

Croydon Council

For General Release

REPORT TO:	ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES REVIEW PANEL 2 OCTOBER 2013
AGENDA ITEM NO:	9
SUBJECT:	Croydon Adult Safeguarding Annual Report 2012/13
LEAD OFFICER:	Hannah Miller, Executive Director of Adult Services, Health and Housing
CABINET MEMBER:	Councillor Margaret Mead, Cabinet Member for Adult Services and Health
WARDS:	All
CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT: The Croydon Adult safeguarding annual report addresses how Croydon adult social services are doing with regard to protecting Croydon residents who are the most at risk in our community. This work meets a number of Croydon's corporate priorities that includes turning around the life chances of some of the most vulnerable people in the borough, creating a safer and stronger community, improving health and well being, tackling inequality, ensuring respect for people as they age and reducing the impact of long term conditions and disability.	
FINANCIAL IMPACT None as a result of this report	
FORWARD PLAN KEY DECISION REFERENCE NO.: not a key decision	

1. RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 The adult social services review panel is requested to be aware of the contents of this report, the work that is happening regarding safeguarding adults at risk and the on-going planning to strengthen this area of joint work by the council and its statutory and voluntary partner agencies.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This annual report of the Croydon Safeguarding Adults' Board covers the period from April 2012 to the end of March 2013. The report reflects a great deal of commitment and hard work across agencies in Croydon in support of the safeguarding adults' agenda. The growing membership of the Croydon Safeguarding Adults Board is committed to ensuring robust partnership responses to safeguarding adults at risk, strengthening safeguarding in all areas of the community. This commitment is reflected in the reports submitted by partner agencies for inclusion within this report. The Board promotes constructive challenge, innovation and reflective and evidenced based practice, drawing on the increasing body of knowledge and experience emerging in the field of safeguarding adults. The period 2012/13 has seen a number of milestones and developments in safeguarding adults nationally including the publication of the final report of the Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust Public Inquiry chaired by Robert Francis QC; a statement of Government policy on adult safeguarding and new advice and guidance to Directors of Adult Social Services, issued by ADASS. The priorities of the CSAB reflect this national learning.

3. DETAIL

Despite an unexpected drop in the numbers of safeguarding referrals in 2011/12, this year has again seen a rise in referrals alongside most other neighbouring authorities. Research indicates that much abuse in the community remains unreported and the Croydon data suggests that safeguarding incidents for the black and ethnic minority groups are still going largely unrecognised. This suggests that referral rates have not yet peaked and there is still an unknown potential for further increases. Croydon's population continues to rise as does the overall level of deprivation. Older people aged 65 years and over make up 13.8% of the Croydon population and residents aged 85 years and over make up 1.9%. These proportions are projected to increase to 16.27% and 2.91% respectively by 2030. The substantial numbers of adults living in Croydon who have particular vulnerabilities associated with having a disability is also outlined in the report.

This 2012/13 annual report for the first time includes comparative safeguarding data with other neighbouring and similar local authorities. The comparative data relates to 2011/12 information which is the latest available and reflects the decrease in safeguarding referrals in Croydon last year, a trend which has been reversed with this year's figures.

The data tells us that:

- The most common group subject to abuse allegations are older / elderly white women with physical disabilities / frailty.
- The most common locations of abuse are the clients' own homes and care homes.
- The most common category of person alleged to have caused harm are family members and care staff (the former may also be carers).
- The most common types of abuse are physical, financial and neglect.

- Small majority of allegations are not substantiated compared with those that are either substantiated or are inconclusive- although this does not necessarily indicate that the allegations themselves are false – simply that it is not always easy to know at first sight whether someone who may have suffered harm or sustained an injury has been abused.

Robust systems for the exchange of information within the borough are essential in developing good partnership working. The Croydon Adult Safeguarding board and its subgroups which are multiagency and which include key statutory agencies – social services, health and the police and many voluntary and community groups - are at the heart of promoting effective information sharing and the development of good practice. The dignity in care movement is a strong contributory force to the aim of preventing abuse. One of the ten dignity challenges is to have a zero tolerance of all forms of abuse. In 2012/13 and on-going joint work with providers of care and commissioners has been underpinned by the dignity agenda to improve the experience of people using services. The development day in June was a successful event which enabled board members from both statutory, voluntary and provider agencies to work together to agree the priorities for the forthcoming two years in terms of the protection and empowerment of adults who are at risk of harm.

This year has seen the development of a range of practice initiatives – focusing on supporting people who are at risk of neglecting themselves, action planning resulting from the Winterbourne abuse scandal to ensure Croydon’s learning disabled residents are protected from such harm, reviewing and strengthening arrangements for advocacy, learning for serious case reviews and critically evaluating safeguarding practice by means of an external file audit.

This report also contains individual contributions from the subgroups and partner agencies, focusing on key aims and activity, learning and development, links with national initiatives and key preventative measures.

4. CONSULTATION

4.1 None for the purpose of this report

5. FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 There are no specific financial considerations attached to this report.

(Approved by: Paul Heynes, Head of Finance – DASHH, Interim Chief Executives Department on behalf of the Director of Finance)

6. COMMENTS OF THE COUNCIL SOLICITOR AND MONITORING OFFICER

6.1 The Solicitor to the Council comments that there are no legal issues arising from the report

(Approved by: J Harris Baker, head of social care and education law and deputy monitoring officer on behalf of the Council Solicitor & Director of Democratic & Legal Services)

7. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 7.1 There are no human resources issues that arise as a consequence of the recommendations in this report

(Approved by: *Michael Pichamuthu* on behalf of the Director of Workforce & Community Relations)

8. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 8.1 This annual report concerns the protection and well-being of the most vulnerable adults in the community by nature of age, disability and including consideration of differing cultural equalities. The report concerns people who are protected under the equalities act due to a number of protected characteristics including learning disability, mental illness and who are vulnerable adults. The report helps to identify work that has been achieved as well as the on-going work to improve the empowerment and protection of these groups.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 9.1 None as a result of this report

10. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

- 10.1 The report considers Croydon adult services responses and that of partner agencies to people who are the victims of harm which in some cases amounts to criminal acts and how we can work together to reduce and prevent harm.

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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: *Croydon safeguarding Adults annual report 2012/13*