

Report to the NHS Somerset Integrated Care Board on 1 December 2022

Title: Safeguarding Children Annual report 2021 / 2022	Enclosure E
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Executive Lead	Shelagh Meldrum, Chief Nursing Officer NHS Somerset ICB
Clinical Lead:	Marie Davis, Designated Nurse Safeguarding Children
Author:	Marie Davis, Designated Nurse Safeguarding Children

Summary and Purpose of Paper

Note: The report covers the period where responsibility sat with the Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group. This responsibility transferred to the ICB on 1 July 2022.

- Details the arrangements in place to safeguard children in the NHS Somerset Integrated Care System (ICS), and the services commissioned by NHS Somerset (ICB).
- Sets out the context for safeguarding children arrangements in the Somerset ICS/ICB.
- Demonstrates how the ICS/ICB is fulfilling the statutory safeguarding children responsibilities.
- Reports on governance and accountability arrangements within the ICS/ICB, and the ICS/ICB role in the Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) and its sub groups.
- Highlights achievements and identifies current safeguarding children risks in provision within health services
- Identifies the [former] CCG's 2021/2022 safeguarding children objectives (now transferred to the ICS/ICB)
- Provides assurance that the safeguarding children 2021/2022 objectives were completed
- The impact of the restoration /recovery phase of the Covid pandemic on the ability to safeguard children.

Recommendations and next steps

The NHS Somerset Integrated Care Board is asked to note the content of this report and the objectives for the safeguarding children team for 2022/2023.

The Somerset ICB Safeguarding children team will continue to work collaboratively at a local, regional, and national level to improve the quality of, and strengthen, safeguarding children and child death review arrangements, where necessary mitigating organisational and partnership risk.

This report, once approved by the ICB Board, will then be considered by the Somerset Safeguarding Child Partnership.

Impact Assessments – key issues identified	
Equality	Commissioning and delivery of high quality and accessible statutory health services to meet the safeguarding needs of children and young people will ensure this cohort will not be disadvantaged in comparison with their peers who do not experience the same vulnerabilities.
Quality	This report reflects on the quality and impact of safeguarding children practice. The past year has been without precedent in terms of the scale and volume of challenges for the safeguarding system; with even more importance on the need to take stock and learn in order to influence the quality and outcome of children and families' experiences of safeguarding children practice.
Safeguarding	Statutory safeguarding children responsibilities of the [former CCG] ICS/ICB and the services it commissions are considered throughout this report.
Privacy	Information sharing processes are already established; there are no breaches of privacy are expected.
Engagement	Meeting statutory safeguarding children requirements is a shared responsibility. The safeguarding children team works closely with ICS/ICB colleagues, the services commissioned by the ICB and all key partners of the Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) and the Safer Somerset Partnership (SSP) to ensure these are met.
Financial / Resource	Resources required to implement and support statutory safeguarding children requirements are in place. An objective for 2022 to 2023 is to work with NHS Providers regarding a substantive Health Safeguarding System Representative post utilising funding already provided through block payments.
Governance or Legal	<p>The provision of statutory safeguarding children requirements are governed by the following legislation and statutory guidance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children Act 1989 • Children Act 2004 • The Children and Families Act 2014 • The Children and Social Work Act 2017 • Data Protection Act (2018) • Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 • Safeguarding children, young people and adults at risk in the NHS: Safeguarding Accountability and Assurance Framework 2022 • Child Death Review Statutory and Operational Guidance (England) 2019 • Intercollegiate Document: Safeguarding children and young people: roles and competences for health care staff, (RCPCH) 2019 • Domestic Abuse Act 2021 • Mental Capacity Amendment Act (2019)
Sustainability	<p>Working with all our partners in the local, regional and national safeguarding system, the safeguarding children team aims to deliver a sustainable and effective healthcare system for Somerset, which routinely includes the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.</p> <p>The Children and Young People Plan informs the work of the Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership, of which the ICB and the services we commission are key partners. The plan embraces potential and actual synergies between the sustainability and health agendas.</p>
Risk Description	The following risks on the Risk Register are associated with the safeguarding children agenda:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICB safeguarding service provision - Risk 368 – score 6 • Lack of recurring funding for statutory contribution to multi-agency triage at Family Front Door and Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) - Risk 541 – score 8 			
Risk Rating	Consequence	Likelihood	RAG Rating	GBAF Ref

**SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN
ANNUAL REPORT
2021 - 2022**

October 2022

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN ANNUAL REPORT 2021 - 2022

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Author	Marie Davis Designated Nurse SGC
Developed in conjunction with	Deputy Designated & Named Professionals for Safeguarding Children
Sponsor Role	Shelagh Meldrum Chief Nurse / Executive Lead for Safeguarding
Date	October 2022

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report covers the period of 1st April 2021 to 30th June 2022 and is the final NHS Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) annual report for Safeguarding Children. The CCG will become an Integrated Care Board (ICB) on 1 July 2022. This report provides assurance to the ICB and members of the public that the CCG has fulfilled its statutory responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- 1.2 The narrative throughout this report gives an overview and summary of assurance against our statutory functions and the shared local priorities of safeguarding children partners. This report will conclude by looking forward to the year ahead identifying key priorities for 2022-2023.
- 1.3 Our core business is to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people by fully understanding the outcomes we want to achieve and continually reflecting on how well we do things. We want to be able to work with our partners and to evidence the impact our services have on the lives of children, young people and their families. We endeavour to keep the individual at the centre of everything we do and engage service users in the work we undertake.

2 DELIVERY OF STATUTORY SAFEGUARDING FUNCTIONS

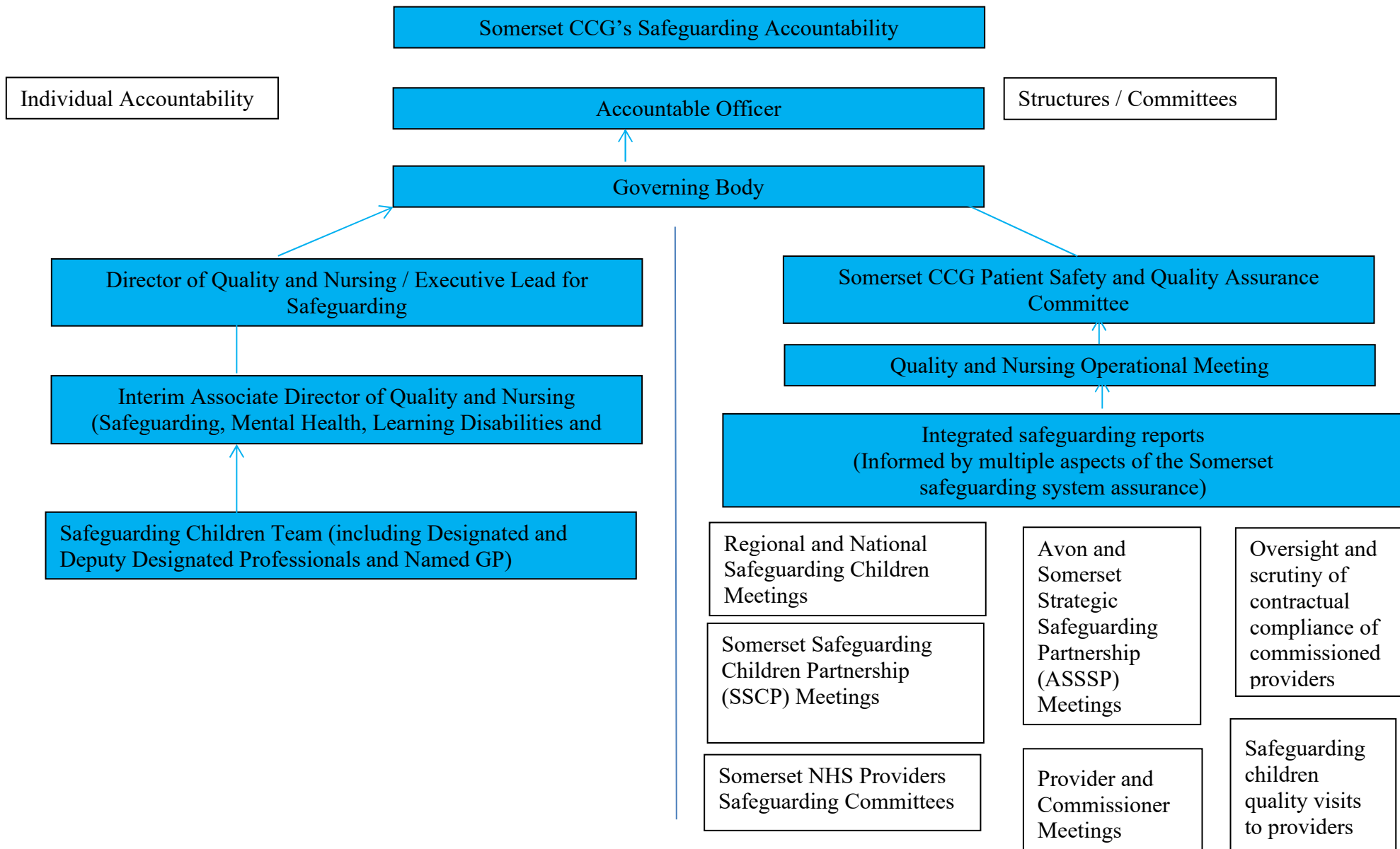
2.1 Somerset Safeguarding Leadership and Accountability

- 2.1.1 The accountability for safeguarding rests with the Chief Executive / Accountable Officer of the CCG¹ and Clinical Executive Committee (CEC) Chair. The safeguarding children team are part of the CCG Strategic Safeguarding Team, which is now led by the Interim Associate Director of Quality and Nursing (Safeguarding, Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Autism). The Designated Nurse Safeguarding Children reports via the Interim Associate Director of Quality and Nursing to the Director of Quality and Nursing / Executive Lead for Safeguarding.
- 2.1.2 As part of an integrated approach quarterly safeguarding assurance reports have been provided to the Patient Safety and Quality Assurance Committee from a safeguarding adult, safeguarding children and children looked after and care leavers perspective. These are reported by exception to the Governing Body. The Governing Body receives the Safeguarding Children Annual Report.
- 2.1.3 The CCG strategic safeguarding children team structure incorporates the statutory roles of Designated (and Deputy) Designated Nurses, Named GP, and administrative staff. The reporting structure below demonstrates the safeguarding governance arrangements.
- 2.1.4 As part of a Case for Change the statutory Designated Doctor for Safeguarding Children postholder (5 PAs a week) was recruited to a 1-year secondment. Recruitment process is underway in relation to a substantive / permanent post.

¹ [Safeguarding Competences for Healthcare Staff: Intercollegiate Document 2019](#)

The Named GP for Safeguarding post has been vacant since October 2021 and continues to prove challenging to recruit to.

Table 1 - Somerset CCG Safeguarding Children Governance Framework:



NHS England Quarterly safeguarding assurance returns

2.2 Discharging Statutory duties for Safeguarding Children

2.2.1 Accountability: There is a clear line of accountability for safeguarding children reflected in our CCG governance arrangements, including statutory roles as described in Table 1 above. We have achieved compliance against the requirements of the NHS Safeguarding Accountability and Assurance Framework and substantial assurance was provided through the following to NHS England South West Safeguarding:

- Quarterly Safeguarding Assurance reports
- Safeguarding Commissioning Assurance Toolkit (SCAT)
- South West safeguarding steering group
- System updates to the South West Designated Professionals forum
- Safeguarding assurance visits to the CCG

2.2.2 Policies and Procedures: The CCG's Safeguarding Children policy sets out our commitment and approach to safeguarding children and is in the process of being updated. This will be shared with NHS providers, CCG staff and GP practices as a number of practices then adopt this policy as their own. The current policy published in 2019 is located here, as will be the updated version once finalised: <https://nhssomerset.nhs.uk/health/safeguarding-adults-and-children/safeguarding-children/>

2.2.3 Effective Supervision & Training: The ongoing challenge since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic has been the delivery of safeguarding training and supervision. Two all day training events were provided virtually to GP safeguarding leads and CCG staff between April 2021 and June 2022. This is in addition to virtual training opportunities provided by the Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP). Feedback from both training events was positive, including the following:



2.2.4 The CCG's Strategic Safeguarding Team have continued to provide formal and informal safeguarding supervision sessions to Primary Care staff, strategic safeguarding leads within providers commissioned by the CCG, staff and teams within the CCG and partner agencies. Utilising MS Teams to its full extent as well as remaining accessible by telephone and moving towards more face-to-face contact.

2.2.5 The dissemination of the CCG newsletter 'The Safeguard' has now evolved to contain key updates and information on all things safeguarding. Safeguarding in this context includes but is not limited to Safeguarding Children, Safeguarding Adults, Children Looked After, Care Leavers, Domestic Abuse, Prevent, Exploitation, Serious Violence, Mental Capacity, Deprivation of Liberty and Liberty Protection Safeguards.

3 SAFEGUARDING ASSURANCE DURING COVID 19

- 3.1 During the timeframe of this report, the Safeguarding Children team have continued to prioritise the need to support acute, community, and primary care services in their safeguarding practice, together with partners across the system. Key to this was quickly developing alternative methods of communication during the pandemic, to maintain good working relationships within the CCG, with the providers we commission and with partner agencies, with unborn babies, children and their families at the forefront of this work.
- 3.2 Somerset CCG has continued to regularly receive assurance on statutory safeguarding children responsibilities from the services we commission, with work underway to revise the joint safeguarding adults and children dashboard provided by Somerset NHS Foundation Trust and Yeovil District Hospital NHS Foundation Trust.
- 3.3 Safeguarding assurance in relation to the services we commission has also been provided as a result of scrutiny and oversight of the work of the Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP), which has continued at pace and not put on hold during the pandemic or the recovery phase. In the [SSCP 12 monthly report for 2021 to 2022](#) the Independent Scrutineer is clear that in spite of the Pandemic and the level of change we have experienced “...*safeguarding in Somerset is strong, and the Partnership is working well...*”. As we moved into the recovery/restoration phase, face to face contact as part of the work of the partnership has become a priority.
- 3.4 The potential impact of Covid-19 on safeguarding practice was considered as part of a [Thematic Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review \(LCSPR\) into non accidental injuries to children during the pandemic](#) published in March 2022. Ongoing work in relation to the learning identified from this review is being scrutinised and overseen by the SSCP Learning and Improvement sub group, with good representation from across the health system as part of that group.
- 3.5 Additional safeguarding assurance in relation to the health system and partner agencies is provided through the multi-agency Bi-Monthly Safeguarding Forum. This Forum has evolved from the Somerset multi-agency safeguarding system cell set up at the start of the Pandemic in 2020. This forum continues to provide a unique opportunity for tripartite partners to come together to:
- share and reflect on policy, practice and procedural issues relating to safeguarding across the Somerset system
 - discuss and achieve consistency across the lifespan relating to safeguarding work across the Somerset system
 - share learning and best practice
 - share strengths and worries and facilitate peer support
 - provide an opportunity to identify blocks to interagency working and solutions to mitigate these.
- 3.6 In recognition of the pressures Primary Care were under during the pandemic the safeguarding assurance sought through the annual safeguarding report was held in abeyance. As the CCG moves to an ICB the safeguarding annual reporting arrangements for Primary Care will be reviewed, with support from the Somerset Local medical Committee.

4 PROGRESS AGAINST OBJECTIVES FOR 2021 – 2022

4.1 The CCG safeguarding children team have continued to work collaboratively, engaging with partners in work streams to improve quality, strengthen safeguarding children and child death review arrangements and where necessary mitigate organisational and partnership risks. The following objectives were identified for completion in 2021/2022:

Embedding safeguarding within the Somerset Integrated Care System	ONGOING
Implementation of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021	ONGOING
Implementation of learning from recent local and national Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPRs)	ACHIEVED AND ONGOING
Finalise with Human Resources a means of capturing CCG staff compliancy with mandatory safeguarding children training on the Electronic Staff Record	ONGOING
Ensure that GP's fully engage with their safeguarding responsibilities in relation to Child Protection Case Conferences	ACHIEVED AND ONGOING
Ensuring robust CCG safeguarding children governance and reporting processes are in place	ACHIEVED
Implementation of health safeguarding system representation within the Somerset multi-agency triage through a project funded by the Department for Education	ACHIEVED
Ensure the CCG and the services we commission fulfil our statutory safeguarding children functions	ACHIEVED
Recruitment to Designated Doctor Safeguarding Children secondment through the agreed Case for Change	ACHIEVED
Finalise work undertaken in 2020 2021 in relation to embedding key metrics for maternity services in the joint safeguarding dashboard	ACHIEVED
Continue to work collaboratively with local and regional safeguarding children partnerships; to improve quality and strengthen safeguarding children and child death review arrangements, mitigating where necessary organisational, partnership and system risks	ACHIEVED

Feedback from safeguarding colleagues:

"Thanks for you input today, always really helpful"

Avon and Somerset Police feedback in relation to work on the Serious Violence Duty

"I would echo comments about the really positive partnership response to working together on the actions, as we proved today".

SSCP feedback about Thematic LCSPR

"What an amazing email! Sensitively and expertly managed".

Feedback from NHS Provider following escalation of safeguarding concerns.

5 PRIORITIES FOR 2022 - 2023

- Continue to work collaboratively with local and regional safeguarding children partnerships; to improve quality and strengthen safeguarding children and child death review arrangements, mitigating where necessary organisational, partnership and system risks.
- Ensure the ICB and the services we commission fulfil our statutory safeguarding children functions.
- Develop a shared understanding of safeguarding risks within the Somerset Integrated Care System.
- Contribute to the identification and agreement of short, medium and long terms goals related to joint safeguarding workstreams overseen by the Somerset ICS safeguarding steering group.
- Completion of the Health Safeguarding System Representative project funded by the Department for Education.
- Identification of recurring funding for Health Safeguarding System Representative within the Somerset multi-agency triage and Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
- Support the development of streamlined Child Safeguarding Case Review systems and processes in Somerset; including methodologies, tools and templates to be used.
- Implementation of sustainable and measurable learning from Child Safeguarding Case Reviews utilising a Quality Improvement methodology.
- Streamline oversight and scrutiny arrangements in relation to recommendations and action plans arising from Child Safeguarding Case Reviews.
- Develop and evaluate how health professionals are involving fathers and male carers in support for families including supporting the work of the SSCP Forum Legacy Group.
- Recruit to substantive Designated Doctor Safeguarding Children post once Case for Change secondment is completed.
- Explore alternative recruitment solutions to Named GP for Safeguarding post if it remains vacant.
- Implement the Domestic Abuse project to address existing risks and concerns in relation to information sharing between Avon and Somerset Police and Primary Care regarding high-risk Domestic Abuse incidents involving children.
- Support the development of a trauma informed approach across the Somerset system to enable more targeted support and understanding of children and families' needs.
- Support the development of a national template for safeguarding assurance of Termination of Pregnancy providers.
- Develop a Termination of Pregnancy pathway for Under 13s with NHS providers and partner agencies in Somerset.
- Develop a Child Protection Medical pathway with NHS providers and partner agencies in Somerset.
- Develop a sustainable safeguarding training package, including Back to Basics and Child Death Reviews.

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Commissioners of health services have a duty to ensure that all NHS Trusts recognise the importance of having robust and effective arrangements in place to safeguard and protect children and young people across Somerset, and to provide assurance that they are fulfilling their statutory responsibilities for Safeguarding Children under Section 11 of the Children Act 1989 (2004).
- 6.2 It is hoped that 2022 to 2023 objectives will continue to take forward the progress that has been made this year to fulfil our statutory and strategic objectives.
- 6.3 NHS Somerset Integrated Care Board are requested to note the contents of this report.