

Wales Safeguarding Procedures: Briefing following the launch 11 November 2019

The new Wales Safeguarding Procedures were launched at the Temple of Peace in Cardiff during Safeguarding Week 2019

Safeguarding is important to protect people at risk from harm. We all have a responsibility to ensure that children and adults at risk in our communities are able to live safely, free from abuse and maltreatment. Knowing how to spot the signs of someone being the subject of harm or exploitation and knowing what to do is everybody's - including the third sectors' - business.

The Wales Safeguarding Procedures represent the first time there is one set of documents which incorporates the information on how we should safeguard children and adults across Wales. The Procedures provide a consistent approach to children and adults safeguarding. They show a slight change in focus – the need to understand risk, with reporting at the earliest opportunity along with prevention.

The Wales Safeguarding Procedures provide practical guidance that aims to be easy to understand and can be applied across all sectors and age groups. Implementation is the next stage, which should enable the development of good practice across the whole of Wales, including across the third sector. There are two main principles that run throughout the Procedures -

- child/person-centred practice, and
- that safeguarding is everybody's business

The Procedures will not be available in paper form. They have been written as an online resource, so only up to date versions will be available. The plan is that they will be updated on a quarterly basis or when there is new legislation that has an impact. They will:

- Provide consistent practice across all agencies
- Be up to date with legislation
- Ensure the voice of the child and the adult at risk is strong throughout
- Be easy to access and available to anyone, anytime
- Provide pointers for practice.

The procedures have been developed to bridge the gap between current Safeguarding terminology and the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014. For example, there are changes of emphasis

- Terminology has changed, so you will no longer do a referral you will make a report
- From focusing on specific concerns to looking at patterns of behaviour, motivation and ability, ensuring meaningful outcomes for the child or adult at risk.

- The importance of knowing about people's wider issue - recognising that abuse does not occur 'in a bubble'
- Shifting practice from 'Do To' to 'Done With'
- Moving from proving abuse and / or neglect to promoting planning and early intervention and prevention
- Increased focus and support for the victim rather than focus on the perpetrator.

There is a personal duty alongside a professional duty to report. The duty applies at all times, not just when working. At the launch event it was acknowledged there needs to be improvement around collaborative practice - for example, to ensure written forms are progressed as well as telephone reporting is currently, and information from other sectors and from individual citizens needs to be dealt with as seriously as that received from statutory bodies.

Each Regional Safeguarding Board must adopt the Wales Safeguarding Procedures. Training materials will be made available to support the roll out of the Procedures. Training, with an emphasis on the importance of multi-agency training, will consist of a ½ day introductory course, 1 day course, a train the trainer programme, and further modules for specific aspects. More information will follow once it is available.

Full implementation across Wales will be required by April 2020. The website is available at www.safeguarding.wales the App's are available at <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.socialcarewales.safeguarding> (Android) and <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/wales-safeguarding-procedures/id1480837394?ls=1> (Apple)

The NSPCC has useful resources aimed at enabling people to feel listened to. The resources, referred to in the Wales Safeguarding Procedures, are available to everyone; visit www.nspcc.org.uk/listen

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November 2019