

Task 4

Safeguarding in an area which is not your main area of work

Guidance:

*Social Care Wales require newly qualified social workers to provide evidence of their understanding of safeguarding work with adults and children. The assignment below will enable you to demonstrate this. **N.B.** if your usual area of work is with children please write about adult safeguarding. If you usually work with adults, then write about child safeguarding. Ensure you meet the learning outcomes for this task (see appendix 5 of the handbook).*

Question a:

In an area **that is not your main focus of work** (see guidance above), explain the relevant legislation, and the national, local and organisational policies and procedures for safeguarding.

As my current role is in a children's team, for this task I will write about Adult safeguarding.

The national Wales Safeguarding Procedures (WSP, 2019) are in place for both children and adults at risk of abuse and neglect. In addition to this, there is the safeguarding guidance "Working together to Safeguard People" (Welsh Government, 2022). These procedures and guidance are based on the same principles within the Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014 (SSWBA). Section 126 of the SSWBA (2014) relates to adults experiencing abuse and neglect or at risk of it. If the Local Authority has cause to believe an adult is at risk it must make enquiries into these concerns and decide on what action to take and who should take it. Furthermore, S.127 are adult protection and support orders that allow authorised officers to speak to an adult at risk in private. In Wales, each area has Safeguarding Board that aims to improve outcome for adults and children at risk (WSP, 2019). Abuse and neglect of an adult can include, physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial and can take place in any setting, either private or otherwise (WSP, 2019).

In relation to more global principles relating to adults, the United Nations Principles of Older persons was adopted by the UN General Assembly on 16 December 1991 and include that older people should have access to education and training opportunities, and have access to adequate food, water, shelter, and community support (Older peoples commissioner Wales, 2022).

Prior to the implementation of the SSWBA in 2014, there was no specific legislation in relation to the protection of adults in England and Wales. In England, the Care Act 2014, under S.42 placed the duty on a local authority to protect adults from abuse and neglect (SCIE, 2022). Each local authority in England has to have an Adult Safeguarding Boards which include Health and the Police (SCIE, 2020).

The Mental Capacity Act 2005 (MCA) is also an important piece of legislation and covers areas such as capacity (and lack of), lasting powers of attorney, deprivations of liberty safeguards, and independent mental capacity advocates. An adult with capacity is able to refuse to participate in a safeguarding assessment, and of an assessment of their care and support needs.

In my role I need to consider as part of completing an assessment (part 3, SSWBA) the adults in a family and that they be at risk of abuse and neglect or in need of care and support as this would impact on their ability to be a parent. As part of an assessment of care and support of a child, I would signpost and refer adults to services such as mental health support, tenancy support, domestic abuse agencies, and appropriate health professionals such as the GP. Collaboration and multi-agency working with adult social work teams is also important to be able to consider any previous support or concerns raised in terms of their health and wellbeing needs. As part of my role, I would liaise with Police in relation to an adult who has been arrested or charged with offences that could place themselves or the children in the family at risk of harm, abuse or neglect.

Word count - 535

500 words (+/- 10%: include your actual word count at the end of each section).

Question b:

Reflect on the difference between safeguarding in adults' and children's work

Since qualifying I have only had practice experience of safeguarding children as I have worked in a Children's team.

There are many similarities when working to safeguard both adults and children. The primary statutory role of safeguarding children comes under the local authority (Law Wales, 2021), and the safeguarding of both adults and children comes under the SSWBA (2014) legislation, although prior to the implementation of this law, there was no specific guidelines around safeguarding. In addition, the WSP (2019) include guidance on safeguarding principles and procedures for practitioners when working with adults and children. Parts 3 and 4 of the SSWBA 2014 set out the requirements for assessing the care and support needs of adults and children and how they can be met.

Adults are protected under S.137 of the SSWBA (2014) and an officer from the Local Authority can apply to the magistrates court, for an adult protection and support order and can do so when an officer has reasonable cause to suspect that a person is an adult at risk. Categories of harm and abuse include sexual, physical, psychological, emotional,

neglect and for adults there is also financial abuse. Financial abuse can include having money or property stolen or being put under pressure in relation to money or property (Law Wales, 2021). Also, adults can be at risk of “self neglect” which means they are vulnerable and although sometimes their choice, it would require an investigation if their care was not being met by the responsible person or they lacked capacity to the risk of neglect (SCIE, 2018).

There is more complex legislation in relation to safeguarding of a child, compared to an adult in relation to investigations by local authority and partner agencies, timescales, assessments, and emergency applications through court for their safety . A parent has legal parental responsibility for their child, and they can make decisions about what happens to the child and consent to care and support offered, unless there are risks of significant harm to a child and consent can be over ridden (WSP, 2019). Adults are able to make their own decisions, and presumed to have capacity and can make unwise decisions, and as a social worker we have little power to intervene (Mantell and Scragg, 2011), unless they have had a Mental Capacity Assessment under the Mental Capacity Act 2005, and they are deemed to lack capacity. Under the Gillick Competence which came into force in 1983, a child can give their permission or consent to medical advice and treatment without their parents knowing or giving their permission, as long as they pass the Gillick test (Mental Capacity, 2022).

Word count - 440

400 words (+/- 10%: include your actual word count at the end of each section).