## Adult Safeguarding: Standards and Performance
### Summary: July 2012

### 1.  Introduction

This report summarises work by the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) Safeguarding Adults Leads during 2011-2012 with regards to performance monitoring.

Whilst there has been extensive development over the last ten years in the delivery of safeguarding, and whilst all councils and their partners have some aspects of excellent safeguarding practice, all also struggle with some aspects of safeguarding and there are some universal areas for development. It also remains a challenge to lead key partners in the delivery of safeguarding, particularly in relation to the NHS and the police and criminal justice system.

Safeguarding is a dominant theme in the overall performance of adult social care. It has a disproportionate significance in terms of impact. Addressing the safeguarding dimensions of improvement is therefore critical for sector based improvement itself.

The report is intended to support the work of ADASS, LGA and other partners in improving and evidencing the effectiveness of safeguarding adults' practice and our future development work as part of sector led improvement. It sets out a suite of safeguarding standards and performance components that have been developed or built on during the year. It is intended to be complementary to new legislation.

This document is a summary of a full report which has been endorsed by the Towards Excellence in Adult Social Care Board (TEASC) and the ADASS Executive and has been circulated to all directors.

### 2.  Focusing on outcomes

Most of what informs how effective practice currently is based on data that is collected for national purposes. Most of that data relates to **quantity** and to **outputs**. We think we need to change our range of measures to include **outcomes** and **quality** as well as quantitative measures.

We recognise that one of the fundamental complexities of safeguarding adults work is that people generally want more than one outcome and that these are frequently not easily reconcilable. In many instances these relate to both wanting to be safe and wanting to be engaged in/ maintain relationships.  A focus just on being or feeling safe is not enough.

There is a need to refine safeguarding indicators for strategy, planning and needs analyses, managing safeguarding services and accounting for the outcomes and effectiveness of safeguarding. These are collated nationally to inform policy and resourcing. They are also used to compare performance between and within local areas. We proposed two indicators for national collection. We also produced a working paper that set out a suite of potential local and national indicators and standards. This work is in addition to the safeguarding standards and the Making Safeguarding Personal work referred to in section six below.

3. **Learning from peer reviews and challenges**

Nine peer reviews or challenges, seminars and work with a range of stakeholders have reinforced and extended some key messages with regards to local work on safeguarding:

- **Collaborative leadership** – supporting, integrating and holding partners to account is key to cross agency engagement and effectiveness.

- **Effective interfaces** are needed between developing Health and Wellbeing Boards and Community Safety Partnerships, Children's Safeguarding Boards and membership of Trust Boards and Police Authorities.

- **Making links** - Boards need to work on a number of levels of safeguarding and influence a number of key interfaces to increasingly develop:

  - Communities that "look out for each other"

  - Domestic violence, hate crime, anti-social behaviour, trading standards, forced marriage, female genital mutilation etc activity and services that include and support older, disabled, mentally ill and substance misusing people

  - Good quality care and justice services that safeguard people's dignity and rights and enable people to keep themselves safe

  - Specialist services or staff to advise others, respond to concerns about harm and abuse and who have a portfolio of responses to support people (using the Mental Capacity Act if necessary) with difficult decision making

- **Key areas for development include:**

  - Developing policy and practice that focuses on outcomes and the difference that is made, rather than the process that is followed and the outputs that emerge

  - Ensuring that everyone sees personalisation and safeguarding as two sides of the same coin rather than separate or even conflicting regimes

  - Increasing access to justice (social, restorative, civil or criminal)

- Developing a portfolio of responses to safeguarding circumstances that aim to bring both safety and resolution of people's wishes and circumstances

- Work with people causing harm or abuse, particularly if they are at risk or vulnerable themselves.

- **Key areas of challenges include:**

- Cross system understanding of and means to address basic service quality (in social care, health care and police responses to people in the community) such that their rights and dignity are safeguarded and wherever possible we avoid service failure and the need for safeguarding. Combined commissioning, contracts management, care management review and safeguarding intelligence and feedback from people using services

- Making sure that concerns are addressed in the right place, at the right time and proportionately, so that our systems aren't paralysed by addressing things that others should be, and we spot the really serious concerns

## 4. Further resources

**Councillors briefing: Safeguarding Adults**
All councillors share a responsibility in relation to safeguarding those adults whose circumstances make them vulnerable.  An LGA publication outlines the role of councillors in safeguarding adults which can be found at www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/home/-/journal_content/56/10171/3510589/ARTICLE-TEMPLATE

**Safeguarding standards**
The LGA, ADASS, the Social Care Institute for Excellence  and NHS Confederation have all endorsed the 'Safeguarding Standards' which have been tested and evaluated through pilot peer reviews and used in subsequent peer reviews and other contexts, including as a basis for self-assessment. The Standards can be accessed at www.local.gov.uk/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=56e9c5e8-0578-4824-a65c-3e44d73ca6f6&groupId=10171

**The vision for safeguarding adults work**
ADASS has outlined its vision in an Advice Note which it adapted from that set out by the WIHSC's Review of 'In Safe Hands'. This vision is important as it provides a basis for the work of Boards, individual agencies and practitioners and embodies the purpose of the work that is being undertaken. Remembering the vision should enable everyone to keep focus and not get lost in process and detail.

**Eliciting and sharing learning and effective practice**
The Community of Practice on the Knowledge Hub now has over 900 members, (from councils, the NHS, academics, independent chairs and others) and over 200 documents in the library. During 2011/12 a series of hotseats and webinars under the theme of "Improvement Conversations" were delivered.

**Guidance**

Over the last year a range of guidance has been issued for partners in safeguarding by the sector and by government departments, and covering the work of councils, the NHS and the police and courts. All of these documents and more are on the 'Adult Safeguarding Community of Practice' group in the Knowledge Hub.

**Advice on Local Accounts**

We issued advice on the Safeguarding dimensions of Local Accounts early in December 2012 at the request of the TEASC programme. The advice focuses on some key questions related to safeguarding outcomes. Some is directly within the field of social care management. Other areas will require councils to exercise their strategic leadership of safeguarding to influence the data that partners produce in order to give account to local people.

**'Making Safeguarding Personal'**

LGA developed "*Making Safeguarding Personal: A Toolkit for Responses*" in 2010/11. The toolkit builds in an outcomes focus and a range of responses to safeguarding circumstances. TEASC and SCIE have committed funding to develop early proof on concept work on this with five local authority test bed sites, with the intention that this will inform further research and development. The initial document is available on www.local.gov.uk/adult-social-care We also have communicated views on the need for an outcome based approach to data collection to the group that has been undertaking the Zero Based Review of Adult Social Care for the NHS Information Centre.

**Sector Led Support**

There are a number of dimensions to this that are priorities:

- Support for councils assessed as 'adequate' under the previous inspection regime
- Peer challenge and review accessed by any council – see www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/peer-challenges/-/journal_content/56/10171/3510407/ARTICLE-TEMPLATE
- Undertaking national improvement and development where issues have already been identified
- Working with TEASC to developing 'warning' mechanisms for when councils (start to) fail

5. **Next steps**

Whilst much was achieved in 2011/12, there is clearly more to do. We see the key next stages and the focus of our work for the coming year to include:

- Supporting peer review and challenge and engaging with broader sector led improvement in adult social care
- Developing a wider range of responses to safeguarding
- Eliciting and sharing learning through a variety of means

**Cathie Williams, LGA Adult Safeguarding Lead**

**The full paper was co-written with Adi Cooper, co-lead for Safeguarding in ADASS, with the support of Sarah Norman, co-lead for Standards and Performance for ADASS.**