

# Safeguarding Early Adopters programme

## Learning example



### Early Adopter: Wiltshire

Learning theme: A whole systems approach to protecting children and vulnerable people; Developing a service-user informed approach to scrutiny across the safeguarding and public protection landscape

#### Introduction

Wiltshire's Safeguarding approach will develop and challenge practice across the partnership with multi-agency partners holding each other to account.

At the heart of our work is one simple proposition:

*Children, young people and adults live in families and local communities; these can be sources of support and safety or of danger and risk. Our approach to safeguarding and protecting our community is focused around where people live and with whom – it's an approach which has 'Think Family, Think Community' at its heart.*

To reflect this, we have developed the Safeguarding Vulnerable People Partnership. The new partnership will allow us to take a more holistic approach to cover and address work which sits across children and adult services and community safety.

Our safeguarding plan therefore is designed to work in the spaces 'between':

- The Families and Children Transformation programme and associated workstreams
- The Education Transformation Board
- The emerging Adult Transformation programme
- The Community Safety Partnership and associated work streams
- The work of the Safeguarding Adults Board

This will allow us to address the safeguarding needs of children, young people and adults in context and align one with the other.

To reflect the statutory responsibilities in Working Together 2018 to ensure the safeguarding of children in Wiltshire, the Safeguarding Partners have worked together to address safeguarding in the context of family and community.

#### Background, aims and objectives

The new partnership will:

- Develop a geographical and community focus and in so doing ensure that agency responses are varied to meet the needs of different communities and locations across the county.
- Examine areas which require a response from across the children, adult and community safety areas.
- Ensure all safeguarding partners will make a shared and equal contribution to the Quality Impact agenda in terms of leadership, culture setting, data production and evaluation of practice.
- Practice will be developed using a clear evidence base of the demographic and population projections to plan and respond effectively.
- Develop a relentless focus on outcomes for children and young people (see QI section below).
- Ensure that our collective approach to risk and risk management is aligned and explicit and will ensure that front line practitioners are enabled and supported to carry the risks they are presented with.
- Ensure that workforce development is focused on developing staff skilled in 'relationship based' work. Clearly there are specific areas of expertise and knowledge needed within certain specialisms/roles but at the heart of it is a need to be confident that the partnerships have front line staff able to assess and respond to risk; to form professional relationships with service users and to use those relationships to drive change and increase safety and well-being.
- Act to ensure users and the wider community are properly engaged in our work. There are some developments around the engagement of young people and the voice of users is better heard within adult services, but we currently have nothing that enables us to hear the voice of parents and extended family members - many of who might also be adult service users. (Our Early Adopters bid majors on this theme).

## **Approach**

Approach to creating the partnership:

- Changes within Wood and then WT embraced very positively from the outset. Partners saw the opportunity to create something bespoke and purposeful to reflect needs of the County
- From the outset, a commitment to think differently about how we meet our safeguarding responsibilities – we were committed to not moving the LSCB deckchairs around
- A joint commitment to build on something across the adults, children and community safety agendas. To build on the pre-existing joint Business Support Unit
- Built on a history of effective partnership working
- Developed the strengths inherent within a relatively straightforward geographical position – one Police force, one CCG covering the Council footprint with one unitary in it but with a collective acknowledgement that both councils required

different solutions to meet different demands and circumstances but also with a commitment to minimise duplication and repetition

- A joint commitment to streamline existing partnership arrangements and build on strengths of service provision in the County

Approach to informing and developing the partnership:

- Recognition of the need for the new partnership to plan its activity and approach based on the **evidence** the partnership holds and the **experience of service users**.
- Using an experienced data analyst to help generate a more intelligent-led approach to both service development to better meet need and to sharpen the quality impact focus of our work.
- Our approach to quality assurance is being refocused to capture and respond to the views and experience of families who we have worked with. As part of the Early Adopters programme we have been working to facilitate a group of families who will help us to develop this approach.
- The new partnership will have three subgroups - a Quality Impact Group, a Practice Review Group and a group which focuses on harnessing the voice of the user and local people. There currently are in existence a Young People's Safeguarding Board which informs the work of the WSCB, and a Service Users Group and a Carers Network developed under the WSAB. These voices will be added to feedback emanating from the 18 Community Area Boards across the county and any other public or community engagement activities to give a collective overview of the views of local people inasmuch as they relate to issues of public safety and protection.

## Challenges

- Time is a challenge – we hoped to complete our work sooner than we have – but on the other hand it has ensured full agency buy-in at all levels.
- The timeframe has presented a specific challenge in the introduction of a new service-user model of engagement - the recruitment process did not generate the level of expertise we required and we have had to take a different approach to engaging with families
- Our intention to share intelligence and data where appropriate and necessary to inform the new partnership has meant that we have had to consider and overcome barriers to doing so - bringing together data held across agencies has been complicated by the use of different software and attaining the necessary licenses.
- Developing a response that works across adults, children's and community safety whilst ensuring the specific demands of WT to safeguard children are fully met has been a challenge. We have arrived at something which we think addresses the WT

issues but does so in a cross-cutting way and sets out a pathway for further integration over the next period.

- There remains an outstanding task to review the resource needed to support the new arrangements and ensure it is fit for purpose -the joint unit offers a good starting point but we need to agree funding arrangements and support requirements going forward.

### **Successes**

- Whilst developing the wider partnership arrangements, we have met the specific requirements of WT to complete rapid reviews and have, we think, done so effectively and in a timely fashion, generating some good RRs whilst recognizing the pressures on all caused by the 15-day timetable. We have also developed some different and we think more effective approaches to practitioner involvement and learning through the existing SCR process.
- We have had considerable engagement at senior/chief officer level from the Safeguarding partners which has ensured a greater sense of ownership than hitherto – there is a real sense that the new arrangements are 'ours' not ones imposed centrally.
- We believe our newly crafted approach to scrutiny and quality will add value to the safeguarding system in a way which has not always been true – it will work in the areas not covered by existing quality processes and add to them rather than replicate them.