 <p>GIG CYMRU NHS WALES   Iechyd Cyhoeddus Cymru Public Health Wales</p>	<p><b>Name of Meeting</b> Quality, Safety and Improvement Committee</p> <p><b>Date of Meeting</b> 24 July 2024</p> <p><b>Agenda item:</b> 4.6</p>
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<b>Safeguarding Annual Report 2023-2024</b>	
<b>Executive lead:</b>	Claire Birchall Interim Executive Nurse Director, Quality, Nursing and Allied Health Professionals
<b>Author:</b>	Donna Newell, Named Lead for Safeguarding (Corporate)

<b>Approval/Scrutiny route:</b>	This report will be presented for information at the Safeguarding Group on 16 <sup>th</sup> July 2024 and has been signed off by the Interim Executive Director for QNAHPS.
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<p><b>Purpose</b></p> <p>The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an annual Safeguarding report summarising work delivered against the annual Safeguarding workplan for 2023-2024, compliance with current legislation and improvements identified within the Safeguarding Maturity Matrix.</p>
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<b>Recommendation:</b>				
APPROVE <input type="checkbox"/>	CONSIDER <input type="checkbox"/>	RECOMMEND <input type="checkbox"/>	ADOPT <input type="checkbox"/>	ASSURANCE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>The Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Receive assurance</b> from this Safeguarding annual report that the Safeguarding Group and Named Lead for Safeguarding (Corporate) are ensuring that PHW (Public Health Wales) is meeting its Safeguarding responsibilities in line with Legislation, Health and Care Quality Standards and continuous improvement.</li> </ul>				



**Link to Public Health Wales [Strategic Plan](#)**

Public Health Wales has an agreed strategic plan, which has identified seven strategic priorities and well-being objectives.

This report contributes to the following:

<b>Strategic Priority/Well-being Objective</b>	4 - Delivering excellent public health services
<b>Strategic Priority/Well-being Objective</b>	2 - Promoting mental and social wellbeing
<b>Strategic Priority/Well-being Objective</b>	Choose an item.

**Summary impact analysis**

<b>Equality and Health Impact Assessment</b>	An Equality and Health Impact Assessment is not necessary as no decision is required.
<b>Risk and Assurance</b>	Public Health Wales has a legal duty of care towards service users, staff, and members of the public, who come in to contact with the services it provides. Compliance with Legislation safeguards service users and staff from abuse and neglect.
<b>Health and Social Care (Quality and Engagement) (Wales) Act</b>	This report supports and/or considers the Health and Care Standards for NHS Wales Quality Themes Governance, Leadership and Accountability
<b>Financial implications</b>	Investment has been secured for the work associated with Public Health Wales’s position for Disclosure and Barring Service checks.
<b>People implications</b>	N/A



## 1. Purpose / situation

Public Health Wales is committed to ensuring that Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility within the organisation. This supports the delivery of high-quality services and safeguards the health and well-being of both service users and employees.

The purpose of this paper is to provide the Committee with an Annual Safeguarding report summarising the work completed against the Safeguarding workplan for 2023-2024, and outlines safeguarding activity, achievements, and priorities within the reporting period. It is intended to provide assurance to the Committee and the Board in relation to compliance with statutory requirements and obligations, but also reassurance that the organisation continues to develop its safeguarding ability and reach.

Throughout the course of the year, Public Health Wales's Safeguarding Group meetings have continued to ensure we continue to meet our safeguarding and public protection responsibilities.

This report covers the period from 1st April 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.

## 2. Background

Public Health Wales (PHW) have a responsibility to comply with key pieces of legislation. The aim of this annual report is to provide assurance that PHW is fulfilling legislative requirements by summarising and reporting key safeguarding activity in line with the Corporate Safeguarding Workplan across PHW during the period 2023-2024. The Corporate Safeguarding Workplan includes Safeguarding Children and Safeguarding Adults at Risk, making progress against the Safeguarding Maturity Matrix, and considers the specific legislation as outlined below:

- Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act (2014) (SSWBA)
- Violence Against Women Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Act (2015) (VAWDASV)
- Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
- Children Act 2004
- Mental Capacity Act (Amendment) 2019

This annual report seeks to provide assurance to the Business Executive Team and subsequently the Board (delegated to the Quality, Safety, and Improvement Committee) that there are effective organizational arrangements in place to fulfill its statutory responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and is provided on an annual basis.

The Named Lead for Safeguarding has responsibility for Safeguarding Children as well as Adults at Risk. This role ensures PHW is compliant with Statutory Legislation and Guidance above. The Named Lead for Safeguarding takes the organisational strategic lead on all safeguarding related matters for Public Health Wales. Key functions have included ensuring appropriate policies, procedures, pathways, audit, and training are developed and kept updated in line with national legislation and guidance. In addition, the Named Lead for Safeguarding monitors and provides recommendations on any service developments and service level agreements which have the potential to impact on the well-being of children and adults at risk. This ensures the organisation's ability to provide safe and effective care which protects vulnerable people from abuse, neglect and exploitation and compliance with Health and Care Quality Standards.

### **3. Description/Assessment**

Public Health Wales recognises safeguarding is fundamental to the quality and safety of services and is committed to ensuring that a consistently high standards of safeguarding arrangements are in place and is seen as an essential requirement of assuring high quality, safe and effective services, and functions.

The Annual Report is also informed by Health and Care Quality Standards (2023) so that Health services promote and protect the welfare and safety of children and adults who become vulnerable or at risk at any time. The Duty of Quality forms part of the Health and Social Care (Quality Engagement) (Wales) Act 2020, which came into effect on 1 April 2023. The duty defines quality as "continuously, reliably, and sustainably meeting the needs of the population that we serve. To comply with this Duty, elements of Safeguarding improvements that have been implemented throughout the year will be discussed throughout this paper.

#### **3.1 Safeguarding Group**

The purpose of the Safeguarding Group is to oversee, monitor, and support improvement plans against the safeguarding workplan. In addition to share learning within the group and to promote and identify mechanisms for wider learning across the organisation regarding safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk. The Safeguarding group supports the provision of assurance to the Business Executive and the Board/Board Committee in relation to PHW's arrangements for all safeguarding issues in accordance with its stated objectives and the requirements and standards determined by the NHS and Legislation. Over the course of the year, in addition to this monitoring, the group focused on identifying areas for improvement in PHW associated with Safeguarding practice which was included within the Safeguarding Maturity Matrix submission.

Areas of focus included, discussing, and agreeing the safeguarding risk register to include the risk associated with the frequency and compliance with Disclosure and Barring Standard checks. In addition, undertaking an audit in collaboration with People and Organisation Directorate (POD) to understand and strengthen organisational understanding of the risks associated with safe recruitment processes and compliance with Disclosure and Barring checks. Other areas identified for improvement included the more detailed reporting of Safeguarding training compliance. The group also reviewed safeguarding policies and procedures.

### **3.2 Policies and Procedures**

There is a well-established, comprehensive policy review programme, managed through corporate governance, to ensure all policies, procedures are up to date and reflect the latest evidence-based practice. Safeguarding input and follow the necessary review and approvals process.

During 2023/24 the following documents were approved and published:

<b>Policy or Procedure</b>	<b>Update</b>	<b>Approval date</b>	<b>Review date</b>
Safeguarding Policy Version 4	Currently in date	12 October 2023	12 October 2026
Prevent Policy	Reviewed and re published in the reporting period for 2023-2024	18 <sup>th</sup> July 2023	18 <sup>th</sup> July 2026
Managing Allegations of Abuse by Staff Procedure	Incidents have identified a requirement for a section to be strengthened within this procedure. This will be taken forward in the first quarter of 2024-2025.	19 <sup>th</sup> October 2022	19 <sup>th</sup> October 2025
Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Procedure	Reviewed and re published in the reporting period for 2023-2024	12 <sup>th</sup> October 2023	12 <sup>th</sup> October 2026

Children at Risk Procedure	Reviewed and re published in the reporting period for 2023-2024	12 <sup>th</sup> October 2023	12 <sup>th</sup> October 2026
Adult at Risk Procedure	Reviewed and re published in the reporting period for 2023-2024	12 <sup>th</sup> October 2023	12 <sup>th</sup> October 2026

Following professional concerns type incidents being raised during 2023/24, the need to update the 'Managing Allegations of Abuse by Staff procedure' was identified to ensure that Corporate Safeguarding is sighted on all these types of cases. This will be reported as an area of improvement for 2024-2025

### **3.3 Safeguarding Education and Training and Compliance**

PHW adheres to the UK Core Skills Training Framework. All staff are expected to undertake a level of Safeguarding training commensurate with their roles as part of their mandatory training programme. There are 2 levels of training identified as part of mandatory training.

- Level 1 Safeguarding Adult and Children - Completed by all non-patient facing staff every three years.
- Level 2 Safeguarding Adults and Children- Completed by all staff with direct contact with the public and patients every 3 years.

All PHW staff are required to complete Group 1 Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Public Health Wales Act Training as outlined by the National Training Framework.

Group 2 of the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Ask and Act is aimed at professionals who are likely to be in jobs where violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence may be an issue for their client group, who are able to 'Ask and Act'. Training has been delivered to our frontline staff so that they are further supported to identify, support, and act for victims and their families.

The below table illustrates compliance rates as a staff percentage for completed training against the various levels and groups of mandated safeguarding training.

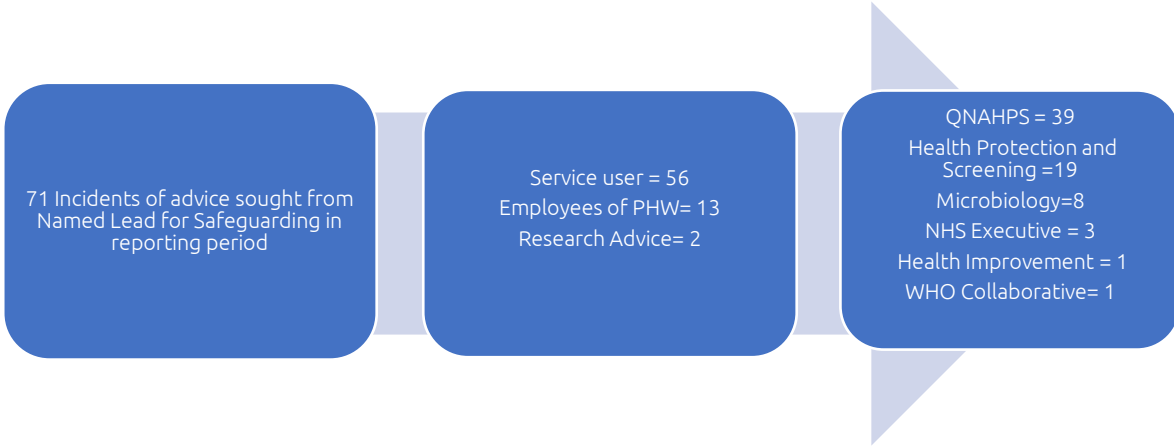
Overall, there is an improving position for all levels of Safeguarding except for Group 2 VAWDASV. A total of 274 staff have received training to date against a target of 502 staff during this reporting period resulting in a compliance rate of 67.26%. A plan is in place for next year to improve overall compliance with Safeguarding training for those Directorates where compliance is below target.



Safeguarding Training	WG 85%	Target	Compliance 2021-2022	Compliance 2022-2023	Compliance 2023-2024	Trend
	PHW 95%	Target				
Level 1 Safeguarding Children			83.95%	88.87%	90.89%	
Level 1 Safeguarding Adults			85.6%	90.26%	92%	
Level 2 Safeguarding Children			83.95%	88.87%	85.38%	
Level 2 Safeguarding Adults			78.03%	83.65%	88.14%	
Level 3 Safeguarding Adults and Children			No data	No data	62.73%	
Group1 VAWDASV			82.74%	86.54%	88.80%	
Group VAWDASV			54%	54.58%	67.26%	

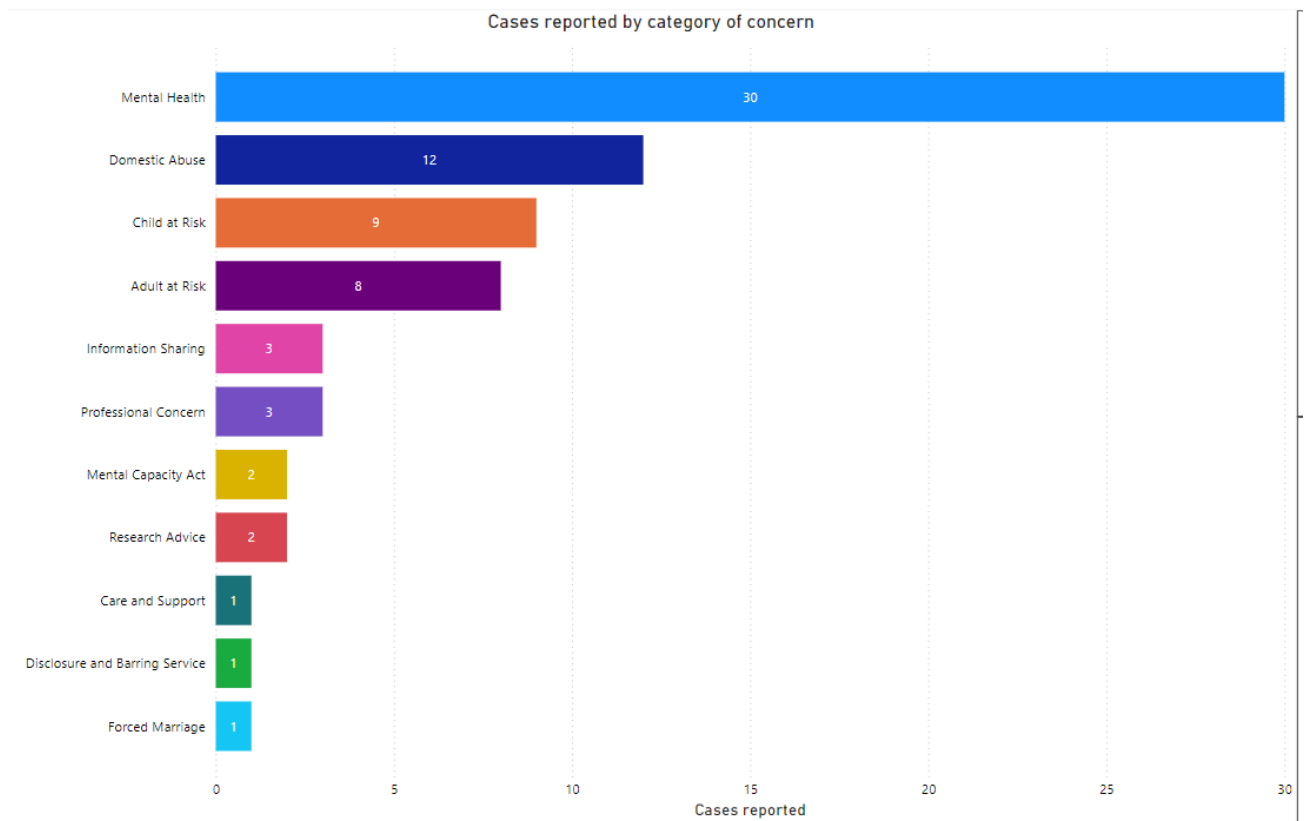
### **3.4 Safeguarding incident reporting and Safeguarding advice**

The Named Lead for Corporate Safeguarding provides Safeguarding advice and support to employees and managers within PHW. Safeguarding advice and support are recorded as Safeguarding incidents and entered onto the Datix incident management system categorised as a Safeguarding concern. This allows for oversight of the incident by the Named Lead for Safeguarding and ongoing management of Safeguarding concerns. The below diagram identifies directorates that have reported safeguarding concerns during 2023/24.



71 safeguarding related incidents have been referred to the Named Lead for Safeguarding for advice and support. This is an increase of 23 compared to the previous year. This suggests increased awareness of Safeguarding within Public Health Wales employees and managers as to when and how to access specialist Safeguarding advice.

The chart below demonstrates the themes of Safeguarding concerns reported.





The main category for advice relates to concerns associated with a member of the public, service user or employee presenting with indicators of deteriorating Mental Health. Support and advice have been provided for these cases. For the first time, professional concerns have been raised with the Named Lead for Safeguarding. Whilst these have not met the threshold for progression to a Professional Strategy Meeting, it demonstrates an improved awareness for Safeguarding advice being sought and accessed leading to employees receiving support from their managers where these concerns could have a significant impact on their wellbeing.

When a child or adult at risk has been identified, staff follow the Wales Safeguarding Procedures in addition to complying with the Social Services and Well-Being Act 2016 in making a referral under a duty to report to the relevant Local Authority. These concerns are captured on the Datix system and categorised as safeguarding by the referring staff.

The Named Lead for Safeguarding has continued to develop employees understanding and knowledge pertaining to Safeguarding thresholds, to ensure that the reports made to Social Services are appropriate and in accordance with the required standard. A total of 15 Safeguarding Reports were made to Local Authorities across Wales between 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024. This is an increase of 9 compared to the previous year. 6 referrals were made for Child Protection Concerns, 7 referrals were made for adult at risk concerns, 2 related to professional concerns. Of all the referrals made, 2 progressed to further enquiries and 13 led to no further action.

### **3.5 Learning from Safeguarding Incidents**

Following a safeguarding incident within Microbiology division the need of a Safeguarding Standard Operational Procedure to support Microbiology staff in understanding their Safeguarding responsibilities was identified as a key area for improvement. This has been developed, presented, and ratified at the Microbiology Methods, Development and Standardisation Group. The Safeguarding Standard Operational procedure will now be considered at an All-Wales level to be used within all laboratories. This is a significant safeguarding improvement in an area which is not direct patient facing. The incident demonstrated the need for staff to be professionally curious and consider potential safeguarding concerns that need to be raised, and the importance of gaining further information to support decision making.

### **3.6 Safeguarding Maturity Matrix Self-assessment**

The Safeguarding Maturity Matrix (SMM) is a self- assessment tool agreed by the Chief Nursing Officer for Wales and the Executive Nurse Director Forum in Wales. It addresses the interdependent strands regarding Safeguarding, service quality improvement, and compliance against agreed standards as well as learning from incidents and reviews. The focus of the SMM is for each Organisation to develop improvement plans which support a consistent approach to Safeguarding across



Wales. The scoring system is set against 6 agreed standards as a Blue, Red, Amber, Green rating.

PHW's Safeguarding Maturity Matrix tool for 2022-2023 with identified improvements was reported retrospectively. The Named Lead for Safeguarding participated in a face-to-face peer review process in November 2023 as part of this year's arrangements. Together, through a facilitated approach, 9 other NHS Wales Health Boards and Trusts considered and discussed individual self-assessment improvement plans in a collaborative and transparent system for learning. PHW's improvement plan formed part of the Safeguarding priorities set for 2023-2024 and beyond. This is reported quarterly into the Safeguarding Group for organisational oversight.

### **3.7 National Safeguarding Week**

This year's National Safeguarding Week was held between Monday 13 and Friday 17 November 2023. The National Safeguarding Service, the Named Lead for Corporate Safeguarding and Head of Emergency Preparedness and Response in Wales, organised a programme of national learning opportunities to raise awareness that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. These organised events focused on Prevent and Gender Based Violence, as well as using the opportunity to raise the profile of the NHS Safeguarding Network. Speakers were invited from South Wales Police, the Home Office and the National Advisor for Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV). All the events were well attended and well received, with a range of 178 professionals across NHS Wales attending, including paediatricians, safeguarding professionals, mental health practitioners, health visitors and school nurses and other employees from Public Health Wales. The success of the week was due to the strength of multiagency partnerships and collaboration and PHW wish to thank all those who contributed and participated in the events.

### **3.8 Networking Day for New Colleagues**

The Named Lead for Safeguarding has supported all 3 of the networking days for new colleagues this year. This gave new colleagues the opportunity to engage in safeguarding conversations and raise awareness of the subject.

### **3.9 Organisational Safeguarding work plan**

There were 9 objectives detailed on the 2023-2024 work plan which were met with further work identified to progress into 2024-2025 due to the need for ongoing work in these areas. In addition to the work identified within the plan, 16

improvements were identified within the Safeguarding Maturity Matrix with 15 progressed and completed. The work not progressed was associated with the delivery of the Young Ambassadors (YA) residential programme including engaging with work on Children’s Rights. This work was paused to consider how to strengthen the governance arrangements along with accountability for any future delivery of the YA programme.

### **Key Safeguarding Improvements identified and progressed in 2023-2024**

- Significant work with multiple strands associated with Disclosure and Barring Service checks across Public Health Wales has been progressed. This includes identifying a new risk associated with this and updating the risk register to reflect this. In addition, the need to, audit to specifically identify further concerns relating to the risk. This required successful collaborative work with POD and Head of Risk.
- Recurrent investment secured for work to revise the DBS (Disclosure and Barring Services) policy, look back at existing workforce and routinely undertake DBS (Disclosure and Barring Services) checks for established staff going forward, ensuring that each employee has the relevant level of Disclosure and Barring Service check required assigned to their role.
- The increased training compliance with mandatory safeguarding modules.
- The submission of the Safeguarding Maturity Matrix to the National Safeguarding Service and Peer Review process with an NHS Wales organisation. This has led to the publication of safeguarding improvement work and shared learning nationally.
- The development of a Safeguarding Standard Operational Procedure for Microbiology services, advocating an All-Wales approach and proposed adoption.
- Working in partnership with Shared Services, the development of a Safeguarding Advice and Support module within the Datix Once for Wales Safeguarding Module has progressed. This aims to capture all Safeguarding advice enquiries and will support reporting of data to the Safeguarding Group. PHW will pilot this Datix module as part of the planned improvements for next year, and if successful it will be implemented at an All-Wales level.
- Representation at the All-Wales Safeguarding Network and subgroups to ensure that Public Health Wales influences national improvements within Safeguarding.



## **Forward look to 2024-2025**

- Continuing with the work associated with the organisational approach to renewal of Disclosure and Barring checks for relevant employees to reduce the risk to service users, the workforce and to mitigate the potential rare cases of harm and reputational risk.
- To pilot the Once for Wales Datix Safeguarding module in August 2024 which will inform quality reporting of Safeguarding nationally.
- Ongoing work to increase the compliance of Group 2 Violence Against Women, domestic abuse and sexual violence and Level 3 Safeguarding training. Work is being scoped to identify an external provider with support from the National Safeguarding Team.
- Submission of the Safeguarding Maturity Matrix to the National Safeguarding Service which will identify further Safeguarding improvements for 2024-2025.
- The development of a service user feedback survey for corporate safeguarding advice and support as a quality improvement initiative



### 3.1 Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015



The annual report seeks to provide the Board and relevant Board Committees with assurance that the organization is meeting its responsibilities in relation to the management of Safeguarding.



Where possible Public Health Wales seeks to prevent the occurrence of concerns by taking a proactive approach to the reporting of Safeguarding concerns to ensure safe services are provided to the users and employees of our services.



The Safeguarding Annual report impacts several of the wellbeing goals, including “A Resilient Wales” and “A More Equal Wales.”



Public Health Wales is committed to dealing with safeguarding events and incidents in an open and fair manner. The report offers insight into how various teams are working together with Public Health Wales NHS Trust to provide the best outcomes.



This annual report is an important aspect of the organisation’s governance arrangements, and, as such, helps the organisation to improve the quality and safeguard the ambitious standards of the services provided by Public Health Wales.

### 4. Recommendation

The Committee is asked to:

- **Receive assurance** from this Safeguarding annual report that the Safeguarding Group and Named Lead for Safeguarding (Corporate) are ensuring that PHW (Public Health Wales) is meeting its Safeguarding responsibilities in line with Legislation, Health and Care Quality Standards and continuous improvement.