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**REF**

Dear Julie

Thank you for your request dated 8th April with a query in relation to the **Southwark Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board Annual Report 2011-12 pg 40/41**. Southwark Council's Health Scrutiny Committee received the annual safeguarding report on 6th March and noted that there were no safeguarding alerts recorded from Acute Hospitals or Mental Health Inpatient Settings to Southwark Safeguarding in the year 2011/12 and the meeting of the 25th March requested an explanation for this to be received by 25th April.

As a provider organisation, Guy's and St. Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust is committed to safeguarding the welfare of adults at risk and children and continuously strives to improve their experience of health care. In addition to providing a full range of hospital services for our local communities of Southwark and Lambeth, and from April 2011 integrated community services, we also provide specialist services for patients from further afield, including cancer, cardiac, kidney, women's and orthopaedic services.

We are signed up to the London multi-agency policy and procedures to safeguard adults from abuse and our local policy and procedures are compliant with the London procedures. We have clear a policy and procedures for the management of all types of incidents that occur within the organisation involving patients, carers or visitors. This includes the Serious Incidents procedures, complaints procedures and Safeguarding Adults at Risk procedures which include how allegations against Trust staff are reported and managed. We have a designated Allegation officer and Allegation manager within the Trust.

DH (2010) guidance 'Clinical Governance and Adult Safeguarding: an integrated process', supports NHS organisations having robust arrangements to ensure that clinical governance and adult safeguarding are fully integrated, which is endorsed in the London Safeguarding Adults at Risk procedures.

Safeguarding Trust alerts are those concerns raised by a patient, carer or visitor regarding the behaviour of a member of Trust staff or a Trust service that has or may have caused harm to a patient or patients at risk. A safeguarding alert would be sent to Southwark Safeguarding if the allegation raised concerned an adult at risk, who is a Southwark resident, who has sustained significant harm as a result of acts of omission or commission by a Trust staff member or service.

There have been no incidents of which the Trust has knowledge that met the criteria for reporting to Southwark Safeguarding in 2011/12.

Possible reasons why there were no safeguarding Trust referrals to the Southwark local authority in the 2011/2012 financial year are listed and explained below:

- Any concerns raised about the misconduct of a member of Trust staff involving a patient who is not ordinarily resident in Southwark will not be reported to Southwark local authority. If the patient is of no fixed abode and raises an allegation the referral will go to Lambeth local authority as the head office of the Trust is situated in the borough of Lambeth.
- Any concerns raised against a member of Trust staff will be considered against the safeguarding requirements such as:
  - Is the patient a vulnerable adult or was he/she in a vulnerable situation, e.g., undergoing a procedure, acutely ill etc. when the alleged abuse took place
  - Did the patient sustain significant harm?
- Any allegations of abuse against a patient resident in Southwark, who is considered not to be an adult at risk of abuse may be investigated under another Trust procedure such as the complaints procedure, however the outcome of the complaints investigation may lead to further investigation through the disciplinary procedure, where we would then consider doing a safe guarding alert if it met the threshold.
- Any concerns of abuse of a patient who is a Southwark resident raised against a member of Trust staff which was considered not to have resulted in significant harm, may be investigated under the Serious Incident (SI) procedure which again as stated above may lead to an investigation under the disciplinary procedure, and a safe guarding alert raised if it met the threshold.
- A Southwark patient raising a concern of misconduct or neglect by a member of staff may choose not to involve others in the investigation. For example, the Southwark resident may request that she/he does not wish for social services or the police to be involved with the incident and if they have the capacity to make that decision, it is likely that the investigation will be conducted internally and the patient's wishes respected. This would of course depend on the seriousness of the concern and the wider public interest considerations. A crime will always be reported to the police and investigated using the multi-agency procedures.
- Patients and or carers who raise allegations about Trust staff will always be given an explanation of the multi-agency safeguarding procedures and their consent obtained to share information with other organisations.

We will continue to improve our services to patients and as part of that process review all policies and procedures in line with local and national policy. Both Lambeth and Southwark local authority will continue to be involved in the review of any safeguarding adults at risk policy and procedures.

To conclude we take our responsibilities very seriously and want to work with yourselves proactively to protect our most vulnerable patients. If you would like any further information please do not hesitate to contact me

Yours sincerely



Eileen Sills CBE  
Chief Nurse and Director of Patient Experience