

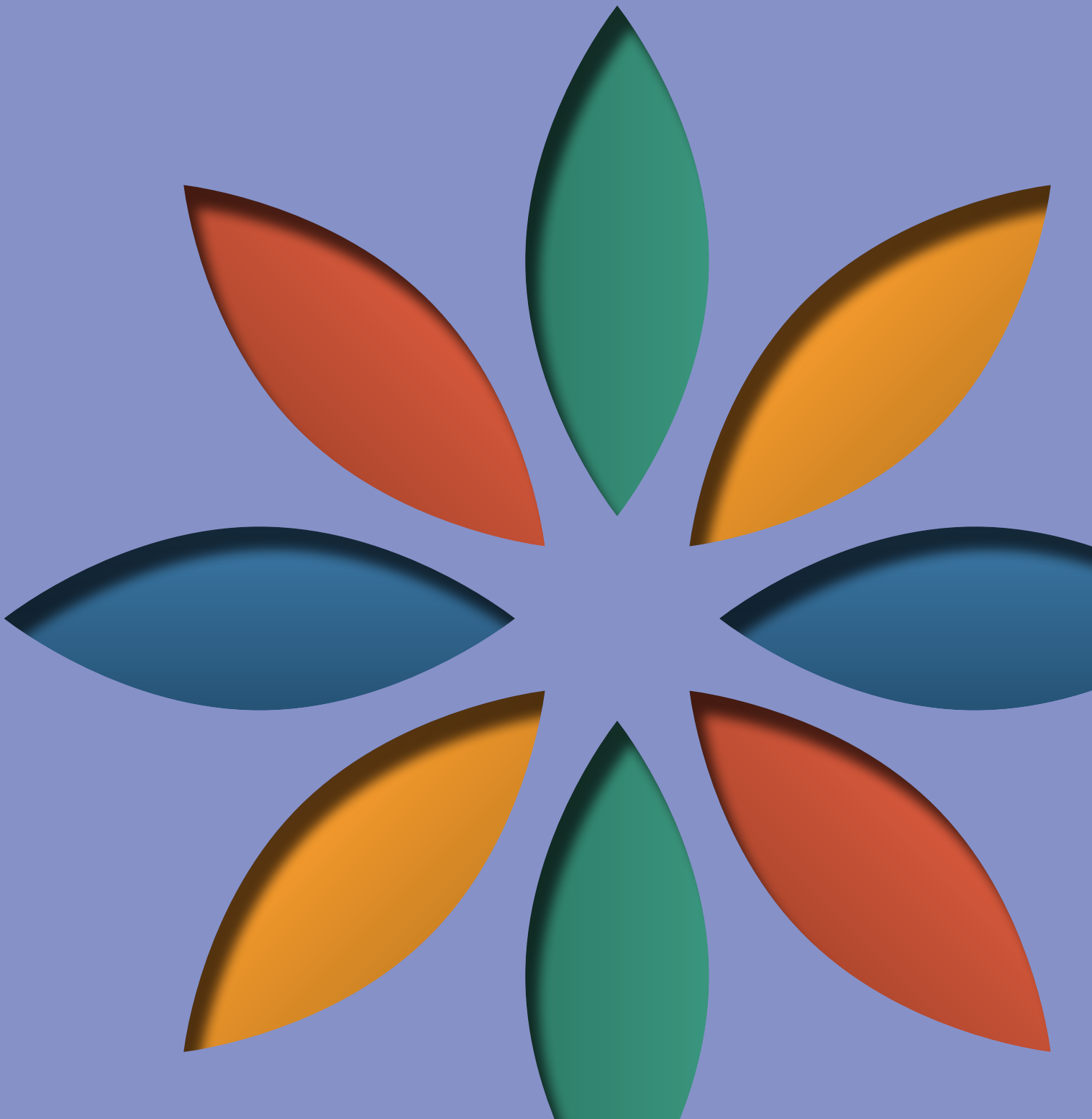


**Bwrdd Diogelu Annibynnol  
Cenedlaethol Cymru**

**National Independent  
Safeguarding Board Wales**



# **Annual Report** **2021-22**





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## Introduction

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The 2021-2022 Annual Report of the National Independent Safeguarding Board covers a year that has seen us beginning to emerge from the Covid-19 pandemic and dealing with the significant impact that it continues to pose to safeguarding the most vulnerable in our society from abuse and neglect.

Staff in all agencies are feeling the effects of working under such intense pressure for so long and services that have been over-stretched feel fragile and lack resilience as they continue to address the levels of harm revealed as restrictions have been lifted.

In addition to this, we are facing a cost of living crisis that disproportionately affects the most disadvantaged in our society and the war in Ukraine with the ensuing refugee crisis has posed additional challenges to all agencies and services.

These unprecedented times have demonstrated the paramount importance of ensuring an effective multiagency response to the safeguarding of children and adults at risk and the Regional Safeguarding Boards have worked hard over the year to rise to these challenges.

The National Board commends the commitment and hard work over the last year of all those who work in safeguarding whilst not underestimating the work that lies ahead of us in the coming years. This can only be effective with strong partnerships working together and NISB is committed to playing its part.

# National Independent Safeguarding Board [NISB]

## Duties and Responsibilities

The National Board has three primary duties set out in the Social Services & Well-being (Wales) Act 2014:

1. To **provide support and advice** to Safeguarding Boards with a view to ensuring that they are effective
2. To **report on the adequacy and effectiveness of arrangements** to safeguard children and adults in Wales
3. To **make recommendations** to the Welsh Ministers as to how those arrangements could be improved (S.132 (2)).

In addition, eight specific responsibilities of the National Board are set out in *Working Together to Safeguard People*, the Part 7 Guidance on Safeguarding. They are that the National Board:

1. **works alongside** Safeguarding Adults Boards and Safeguarding Children Boards to secure consistent improvements in safeguarding policy and practice throughout Wales (para 246)
2. will **engage with the chairs** of the Safeguarding boards, and relevant inspectorates...at least twice a year (para 258)

3. will **stay abreast of evidence and policy** approaches to safeguarding and protection in other parts of the UK and beyond in order to learn from those and to evaluate Wales' relative performance (para 261)
4. where a **theme of concern** is identified... the National Board could recommend to Welsh Ministers that the matter be escalated to Welsh Government for exploration or to the relevant inspectorate (para 263)
5. will use mechanisms to regularly **engage with a range of expert reference groups**, practitioners and individuals (para 264)
6. will **publish** its own **annual reports** including any **work it is planning**. It will also hold an annual engagement event or events (para 265)
7. has a specific duty under section 133 (2) (d) of the Act to "**consult with** those who may be affected by arrangements to safeguard adults and children in Wales." It will use that duty to enhance its understanding of and extend its experience of safeguarding and protection in Wales (para 266)
8. will **consider the learning from the 'user engagement' activities** of the Safeguarding Boards (para 266).

## Annual Report of the National Independent Safeguarding Board

The information that must be contained in the National Board's Annual Report is specifically described in The National Independent Safeguarding Board (Wales) Regulations 2015.

## Membership of the National Independent Safeguarding Board April 2021 – March 2022



Tessa Hodgson



Jan Pickles



Jane Randall  
(Chair)



Lin Slater



Tony Young

## NISB Work Plan 2021-2022

### NISB Strategic Duty 1:

To **provide support and advice** to Safeguarding Boards with a view to ensuring that they are effective.

**NISB Specific responsibility 1:**  
*NISB **works alongside** Safeguarding Adults Boards and Safeguarding Children Boards to secure consistent improvements in safeguarding policy and practice throughout Wales.*

NISB members were linked to individual Regional Safeguarding Boards and members attended and offered advice and support at Regional Safeguarding Board (RSB) meetings.

NISB also developed an overarching view of safeguarding and emerging themes and issues by:

- » Engaging and meeting regularly with RSB Business Managers
- » Including a review and summary of the work of the RSBs in its Annual Report
- » Attending RSB development days
- » Working with Welsh Government (WG) and RSBs to develop, support and host seminars and webinars during Safeguarding Week. Also, by hosting a portal to show all these events and activities for NISB, WG and RSBs in one place.

RSBs made specific requests for advice and support from NISB in relation to:

- » The role of the Adult Practice Review in Inquests
- » Responses to concerns in Independent Children Care Homes

**NISB Specific responsibility 2:**  
*NISB will **engage with the chairs of the Safeguarding boards, and relevant inspectorates...at least twice a year.***

Members ensured NISB was sighted on issues and emerging safeguarding themes affecting the RSBs through bi-monthly meetings with RSB chairs and WG.

NISB members also ensured a two-way dialogue with organisations in Wales involved in safeguarding by identifying organisations involved in the Welsh safeguarding landscape including:

- » Older Peoples Commissioner for Wales (OPC)
- » Children's Commissioner for Wales (CCfW)
- » Social Care Wales (SCW)
- » Education Workforce Council (EWC)
- » Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA)
- » Violence Prevention Unit (VPU)

**NISB Specific responsibility 8:**  
NISB will ***consider the learning from the ‘user engagement’ activities of the Safeguarding Boards.***

- » In its Annual Report NISB collated information about user engagement activities highlighted in the RSB annual reports.
- » In February 2021, the NISB commissioned Liverpool John Moores University to carry out research to explore and understand safeguarding arrangements across Wales. The aim of the research is to identify what good looks like and provide recommendations to Welsh Government Ministers. The ‘Shaping the Future of Safeguarding in Wales’ project is made up of three workstreams:

- » Workstream 1: An Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Multi-Agency Front-door Operational Safeguarding Arrangements in Wales;
- » Workstream 2: The Development of a National Performance Framework for Statutory Safeguarding; and
- » Workstream 3: Messages from People.

The reports are due for publication in the autumn of 2022.

- » NISB members contributed to the Single Unified Safeguarding Review work around family and community engagement which is ongoing.



## NISB Strategic Duty 2:

**To report on the adequacy and effectiveness of arrangements** to safeguard children and adults in Wales.

### **NISB Specific responsibility 3:** *NISB will **stay abreast of evidence and policy** approaches to safeguarding and protection (including) in other parts of the UK and beyond in **order to learn from those and to evaluate Wales' relative performance.***

- » Work on Phase 2 of Shaping the Future of Safeguarding in Wales continued throughout the year. Workstream 1 will be the findings of Liverpool John Moore's University's evaluation of multi-agency front door safeguarding arrangements in Wales. The report will be published in the autumn of 2022.
- » The inaugural meeting took place in January 2022 of the Ministerial Board responsible for ensuring the widespread learning identified through the Welsh Single Unified Safeguarding Review (SUSR) process. The chair of NISB is a member of this Board.
- » Board members have engaged with relevant workstreams to develop the SUSR process – including the Steering Group, the Legal & Governance Group and the Central Repository Group.
- » Board members participated in and supported webinars and conferences in Wales and across the 5 Nations including:
  - » During National Safeguarding Week hosting the NISB Webinar, in conjunction with the Violence Prevention Unit, on the theme of Adult Safeguarding.
  - » The NISB Website provider set up a Safeguarding Week Portal to show all events and activities for NISB, Welsh Government and Regional Safeguarding Boards in one place.
  - » Board members contributed to the planning and promotion of the 5 Nations Safeguarding Conferences throughout the year.
- » The Bi-annual Welsh thematic review of Child Practice Reviews was due this year. However, only 12 reviews had been published since the last review was undertaken. Therefore, a further decision about a sufficient sample size will be made in the next year.
- » Resources Published on NISB Website:
  - » Safeguarding is Everyone's Responsibility – an interactive guide and directory
  - » National Action Plan preventing and responding to child sexual abuse resources
  - » Making Words Matter: Attending to Language when working with children subject to or at risk of sexual exploitation
  - » Self-Neglect in Adults – a short video
  - » Ending Physical Punishment Partner Pack
  - » DBS guidance on eligibility and barring referrals

**NISB Specific responsibility 4:**  
*Where a **theme of concern** is identified... the National Board could recommend to Welsh Ministers that the matter be escalated to Welsh Government for exploration or to the relevant inspectorate.*

Emerging issues in order to inform and influence the development of safeguarding systems and processes were identified through:

- » Participation in regular meetings with Welsh Government and the Chairs of RSBs
- » Effective dialogue with regulators and inspectorates of public services or workforce standards to consider any safeguarding concerns, development, or improvements for safeguarding, including:
  - » Care Inspectorate Wales
  - » Health Inspectorate Wales
  - » Wales Audit Office
  - » Estyn
  - » Education and Workforce Council
- » Liaison with the Welsh Commissioners for Older People and for Children on emerging safeguarding matters to have effective alliances.
- » Monitoring and reporting on the progress made in relation to specific issues of concern that have been previously highlighted:
  - » Statutory guidance for Children Electively home educated.
  - » Regulatory framework around independent schools and the Education Workforce Council.

- » Presentations from interested groups to NISB including:
  - » Public Law Working Group
  - » Social Care Wales – Safeguarding Standards Group
  - » Cardiff University – Thematic Review of Adult Practice Reviews
  - » University of Sussex – Analysis of Safeguarding Adult Reviews in England
  - » Alcohol Change UK
  - » EWC – Guidance on Use of Social Media in Education
  - » VAWDASV Wales Gold Group

NISB is expecting that future themes of concerns that will require escalation to Welsh Government will come from the commissioned work around Phase 2 of Shaping the Future of Safeguarding in Wales, in particular on the anticipated All Wales Multi-Agency Safeguarding Performance Framework, which is being developed as a part of the programme.

**NISB Specific responsibility 5:**  
*NISB will use mechanisms to regularly **engage with a range of expert reference groups, practitioners and individuals.***

Assurance has been sought to determine the adequacy and effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements in Wales through engagement with:

- » Violence Prevention Unit
- » Child Death Review Panel
- » Welsh Government Children & Young People External Advisory Group
- » Groups invited to present at NISB meetings on specific topics

**NISB Specific responsibility 6:**

*NISB will **publish** its own annual reports including **any work it is planning**. It will also hold an annual engagement event or events.*

NISB put in place processes which enabled widespread communication with stakeholders:

- » Regularly updated the NISB website to provide relevant, topical information and key safeguarding messages in accessible formats.
- » Supported and promoted national public campaigns aimed at preventing, identifying and responding to harm from abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- » Supported National Safeguarding Week and hosted its annual webinar.
- » Produced & published its annual report and workplan within the required timescales.

**NISB Specific responsibility 7:**

*NISB has a specific duty under section 133 (2) (d) of the Act to “**consult with** those who may be affected by arrangements to safeguard adults and children in Wales.” It will use that duty to enhance its understanding of and extend its experience of safeguarding and protection in Wales.*

Whilst the NISB does not have the capacity or resources to engage directly with those who may be affected by arrangements to safeguard adults and children in Wales, it has responded to individual requests from members of the public made via its website. Most often in signposting them to correct agencies or public bodies.

In February 2021, the NISB commissioned Liverpool John Moores University to carry out research to explore and understand safeguarding arrangements across Wales. The aim of the research is to identify what good looks like and provide recommendations to Welsh Government Ministers. Workstream 3 is ‘Messages from People’ and is specifically around the experiences of those affected by safeguarding arrangements in Wales. The report is due for publication in the autumn of 2022.

The Board also considers the findings of engagement events held by the Older People’s Commissioner, the Children’s Commissioner for Wales and others. The findings and recommendations from the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse, which is expected in the autumn of 2022, will also be particularly relevant to NISB’s understanding of and extend its experience of safeguarding and protection in Wales.

## Regional Safeguarding Boards

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The NISB report on the arrangements to safeguard children and adults in Wales that are the responsibility of Regional Safeguarding Boards is based on the content of the Annual Reports of the Regional Boards and attendance at Board meetings by members of the National Board.

There are six regions in Wales, in **2021-2022** they were:

- » Cardiff and Vale
- » Cwm Taf Morgannwg
- » Gwent
- » Mid & West Wales
- » North Wales
- » West Glamorgan.

Five regions produced a single Annual Report to cover the work of the Safeguarding Children and Safeguarding Adult Boards. In all regions, the boards were supported by a single Business Unit.

Four regions produced their annual reports by the deadline of 31st July set out in the statutory guidance. One region published their report in August 2022 and one region had still not published its Annual Report at the time of writing [Oct 2022] and has therefore not been included in this report.

The content of the Regional Safeguarding Boards' Annual Report is laid down in para 209 in the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014 guidance 'Working Together to Safeguarding People – Volume 1 – Introduction and Overview'. All the regions' annual reports seen contained the required content.

# Themes from the Safeguarding Boards Annual Reports

## An Effective Response to the Impact of the Covid 19 Pandemic on Safeguarding Arrangements

This was a common theme in all the annual reports the National Board has seen. The two consistent elements that created the greatest challenges were the heavy demand on services and staffing issues.

Society moved out of the year of lockdowns which removed many of the opportunities for professional oversight and exercising professional curiosity about individual and family situations. As practise returned to 'normal' the level of safeguarding referrals increased and cases were reported to be more complex in nature.

This increasing demand on services coincided with reports of staffing pressures and lack of resilience in the workforce. This was across all agencies but was particularly noticeable within social care. Staff were leaving the workforce altogether or moving around within it, creating a deficit in organisation knowledge and inexperience in working within safeguarding.

## Financial Hardship and the Cost of Living Crisis

A number of the Regional Boards reported that they were turning their attention to the impact on safeguarding of the next crisis looming ahead. That is, the cost of living crisis and the resulting financial hardship. This for these Board's will be a priority area for the year ahead.

## Training and Learning

All Boards delivered extensive and diverse training programmes throughout the year. Most events continued to be delivered virtually but there were signs that there was movement back to some in person events. The first priority was to resume face to face learning events for the adult practice and child practice review process. This is very welcome as it facilitates additional welfare support to staff in often difficult circumstances.

National Safeguarding Week in November 2021 was also a programme of events that was delivered primarily on-line. The Regions worked separately and together to deliver a comprehensive range of events across the whole week. All the Boards reported on these events within their annual reports.

## Other Themes

The Boards are required to report on their resourcing. Generally very little detail is included beyond stating that agency financial contributions are in line with the National Funding Formula and the bulk of this is used to finance the Business Units. It is therefore impossible to get a national picture of the expenditure of the regional boards or how effectively these resources are being used.

A second area which is consistently lacking is in relation to performance information. This is something that the National Board has noted in previous years. Whilst the regions describe the work and activities they have undertaken, there is no attempt to analyse how effective they have been in keeping people safe.

## Individual Regional Safeguarding Board Reports



At the time of writing in October 2022, Cardiff & Vale Regional Safeguarding Board had not published their Annual Report for 2021-2022. Unfortunately this is the second consecutive year that they have been unable to meet the statutory timescale for publication that is laid down in regulations.

NISB would advise the RSB to have a clear plan in place for future compliance and provide this assurance to both NISB and Welsh Government.

### Annual Report

At the time of publication of the National Board's Annual Report, a link was provided to Cardiff & Vale RSB's full report:

[www.cardiffandvalersb.co.uk/adults/about-us/annual-plans-reports](http://www.cardiffandvalersb.co.uk/adults/about-us/annual-plans-reports)

[www.cardiffandvalersb.co.uk/children/about-the-rscb/annual-plans-reports](http://www.cardiffandvalersb.co.uk/children/about-the-rscb/annual-plans-reports)



**Cwm Taf Morgannwg  
Bwrdd Diogelu  
Safeguarding Board**

## Introduction

The Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board covers the local authority areas of Bridgend, Merthyr Tydfil and Rhonda Cynon Taf, serving a population of approximately 428,000. The Boards aim, to ensure that all its citizens across all ages are safeguarded, is delivered by a multi-agency substructure and supported by the Boards Business Unit. The Board is well attended at an appropriate level by the multiagency partnership and the subgroups are supported by agencies to function effectively.

## Delivering the Annual Plan

Throughout 2021, the COVID19 pandemic was for a second year, impacting on the ability of all agencies to deliver high quality services due to the continued heavy demand on services and staffing pressures. This resulted in some areas of Board work remaining incomplete as critical resources were redirected to manage the impact of the pandemic on vulnerable members of the community. Although system pressures continue, progress has been made on all these areas.

A Board priority for 2020-21 was a focus on learning from the experiences of practitioners, recognising the wealth of learning from reviews and case audits and the need for this to better support and influence practice.

While several actions were progressed the development of a Learning and Improvement framework was deferred. This has now been established to identify multi-agency learning and support improvements to secure better outcomes for children and adults at risk of harm. Outstanding audits were completed including a multi-agency Domestic Abuse audit to identify learning themes.

Other areas of work included the establishment of a multi-agency Suicide Review Group to scrutinise information held by the Board in respect of suspected completed suicides managed under the Boards Immediate Response protocol. This now helps the Board to identify contributory themes to use as a basis for recommendations aimed at better enabling recognition, sign posting and intervention going forward.

A regional approach to managing cases of self-neglect in adults has been introduced through the establishment of multi-agency Self-Neglect Partnership Panels led by Adult Services in each LA area. Early indications are that these are having a positive outcome for people in these circumstances.



On March 31st, 2021, the Board published its Annual Plan setting out its priorities for safeguarding children, young people and adults for the year ahead. Three overarching strategic priorities were to:

1. Ensure an Effective Response to the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic
2. Strengthen Safeguarding Links to other Partnerships in the Region
3. Improve the Approach to Public Protection Concerns

### *Strategic Priority 1: Ensure an Effective Response to the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic*

While the Boards data analysis demonstrated an increased demand for services across the health and social care system in all areas, a slightly adapted but 'business as usual' approach was taken throughout 2021-22. Where a greater understanding of the reasons for increased service demand was required, this was explored through a quality assurance process to enable services to adapt and seek solutions to better respond.

A work stream for this priority aimed to ensure that those most at risk were able to re-engage with services. Innovative approaches were developed, and agencies maximised virtual platforms to assist communication.

A review of Child Protection Conferences focused on the co-production of child protection plans with families so that views and experiences informed plans for positive change. This was further enhanced by a review of the provision of advocacy to parents attending conferences.

Agencies working to safeguard adults supported care providers through the administration of a hardship fund to ensure continued service delivery to adults at risk.

A focus was maintained on the safety and wellbeing of those living in residential care settings and agencies worked together to jointly develop a safe hospital discharge policy for those entering care homes.

Across all agencies, the impact on staff in managing the challenges of the Pandemic is fully recognised and several actions have been taken to support staff and their wellbeing. Recruitment and retention of essential staff continues to be of serious concern. All agencies shared with the Board, the efforts put in place to support staff and manage these challenges.

### *Strategic Priority 2: Strengthen Safeguarding Links to other Partnerships in the Region*

This builds on a 2020/21 priority with the Board continuing to strengthen working arrangements with other partnerships. This has led to good collaboration on safeguarding matters with the Anti-Social Behaviour Team, Prevent/Channel Panel, Licensing, and the Domestic Abuse Services within the Community Safety Partnership resulting in better joined up working. As examples, a new Regional Prevent Delivery Group is involved in testing a new Prevent e-learning platform, designed to safeguard individuals who are vulnerable to radicalisation. The link between the Board's Immediate Response Group structure, Suicide Review Group, and the Suicide Prevention Steering Group, has created a structural connection between the Board and Mental Health Services.



### **Strategic Priority 3: Improve the Approach to Public Protection Concerns**

Through their data collection and analysis, the Board was alerted to an emerging pattern of diminishing child sexual abuse but an increasing number of criminal child exploitation cases in some parts of the region, leading to a concern that child sexual abuse and exploitation abuse might be hidden rather than diminished. While processes for managing child sexual exploitation are well established further focus on criminal child exploitation, on-line abuse, modern slavery and human trafficking and radicalisation was indicated. Regional collaboration has now resulted in the development of a Board Exploitation Strategy and Toolkit, initially to support practice concerning children and young people transitioning to adulthood but with a view to progressing the use of the strategy to all adults. The Board plans continuing data analysis in working to the National Action Plan, Preventing and Responding to Child Sexual Abuse.

### **Safeguarding Themes**

Learning from practice has supported the board in identifying areas of improvement. This has been through themed audits and Adult and Child Practice Reviews.

The themed audits concerned 'Cases where Advocacy needed to be used or the involvement of family members (adults)' and 'Local Authority Audit in relation to Proportionate Assessments (children)' have resulted in several items for consideration to support practice that are detailed in the Annual Report.

The Board published 2 Child Practice Reviews, 2 Adult Practice Reviews and, in collaboration with the Community Safety Partnership, 2 Domestic Homicide Reviews. The Annual Report details the learning from each of these individual reviews along with the resulting actions taken.

In October 2021, the Board commissioned the National Safeguarding Team (NHS Wales) to carry out an independent rapid review into multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in Bridgend. This followed five unexpected child deaths, which were all unrelated. This early independent review was completed separately to the planned Practice Reviews of the cases. A final report presented to the Board in December 2021, contained a series of recommendations leading to actions taken to improve multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.

### **Information and Learning**

Staff training is coordinated and delivered by the local authority training departments and monitored by the Boards Training and Learning subgroup. It is now also supported by the newly agreed Learning and Improvement Framework. Whilst training data evidenced a decrease compared to pre covid data, a rapid shift to remote and digital learning was brought about by an investment in on-line resources for virtual classroom learning, the purchase of computer hardware to loan to staff otherwise without access, and the provision of support to those needing digital literacy skills. This and face to face learning where possible, resulted in 3,838 learning activities being undertaken with a range of staff, volunteers, and foster carers.

VAWDASV training was progressed throughout the year. The Welsh Government training grant provided for a range of additional staff training that included Exploitation; Professional Curiosity and Disguised Compliance; Suicide Prevention and Staff Well-being. The Multi Agency Practitioners Fora provided further opportunity for staff to learn from specific cases. Partner agencies reported to the Board on the training that they had also provided for their staff.

Activities during Safeguarding week provided training for staff and education and awareness raising sessions for young people, parents/carers and the general public. A range of safeguarding issues including child sexual exploitation, mental health, domestic abuse, and child criminal exploitation were programmed. Workshops on suicide and self-harm prevention considered both national and local initiatives and provided opportunity for attendees to network and discuss together opportunities for prevention.

The Boards website is regularly updated and used to share reports and disseminate learning from reviews and audits. Social media platforms including the Boards Facebook page and Twitter account continues to raise safeguarding awareness and promote safeguarding campaigns.

### Safeguarding Board Resourcing

The Boards Annual Report provides information regarding its expenditure for staff and premises and an additional expenditure not detailed. This cost is divided between the partner agencies in a prescribed formula of financial contribution.

### Participation and Involvement

Partnership and engagement events with children, young people and adults were undertaken within local authority areas, across the region and in collaboration with other partnerships. Examples includes the engagement of Bridgend Youth Matters with 690 young people on the street in areas of anti-social behaviour activity. The VAWDASV 'snip it in the bud' campaign where hair salons and barbers in Cwm Taf Morgannwg have been supported to identify signs and support disclosures of domestic abuse by signposting to local services. In Rhondda Cynon Taf a website for children looked after, has been co-produced and an interactive information, learning and support platform designed for the use of young people. Views are being sought from children and young people looked after in developing My Voice-My Review, the documentation used to capture their views whilst in care and in Merthyr Tydfil, Children's Services sought the views of parents attending child protection conferences through a commissioned pilot to determine the effect of the offer of parental advocacy. Based on the positive feedback, funding was identified for a 12-month project of parental advocacy for all parents and people with parental responsibility for attendance at Initial and Review Child Protection Conferences. Other examples of participation and engagement are noted in the Annual Report.

### Annual report

The [Boards annual report](#) provides the full membership and the detail of their collaboration to safeguard and protect children and adults at risk from harm over the previous year.

## Gwent Regional Adults and Children's Safeguarding Boards



## Diogelu Gwent Gwent Safeguarding

### Introduction

Gwent Safeguarding Boards area covers the local authority areas of Blaenau Gwent, Torfaen, Caerphilly, Newport and Monmouthshire serving a population of 587,700.

Regional safeguarding partners in Gwent maintain two separate boards for adults and children respectively, to ensure appropriate and undiluted priority for each population group. Nevertheless, the two boards work in very close collaboration and convene their respective board meetings to run consecutively on the same day, with a shared 'business' agenda covering issues in common.

Above all, the Gwent Boards share **"One Overarching Vision: To ensure that children and adults, in Gwent, are safeguarded."** In turn, this is underpinned by

#### **"Three Joint Strategic Priorities:**

- » *To better protect children and adults at risk of exploitation.*
- » *To better protect children and adults from neglect, physical, emotional, sexual and financial harm.*
- » *To improve and maintain the effectiveness of the Regional Safeguarding Board."*

The Joint Boards' three-year Strategic Plan, to support the delivery of these priorities, is in its third year at the time of writing.

These strategic priorities are progressed by an active combination of statutory and non-statutory regional partners through range of highly effective and productive multi-disciplinary and multi-agency sub-groups, supported by a well-resourced Boards Business Unit. Membership attendance at the quarterly Board meetings reflects a high level of commitment by all partners.

### Delivering the Annual Plan

This review of the Gwent Regional Boards' Annual Plan, as in previous years, endeavours to reach a balanced view of the boards' progress against their joint strategic priorities; this review is focused on progress made at the conclusion of year 2 of the Joint Boards' Strategic Plan. The review follows a similar approach to the reviews previously undertaken by the representative member of the National Independent Safeguarding Board, who liaises and attends the joint boards during any given year; it is based on a reading of the Joint Boards' own Annual Report for the year 2021-22 and on observing meetings of the Joint Boards during the period. In relation to the 2021-22 year however, no external reading of the Gwent Boards' Annual Report, can be appreciated without significant reference to the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic, this being even more important for the 2021-22 year, than the previous period, when Covid was a more recent phenomenon.

In this context, it is noteworthy that as in the previous year, when in-person meetings were not possible due to the pandemic, the Joint Boards maintained a monthly virtual Executive meeting for part of the year (as opposed to full-member quarterly boards), to ensure continuity of business and more importantly, to ensure closer oversight of shifting patterns of vulnerability and workforce capacity in response to the pandemic.

Having, on the one hand, established these effective and well-organised contingency arrangements in the previous year, the joint boards were well-placed to ensure continuity of focus on their 3 core priorities, maintain momentum of activity and put measures in place to enable the monitoring of existing and emergent risks in the context of a fast-changing pandemic profile; overall, the Joint Boards have been able to sustain their operation as effective entity. On the other hand, as with other areas of the country, the scale, depth and longevity of Covid's impact on individuals and communities, particularly the most vulnerable, is yet to be fully understood. The board is concerned moreover about the additional impact, on these same individuals, of the growing cost-of-living crisis.

Of note and specifically in relation to each of their three priority areas, the Joint Boards have highlighted progress as follows: -

#### *Protecting children and adults at risk of exploitation – activity included*

- » Commissioning specialist awareness-raising regarding gender and exploitation and criminal and gang behaviour with a plan focus on adults in the forthcoming year.

- » Continued systematic oversight of child exploitation using the region's model Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) arrangements.
- » Participation in a Home Office sponsored pilot to test and promote devolved decision-making about children who are victims of modern slavery; the current scheme centralised nationally at the Home Office, where decisions to treat children as victims, rather than solely as criminal offenders, are taken; these decisions can take up to 18 months to the detriment of those children involved. By contrast, it is noted that early evidence from this pilot across all 5 local authority areas across the Gwent area (& Cardiff) and in 8 English L.A.s, is demonstrating considerably quicker and more effective decision-making (at c 90 days). It is believed that a wider roll out across all L.A.s in England and Wales is likely to follow at the end of the pilot in March 23.
- » Commissioning workshops from the Centre of Expertise for Child Sexual Abuse, to strengthen practitioner understanding of indicators and effective responses.
- » Development of a dedicated webpage to support implementation of the forthcoming Liberty Protection Safeguards reforms.
- » Launch of a 'bitesize' learning campaign to raise awareness of contextual safeguarding.
- » Development of materials, including an audit tool, to support initiatives to tackle financial abuse, particularly in the context of Covid 19.

### *Protecting children and adults from neglect, physical, emotional, sexual and financial harm*

- » Dissemination of a regional Coercive Control guide.
- » Newly developed regional guidance on Adult Protection and Support Orders emanating from regional adult practice review learning.
- » Publication of regional Multi-Agency Practice Guidance for Dealing with Cases of Domestic Abuse to Safeguard Adults with Care and Support Needs.
- » Introduction of a data dashboard neglect to establish the prevalence of cases in the region. This is part of an ongoing medium-term project which is aiming to develop a range of multi-agency measures of safeguarding effectiveness.

### **Improve/maintain the effectiveness of the Regional Board**

- » Region-wide roll-out of awareness raising and materials to support ongoing implementation of the All-Wales Procedures.
- » Ongoing work with the single unified safeguarding review programme to ensure appropriate resources / capacity are prepared to accommodate any future increase in safeguarding reviews.

### **Safeguarding Themes from Practice**

- » In reflecting at the end of year 2 of their strategic plan, the Board has been conscious of the very significant impact of Covid 19, in addition to early concerns that the cost of living appears to be compounding an already damaging period for its population and communities. Taken together Covid and cost-of-living impacts, appear to represent an overarching theme which link to the other discrete themes identified in the Board's Annual report. The Joint Boards assess that these twin factors have combined to compound pre-existing or underlying risks.
- » For example, the Board has cited the significance of **resilience** in the face of national crisis and the extent to which this has combined with persistent underlying vacancy factors to make the operating environment, particularly at practitioner level, very challenging.
- » Again, related to resilience, is the Board's concern at the emergence over the last 2 years of heightened risk affecting the **mental well-being** of children and adults, *"...inextricably linked to a person's ability to build resilience and maintain well-being through periods of stress and crisis."* This appears to be manifesting itself in an increase in concerns about suicide and self-harm and the board has been proactive in developing a range of initiatives to strengthen the response of practitioners and partners.
- » Similarly, the Board identified the need to consider the occurrence of neglect in the context of the pandemic and more recent cost-of-living pressures.

## Information & Learning

As with previous years, the Joint Boards have sustained a comprehensive training programme, that reflects core safeguarding and more contemporary needs and that is impressive in its reach, including service providers and volunteers. In all, 1,180 individuals have benefited from training delivered over seventy-three separate sessions.

This has included training to ensure that practitioners are fully compliant with the Wales Safeguarding Procedures; launching a new website which enabled streamlined content; piloting and launching a weekly Information Exchange and quarterly newsletter to provide a more easily digested method of communication following feedback from partners; establishing bitesized learning campaigns to share resources; facilitating awareness briefings in subject areas including Gangs and Criminal Exploitation, Handling Issues of Suicide and Self Harm, Contextual Safeguarding, Vicarious Trauma and Wellbeing, Domestic Abuse in Older People.

## Section 137 Powers

During the year 2021/2022 the Gwent Safeguarding Boards did not use their Section 137 powers to access information.

## CPR/APR/DHR Related Learning

During the year the Joint Boards undertook the following: -

**One Domestic Homicide-Adult Practice Review pilot** generating learning around how the Domestic Homicide Review process could be aligned more closely with the Adult Practice Review methodology and lead to a less onerous process for families and more timely learning for practitioners.

**Publication of one Adult Practice Review** which also considered the execution of the first Adult Protection and Support Order (APSO) in Wales, prompting the completed revision of the region's **APSO protocol**.

During 2021/2022, Gwent Regional Boards completed and disseminated the learning from a number of reviews and Multi-Agency Professional Forums. The learning that flows from published reviews is embedded in the work programme of the boards.



## Safeguarding Board Resourcing

The Boards are funded by contributions from statutory partner agencies who have agreed the funding formula as set out in the Welsh Government document 'Working Together to Safeguard People Vol. 1'

The Report does not detail the contributions but does set out costs incurred in sustaining the business unit, workshop and meeting arrangements. There is no 'budget' as such, within the report.

The report acknowledges the significant in-kind contributions of its partners.

## Participation and Involvement

It is not surprising to note that direct and in-person engagement in consulting with and reaching out to communities of interest has been highly constrained by Covid 19 restrictions. In the Joint Boards own words – *"Throughout the past two years, the pandemic has presented significant challenges for safeguarding boards in attempting to reach out to its citizens."*

That said, the boards have taken the opportunity, through its Engagement and Communication subgroup, to engage all partners in developing a refreshed engagement and communication strategy, including specific steps to integrate engagement and communication into the work of all sub-groups as a norm.

In terms of partner engagement, the Joint Boards Annual Report evidences high levels of commitment by all partners throughout, reflected in a range of highly active programmes of work and development.

## Annual Report

The [Board's annual report](#) provides the full membership and the detail of their collaboration to safeguard and protect children and adults at risk from harm over the previous year.

## The Mid and West Wales Regional Safeguarding Board



# CYSUR

### Introduction

Mid and West Wales is covered by two sister Safeguarding Boards: CWMPAS [Collaborative Working & Maintaining Partnership in Adult Safeguarding] and CYSUR [Child & Youth Safeguarding, Unifying the Region]. The Executive Boards for CYSUR and CWMPAS work together as an overarching Regional Safeguarding Board to monitor and improve regional safeguarding activity across Mid and West Wales. An infrastructure is shared by the two 'sister boards' and there is a single business unit. The membership of the two Boards, including all statutory partners, are listed in the Boards Annual Report.

### Delivering the Annual Plan

The Annual Report evidences a range of activity and accomplishments made possible through multi-agency working and partnership collaborations. The statutory agencies also provide a narrative of their individual contributions to the work of the board. CADW, the well-established Regional Junior Board has again demonstrated exceptional commitment and enthusiasm in supporting the Board to meet strategic priorities. These are:

#### 1. Effective Engagement and Communication:

To improve engagement and consultation with children, adults at risk, vulnerable groups, professionals, and partnerships. Activity has included:

- » Completion and publication of regional policies and pathways to guide staff.
- » Engagement with adults at risk and implementation of the Boards Multi-Agency High-Risk Behaviours Policy and Procedure (Including Self-Neglect and Hoarding).
- » Promotion of campaigns and awareness on a variety of issues reaching high viewing numbers to content on the established Facebook and Twitter accounts. A new Instagram account to extend reach to young people and a YouTube channel provide additional platforms for engagement.
- » The Regional Junior Boards development and production of a training video/animation for multi-agency practitioner training.

#### 2. Thematic Learning and Developing Best Practice:

To ensure a thematic approach to learning and evaluate the continued impact of board work over time, allowing key themes identified to inform strategic priorities. To continue to develop and share best practice. Activity included:

- » The Child and Adult Practice Review groups distillation of learning from review processes to inform training. Continuing dissemination of 7 minute briefings to practitioners on a variety of safeguarding issues.



- » Safeguarding training made increasingly accessible via the introduction of additional virtual platforms and resource suites. Safeguarding week centred on themes of learning of particular significance during the pandemic.
- » Introduction of an Immediate Response Model to ensure support to individuals who may be at increased risk following an instance of suicide in their network or peer group.

### 3. **Strengthening the Workforce and Managing Risk:**

To develop and implement strategic initiatives which will enable greater retention of and recruitment into the social care workforce, and to identify and respond to other significant risks in the safeguarding arena.

- » Reviews of staffing levels undertaken to enable clear plans for staff recruitment and retention.
- » Regional multi-agency referral forms for children and adults reviewed to enable online submission by practitioners reporting concerns.

### 4. **Leadership, Visibility and Challenge:**

To continue to provide visible leadership and influence the national agenda in relation to Mid & West Wales safeguarding priorities, and to enable constructive challenge and active engagement from all agencies in our partnership.

- » Considerable contributions have been made to national areas of work including the development of legislation, policy, guidance.

### 5. **COVID-19 response and recovery:**

To monitor the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, respond to any issues arising and coordinate a regional multi-agency approach to recovery.

- » Whilst acknowledging the challenges of a second pandemic year, all necessary systems and structures to manage the effects have been put in place. This included the implementation of regional policies and frameworks for example COVID-19 Regional Escalation Process and Risk Management Policy for Care and Nursing Homes, and the COVID-19 Threshold Documents.

## Safeguarding Themes

The Boards' Quality Assurance and Reporting Framework, which includes a comprehensive dataset alongside a local and thematic regional audit schedule, has continued to aid the Boards' understanding of professional safeguarding practice.

Themes arising from case practice reviews were considered to inform training programmes and future priorities. These included:

- » The need to support practitioners to practice professional curiosity and to be alert to situations of disguised compliance
- » The need to support practice in relation to mental capacity legislation, particularly where service users exhibit high-risk behaviours
- » Suicide prevention
- » Alcohol and substance misuse impact on safeguarding
- » Infant deaths related to safe sleeping
- » The need for better information sharing between agencies

National themes have continued to generate Board activities and include:

- » **The Regional Safe Lives, Healthier Relationships VAWDASV Strategy.** Significant funding has been secured and used to support the capacity of VAWDASV service providers, increasing accommodation and securing improvements to refuge and sexual assault referral centres (SARCS). The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) has provided funds to support the regional approach to the delivery of perpetrator intervention programmes and Welsh Government funding has allowed for a further 3 remote evidence sites across the region. The annual report provides further examples of progress in this area of work.
- » **National Action Plan for Responding to and Tackling Child Sexual Abuse** progressed through campaign promotions, training and events in different settings using social media and through staff briefings and the wide sharing of the resources such as Keeping Safe Online.
- » Actions taken to prevent and identify the **exploitation of children and young people** includes a strategic approach to consider children at risk of wider forms of exploitation, including criminal exploitation. A comprehensive dataset is being developed to further support and enhance this work.
- » **Mental health, self-harm and suicide** continues to remain a high priority for the Board. A regional coordinator supports the national Talk to me 2 Suicide Prevention Strategy and the Rapid Response model for suspected suicides for both children and adults has been implemented.

- » **Drug related deaths and non-fatal overdoses have received focussed attention**, with awareness raising of themes and trends.
- » Continuing and rising numbers of **preventable deaths related to babies co-sleeping** with parents have emerged through the Process for Reviewing Unexpected Deaths in Children (PRUDiCs) across the region. This has prompted national consideration and development of further regional guidance for parents and carers.
- » The challenge of insufficient appropriate **accommodation for those with complex needs** is the focus of a specialist task and finish group.
- » **Embracing the Preventative Agenda, Ending Physical Punishment in Wales** supported through campaigns and the promotion of Welsh Government resources.

## Information and Learning

Comprehensive information about the Board; Annual Plans and Annual Reports and published Practice Reviews, along with a range of resources for practitioners are all accessible via a regularly updated website.

The Annual Report includes details of conferences, events and training delivered through the Board and provided by experts in the field and partner agencies. A suite of Professional Curiosity Training and Resources for practitioners is in development.

The development and production of an animation film by the Junior Safeguarding Board is now ready to be launched and will be incorporated into training programmes to support practitioners to communicate sensitively and effectively with children and young people.

In National Safeguarding Week a regional programme of events attracted a wide reach, including more than 8,000 hits to the Boards Facebook page on a single day and with Twitter expressions exceeding 17,000. A new Instagram account and YouTube channel for briefings and presentations are also being viewed widely.

### Safeguarding Board Resourcing

All statutory partners of the Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Boards contribute time and expertise in addition to the financial running of the Boards.

### Participation and Involvement

Young members of the CADW: Junior Regional Safeguarding Board undertook a range of activities including the development and production of an animation expressing the views of children and young people on how practitioners can better support and interact with them. Additionally, a few examples of activities across local areas include:



**Powys Ambassadors of Youth Safeguarding (PAYS)** this year have focussed on active promotion and identified the

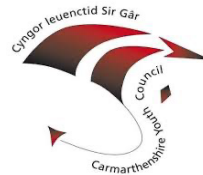
key objectives of Raising awareness of the United Nations Convention for the Rights of the Child (UNCRC); safety at home, school and the community; and transitioning into adulthood.



**The Ceredigion 'Ser Saff' and Ceredigion Youth Service** distributed Safe Stars Health and Wellbeing Packs to children and young people

living in Ceredigion, to help and equip them with information to support their health and wellbeing.

A Safe Stars calendar includes dates of key awareness days relevant to young people, on themes including mental health and exploitation, against the backdrop of picturesque views of Ceredigion taken during the young people's time spent getting into nature during lockdown.



**Carmarthenshire Youth Council (CYC)**, continue to run the Children's Rights Community Ambassadors scheme,

in raising awareness of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC); CYC's members are engaged within both the United Kingdom Youth Parliament (UKYP) and the Welsh Youth Parliament (WYP).



**Pembrokeshire Junior Safeguardians** worked with the Head of Children's Services this year to develop a Children and Young People's Charter, a

Children's Services promise to children and young people about how they will be treated when they have a social worker. This will help children and young people decide if the service they are getting meets their needs and considers their views and lived experience.

### Annual report

The [Board's annual report](#) provides the full membership and the detail of their collaboration to safeguard and protect children and adults at risk from harm over the previous year.

## North Wales Safeguarding Board



### Introduction

The North Wales Safeguarding Children and Safeguarding Adult Boards encompasses six Local Authority areas: Flintshire, Wrexham, Conwy, Denbighshire, Gwynedd and Ynys Mon. Serving such a large region came with significant challenges but the board and its members continued to be proud of the strong ethos of collaboration and partnership working that had been established at both a senior executive board and subgroup level.

Protecting and preventing children and adults at risk from experiencing harm and promoting the wellbeing of the people of North Wales enabling them to achieve better outcomes remained central to the Board's work.

### Delivering the Annual Plan

The Adults and Children Boards met separately three times and jointly once in the year. In addition, there was a joint Business Development Day held to set the priorities for the year and self-assess the progress of the Boards.

Three Strategic Priorities were agreed:

#### *Strategic Priority 1. Continue to promote awareness and compliance around the Wales Safeguarding Adult Procedures*

Each statutory agency of the NWSAB completed a self-assessment toolkit. As a result, agencies updated their policies and procedures, provided evidence of training delivered and identified where IT systems had been updated. In addition, Commissioning contracts across the region were updated to reflect the Wales Safeguarding Procedures.

The work identified a concern in relation to outcomes at the end of the Section 5 process of the Wales Safeguarding Procedures and that additional guidance around the threshold for these meetings was needed. Feedback was therefore, provided to the National Project Board.

#### *Strategic Priority 2. Continue to promote awareness and compliance around the Wales Safeguarding Children Procedures*

Similarly, all agencies of the Safeguarding Children Board completed the self-assessment. In addition to the findings outlined above, the audit identified a number of examples in relation to child centred practice including support provided during the Child Protection Conference by advocates and by peers/buddies. There was also a greater focus on the Lived Experiences of the Child.

### ***Strategic Priority 3: To continue to ensure a robust, resilient and consistent approach to safeguarding practice during the Covid- 19 pandemic***

During 2021-22, the NWSB continued to monitor the impact of Covid-19 and the following issues were identified:

- » Workforce and Recruitment – shortages of front-line safeguarding staff in all agencies.
- » Placement choices for Children Looked After – the need to increase the choice of placements / recruitment of Foster Carers / where possible reducing the need for unregulated placements.
- » Increase in Adult Safeguarding Reports/ Referrals.
- » Complexity of Safeguarding Cases in Adult and Children services.
- » Management of Section 5 process – different approaches in each Local Authority area.
- » Financial Hardship.
- » Implementation of the Liberty Protection Safeguards.
- » The impact of WAST Ambulance delays.

In addition, further work was undertaken in the following areas:

- » The multiagency safeguarding pathway around Domestic Abuse and Adult at Risk Cases.
- » A pilot of weekly MARAC meetings across the region in response to the increase in Domestic Abuse Cases.
- » Development of practice guides in relation to the Adult at Risk and Domestic Abuse, and Multi-Agency Practice Guidance for Dealing with Cases of Domestic Abuse to Safeguard Adults with Care & Support Needs.

- » Development of a Modern Slavery Pathway for Adults at Risk and awareness raising material.
- » Work within BCUHB around the 126 enquiries pilot to support Health Practitioners.
- » Continued implementation of the National Child Sexual Abuse action plan.
- » Promotion of the 'Stop It Now' campaign.
- » Responded to the 'Everyone's Invited' website

### ***Safeguarding Themes from Practice***

During this year, the NWSB did not identify any specific practice themes but undertook a series of practice reviews.

### ***Transitional Safeguarding***

A review was undertaken to focus on the 'transition arrangements' for young people identified as being at risk of exploitation and having significant issues moving into adulthood. The NWSB is currently consulting on a draft Transitional Regional Practice Guide.

### ***Response to the findings from the thematic analysis of Adult Practice Reviews in Wales***

This research project commissioned by the National Independent Safeguarding Board (NISB) looked at learning from a systematic analysis of Adult Practice Reviews (APRs). Due to the serious concerns that the report highlighted in relation to Adult Safeguarding in Wales, the NWSB requested a response to the report and updates over the year from the Local Delivery Groups on the actions taken.

## *The Annual PRUDiC Report from Public Health Wales*

The NWSCB monitored the PRUDiC processes initiated in North Wales and ensured the procedural response was followed to completion.

### **Information & Learning**

The Annual Report included a table of information or learning the Safeguarding Board disseminated or training it recommended or provided throughout the year:

- » Child Sexual Abuse Prevention – Multi Agency Training
- » Learning from a NW Child Practice Review for Education
- » Missing Home –Return from Home Interviews
- » Promote awareness of the practice guidance pre-birth assessment
- » Contextual Safeguarding and the Wales Legal Context
- » Joint investigation Training/ Achieving Best Evidence
- » Overview of the Statutory Guidance on safeguarding children from sexual exploitation
- » Role of the Child Practice Reviewer

## *North Wales Safeguarding Board Website*

The website was used to provide resources that kept practitioners and the public updated about policy changes, new support helplines and general information gathered from across Wales and the rest of the UK.

### *NWSB Key Messages Key*

Messages from the North Wales Safeguarding Board meetings were made available via the resources library.

### *7 Minute Briefings*

7 minute briefings were used to highlight issues and themes throughout the year. In total there are 160 briefings currently available on the website. A number of briefings were created for particular National Themed weeks e.g. during Mental Health Awareness week and Dementia Awareness week.

### *Z Cards*

Practitioners across North Wales are now able to access a number of Z cards on safeguarding practice.



## Safeguarding Board Resourcing

There was good attendance at Board meetings and whilst it was acknowledged that it was not always possible for senior officers to attend meetings, another representative from the organisation deputised.

The Board used the National Funding Formula to assess and identify annual funding from statutory Board partners. The bulk of the expenditure was spent on staffing costs. There was a four-month period without a Safeguarding Administrator as the Board had difficulty in filling this vacancy.

In this year's report the cost of commissioning reviewers to undertake practice reviews and MAPF's was included as it was difficult to engage in-house reviewers from the region.

## Participation and Involvement

The NWSB worked with the Regional Advocacy Services to commission Person Centred Practice and the Wales Safeguarding Procedures Training for Advocacy Providers. Advocacy representatives at the Local Delivery Groups provided feedback from Adults at Risk regarding their views around the safeguarding process. From this feedback key messages were disseminated across the region for safeguarding practitioners.

Children Services undertook work with the regional advocacy service to create a Junior Safeguarding Board, however this was not successful. Instead, the NWSCB gave presentations to selected schools and colleges around the role of the NWSCB and key messages. This provided opportunities to share the drafts practice guides/ 7-minute briefings and the children added to the guidance.

Feedback from parent's/carers about the areas they wanted the NWSCB to focus on led to some key messages around Tik Toc. Other information to safeguard children from exploitation on-line was also developed e.g. 15 Apps Parents should know about.

## Annual Report

The [Annual Report of the North Wales Safeguarding Boards](#) covered all the elements laid down in the statutory guidance and was published in line with the statutory requirements.



## Introduction

West Glamorgan Regional Safeguarding Board covers the footprint of Swansea and Neath Port Talbot Local Authorities. It serves a population of just over 400,000.

The board is multi agency, is well attended and supported by a business unit.

There are co-chairing arrangements and four sub groups with responsibility for training; performance management; policy, procedure and practice management and practice review management feed into to the main board.

Representatives of the board also engage with Welsh Government, other regional boards from across Wales, the National Independent Safeguarding Board and other agencies as necessary.

## Delivering the Annual Plan

The Children and Adults board have a joint Annual Plan. Outcomes are set alongside the actions required. Each action is allocated to either one of the management groups or an individual – held to account through the monitoring process. At each meeting milestones are checked, risk/issues and achievements reported to Board meetings using the status report templates.

## West Glamorgan RSB Annual Plan 2021-22

The Board decided that given the ongoing pandemic to continue with a covid related approach and the safeguarding priority was to ensure a robust, resilient and consistent approach to safeguarding practice during Covid pandemic.

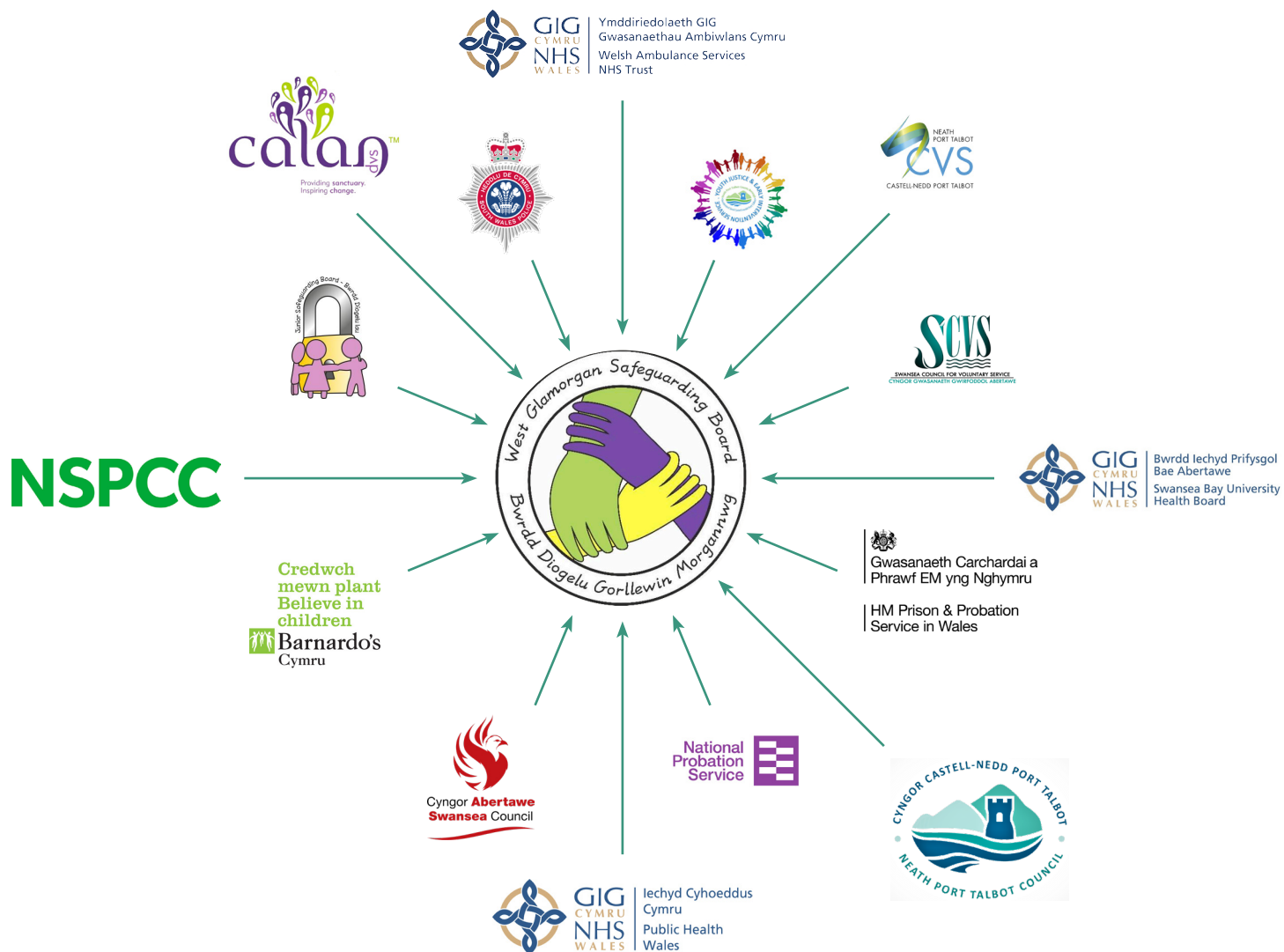
From this strategic priority, the Board identified two headline areas of focus

1. To understand the impact of Covid and to oversee and review the efficacy of measures taken by agencies as the realign governance, processes and practice to respond to Covid 19.
2. To ensure the response to Covid across the region is measured, legal, consistent and that safeguarding remains the golden thread.

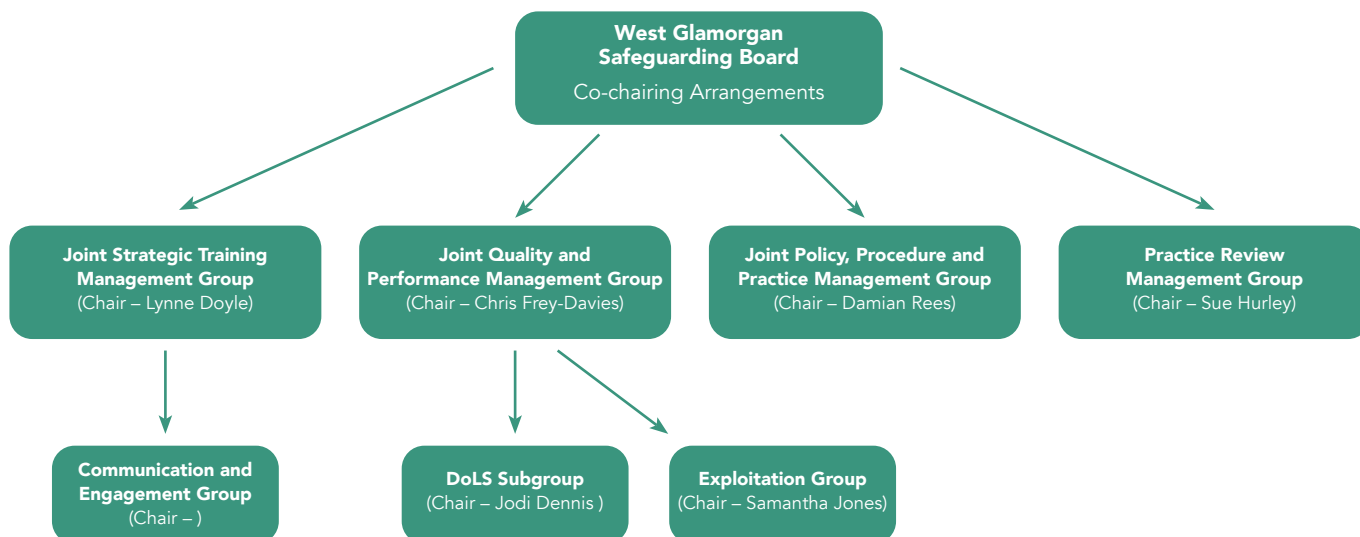
In the annual plan the Board then set out what they wanted to achieve, what the outcome indicators were and then allocated tasks to the respective subgroups. Looking to future the Board have decided to produce a Three year plan for 2022-25.

The annual report contains a section from each sub-group titled "How have we made a difference", which analyses delivery against the annual plan.





## Organisational Chart



### *The quality performance management group (QPMG)*

The Quality Performance Management Group (QPMG) reported that the key assurance they have sought is in respect of each agencies capacity and capability to fulfil its safeguarding functions. The key reporting is that while agencies are under acute pressures none have reported these pressures to be undermining the delivery of their safeguarding duties and responsibilities. The report highlights the increasing numbers of children and young people presenting with mental health and emotional concerns.

### *Policy procedure and practice management group (PPPMG)*

The PPPMG has a key role in delivering the Safeguarding Board's overall objectives, which are: ensuring that effective policies and working practices are in place to protect children and adults and that they are properly coordinated. Only when these are in place should Boards look to their wider remit of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and adults.

The PPPMG have continued to focus on reviewing their policies to ensure they are in line with the new procedures and have sought assurance from partner agencies that they have done the same.

The PPPMG's focus during this year has remained the same as previous years – to develop and review regional policy, procedures and guidance on how services would continue to operate during the height of the ongoing pandemic. The West Glamorgan Safeguarding Guidance during Covid 19 was created and circulated to all safeguarding board partners.

### *Practice review group*

The Board commissioned training for practice reviewers as there was a lack of trained reviewers and chairs. The training was aimed at extending skills and competence and to build confidence. The training was well received and has increased the pool of available reviewers and chairs.

All reviews are presented to the Board with a report, action plan and seven minute briefing. The seven minute briefing has proved an effective tool for cascading the learning from reviews.

During 2021-22 the Board received: – 2 child practice review referral – 1 progressed to a concise Child Practice Review and one Multi Agency Professional Forum (MAPF):

And three Adult Practice Review Referrals – one progressed to a MAPF, one didn't meet the criteria and one didn't have enough information and would be delayed until the next meeting, which is out of the scope of this year's report.

During this year the Board published two adult practice reviews.

### *Safeguarding Themes from Practice*

Learning events in relation to child and adult practice reviews has continued to take place and good practice disseminated.

During safeguarding week, the Board hosted an online event where three practice reviews were presented and the identified learning shared. There were 61 professionals in attendance via Microsoft Teams and positive feedback was received with request that these online learning events continue in the future.

## Information & Learning

Training and learning are coordinated through the joint strategic training and management group.

The board has used both virtual and face to face training methods.

Specialist training in Child Sexual Abuse was commissioned from the Lucy Faithful Foundation.

Training on sexual violence disclosures was delivered by local specialist services and was attended by regional multiagency workers and volunteers.

The rationale for training was explained including: -

- » To update on the Wales Safeguarding Procedures
- » To ensure that all partners follow rigorous and consistent safeguarding practice in response to Welsh Audit Office recommendations
- » To achieve consistent and quality safeguarding practice
- » To contribute to raising awareness
- » To respond to the 2020 recommendations of the Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse
- » To develop a robust response to exploitation across children and adult services
- » To support contextual safeguarding, extra familial harm and
  - » Modern Slavery Act 2015
  - » County Lines Violence
  - » Exploitation & drugs supply – national briefing report 2017

- » Promoting the welfare of children who are at risk of abuse through sexual exploitation All Wales Protocol 2013
- » Counter terrorism and security act 2015
- » The Prevent duty

The numbers of staff in the local authority who have completed various training modules was recorded.

## Safeguarding Board Resourcing

The report details the total costs of the board and details the amounts spent on staffing, training and development and supplies and services. The report also acknowledges the contribution in time from board members that is not easy to quantify or to place a value on.

The Board uses the national formula to apportion financial contributions from statutory partner agencies.

## Participation and Involvement

The board routinely invites a range of people and organisations to participate in its work. Including families subject to practice reviews and the junior safeguarding board.

The Board also has a large network of organisations and partnerships with whom they engage with nationally, regionally and locally.

The Annual report contains sections detailing the work and safeguarding metrics from some of the Board's contributing agencies.



The Junior safeguarding board is extremely active and ran a series of events through the year including Equali-Tea raising awareness of safeguarding concerns of the LGBTQIA+ community; production of a newsletter aimed at engaging with schools, members were also given the opportunity to attend a preparing to be a board members training, delivered by Neath Port Talbot Children's Rights Unit. The Stay Safe in Sport campaign message continues to be promoted.

## Annual Report

### West Glamorgan Regional Safeguarding Board Annual Report



## NISB Strategic Duty 3:

To make recommendations to the Welsh Ministers as to how those arrangements could be improved (S.132 (2)).

### NISB Specific responsibility 4:

*Where a **theme of concern** is identified...the National Board could recommend to Welsh Ministers that the matter be escalated to Welsh Government for exploration.*

Themes of concern were identified and escalated for appropriate measures to be put in place. These were raised through:

- » monthly meetings with WG officials,
- » result of evidence from research, reviews or engagement with expert reference groups including RSBs,
- » Written communication regarding themes of concern raised with NISB,
- » Formal dialogue with the Deputy Minister for Social Services twice a year.

Commission research into areas of concern or that require improvement:

- » Phase 2: Shaping the Future of Safeguarding in Wales,
- » Thematic Analysis of Adult Practice Reviews in Wales.

### Previous Recommendations to Ministers and Progress to Date

With the agreement of the Deputy Minister for Social Services any recommendations made previously by the National Board will continue to be included in our annual reports until they are completed, as agreed.

## Annual Report 2018-2019

### Recommendation 1

Welsh Government should continue to develop the data collection in relation to the abuse of older people and to ensure this data is analysed effectively to understand the prevalence of abuse of older people and their experiences.

### Welsh Government Update August 2022

The Adult Census Development Group have considered and agreed draft guidance for the new Adult Receiving Care and Support Census. This is now being piloted by Local Authorities. It is intended that this will be finalised by the end of October 2022. This census will provide detailed data about adults who are at risk of abuse. Areas for consideration include:

- » The reasons the adult has for care and support
- » If the adult is involved in any safeguarding procedures (and the category of safeguarding)
- » Plus the range of demographic information to segregate the population

### NISB Response

The National Board is awaiting the outcome of the pilot of the census.



We are particularly interested in how it will capture data about all adults at risk of abuse in the general population in addition to the much smaller cohort of those already receiving care and support. In addition we are interested in how the data will be analysed and whether an annual report will be produced, which includes more than raw data, to inform the national picture of the prevalence of abuse of older people in the general population and their experiences.

## Recommendation 2

Welsh Government should ensure that the work being undertaken in relation to the development of safeguarding standards and outcomes frameworks links with the work they asked the National Board to commission in relation to the development of a multi-agency safeguarding performance framework and does not lead to unnecessary duplication.

### *Welsh Government Update August 2022*

Officials within Health and Social Services are developing an Outcomes Framework for Health and Social Care. The draft Framework is due to be finalised in the coming months. Officials will be presenting the framework to stakeholder groups in the coming months, including ADSS. It will be embedded into NHS Planning Framework for 2023-2024

### *NISB Response*

NISB welcomes the development of the Outcomes Framework for Health and Social Care. Links will need to be made between the abuse and neglect element of the Framework and the national multi-agency safeguarding performance framework development currently being facilitated by NISB.

## Annual Report 2019-2020

### Recommendation 3

Welsh Government should set a timetable for the publication of the Statutory Guidance for Children Electively Home Educated in Wales as a matter of urgency.

### *Welsh Government Update August 2022*

Response awaited from Education Directorate Representatives.

Previous update was as follows;

Plans for the development of new statutory guidance and database regulations are being reviewed. Education colleagues hope to be in a position to make the necessary legislation during 2022, with the intention that the regulations will formally come into force during 2023. Welsh Government are in the process of finalising statutory guidance re Elective Home Education. It is anticipated that this will be available in April 2023.

### *NISB Response*

NISB is disappointed at the lack of progress on this important issue and would welcome a robust timetable of work. This has already slipped from the end of 2022 as confirmed by the Deputy Minister in our June 2022 meeting with her, as it is now proposed to be published in April 2023.

### Recommendation 4

Welsh Government should honour the commitment made to amend the regulatory framework around independent schools and the Education Workforce Council to include a requirement that all teaching staff and all school leaders in independent settings register with the Education Workforce Council (EWC).

### *Welsh Government Update August 2022*

The safeguarding of all learners is a high priority for the Welsh Government. Work to strengthen safeguarding measures in independent schools and review the Independent Schools Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003 is moving ahead. Separately, work is progressing at pace to amend legislation to require teaching staff in independent schools to register with the Education Workforce Council.

#### *NISB Response*

NISB continues to be disappointed in these delays that potentially expose learners in the private sector to a greater risk than others receiving statutory education. A timetable of work on this issue would be welcomed.

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## **Annual Report 2020-2021**

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### **Recommendation 5**

Welsh Government should ensure that a review is undertaken to understand the impact and legacy on safeguarding in Wales of the Covid 19 pandemic.

### *Welsh Government Update August 2022*

A team has been assembled to lead on the Welsh Government's response to the Covid-19 Public Inquiry and it is important that we link to this work in all aspects of considerations of reviews in light of the pandemic. The Inquiry process is underway and steps are being taken to ensure that all policy areas are involved in the process, including to explore the actions taken on the lead up to the lockdown period being instigated are included.

It is unlikely that recommendations arising from the inquiry will be identified for at least another year. Work is ongoing.

#### *NISB Response*

NISB welcomed this update and has requested the terms of reference for the National Review as these become available. Further considerations of the impact of the pandemic on safeguarding will be required in due course.

### **New Recommendations to Ministers 2021-2022**

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## **Shaping the Future of Safeguarding in Wales project (appendix 1)**

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### **Recommendation 6**

By the end of 2022 there will be recommendations from the completed work. The NISB recommends working collaboratively with the Deputy Minister and key stakeholders to take these forward in the coming year.

### **Recommendation 7**

In light of the national concerns around workforce deficits, the NISB recommends support for inclusion of workforce data in the prototype national multi-agency performance framework to ensure consistent monitoring and consideration of potential solutions to mitigate the impact on safeguarding practices.



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