

SAB Escalation and Challenge Protocol



Introduction

The purpose of this Protocol is to ensure a prompt, sensitive and professional response to the management of escalating issues and constructively challenging agencies regarding their practice in respect of safeguarding adults in Gateshead.

Who can raise issues using the SAB Escalation and Challenge Protocol?

All professionals have a responsibility to escalate issues and challenge other professionals when they are concerned about any issue relating to safeguarding adults with needs for care and support. This Protocol should be followed by professionals to ensure a speedy resolution to the issues. The SAB Independent Chair will consider the issue and determine what level of response, as detailed below, is required.

Criteria

There is a presumption that any issues referred for a possible SAB Escalation and Challenge will satisfy one of the following criteria:

- A long term issue that has not been resolved despite sustained attempts
- A practice that puts an adult at risk or causes an adult to suffer significant harm
- A failure to act in the best interests of the adult with needs for care and support

Procedure for escalating issues via this protocol

The following is the process for escalating issues to another professional, however it must be noted that the issue may be of such significance and concern that it may immediately go to Stage 3.

All escalations and challenges made via this Protocol should be recorded on the adults file, in line with your agency's recording policy, until Stage 3 when the pro-forma should be used.

When a professional has a concern which satisfies the criteria above, they should address their concern with the other professional involved in the first instance. If this challenge does not address the concern the professional is required to escalate their concern via the following pathway:

Stage 1 - Immediate Resolution

The relevant professional should elevate the concern to their Line Manager. The Line Manager will contact their counterpart (the Receiving Manager) in the other agency to raise the concerns. The Receiving Manager must respond in writing within 5 working days regarding what action is to be taken. The Referring Manager must acknowledge the response and confirm if they are satisfied with it as soon as is practicable. If they are not satisfied and believe the concern remains, they will implement Stage 2 of this Protocol.

Stage 2 – Resolution by Senior Manager

The Referring Manager will escalate the concerns and the action taken to date to their Senior Manager who will refer the issues to a Senior Manager in the receiving agency. The Receiving Senior Manager will investigate the concerns and the action taken and respond to the Referring Senior Manager within 5 working days.

The Referring Senior Manager will acknowledge the response and confirm if they are satisfied with it and the action taken. If they are not satisfied, they will implement Stage 3 of the Protocol.

Stage 3 – Resolution by Director (or equivalent)

At Stage 3 the Director (or equivalent) will pass the information to the relevant Director with a copy to their Designated/Named or Lead Professional in the Referring Agency. The Receiving Director has 3 working days to acknowledge the issue has been received and outline what action will be taken.

The Receiving Agency Director has a further 5 working days to respond to the Referring Agency. The Referrer then has 3 working days to consider the information and advise if they are satisfied with the action taken and the outcome. If the Referrer remains concerned with the action taken, this will be passed to the SAB Business Manager to be addressed at Stage 4.

Stage 4 - Formal Consideration by SAB

Upon receipt of the information:

1. The SAB Business Manager will discuss with the SAB Chair and three statutory partners, as appropriate, to determine how the issue should be addressed. This may be a direct approach to the Agency by referring the issue to be addressed by the agency or for discussion at the SAB.
2. The SAB Business Manager will acknowledge receipt of the issue and inform the referrer of the planned action within 3 working days of receipt of the issue being raised
3. The SAB Business Manager will ensure that all issues and subsequent actions will be recorded on the SAB Escalation Challenge spreadsheet. This will ensure an accurate record of all challenges and the outcomes is held and any themes will be considered on a 6 monthly basis by the SAB Board.

Where the escalated concerns have not been satisfactorily resolved at Stage 3 all information regarding the Escalation and Challenge and the response(s) should be escalated to the SAB Business Manager.

Quality Assurance

Issues referred via this Protocol will be reviewed on a 6 monthly basis by the SAB Quality, Learning and Practice Group (QLP) which reports to the SAB.