

Information for Safeguarders on Report Sampling

PURPOSE

The vision of the national Safeguarders Panel is to be excellent, transparent, accountable and respectful in the delivery of services to children. All Safeguarders operate to the Practice Standards for Safeguarders and are measured against the Standards using the Performance Support & Monitoring Framework (PSMF). The PSMF supports the recommendations to Ministers about continued membership of the national Safeguarders Panel. There is a distinct focus in the Practice Standards on reports, and report sampling forms one element of the PSMF. The preparation of reports is a core function of the Safeguarder role and report sampling provides a concrete and qualitative measure that supports self-reflection and brings structure to the planned support sessions.

PRINCIPLES

Independence

- The independent role of the Safeguarder is upheld within the activity of report sampling and more generally performance monitoring.
- Reports are sampled and assessed against the Practice Standards and discussed at individual support sessions with the allocated support manager. The recommendations made by Safeguarders in individual reports will not be the focus of the report sampling.

Proportionality

- Requests for information sent by the Safeguarders Panel Team to SCRA will be proportionate and relevant to the discharge of the duty to operate and manage the Safeguarders Panel as outlined in the Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011 and subsequent regulations.
- Reports requested for the purposes of report sampling will relate to appointments that have ceased. A minimum of 2 reports will be randomly sampled annually per Safeguarder.
- Where possible reports requested will have been written within the past year and not pre-date September 2015.

Accountability

- Requests for reports will be made by Service Managers at the Safeguarders Panel Team to identified SCRA I.T. Technical Manager and the transfer of information will be managed in line with the Memorandum of Understanding.
- The information contained within Safeguarder reports is treated with the utmost respect and care. Details in a report that allow any child, their family and circumstances to be identified will be kept confidential and not shared or retained by the Safeguarders Panel Team beyond the time required for report sampling.
- The Safeguarders Panel Team will maintain robust processes for the storage, retention and subsequent deletion of reports. The reports will be retained only until the discussion regarding the report has taken place with the Safeguarder at the support session. The receipt of and subsequent destruction of the report will be recorded for audit purposes.
Data Loss/ Data Breach Protocols are operational.
- Safeguarders have responsibility to comply with data management requirements and the Practice Standards by not retaining reports and information used in the production of the reports beyond parameters set.
- Safeguarders have responsibility to inform the subject of reports of the possibility of reports being used for report sampling in line with the Data Management Policy and Guidance issued in September 2015.

Transparency

- A consistent assessment tool will be used in the sampling of reports.
- There is equity in the time available for the review of the report. Support managers will make arrangements with individual Safeguarders to ensure both Safeguarder and support manager have access to the report approximately 1 month before support session allowing sufficient opportunity for individuals to review the report.
- Safeguarders will be alerted to any issues to be discussed in relation to the reports at the phone call 2 weeks prior to the individual session.
- Support sessions will address issues and record actions of development or improvement to enable the minimum standards to be achieved or maintained in line with the Practice Standards.
- The support manager will record evidence of strong performance or otherwise to support the process of reappointment. This will be recorded on the Support Session Record and Individual Development Record in usual manner.

AUTHORITY

- The Children's Hearings Scotland) Act 2011 (Safeguarders Panel) Amendment Regulations 2016 includes a power for the SCRA to provide to Scottish Ministers Safeguarder reports for the purpose of monitoring the performance of members of the Safeguarders Panel.
- As contract managers, the Safeguarders Panel Team at Children First discharges duties on behalf of Ministers in relation to the operation & management of the national Safeguarders Panel.

KEY DOCUMENTS

- The Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011 (Safeguarders Panel) Regulations 2012
- The Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011 (Safeguarders Panel) Amendment Regulations 2016
- Privacy Impact Assessment (Scot Gov 2015)
- Data Management Policy and Guidance for Safeguarders
- Memorandum of Understanding between SCRA; Children First and SCTS (updated March 2016)
- Report to Scottish Government on Redacted Report Sampling (Safeguarders Panel Team 2015)
- Practice Note – Role of the Safeguarder – Explaining the Role
- Practice Notes for Safeguarders on Reports
- Safeguarders Panel Team Data Loss Protocol
- Safeguarder Panel Leaflets

PROCESS FOR REQUESTING REPORTS

- Requests for reports will be made by service managers at Safeguarders Panel Team to identified SCRA I.T. Technical Manager
- Report sampling will be coordinated and monitored by the identified admin and service manager lead in the Safeguarders Panel Team.
- There will be a proportionate distribution of requests for reports across all locality offices.
- Where possible reports will not pre-date September 2015.
- If there is not sufficient detail in a report selected the service managers may need to request an alternative report.
- Requests for reports will be made by service managers to SCRA using agreed template and secure email service.
- SCRA will make arrangements for reports to be identified and emailed within agreed timeframe to the Safeguarders Panel Team secure email service.

- If there is a difficulty in obtaining a report, SCRA will make arrangements to alert the Safeguarders Panel Team as soon as possible to ensure alternative reports can be requested.
- Support managers will make arrangements with individual Safeguarders to ensure the safe transfer and receipt of report to be sampled at support session. Safeguarders are asked to exercise due care in the storage of report identified for report sampling purposes and will be asked to return the report at end of support session.