



North Somerset

Section 11 Audit 2021-2022

Avon & Somerset Region

## What are Section 11 Audits?

**Section 11** places a duty on:

- local authorities and district councils that provide children's and other types of services, including children's and adult social care services, public health, housing, sport, culture and leisure services, licensing authorities and youth services
- NHS organisations and agencies and the independent sector, including NHS England and clinical commissioning groups, NHS Trusts, NHS Foundation Trusts and General Practitioners
- the police, including police and crime commissioners and the chief officer of each police force in England and the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime in London the British Transport Police
- the National Probation Service and Community Rehabilitation Companies Governors/Directors of Prisons and Young Offender Institutions (YOIs)
- Directors of Secure Training Centres (STCs)
- Principals of Secure Colleges
- Youth Offending Teams/Services (YOTs)

### Section 11 of the Children Act 2004

Places duties on a range of organisations, agencies and individuals to ensure their functions, and any services that they contract out to others, are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

These organisations and agencies should have in place arrangements that reflect the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including:

- a clear line of accountability for the commissioning and/or provision of services designed to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- a senior board level lead with the required knowledge, skills and expertise or sufficiently qualified and experienced to take leadership responsibility for the organisation's/agency's safeguarding arrangements
- a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, both in individual decisions and the development of services
- clear whistleblowing procedures, which reflect the principles in Sir Robert Francis' Freedom to Speak Up Review and are suitably referenced in staff training and codes of conduct, and a culture that enables issues about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children to be addressed
- clear escalation policies for staff to follow when their child safeguarding concerns are not being addressed within their organisation or by other agencies
- arrangements which set out clearly the processes for sharing information, with other practitioners and with safeguarding partners
- a designated practitioner (or, for health commissioning and health provider organisations/ agencies, designated and named practitioners) for child safeguarding. Their role is to support other practitioners in their organisations and agencies to recognise the needs of children, including protection

from possible abuse or neglect. Designated practitioner roles should always be explicitly defined in job descriptions. Practitioners should be given sufficient time, funding, supervision and support to fulfil their child welfare and safeguarding responsibilities effectively

- safe recruitment practices and ongoing safe working practices for individuals whom the organisation or agency permit to work regularly with children, including policies on when to obtain a criminal record check
- appropriate supervision and support for staff, including undertaking safeguarding training
- creating a culture of safety, equality and protection within the services they provide

In addition:

- ✓ employers are responsible for ensuring that their staff are competent to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and creating an environment where staff feel able to raise concerns and feel supported in their safeguarding role
- ✓ staff should be given a mandatory induction, which includes familiarisation with child protection responsibilities and the procedures to be followed if anyone has any concerns about a child's safety or welfare
- ✓ all practitioners should have regular reviews of their own practice to ensure they have knowledge, skills and expertise that improve over time

## Section 11 Audit Plan for 2021-22

The five children's Partnerships across the Avon & Somerset Region will work together to audit organisations working with children and families. This year the audits will take place in a series of peer review workshops and the findings and learning will be shared across the children's partnerships in Bristol, Somerset, North Somerset, Bath & North East Somerset and South Gloucestershire.

### North Somerset peer review workshops

It was agreed each local authority would undertake three peer reviews with separate agencies, ensuring agencies were not asked by more than one local authority. North Somerset were undertaking reviews with Sirona Care & Health, Safe Lives, YMCA. However Safe Lives no longer operate within North Somerset, HomeLink offer a similar service however Bristol were nominated to review this organisation. Therefore North Somerset undertook 2 reviews.

## YMCA

The following section of the report is based on the YMCA Dulverton Group conversation which took place on the 1st February 2022 we would like to thank them for their valuable contribution.

### Safeguarding Structures

<b>Theme: Safeguarding Structures</b>
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Q1 How do you ensure that staff know what to do if they have a concern for a child or an adult?
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YMCA Dulverton Group reported that new staff are immediately made aware of the organisations commitment to safeguarding as it is in all job specifications.

All new staff go through an initial induction process for their role, this includes setting up, activating and accessing EduCare® the UK's leading provider of essential duty of care and safeguarding training. New staff are required to complete certain courses within their first few weeks. A one-to-one meeting with the safeguarding officer is also arranged

Annual refresher training for health and safety, safeguarding and professional boundaries is mandatory. The safeguarding aspect of the training covers any updates to their safeguarding policy and procedures, including reporting.

<b>Theme: Safeguarding Structures</b>
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Q2. How is information shared about your safeguarding lead, key policies including escalation and whistleblowing and multi-agency guidance, policy, and procedures? How do you check that this information is known and understood?
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The safeguarding officer is named in their Safeguarding Policy, All staff who log into My Concern® immediately see a list of managers within their area of work who have safeguarding responsibilities and also the safeguarding officer.

All YMCA Dulverton Groups policies and procedures are stored online within the organisations SharePoint. These documents are accessible to all staff at any time. As part of the new staff induction process all inductees are directed to read the policies and procedures. Their human resources online portal called People HR notifies all staff of any new policies, or policy updates and electronic versions are available for staff to read, they are asked to sign off that they have read and understood the policy and their electronic signature is required to confirm this. The YMCA stated that they have a close knit team and work hard to create the right environment where whistleblowing feels safe.

### **Theme: Safeguarding Structures**

#### **Q3. How do ensure staff are recruited safely to work within your organisation?**

YMCA Dulverton Group's state their commitment to safeguarding is clearly advertised through every aspect of recruitment processes including job specifications, online advertising, and application packs.

Staff involved in recruitment have relevant training available through the EduCare® training portal relating to safer recruitment.

All staff offered employment with YMCA Dulverton Group are done so upon receipt of a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) enhanced check and the references from previous employer(s). This is all set out within their recruitment policy and recruitment of ex-offenders' policy.

Covid has impacted on suitable job applicants and they have noticed an increase in applications but from people not really suited to the role, not necessarily because they pose a risk, but because their skill set isn't what is needed, or the applicants motivation is to get a job as opposed to a desire to work with young people.

We explored the relationship with the LADO for any issues with existing staff and identified the need to further develop this relationship.

## Learning & Development

**Theme:** Learning and Development

Q4 Tell us about how you incorporate safeguarding into induction?

On employment with YMCA Dulverton Group new staff go through an initial induction process as previously mentioned. New staff are required to complete certain courses within their first few weeks, this includes a one-to-one meeting with the safeguarding officer.

**Theme:** Learning and Development

Q5 Tell us about the single agency or in-house training available to your organisation. How is it quality assured?

YMCA Dulverton Group subscribes to EduCare® to provide all of its in-house duty of care training, which covers safeguarding, compliance, health and safety, and wellbeing. All courses are online giving staff a single point of access. All courses are high-quality, interactive and engaging, providing simple, relevant and memorable content to empower staff with the confidence to act. They're written in partnership with leading experts to ensure the very best, and most up-to-date, advice and information is included. EduCare® is the UK's leading provider of essential duty of care and safeguarding training working with 20,000 schools and colleges, 500 local authorities and councils and 800 charities. New courses are frequently added to EduCare® online learning service existing courses are continually updated in line with statutory guidance, so staff can access the most up-to-date information all year round. Staff can return to their courses to refresh their knowledge whenever they need to and print PDFs of the course transcripts to keep to hand. Staff can be set specific courses to complete, monitor their learning via a reporting suite and provide evidence to inspectors.

**Theme: Learning and development**

Q6 How well do staff engage with the multi-agency training available?  
How do you decide who will attend, and how do you monitor this?

YMCA report that staff engage well with multi-agency training when it is available. As an organisation staff training and development is a focus and managers have access to a training budget. Through relationships with partners a number of staff have been able to attend other courses over the past twelve months.

- Inter-Agency Signs of Safety (North Somerset CPD)
- Working with Trauma (North Somerset & A&S Police)
- Trauma Informed Way (North Somerset & A&S Police)
- ASSIST Suicide Awareness and Prevention (MIND)
- Naloxone Saves Lives (Turning Point)

YMCA would wish for all staff team to attend particular external and multi-agency training courses, however this can take time as some courses are not held regularly or can be oversubscribed making it difficult to obtain places.

YMCA report that their commissioner is opening up more training courses as the service develops, however this approach has floors. A recent event on knife crime was not offered to the YMCA, on oversight as opposed to intentional, therefore this pathway needs developing.

**Theme: Learning and Development**

Q7 Tell us about the supervision available to staff working in your organisation

One-to-Ones, Supervisions and Annual Work Reviews are all key elements in ensuring the effective delivery of the services and are also an important quality assurance measure.

The dates for One-to-Ones, Supervisions and Annual Work Reviews are booked in advance and arranged for a mutually convenient place and time. The

frequency of One-to-Ones, Supervisions and Annual Work Reviews are

- Every four weeks for a One-to-One catch up session of between 15-20 minutes.
- Four times a year (once every quarter) for a Supervision session of between 30 minutes to one hour.
- Once a year for an Annual Work Review for a session of between one and two hours.

**Theme: Learning and Development**

Q8 How is learning from training and events embedded into practice and shared with colleagues?

- When staff attend training courses any learning is shared through site, wider team and departmental management meetings. Any new procedures, knowledge or skills learnt that would improve our support offer is cascaded to staff and implemented.
- Good practice and learning from particular situations or service users within the service are written as case studies and shared with our teams, managers, local partners and commissioning bodies.
- Area to area sharing was commonplace pre-pandemic, but as with other organisations and partners bringing people together has been a challenge.

**Theme: Learning and Development**

Q9 How do you share local and national learning from Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, internal and multi-agency audits? Tell us about how you ensure learning is impacting practice

YMCA state that any learning from local or national reviews and audits that have relevance to the service is implemented through additional training for our staff and any required changes to our own policies and procedures. Our staff have access to all national guidance and case reviews through MyConcern® and any current national safeguarding news is shown on the MyConcern® homepage in its safeguarding news section.

However, as we have already discovered through the offer of the highly relevant training on knife crime not being offered to the YMCA, we must consider it a possibility that learning from local reviews hasn't reached this audience.



YMCA were recently audited by the North Somerset commissioning team and are currently waiting for the outcomes.

## Impact of Covid-19

### Theme: Impact of Covid-19

Q10 How are you managing the emotional impact of the pandemic on staff and ensuring wellbeing. What have been the biggest challenges for your organisation?

At the beginning daily meetings with senior leaders were held on how best to respond. There were concerns about PPE, leaving staff feeling very vulnerable, but this is a lot easier now as it's more readily available.

The mental health of staff and also residents was concerning. The YMCA reported they changed their counselling response availability to staff, originally this was a dedicated phone service which wasn't meeting needs and not necessarily the most consistent, this was reviewed and improved.

YMCA senior leaders felt fortunate that they have a 'very bold board and the CEO is very hands on'. A real Team effort where they describe having all looked out for each other.

### Theme: Impact of Covid 19

Q 11 Tell us about any changes you have made to practice because of the pandemic that will continue permanently

The telephone counselling service has been replaced with front facing counselling being available to all staff. This has proven to be a real asset and appears to have more of a positive impact than the previous offer.

Relationship with Health agencies, such as National Health Security Agency and local Public Health, has become more solid and this sees some real

benefits for residents' outcomes and also exposes the YMCA to a lot more information directly – In turn this has a positive impact on staff hearing things firsthand.

Other reflections focused upon the need to be more mindful of health and the implications and responses, encouraging staff to take more time to recharge and being more mindful of burn out.

## Listening to Children

### Theme Listening to Children

Q12 Can you give an example where your organisation has effectively engaged with children and young people which has directly improved services and outcomes

The activity offer in North Somerset only saw a small number of participants. Through listening to the young people, it became apparent that their attendance depended very much on the different activities that were scheduled to take place on that day. It was agreed that moving forward the activity would be decided on the day with the young people, this saw an immediate increase in participation.

Young people engaged and enjoyed the activities more, which has benefited their health and wellbeing.

Young people in one property in North Somerset had voiced on a number of occasions that they did not enjoy living there due to the negativity and pressure from neighbours and the local community. This was a large factor in YMCA Dulverton Group deciding to seek a more appropriate property that would be better for their young people and a more suitable property was found.

### Theme Listening to Children

Q13 How do you ensure that individual children are heard by practitioners as part of their everyday practice

Support for each individual is provided through formal, planned, structured keywork sessions as well as informal, unplanned, unstructured conversations. All projects have space for one-to-one confidential meetings; however, in order to maximise the opportunities for informal interactions that make every contact count, staff ensure they are visible in communal areas and accessible wherever possible. Staff establish psychologically-informed environments in

which young people feel safe and are able to learn, grow and change, ensuring that they are also trauma-informed. In projects staffed 24 hours a day, there is no time when a young person cannot access support.

Support plans known as 'My Plan' are co-produced as young people feel safest when staff share control and decision-making. They include a range of activities and tasks, identified with the young person, which enable them to progress their goals.

Another additional layer of support introduced is the 'I Am Safe' scheme. It is simply an email address that can be used to report any concerns surrounding their safety. Staff should always be the first port of contact, however following best practice guidelines around listening to the needs of young people, the YMCA concluded to layer the support in place, so that young people have options as to how they report their thoughts.

A focus on increasing participation and voice, ensuring their thoughts, views and opinions are carried through into the offer of 'More Than a Room'. through the 'I Feel Listened To' email address helping young people to shape services and most importantly feel listened too.

## Information Sharing

### Theme: Information Sharing

Q14 Section 11 auditing tells us that organisations have protocols for information sharing in place. Can you give us an example from your organisation where information was shared effectively with partner organisation (s) and made a difference to the outcome for a child

The organisation provided an example of sharing sensitive information in relation to a young person where offending was an issue as well as his vulnerability to being exploited. A multi-agency meeting was called as things deteriorated and information sharing amongst this group was undertaken, day to day life for this young person has improved and slowly his trust in professionals is improving.

### Theme Information Sharing

Q15 What are the barriers you face to effective information sharing?

The only information sharing protocols are with Children's Social Care when under 18's live within the YMCA, mainly relying on their consent to share with those agencies, organisations and health services that they are involved with once they reach the age of 18. This is only a barrier if a resident then chooses to withdraw their consent, this typically occurs when young people experience mental health challenges.

YMCA staff at times feel frustrated when Health services will not let staff speak on a resident's behalf even when consent to share from that resident has been obtained. When a young person has low confidence, low self-esteem, anxiety or mental health issues who struggles in communicating with much needed health services they can be left stuck and unable to access essential health services.

## Child Exploitation

### Theme: Child Exploitation

Q16 How confident are you that staff know how to spot the signs of all forms of child exploitation?

YMCA report they feel confident in this area and a number of our staff have been in receipt of child exploitation training and those remaining members of staff can now access this training through EduCare®. Information regarding the signs to recognise child exploitation and the pathway for reporting has been shared within the team.

### Theme Child Exploitation

Q17 How do you know that staff are confident about where to get help for a child at risk of exploitation and know about the support available?

The induction process, internal and external training, the sharing and promotion of information through site, wider team and departmental meetings presents staff with the skills, knowledge and confidence to act appropriately and quickly with all safeguarding issues including exploitation. Staff also

know that if they are unsure at any time they can access support through their line manager, or the safeguarding officer. YMCA report that their internal measures indicate this is an area of strength.

## Children's Partnerships

### Theme Children's Partnership – The KBSP

Q18 How do you share the information provided by your local children's partnership to staff?

Information is shared through site, wider team and departmental management meetings. Any new procedures, knowledge or skills learnt that would improve the support offer or service is cascaded to staff and implemented.

Any good practice and learning from particular instances, within the service are written as case studies and shared with amongst teams, managers, local partners and commissioning bodies.

Area to area sharing was commonplace pre-pandemic, but as with other organisations and partners bringing people together has been a challenge, but as restrictions are lifted these meetings and events will return.

### Theme Children's Partnership

Q19 What do you think the children's partnership could do to help improve understanding about, and engagement with, practitioners?

YMCA would like to see more practitioners being utilised by the children's partnership when looking at improving safeguarding and recognising new areas of work, as the ones that directly work with those children, young people, families and vulnerable adults most at risk and have a wealth of knowledge and experience.

The children's partnership would also benefit greatly by visiting practitioners to gain a better understanding of the good work they do and the problems they face.

The Children's partnership website is not what it needs to be and has been neglected and needs a revamp.

Improved networking opportunities and knowing who to go to and the services available and knowing the individuals within organisations.

### Theme Children's Partnership – The KBSP

Q20 The Partnership board has a threshold document how widely is this used within your organisation and how do you monitor staffs understanding and use of this tool?

The threshold document is a key stone for delivering services in North Somerset, it ensures that there is a pathway for other, more appropriate services to assist those young people who have additional complex needs that the YMCA cannot meet. It opens a clear dialogue between practitioners to understand the work each does and how best we can support each and those accessing YMCA services.

Staff who have used the threshold document when seeking additional support for young people with complex needs have a good understanding. Managers and the safeguarding lead have a much better understanding and are available to offer best advice and support frontline staff when there is a clear need for the involvement of other services.

## Sirona Health

The following section of the report is based on the Sirona Health conversation which took place on the 28th January 2022 we would like to thank them for their valuable contribution.

### Safeguarding Structures

<b>Theme: Safeguarding Structures</b>
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Q1 How do you ensure that staff know what to do if they have a concern for a child or an adult?
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All staff are expected to engage with the appropriate training level dependent upon their role and responsibility. Sirona have a Think Family Training Strategy which is compliant with the Intercollegiate Documents for Adults / Children: Roles and Responsibilities for Health Care Staff (2018 / 2019) / NHS England Prevent Competencies 2017. Staff are directed to the Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedures. A Think Family Safeguarding Booklet which gives immediate access to all contact numbers for support from the Safeguarding Team is shared with staff at induction and all training events.

Sirona have a dedicated, integrated Safeguarding Team which is co-ordinated and overseen by the Head of Safeguarding. The safeguarding children team in North Somerset is led by the Named Lead for Safeguarding Children who regularly links with the Safeguarding Adults Lead.

Since COVID an on-call system with safeguarding member of staff for staff to contact. Colleagues feel this is accessible and good to have the named link where reduced numbers of staff have been working.

<b>Theme: Safeguarding Structures</b>
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Q2. How is information shared about your safeguarding lead, key policies including escalation and whistleblowing and multi-agency guidance, policy, and procedures? How do you check that this information is known and understood?
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Information concerning these arrangements is shared via various approaches here are some:

- Induction process for new staff
- Think Family Safeguarding Booklet
- Sirona webpages
- Internal Safeguarding Children Policy and Procedure

Sirona also have Freedom to Speak Up Guardians who can be approached anonymously at any time. They also have a dedicated email facility called “Ask Anything”. Staff are encouraged to use all these routes to raise any concerns about practice that they may have. Concerns raised and action taken are formally reported to the Sirona Board (with discretion).

Records are regularly reviewed and audited as part of a yearly audit cycle and action plans are developed to support sound and accurate record keeping. Individual competency issues may be raised with a practitioner and line manager and support plans put in place.

All newly qualified Public Health Nurses are supported through working on a set of safeguarding Competencies and these are assessed and signed off by the Specialist Safeguarding Nurse for Children.

### **Theme: Safeguarding Structures**

#### **Q3. How do ensure staff are recruited safely to work within your organisation?**

Sirona has a Safer Recruitment policy and process in place, managed via HR department which applies to anyone who wishes to work for the organisation. Sirona is a values based company and it is an essential expectation that values play an integral role in any interview and selection process. The usual process related to DBS checks and request of reference prior to employment are key cornerstones to the process.

Lucy Faithful Foundation training on safer recruitment has been offered and the development and embedding managing allegations policy over past 2 years, is working well.



## Learning & Development

### **Theme: Learning and Development**

Q4 Tell us about how you incorporate safeguarding into induction?

Since the pandemic corporate induction has been a virtual process. The Safeguarding Team have developed a short webinar / video that is shared with staff at the induction session. The session covers key information such as who the team are , how to find information and support, how to make a referral, what training must be completed. The video is also available to view at any time via the intranet / Workplace pages.

All staff received a copy of the Think Family Information Support Booklet which contains all key contacts and information, all flow charts relating to key safeguarding procedures and requirements. The booklet also contains information about the role of the safeguarding partnerships and how to access the South West Child Protection online procedures.

New starters to the service meet safeguarding supervisors during their induction to the service. School Nurses and Health Visitors are required to complete competencies relevant to their role.

### **Theme: Learning and Development**

Q5 Tell us about the single agency or in-house training available to your organisation. How is it quality assured?

Through the Think Family Safeguarding Training Strategy and the aligned Intercollegiate Documents there is a range of training offered to staff at each level, starting with e-learning packages, they cover all aspects of safeguarding adults / children but staff must also complete Prevent and Domestic Abuse awareness packages. To ensure that staff received the right level of training at Level 3 during Covid – the Sirona safeguarding team have been offering bespoke Think Family training as well as commissioning the purchase of quality assured e-learning packaged from the Virtual College.

Training is also quality assured depending upon evaluation and feedback from staff.

**Theme: Learning and development**

Q6 How well do staff engage with the multi-agency training available?  
How do you decide who will attend, and how do you monitor this?

Level 3 is multi-agency and compliance is seen as completed. All staff requiring Level 3 training have also received preparation for their safeguarding role within their first line training. During the Pandemic opportunities for training at this level have been limited. Currently, training compliance at Level 3 stands at 76% with tight plans and tracking in place to achieve 90% as soon as possible. Sirona are also in the process of harmonising training programmes and reporting across three local authority areas – not possible to report on individual areas such as North Somerset so compliance may well be higher within individual areas. An additional issue regarding accurate reporting relates to data regarding those staff who have attended Partnership multi-agency training not being effectively shared with internal Sirona reporting mechanisms.

Sufficient places are, however, not available. In response training packages have been bought in and these are completed virtually.

**Theme: Learning and Development**

Q7 Tell us about the supervision available to staff working in your organisation

Within North Somerset supervision is provided to all staff that have regular contact with children. The formal supervision is generally offered on a one to one basis or in some cases in a group.

The supervision is supported by Specialist Safeguarding Nurses for Children.

All staff providing the supervision are trained to Level 4 and have received Supervision Skills training (Intrac and NSPCC)

The supervision utilises a 4x4x4 model of training with the focus on the child. A Signs of safety model is used to support reflection and action planning, with the focus on the child. Information on discussion is recorded in the child's electronic records.

The Safeguarding Team also provide adhoc advice on a daily basis (Mon- Fri) where staff can phone and discuss issues and concerns as they arise rather than waiting for formalised supervision.

**Theme: Learning and Development**

Q8 How is learning from training and events embedded into practice and shared with colleagues?

News briefs via the comms department sharing learning briefs, learning from internal incidents investigation and external engagement with CSPR. Safeguarding Team develop action plans based upon learning that needs to be embedded into practice: current work to review the use of the Neglect Tool kit is a key example of this.

Safeguarding Children in Practice group. This runs every two months – the frequency of this was increased during the Pandemic as a means of giving staff regular opportunities for peer support and learning related to local and national safeguarding events and policy changes. The group uses local and national CSPRs and local case involvement as the main vehicle for generating discussion and learning. As well as formalised learning events, safeguarding supervision, formal and “as and when” supervision is available to staff at the point of need.

**Theme: Learning and Development**

Q9 How do you share local and national learning from Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, internal and multi-agency audits? Tell us about how you ensure learning is impacting practice

In addition to above, issues raised within CSPR reports / learning are reviewed by the Safeguarding Children Lead for North Somerset in conjunction with the appropriate operational service leads. Any service improvements / developments warranted as a response to the learning will then be captured in a SMART action plan. The action plans are then tracked locally and are also fed into our Safeguarding Forum meetings for wider learning and assurance.

As Sirona services now cover BNSSG we are able to take the learning from across a wider area – often this is thematic. Work is underway to review and revise how and what we record. This work is being undertaken across several directorates: Information Governance / Public Health Nursing and Quality and Safety (Safeguarding) / Digital Transformation.

## Impact of Covid-19

### **Theme: Impact of Covid-19**

Q10 How are you managing the emotional impact of the pandemic on staff and ensuring wellbeing. What have been the biggest challenges for your organisation?

To counter feelings of isolation and disconnectedness this Sirona have the following strategies in place:

- Expected wellbeing conversations between staff and line managers
- Embedding across the organisation of Wellbeing Wednesdays
- Mindfulness sessions
- Access to counselling sessions
- Access compassionate leadership training.
- Safeguarding Team provided an enhanced level of support when staff were subject to redeployment during the first wave

When Individual risk assessments identified that for some team members working from home could have a detrimental effect on their mental health & well – being, safe working arrangements were put in place, adhering to the COVID guidelines in place at the time of identification.

Systems to ensure that each member of the team has contact with a colleague have minimised the feelings of isolation within the team; concerns for colleague's health and well – being have been escalated appropriately, and the required referrals or sign posting have been initiated. Peer supervision sessions have also taken place.

### Theme: Impact of Covid 19

Q 11 Tell us about any changes you have made to practice because of the pandemic that will continue permanently

The use of virtual platforms to communicate with, and link staff, while having challenges, has actually been very positive. This is especially useful where it cuts down on travel and allows staff to link immediately to discuss important issues.

Training events have been run on line and in the future there will continue to be a mix of virtual and face to face. The virtual platform has facilitated ease of attendance for some members of staff. Virtual platforms have also allowed some families who were hard to reach / didn't engage with services to be contacted and reviewed.

### Listening to Children

#### Theme Listening to Children

Q12 Can you give an example where your organisation has effectively engaged with children and young people which has directly improved services and outcomes

Sirona provided a couple of different examples, one where School Nursing were included in 6th form inductions within a secondary school. A presentation was delivered to include discussions around healthy relationships, consent, sexual health (STI's), and the offer chlamydia/gonorrhoea screening. Year 11 students were asked what they would like/ felt was important to be included within the session. Students fed back to School Nursing in form groups

A member of the School Nursing Service developed a teaching session to deliver to the Team (LGBTQ+ and Reducing Health Inequalities for Children, Young People and Families). 10 young people from LGBTQ+ communities across 4 counties were asked what they thought should be included in the session, and what they wanted School Nurses to know. As some key themes - they wanted School Nursing to understand why there is increased risk of attachment, grooming, CSE, CCE, self-harm and suicide for LGBTQ+ young people. Feedback from the delivery of the teaching session was that it led to an increased knowledge base, increased confidence within the team, and could lead to improved outcomes when working with children, young people and their families from LGBTQ+ communities.

### Theme Listening to Children

Q13 How do you ensure that individual children are heard by practitioners as part of their everyday practice

The electronic record system used within Sirona (North Somerset) to record child health needs assessments and interactions has incorporated the Signs of Safety model and includes a section where detail regarding the Voice of the Child is specifically requested. Practitioners are encouraged to use direct quotes from children who are able to verbalise. Staff are also encouraged to make observations of pre-verbal children and to make a record of these. During supervision sessions, practitioners are encouraged to reflect directly upon the lived experience of the child / children within a family. This is recorded as part of the supervision session. These sessions also allow practitioners to focus upon what the impact of parental behaviours upon a child might be e.g. substance misuse / domestic abuse. The School Nursing service often seen children at school where a parent / carer may not be present. As part of the assessment process, children are asked directly about their lived experience, there are prompts within assessment tools support / encourage discussion to ensure the child's voice is included within every contact.

## Information Sharing

### Theme: Information Sharing

Q14 Section 11 auditing tells us that organisations have protocols for information sharing in place. Can you give us an example from your organisation where information was shared effectively with partner organisation (s) and made a difference to the outcome for a child

Sirona provided this example

A pregnant woman from out of area was identified via a Niche form shared with us via the Police. The Police had only managed to get limited information about the situation (she was staying in our area at the time of the incident). We requested that they share the information with the locality Children's Social Care (Norfolk) based upon the address of the perpetrator who appeared to be the unborn baby's father/partner of the woman. It was picked up by Norfolk CSC who then liaised with their safeguarding midwifery team. We identified our safeguarding equivalent over in Cambridge, who covered the woman's prospective HV team, we shared the Niche information (with permission) and put Norfolk CSC in touch with the safeguarding nurse. The SW managed to speak with unborn baby's father, and they are now starting a pre-birth assessment to assess needs and risks.

## Theme Information Sharing

Q15 What are the barriers you face to effective information sharing?

Barriers that are faced vary, sometimes staff may be reluctant to share information and may state GDPR as a reason for this.

Lack of knowledge & understanding of partner agencies relating to the policies supporting effective information sharing, can sometimes be an additional barrier.

Lack of knowledge of professional roles and engagement in multi-agency opportunities which present.

There are various strategies in place to overcome these, such as training, good supervision and challenge is encourage and supported.

## Child Exploitation

### Theme: Child Exploitation

Q16 How confident are you that staff know how to spot the signs of all forms of child exploitation?

All training sessions across different levels raise awareness about child exploitation: sexual and criminal. Sirona have recently run a series of child exploitation workshops where the Police and Community Safety staff co-delivered. Additionally, within North Somerset the Safeguarding Children in Practice group has delivered sessions related to criminal exploitation / county lines and contextual safeguarding. Staff are also encouraged to attend multi-agency sessions related to child exploitation.

Competencies around knowledge and understanding of exploitation are included within the SCPHN Competencies document and assessment of knowledge and understanding of these will be made prior to staff being signed off by the Specialist Safeguarding Nurse for Children.

## Theme Child Exploitation

Q17 How do you know that staff are confident about where to get help for a child at risk of exploitation and know about the support available?

All referrals to social care / police are centrally logged via the Ulysses incident reporting system so the Safeguarding Team and team managers are alerted. These incidents are reviewed in real time and also via reflective analysis on a daily basis. Additionally, the safeguarding team are made aware of all incidents being reported by Sirona staff across the area and therefore are alert to patterns of unusual behaviour / connections across areas. The system also allows safeguarding staff to use expert knowledge to review incidents which require / issues may not have been seen initially by the reporter. Staff are taken through how to recognise child exploitation via the induction competency programme (already described) which is managed by the Safeguarding Team.

We are also linked in with information sharing via the Topaz and Missing meetings and engagement with the Exploitation sub group.

The children's safeguarding specialist support nurses are available to discuss concerns relating to Child Exploitation, as and when concerns arise. Discussion during supervision sessions with allocated safeguarding staff will check practitioners understanding of where and how to access the required help; any concerns relating to individual confidence or knowledge would be escalated to Service Manager.

## Children's Partnerships

### Theme Children's Partnership – The KBSP

Q18 How do you share the information provided by your local children's partnership to staff?

Staff are made aware during training / preceptorship and supervision sessions as appropriate. They are directed to access information / policies and process as required to the concerns that they are raising. Sirona also have a Think Family Safeguarding Booklet for staff which contains information about the function of the Partnerships and how to access the webpages for additional information. Any updates that are important for staff to be aware of are communicated to staff via Team Brief / local email to teams / regular attendance at operational meetings and direct links with managers and staff.

Operational services cascade of relevant information at team meetings / 1:1's and via email, as and when received into the service.



### Theme Children's Partnership

Q19 What do you think the children's partnership could do to help improve understanding about, and engagement with, practitioners?

During the Pandemic Sirona have noticed a significant absence of Partnership meetings. The new arrangements with regard to how the partnership will function in North Somerset has been the subject to two multi-agency workshops (Jan 2021 / Oct 2021) the finalised agreement re working practice and arrangements remains unknown.

Other suggestions:

- Joint working and communication
- Joint audits
- Understanding of changes within Social Care – especially the Front Door, early help processes
- Working together
- Accessing through Board web page – this was accessible but not as much now

### Theme Children's Partnership – The KBSP

Q20 The Partnership board has a threshold document how widely is this used within your organisation and how do you monitor staffs understanding and use of this tool?

The Threshold Document has been widely used and referred to within Sirona. It is discussed and referenced in training, used in supervision and within social care referrals and referrals for Early Help to provide supporting information for Level of Need. The current Threshold Document is out of date and is difficult to access. It was previously easy to find on the Safeguarding Board website for North Somerset. It is not currently available on the Safeguarding Partnership website. Work with the Adult Safeguarding Team has provided some insight but we have not been made aware of any issues directly from the NS Children's Partnership.

Number	Recommondations
1	Agencies to improve mechanisms to measure impact of training upon worker confidence and practice.
2	To review how the Partnership can develop improved mechanisms to ensure all partners are informed of relevant and recent changes to practice, process, policy.
3	North Somerset to share new Level of Need document previously called Threshold Document.
4	Partners to consider how to improve their systems for ensuring updates from Partnership Board are noticed.
5	Development of jointly owned Quality Assurance activity
6	Partnership Board to prioritise the development of their outward facing communication platforms

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North Somerset Council

Children Services

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