



Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board: PRESS RELEASE

Review recommends improvements following death of Somerset resident

A series of recommendations have been made by the Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board (SSAB) following the death of a Somerset resident.

The recommendations are shared in a report published today, 18/08/2020, which documents the long-term deterioration of Luke (pseudonym), a resident in a Somerset care home. Luke, aged 67 at the time of his death, had been a resident in the care home for about 18 months, and had had a long history of neglecting his own health and well-being before he moved there. Luke had experienced a number of traumatic events in his life and, although Luke died from a diabetic foot ulcer, the focus of the report surrounds how agencies worked together in their approach to Luke and concerns about his mental capacity and neglect of his own wellbeing.

Highlighting improvements that could be made in the way information is recorded and shared across the health and social care system, the report makes various recommendations, including:

- That care providers document any concerns about an individual neglecting their own health and wellbeing, and these should include details of any assessments of mental capacity under the Mental Capacity Act (2005), and approaches used to explore the reasons for their self-neglecting behaviour.
- If a provider of care and support to adults is experiencing difficulty in confirming whether or not an adult has capacity to make a decision, and the consequences of the decision outcome could result in harm to the person, then they should have arrangements in place to escalate this to the relevant Commissioner or the Safeguarding Service for advice; or to call a Multi-Disciplinary Team meeting as appropriate to the circumstances of the case
- There are also specific recommendations to improve awareness of specialist Diabetic Foot Infection Guidelines, and sharing of information to GP's

The learning from the review will be shared with all providers of residential and nursing care operating in Somerset, the Somerset Registered Care Provider Association (RCPA), the Care Quality Commission (CQC), the Local Medical Council, employees of Somerset County Council's Adult Social Care Service, and NHS Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group's Continuing Health Care Team.

Keith Perkin, Independent Chair of the SSAB said:

“The Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board exists to protect people at risk of abuse and neglect, including when people self-neglect, and to make sure lessons are learned so that necessary improvements can be made. I want to take this opportunity to offer Luke’s family my sincere condolences for their loss.

Luke’s tragic story has highlighted that further work is required to sharing information across the health and social care system to safeguard those with support & care needs in Somerset. I am pleased to see that the organisations involved were open to these improvements and lessons have been learned. I will now work with SSAB partners to ensure that this learning becomes normal practice.”

The Safeguarding Somerset Adults Board is made up of all the organisations which have a role in preventing the neglect and abuse of adults, including: Somerset County Council, Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group, Avon & Somerset Police, Somerset NHS Foundation Trust, Yeovil Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, National Probation Service, Registered Care Provider Association and Healthwatch Somerset.

For more information about the SSAB and a copy of the report visit www.ssab.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk

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Notes to editors