

**Template letter to family members, friends and care givers**

Dear XXXXXXX,

Firstly, may I offer my condolences on the sad death of XXXXXXX. I am writing to let you know that Bury Safeguarding Adult Board has decided to undertake a Safeguarding adults review (SAR).

The Safeguarding Adult Board (SAB) has a duty to conduct a SAR in certain circumstances when an adult with care and support needs dies or is seriously injured. The purpose of a SAR is to consider whether there are lessons to be learnt about the ways that agencies, and individual professionals worked together.

XXXXXXX has been appointed as the Independent Reviewer; he/she has no connection with any of the agencies involved other than for the purpose of undertaking reviews.

XXXXXX has organised the 1st panel meeting which will take place on XXXXX, the purpose of the meeting is to scope the review and set a future date for a practitioners learning event.

I appreciate that this is a very difficult time for you. As part of this process, we would like to have your involvement, and XXXXX will make contact with you in due course.

In the meantime, the review will continue, and I would be grateful if you could have a look at the enclosed leaflet as it gives more detail about reviews of this nature and how information will be gathered and shared to learn and improve services where necessary.

If you have any questions or concerns about any aspect of the review process please contact XXXXXX, Tel no: XXXXXX

Yours sincerely,

Bury Safeguarding Adults Board

Email: XXXXX

Tel No: XXXX

**Safeguarding Adult Reviews: Information for family members, friends and care givers**

**Introduction:**

When an adult who needs care and support either dies or suffers serious harm and

* Abuse or neglect is thought to have been a factor, and
* Partners could have worked more effectively to protect the adult concerned

then the Care Act 2014 says that the local Safeguarding Adult Board may need to review what has happened. This is called a Safeguarding Adults Review or SAR for short.

These reviews are to see if there are examples of good practice and also whether or not any lessons can be learned about the way organisations worked together to support and protect the person who suffered harm.

The people in charge of the review understand this is likely to be a very difficult time for you and your family, friends and carers, but we want to learn as much as possible about how to do things better in the future.

We would welcome your involvement in the process as much as possible. We believe you should have the opportunity to discuss any concerns you may have and to share your thoughts and opinions.

This leaflet tells you what happens when a SAR is required to be undertaken, and what you should expect.

**What is the Bury Safeguarding Adults Board (BSAB)?**

The Bury Safeguarding Adults Board brings together the key organisations who work with adults across Bury to make sure that they are working effectively in partnership to keep adults safe; this includes Health services, Police, the Council, Adult Social Care Services, Probation services and others.

BASB is responsible for commissioning safeguarding adults reviews (SARs) for any cases which meet the criteria, as described in the introduction.

**What are Safeguarding Adult Reviews?**

Safeguarding Adult Reviews are one way to improve how well services respond to keep adults, who need care and support, safe from abuse or neglect and aim to prevent what happened, happening to others.

They will try to ensure that public bodies like social services, councils, police and other community based organisations understand what happened and identify where responses to the situation could be improved.

From this, the public bodies hope to learn all the right lessons including those which impact how they work together. These reviews will not seek to lay blame but to consider what happened and what could have been done differently. They will also recommend actions to improve responses to keep adults with care and support needs safe from abuse or neglect in the future.

Safeguarding Adult Reviews are part of the Care Act 2014 and became law from 1st April 2015. They do not replace, but may be in addition to the inquest, or any other form of inquiry or review.

**How will we undertake the review?**

There are different ways in which a SAR can be done, but they involve gathering as much information from as many sources as possible. We can then try to work out exactly what happened, and why. We will consider whether things could or should have been done differently, and ask how things could be done better in the future.

**Who will undertake the review?**

These reviews are commissioned by the Bury Safeguarding Adults Board. An independent person, who has not been involved in the case, will lead the review and write the final report. A review team will be formed from members of the Safeguarding Adults Board or other services that may have provided support to the adult. The review team will not include any professionals who have been directly involved in the case. The review team will look at how the entire community’s response could be improved to help better support victims.

**Your involvement in the review:**

We think family members, friends and carers are the best placed to help us understand what happened. Your contribution will be valuable and may help change the way the services respond to keeping adults with care and support need safe from abuse or neglect.

We appreciate this may have been a very difficult time for you and we do not want to add to your distress but it is important we inform you that the review is taking place and give you an opportunity to be involved. You will be offered a meeting with the Independent Author conducting the review to share your views at the start of the process.

If you do decide to take part in the review, we will ask you to share your understanding of what happened and why.

You can give your thoughts and views in all or some of the following different ways:

* Face-to-face meeting with us,
* Via a telephone conversation, or
* In writing or via a recording.

You will also be informed when the review is completed, and a further meeting will be offered to discuss the findings of the review before the SAB agree whether or not to publish the report. If it is published the report will be available on the Bury Safeguarding Partnership website. Conducting a review is a statutory obligation, therefore families are not asked to consent.

**What happens to the information you share?**

The information you share will help us to build a comprehensive picture of what happened, and in turn will help us identify recommendations for change. These recommendations will then be put into an action plan.

Your input will be confidential, and you will not be named in the final report.

**How long will the review process take?**

It is really difficult to say how long a review will take, as it very much depends on the amount of information to be gathered and/or people spoken to. You will be given a point of contact who keep in touch with you by your preferred means to keep you updated so that you know how the review is progressing.

The review should be completed within six months however the review period could be longer, for example because of potential prejudice to related court proceedings.

**What does the review produce?**

* A detailed report which may be available on a public website, and we use a pseudonym to protect the person’s identity, which you would be welcome to help us choose.
* An action plan to ensure any recommendations made in the report are taken forward appropriately, within a set timeframe.

**Next Steps:**

The decision to take part in this review is entirely yours and if you do not wish to take part your decision will be respected, and we will only contact you to let you know when the review is complete, and the report is available.

If you would like to take part or have any further questions about the review process, please contact the person who has signed the letter attached to this leaflet. They will either answer your questions or direct you to someone who can.

**Publication:**

The Care Act says that the SAB should consider publishing the review so that others may also learn from the findings. Your views on this will be taken into consideration but it is hoped that you will support any decision to publish the report which will be anonymised, and no real names used.