



**South East London**  
Clinical Commissioning Group

# GP Safeguarding Leads Forum

3<sup>rd</sup> November 2021

1pm-2.30pm

# Agenda

- **Adult Safeguarding Updates (Meg Morris, Named GP for SG Adults):**
  - Canvassing opinion on draft of new Adult Safeguarding referral for Southwark
  - Domestic Abuse Act 2021
  - Bridging Hotels, Initial Accommodation Centres, growing refugee population, and the impact on General Practice in Southwark: our responsibilities
  - Safeguarding Adults Awareness Week Nov 15-19th
- **Children's Safeguarding Update (Shimona Gayle – Named GP for SG Children):**
  - Guide to assessing bruising in children in Primary Care
- **Community Harm and Exploitation Hub, Southwark (Bethan West-Kevin Dykes, Child Exploitation Prevention Co-ordinator, Community Safety Team, Southwark Council)**

# New Adult Safeguarding Referral Form

- In draft at present
- Building on collaborative relationship with social services in Southwark
- Responding to our requests for (more) feedback following referrals – this should now be standard IN ALL CASES (including those rejected) – I have also asked to try to ensure details of a NAMED CONTACT is passed to referrer for ongoing correspondence and updates
- Considering some cases that may fall outside traditional thresholds (eg modern day slavery, forced marriage, honour based violence)
- Considering coercion/threats as an influence in capacity to give consent
- We have opportunity to feed back by end of this week before it goes live (or changes are made)

# Domestic Abuse Act 2021

- Due to come into law 2021/22 (though no date set yet – looking like 2022)
- [Domestic Abuse Act 2021: overarching factsheet - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/100222/domestic-abuse-act-2021-overarching-factsheet.pdf)  
[www.gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk)
- To strengthen the support for victims of abuse by statutory agencies
- One clause in particular that GP practices need to be especially aware of

# The act proposes to:

- create a statutory definition of domestic abuse, emphasising that domestic abuse is not just physical violence, but can also be **emotional, controlling or coercive, and economic abuse**
- establish in law the office of Domestic Abuse Commissioner and set out the Commissioner's functions and powers
- provide for a new Domestic Abuse Protection Notice and **Domestic Abuse Protection Order**
- place a **duty** on local authorities in England **to provide accommodation based support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in refuges** and other safe accommodation
- prohibit perpetrators of abuse from cross-examining their victims in person in the civil and family courts in England and Wales
- create a statutory presumption that victims of domestic abuse are eligible for special measures in the criminal, civil and family courts

- clarify the circumstances in which a court may make a barring order under section 91(14) of the Children Act 1989 to prevent family proceedings that can further traumatise victims
- extend the controlling or coercive behaviour offence to cover **post-separation abuse**.
- extend the offence of disclosing private sexual photographs and films with intent to cause distress (known as the “revenge porn” offence) to cover threats to disclose such material
- create a **new offence of non-fatal strangulation or suffocation of another person**.
- clarify by restating in statute law the general proposition that a **person may not consent to the infliction of serious harm and, by extension, is unable to consent to their own death**
- extend the extraterritorial jurisdiction of the criminal courts in England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland to further violent and sexual offences
- provide for a **statutory domestic abuse perpetrator strategy**

- enable domestic abuse offenders to be subject to **polygraph testing** as a condition of their licence following their release from custody
- place the guidance supporting the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme ("**Clare's law**") **on a statutory footing**.
- Provide that all eligible homeless victims of domestic abuse automatically have '**priority need**' for **homelessness assistance**
- ensure that where a local authority, for reasons connected with domestic abuse, grants a new secure tenancy to a social tenant who had or has a secure lifetime or assured tenancy (other than an assured shorthold tenancy) this must be a **secure lifetime tenancy**
- **prohibit GPs and other health professionals in general practice from charging a victim of domestic abuse for a letter to support an application for legal aid**
- provide for a statutory code of practice relating to the processing of domestic abuse data for immigration purposes

# Refugees and Asylum Seekers in Southwark

- Prior to covid-19 we had 1x Initial Accommodation Centre in Southwark, with residents' stays relatively short (a few weeks) and their medical needs being met by the GSTT Health Inclusion Team
- Now, with the pandemic, and the new sudden influx of Afghan Refugees in the summer this has grown to 7 hotels, and many are remaining within them for an indefinite period, being registered at numerous practices across the Borough.
- Situation constantly changing, and more people expected.



# Afghan Refugees in Southwark: Guidance from NHSEI

- “Facilitate GP registration for all”
- “Ensure a Robust and Enhanced health assessment on registration including assessment of trauma/mental health needs”
- “Assessment of any trauma and safeguarding concerns will be a key priority”
  - People are likely to have experienced significant trauma and may need immediate safeguards to be put in place
  - They could also be at risk of victimisation and exploitation once in the UK
- Be aware of high prevalence of multi-Drug resistant organisms due to overuse of antibiotics in Afghanistan and in other parts of the world”
- Offer Covid-19 vaccinations and any needed to come in line with UK schedule vaccinations
- Screen for communicable diseases including TB

# Reasonable Adjustments by Practices

- Although length of stay uncertain, **permanent** registration advised
- No need for proof of ID/address or immigration status
- Consider there may not be access or ability to use internet, or possibly even paper literacy for filling in registration forms
- Consider the need for face to face appointments as opposed to telephone or video consults
- Always use an independent interpreter if unable to speak English
- Consult patients alone to get their true story
- Don't assume they are in a place of safety in their current accommodation – if you or they have concerns, it is your duty to raise them with social care.
- Consider asking if the individual feels safe at each consultation, as may be vulnerable to new forms of exploitation and/or abuse

# Bridging Hotels and Initial Accommodation Centres (IACs) in Southwark

- 2 Bridging Hotels (about 180 residents in total)
- 5 IACs (over 1000 residents in total)
  - Unable to share the names/locations as have been advised this has to remain confidential, for safety reasons
- Managed by “Clearsprings Ready Homes”
- Commissioned by The Home Office
- Hotel staff are apparently safeguarding trained (and we hope DBS checked) but it is really the responsibility of us as trained professionals to look to identify many hidden needs/safeguarding concerns and make robust and appropriate referrals.
- DO NOT ASSUME SOMEONE ELSE HAS DONE THIS
- Unclear length of stays but anticipated many months.
- Accommodation/facilities often cramped, shared between men, women and children who are strangers to each other, and hotel staff are being put in particular positions of power – need to consider the safety/impact of current accommodation, not just the impact of past trauma – previous cases of serious harm in these centres.

# Making a Safeguarding Referral for a Bridging Hotel/IAC Resident

- Essentially the same as for any
  - If you are worried about a child or adult in the bridging hotels, **you must tell Southwark Council via a referral form and usual referral routes.**
- **BUT ALSO**
  - **You need to inform the Home Office**

Email: [AfghanResettlementSafeguarding@homeoffice.gov.uk](mailto:AfghanResettlementSafeguarding@homeoffice.gov.uk)

There is not a designated form to inform the Home Office.

**PLEASE ALSO NOTE: Secure your email if sending identifiable information using @nhs.net.cjism.net**

# How to make a referral to Adult social care for refugees/asylum seekers

- Asylum seekers have No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) but in some circumstances where their safety is at risk or they have been victims of abuse, there is still a statutory obligation to intervene, and any safeguarding concern you have **MUST** be referred.
- There is a designated safeguarding team in Southwark for those with NRPF, so it may be worth sending your referrals for asylum seekers to them:
  - [NRPF@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:NRPF@southwark.gov.uk) (as in the new form, discussed earlier!)
- Refugees, including recently migrated Afghan refugees in Bridging Hotels, **DO HAVE RECOURSE TO PUBLIC FUNDS**. If they do not fall into one of the 3 other categories of care and support needs for adults, use:  
[OPPDContaktteam@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:OPPDContaktteam@southwark.gov.uk)
- I would suggest stipulating that they **may have care and support needs** by virtue of being refugees/asylum seekers with no choice in where they are being housed at the moment – under the jurisdiction of the Home Office.

# Safe Surgeries Network

- [Safe Surgeries Initiative - Doctors of the World](#)
- 26 practices now signed up in Southwark – but aiming for a full house.
- Costs nothing
- Offers resources and advice to members to support inclusivity in the practice
  - Posters translated into 25 different languages
  - Advice line including knowledge on eligibility for funded secondary care in different circumstances when otherwise NRPF.
- Training for clinical and admin staff available if needed (free of charge)

# Safeguarding Adults Awareness Week

- 15<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> November
- Able to sign up to sessions in any of the SEL Boroughs.
- Updated programme list with links sent to me yesterday