

Protocol for Managing Adult Large-Scale Safeguarding Investigations

Cwm Taf Safeguarding Adults Board	Date: 12 September 2016	Status: Final Version - Endorsed by CTSAB
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1. INTRODUCTION

Definition

An Adult Large-Scale Safeguarding Investigation (ALSSI) will take place when;

- A number of adults at risk have allegedly been abused either within a single care setting or served by the same service provider (regardless of which agency commissions care or whether it is privately arranged), **or**
- A group of adults at risk appear to have been abused by one individual or group of individuals in an organised and targeted manner, **or**
- A pattern or theme of potential abuse from a single care provider is emerging from safeguarding or contract monitoring data.

Purpose

The purpose of an ALSSI is to;

- Ensure the safety and well-being of all adults at risk involved, individually and collectively
- Arrange and co-ordinate multi-agency responses to reduce risk of harm and protect all other potential adults at risk

It will be necessary to differentiate between poor practice, which should be addressed via the contract monitoring and Escalating Concerns/Provider Performance process, and abuse, which should be investigated under this protocol. However, as there is a significant over-lap in the two processes, there will need to be effective communication between the Multi-Agency Operations Group (MAOG) and the ALSSI, as action under both processes may be occurring simultaneously.

Every individual adult safeguarding concern will be dealt with following a person-centred safeguarding procedure compliant with the Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 and Cwm Taf Adult Safeguarding procedures. The **ALSSI protocol does not replace these procedures**, but is intended to enhance multi-agency communication, co-ordination and ensure availability of appropriate resources when large-scale abuse is suspected. The immediate safeguarding of individuals and investigations into individual incidents should continue in the usual way.

2. THE STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT GROUP

An ALSSI may involve a wide range of agencies and multiple individual adult safeguarding processes and investigations. It may also cross local authority boundaries and may involve services that are not commissioned by Cwm Taf Local Authorities or the Cwm Taf University Health Board. It is, therefore, crucial that such processes are tightly co-ordinated and managed.

Suspected multiple or organised abuse should be brought to the attention of the designated local authority manager and designated senior detective in South Wales Police responsible for Adult Safeguarding as soon as possible.

Stage 1: Deciding whether the ALSSI Protocol should be triggered

These officers will take responsibility for initiating the ALSSI protocol if appropriate and will also take responsibility for notifying the relevant agency senior manager. The senior manager in each agency will ensure that appropriate resources are deployed and that staff will receive the necessary support. The decision as to whether this protocol will be invoked will be based on whether;

- the definition is met, **and**
- the concerns cannot be managed solely via individual safeguarding processes, the Escalating Concerns process or by individual case management, **and**
- there is a need for complex inter-agency co-ordination and planning.

Stage 2: The Initial & Follow-up Strategic Management Meetings

The designated Adult Safeguarding manager from either Rhondda Cynon Taf or Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council will have overall co-ordination responsibility throughout the ALSSI and will:

- Arrange an initial Strategic Management Group meeting within 2 working days of the decision to invoke this protocol and will then arrange regular meetings, at no less than every 6-8 week intervals, to ensure robust inter-agency communication, co-ordination and progress reporting. A suggested agenda is attached as Appendix 1.
- Liaise with the Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board Business Unit, who will minute and circulate meeting minutes and other relevant documents
- Co-ordinate non-criminal investigation work, identify any barriers to progress and work with partners to secure additional resources if required
- Act as a central point of communication about the ALSSI
- Report to the Board's Operational Committee
- Consider whether the Strategic Management Group should be chaired by the designated officer for the other Local Authority within Cwm Taf if the concerns relate to a setting operated directly by the Home Local Authority.

This initial meeting will consider;

- the number and nature of concerns already known and how those cases have been, and continue to be, managed
- whether there are other adults at risk who may also be experiencing or have experienced abuse and how to manage that potential
- how safeguarding measures can be put in place whilst criminal investigations are in progress.

The Strategic Management Group will also agree lines of communication and accountability for each agency and to the Safeguarding Board: this will include consideration of the need for media statements and an escalation process should issues emerge that cannot be resolved by the Group. Each Strategic Management Group will produce a specific Terms of Reference for the particular ALSSI, which incorporates all of these points and also sets out an agreed initial timetable for meetings.

Core Membership of the Strategic Management Group

- The Local Authority Safeguarding Manager in whose area the alleged abuse has occurred (usually the Chair of the Strategic management Group)
- Local Health Board Head of Safeguarding
- South Wales Police Detective Inspector for Public Protection
- Local Authority Commissioning Manager
- Local Health Board Commissioning Manager
- Care & Social Services Inspectorate for Wales/Healthcare Inspectorate for Wales
- Care Management service managers for the Local Authority
- Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board Business Unit representation
- Other agencies/professionals to be co-opted as required

A template for the Terms of Reference for the SMG is attached as Appendix 2.

Communication with Providers, Service Users and their Families/Advocates

Communication with care providers will be via the individual safeguarding process and the Escalating Concerns process. The Strategic Management Group will consider at each meeting whether any additional communication with the provider is necessary.

Individual service users and their families or advocates will be central to the large-scale investigation. They will be kept up-to-date with progress in investigations and outcomes for perpetrators by the designated lead manager who has had responsibility for managing their case.

Stage 3: Final Strategic Management Group meeting

There will be a final ALSSI strategy meeting once all investigations (including criminal) are concluded. The purpose of this meeting will be to consider the outcomes of criminal and non-criminal investigations and to consider whether any other actions are necessary. This meeting will decide whether the ALSSI can be closed.

Whilst there will be protection plans for the individuals affected, other actions may be required such as:

- Multi-agency actions e.g. changes in policies, procedures or practices.
- Contract and commissioning actions, via Escalating Concerns or service improvement action plans.
- Consideration of whether an Adult Practice Review is needed.
- Ongoing action by the Regulator
- Further police investigation or non-criminal investigation

The meeting will also evaluate the process by considering;

- What was managed successfully in this investigation?
- What could we have done better and what should be done differently next time?
- Did the ALSSI Protocol help?
- Does the Protocol or the Terms of Reference for the Strategic Management Group need to be reviewed?
- Are there any cross-boundary issues or any outstanding local issues that can only be resolved by the Safeguarding Adults Board?

This meeting will be minuted by the CTSB Business Unit and an evaluation report will be produced for the Cwm Taf Safeguarding Adults Board. This report will be shared with safeguarding practitioners via a multi-agency learning event.

3. REVIEW OF THE ALSSI PROTOCOL

This Protocol will be reviewed on a bi-annual basis.

Appendix 1 - Terms of Reference for ALSSI Strategic Management Group

Appendix 2 - Agenda format for first ALSSI Strategic Management Group meeting