



## **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 from respiratory distress and pneumonia

The recommendations are shared in a report published today (18 January 2023) which documents Robert's (pseudonym) self-neglect, which was known to be happening for at least two years prior to his death. This review is to ensure that the services Robert came into contact within the lead up to his death were providing the appropriate level of care and to identify whether they could have prevented Robert's levels of self-neglect which contributed to his death.

Highlighting weaknesses in the way Robert has been assessed and the information recorded and shared across the health and social care system, the report makes various recommendations, including:

- That there should be a multi-agency action plan to increase understanding and recognition of self-neglect.
- That Somerset County Council Adult Social Care and Somerset Integrated Care Board (for GPs) should agree a multi-agency action plan aimed at improving the understanding of the practical application of the Mental Capacity Act.
- That the Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board should lead an analysis of the extent to which the policy, procedural and organisational environment in Somerset fosters effective ways of working with people who self-neglect.
- That there are open channels of communication between partner agencies, clear pathways and referral points for raising concerns including safeguarding concerns, and a shared understanding of statutory powers and duties and the self-neglect policy and procedure.
- That when supporting an individual's rehousing or move to temporary accommodation, organisations should ensure there is communication with the individual's family
- That GP practices should give more consideration to follow-up when patients disengage with the assessment and treatment of their medical health conditions.

The learning from the review will be shared with the NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB), housing employees within district councils and housing associations, employees of Somerset County Council's Adult Social Care Service and the Community Council.

Keith Perkin, Independent Chair of the SSAB said:

“The Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board exists to protect vulnerable people, and to make sure lessons are learned so that necessary improvements can be made. I want to take this opportunity to offer Robert’s family my sincere condolences for their loss.

Robert’s story has highlighted the need to truly understand self-neglect and how we share the information across the health and social care system to support and safeguard those in Somerset. Throughout this process, all organisations have offered their contributions openly and honestly to allow us to learn from Robert’s sad death. I will now work with SSAB partners to ensure that this learning becomes embedded within daily 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 NHS Integrated Care Board, 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](http://www.ssab.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk)

**ENDS**

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**Notes to editors**