



# SAR Quality Markers Guidance for the Review Sub Group / Case Review Group

Overview of Role and Responsibility of the Review Sub Group / Case Review Group in relation to SARs:

- Scrutinise and analyse information provided to support the group in making recommendations to the LSAB Independent Chair
- Coordinate additional information from own agencies as required to make a recommendation about whether or not to commission a SAR
- Coordinate chronology from own agency
- Determine SAR methodology
- Agree draft Terms of Reference
- Agree draft scoping period
- Confirm organisations to be involved in the review. Confirm initial membership of panel (or attendance at learning event etc. dependant on the review methodology)
- Approve any changes to Terms of Reference and scoping period
- Approve any changes to panel membership
- Ensure that relevant members of own organisation (including Board Member, IMR author, SAR Panel Member) are updated about commissioned SARs (including sharing review timeline, terms of reference, emerging learning as appropriate)
- Quality assure final draft of Overview Report, Executive Summary and Action Plan, ensuring that the review is of a sufficiently high standard and that wherever possible, multi-agency actions are SMART and have allocated action owners
- Ensure own organisation is adequately represented at relevant meetings (i.e. Review Sub Group meetings, SAR panel meetings, SAR publication meetings) and in key discussions
- Review Sub Group chair to chair SAR publication meetings
- Ensure that individual agency learning from SARs is shared within own organisation and that assurance is provided to the LSAB Training Sub Group that this has been done
- Be the main point of contact within own organisation for single agency SAR actions updates

Not all Quality Markers are relevant to the Review Sub Group / Case Review Group, as not all link in with their role and responsibilities. The relevant Quality Markers and the questions to be asked for each are listed on the following pages.

# Setting up the Review – Relevant Quality Markers

## Quality Marker 1: Referral

Quality statement – The case is referred for a Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR) consideration with appropriate rationale and in a timely manner

### Questions to ask:

- Does the referral state explicitly which of the statutory criteria the case has been met?
- AND/OR how the case features practice issues to be proactively reviewed before abuse or neglect has occurred, in order to pre-emptively tackle them?
- AND/OR specify clearly any other reason why a SAR is needed?
- Does the information provided evidence the rationale given for why the case is being referred?
- Are explanations provided for any delays in the referral?

## Quality Marker 2: Decision making – what kind of SAR, if any

Quality statement – Factors related to the case AND the local context inform decision making about whether a SAR is needed and initial thinking about its size and scope

### Questions to ask:

- Has meaningful multi-agency discussion informed the recommendation to the Chair?
- Has there been appropriate challenge about how an adult with care and support needs is defined?
- Have there been discussions about the abuse and neglect suffered by the person, included self-neglect?
- Have discussions about any cause for concern about the quality of safeguarding practice, overtly referenced the principles of Making Safeguarding Personal?
- Have discussions about any cause for concern about working together to safeguard, included consideration of all parts of the system - provider and commissioner, direct practice and oversight?
- Has available data from existing audits and reviews been used to identify outstanding learning needs locally, as well as what is already known and does not need to be re-learned?
- Have the benefits of proactively learning from practice issues in the case, been considered in tandem with identifying whether any of the statutory criteria have been met?
- Has the recommendation about whether a SAR is needed given an indication of the appropriate size/scope given the case and context?
- Are you clear whether the s42 is completed (where relevant)?
- Have other review pathways been considered and discounted, e.g. DHR?
- Have other parallel processes been identified?

# Setting up the Review – Relevant Quality Markers

## Quality Marker 4: Clarity of purpose

Quality statement – The Safeguarding Adult Board (SAB) is clear and transparent, from the outset that the SAR is a statutory process, with the purpose of organisational learning and improvement, and acknowledges any factors that complicate this goal

### Questions to ask:

- Have you communicated with all the necessary parties (SAB members, involved agency/provider/commissioner leaders, as well as practitioners), a positive message about the purpose of the SAR being learning and improvement of social and organisational conditions to;
  1. enhance partnership working,
  2. improve outcomes for adults and families,
  3. and prevent similar abuse and neglect in the future?
- Is what you are saying underpinned by an agreed organisational accident or incident causation model to aid clarity and provide suitable vocabulary?
- Has meaningful multi-agency discussion allowed for all potential tensions and contradictions to be recognised and managed as best as possible?

## Quality Marker 5: Commissioning

Quality statement – – Decisions about the precise form and focus of the SAR to be commissioned take into account a range of case and contextual factors, in order to make the SAR proportionate to the potential learning and improvement. Decisions are made with input from the SAB Chair and members

### Questions to ask:

- Does the case indicate that there are system conditions leading to poor safeguarding practice or communication?
- Does intelligence from other quality assurance and feedback sources (e.g. audits/complaints) suggest the kind of practice issues in the case and/or their systemic causes are new, complex or repetitive?
- How do the issues and the system conditions indicated in this case, relate to SAB strategic plan as well as current and future priorities?
- Has anything similar has happened before? If a SAR was commissioned, has learning from it been implemented or and is there likely to be new learning to be identified?
- Is there evidence of sufficient good practice to indicate the potential to explore the supportive system conditions and share learning across the partnership?
- What is the capacity of practitioners to be openly involved at this time?
- What is the capacity of the SAB and member agencies at this time to carry out the review and to respond meaningfully to the review outputs?
- Is there is media interest or serious public concern?
- What is the availability of reviewers who are sufficiently experienced or qualified to undertake the review?

# Running the Review – Relevant Quality Markers

## Quality Marker 6: Governance

**Quality statement – the SAR achieves the requirement for independence AND ownership of the findings by the SAB and member’s agencies**

### Questions to ask:

- Are senior managers being kept up to date in order to cultivate ownership of the conclusions, and avoid any surprises about the learning being identified?
- Are there mechanisms in place to allow challenge to the information and analysis of the review, so that the findings/ recommendations have been thoroughly considered before the report is finalized and taken to the SAB?
- Have quality assurance mechanisms managed the tension in a fair and balanced way, between the independence of reviewer(s) AND local involvement, and avoided agency defensiveness and inappropriate pressure?

## Quality Marker 8: Parallel processes

**Quality statement – When there are parallel processes, the SAR is managed to avoid as much as possible duplication of effort, prejudice to criminal trials, unnecessary delay and confusion to all parties, including; staff, the person, and relevant family members**

### Questions to ask:

- Has early contact been made with all those managing all relevant processes, to achieve the best fit between them for the circumstances?
- Have you considered any parallel processes in the terms of reference/scoping document?
- Has there been early discussion with the police/ Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) and/or coroner and the SAR and where necessary a face-to-face meeting?

## Quality Marker 7: Management of the process

**Quality statement – The SAR is effectively managed. It runs smoothly, is concluded in a timely manner and within available resources**

### Questions to ask:

- If there have been any changes in key personnel, has there been a reflection on any impact on the SAR?

## Quality Marker 12: Analysis

**Quality statement – The SAR analysis is transparent and rigorous. It evaluates and explains professional practice in the case, shedding light on routine challenges and constraints to practitioner efforts to safeguard adults.**

### Questions to ask:

- Does the assessment of practice in the case reflect the principles of Making Safeguarding Personal and the six core adult safeguarding principles?
- Is the research evidence about what constitutes good practice, being used in the analysis, up to date and accurate?
- Is it clear what specific techniques have been used to minimise the bias of hindsight and outcome knowledge on the analysis?
- Does the presentation of the analysis show the working-out process adequately, allowing the interpretation to be critiqued and counter evidence to be brought to bear?
- Where reference is made to practice beyond the case, either at the time of the case or in the present, is it clear where the knowledge about the wider safeguarding system has come from?
- Does the analysis show clearly how the conclusions relate to the individual case as well as why they are relevant to wider safeguarding practice?
- Does the lead reviewer(s) access supervision or peer challenge to support the quality of analysis undertaken?

# Outputs, Outcomes and Impact from the Review – Relevant Quality Markers

## Quality Marker 13: The Report

**Quality statement – the report identifies clearly and succinctly the analysis and findings of the SAR, while keeping details of the person to a minimum. Findings reflect the casual factors and systems learning the analysis has evidenced**

### Questions to ask:

- Does the report get beyond description and foreground deeper analysis about social and organisational conditions that help or hinder effective, personalised safeguarding?
- Does the amount of information provided in the report satisfy the need for privacy of the adult, relevant family members and individual staff while providing sufficient information to make accessible the SAR analysis, in order that it can support necessary improvement work?
- Does the report contain findings and/or recommendations that reflect the areas deemed priority for improvement?
- Is there transparency in how conclusions have been reached?
- Does the report adequately manage accessibility and explaining complex professional and organisational issues?
- Is the tone and choice of words appropriate to the review?
- Does the structure of the report make it straightforward to identify relevant analysis and findings and coding them for the national SARs Library?