS Integrated Care Board) and others, but will not include officers who were directly involved in the case. The panel will look at how organisations supported the individual from the information requested via detailed questionnaires or chronologies (a sequence of events).

TAKING PART IN THE SAR

It is important to Northamptonshire Safeguarding Adults Board (NSAB) that we hear your voice as a relative of the person that has died (or been abused/neglected), and we welcome your contribution.

If you decide to take part in the SAR, the independent author or chair will ask you to share your thoughts on what happened leading up to the event. They will also want to understand more about your family member as a person, including their hopes and wishes so that this can be captured in the report.

¹ [Care and support statutory guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

The independent author will try to understand the circumstances around the death or abuse/neglect of your family member. As part of the discussion, you might know of other people that you think should be invited to submit their views.

You can input in all or some of the following ways:

- In writing or via a recording.
- Via a telephone conversation or a Microsoft Teams or Zoom meeting.
- Via a face-to-face meeting (Covid-19 restrictions allowing).

The contact will be informal and the discussion should last between 1-2 hours, or for as long as you feel able to participate.

WHAT HAPPENS TO THE INFORMATION YOU SHARE WITH THE INDEPENDENT AUTHOR?

The information you share will help the author to build a comprehensive picture of what happened before the death or serious injury, and will help to formulate the findings and recommendations for change.

Your contribution will be confidential and you will not be named in the SAR report. Your contribution is invaluable and may help change the way organisations respond to serious situations in the future.

HOW LONG WILL THE SAR PROCESS TAKE?

A SAR should be completed within six months but they can take much longer, because of the complexity of the situation, and other related investigations/enquiries/court proceedings.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE SAR IS COMPLETED?

A report will be produced by the author. Any reports are usually published on the NSAB website, but where there is highly sensitive information that could adversely impact the subject's children, a redacted summary may be created. NSAB have the right not to publish a report but a learning briefing may be created instead.

An action plan will be created to bring all of the report recommendations into one place. NSAB will review the plan to seek assurance and evidence that organisations have put the recommendations into practice.

Learning events will also be held so that officers from the organisations involved can discuss how they can support the recommendations and change their practice, where appropriate.

NEXT STEPS

The decision to take part in this SAR is entirely yours and if you do not wish to take part your decision will be respected. If you decide not to take part, we will contact you again to let you know when the SAR has been completed and if the report is going to be published.

If you would like to take part or have any further questions about the review process, please contact Suzanne Binley, Business Manager at Northamptonshire Safeguarding Adults Board:

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