

Report to the NHS Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group on 25 March 2021

Title: SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN ANNUAL REPORT 2019 / 2020	Enclosure G
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Version Number / Status:	Version FINAL
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Summary and Purpose of Paper

- Detail the arrangements in place to safeguard children in health services we commission.
- Set out the context for safeguarding children health arrangements in Somerset
- Demonstrate how Somerset CCG is fulfilling its safeguarding children statutory responsibilities.
- Report on governance and accountability arrangements within the CCG, and the CCG role in the Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) and its sub groups
- Highlight achievements and identify current safeguarding children risks in provision within health services
- Provide assurance that the safeguarding children 2018/2019 objectives were completed
- Identify the CCG's 2020/2021 safeguarding children objectives
- The impact of the Covid pandemic on the ability to safeguard children.

Recommendations and next steps

The Governing Body is asked to Endorse the content of this report and the objectives for 2020/2021.

Somerset CCG Safeguarding children team will continue to work collaboratively, to engage in work streams to improve quality, strengthen safeguarding children and child death review arrangements and where necessary mitigate organisational and partnership risks.

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.
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Quality				
Privacy	Information sharing processes are already established; there are no breaches of privacy expected.			
Engagement	Meeting safeguarding children statutory requirements is a shared responsibility. Somerset CCG works closely with its Providers, (Somerset NHS Foundation Trust and Yeovil District Hospital NHS Foundation Trust), Primary Care and all key partners of the SSCP to ensure these are met.			
Financial / Resource				
Governance or Legal	<p>The provision of safeguarding children statutory services are governed by the following legislation and statutory guidance:</p> <p>Children Act 1989 Children Act 2004 Intercollegiate Role Framework: Safeguarding children: knowledge, skills and competences for health care staff, (RCPCH, 2019) The Children and Families Act 2014 The Children and Social Work Act 2017 Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 NHS Safeguarding and Accountability framework (2019).</p>			
Risk Description				
Risk Rating	Consequence	Likelihood	RAG Rating	GBAF Ref

**SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN
ANNUAL REPORT
2019 / 2020**

October 2020

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Date	October 2020

1 FOREWORD

- 1.1 I am pleased to introduce this annual report for Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group covering April 2019 – July 2020. This is a public report which sets out the work of the CCG in relation to safeguarding children as lead commissioner for healthcare services within Somerset and as one of the 3 key safeguarding children partners for the Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership. The report aims to give everyone who lives and works in Somerset a sense of how well the CCG, the services it commissions and partner agencies are working together to keep children safe.
- 1.2 In June 2019 the CCG along with key safeguarding children partners – Somerset County Council and Avon and Somerset Police– published plans for the new local arrangements for safeguarding children in response to the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and the statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018. The new arrangements were implemented as planned in September 2019. Almost a year on, the partnership has had the opportunity to reflect on the more collaborative approach the new local safeguarding children arrangements have provided, with the CCG, Somerset County Council and Avon and Somerset Police working with all relevant parties to ensure that the most vulnerable individuals and families are identified, supported and safeguarded in a timely way. In partnership with Somerset County Council and Avon and Somerset Police the CCG have significantly invested in the new safeguarding arrangements.
- 1.3 To ensure that the Somerset safeguarding system is as effective as possible in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, the existing safeguarding partnership arrangements are a solid platform from which the CCG, along with key partners and other relevant parties can build on. The partnership's Independent Scrutineer took up post in January 2020 and will continue to be an invaluable source of challenge and scrutiny, as we work through the partnership's priorities for 2020 / 2021.
- 1.4 The NHS Long-Term Plan set the ambition that every part of the country should be an integrated care system by 2021. This 'system' level approach provides strategic leadership across the whole population of the ICS. Safeguarding systems and safeguarding strategic leadership are an integral part of developing a safe and effective ICS, which the CCG are committed to. As the safeguarding children element of the ICS evolves, the CCG is clear that whatever we do, it must add value to what is already happening across the safeguarding system.
- 1.5 The CCG's safeguarding children team are working hard to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. I thank them all for their hard work and dedication.

Sandra Corry
Director of Nursing and Quality / Executive Lead for Safeguarding

2 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 2.1 This report comes at a time of ongoing changes linked to the developing Integrated Care System (ICS), which will support a system wide approach to safeguarding during the forthcoming year. This report which covers the period of 1st April 2019 to 31st July 2020 describes the range of activities and developments that the safeguarding children team have supported in designing and delivering effective safeguarding arrangements across Somerset. The report provides assurance to the Governing Body and members of the public that the CCG has fulfilled their statutory responsibilities to safeguard the welfare of children, adults and children looked after.
- 2.3 The narrative throughout this report gives an overview and summary of assurance against our statutory functions, our internal strategy and the shared local priorities of safeguarding children partners. This report will conclude by looking forward to the year ahead identifying key priorities for 2020-2021; this includes our plans to continue to strengthen the safeguarding children arrangements across health and social care partnerships.
- 2.4 Over the last year we have focused our work priorities on national priorities for Safeguarding Children and priorities of the Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership. Our safeguarding activity takes in to account any key changes to national legislation and learning from local and national safeguarding children reviews.
- 2.5 Our core business is to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people by fully understanding the outcomes we want to achieve together and continually reflecting on how well we do things. We want to be able to work with our partners and be in a position to evidence the impact our work makes on the lives of children, young people and adults by keeping the individual at the centre of everything we do.

3. 2018 / 2019 PRIORITIES

We said..	We did..
Development of tripartite role within the new Somerset Safeguarding Partnership and its sub-groups	The new Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) arrangements went live as planned September 2019. The CCG has actively participated in the development of these arrangements and in the Avon and Somerset Safeguarding Strategic Partnership arrangements.
Development of the new Joint Dorset and Somerset Child Death Notification, Investigation and Review arrangements	The new Child Death Review (CDR) arrangements went live as of July 2019. The Memorandum of Understanding and Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) Terms of Reference are in the process of being evaluated by CDR partners.
To capture and monitor Safeguarding training compliancy for CCG staff	Using the Electronic Staff Record (ESR) system the CCG are able to monitor compliancy with mandatory safeguarding children training.
Continue to work with multi-agency colleagues to ensure GPs are routinely included in the MARAC process for vulnerable and at risk unborn babies, children and their families.	GPs are routinely contacted as part of the information gathering exercise undertaken; notified of the Domestic Abuse incident and subsequent referral to MARAC, and are asked to provide relevant information to the MARAC meeting. Either in writing or virtually, as part of the meeting.
To oversee and scrutinise the implementation of the new mandatory safeguarding children training requirements by providers.	This has been monitored and discussed as part of the NHS provider's submission of a monthly safeguarding dashboard, which includes training data, and attendance at the NHS provider's safeguarding committee.
To oversee and scrutinise how Primary Care staff meet their statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, through the child protection case conference process.	A proposal to ensure all our Somerset GPs effectively respond to any requests for child protection case conference reports was completed, which explored the potential to introduce payments for such reports into GP contracts. Payment for these reports has been agreed, which will include a robust quality assurance process prior to payment.

To raise the profile of the resolving professional differences protocol	This work has been completed through training and development opportunities provided to primary care staff, as well as through supervision and The Safeguard newsletter.
To work with Avon and Somerset Police regarding dissemination of Domestic Abuse notifications to health professionals	The CCG led on a brief Domestic Abuse notification project looking at positive impact dissemination of high risk police notifications could have in primary care, if shared directly with the relevant practice. As a direct result of this and an ongoing task and finish group, Avon and Somerset police are now sharing Domestic Abuse notifications direct with GPs.
Drive the “Think Family” approach through a more integrated safeguarding approach within the CCG	There are now multiple work streams that the CCG’s safeguarding adults, safeguarding children and child looked after leads are routinely working on together. This includes an integrated report for the CCG internal governance processes and an integrated training day for CCG and primary care staff.
To continue to work with partners within the safeguarding children partnership to robustly address concerns regarding the child protection referral process, and the impact this has on safeguarding children.	The Early Help Assessment (EHA) tool is the form used for multiple purposes. As a result of feedback from the CCG and other professionals the EHA form has been revised and significantly shortened.
To explore alternative and creative ways to recruit to the vacant Designated Doctor Safeguarding Children post.	A Case for Change has been developed with input from the National Network of Designated Health Professionals and NHSE / I South West safeguarding team. Alternative recruitment options are currently being explored.
To conduct a whole CLA service review	The Designated Nurse Children Looked After has completed a whole service review. This is outlined in a separate Annual report for Children Looked After and Care Leavers.

4 DELIVERY OF STATUTORY SAFEGUARDING FUNCTIONS

4.1 Somerset Safeguarding Leadership and Accountability

The accountability for safeguarding rests with the Chief Officer of the CCG. The safeguarding children team is led by the Designated Nurse Safeguarding Children who has a direct reporting structure via the Executive Safeguarding Lead and Chief Officer. Quarterly safeguarding assurance children reports are provided to the Patient Safety and Quality Assurance Committee which are embedded within Governing Body reporting arrangements.

The CCG safeguarding children model incorporates the statutory safeguarding children roles, which includes Designated Doctor Safeguarding Children, Designated and Deputy Designated Nurses for Safeguarding Children, Named GP for Safeguarding Children, and support administrative staff. The reporting structure overleaf demonstrates the safeguarding governance arrangements.

Currently the CCG's Safeguarding Children team holds a vacancy for a Designated Doctor Safeguarding Children (5 PAs a week). Mitigation in place includes the employment of the Interim Designated Doctor for Safeguarding Children on 3 PAs a week. This mitigation will cease 31st October 2020. The CCG is currently working through a Case for Change in relation to this vacancy and the associated risks.

4.2 Discharging Statutory duties for Safeguarding Children

Accountability: There is a clear line of accountability for safeguarding children reflected in Somerset CCG governance arrangements, including statutory roles as described above. At the time of writing this report we have achieved full 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 Business Continuity returns
- Safeguarding Quarterly Assurance reports
- South West safeguarding steering group
- System updates to the South West Designated Professionals meetings

Policies and Procedures: Policies and procedures are in place setting out a commitment and approach to safeguarding children. In July 2019 the CCG's Safeguarding Children policy was updated and shared with GP safeguarding leads in each practice, and made available for practices to adopt. .

Effective Supervision & Training: Ensuring that Somerset CCG staff have the required competencies to carry out their responsibilities for safeguarding children has been through a culture of learning across the system; which includes provision of safeguarding children supervision and learning and development opportunities. A series of events for staff in primary care requiring level 3 mandatory safeguarding children training has been provided through the GP Safeguarding Leads training day, locality based safeguarding

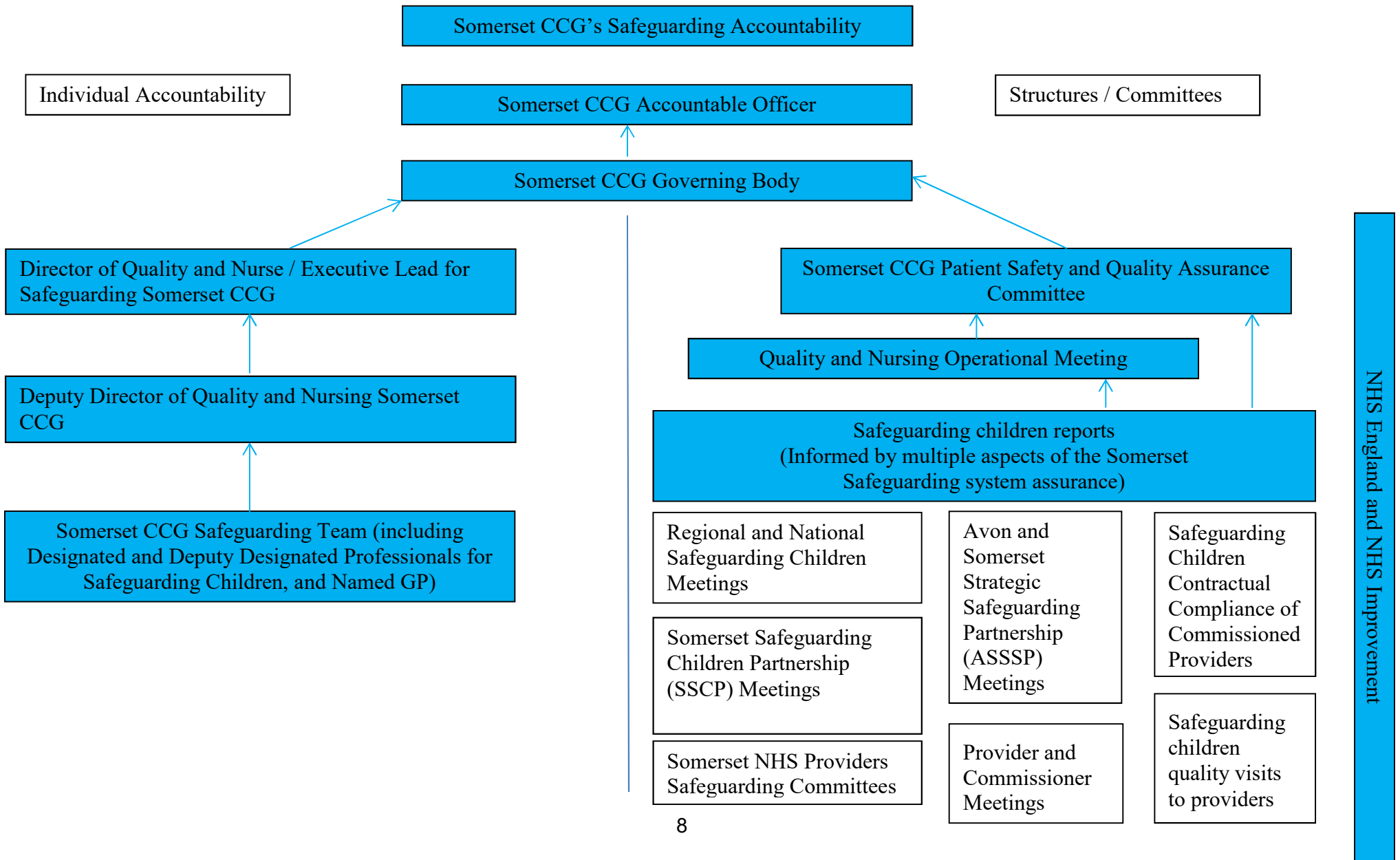
children sessions and sessions provided as part of the GP Education Trust training programme. Safeguarding children training topics have included:

- GP response to management of disclosures of sexual abuse / concerns about possible child sexual abuse
- Safeguarding Babies and Learning from a recent Serious Case Review
- Learning from local Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPRs):
- Neglect in childhood / Use of Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership Neglect toolkit
- Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership Pre-birth protocol: Practical application in primary care

These events have been attended by over 102 Primary Care Staff from 65 GP practices in Somerset. The ongoing challenge since March 2020 has been the delivery of training during the Covid 19 Pandemic. Members of the CCG's safeguarding children team have contributed to the virtual training offer provided by the Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP). The CCG have also utilised Covid 19 money to support the SSCP virtual training offer, as lack of funds usually generated resulted in a risk to this statutory function. In September 2020 the CCG's safeguarding team are to host an all-day virtual training event for level 3 staff in the CCG and primary care.

The dissemination via The Safeguard newsletter of key safeguarding children messages, lessons learnt and useful documents and tools to support practice, learning briefs and Policy updates. A Covid 19 and Safeguarding newsletter was also produced and disseminated widely within the health safeguarding system.

Safeguarding Children Governance Framework:



5 **IMPACT OF COVID 19**

Key to 2019 – 2020 was the development of a transformational model of safeguarding across the Integrated Care System. During this unprecedented time of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the Safeguarding Children team have prioritised the need to support acute, community, and primary care services together with partners across the system in the most meaningful way possible.

There has been reduced capacity within the Safeguarding Children team due to supporting the ongoing work of the Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership, which unlike many other partnerships and boards in the area was not put on hold, and multiple work streams arising out of the Covid-19 pandemic. Maintenance of statutory safeguarding children functions and provisions have remained the same throughout the pandemic as outlined in the [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(HM Government, 2018\)](#) and the NHS [Safeguarding and Accountability framework \(2019\)](#).

Recent additional legislation and policy has enforced the need for safeguarding children to be maintained as a priority, especially given the recognition that harm and abuse is potentially now hidden, and the impact COVID 19 had on face to face contacts with children. As we move in the recovery/restoration phase, 'normal' service delivery is expected to resume and with this it is anticipated that we will see a surge in demand for safeguarding children response across the multi-agency system, which includes: mental health issues; neglect; exploitation; disclosures of domestic abuse and disclosures of sexual abuse.

Somerset CCG has continued to receive assurance that commissioned services are meeting their statutory responsibility to safeguard and promote the health and wellbeing of children. Assurance has been obtained throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and will continue through the recovery phase and beyond, as measured against the guidance outlined above.

In order to support this, the Somerset multi-agency Safeguarding system cell that was initially set up early in March 2020 by the CCG's Designated Professionals will continue to meet on a monthly basis, highlighting and responding to challenges in the safeguarding children system that require a multi-agency response. A successful example of this was the Linked Professional Approach, leading to teams of professionals involved with children deemed at high risk meeting on a regular basis to discuss the safeguarding needs of those children and their families and how they are to be met by the multi-agency team. This is over and above existing child protection, children in need and children looked after statutory processes in place.

There is also recognition that the Safeguarding Children Partnership plays a role in seeking assurance around the increased demand on safeguarding children and system service delivery, all of which requires a partnership approach.

Delivery of Statutory Safeguarding Functions	Development of High Quality safeguarding services	Using intelligence and information to inform decisions	Influencing Partnership working
<p>Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the clinical skills of some of the safeguarding children team members were utilised to support the emergency situation. This did not impact on the team's ability to focus on statutory safeguarding responsibilities, but did affect developmental work.</p> <p>The CCG's safeguarding children team have continued to actively participate in the ongoing development of the Somerset safeguarding children partnership arrangements and the Child Death review arrangements.</p> <p>Working from home became a necessity and not all staff had the appropriate levels of equipment to work virtually. Fortunately this was addressed as a matter of urgency.</p> <p>Named GP function was initially limited due to COVID demands; this functionality had to be delivered by the wider CCG safeguarding children team.</p> <p>ICS Safeguarding development work that had started in June has been delayed.</p>	<p>Multi-agency safeguarding children partnership continued but was undertaken virtually.</p> <p>Work has continued with developing safeguarding children practice within primary care via virtual training; telephone consultations and support; and ensuring up to date information is passed to them in a timely manner.</p> <p>Visits to practices, alongside Safeguarding quality assurance visits, has been put on hold.</p> <p>CCG safeguarding children staff have been consistent members of some of the key 'COVID Cell' meetings e.g. women and children, primary care, domestic abuse. The Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Children set up the Safeguarding health system cell early in March 2020 and quickly expanded its membership to include multi-agency safeguarding leads. This continues on a monthly basis, although no longer formally reporting in the Incident Control Centre. This has provided the opportunity for timely and relevant information sharing to establish and act on any risk areas. In addition it has enabled the wider CCG teams to consider safeguarding children impacts.</p>	<p>The requirement for safeguarding assurance during the COVID 19 pandemic increased initially; with significant assurance provided through multiple returns to NHS E and I.</p> <p>The two main providers in Somerset have continued to submit the safeguarding children dashboard, as well as their safeguarding committee meetings; which Designated Professional are invited to.</p> <p>The CCG has also sought additional safeguarding children assurance, with monthly exception reports provided to the Patient Safety Quality Assurance Committee and the Quality and Nursing Operational meetings.</p> <p>The CCG safeguarding team has significantly led and supported developments and interventions with the local Violence Reduction Unit. This has been a substantive increase in workload for the safeguarding team.</p> <p>Intelligence received across the country has identified an increase in domestic abuse during 'lockdown' this is not something that has been demonstrated from our local police and LA referral systems. We initially saw a general decrease in children's referrals to the LA's, which was worrying, but these referral rates are now returning to normal.</p>	<p>The CCG is part of the wider ICS. An initial meeting was held in June 2020 to explore the development on an integrated approach to safeguarding across the Somerset ICS. This work is ongoing.</p> <p>The Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership executive was meeting monthly initially, as part of ongoing assurance in relation to the new safeguarding children partnership arrangements. The CCG's Director of Quality and Nursing is the executive lead for safeguarding children on behalf of Somerset CCG and input and feedback from these meetings has been useful.</p> <p>In order to support the Director of Quality and Nursing in this key safeguarding role the Designated Nurse safeguarding children and the Deputy Director of Quality and Nursing have worked to support her.</p> <p>The CCG designated leads across the ICS system have met regularly on a virtual basis with our provider leads to ensure communication links are maintained; key messages are received and to ensure emergent risks are identified and addressed.</p>

6 SUMMARY

- 6.1 Commissioners of health services have a duty to ensure that all NHS Trusts recognise the importance of robust and effective arrangements in place to safeguard and protect children and young people across Somerset, and to provide assurance that they are fulfilling its statutory responsibilities for Safeguarding Children under section 11 of the Children Act 1989 (2004).
- 6.2 The CCG's Safeguarding Children Team strive to ensure all safeguarding children processes and systems put in place by 'health' and partner agencies are robust and effective. There has been a huge amount of work and developments to improve processes and build on existing relationships, systems and procedures in 2019 / 2020; in no small part due to the development of the new statutory arrangements:
- Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership
 - Pan Dorset and Somerset Child Death review Arrangements
 - Avon and Somerset Safeguarding Strategic Partnership
- 6.3 The work of the CCG's Safeguarding Children team increased in light of the Covid 19 pandemic and the need to ensure that children and young people continued to be safeguarded, especially during the national lockdown when the multi-agency safeguarding system had limited access to our most vulnerable children. Through the CCG led Somerset Safeguarding system cell, initially set up as part of the Covid 19 Incident Control Centre, greater collaboration between safeguarding leads across the system has been possible.

7 PRIORITIES FOR 2020 / 2021

Somerset CCG Safeguarding children team will continue to work collaboratively, to engage in work streams to improve quality, strengthen safeguarding children and child death review arrangements and where necessary mitigate organisational and partnership risks.

7.1 Somerset CCG Vision¹

'Working together, we want the people of Somerset to be able to live healthy and independent lives, within thriving communities'. To achieve our vision we will deliver services by adhering to the following values that guide our behaviour and shape our organisation's culture:

- Quality improvement
- Integrated working
- Personal integrity,
- Compassion and self-awareness.

7.2 Somerset CCG Safeguarding Children Team Vision

¹ [Somerset Annual Review 2019-2020 Summary](#)

During 2020-2021 the Safeguarding Children Team will contribute to these objectives and vision by:

7.2.1 Ensuring CCG Safeguarding children and Child Death Review arrangements are in place:

- Continue to deliver the CCG Core Statutory Safeguarding Children functions
- Continue to contribute to and influence the local and regional safeguarding children partnerships
- Ensuring robust CCG safeguarding children governance and reporting processes are in place
- To review the health input into the Somerset violence reduction unit; aligning where possible other work streams that also require a robust and effective multi-agency triage system for our most vulnerable children.

7.2.2 Development and Maintenance of high quality standards of safeguarding practices across the health system:

- Support Primary Care Networks to ensure effective safeguarding children arrangements are in place
- Realigning Safeguarding children system and resources across the Integrated Care System
- Monitor, assure and reduce impact when safeguarding children performance in an NHS provider commissioned by the CCG is not meeting contractual requirements
- Dissemination of learning from Serious Incidents and learning reviews including Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews and Child Death Reviews
- To progress the Case for Change in relation to an alternative recruitment pool for the vacant Designated Doctor Safeguarding Children post.
- Due to the blended approach to Level 3 mandatory safeguarding children training an alternative means of capturing compliance with this on the Electronic Staff Record for CCG staff will be developed in conjunction with the HR department
- Continue to drive the “Think Family” approach through a more integrated safeguarding approach within the CCG

7.2.3 Commissioning of safe services

- Ensure safeguarding children is appropriately considered and referenced in all stages of the commissioning cycle
- Continue to ensure that safeguarding children compliance is a requirement of performance monitoring
- To evaluate and update the Integrated Safeguarding dashboard; to include key metrics for safeguarding in maternity services.
- To develop a robust quality assurance process in relation to payment for GP reports for safeguarding children conferences.

Appendix 1: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group
CDOP	Child Death Overview Panel
CDR	Child Death Review
CE	Child Exploitation
CLA	Children Looked After
CLAS	Children Looked After and Safeguarding
CPB	Corporate Parenting Board
CQC	Care Quality Commission
CSE	Child Sexual Exploitation
CYP	Children and Young People
ESR	Electronic Staff Record
FGM	Female genital mutilation
GP	General Practitioner
HWB	Health and Wellbeing
JTAI	Joint targeted area inspection
MARAC	Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference
NHS	National Health Service
PSQAC	Patient Safety Quality Assurance Committee
SCR	Serious Case Review
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
SGC	Safeguarding Children
SSCP	Somerset Safeguarding Children Partnership
SSP	Safer Somerset Partnership
Sompar	Somerset Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
TST	Taunton and Somerset NHS Foundation Trust
UASC	Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children
YDH	Yeovil District Hospital NHS Foundation Trust