



Warwickshire
Safeguarding
Adults Board

Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR)

Protocol and Guidance

(Refreshed: October 2016 v1.0)

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1. Introduction

The SAR (SAR) Sub-committee of the Warwickshire Safeguarding Adults Board (WSAB) is responsible for recommending the commissioning of SARs, managing the process and assuring the WSAB that recommendations and associated actions have been addressed by the multi-agency partnership and individual agencies.

This document has been produced referencing the West Midlands Adult Safeguarding SAR guidance¹ and The Care Act 2014 Statutory Guidance, s.44². It sets out the criteria for conducting a SAR and provides a menu of options for conducting those reviews. The associated guidance is designed to ensure governance of the process and to provide a local process for achieving a complex and challenging task more effectively.

The process flowchart illustrated in **Appendix.1** provides an overview of the different stages of a SAR and how these will be managed by the WSAB.

2. The Purpose of a SAR

SARs provide an opportunity to:

1. Improve inter-agency working, for onward dissemination of lessons learnt to partner agencies
2. Share best practice; and
3. Ultimately, better safeguard adults at risk of abuse and neglect

SARs are not enquiries into how an adult died or who is culpable; that is a matter for Coroners or Criminal Courts to determine, as appropriate.

The purpose of a SAR is to:

- ***Learn from cases where there are clear concerns that agencies have not worked as well together as they might; and which demonstrate areas of practice that could have been delivered more effectively and additionally***
- ***Consider whether or not serious harm experienced by an adult, or group of adults at risk of abuse or neglect, could have been predicted or prevented, and use that consideration to develop learning that enables the safeguarding adults partnership in Warwickshire to improve its services and prevent abuse and neglect in the future***
- ***Agree how this learning will be acted on, and what is expected to change as a result***
- ***Identify any issues for multi or single agency policies and procedures; and***
- ***Publish a summary report, which is available to the public***

¹ West Midlands Adult Safeguarding SAR Guidance

² The Care Act 2014, s.44

Agencies will have their own internal procedures to review practice and raise standards, such as complaints, audits and serious incident investigations; a SAR is not intended to duplicate those processes, or to investigate allegations of abuse or neglect. Rather, the focus is on multi-agency learning through consideration of how agencies worked together, with the intention of improving how they do so in the future.

3. Legal Context

From April 2015, Section 44 of the Care Act 2014 places a statutory duty on local Safeguarding Adults Boards (SABs) to arrange SARs

- When an adult, with needs for care and support, (whether or not the local authority was meeting any of those needs) in its area dies as a result of abuse or neglect, whether known or suspected, and there is concern that partner agencies could have worked more effectively to protect the adult; OR
- If an adult in its area has not died, but the SAB knows or suspects that the adult has experienced serious abuse³ or neglect and there is concern that partner agencies could have worked more effectively to protect the adult.

SARs can also be used to explore examples of good practice where it is likely that lessons can be applied to future cases.

4. Criteria for Conducting a SAR

A SAR is not restricted to occasions where the safeguarding procedures have not been followed, and can be applied where this has not been the case.

The WSAB will consider undertaking a SAR when it is known or suspected that:

- 1. Actions or omissions in a number of agencies involved in the provision of care, support or safeguarding of an adult, or group of adults, at risk of abuse or neglect have caused (or are implicated in) the death or serious harm of that individual or group of individuals; OR***
- 2. An adult or group of adults at risk die or experience serious harm and there are concerns about how agencies have worked together to prevent, identify, minimise or address that harm and there are concerns about how this may place other adults at risk of serious harm; AND***
- 3. There are clearly identified areas of learning and practice improvement or service development that have the potential to significantly improve the way in which adults at risk of abuse and neglect are safeguarded in the future.***

³ Serious Abuse: considered to be life threatening which requires intervention to prevent death and/or where there is significant psychological impact of the abuse on the individual.

The SAR Sub-committee will consider the issues raised within the case on behalf of the WSAB, and will carefully examine the potential for learning across agencies/services.

5. Identification and referral for a SAR

Any agency or professional body, elected members, MPs, the Coroner or the individual concerned or a family member may refer cases to the WSAB for consideration of a SAR.

Referrals must be made in writing using the SAR referral form (**Appendix.2 - SAR Form.A**).

6. Deciding whether or not a SAR should be held

Considering the circumstances of the case will need to be supported by information provided by agencies. The request for Agency case information form (**Appendix.3 - SAR Form.B**) should be completed by all the relevant agencies in preparation for the SARs Sub-committee.

If the decision is to proceed with a SAR, the SARs Sub-committee can use this information to determine the type of review to be undertaken and the scope of the review.

Only the SARs Sub-committee can recommend that a SAR be undertaken.

7. Recommendation to the Chair of WSAB

The SARs Sub-committee will meet to consider the referral for a SAR taking into consideration any case information provided by agencies involved with the adult, in respect of whom the referral has been made.

The SARs Sub-committee will make its recommendation to the Chair of the WSAB in writing using the recommendation form (**Appendix.4 - SAR Form.C**) briefly outlining the basis for its decision.

8. Relationship to other Reviews

When a case meets the criteria for a SAR, the Chair of WSAB will seek to identify at the outset what other reviews and processes are taking place or envisaged in relation to the same events, such as:

- Child Serious Care Review
- Domestic Homicide Review
- Police investigation/criminal charges
- Health and Safety Executive investigation/charges

- Coroner's inquest

Early contact will be made with the Chair of any parallel process in order to

- 1. determine how the reviews can be effectively managed to maximise learning for individuals and organisation; and***
- 2. avoid duplication for families and professionals.***

Consideration will be given to -

- ***Whether the actions of all agencies and all aspects of the case could be effectively covered by one of the reviews;***
- ***Whether it would be appropriate for related reviews to be chaired by the same person***
- ***Whether some aspects of related reviews could be commissioned or undertaken jointly***
- ***Ensuring that the terms of reference for related reviews effectively cover all aspects of the case***
- ***How to engage with adults, families and/or advocates to enable involvement and contribution to reviews, and how their expectations can be managed appropriately and sensitively.***

There may also be situations where both the WSAB and relevant Community Safety Partnerships decide that the case does not benefit from any form of review, and that decision will be reported to both the WSAB and the relevant Warwickshire County Council District/Borough CSP.

9. Recommending the Overall Approach to the SAR

Once a decision has been taken by the Chair of WSAB to proceed with a SAR the SARs Sub-committee will also consider whether it should make the recommendations as to the overall approach to a SAR or whether a Review Panel should do so.

It may be that the SARs Sub-committee recommends some elements of the approach and asks the Review Panel to recommend others. Each case will be dealt with according to its needs. All reviews will establish a Review Panel, of whatever size is required in relation to its complexity.

Either the Sub-committee or the Review Panel will recommend:

- ***Which agencies should be asked to participate in the SAR***
- ***Whether the agencies concerned are required to secure their files***
- ***Which methodology should be used to facilitate learning in the case***
- ***The Terms of Reference for the SAR and outline timescales***
- ***The required output from the SAR (e.g. a report)***
- ***The timescales for completion of the SAR***
- ***The appointment of an independent Reviewer and the commissioning of an independent author and their terms of reference***
- ***How and when to communicate the key messages of the review with the public/media***
- ***How the adult and/or their family or advocate will be involved in the review and the level of their involvement and how they will be informed***
- ***Whether or not to communicate with the person who is alleged to have caused the abuse or neglect***

10. SAR Methodologies

The WSAB is clear that there are many ways for the Partnership to achieve learning but the review must be proportionate in the approach it takes. The SARs Sub-committee will consider the most appropriate learning method for the case under consideration and make their recommendation accordingly.

A summary of some the methodologies that may be used are contained in **Appendix.5**. This list is not exhaustive, and the SARs Sub-committee may wish to use its collective expertise to recommend an alternative approach.

Regardless of which methodology is used, contributing agencies need to be mindful that there may be public scrutiny of information provided by agencies to the SAR and, in particular, HM Coroner may request information. All agencies should therefore ensure their senior managers approve any written submissions to a SAR, and where they consider it appropriate, seek legal advice prior to submission.

The WSAB Business Manager will write to agencies to confirm their knowledge of the review and request them to secure files (**Appendix.6 - SAR Form.D**)

11. Information Sharing

This SAR Protocol and Guidance needs to be viewed alongside Section 45 of The Care Act 2014, Supply of Information, and be fully compliant in those circumstances where information is required from other persons to enable the WSAB to exercise its functions.

Information shared as part of the SAR process is confidential and therefore the following information security precautions will be taken for information shared:

- ***A confidentiality statement will be signed at each SAR in any meeting where a review is being discussed***
- ***Information pertaining to a SAR will be marked as 'SENSITIVE'***
- ***Information will be transferred by email only when there is a secure email available. In all other circumstances information will be transferred via recorded delivery or hand delivery marked for the attention of the addressee only. A return address should be included on the outer envelope to avoid the need for it to be opened should it not be delivered.***
- ***Information relating to a SAR should not be stored alongside a person's normal records. They should be stored separately, with limited access to those identified as requiring access.***

The documents and information produced for a SAR are the property of WSAB. Any individual IMRs submitted by agencies will be returned to the respective agency by the report author, upon the completion of the SAR process. Requests for copies of documents of information produced for a SAR should be directed in writing to the WSAB Business Manager, detailing the purpose of the request. The request will be discussed with the Chair of WSAB, the SAR Sub-committee Chair, the Director of Adult Social Services and a legal advisor before any disclosure is made.

12. Communications

Effective communications is a key part of the SAR process. It is important, that whenever a SAR is to be conducted, the communications professionals in the different organisations are alerted.

The Warwickshire County Council Communications Team will be the lead organisation in guiding WSABs communication requirements. This will include liaising with communications leads in WSABs member organisations and initiating and implementing a communications plan.

The Communications plan for each SAR will take account of communication requirements for a range of audiences / stakeholders including:

- ***The family***
- ***Between member organisations of WSAB***
- ***Within the different organisations***
- ***With the public***
- ***With the media***

All communications will need to take account of any legal issues e.g. requirements for information to be published, constraints relating to identification of individuals involved in SARs, on-going legal action and Coroner Court proceedings.

All members of WSAB will be kept informed regularly throughout the SAR process. This will be achieved by:

- Agreeing a timetable and protocol at the outset of all SARs
- Regular updates at Board meetings
- Sharing the Independent overview reports with all members prior to publication externally

13. Implementation of the learning from SARs

The WSAB will ensure that the findings, recommendations and action plans from reviews are endorsed at a senior level by each agency. The action plan will be constructed in the following way:

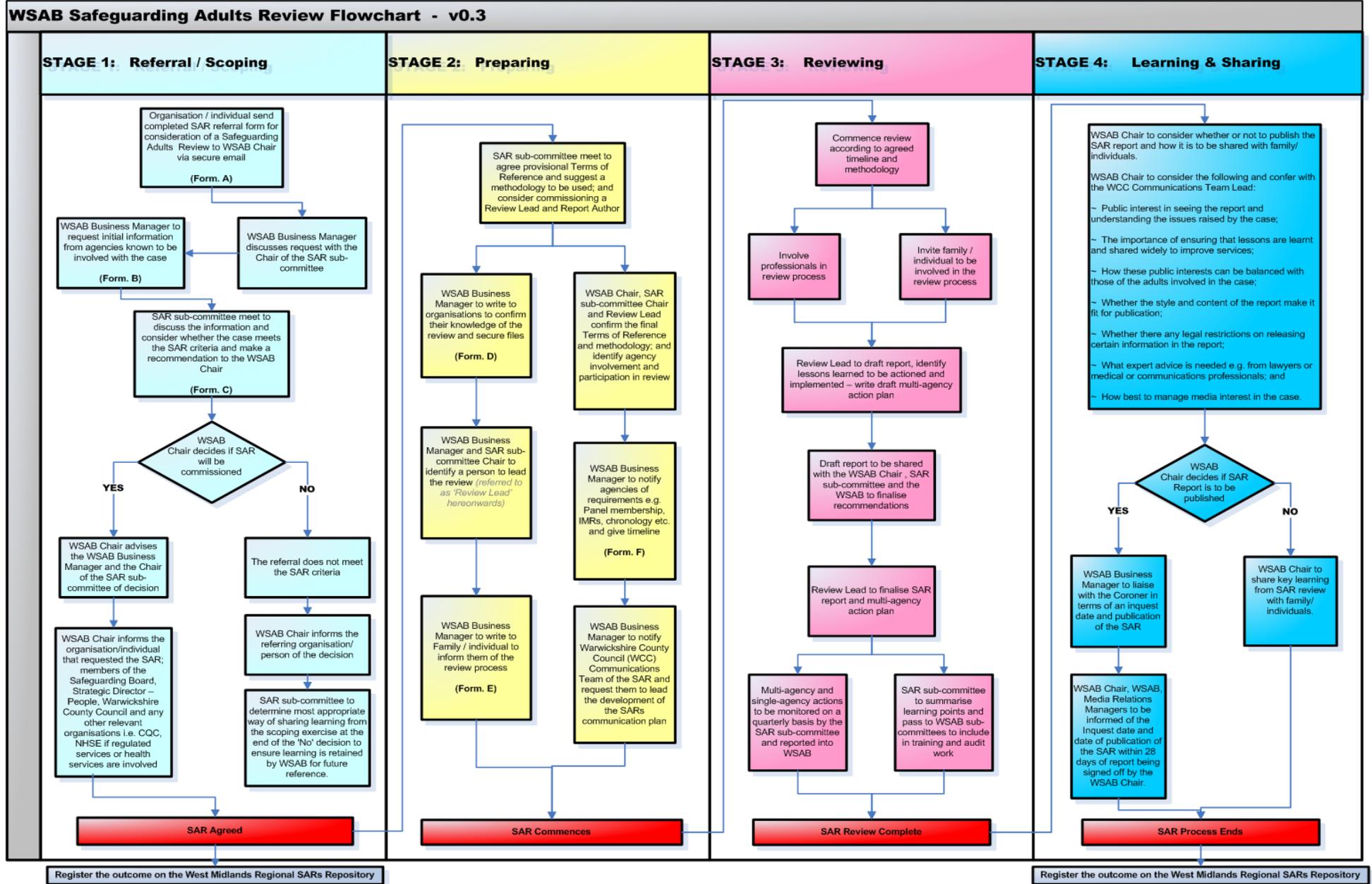
- Who will be responsible for the actions
- The timescale for completion of the actions
- The intended outcome of the various actions and recommendations
- The means of monitoring and reviewing the intended improvements in practice and systems

The SARs action plan will be a standing agenda item at SAB meetings until all actions have been completed.

The WSAB will ensure that:

- ***Any learning is shared with front-line practitioners in order that practice can be improved.***
- ***Learning from SARs is used to improve multi-agency safeguarding policy and procedures.***

Appendix. 1





Appendix.2

SAR

REFERRAL FORM (SAR Form.A)

Please provide as much detail as possible to enable the WSAB SAR Sub-committee to agree an appropriate and proportionate response to the referral.

Please share this referral with your organisational Safeguarding Lead prior to submission to ensure that internal governance has been applied.

If you have any questions, please contact the Safeguarding Adults Board Business Manager at WSAB@warwickshire.gov.uk or on 07766 367414

(Electronic versions preferred)

1. Referrers Details	
Date of Referral	
Name of Referrer	
Designation	
Organisation	
Address	
Tel. No	
Secure Email Address	

2. Details of Adult			
Full Name(s)		Gender	M / F
Date of Birth			
Date of Death <i>(if appropriate)</i>			
Address			
Ethnicity			
Next of Kin			
Contact Details <i>(Incl. Tel.No)</i>			
Name and Contact details of any formal/informal carers for the adult			
Details of any Dependents			

3. Other Organisations / Service Providers Involved <i>(If known)</i>			
Organisation	Contact Person	Tel. No	Email

4. Details of Adult Death / Serious Incident

Please provide as much detail as possible, including the location / address where alleged incident or incidents occurred.

5. Why you think this case may meet criteria for a SAR

Please summarise why you think this case may meet the criteria for a SAR.

6. Is there a legal case pending?

Y / N / Don't Know

7. Is this case undergoing a Police investigation?

Y / N / Don't Know

8. Is the case awaiting a Coroner's Inquest?

Y / N / Don't Know

9. Your Manager's Details

Full Name(s)	
Job Title	
Organisation	
Address	
Secure Email Address	
Tel.No	

10. Where to send this form

Please return this completed form to:

WSAB@warwickshire.gcsx.gov.uk and title your email '***SENSITIVE: SAR referral F.A.O WSAB Chair and WSAB Business Manager***'

This form must only be sent by secure email. Please contact the WSAB Business Manager for advice if you do not have access to secure email.

FOR WSAB OFFICE USE ONLY

Date referral received by WSAB	
Date referred to SAR Sub-committee Chair	



Appendix.3

SAR

Request for Agency Case Information Form (SAR Form.B)

Name of Agency	
Date Information Required by	

We have been advised that your agency has been supporting an adult who has been referred to Warwickshire Safeguarding Adults Board to consider if it meets the requirement for a SAR.

The Care Act 2014 placed a statutory duty on the Local Safeguarding Adults Board to arrange a review of adults within its area, who have needs for care and support (*regardless of whether these needs are being funded by the individual or other public bodies*) if

- a. **There is reasonable cause for concern about how the Safeguarding Adults Board, members of it or other organisations worked together to safeguard the person; AND**
- b. **The person has died and the Safeguarding Adults Board knows or suspects that the death resulted from abuse or neglect (whether or not it knew about or suspected the abuse or neglect before the adult died); OR**
- c. **The person is still alive and the Safeguarding Adults Board knows or suspects that they have experienced serious abuse or neglect.**

Safeguarding Adults Board can also arrange a review in other situations involving an adult in its area with needs for care and support if it is felt there would be learning to be obtained.

The Safeguarding Adults Board requests that you use the following form to provide information on your agency's involvement with the named individual, their family/friends/carers and the other agencies involved. This can be a brief outline. It is required to help the Safeguarding Adults Board decide the next steps. The Board may request additional information at a later stage, if required.

If you have any queries/concerns about completing this form please contact the WSAB Business Manager at WSAB@warwickshire.gov.uk or on 07766 367414.

(Electronic versions preferred)

11. Details of Person providing this information	
Name	

Designation	
Agency	
Address	
Tel.No	
Secure Email Address	
Date	

12. Details of Adult			
Full Name(s)		Gender	M / F
Date of Birth			
Date of Death <i>(if appropriate)</i>			
Address			
Ethnicity			
Name and Contact details of any formal/informal carers for the adult			
Details of any Dependents			

13. Details of person(s) alleged to be responsible for the abuse or neglect <i>(If self-neglect, please put name of the adult)</i>			
Name	Date of Birth	Address	Tel. No

14. Chronology (Please provide details of significant dates and events between xx/xx/xx and xx/xx/xx)	
Date	Event

15. Overview of Case Record Relating to the Adult (Please provide brief overview including details of any records reviewed to complete this)

PLEASE RETURN THIS COMPLETED FORM TO:

WSAB@warwickshire.gcsx.gov.uk and title your email '**SENSITIVE: Agency Information for SAR F.A.O WSAB Business Manager**'

This form **must** only be sent by secure email. Please contact the **WSAB Business Manager** for advice if you do not have access to secure email.

Your agency information will be used by the WSAB SAR sub-committee and will be stored and shared in accordance with the WSAB partner agency information governance agreement.



Appendix.4

SAR

RECOMMENDATION FROM SAR SUB-COMMITTEE (SAR Form.C)

The SAR sub-committee has considered the details of the referral for the below named adult and makes the following recommendation to the Chair of WSAB:

16. Details of Adult			
Full Name(s)		Gender	M / F
Date of Birth			
Date of Death <i>(as appropriate)</i>			
Address			
Ethnicity			

Date referral received by SAR Sub-committee Chair	
Date of decision by SAR Sub-committee	

17. SAR sub-committee recommendation to Chair of WSAB <i>(please tick one of the following)</i>	
This case meets the criteria within the Care Act 2014 and should be considered for a SAR; OR	
This case does not fit the criteria and should not be considered for a SAR; OR	
This case provides an opportunity to share examples of good practice across the multi-agency partnership, to ensure lessons can be applied to future cases	
This recommendation is based on the following information	
Name of Chair of SAR sub-committee	
Signed:	Date:

PLEASE RETURN THIS COMPLETED FORM TO:

WSAB@warwickshire.gcsx.gov.uk and title your email 'SENSITIVE: Recommendation from SAR sub-committee F.A.O WSAB Business Manager'.

This form **must only** be sent by secure email. Please contact the WSAB Business Manager for advice if you do not have access to secure email.

Appendix.5 - SARs Methodologies

Traditional serious Case Review (SCRs)

- Traditional approach to undertaking serious case reviews in both adults and children services.
- Agencies involved are asked to submit both a chronology and an Individual Management Review

SCIE Learning Together Model

- This approach has been used in both safeguarding adults and safeguarding childrens reviews.
- The model uses systems thinking to gain a deeper understanding of current local practice and cultivate an open and transparent learning culture

Individual Management Reviews (IMRs)

- IMRs provide a way of enabling organisations to reflect and critically analyse their involvement with key individuals in the case under consideration
- These can be used for a desk-based review or a review that involves a multi-agency review panel

Appreciative Inquiry (AI)

- This approach is rooted in action research and organisational development, and is a strengths based, collaborative approach for creating learning change.
- AIs seek to ask generative open questions about what worked well, alongside what might and should be differently in the future.

Peer Review (PR)

- This approach accords with increasing sector led reviews of practice, whereby peers can constitute professionals/agencies from within the same safeguarding partnership (i.e. WSAB members), or other local authority areas.
- PRs provide an opportunity for an objective overview of practice, with potential for alternative approaches and/or recommendations for improved practice.

Significant Incident Learning Process (SILP)

- This involves agencies completing reports around what happened when something does go wrong and then coming together to identify how things could have been done better.
- SILPs explore the professionals view of the case at the time and identify what affected their actions and decision making at the time and identifies what needs to change.

Root Cause Analysis (RCA)

- An approach predominantly used within health agencies as the method to learn from significant incidents.
- RCAs set out to find the systemic causes of operational problems and seek to understand the underlying causes and environmental context in which the incident occurred.

Multi-Agency Combined Chronology

- Developing a chronology of events is a useful way of achieving an overview of a case or situation and considering the areas for development or change.
- With a multi-agency combined chronology this perspective is greatly enhanced and enables identification of (i) gaps in service provision and therefore opportunities for development, and (ii) missed opportunities for communication between agencies.



Appendix.6

SAR

CONFIRMATION NOTICE TO AGENCIES TO PROCEED WITH SAR (SAR Form.D)

Agency	
Named Officer	
Designation	

Thank you for your information in respect of the below named adult following a referral for a SAR (SAR).

Details of Adult			
Full Name(s)		Gender	M / F
Date of Birth			
Date of Death <i>(as appropriate)</i>			
Address			
Ethnicity			

The WSAB SAR sub-committee have now considered the details of the referral and made their recommendation to the Chair of WSAB.

The Chair of WSAB has considered the recommendations of the SAR sub-committee and has decided to **proceed** with a SAR, in accordance with the guidance in the Care Act 2014.

The SAR sub-committee will now agree the provisional Terms of Reference for the SAR and agree the preferred methodology for conducting the review.

A 'Review Lead' will be appointed to manage the SAR and develop the action/learning plan.

You are requested to note the outcome of this decision and make the necessary arrangements to secure all relevant files relating to the above named adult. You will be contacted again shortly to confirm the agreed methodology for the review and arrangements for the submission of files.

In the interim, if you have any queries/concerns about any aspect of the above please contact the WSAB Business Manager on 07766 367414 or via **WSAB@warwickshire.gov.uk**

This form **must** only be sent by secure email to **WSAB@warwickshire.gcsx.gov.uk** Please contact the **WSAB Business Manager** for advice if you do not have access to secure email.



Appendix.7

SAR

NOTIFICATION TO FAMILY/FRIENDS/CARERS OF WSAB's DECISION TO PROCEED WITH SAR (SAR Form.E)

It would be highly recommended, where possible, that this letter is hand delivered in person by a designated professional who has held a working relationship with the family/friend/carer

(Insert Date)

(Insert Addressee details)

Dear

Re: (Insert name of deceased/harmed)

I am writing to inform you that Warwickshire Safeguarding Adults Board has received a request to undertake a SAR (SAR) in accordance with s44 of the Care Act 2014 in respect of the death/abuse* of your family member/friend*. The attached information leaflet provides a more detailed account of the SAR purpose, process and examples of some possible outcomes.

Having considered the request, the Safeguarding Adults Board has decided to proceed with the SAR on the basis that it will provide an opportunity to review what the relevant agencies and individuals involved in the case might have done differently that could have prevented harm or death. This is so that lessons can be learned from the case and those lessons applied in practice to prevent similar harm occurring again.

The Board will now appoint a Review Panel and an Independent Reviewer to undertake this work. There will be clear Terms of Reference and an agreed timeline for undertaking the SAR.

As family/friends/carers* of the deceased/harmed* you will be invited to take part in the SAR, to share your understanding of what happened and why; this may include your thoughts, memories and point of view on any aspect of the incidents leading or contributing to the death/harm* of your family member/friend*. The Review Panel will want to ensure that your voice is heard and that circumstances around the death/harm of your family member/friend

are understood as far as possible, and that learning is used to prevent such incidents in the future.

The decision to participate and the methodology for your preferred input into the SAR will be entirely at your discretion and agreed with you in advance i.e. contribution in writing or via recording, telephone conversation or face-to-face meeting with some of the Review Panel.

Please accept this as a courtesy notification of the Board's decision. The Independent Reviewer will contact you in due course to discuss the agreed timescales for the SAR and your preferred method of input.

In the interim, should you have any questions regarding the decision to proceed with the SAR, or wish to clarify any aspect of the above, please feel free to contact me at the address provided below.

Yours sincerely

Mike Taylor
Independent Chair
Warwickshire Safeguarding Adults Board

Warwickshire County Council
Shire Hall
Northgate Street
Warwick

Enc.

(* please delete as appropriate)



Appendix.8

SAR

CONFIRMATION NOTICE TO AGENCIES TO PROCEED WITH SAR (SAR Form.F)

Agency	
Named Officer	
Designation	

I am writing to you further to earlier correspondence confirming the Board's decision to proceed with a SAR (SAR) in respect of the below named adult in accordance with the Care Act 2014 guidance:

Details of Adult			
Full Name(s)		Gender	M / F
Date of Birth			
Date of Death <i>(as appropriate)</i>			
Address			
Ethnicity			

Please note the following details have now been confirmed in respect of this SAR; you are requested to note the timelines stipulated for the commencement of the Review, expectations of your involvements and the submission of associated files/paperwork as per below:

Name of SAR Review Lead	
Membership of the SAR Panel	
Terms of Reference for the SAR	
Agreed methodology for the SAR	
Agreed timescale for conducting the SAR and submission of case files	
Agencies to be invited to be involved in the SAR	

In the interim, if you have any queries/concerns about any aspect of the above please contact the WSAB Business Manager on 07766 367414 or via **WSAB@warwickshire.gov.uk**

Please note: All information pertaining to this case **must** only be sent by secure email to **WSAB@warwickshire.gcsx.gov.uk** Please contact the **WSAB Business Manager** for advice if you do not have access to secure email.