ADVOCARE

Introduction and context

Advocare is an organisation for carers based in Poole, Dorset. Advocare was originally set up in 1999 by a small group of former carers with the aim of helping fellow carers of older people with dementia and improving local social services. By November 2008 Advocare – Caring for Carers, as the organisation became known, had acquired charitable status and broadened its remit to include support for unpaid carers of frail, sick or disabled people with any condition. Its stated aim was to empower unpaid carers to speak openly about their needs and concerns.

In 2009 Advocare brought a number of cases involving concerns unpaid carers had in relation to the health and social care services provided in Poole, Bournemouth and Dorset to the attention of the then MP for South Dorset, requesting an independent inquiry. These concerns were also brought to the attention of the South West Strategic Health Authority. This started a process leading to a two stage Independent Investigation ranging across healthcare, social care, continuing healthcare and safeguarding. The investigation was carried out by Dr. Susan Benbow.

Advocare formed an oversight group with Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole councils and the primary care trust. The Terms of Reference for the investigation clarified that scrutiny of the actions from the investigation would be overseen by the Safeguarding Adult Boards.

A number of individual cases, many dating from some time ago, have been investigated and responses provided to carers by the relevant organisations. Furthermore, practice in Health and Social Care has changed during the course of the investigation through the implementation of the Care Act 2014 and the approach Making Safeguarding Personal, which makes the wishes of individuals and their carers central to the safeguarding process. A summary of improvements made within Health and Social Care Services within Dorset, Bournemouth and Poole can be found in chapter 7 of the final Investigation Report.

In addition, a detailed action plan responding to recommendations from individual investigations and medical case reports has been compiled.

At a joint meeting of the Dorset and Bournemouth and Poole Safeguarding Adults Boards on 21st September 2018, the action plan was scrutinised and responsibility for further monitoring of progress was formally handed over to the Safeguarding Adults Boards.

The following documents are now available on the websites of both Boards

* Independent Investigation Final Report, 20 March 2018.
* Joint agency action plan
* Minutes of the joint SAB meeting on 21st September 2018

Barrie Crook

Independent Chair, Dorset and Bournemouth and Poole Safeguarding Adults Boards

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