



Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs)

A Guide for Families and Carers

This leaflet tells you what happens when a Safeguarding Adult Review needs to be undertaken and what you should expect as a family member or carer involved in the review process

What is the Safeguarding Adults Executive Board?

The Safeguarding Adults Executive Board (SAEB) is a partnership of organisations across the Bi-Borough of Westminster and Kensington and Chelsea who work together collaboratively to safeguard adults with care and support needs from abuse, neglect and exploitation.

What is a Safeguarding Adults Review?

The [Care and Support Statutory Guidance](#) sets out that Safeguarding Adults Boards (SABs) have a duty to carry out a Safeguarding Adult Review when an adult dies or experiences serious harm as a result of abuse or neglect. This is when abuse or neglect is known or suspected, and there is information to suggest that partner agencies could learn lessons and improve the way they work together to support adults at risk in the future. A Safeguarding Adult Review is often referred to as a 'SAR'.

It is important to note that a SAR is not an enquiry into the cause of death or injury. It does not seek to apportion blame or punish anyone involved and is separate to any investigation undertaken by the police or Coroner or via a complaints process.

Reviews are held to see whether there is learning about the way agencies worked together to protect and support the person who suffered harm and identify recommendations to promote effective multi-agency learning and improvement. This is in order to minimise the risk of future deaths or serious harm occurring again.

The SAEB wants families and carers to be involved in SARs as much as possible so that the review can ensure their views, opinions and concerns help to inform the review, and that reviewers know as much as they can about the person who has died or experienced significant harm.

Who will carry out the Safeguarding Adults Review?

The review will be carried out by an Independent Reviewer, appointed by the SAEB, who has the appropriate knowledge, skills and experience to lead the review. The Independent Reviewer with support from the SAEB Business Manager will make contact with family members and carers to invite them to contribute to the review. The review will also involve senior representatives from agencies who worked with the adult, who will analyse events prior to the death or serious incident. This will be from a range of agencies including statutory, voluntary and private sector agencies. The Independent Reviewer will write a report with findings and recommendations to take forward the identified learning.

How can family members, friends and carers be involved and share their views?

It is very important to the SAEB that our SARs involve family members and important people in the adult's life. We will ask you if you would like to share your experiences so that we can understand fully what happened, identify what lessons should be learned and what has worked well and less well.

The SAEB Business Manager will make contact with you early in the process to discuss the review and agree how much you wish to be involved. If you decide you would like to contribute to the review, you will be asked to share your understanding of what happened and why.

You can give your thoughts and views in different ways. Some people prefer to have a face-to-face meeting with the Independent Reviewer, others are more comfortable having a telephone conversation / virtual meeting or by providing feedback in writing.

It is your decision as to how much involvement you would like to have in the review, and you can be involved as much or as little as you would like. You may also agree how you would like to be kept informed as to the progress of the review and how you would like to receive a copy of the final report.

Our aim is to complete SARs in around six months. It sometimes takes longer if the case is very complex. We will provide you with explanations for any delays.

As there is a legal duty to undertake a SAR, the review will still go ahead if you decide you do not wish to contribute.

We understand that this may well be a difficult and upsetting time for you, and we will try to support you as much as possible if you decide to contribute. Some families have found advocacy helpful, and we can also support with providing advocacy services should you wish for this.

What happens when the review is completed?

The report and recommendations will be presented to SAEB members and must be approved by the Board. Family members and carers will be offered the opportunity to view the report and meet with the Independent Reviewer and / or SAEB members involved in the review to ask any questions they may have.

Where possible, we wish to share the learning from our SARs so services in other areas can learn from our reports. Published reports are usually anonymised or, if it is the family's wish, consideration can be given to using the adult's actual name or a name suggested by the family. If the report is published, it will be on the SAEB and / or council's websites. However, sometimes a decision is made not to publish depending on the circumstances of the case.

Once the SAR report has been agreed by the SAEB, an action plan will be developed to make sure any recommended improvements are made to services. The SACRG is responsible for making sure that agencies report on their progress and provide evidence for how practice has changed and improved. The Board will also report on SARs undertaken and the progress of improvements within the SAEB Annual Report, which is also available on the websites as above.

Further information

For any further information please contact Trish McMahon, SAEB Business Manager at makingsafeguardinpersonal@rbkc.gov.uk

The SAEB website has a dedicated [Safeguarding Adults Reviews page](#), which contains the [SAR Protocol and Guidance](#), our published reviews and learning briefings.

Information on safeguarding adults can be found within the [London Multi-Agency Adult Safeguarding Policy and Procedures](#).