

SSAB SAR Quality Assurance Framework

Approved by	Case Review Group (CRG) - June 2021
Due for Review	June 2023

Introduction

Southampton Safeguarding Adults Board (SSAB) has adopted a Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) quality assurance process, in line with the Social Care Institute of Excellence (SCIE) considerations, which assumes the principles of Making Safeguarding Personal, as well as the Six Principles of Safeguarding that should underpin all adult safeguarding work (Empowerment; Prevention; Proportionate; Protection; Partnership; Accountability).

Clarity of purpose

SSAB is clear and transparent, from the outset, that the SAR is a statutory process, with the purpose of organisational learning and improvement, and acknowledges any factors or challenges that complicate this goal. SSAB's approach to the quality assurance of SARs supports and reinforces the focus on learning and agency improvement actions.

The SSAB Case Review Group (CRG) will carry out the quality assurance function for each SAR, including overseeing the process, taking responsibility for resultant findings, recommendations and the production of the final Overview Report. The following table sets out function, accountability and responsibility:

SAR responsibilities and functions

	SAR function & accountability	Responsibility
1	Ultimate responsibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decision to commission the SAR • letter to relevant CEO of agencies concerned and letter to family • sign-off of the SAR report • providing transparency and accountability via SSAB and its annual report • seeking assurance of effective responses by agencies and/or Board • raising any national safeguarding issues resulting from SAR's as appropriate 	SSAB Independent Chair
2	Managing SAR process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • managing the agency panel • feeding back to CRG • initial information gathering • initial family contact and establishing who the family want as reps • ensuring decision making is timely, in relation to the receipt of referrals • ensuring meetings are minuted, noting any reasons for delay • ensuring recommendations are made to the SSAB Chair as to whether SAR should be commissioned or alternative process, if applicable. 	Case Review Group & Partnerships Manager SSAB Team

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decision as to whether a) immediate assurance or escalation or b) a Rapid Review is required to address current risks/immediate learning that requires speedy dissemination • scoping the period for the review • identifying a suitably experienced independent reviewer • agreeing and publishing Terms of Reference • ensure types of abuse/neglect are identified and specified • ensure SSAB Methodology is followed • provide quality assurance and independent challenge • ensure individuals and families are included • ensure the review is informed through engagement with front line practitioners and managers • provide quality assurance of the report • ensure an accessible report is produced • ensure reviews are conducted in a timely manner. <p>SAR report follow-up actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agreement with agency panel regarding achievable recommendations • publication discussions with SSAB • decisions regarding immediate actions in response to findings • sharing of SAR learning and progression • drawing up and sharing action plan for agency improvements • monitoring actions and completions • evaluation of the sustainability of change and evidence-based evaluation of improved practice/thematic learning • ensure an accessible report is produced 	
3	<p>Practical support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • receive SAR referrals and collate reports for the CRG • update referrer and relevant agencies re decision and future actions • administrative & project management support & access to data • links with agencies • liaison with the SSAB Independent Chair 	SSAB Team
4	<p>Carrying out the Review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct independent review • Chair SAR Panel • Ensure individuals and families have the opportunity to be included • Meet family reps three times and keep them updated • Engage front line practitioners and managers during the review • Advise SSAB Chair of any disagreements • Produce an Overview Report and Executive Summary 	SAR Reviewer
5	<p>Strategic leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide independent challenge • provide relevant organisational context and leadership • identify questions for agencies/any further information required • quality assure report • ensure reviews are conducted in a timely manner • media management 	Reviewer CRG Members SAR Panel Ind. Chair SSAB Team
6	<p>Follow-up actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAR report publication decision • decisions over immediate actions required in response to findings 	SSAB Board

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • longer-term sustainability of change and its evaluation • agreement of report content and recommendations • sign off • media releases and press discussions 	
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Quality Assurance Considerations

1)Setting up the Review

Stage	Quality Statement
Referral & Decision	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.The referral has been considered in consideration of Care Act criteria and discretionary powers; a defensible decision has been agreed in a timely manner and the reason for any delay is documented. 2. Any immediate actions in response to risk have been recorded and delegated for action, and feedback will be sought. 3. A letter has been sent from the SSAB Chair to advise relevant agencies that a SAR will be taking place. 4. Any alternative decisions have been advised to the Independent Chair, with appropriate rationale.
Decision of SSAB Independent Chair	The SSAB Independent Chair has considered recommendations from the CRG and has made a decision, which has been recorded by the SSAB Partnerships Team and kept on a decisions log.
Update to referrer and advice to relevant agencies CEO's.	The SSAB team has updated the referrer and a template letter, agreed with the SSAB Chair was sent to relevant agency CEO's advising them that a SAR was commissioned, which bears relevance to their organisation.
Making safeguarding personal and family involvement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1.A family member will have been established by the SSAB Team. 2.The family member will have completed a consent agreement and declared possible interest from any relevant other. 3.Any relevant other is contacted to establish if they wish to participate. 4.Consent forms will be in place for all family/relevant other participants. 5.All relevant participants will understand the lawful purpose of a SAR; will know what to expect; will have met three times with the Reviewer; will have had any issues of disagreement passed to the Independent Chair of SSAB; will have been treated with compassion and respect; will have their views expressed in the Overview Report and can expect to choose to participate in a QA feedback exercise. 6.All participants will have received a letter from the Independent Chair, explaining the above and the complaints process.
Clarity of Purpose	The Safeguarding Adult Board (SSAB) is clear and transparent about the purpose of the Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) as a statutory process, which is set to promote, share and discover organisational learning, which in turn directs improvement, and has acknowledged any factors that have complicated this goal.
SAR Author commissioning	The personal specification set out for the role of SAR Reviewer adequately covers all areas of expertise required and depicts any particular, necessary experience.

Terms of Reference (TOR)	The TOR: have been set out by the SAR panel and endorsed by CRG. Set out Key Lines of Enquiry, within the scoping period. reflect if race, culture, ethnicity or other protected characteristics have impacted on the subject and case management.
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2) Conducting the review

Stage	Quality Statement
Governance	The Safeguarding Adult Review process can be successfully challenged for independence and ownership of its findings by SSAB and any relevant other challenge. Recommendations are approved by SSAB and are achievable for agencies. National recommendations will have been supported by a letter from SSAB Independent Chair to the relevant body.
Management of process	The SAR was effectively managed in as timely a fashion as possible and disagreements were shared with the Independent Chair and the Chair of the CRG. Capacity and or resource issues were escalated to the Chair of CRG.
Parallel processes	Where parallel processes exist, the SAR was managed to avoid: duplication of effort; prejudice to civil or criminal proceedings and unnecessary delays and confusion to all parties. The SAR has respected the views of the local Coroner and enabled as far as possible, their wishes and this has been shared with and opinion sought from the Independent Chair.
Information	The Reviewer has gained sufficient information which as far as possible was triangulated to have enabled analysis of case and system findings, to have informed the creation of achievable recommendations. If an IMR caused a gap in information, this will have been filled via additional questions posed to the agency or an interview, if necessary.
Practitioner involvement	The review has been informed through engagement with the SAR panel which includes front line practitioners and managers, and a constructive experience has been deployed.
Making safeguarding personal	The Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) is informed by the person and relevant family and network members' knowledge and experiences regarding the period under review. They are involved in aspects of the SAR as determined at the outset of the review. <i>Advocacy services are considered and utilised as appropriate to ensure the voice of the individual is heard.</i>
Analysis	The Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) analysis is transparent and rigorous. It evaluates and explains professional practice in the case, shedding light on the routine challenges and constraints to practitioner efforts to safeguard adults.

3) Impact of the review

Recommendations & improvement action	The Reviewer has enabled robust, informed discussion, facilitating agreement of recommendations. The SAR Panel will have created a SMART action plan and identified the organisations who will deploy any necessary activity.
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	National recommendations are supported by a Chair's letter to the relevant body.
Making safeguarding personal	<p>The SAR draft report is shared with the individual and/or families and checked for accuracy.</p> <p>Family's views on publication were sought and the legal obligations of the SSAB were made clear to them in relation to publication and or any discretionary decision-making.</p> <p>The family were asked to produce a pseudonym for the SAR subject.</p> <p>The family were asked for feedback regarding their experience, which has been logged.</p>
Review of the report and recommendations	<p>The report was proof-read and considered by the CRG, who recommended remedial work or who requested that the SSAB Independent Chair recommended sign off by the SSAB.</p> <p>Any implications for SSAB's Business plan have been planned or made.</p>
Publication	<p>The SAR Panel and CRG recommend publishing the report/executive summary and took into account</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lawful obligations • family/person views • no blanket decision making • views of panel and CRG • anonymisation • learning and its dissemination • accessibility • disagreement
Submission to SSAB Independent Chair	<p>The Independent Chair will review the SAR report before submission to SSAB and advise if sign off will be recommended, or not.</p> <p>If the Independent Chair was unable to recommend Board sign off, further remedial work was identified, carried out and re-presented to the Independent Chair.</p>
Approval of the SAR Report	<p>The report has been considered by SSAB, it has been agreed and signed off and considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if recommendations were achievable • if the views of the person and their family were taken into account • that SSAB SAR Methodology was followed with due process • publication decisions • scope and time frame • organisational improvements
Making safeguarding personal	The SSAB decisions were shared with the person/family and relevant organisations.
Implementation and improvement action	The CRG enabled robust and timely implementation of action plans.
Learning and development	The CRG shared learning and made recommendations to SSAB and Learning and Development SSAB Group Chair

Evaluation	The outcomes of the SAR were evaluated by SSAB oversight; Annual Report requirements and an annual thematic review.
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