

Five themes from 6 x Safeguarding Adults Reviews

Essex Safeguarding Adults Board (ESAB) has today published six Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs). Upon review of the recommendations contained within these six SARs, there are five common themes which have been outlined below. Further information on terms used in this document may be found by clicking the relevant links.

The development and delivery of action plans that enable the learning identified through the reviews will be monitored by ESAB and its multi-agency partners.

Theme 1: Challenges when working with those who experience Complex Needs

This is inclusive of a [trauma informed response](#), where the ESAB should consider how a complex trauma informed pathway can be developed for use across agencies, following the key principles of safety, trustworthiness, collaboration, empowerment and choice. This will raise awareness of the need to listen to individuals and recognise the impact of trauma on their ability to keep themselves safe.

The [Mental Health Act](#) should be given particular weighting following the proposed Mental Health Bill white paper. A specific point about the determination of the Nearest Relative for care leavers was made as a helpful detail for patients. As demonstrated in numerous SARs, it is of concern that mental health trusts are not consistently applying the [Mental Capacity Act \(MCA\)](#) to question an individual's capacity to make decisions when they are expressing suicidal intent. Acute mental health trusts must demonstrate how they make decisions and plan for discharge of those known to have suicidal tendencies. Similarly, transfers of care and the ability of a receiving unit to provide care and treatment was highlighted. Where an inpatient mental health unit is identified by commissioners to address a particular clinical need, it is important that there are clear audit mechanisms that allow rapid identification of any failure of a unit to actually meet that identified need.

Theme 2: Improving Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) and hearing the voice of the adult at risk

A vital part of [making safeguarding personal](#) is carer's assessment. All services need to be aware of who is taking on caring responsibilities for an individual with care and support needs. All services must take responsibility to check with the carer to ensure they are offered a [carer's assessment](#) by the Local Authority. The sub-theme of hearing the adult at risk's voice includes safeguarding those who find it difficult to disclose abuse; so a multi-agency discussion, with specialist advice, should be held to ensure that decisions are recorded, and a plan is in place to support an individual who is finding it difficult to disclose abuse. Personalised care within psychiatric units was referenced under this theme where on acute psychiatric

units there needs to be a personalised risk assessment and care planning to ensure that all staff are aware of what the risks to the individual might look like, and what mitigating actions are needed. For someone who misuses substances, the risk assessment should consider to what lengths they may go in order to access substances as this could create further vulnerabilities; these in turn should be risk assessed in terms of supporting that person and reducing the risks.

Theme 3: The importance of a shared approach to setting high standards in safeguarding practice and oversight from ESAB

[Safeguarding practice](#) can be complex and misunderstood amongst agencies therefore a common theme and recommendation in SARs is to improve inter-agency standards. This includes further learning and development for partners on when and how to raise a safeguarding concern, a review of existing policies in the use of safeguarding referrals and the third-party reporting of crimes to the police.

Theme 4: ESAB's oversight of outcomes from partner's quality assurance of safeguarding systems

Many recommendations were given under this theme, all pertaining to better development of safeguarding systems across agencies. All agencies should develop new policies and procedures to manage the disengagement or loss of contact with service users. All agencies/relevant partners should be advised of the lawful obligations to facilitate/ offer [Carer's Assessments](#).

All partners should build upon existing structures to continually improve the way that services are delivered to vulnerable people. This includes safer staffing and ensuring that a formal mechanism exists to ensure that inpatient mental health providers are required to provide appropriate staffing to allow them to deliver the clinical services, therapies and treatments which form the principal basis by which the service aims to support the patient's recovery. It also includes transfers of care improving on information sharing, so a minimum set of standard documents are identified which are expected to be shared for all transfers of care.

Theme 5: Improving interagency communications between Health and Social Care

Communication is vital and this theme explored the recommendations made in partners adopting and engaging with the new [Changing Futures](#) multi-agency programme, and the [Choices programme](#), led by Essex County Council, to enable a more consistent approach to identification of, and provision of integrated support to those with the most complex needs in our communities.