

Suffolk Adult Safeguarding Newsletter

Issue one January 2008

Welcome to the Suffolk Adult Safeguarding Newsletter from Bill Nicol, Head of Adult Safeguarding.

The purpose of which is to keep you up to date with developments and research findings in Adult Safeguarding at both a local and national level.

Although much of the work undertaken by Adult Safeguarding Services, the Adult Safeguarding Board, and its' Locality Committees is outlined within our Business Plan and Annual Report (see www.suffolkas.org for details) we hope that this newsletter will also provide an insight into the ongoing work across the County to protect the most vulnerable from abusive behaviour and practice. The newsletter also provides an opportunity for key stakeholders, partner agencies, and all others involved in community safety initiatives to contribute to a growing awareness of safeguarding matters.

The next few months will see the launch of a new DVD for customers, family carers and public. This will complement the recent publication of our 2 new booklets to enhance public awareness and understanding. Both are available at www.suffolkas.org.

The adult safeguarding policy and operational procedures are currently undergoing revision and work is close to completion on joint operational protocols for both the investigation of abuse and the disclosure of information. A document outlining the process for undertaking Serious Case Reviews has been finalised.

The safeguarding staff development programme is ongoing and we hope to launch a new e-learning training facility that all agencies can access in the New Year.

Information and advice for employers to ensure they adopt safer recruitment practices can be found on our website and work is underway to develop a set of benchmark standards within Suffolk for all agencies and care providers to achieve.

We will provide further information on all safeguarding developments in forthcoming editions. In the meantime please use our website and feel free to provide feedback on any aspect of our work.

Bill Nicol, Head of Adult Safeguarding bill.nicol@socserv.suffolkcc.gov.uk

A week in the life of Seb Smith, Adult Safeguarding Manager, Northern Area.



Monday: Start the day in Endeavour House where we are meeting with police colleagues to discuss the review that has taken place of the Victim Care Centres. Discuss the implementation of the new police central referral unit, and how best we can jointly work together to provide an improving service. Meeting is productive and all parties feel that despite working in a time of unprecedented change, there are opportunities that we can exploit to improve the adult safeguarding service in Suffolk.

The afternoon is taken up with another meeting in Endeavour house with an ACS director and colleagues from CYP and care procurement to discuss issues at a significant care provider. It is a useful opportunity to work with colleagues from CYP to ensure that information is shared effectively and we are able to plan a co-ordinated response. Children's safeguarding and Adult safeguarding work in different ways at the moment for a variety of reasons, but clearly there is a lot of overlap and where organisations provide care for both adults and children it is important that we pool all our information.

Tuesday: Get to the office (Victim care centre) early today to try and catch up a bit as I wasn't able to access e-mails for most of Monday. The police generally start work at 8:00am so there are plenty of people around. Log onto CITRIX and wait ten minutes or so for my e-mails to synchronise with the main server. Use the time to check with colleagues the status of various jobs that are ongoing. Read through all the outstanding referrals and discuss with the police supervisor. We decide that one case in particular will require a comprehensive strategy meeting and so I contact the senior Practitioner in ECF to set the ball rolling. Decide that we will need a solicitor, psychologist, housing rep, social worker, senior practitioner and family planning rep for the meeting and book a room at the VCC. We are fortunate that we are able to get all the key people for the following day and so plan to meet tomorrow at 2:00pm.

Spend the afternoon drafting a joint protocol between the police and ACS for adult safeguarding. This is now version IV and it has been quite a challenge to keep up with all the changes within ACS lately. Take a couple of calls from social workers wanting some advice about particular issues, and monitor new referrals as they come through

Wednesday This morning I am giving a talk on adult safeguarding to the residents of a care home in Lowestoft. It is amazing how often after giving a talk like this someone will follow you outside and say 'It's probably nothing but.....' Head back to the office for some much needed e-mail maintenance, read through the referrals and discuss with the Supervisor. Read through the relevant papers for this afternoon's strategy meeting, and tailor the standard agenda for the needs of the meeting.

Meeting begins on time and proves to be a comprehensive and thorough exploration of all the issues. The contribution of the psychologist is very useful as we are able to make

clear determinations around capacity issues. Despite the fact that the meeting is large and resource intensive it really does underline the value in getting all the key people together in one place. Decision can be made much more quickly and are much stronger as a consequence.

Thursday: Meeting of all the victim care centres. We rotate the venue around the county and this week it is as at Ipswich. Discussion takes place about change management and it provides a useful opportunity to develop consistent practice across the county. The ASM's stay on to discuss how best to demonstrate in quantitative terms what we are achieving.

Spend the afternoon catching up on e-mails, developing an up to date flow chart for our processes, and discussing a case with the senior practitioner regarding a local home which is the subject of a list of complaints from an ex employee.

Friday: Case comes to light of a man who is the victim of assault by his wife. This highlights the fact that whilst much of our work happens in a domestic context, the primary focus of our intervention has to be from an adult safeguarding perspective. Similarly, the significance of the victims' gender is less important than is his disability in explaining the cause of what has happened. Work with the police to consider options for arrest/bail of wife and discuss the ramifications of such action as she is his primary carer. After interview of the victim by police and social care, it is clear that no formal complaint will be made. However, our joint agency's primary function is to stop abuse rather than secure convictions and so the focus of the ongoing work is in ensuring the victims future safety.

Spend the afternoon doing some statistical analysis of the referrals we are receiving. The numbers are going through the roof, but we need to try and interrogate the data in order to gain a better understanding of where we need to focus resources.

Biography.

Seb worked as a tree surgeon before training as a social worker in 1995. His first post was in an older person and physical disability team based in Woodbridge, and whilst there he became a member of the out of hours social work team. Following a spell working in customer first Seb began work in an older persons team as a senior practitioner in Ipswich. This was followed a year later by a spell as senior practitioner in Eye. In 2004 Seb was appointed as working age services manager and he remained in this post managing the learning disability for Waveney until his appointment as Adult Safeguarding Manager in October 2006. Seb is married, has three children, and lives in Athelington, Mid Suffolk.

[Back to top](#) Seb Smith, seb.smith@socserv.suffolkcc.gov.uk

Honour Based Violence

In cases of Honour Based Violence (HBV) there is a need for an immediate, co-ordinated, full and effective response into all cases. Research suggests that in cases of HBV women are more likely to come forward for help at a higher level of violence with associated risk levels, one of the reasons for this is the shame believed to be brought

upon themselves and the family as well as the risk of further more serious violence including abduction and murder in the name of honour.

Cases reported in recent years show that there is still limited knowledge about the impact of family-based honour violence and little resistance to so called honour killings in communities where they occur. In Suffolk reports of HBV are not as prevalent as other parts of the UK, however the reporting is on the increase as awareness is raised and a greater level of support offered.

One of the biggest problems posed is individuals not asking the question of whether, in their view, honour is the basis of the violence/fear experienced.

PC Martin Sheeran, Hate Crime Officer states:

Murders in the name of so-called honour' are murders in which, predominantly women, are killed for actual or perceived immoral behaviour, which is deemed to have breached the honour code of a family or community, causing shame. They are sometimes called 'honour killings.

There is, however, no honour in murder.

Do not underestimate that perpetrators of HBV really do kill their closest relatives and/or others for what might seem a trivial transgression. Just the perception or rumour of immoral behaviour may be sufficient to kill.

Evidence shows that these types of murders are often planned and are sometimes made to look like a suicide, or an accident. A decision to kill may be preceded by a family council. There often tends to be a degree of premeditation, family conspiracy and a belief that the victim deserves to die.

In Suffolk there are various agencies that can be contacted with or without contacting the Police, or via referral from the Hate Crime Officer.

ISCRE Ipswich & Suffolk Council for Racial Equality 01473 408111

RHI Racial Harassment Initiative (Suffolk County Council) 01473 265162

There is also a free Counselling Service available through **RHI** for victims and witnesses of Hate Crime

[Back to top](#)

Paula Youell, Adult Safeguarding Manager, Southern area.
Paula.youell@socserv.suffolkcc.gov.uk

Domestic Abuse MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference)

In Spring 2007 Ipswich Magistrates Court opened its first Domestic Violence Court, hearing cases every Wednesday before a court of trained Magistrates, and prosecuted by a dedicated Crown Prosecution Team.

Following on from the courts implementation, MARAC was introduced in Ipswich in August 2007.

In addition there are soon to be an Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) based at Conifer House who will compliment the work undertaken by the Victim Care Officers and work directly with the victims referred to MARAC, the IDVA will liaise with the referrer as appropriate.

The MARAC is expected to roll out across Suffolk by the end of 2008.

As with a Strategy Meeting convened to safeguard and protect vulnerable adults in Suffolk see www.suffolk.suffolkas.org the responsibility to take appropriate action in MARAC rests with individual agencies; it is not transferred to MARAC.

The role of MARAC is to facilitate, monitor and evaluate effective information sharing to enable appropriate actions to be taken to increase individual and public safety.

It will normally be a decision and action at a POVA Strategy Meeting to refer to MARAC, as the risk assessment can be completed during the meeting to determine eligibility, however urgent cases may require immediate referral and action.

AIMS OF MARAC

- To share information to increase safety, health and well-being of victims – adults and their children.
- To determine whether the perpetrator poses a significant risk to any particular individual or to the general community.
- To construct jointly and implement a risk management plan that provides professional support to all those at risk and that reduces the risk of harm.
- To reduce repeat victimisation.
- To improve support for staff involved in high risk domestic violence cases.

REFERRAL TO MARAC

Referral is based on an actuarial assessment of risk. The initial is completed by the referrer see link www.caada.org.uk and forwarded to (see link). In addition to this the referrer will be required to complete a report (see link) which will be presented to the MARAC.

[Back to top](#)

Paula Youell, Adult Safeguarding Manager, Southern Area.
Paula.youell@socserv.suffolkcc.gov.uk

Adult Safeguarding at St Nicholas Hospice, Bury St Edmunds

With increased professional and public awareness about the need to ensure the protection of vulnerable adults, St Nicholas Hospice set about revising its guidance for staff in 2005. We were fortunate in being able to use Suffolk's recently-published inter-agency guidance to re-state our commitment to the rights and well being of vulnerable people. After our own policy and guidance had been approved by managers and trustees, the next step was to ensure that the document didn't just sit on a shelf but actually began to make an impact on our practice.

This needed a training and awareness-raising approach, backed by a management requirement that staff and volunteers should attend a mandatory programme – easy to decree, but harder to put into practice when it had to take its place alongside our growing and diverse agenda of statutory or mandatory training, including topics like child protection, moving and handling, blood transfusion, communication skills, managing risk, food hygiene or safe practice with medical gases, to name but a few. This range of topics reflects the holistic nature of hospice care and underlines the reality that in this setting, staff and volunteers can encounter just about anything in the spectrum of medical, psychological, social, spiritual and physical care – including harm and abuse.

We were also fortunate that this coincided with the establishment of the Adult Safeguarding Manager posts and the arrival in Bury St Edmunds of Geoff Meech who readily offered his advice and active participation in putting our training sessions into place. Our training groups are multidisciplinary, comprising medical, social work, nursing, complementary therapy, physiotherapy and O.T. professionals, together with volunteers. Geoff has been able to attend the majority of the training sessions to explain his role and help this diverse group appreciate the community response to the phenomenon of adult abuse – undoubtedly one of the most enjoyable and informative aspects of the sessions. There is no substitute for staff from other agencies giving a group like ours a practice-based view of a topic like this.

To date, about 60 staff and volunteers have been trained and the training is firmly established in the annual education programme. Our service has been influenced and staff awareness sharpened: although we have only rarely needed to invoke the Adult Safeguarding procedures so far, many multidisciplinary discussions have considered whether issues of harm or abuse have been, or are likely to be, factors in a difficult or complex cases. More often than not, this leads to alternative outcomes like the discovery of other protective factors in a situation, but I think I can safely say that practice has been positively affected. Of course we can't be complacent and as with any service, the possibility adult abuse presents us with an ongoing challenge. Many thanks to Geoff for helping us get this far: I know his time is precious but I hope that from time to time we will benefit from the knowledge and experience he provided in the training sessions.

[Back to top](#)

Dave Rushton, Head of Family Support
St Nicholas Hospice, Bury St Edmunds

Suffolk Adult Safeguarding Website

The Suffolk Adult Safeguarding website, www.suffolkas.org is the site for information relating to Adult Safeguarding in Suffolk.

On the website you will find a wide range of information and publications. The site is regularly updated with new articles of interest including local and national developments. On these public pages you can view and download the current Policy, procedure, annual report, referral form, information booklets and other released publications. You will also find information on training, domestic abuse, the new mental capacity act, and our contact details. On the publications page you will be able to download all of our documents, policy, and booklets. Our most recent publications available to download are; Annual report 2006-7, Business Plan, and the information booklets "Adults Are Abused Too" and easy read version "Say No To Abuse".

We would like to encourage all professional users of this site to register so you can be notified when the site has been updated so that you don't miss important changes.

If you would like to submit articles or have any questions or comments in relation to the website email to; Wendy.garrard@socserv.suffolkcc.gov.uk

[Back to top](#)

Wendy Garrard, BSAM Adult Safeguarding,
Wendy.garrard@socserv.suffolkcc.gov.uk

Information and contacts

Comments on this publication

We aim to provide the most extensive coverage of news and information possible and would welcome feedback and articles for this publication. If you have any questions, comments, or would like to submit articles for this publication, contact: Wendy Garrard, BSAM Adult Safeguarding, Wendy.garrard@socserv.suffolkcc.gov.uk phone 07920466336

On the web

General information about the Adult Safeguarding Board is available at www.suffolkas.org.

Past publications and news from the Adult Safeguarding Board as well as local and national developments are available at www.suffolkas.org.