



Coventry Safeguarding Adults Board

Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement Framework 2022 - 24

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1. Introduction

The Coventry Safeguarding Adults Board (CSAB) aims to ensure that adults who have care and support needs and who are unable to protect themselves are safeguarded. The Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement Framework helps the Board to do this by using a wide range of key quality and performance indicators, aligned to the CSAB priorities, that are scrutinised and challenged through a robust, systematic process. This will provide assurance to the Board and the CSAB Executive Group that partner agencies have effective systems, processes and practice in place to improve outcomes and experience in the context of safeguarding adults at risk, and that the quality of work undertaken in Coventry is to a sufficient standard.

The framework will also ensure that the CSAB is able to meet statutory requirements as laid out in the Care Act 2014. The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE)¹ also offers guidance to Safeguarding Adult Boards in relation to quality assurance.

The Board has three main priorities; each priority has a set of actions to ensure they are delivered, and a quality assurance schedule to test their implementation and impact on protecting adults in the city.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the framework is to draw together the various quality and performance improvement methods that are used to monitor and evaluate the work of agencies from across the partnership. The framework provides the mechanism for the Board and the CSAB Executive Group to understand what the strengths and areas for development are in safeguarding activity in Coventry, hold local agencies to account regarding their safeguarding arrangements, and ensure there is continued evaluation and improvement of the quality of services being provided and outcomes achieved.

3. Roles & Responsibilities

This framework is for the CSAB, partner agencies and all local organisations who work with adults with care and support needs. Partner agencies are expected to endorse this framework and embed it into their organisational and workforce learning and development policies. In addition, partner agencies and local organisations are responsible for:

- Providing staff and other resources to deliver the framework
- Contributing to audits and reviews of practice undertaken by the CSAB
- Ensuring that frontline staff are informed about lessons learnt from these reviews of practice
- Feeding back on action taken as a result of recommendations from audits and reviews
- Ensuring that lessons learnt from these reviews of practice are embedded into practice

The implementation and sustainability of the framework is the responsibility of the CSAB Quality, Assurance and Performance Subgroup (QA&P); this group will maintain and develop the framework responding to local and national policy and agenda with a formal review every 2 years. They will also retain responsibility for reporting progress to the Board on a quarterly basis.

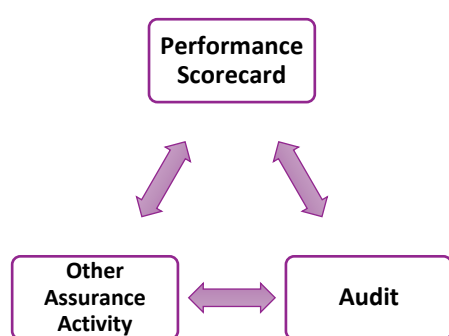
¹ <https://www.scie.org.uk/care-act-2014/safeguarding-adults/safeguarding-adults-boards-checklist-and-resources/quality-assurance/>

4. Quality Assurance Framework

The Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement Framework is a vehicle through which partner agencies and a wider cohort of organisations can demonstrate their contribution to effective safeguarding services in Coventry. Quality assurance is about assessing the quality of the work we undertake to safeguard adults at risk and understanding the impact of this work in terms of its effectiveness in helping to keep vulnerable adults safe, improve outcomes and making a positive difference to their lives. Effective quality assurance will contribute to a culture of continuous learning and improvement.

It is essential that the multi-agency work conducted is evaluated and monitored to continually drive and improve performance, identify areas for development, evidence good/best practice, and provide effective challenge to all partner agencies.

To deliver effective and impactful quality assurance there are three key work strands:



1. The production of a quarterly Performance Scorecard which measures several key performance indicators linked to Board priorities

2. A planned programme of audit activity which focuses on statutory audits (Care Act 2014) and thematic audits, chosen by the Board linked to the priorities, in response to identified areas of concern, as a result of Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs) or from policy or workforce development activity.

3. Other assurance activity via the QA&P subgroup to provide assurance of best practice and areas of learning to the Board and Executive Group. This can include monitoring and sharing single agency audits and ensuring that partners have effective quality assurance processes in place.

The role of partner agencies is crucial to the success of the quality assurance work of the CSAB, and agencies will be expected to submit performance data and respond to multi-agency audit requests within the agreed timescales.

4.1 Performance Scorecard

The scorecard is populated by the Quality Assurance Manager on a quarterly basis and brought to the QA&P subgroup for consideration and refinement before being presented, by the Quality Assurance Manager, to the Board. The data should emanate from all partners represented at QA&P² and actively provide assurance that work is protecting and improving outcomes for adults with care and support needs across the city.

The scorecard indicators should align with CSAB priorities to ensure that the data collected can provide assurance around areas of concern; this makes the scorecard a dynamic and evolving document, and it should be formally reviewed and updated after each re-set of Board priorities and objectives.

The scorecard indicators can also be updated at any time, provided the amendment(s) are approved by a quorate QA&P subgroup and formally recorded in the meeting minutes.

² Most data within the current Performance Scorecard (2022/23) is provided by Coventry Local Authority and Coventry & Warwickshire Partnership Trust

4.2 Audit Programme

Multi-agency audits provide a valuable means of identifying strengths and areas of good practice alongside key lessons for improvement; having a systematic auditing process in place allows the CSAB to monitor the quality of practice and target areas that require further development.

The CSAB aims to conduct a maximum of 4 multi-agency thematic audits each year (one per quarter) reviewing specific areas aligned to the Board's priorities and emerging safeguarding themes in Coventry. The annual audit programme will be discussed and agreed by the QA&P Subgroup before any audits commence.

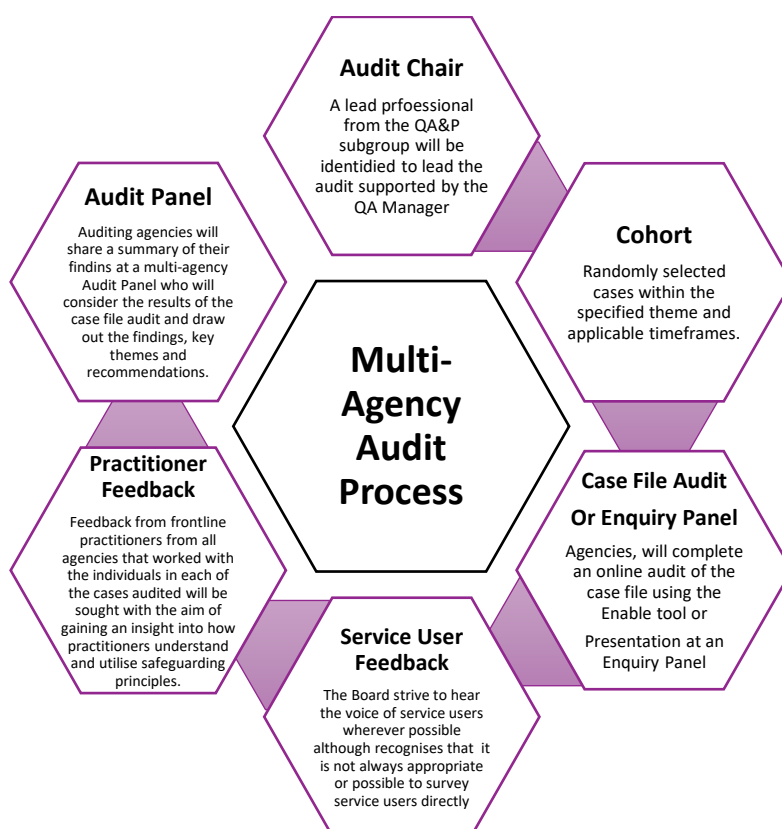
The CSAB is also responsible for co-ordinating the Care Act Compliance audit (biennial); this includes receiving the submissions, analysing the data, and producing a report that includes recommendations and/or actions for each agency.

The Quality Assurance Manager is responsible for collating and analysing the results from all audit activity and producing the final audit report which goes to the Audit Chair for sign-off. The report then goes to the QA&P Subgroup for their consideration and final amendments, and once agreed the final report is presented at the CSAB Board meeting.

4.2.1 Thematic Audit Process:

Thematic audits will follow the same general framework designed to encompass a multi-agency approach, allow for triangulation of data, review the effectiveness of practice, and capture the legal requirements of all agencies in supporting and protecting adults at risk.

Multi-Agency Audit Process:



All recommendations and actions are held in the QA&P audit action plan and tracked by the subgroup until completion.

4.2.2 Care Act Compliance

The statutory guidance issued to support the Care Act 2014 states *“Each SAB should...determine its arrangements for peer review and self-audit.”*

The Care Compliance Audit affords the CSAB with an overview of the safeguarding arrangements that are in place within partner agencies identifying:

- Strengths, in order that good practice can be shared
- Common areas for improvement where organisations can work together
- Single agency issues that need to be addressed
- Partnership issues that may need to be addressed by the CSAB
- Issues that need to inform the Board’s priorities and strategic plan

The CSAB completes this piece of multi-agency assurance work every 2 years, using the CSAB secure online audit tool, to understand agencies’ general compliance with the Care Act 2014. The audit was created (and is updated) by a regional group of Board representatives from across the Midlands area and this joined up working means that, after audits are completed across the region, comparative work can take place to identify any wider regional themes, share good practice and find collective solutions.

The audit assesses each organisation against standards based on the requirements of the Care Act 2014, and throughout the process consideration must be given to evidencing improved outcomes for adults as a result of the arrangements.

The Quality Assurance Manager will co-ordinate this audit and complete the report for the QA&P subgroup to approve before presenting the report at the CSAB Board meeting.

Agencies are also expected to report on progress of improvements to their safeguarding procedures during the previous 12 months.

4.3 Other Assurance Activity

The CSAB may decide to undertake an impromptu audit at any time; this would normally be the case following a Safeguarding Adults Review highlighting areas of concern, any identified policy or workforce development issues or following receipt of other other information indicating areas for quality assurance focus.

If such work is requested, the QA&P subgroup must consult the audit schedule document and decide on the priority area to be quality assured. Timings must be considered in relation to other audits being undertaken by the QA manager and partner agencies to ensure no clash of timings, and that staff are not being asked to complete too much audit activity simultaneously.

The Executive Group may request a report for any other area of concern which comes to light; this may stem from an emerging theme or Performance Scorecard data. The Quality Assurance Manager will undertake this work to a clear deadline, and with an understanding that any unpremeditated requests for information will be short and concise, with a focus on providing a broad spectrum approach rather than a ‘deep dive’ into information.

Should the Executive Group or QA&P decide more extensive information is required from any partner then the agency lead should take that request back and arrange for either:

- A report to be prepared ready for the next subgroup meeting, or
- For agency representative to attend the next meeting to give a presentation on their area and take questions from QA&P members.

The Executive Group or QA&P may make any other requests for quality assurance work within the parameters of the group scope and purpose, utilising the role of the Quality Assurance Manager and agency leads to ensure CSAB priorities are investigated, managed and met. An example of this is the Position Statements which were requested from partner agencies during the Covid-19 pandemic.

4.4 Recommendations, Actions and Learning

It is important that the CSAB uses performance data and outcomes of audits to learn, improve practice and assess the impact of changes resulting from audit findings on adults at risk in Coventry.

At the end of each audit or piece of quality assurance work, a set of concise and appropriate recommendations will be made that aim to drive improvement and influence future practice. The recommendations will be formulated into a SMART Action Plan and the implementation of this will be monitored by the QA&P Subgroup until completion.

The QA&P subgroup will also consider the most appropriate and effective ways for sharing the learning from each thematic audit across the partnership. This could include several approaches:

- Development of One Minute Guides
- Webinars
- Presentations at relevant forums
- CSAB newsletter, website and social media platforms
- Informs workforce development activity
- Learning events

5. Continuous Improvement

The framework enables the CSAB to make informed decisions at a strategic level to ensure continual improvement in safeguarding practice. Regular review of learning will allow the Board to make informed plans for their activity which leads to things being done differently and better. This cycle of continuous improvement works on both an annual and a quarterly level and ensures that learning becomes embedded in front line practice. The table below outlines how the cycle works:

