



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

The Single Unified Safeguarding Review

Learning from the past to make the future safer

Young person's version



This document was written by the Welsh Government
February 2023

Contents of the guide

	Page		Page
What is the Safeguarding Review?	2	Involving family and key individuals	7
Why we created the Safeguarding Review?	3	The stages of a Safeguarding Review	8
Our support network	4	How to learn from Safeguarding Reviews?	9
When to do a Safeguarding Review?	5	What do we learn?	10
Who does a Safeguarding Review?	6	Hard words	11



What is the Safeguarding Review?

To make this Young Person's guide simple to use we will use a shortened name for the **'Single Unified Safeguarding Review'** process in the document.

We will simply call this process our **'Safeguarding Review'**

This new process brings together Child Protection Reviews, Adult Protection Reviews and Domestic Homicide Reviews all under one umbrella - the Single Unified Safeguarding Review (SUSR).

We need to change the way we deal with safeguarding problems in Wales.

Remember, for an explanation of any difficult words please go to the **hard words** section on page 11.

Safeguarding means protecting a person's health, wellbeing, and human rights, especially children and adults most at risk, to make sure they can live free from abuse and harm.

When a child or adult that we are safeguarding comes to harm, we must look at what happened.

We must work together to see what could have been done differently to stop the harm from happening.

This is called a Safeguarding Review.

In the past, when a safeguarding problem happened, we used to have lots of meetings to talk about it. We found that having lots of meetings about difficult topics made people feel:

upset, tired and frustrated

This was unfair on the people involved so we wanted to make the process easier for them.

We have now developed the Single Unified Safeguarding Review – our **Safeguarding Review** – a way of dealing with safeguarding problems.



Why we created the Safeguarding Review?

We created the Safeguarding Review to keep people safe from harm in the future.

We want to make the safeguarding process better and make it easier to learn from cases.

To do this we have combined all previous reviews to make the review process more simple, meaning that families only have to go through the process once.

The reviews are not about blaming staff for making mistakes.

They are to make sure we learn from every case.

It is important that everyone is open and honest during a Safeguarding Review because that is how we will make things better.

It is also important that people who are at risk have their say because their voice matters.

Aims of the Safeguarding Review

Some of the aims of the review are:

- Making one Safeguarding Review process for everyone in Wales to follow
- Bringing lots of professionals into **one** meeting to talk about safeguarding problems, rather than having lots of meetings
- Making life easier for families or victims involved and make sure they have fewer meetings to go to
- Getting things done more quickly without losing quality
- Making sure we do things better in the future
- Making sure staff have much needed support from managers
- Making sure staff understand the impact difficult situations have on families
- Making sure we learn from complicated cases



Our support network

To reach our aims for the Safeguarding Review we have created a support network.

The support network will include:

- A place where all finished Safeguarding Reviews will be kept and professionals will be able to read these past reviews to help them learn
- A team who will make sure we learn from things that have gone wrong
- The team will write reports about things that most often went wrong
- The team will deliver training and host events to share best ways of working and lessons learned across Wales
- The team will talk about serious issues that need to be dealt with on a national or UK level
- The team will link what we learn to policies and plans in Wales and will support changes to the law and make sure we are working in the best ways



When to do a Safeguarding Review?

When someone has died or been seriously harmed we will do a Safeguarding Review to find out what happened. We won't do a Safeguarding Review for every case we see.

We will do a Safeguarding Review when:

- We think a child or adult at risk has been **abused** or **neglected**.
- Someone aged 16 and over has died and been killed by a person they are related to, or had a relationship with
- We think this person died from violence, abuse or neglect by someone they are related to, or had a relationship with
- Someone takes their own life and we think they did it because someone was harming them
- Someone has died and they have been killed by someone who has used mental health services in the last year
- There has been a death using an **offensive weapon** and the person is aged over 18

Abuse is when someone hurts you or treats you badly. There are different types of abuse.

Neglect is a type of abuse. It means someone has not given you the care you need.

An **offensive weapon** is something someone would use to cause harm to another person, for example a knife. We will also see if we knew about this child or adult at risk before. And if we should have been working harder to keep them safe.

Who does a Safeguarding Review?

It is important that the right people do a Safeguarding Review and that they are clear on what their roles are. Every Safeguarding Review will have the following people involved from their local authority, their local health board, the police and other agencies. They will form the Case Review Group and they will decide if a Safeguarding Review is needed.

How to do a Safeguarding Review?

Regional Safeguarding Boards, a team of professionals will manage the Safeguarding Reviews in their area. There are 6 in Wales and they oversee safeguarding in their area. Regional Safeguarding Boards will put together a Case Review Group.

The Case Review Group will:

- Talk to the child or adult at risk if needed and to their family members
- Talk to staff who have been working with the child or adult at risk and to their families
- Make sure things are done properly and that staff learn from the case
- Send a report back to their local Regional Safeguarding Board with an action plan

The Review Panel

Then the review panel will manage the review process and get all the information about the case together. They also make sure that everyone learns from the review. Review panels should all be professionals and should be the same group of people all the way through the review.

But they must not have had anything to do with the case before.



Involving family and key individuals

For every review that we do different people will need to be involved. They can be key family members and:

- The victim
- The perpetrator
- Friends
- Community staff
- Neighbours
- Colleagues
- Employers

We have created some guidelines for this:

- Key individuals will be contacted as soon as possible
- They will be kept up to date about what is happening in the review if that is what they want
- Key individuals will be told about the process and what will happen
- We will provide families and individuals with a contact person
- We will support the key individuals through the review process
- We will use easy to understand language throughout
- We will communicate in a language of your choice
- If families and key individuals feel that the report is not quite right they can suggest changes
- Families and key individuals should know who to contact if these guidelines are not followed

When the review is about a child or adult at risk

In the past children and younger adults were not always able to speak at reviews.

In our experience we find that it is best if all people, including young people, are involved even if only a small amount.

- Regional Safeguarding Boards will try different ways of working with families
- We will give feedback from reports to family members in the format they want

There are many stages to go through to complete a Safeguarding Review.

Timelines

Timelines show the dates of when certain things happened.

Timelines should go back far enough so we can understand the full story. But they should not go back more than 12 months in most cases.

Other documents

It is useful to create a document showing all the family members in a case and how they relate to each other.

We might realise we can't do a review on a certain case. If we stop, we will write a report to explain why.

Learning from Safeguarding Reviews

At the start of every Safeguarding Review we will hold a learning event so everyone can discuss the case and learn from it.

We will use old cases to help us.

After the review we will write a report about what we have learnt.

We will also write an action plan. This will say what we need to do to improve safeguarding.

This whole process is very important and helps everyone to do a better job in the future.



How to learn from Safeguarding Reviews?

The most important part of the Safeguarding Reviews is what we can learn from them.

This will help keep children and adults at risk safer in the future.

The Wales Safeguarding Repository was created as a place to store all Safeguarding Reviews. Storing all Safeguarding Reviews in one place makes it easier for everyone to learn from them.

The Safeguarding Review Coordination Hub will use the old reviews to understand what cases are happening in Wales and to see how to make safeguarding better.

Learning events

The Safeguarding Review Coordination Hub will run learning events every 6 months.

Multi-Agency Professional Forums are events to share information and learn from Safeguarding Reviews. They are arranged by the Regional Safeguarding Boards.

The events give everyone the chance to talk about Safeguarding Reviews and to learn from each other.

These events help to keep children and adults at risk safer in the future.

Anything new we learn at the events should be shared with all professionals across Wales.

Doing Safeguarding Reviews on old cases

Not all cases should have reviews done on them.

Teams and review panels decide which cases have Safeguarding Reviews and which don't.

Sometimes teams decide that it would be useful to do a Safeguarding Review on an old case.

They do this if they think we can learn a lot from these cases.

We follow the same rules for Safeguarding Reviews even if they happened a long time ago.



Safeguarding Reviews are about learning and making improvements.

Safeguarding Reviews are not about punishing staff for mistakes.

During a Safeguarding Review we might realise that staff did something wrong or that they broke the law. We might need to talk to the police.

But this should not stop us from doing the Safeguarding Review.

If someone complains, we have a complaints process that should be followed.

Protecting private information

Some of people's private information will be shared in Safeguarding Reviews.

But people's private information should be protected as much as possible.

For example, we should use fake names in reports to protect people.

And we should make sure reports and documents are kept somewhere safe.

We might need to tell people what information we have about them.

We need to make sure we follow the law.

Have your say

Now you can have your say on our Safeguarding Review process.

Please use our **Safeguarding Review Response Form** to let us know what you think.

How can we improve our Safeguarding Review process?



Hard words

Abuse	Abuse is when someone hurts you or treats you badly. There are different types of abuse.
Health Board	Local health boards are responsible for planning and delivering the National Health Service in your area. These health services include dental, opticians, pharmacies as well as doctor surgeries and hospitals.
Human rights	Human rights are the basic rights and freedoms that belong to every person in the world, from birth until death. They apply regardless of where you are from, what you believe or how you choose to live your life.
Local Authority	Local councils, the most common type of local authority, are made up of councillors who are elected by the public in local elections. Councillors represent their local communities, make important decisions about services and the council's priorities in delivering those services. Councils are responsible for social care and provide some aspects of transport, housing and education. They are also in charge of a range of services including libraries and waste collection.
Neglect	This is a type of abuse. It means someone has not given you the care you need.
Offensive weapon	An offensive weapon is something someone would use to cause harm to another person, for example a knife.
Perpetrator	This is someone who carries out harmful or illegal acts.
Regional Safeguarding Board	The task of each safeguarding board is to protect children and adults at risk within its area.

Safeguarding This means protecting a person's health, wellbeing, and human rights.

Victim A person harmed, injured, or killed as a result of a crime, accident, or other event or action.

Wellbeing Your wellbeing doesn't only mean being healthy, it means:

- being well in your emotions
- feeling safe where you live
- having every chance to do well at school
- having friends
- being a part of a good, strong community
- being safe from violence





Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



Safeguarding for the future

For more information contact:

Website: gov.wales/safeguarding-guidance

E-mail: SUSRWales@gov.wales