



**South Ayrshire
Adult Protection Committee
Biennial Report
2018-2020**

October 2020

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Executive Summary

This Biennial Report on the work of the Adult Protection Committee in South Ayrshire shows continued progress on the development and effective implementation of policies, procedures and systems designed to minimise the risk of abuse to adults.

Professor Paul Martin was appointed as Independent Convenor in early 2018 and his tenure in this role was extended in 2020. His appointment provided an opportunity for the APC to review the work that it had undertaken in recent years, to further build on strengths and to address areas that have been identified for improvement. This included the creation of four new inter-agency sub-groups which supported the work of the main Committee in areas such as communication and awareness raising, self-evaluation, training and policy and practice.

The renewed focus on these areas lead to improved quality assurance for local communities and for governance groups through continuous improvement and clear outcomes, linked to effective business planning. At the start of 2020 it was agreed by the APC that the sub-group structure should be reviewed and this work is currently underway.

There have been developments to include the work of the APC in a wider “public protection” perspective, drawing closer links with Child Protection, MAPPA, Gender-based Violence and Alcohol and Drugs misuse.

During the two-year period covered by this report there has been a continuing upward trend in the number of adult support and protection referrals dealt with. In 2018-19 the number of referrals was 881, a reduction of 75 from the 956 dealt with in the previous year. In 2019-20, the number dealt with increased to 998, continuing the general increase in the rate of referrals.

Efforts have been made to provide greater awareness of ASP issues at the Acute Hospitals and training has been provided to hospital staff as one of a number of steps designed to increase referrals from this source. Work continues to assess the impact that greater choice and control in the provision of social care, through the Self-Directed Support policy, may have in terms of Adult Support and Protection referrals and issues. Other on-going areas of focus for the APC are in relation to human trafficking, financial harm, hoarding and ensuring sufficient access to independent advocacy.

Learning from previous activity has continued to be a priority for the APC and during the period of this report there has been a range of self-evaluation and quality assurance activity. Findings have also been reported and are included in this report from Initial Case Review and Significant Case Review work undertaken. The APC and South Ayrshire Chief Officers’ Group had key roles in overseeing the independently-chaired Significant Case Review of the circumstances surrounding the death of Sharon Greenop and also of the development and implementation of the subsequent Action Plan.

The South Ayrshire APC welcomes the work being done by the Scottish Government Adult Support and Protection team. The publication of the National Adult Support and Protection Improvement Plan 2019-22 provides a strong framework for the ongoing development and improvement of services and processes to ensure the people at risk are protected from harm.

The year 2020 will no doubt be best remembered for the impact and the tragic loss of life due to the spread of coronavirus. However, the specific impact on Adult Support and Protection in South Ayrshire is not addressed in this report as the first week of “lockdown” coincides with the final week of this 2-year reporting period. However, the range of measures taken across partners to address the risks associated with coronavirus are well documented, with weekly reports to the Scottish Government, fortnightly COG-oversight reporting and monthly meetings of both the APC and COG. Work plans and priorities for 2020-21 have also been subject to change due to the necessary adjustments in the face of the epidemic.

A Forward Plan picking up on on-going work identified in this Biennial Report is included at the end of document.

The 2018-20 membership of the South Ayrshire Adult Protection Committee is included as an Appendix to this report.

Section 1: Background

This is the sixth Biennial Report by the Convener of the South Ayrshire Adult Protection Committee (APC).

The Committee continues to carry out its strategic oversight of services for adults in South Ayrshire. It evaluates their effectiveness in assessing risks to vulnerable individuals and in arranging services, which in partnership, aim to mitigate those risks, result in good outcomes, thus enabling individuals to live independently within their communities.

Since the commencement in 2009 of the Adult Support and Protection Act, there has continued to be year on year increases in referrals (with 2018-19 being an exception). Over the last two years there has been a continuing upward trend in referrals. Whilst this certainly is challenging against a frontline workforce practicing within the limits of existing resources, it does reflect an increasing awareness by the Public and Third and Independent Sector services of the dual issues of independent living opportunities and corresponding harms which can also be present for some especially vulnerable people. It also challenges services and staff teams to consider different approaches to care and support.

The Committee has carried out several Initial Case Reviews (ICRs). One of these progressed to an SCR, which formally reported its findings in April 2019 and another resulted in an SCR being initiated in November 2019. However, due to the impact of COVID-19 restrictions, this review was suspended in March 2020. (It has now resumed and it is expected to report its findings in December 2020). The more detailed reviews have identified some key learning points which are outlined later in this Report and which are aimed at further risk reduction through procedural changes in services, achieved through a combination of practice development and awareness raising.

Section 2: Governance Arrangements

Vision Statement

The South Ayrshire Adult Protection Committee is committed to promoting public awareness of any harms affecting vulnerable adults and to working in partnership with all agencies within the wider community to support and protect any individual who may be vulnerable to any form of harm in South Ayrshire.

The work of the APC can be summarised by means of the following:

Aims of the South Ayrshire Adult Protection Committee

- Improve the safety of adults at risk of harm in South Ayrshire.
- Ensure that adults at risk of harm are listened to.
- Raise awareness of adult protection and any emerging threats to individual wellbeing.
- Provide an integrated approach to the development of adult protection policy and practice.
- Ensure staff are confident and competent.
- Ensure continuous improvement through audit and review of professional practice.

Objectives of South Ayrshire Adult Protection Committee

- Develop policies and strategies to promote the wellbeing of vulnerable adults and to involve them.
- Develop systems which identify concerns emerging from data and performance.
- Guide Significant Case Reviews and oversee the implementation of learning.
- Develop, design and deliver education and training programmes.
- Create policies for information sharing across partners.
- Monitor, audit and review the implementation and impact of policy.
- Monitor performance and report to Scottish Ministers on progress against national priority workstreams.
- Oversee the publication of public information to promote understanding of adult support and protection in local communities.

Local Governance Arrangements

The South Ayrshire Adult Protection Committee is one of several partnerships which have responsibility for public protection. The others include:

- South Ayrshire Child Protection Committee.
- South Ayrshire Alcohol and Drug Partnership.
- South Ayrshire Violence against Women (and Children) Partnership.
- Multi agency Public Protection arrangements.

Chief Officers Group

The present governance arrangements for the APC are directly to the Chief Officers Group for Public Protection (COG). The COG comprises of the Chief Executives of South Ayrshire Council and NHS Ayrshire and Arran and the Divisional Commander for Police Scotland. The COG also comprises the Executive Group for reporting to the Community Planning Partnership (CPP).

Adult Protection Committee

The South Ayrshire Adult Protection Committee (APC) meets quarterly and also reports quarterly to the COG. The full membership of the APC is shown at Appendix 1.

South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership

The South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership which comprises community-based health and social care services for adults and children, is governed by the Integration Joint Board (IJB). The IJB Chief Officer is also the Director of the Health and Social Care Partnership. The Chief Social Work Officer provides professional advice on all Social Work services and practice to the IJB, South Ayrshire Council, the Chief Officers Group and the Adult Protection Committee. The IJB is supported by a Performance and Audit Committee and by a Health and Care Governance Committee.

APC Sub Committees

In 2018-20 the APC was supported in its work by four Sub Committees:

- Communication and Engagement
- Service Evaluation
- Policy, Planning and Performance
- Learning and Development

Each of these sub-groups was Chaired by a Senior Manager from one of the key partner agencies, with group membership having a similar multiagency basis. Group members were selected for their interest in the wider adult protection agenda. Meeting quarterly, the subgroups contributed significantly to the priority areas identified by the Committee. An APC Sub-group Development Day was held in February 2019 and this provided an opportunity for sub-group Chairs, members and the wider APC to further develop the remit and functioning of the groups and linking to the APC action plan.

While each of the subgroups had a clear focus and developed a work plan for each of their areas, the number of meetings and the administrative support arrangements for them presented some challenges. In addition, towards the end of 2019, three of the sub-group Chairs stood down, either due to retirement from their service or moving to new posts. The APC agreed that the format and make-up of the sub-groups should be revisited and this would be taken forward in 2020.

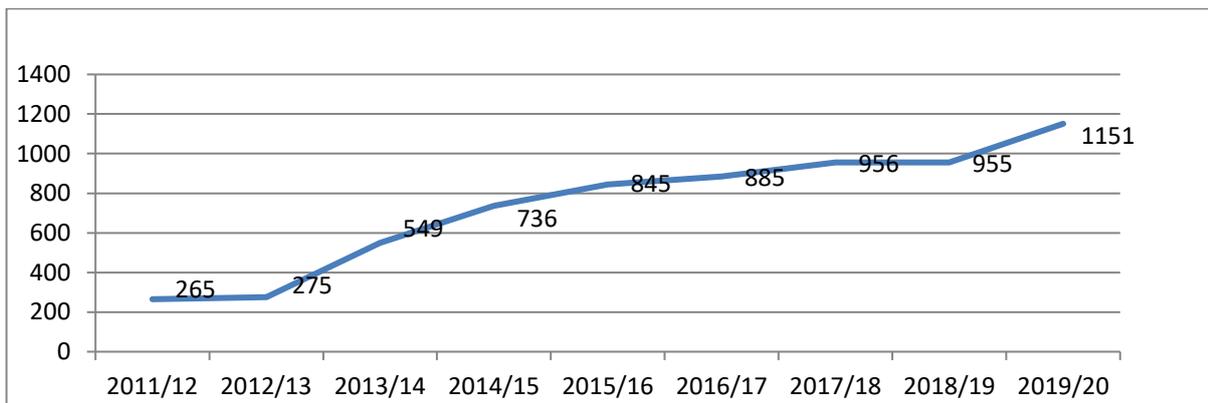
Pan-Ayrshire Learning and Development Sub-Committee

This pan-Ayrshire Group is hosted by North Ayrshire APC and chaired by Police Scotland. Membership is drawn from ASP Learning and Development Officers and other professionals across Ayrshire, including NHS Ayrshire and Arran Acute Services. This Committee addresses core and additional training needs of the multi-agency workforce, with some courses delivered by individual HSCPs, but also promoting pan-Ayrshire access opportunities. Council Officer 5-day training is an example of the joint and co-ordinated activity undertaken; this is planned and delivered by the three authorities, with Social Workers from each of the three areas undertaking the required training.

Section 3: Information and Activity

The following charts provide an overview of adult support and protection activity in South Ayrshire during the period of this Biennial Report and where applicable compares this with activity in earlier years.

Figure 1: Annual Adult Support and Protection Referrals



Adult Support and Protection (ASP) referrals in South Ayrshire are those referrals to Adult Community Care Social Work and Health Teams, deemed by the Team Leader to be “ASP” i.e. likely to meet the 3-point test required by legislation or where the South Ayrshire procedure for “upgrading” repeat Vulnerable Adult/Adult Concern referrals has resulted in a referral being responded to in line with South Ayrshire ASP procedures. These procedures were put in place following recommendations from a Significant Case Review (2015). However, it has become apparent that the upgrading to ASP has had the effect of distorting South Ayrshire’s reporting of ASP referrals as the current Management Information System does not have the facility to report on how the referrals were received, only how they were responded to. However, the South Ayrshire HSCP are in the process of changing to a new Management Information System which will be able to provide this facility in the future. In addition, for 2020, the current procedures for responding to Vulnerable Adult/Adult Concern referrals will be subject to review.

In previous biennial reports, comparisons have been made with referral figures from both East and North Ayrshire. These comparisons routinely showed that South Ayrshire had significantly higher rates of ASP referrals (by 62% and 46% respectively for 2016-18) but the impact of having different reporting processes has shown that such comparisons are not purposeful so they will not be included in this report.

Referral activity has generally increased year on year (2018-19 being the exception) with an overall increase of over 400% between 2011/12 and 2018-20. The increase from the biennial reporting period 2016-18 to 2018-20 was 14%, and 2019-20 saw a 20% increase from 2018-19. referrals.

A summary of key Adult Protection activity and trends is noted below:

Management Information	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	Trend
Number of Adult Support and Protection Referrals	885	956	955	1151	↑
Number of Vulnerable Adult Referrals	772	815	1151	1376	↑
Number of Case Conferences	177	139	91	67	↓

Vulnerable Adult referrals have also continued to show significant increases, with the rise from the previous biennial reporting period to the current period being 60%. However, as with the caveats regarding the number of ASP referrals, there is an impact on the reporting of Vulnerable Adult referrals as a significant number of referrals received as “Vulnerable Adult” referrals will have been upgraded to ASP so the overall number of Vulnerable Adult referrals will be underreported. This issue will be rectified with the move to the new Management Information System and the review of Vulnerable Adult procedures.

In the Scottish Government’s Adult Support and Protection Outcomes Report (2016-17), South Ayrshire was identified as having the highest rate of ASP Case Conferences per 100,000 in Scotland – 177, three times the national average. The APC commissioned a review of practice and procedures around the scheduling of ASP Case Conferences. A key outcome of the review was a series of development sessions with Social Work Team Leaders, looking at decision-making processes and promoting the utilisation of ASP Planning Meetings – a less formal process for multi-agency discussion and risk assessment. Consequently, the number of Case Conferences/Review Case Conferences has been falling and in 2019-20 there were 62% fewer than in 2016-17. The number of ASP Planning Meetings increased by over 130% in the same period.

The effectiveness of multi-agency ASP Planning Meetings and Case Conferences is dependent of the participation of partner agencies. However, in many instances, representation and participation is limited and this remains an area for further development and improvement. Equally, meaningful engagement with adults at risk and

their families/carers/legal proxies in the various stages of ASP procedures is also an area for development. In too many instances, the initiation of Adult Support and Protection measures is reported as something that is done “to” people, rather than “with” them. An audit of people’s views and experiences of being the subject of ASP processes will be carried out in 2020-21 and the outcome of this will help to make improvements in this area.

The importance of the availability and accessibility of an Independent Advocacy service is recognised by the APC and “Circles Network” provide this service in South Ayrshire and are represented on the APC.

Figure 2: Number of ASP Case Conferences and Planning Meetings

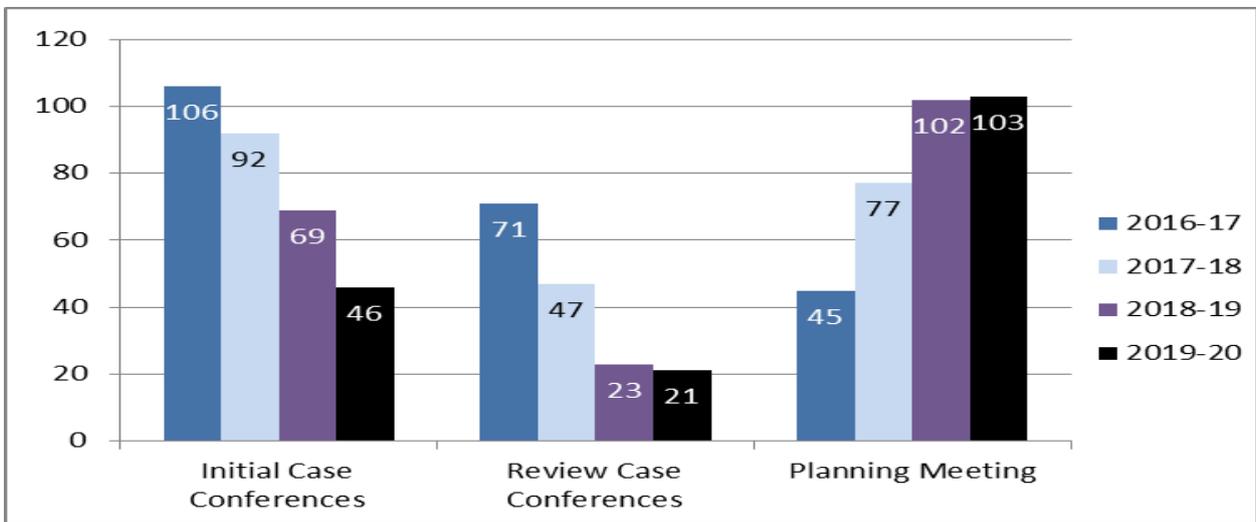
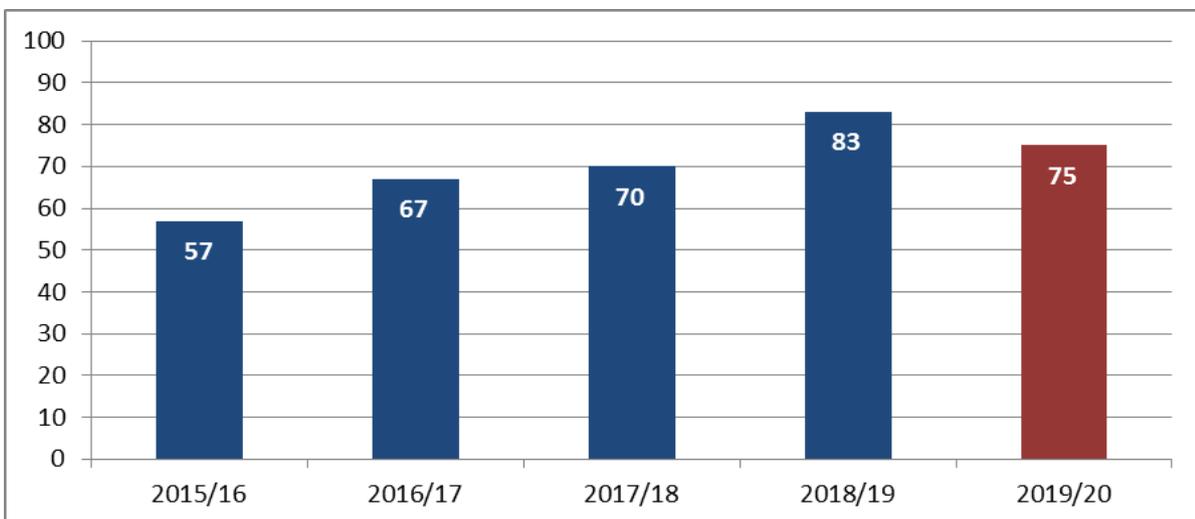
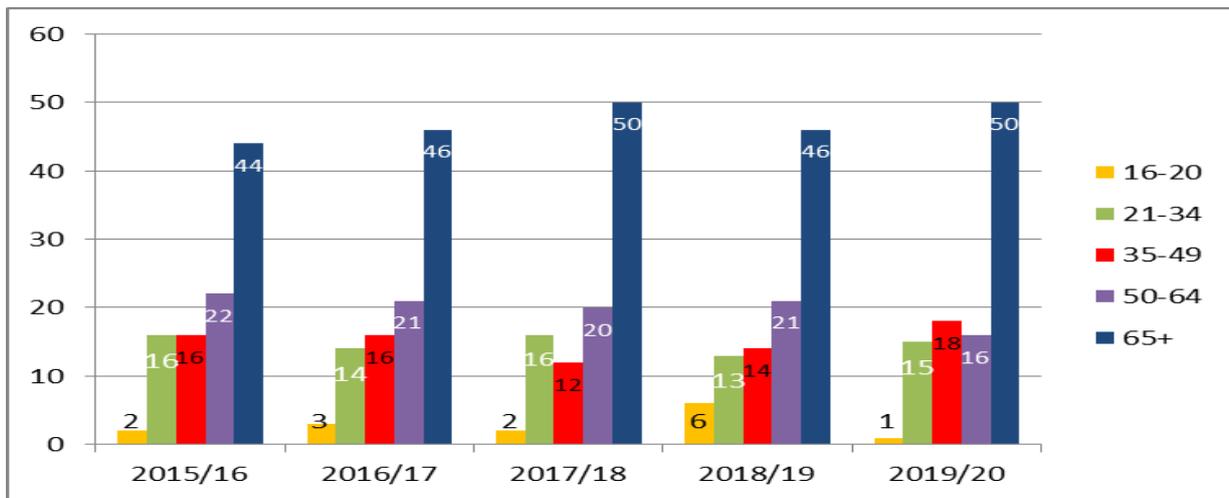


Figure 3: Percentage of Inquiries completed within 5 working days.



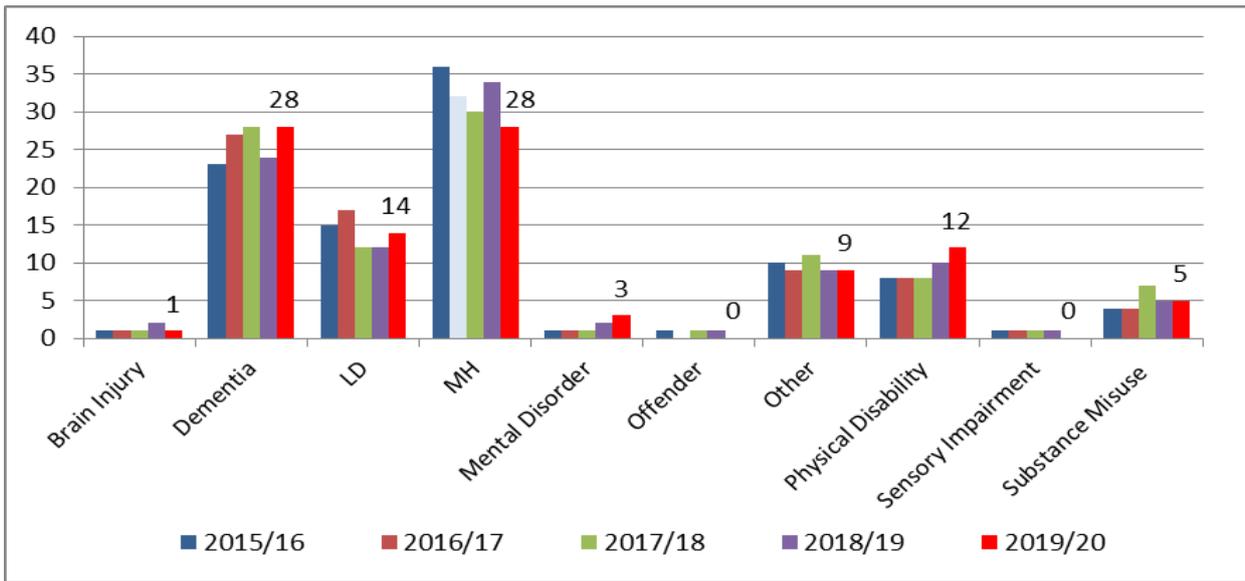
The target timescales for completion of the various stages of the ASP process are outlined within the West of Scotland Inter-agency Adult Support and Protection Practice Guidance (2019) and are incorporated into South Ayrshire’s ASP Practice Guidance. However, there have been discussions (locally, regionally and nationally) around the appropriateness and usefulness of the current 5-day target for Inquiries and the 8-day target for Investigations in light of the volume and nature of referrals received. In 2020 the APC will be reviewing the timescales associated with the various stages of the ASP process.

Figure 4: Percentage of referrals per year by age group.



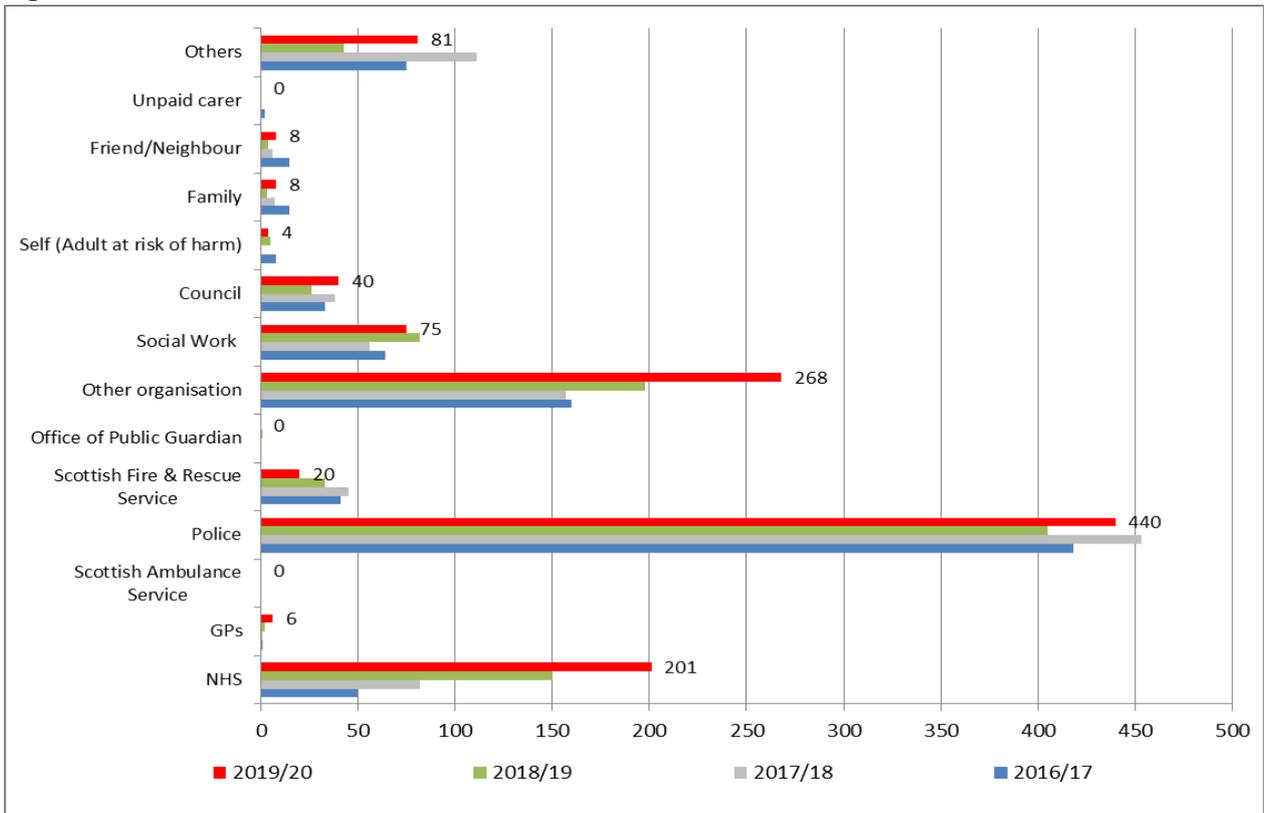
People at risk in the 65-year-plus age group continue to be the most likely to be the subject of an ASP referral and account for 48% of referrals in the period 2018-20. There has been a general (albeit slight) increase in the rate of referrals for this group. There has also been an increase in the past few years for the rate of referrals for people in the 35-49 years age range. This group tends to have the largest number of people for whom there are multiple referrals, often in a short space of time. Such cases typically feature diagnoses of Borderline Personality Disorder, alcohol/substance misuse, self-harming behaviour and no assessment of incapacity. These cases present ongoing challenges for all partners and for the individuals themselves and their families.

Figure 5: Percentage of referrals per year by Client Group



People with Mental Health issues have tended to be the single largest “Client Group” in terms of the number of referrals received. However, the general trend illustrates a decline in the rate of referrals for this group and in 2019-20 the number of referrals for this group equalled those for people with “Dementia”. Referral rates for people with “Physical Disabilities” continue to rise, with no significant changing or emerging trends for the other groups. Referrals which concern individuals with some degree of cognitive impairment typically account for around 70% of all referrals and work around this will be taken forward in 2020-21.

Figure 6: Source of Referrals

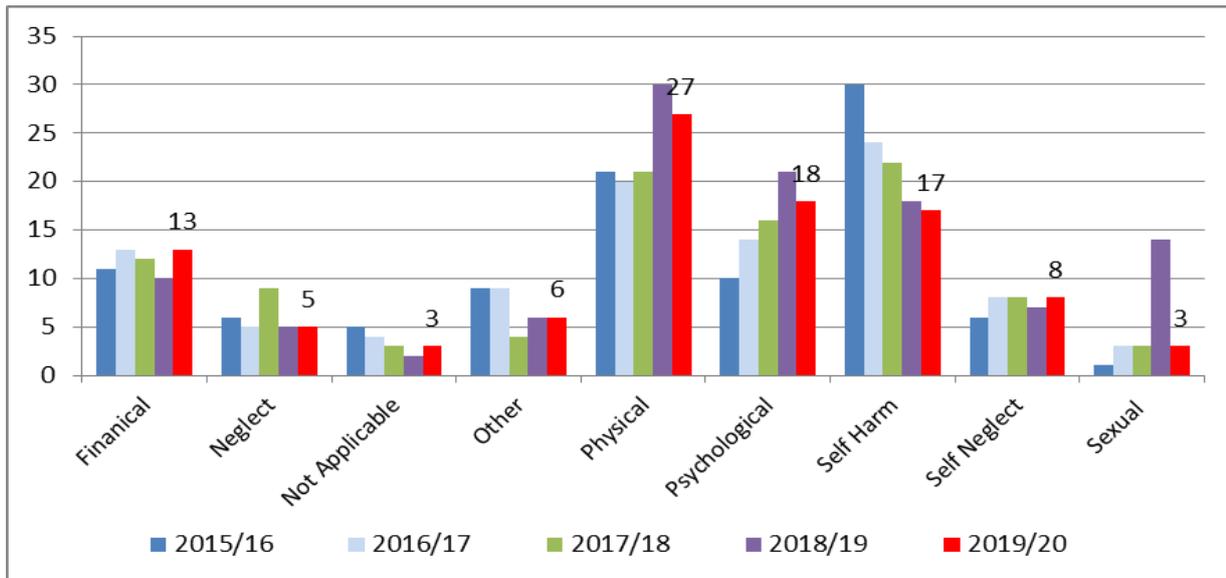


Police Scotland remain the single largest source of referrals, accounting for around 40% of referrals received. The number of referrals received from “health” services has increased significantly over recent years – this reflects the success of the work being done with the Acute Services ASP Adviser for Ayrshire and Arran Health Board, focused around raising awareness of ASP issues and processes and developing new processes. This includes a new “Symphony” referral pathway. This ASP referral pathway for Emergency Departments was introduced in April 2018. This development means clinicians can complete a referral while utilising the electronic patient recording system (Symphony) used in the department. Prior to this development clinicians identified that having to transfer from one recording system to another was a barrier to referral. Since the introduction of the pathway a number of minor issues have been resolved and the pathway is now fully embedded. This is one of a number of measures which has contributed to the increase in the number of referrals received from health services.

Work has also been done with partners in East and North Ayrshire and the Scottish Ambulance Service (SAS) to develop an Ayrshire-wide ASP referral route for the SAS. This was in response to the recognised relatively low rate of referrals received from the SAS. The new referral route enables SAS teams to make a telephone referral directly to a single point of contact (Crosshouse Hospital Social Work team) and the referral will then be forwarded to the relevant Social Work team to respond to, irrespective of which part of the Ayrshire the person lives in. This has proved to be a success with an increase in referrals from SAS.

Care Homes (grouped with other service providers in “Other Organisation”) continue to make a significant number of ASP referrals. However, referrals audits have shown that many such referrals are based on a strict interpretation of the “three-point-test”, whereby almost anyone in a care setting would be likely to meet the criteria. Typically, a referral will concern one resident who has been subjected to physical harm by another resident and one or both residents’ behaviours are a consequence of their dementia. While the actual harm caused may be at the lower end of the scale of harms, appropriate steps need to be taken to ensure that all concerned are kept free from harm. In such cases, the risk of harm (or actual harm) is most appropriately dealt with through “care management” rather than through ASP processes which may not represent the “least restrictive” option. Discussions with Care Home providers and partners across the Health and Social Care Partnership have centred around what support can be made available locally to support Care Homes to best manage challenging and aggressive behaviour to ensure that residents (and staff) are kept safe from harm. This again is an issue which will be taken forward in 2020-21, working with Care Home provider partners.

Figure 9: Referrals by Harm Type



During this reporting period referrals for “Physical Harm” have increased significantly, albeit with a slight decrease from 2018-19 to 2019-20. (A high proportion of referrals received from Care Home providers relate to instances of Physical Harm, where one resident has harmed, or put at risk of harm, another resident and these referrals have also increased). The proportion of referrals which cited “Self-Harm” have significantly decreased during the same period and while this welcome, the reasons for this reduction are not clear. This will be further explored in 2020-21. 2018-19 also saw a significant increase in referrals for “Sexual Harm” although 2019-20 saw the referral rate fall to the levels reported on 2016-18. The increase in referrals for “Financial Harm” in 2019-20 largely relate to issues/concerns around “familial” harm, or where harm has occurred as a result of the actions of individuals who have either abused, or misunderstood, the powers associated with the granting of a Power of Attorney or a legal Guardianship. “Commercial” financial harm or “scamming” has been addressed local through a pilot partnership project with the local Trading Standards service and the Life Changes Trust. (A report on the outcome of the project will be taken to the APC in 2020). Further work around preventing and dealing with financial harm will be taken forward in 2020-21.

Adult Support and Protection Quarterly Monitoring Report

The APC requires a quarterly report detailing and analysing ASP activity across South Ayrshire, and this report also provides assurance to the COG at their quarterly meetings. The content and format of this report has been the subject of much discussion and debate and has periodically been reshaped to provide more detailed information and analysis. For 2020, input from both Social Work Service Managers and Team Leaders will add a critical operational perspective which has so far been lacking. It is anticipated that this will provide not only a more purposeful report which goes beyond the documenting of ASP activity but will provide greater opportunities to identify areas for practice development

and the improvement of internal processes and procedures and also provide a greater degree of assurance to the APC and CG that people at risk are being protected from harm.

Quality Assurance Activity

During the period of this Biennial Report, case-file audits have been carried out across the range of partner services. These audits review a range of factors using an audit tools developed for each audit, adapted from the Care Inspectorate Audit Tool. These audits may also include the review of partner agencies case-files and principally review against the standards of “Risk – Protection risks” and “Risk – non-Protection Risks”.

In addition to the ASP-specific audits, the APC was instrumental in the co-ordination and conducting of a series of audits arising from the action plan put in place following the findings of the SCR into the circumstances around the death of Sharon Greenop (published in April 2019). The COG and APC also maintained oversight of the implementation of the associated action plan

An ASP case-file was carried out and reported to the APC in October 2018. The audit reviewed both Social Work (locality Teams) and District Nursing files for a sample of cases where both services had involvement. The recommendations from the audit were as follows:

Future audits:

- The selection of files for future ASP audits should be more focused and take account of the extent, stage and degree of ASP intervention to provide a more uniform sample. This could be, for example, cases which have gone to case conference, or cases where it was decided to take “no further action” following an ASP Investigation. This would facilitate a more useful consideration of common processes and decision-making and to make relevant comparisons.
- Where an audit is being planned to review the case-files or information from a range of agencies, it essential that the required information is sourced and made available on the day of audit.
- File-readers should not review files for which they have a recent or current direct care management responsibility.
- The Audit Report will be provided to the relevant Senior Manager of each service involved in the audit.

Adult Protection practice

- Team Leaders should ensure that all case-files contain a full and up-to-date record of relevant Adult Protection processes and minutes.
- The numerical values ascribed to each Team should be used for benchmarking and Team Planning purposes.

- The numerical values ascribed across the Teams should be used for practice development across localities.
- Coordinators, Team Leaders and their teams should consider cases which received ratings of “Excellent” or “Very Good” for the purposes of sharing and disseminating good practice.
- Coordinators, Team Leaders and their teams should consider cases which received ratings of “Weak” or “Unsatisfactory” for the purposes of identifying areas for improvement and practice development.
- The District Nursing service should consider more robust and comprehensive recording of Adult Protection status and measures.

Development of a MAASH approach to dealing with referrals

In January 2017 South Ayrshire established an “Adult Concerns Initial Response Team” (ACIRT) as a pilot project to deal exclusively with “vulnerable adult” (VA) and “adult at risk” (ASP) referrals from Police Scotland to the South Ayrshire Health and Social Care Partnership. Previously, such referrals were directed to the relevant Social Work Team based on either the geographic area where the person resided or their connection with a specialist Social Work Team (typically Mental Health or Learning Disability). The Team (formally titled the Adult Concerns Initial Response Team – *ACIRT*) consisted of two Social Workers who are also authorised Council Officers, led by a Team Leader. Social Workers from the Team met with Police Scotland officers on a daily basis and jointly screen “vulnerable adult” and “adult at risk” concerns that have been submitted via Police Scotland officers across South Ayrshire. The model has provided an effective way to screen referrals and has required, and enabled, Team Members to develop their own knowledge, skills and understanding of Adult Protection and to apply these to ensure that people are kept safe from harm. Partnership working is essential to the work of the Team – not just with Police Scotland, but with a range of agencies, including partners across the Health Board, the Local Authority and the Independent and Third Sectors. Good partnership working has enabled inquiries and investigations to be carried out sensitively and timeously and requires partner agencies to work collaboratively to ensure that individuals are protected.

The operational model for this approach was suspended with the introduction of the GDPR in 2018 as Police Scotland procedures effectively ruled out the joint screening process. Since that time, the ACIRT Team has continued to operate effectively in responding to ASP/VA referrals where the subject of the referral is not “known” to another Social Work Team.

In 2019 discussions had taken place with partners around building on the ACIRT model to develop a multi-agency assessment and screening hub (MAASH) approach which would also incorporate referrals/concerns under child protection procedures. Further

detailed discussions will be carried in to 2020, with a view to developing an action plan for the introduction of a MAASH model in South Ayrshire.

Joint Inspection of Adult Support and Protection

In February 2020, notification was received of the intention to carry out an inspection of Adult Support and Protection in the South Ayrshire Partnership Area. However, the impact of COVID-19 meant that the inspection, scheduled to take place in May 2020, was postponed. Work across the partnership in preparation of the inspection had already commenced and partners agreed that this would carry on. Consequently, an extensive process of self-evaluation was initiated and the findings from this would inform the evaluative comments within the Position Statement which would be submitted to the Care Inspectorate prior to the inspection being carried out. This exercise will have benefits beyond the purpose of preparing for inspection and the outcomes will contribute to service and practice development across the partnership.

Self-Evaluation will continue to be an important part of the work of the APC and the Business Plan will outline the details of future planned self-evaluation activity. The APC will monitor the implementation of the findings summarised above to ensure that these are incorporated whenever possible into practice, policies and operating procedures. This will be part of the programme of work set out in the Forward Plan at the end of this report and this Plan will inform the APC Business Plan for 2020-21 and in future years.

Section 4: Initial and Significant Case Reviews

SCRs are conducted by means of the 2013 Pan-Ayrshire Guidance, and the Scottish Government's "Interim National Framework for Adult Protection Committees for Conducting a Significant Case Review". The Pan-Ayrshire Guidance will be reviewed in 2020 to ensure it reflects the new interim guidance.

The parallel arrangements for NHS reporting of Adverse Events, referred to in the previous Biennial Report, have continued to be the subject of ongoing discussion to clarify where and under what circumstances, a single review on a multi-agency basis would be more appropriate than the single agency approach of NHS. This particularly applies in overlapping areas of mental health and addictions where there may usually have been a series of contacts with several agencies over time. Work to more closely align these processes will continue in 2020-21.

The APC has conducted and completed five Initial Case Reviews (ICRs) and one Significant Case Review (SCR). A further SCR, initiated in November 2019, is ongoing and is expected to report towards the end of 2020.

The findings and, where appropriate, the recommendations from the ICRs were reported to both the APC and South Ayrshire COG. In each case, the determination that there was no requirement to progress to an SCR was accepted.

The completed SCR was commissioned by South Ayrshire COG and was an inquiry into the circumstances of the death of Sharon Greenop. This was a tragic and difficult case, with Sharon's daughter and sister both being charged with Sharon's murder. At the subsequent trial at the High Court of Justiciary in Glasgow, Sharon's sister was convicted of the murder and the case against her daughter was found "not proven". The review was led by an Independent Chair and the COG agreed that the final report should be published in full. The review report made a number of recommendations related to both Adult Support and Protection practice and Social Work case management. The APC, COG and HSCP were all committed to the sharing of the learning from the SCR and a number of formal presentations were delivered to other APCs and HSCPs. The findings were also presented at the Scottish Government's launch of the "Interim National Framework for Adult Protection Committees for Conducting a Significant Case Review" in November 2019.

Both the APC and COG continue to maintain ongoing oversight of the implementation of the SCR Action Plan which was developed to address the issues/recommendations identified within the SCR.

Section 5: Learning and Practice Development

The APC continues to have a commitment to the promotion of learning and development and practice improvement. However, the range of activities developed has been limited due to the ASP Learning and Development Officer post having been vacant since July 2017.

Core Adult Support and Protection training continues to be offered on a multi-agency basis and is free for partners to access. This training consists of both ASP Level 1 (half-day) and ASP Level 2 (full-day) training. An annual training calendar is published and made available to all partners.

Key Achievements in terms of learning and practice development during the period of this report include the following:

- the core planned training programme has been delivered
- development of Council Officer "Refresher Training" (with partners across the West of Scotland Adult Support and Protection Consortium)
- a series of ASP Development Workshops, engaging with Social Work Team leaders, identifying issues and ways to improve ASP practice and processes
- Review and improvement of the delivery of key Council Officer 5-day training with East and North Ayrshire
- Delivery of Human Trafficking/Labour abuse seminars; these were arranged in partnership with East and North Ayrshire and Police Scotland were well attended by a wide range of partner agencies and were very successful.

- Development of revised Forced Marriage and Human Trafficking Guidance (again, in partnership with East and North Ayrshire).

Ayrshire Adult Support and Protection Conference 2019

Each of the three Ayrshire APCs take it in turn to host an annual Ayrshire ASP Conference. South Ayrshire hosted this in 2019. The theme for the event was “Capacity and Consent”. Speakers included Jill Stavert, Professor of Mental Health and Capacity Law, Napier University; Mike Diamond, Executive Director (Social Work), Mental Welfare Commission for Scotland; NHS Ayrshire and Arran Psychiatry; Circles Network (Advocacy); Speech and Language Therapy and Police Scotland. The event was attended by 70 representatives from a wide range of partner agencies from across Ayrshire. The varied agenda for the day meant there was informed and insightful presentations from both academic and practice-based perspectives and greatly added to debate and understanding around the often contentious issues of capacity and consent.

NHS Ayrshire and Arran are committed to supporting the Adult Protection Committee in its functions and proactively support staff across acute and partnership services. One example is the Charge Nurse Adult Support and Protection survey. In 2018 and 2019 short surveys designed to gather information on the views and experiences of Senior Charge Nurses working in acute services about Adult Support and Protection (ASP) were undertaken. The surveys focussed on the areas of training, referrals and staff support. Most respondents in both years identified eLearning as their favoured learning style indicating value in having the ASP: Essentials module as one of the 12 Mandatory and Statutory modules undertaken by all NHS Ayrshire and Arran employees and repeated 3 yearly. The majority of respondents felt they understood their responsibilities under the Act however just over half were unsure of the difference between an ASP referral and adult concern referral. This was an area highlighted for improvement and a number of referral exemplars and staff guidance have been developed. The survey is next due to be repeated in 2021.

Associated with this is the development of the “Public Protection Learning Index”. This index has been developed to support NHS staff and their managers to know which level of public protection training they should attend, how to access it and where to find more information if required. The index is updated every year and in response to Covid-19 will be updated 6-monthly while learning events adjust to new methods of engaging delegates.

Work has also been done to align procedures around “missing” vulnerable inpatients with the national Missing Persons Framework. An “Absent Vulnerable patient – missing inpatient” procedure was developed. This procedure, which covers both acute hospital sites and Ayrshire Maternity Unit was updated in 2019 as part of the work to progress the National Missing Person Framework. The procedure makes use of the terminology used in the national framework to describe a missing person and identify levels of risk. This

ensures shared understanding and shared terminology between agencies when a multi-agency response is needed if the procedure is triggered.

Section 6: Outcomes, Strengths and Challenges

Outcomes

Considerable progress has been made during the period of this Biennial Report to enhance inter-agency working and to strengthen this through the learning from Initial and Significant Case Reviews, practice reviews and on-going Self-Evaluation activity. There is an opportunity to further enhance this inter-agency working through the clear commitment of governance bodies and the Chief Officers Group to Adult Support and Protection and the work of the APC.

The number of ASP and VA referrals continues to increase year on year. The continual rise in the number of referrals has seen an increased work load across most of the Social Work Teams which respond to such referrals but Local Adult Support and Protection procedures continue to work well to ensure that people at risk are protected from harm.

Referrals are responded to timeously and the majority of Inquiries and Investigations are completed within the target timescales. However, it is recognised that current analysis of these areas of activity cannot take into account the often-complex circumstances of individual cases and it is recognised a more flexible system would enable consideration on a more meaningful basis.

At each stage of the ASP process consideration is given to the range of practice and legal options available to ensure the most effective, and least restrictive, response to keep people safe from harm. South Ayrshire Legal Services are a key partner in this process and regularly provide detailed advice and guidance on the possible legal options in specific cases. During the reporting period there were no ASP Protection Orders applied for although Legal Services did provide advice on a number of cases where such measures were being considered.

Strengths

South Ayrshire APC has strong partnership links with both East and North Ayrshire APCs. The three APCs work together in a range of areas including the development of joint policies and guidance, the planning and delivery of learning and development activities and the hosting of the annual Ayrshire ASP conference.

There are also strong links with the West of Scotland ASP Consortium and the West of Scotland ASP Guidance, developed by the Consortium, forms the over-arching guidance for South Ayrshire ASP policy procedures.

The South Ayrshire COG has a clear governance role with respect to ASP practice and has a clear role in the reporting and oversight of ICRs, SCRs and LSIs. This was particularly the case in the SCR into the circumstances around the death of Sharon Greenop and the implementation of the subsequent Action Plan.

Effective partnership working with Police Scotland is evident in the operation of the local Concern Hub. While the introduction of the GDPR resulted in a cessation of the joint screening of referrals by Police Scotland and the Social Work Adult Concerns Initial Response Team, effective processes remain in place and will be enhanced by the development of a MAASH approach.

The APC conduct ICRS, SCRs and Large-Scale Investigations when required. Again, effective partnership working is essential for such reviews/investigations and the multi-agency approach to conducting such reviews ensures that a breadth and depth of specialist knowledge and experience is reflected in the composition of the review Team.

NHS Ayrshire & Arran are a key partner in the development of ASP practice and the NHS Ayrshire & Arran Acute Services ASP Adviser continues to raise awareness and develop effective ASP processes across the acute sector. An example of the success of this is the development of a new referral process to enable Emergency Department (ED) staff to make direct referrals where they have concerns that someone may be at risk of harm. This has resulted in an increase in the number of referrals from the ED. More generally, partnership working with Acute Services ASP Adviser has seen the referrals received being more detailed, and more appropriate, all of which contribute to an effective response to ensure people are kept safe and protected.

Across South Ayrshire HSCP there are structures and processes in place to ensure that there is an effective response to concerns about adults at risk of harm and that they are protected. In this reporting period, a number of key management vacancies have been filled and the stand-alone Chief Social Work Officer post was created. This has resulted in a more practice-focused approach to ASP and has strengthened the drive towards a wider Public Protection perspective.

Challenges

The outdated Social Work Information System (SWIS) continues to present a major challenge to the effective administration of Social Work Services particularly for adults and older people. Work has commenced to migrate information to a new system, CareFirst and this is expected to be in place for 2020.

There are a number of individuals whose circumstances and behaviours result in them being the subject of repeated ASP/VA referrals. These present a wide range of challenges for all partner agencies and current processes/procedures should be reviewed to endeavour to have more effective means of ensuring that these people can be kept safe from harm. Associated with this, the processes and procedures in place for

responding to Vulnerable Adult referrals should be reviewed, particularly the threshold for upgrading repeat referrals to ASP. This would be consistent with ensuring that the principle that the “least restrictive” steps should be taken is observed.

The increased incidence of drugs-related deaths, both locally and across Scotland, has raised the issue of people whose lives are significantly and negatively impacted upon by drugs and/or alcohol misuse, who are living in the community and are at a high risk of harm but who meet neither the criteria for adult support and protection nor the “critical” threshold for Social Work support packages. Again, the development of processes and procedures across the partnership should be reviewed to ensure that appropriate responses and support are provided.

Further work should be undertaken with Care Home providers to ensure that ASP referrals are made appropriately and there is a measured balance between the APC ensuring that people are protected from harm and the providers are supported to provide services.

There have been increased referrals around financial harm, where a person has been harmed, or put at risk of harm, by a family, friend or legal proxy. Work should be undertaken around this issue to ensure that, as far as possible, such harm is prevented and that there are effective interventions when such harm takes place. Associated with this, it is known that around two-thirds of all referrals concern individuals who have some form of cognitive impairment. Further work should be undertaken to ensure that there is wider awareness in the community of ASP risks generally and that those responding to such referrals have sufficient knowledge and understanding to inform any planned interventions.

The failure to fill the Adult Support and Protection Learning and Development Officer post (vacant since July 2017) continues to have a significant impact on the extent to which appropriate and sufficient learning and practice development opportunities are created.

While there has been significant success in reducing the number of ASP Case Conferences, partners’ engagement in the process could be improved. Equally, further work should be done to ensure that the person at risk, their families/carers/legal proxies have more purposeful opportunities to engage in the ASP process, and in case conferences in particular. On a wider issue, the APC should consider what steps could be taken to ensure that the practice of adult protection, and the associated policies and procedures, are better informed by the views and experiences of those who have been subjected to these procedures or at risk of being so.

Over this reporting period, much of the audit activity undertaken was related to the findings and subsequent Action Plan following the SCR into the circumstances of the death of Sharon Greenop. Further work should be done to ensure that there is a clear schedule of ASP audit activity underpinning the APCs commitment to quality assurance

and service enhancement and that partner agencies have a clear understanding of their organisations role in the conducting and resourcing such activities.

Section 7: Adult Protection Committee – Forward Plan

The items identified below are a summary of the items which have been highlighted in this Biennial Report and that form part of the APC Business Plan for 2020-21 and future Years.

Item/Description	Responsible Lead	Due By
Development of a Schedule of Audit Activity for 2020-21	ASP Lead Officer	March 2020
Audit of views and experiences of adults at risk and their families/carers/legal proxies	AS Lead Officer	August 2020
To work with partner agencies to achieve the development of a MAASH approach.	HSCP SW Head of Service (Adults)	March 2021
Review of APC sub-group structure	APC Independent Convenor	June 2020
Report on arrangements for the formalisation of a more integrated “Public Protection” perspective	CSWO	August 2020
Development of additional practice guidance around financial harm perpetrated by family/friends/associates/legal proxies	ASP Lead Officer	January 2021
To work with the South Ayrshire Alcohol and Drugs Partnership to review service provisions for people affected by drugs/alcohol and who are living with a high risk of harm	ASP Lead Officer/ADP Co-ordinator	January 2021
To work with Care Homes to provide further/clearer guidance on the making of ASP referrals.	ASP Lead Officer	January 2021
To review South Ayrshire’s processes and procedures for responding to Vulnerable Adult referrals	ASP Lead Officer/CSWO	January 2021
To review the target timescales for completion of ASP Inquiries and Investigations	ASP Lead Officer/CSWO	January 2021
To work with partners in East and North Ayrshire to review the Ayrshire ICR/SCR Guidance, in line with the Scottish Government’s Interim ICR/SCR Guidance	ASP Lead Officers (East, North & South)	March 2021
Ensure the implementation in full of the Significant Case Review (Sharon Greenop) Action Plan	HSCP SW Head of Service (Adults)	December 2020

Item/Description	Responsible Lead	Due By
To work with NHS Ayrshire & Arran Acute Services ASP Adviser to review “health” referrals and identify areas for further improvement where appropriate	ASP Lead Officer	January 2021

Appendix 1



Adult Protection Committee Members – 2018-20

(Membership as of March 2020).

Member	Designation
Paul Martin	Independent Convenor
Billy McClean	Head of Community Care & Housing
David Eaglesham	Circles Network Independent Advocacy
Karen Briggs	Service Lead, Legal and Licensing
Pauline Draper	Co-Ordinator Housing
Caroline Dickson	Manager Acute Services, NHS A&A
Hamid Gazem	Team Leader Environmental Health & Trading Standards
Heather Irving	Care Inspectorate
Kenny Armstrong	Detective Superintendent, Police Scotland
Glenda Hanna	Local Integration & Improvement Lead, Independent Sector
Lisa Smith	Communications Manager (Policing)
Rosemary Robertson	Associate Nurse Director
Tim Eltringham	Director South Ayrshire HSCP
Sharon Hackney	Service Manager (Mental Health)
Scott Hunter	South Ayrshire Chief Social Work Officer

Mark Taylor	Adult Support & Protection Co-ordinator (Acting)
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