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Bwrdd Diogelu Annibynnol
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National Independent
Safeguarding Board Wales

Llunio Dyfodol Diogelu • Shaping the Future of Safeguarding

Recommendation iFramework:

Single Unified Safeguarding Reviews (SUSR)
Wales-aligned Guidance for Developing
Stronger Safeguarding Recommendations

harmful, risky,
safeguard n.
guards again

Why this guidance matters

Safeguarding reports, reviews, inspections, and inquiries carry significant weight in driving change. Their recommendations shape priorities, guide resource allocation and create systems and processes with the aim to prevent the recurrence of serious incidents, while improving professional safeguarding practice. Yet, the formulation of these recommendations is rarely taught, researched, or subject to quality assurance. Too often, well-intentioned ‘learning points’ simply reiterate known issues without specifying what action is required, by whom, within what timeframe, with details regarding how progress will be monitored or evidenced often absent.

Recommendations are the bridge between understanding learning and directing change. When tasked with writing them, we carry a responsibility to ensure that insights gained are effectively translated into meaningful action. This means crafting recommendations that are clear, actionable, and accountable, maximising the potential for knowledge to inform practice and drive improvement.

“Whenever any life is lost or is significantly impacted by abuse, as public servants, we need to make sure that no opportunity to protect that person from harm was missed so that we can better protect others in the future.”

Dawn Bowden, Minister for Social Care
(Foreword to Single Unified Safeguarding Review (SUSR) Statutory Guidance, Oct 2024¹).

The 7 Core Principles:

Through detailed analysis of recommendations in Adult Safeguarding Practice Reviews (APRs) in Wales, we identified seven core principles that support the development of clear, feasible, and accountable recommendations which guide the implementation of learning into changes in practice, policy, and systems. While not every principle will apply to each recommendation, together they offer a strong foundation for turning insight and learning into action.

Who is this Guide for:

This guidance is relevant to anyone involved in writing, quality-assuring or implementing safeguarding recommendations across Wales. It is especially relevant to SUSR Reviewers, Panel Chairs, Case Review Groups and Regional Safeguarding Boards, as well as Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs), the SUSR Co-ordination Hub, and contributors to the Wales Safeguarding Repository (WSR).

How to use this guide:

1. Apply the **seven principles** as a foundation for developing recommendations.
2. Understand common pitfalls and **reoccurring issues** in recommendation formulation and use the **good practice examples** as a mechanism to improve your phrasing.
3. Complete the final **checklist** before sign-off. Don't forget to explore the ‘**Quick AI Self-Check Tips**’ for an extra layer of support!

SUSR alignment: Use the SUSR templates² (Report, Action Plan, Timetable) and the Engagement flow chart for Chairs/Reviewers alongside this guide; final reports/action plans are uploaded to the WSR.

How the iFramework was created

Commissioned by the National Independent Safeguarding Board (NISB) Wales, we conducted an in-depth analysis of 25 Adult Practice Reviews across Wales (2016–2022)³. From this analysis, we identified recurring limitations and examples of good practice, which we distilled into seven practical principles: collectively forming the **Recommendation iFramework**.

This Recommendation iFramework Wales edition complements implementation of the Single Unified Safeguarding Review (SUSR) model introduced across Wales in 2024.

¹ <https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2024-12/single-unified-safeguarding-review-susr-statutory-guidance.pdf>

² <https://www.gov.wales/single-unified-safeguarding-review-toolkit>

³ <https://safeguardingboard.wales/wp-content/uploads/sites/8/2025/05/APR-Wales-Main-Report-March-2025.pdf>

Our analysis identified several **recurring issues** in the formulation of safeguarding recommendations, particularly the feasibility element of **‘how’**, including:



Lack of Clarity (in 29.37%):

Frequent lack of implementation detail, including the ‘how’. ‘How’ will a change be implemented, supported and resourced? This also included undefined thresholds for triggering actions/decisions (e.g., “in certain circumstances” without further information as to what circumstances, “when multiple referrals...” without clarifying the conditions of “multiple referrals”).



Language (in 27.91%):

Heavy use of buzzwords (e.g. “holistic”, “person-centred”, “professional curiosity”) without the “how” this will change practice; non-assertive language (“consider”, “should”); non-actionable verbs (“raise awareness”, “acknowledge”); statement-style wording; and too many actions packed into one single recommendation.



Follow-up & accountability measures (in 23.56%):

Monitoring and evaluation steps often missing, such as the ‘how’ we will understand progress and impact, owners/governance is unclear, reducing traceability from recommendation to impact.



Feasibility (in 19.78%):

Recommendations often skipped root-cause analysis, assumed resources and capacity funding/workforce/IT/specialised services would materialise, without acknowledgement of ‘how’ feasible such action is, risking non-implementation and therefore failure in achieving outcomes from recommendations.





Learning from good-practice recommendations

This section briefly highlights some examples of strong recommendations identified in our deep-dive analysis (see Footnote 1 for report that includes section on good practice). These are the ones that stood out for being **clear, directive, and actionable**. Use them as mini models to guide your own drafting, whether you're writing from scratch or refining existing recommendations.

Clarity & specificity: what/when/who

- **What:** “Ensure adult at risk report-makers receive acknowledgment of receipt of a report within 7 working days.” (APR 16).
- **When (trigger):** “When a prescription is not collected ...” (APR 7); “when concerns are raised about low weight or poor nutritional intake ...” (APR 23).
- **Who (named owner):** “Each GP surgery to identify a Safeguarding Lead.” (APR 14).
- **How: Concrete tools/protocols:** Reference specific tools such as MUST (Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool) for nutrition risk and the North Wales Self-Neglect Protocol, to enable immediate enactment (APRs 23, 4/24).

Assertive language: intent that drives action

- Use obligatory language such as must / will. Example: “This must be implemented immediately.” (APR 15).

Implications: linking action to outcomes

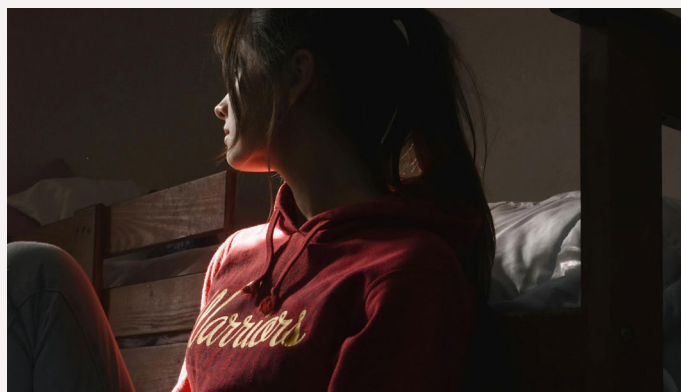
- Collating information coherently: “ensuring all documentation accompanies individuals during transitions will reduce distress to individuals and their families.” (APR 20).
- Joint training framed by benefit: “present further opportunities to provide advice and support” to victims of domestic abuse (APR 8).

Transparency & realism: acknowledging constraints

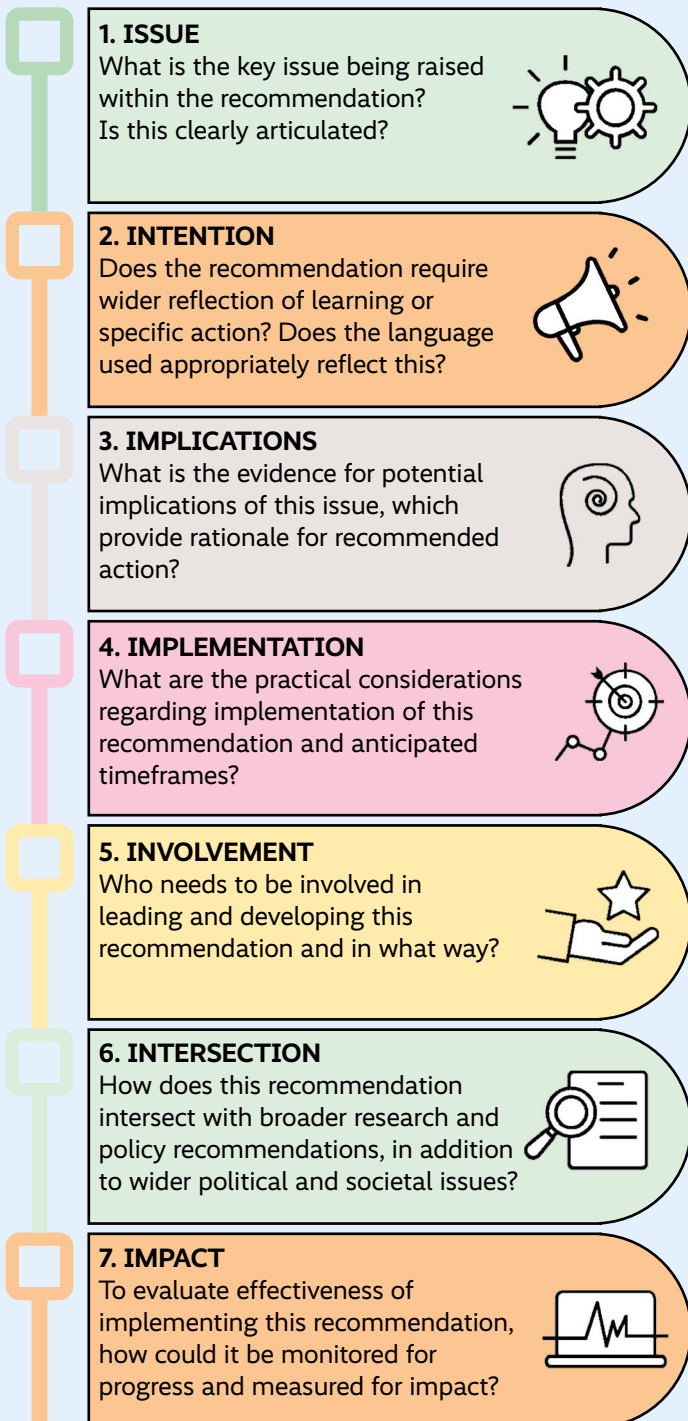
- Recognise practice reality such as time requirements to improve feasibility: “building trust over time” with resistant individuals (APR 6); “local knowledge of the area and services could be limited” (APR 5).

Practical workarounds: when system fixes are long-term

- Where no shared health database exists, a weekly Social Services–District Nursing huddle to review shared cases will enable improved information flow (APR 18).



Recommendation iFramework



Additional Considerations:

- 1. Issue:** What exact problem or gap are we addressing? Name the trigger/context.
Ask: What happens/when/where?
- 2. Intention:** Are we calling for *immediate action* or *structured reflection first*?
Ask: Is this a concrete action now, or a first step towards one?
- 3. Implications:** Why does this matter? What outcome will improve if we act?
Ask: If we do this, what will change for people and practice?
- 4. Implementation:** Is this action doable here? Note resources, dependencies, and realistic timeframes.
Ask: What's needed to make this stick?
- 5. Involvement:** Who must do what, and who coordinates? Keep one main owner.
Ask: Who is responsible and accountable, who has been consulted/informed?
- 6. Intersection:** How does this align with interconnected research and practice domains (e.g. criminal justice, mental health, child development) and existing policy, protocols, recent national inspection findings and SUSR framework?
Ask: What does this link into or avoid duplicating?
- 7. Impact:** How will we know it worked? Include a simple measure or evidence source.
Ask: What will we count or look for and by when?

Supplementary Checklist: Strengthening Your Recommendations

Ensure each recommendation is clear, actionable, and accountable:

- ☐ **Named Owner** – One clearly accountable role or body (not a group or team).
- ☐ **Specific Action** – A single, observable verb (e.g., *introduce, mandate, publish, run*).
- ☐ **Purpose/Outcome** – A plain statement of the intended difference (so that...).
- ☐ **Trigger/Threshold** – Defines when the action should be taken (*if X, then Y*) – where relevant.
- ☐ **Measure & Target*** – The simplest way to track progress (e.g., % on-time, dip-sample).
- ☐ **Timeframe*** – A clear date or delivery window aligned to SUSR guidance.
- ☐ **Governance & Assurance*** – Specifies who reports, how, and when.

*These points may be addressed specifically by follow-up action plans such as within SUSR process⁴

Ensure recommendations are grounded in practical delivery and shared accountability:

- ☐ **Clear Delivery Audience** – The specific group/role/sector expected to take action is named.
- ☐ **Consultation Evidenced** – Those expected to deliver have been engaged, or a brief engagement plan is in place.
- ☐ **RACI Alignment** – Roles are clearly defined using the RACI model (*Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, Informed*) with no duplication or ambiguity.

Ensure each recommendation is realistic, aligned, and deliverable:

- ☐ **Resources & Dependencies Identified** – Key enablers (e.g., staffing, IT, legal, funding) are named, and constraints are acknowledged.
- ☐ **Policy & System Fit** – Aligns with existing policies, protocols, and data systems; avoids duplication or conflict.
- ☐ **Staged Delivery** (for national/system-level actions) – Includes a clear sequence (e.g., consultation → issue → commencement) with indicative dates.

Ensure recommendations are understandable, inclusive, and tailored to those who must act and those affected:

- ☐ **Plain, Concise Language** – Wording clear and tailored to audience responsible for delivery.
- ☐ **Audience-Appropriate Products** – Formats are suitable for the intended audience (e.g., bilingual, public-facing, or sector-specific).
- ☐ **Equity Impacts Considered** – Potential impacts on different groups are acknowledged, with attention to fairness and inclusion.

Ensure each recommendation is tracked, monitored, and sustained beyond initial delivery:

- ☐ **Registered** – Logged in the appropriate system with a unique ID, named owner, and due dates.
- ☐ **Monitoring & Assurance Schedule** – Includes checkpoints at 30, 90, 180 days, and 12 months, with named sources of evidence.
- ☐ **Closure & Sustain Criteria Defined** – Specifies what evidence confirms completion and what demonstrates the recommendation is embedded in practice.

Use these additional checks when a recommendation involves national or system-level action.

- ☐ **Named Addressee** – Clearly identifies the responsible body (e.g., Welsh Government, Social Care Wales, HM Inspectorates).
- ☐ **Specified Instrument** – States the mechanism for change (e.g., statutory guidance, standards, codes, funding decisions, regulations).
- ☐ **Milestones & Support** – Includes key dates (consultation → issue → commencement) and outlines support (e.g., templates, training, funding).
- ☐ **Local Interim Step** – Identifies a paired local action to reduce risk or delay while national work progresses.

⁴ [action-plan-template-and-guidance-single-unified-safeguarding-review.docx](#)

Top Tip! Quick AI self-Check

If your organisation has access to a secure, enterprise AI environment, you can run a rapid, structured check of draft recommendations against the 7 Principles and the Supplementary Checklist. This helps identify vagueness and gaps, such as missing owners, measures, or timeframes, before finalising your report.

How to use (3 steps)

1. Prepare Safely

Anonymise or pseudonymise case details and include only what's necessary. Use internal or approved AI platforms in line with your DPIA and information governance policies. Use SUSR templates where appropriate and guide the AI to consider specific requirements from statutory guidance, templates and required reporting.

2. Run the Check

Paste the 7 Principles and Supplementary Checklist alongside your draft recommendations. Ask the AI for concise ratings and suggested improvements.

Example prompt:

"Please review these safeguarding recommendations against the following checklist. Highlight any gaps or vague phrasing and suggest clearer alternatives."

3. Capture & Update

Record any flagged gaps or edits in your Recommendation Register and update the draft accordingly.

Example Prompt for AI Self-Check

(Copy and paste into your secure enterprise AI platform)

Act as a safeguarding recommendations reviewer.

Audit the following recommendations against the "Recommendation iFramework 7 Principles" (Issue, Intention, Implications, Implementation, Involvement, Intersection, Impact) and the Supplementary Checklist.

For each recommendation, provide:

- A one-sentence summary
- A traffic-light rating per Principle with ≤15-word fix for any amber/red
- A missing-items list (owner, action verb, outcome, trigger, measure + target, timeframe, governance)

(d) One tightened rewrite in a single sentence

(e) Note any national-level levers (instrument + staged milestones) and a paired local interim step

Keep responses concise and in a table.

Good Practice Notes When Using AI

• Accessibility & Audience

Use plain, concise language tailored to the people who must act. Request bilingual headings where needed and arrange a human language check if required.

• Human Oversight

AI supports the author, it does not replace panel QA, governance processes, or professional judgement.

• Consultation

If the AI flags a delivery role, confirm that those teams have been consulted or add a short plan to do so.

Final Tip

Save this prompt as a reusable template so authors can run consistent checks across safeguarding reports.

Bringing it together: from learning to action

Strong recommendations are the bridge between understanding learning and directing meaningful change. Whether it's a **local operational action** or a **national/system-level lever**, each recommendation should be:

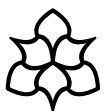
- ☒ **Refined** – Developed clearly and coherently, using an evidence-based framework
- ☒ **Registered** – Logged and acknowledged within the relevant system.
- ☒ **Reviewed** – Monitored regularly for progress and continued relevance, sharing with the SUSR Co-ordination Hub, and key governance forums: Regional Safeguarding Boards, VAWDASV and with updates returned to the WSR.
- ☒ **Ratified** – Supported by data, feedback, or documentation showing implementation.
- ☒ **Resolved** – Only when the intended impact or improvement is demonstrably achieved.

Use this supplementary checklist alongside the 7 principles to ensure your recommendations are not only well-formulated but also effectively actioned and accountable.

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