



Merton  
Safeguarding  
Adults Board

# Annual Report

2019-20





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**The improvement  
in local safeguarding  
practice is evident  
from this report,  
as is the Board's  
determination to  
continue to learn.**

## Message from the Independent Chair

I am pleased to present the Merton SAB Annual Report for 2019 – 2020. This report summarises what the Board achieved throughout the year on behalf of Merton residents, together as a partnership as well as through the work of individual partner organisations.

It was my privilege to be the first Independent Chair of Merton SAB from 2016 until the end of 2019 and to have worked with such a committed and energetic Board to develop and improve safeguarding adult's partnership working across the Borough.

The improvement in local safeguarding practice is evident from this report, as is the Board's determination to continue to learn and to ensure that partners listen and understand safeguarding issues for all Merton residents. The Board's website was launched at the beginning of the year and provides greater access, information and visibility of the partnership's work.

2020 has of course seen unprecedented demands on local services as a result of Covid19. The pandemic has and will continue to have an effect on all of us, impacting on the lives of service users and staff across the partnership. Merton SAB's priorities for 2020-21 are heavily based on our response to the current crisis and to do our utmost to ensure safeguarding adults at risk remains at the forefront of our work.



**Teresa Bell**  
**September 2020**

# The Merton Story

## Overall healthy and safe borough, rich in assets

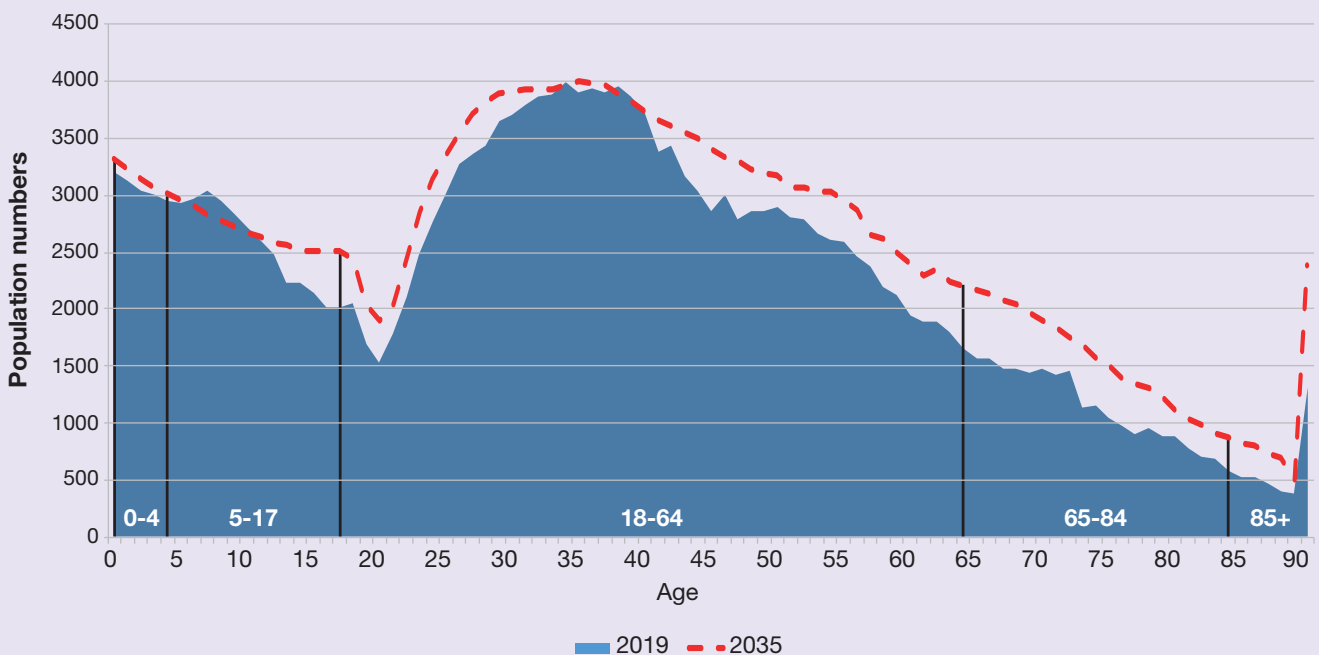
### Challenges:

- Inequalities and the health divide
- Healthy lifestyles and emotional wellbeing
- Child and family, resilience and vulnerability
- Increasing complex needs and multi-morbidity
- Hidden harms and emerging issues

### Rich in Assets

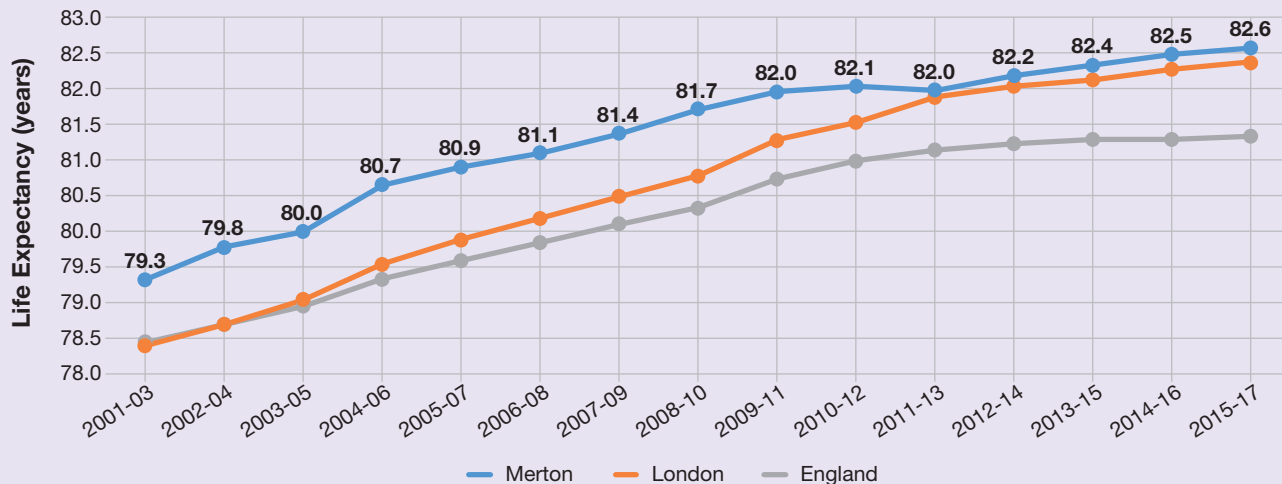
-  Many green spaces
-  Active voluntary and community sector
-  Resourceful libraries
-  Good schools
-  Transport connections

Population in Merton (all persons) by single age band, 2019 and 2035



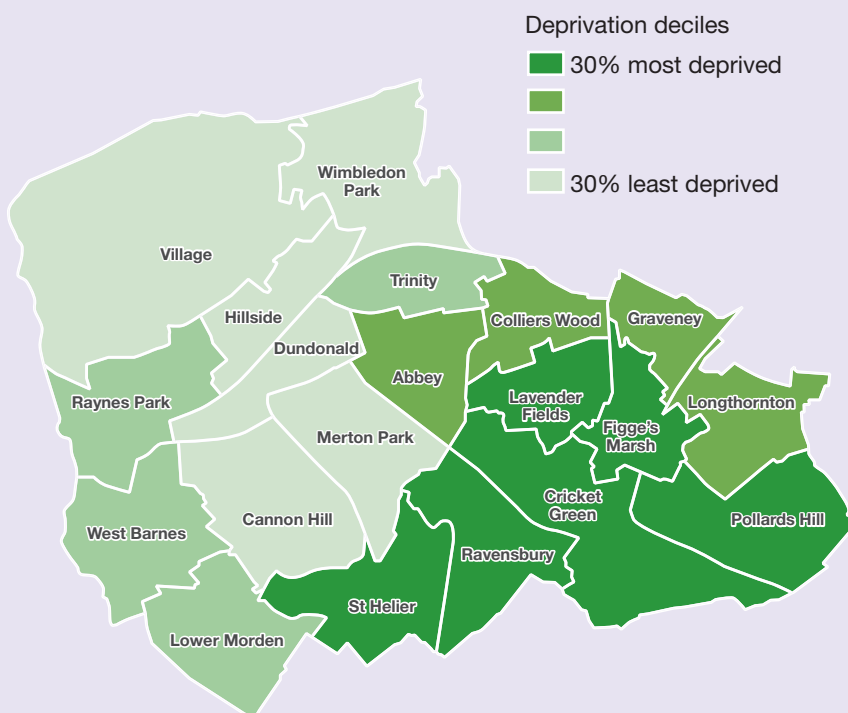
## Overall healthy and safe borough

Life Expectancy at birth for people in Merton, London and England



## Inequalities and the health divide

Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2015 for Merton Wards



**Significant social inequalities between east and west.**

**Similar patterns for:**

- Life expectancy
- Unemployment
- Long-term conditions
- Educational attainment
- Overcrowding

## Healthy lifestyles and emotional wellbeing

	Numbers in Merton	Risk Factors
 <b>Exercise</b>	<b>31,000</b>	Number of adults doing less than 30 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity per week
 <b>Healthy Eating</b>	<b>68,200</b>	Number of adults not meeting the recommended '5-a-day' on a 'usual day'
 <b>Alcohol</b>	<b>40,700</b>	Number of adults drinking above the recommended limit of alcohol a week
 <b>Smoking</b>	<b>17,600</b>	Number of adults who smoke
 <b>Mental Wellbeing</b>	<b>19,000</b>	Number of adults with depression and anxiety recorded by GPs

## Child and family vulnerability and resilience

### Good things happening...

- Improved school readiness
- Reduced teenage pregnancy
- 16-17 year olds not in education, employment or training (NEET)

### Keeping an eye on...

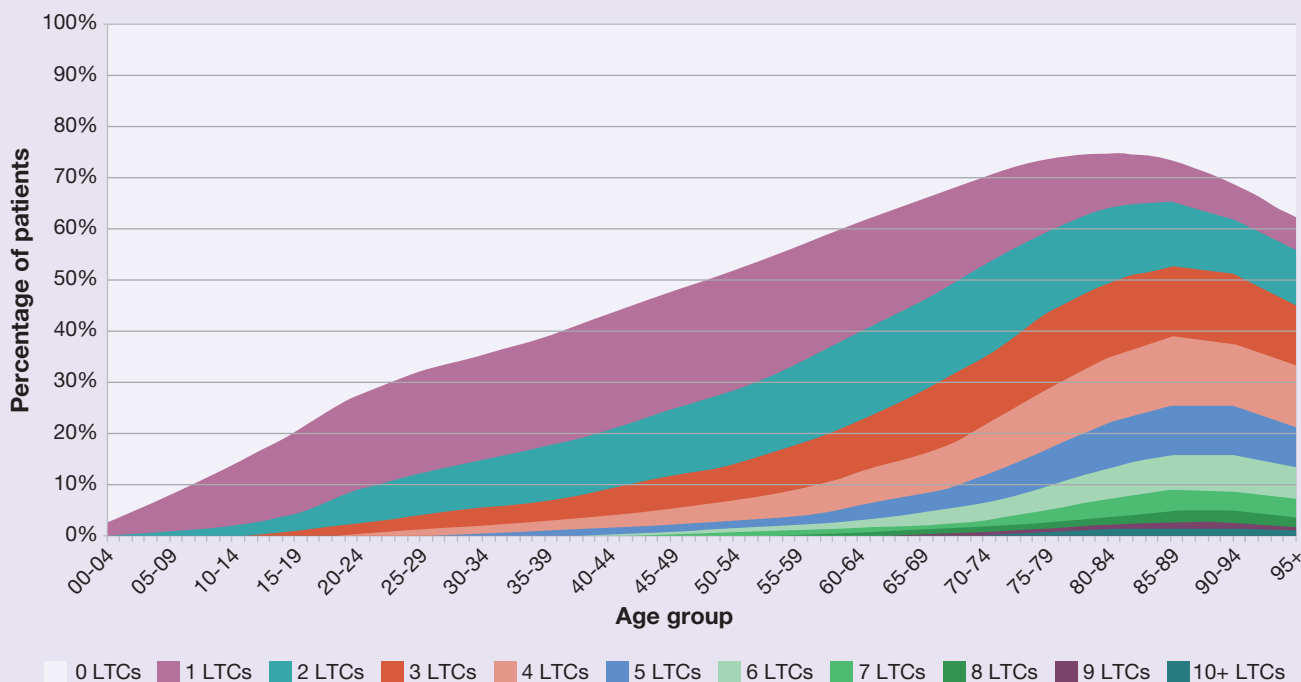
- Increasing childhood obesity gap

### Worrying about...

- Increase in self-harm
- Poor immunisation rates



## Increasing complex needs and multi-morbidity



Source: Kent Integrated Dataset. Produced by KPHO (ES) 07/16  
 N.B. This is illustrative data – pattern in Merton will be similar

Total number of long term conditions increases with age e.g. 75% of people aged 80-84 years have at least 1 long term condition; 50% have 3 or more.

## Hidden harms and emerging issues

### Hidden harms



**Loneliness**



**Excess Winter Deaths**



**Domestic Violence**

### Emerging issues



**Air Pollution**



**Adverse Childhood Experiences**



**County Lines**



**Antibiotic Resistance**

# Why we have a Safeguarding Adults Board

## Main purpose

- The overarching purpose of the SAB is to help and safeguard adults with care and support needs

## It does this by:

- Assuring itself that local safeguarding arrangements are in place as defined by the Care Act 2014 and statutory guidance

## Core Duties

- Develop and publish a **strategic plan**
- Publish an **annual report**
- Commission **Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs)** for any cases which meet the criteria for these

# How the Board works in Merton

**The Merton Safeguarding Adults Board (MSAB) is a multi-agency partnership board. It has four sub groups that are tasked with undertaking the work of the board. Each sub group reports to the board.**

The MSAB is facilitated by an Independent Chair and supported by a Business Manager and a designated Administrator.



**Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) Sub Group**  
Oversees the safeguarding adult review process when they meet the criteria. Ensures learning from reviews are identified and shared effectively.

**Learning and Development Sub Group**  
Oversees the learning and development strategy, including training across the partnership. Works alongside the SAR Sub Group to ensure learning from SAR's are included in training plans as required.

**Performance & Quality Sub Group**  
Has oversight of performance and quality of safeguarding activity, through developing robust mechanisms across the partnership, which assure good practice to safeguard adults at risk.

**Communication and Engagement Sub Group**  
Oversees communication and engagement to improve engagement with a wider range of stakeholders, service users and carers on behalf of the Board.

# The Six Safeguarding Principles



**Empowerment:** people being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and give informed consent



**Protection:** support and representation for those in greatest need



**Prevention:** it is better to take action before harm occurs



**Partnership:** local solutions through services working with their communities – communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse



**Proportionality:** the least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented



**Accountability** and transparency in safeguarding practice

# Our Partnership





# Our Plan for 2019/2020

## **Priority 1:**

We will ensure that partner agencies work together to prevent abuse and protect adults at risk of abuse and neglect.

## **Priority 2:**

We will strengthen our communication and engagement across groups and communities in Merton to increase public awareness of safeguarding adults and to ensure that our plans and actions are informed by the experience of the widest range of local people.

## **Priority 3:**

Together we will learn from experience and support both paid and unpaid staff across the partnership to continually build confidence and the effectiveness of everyone's safeguarding practice.

## **Priority 4:**

We will understand how effective adult safeguarding is across Merton to ensure that we identify emerging risks and take action accordingly

# Our Achievements

**In line with our priorities, this year has seen much improved partnership working, facilitated by the board and the four sub groups. The sub groups have started to develop SMART plans to take forward the MSAB objectives in a timely way.**

An independent MSAB website was developed and launched earlier in the year. The formal launch will take place in 2020/2021. It provides a visual platform for the board to communicate with partners and the wider community. In the future, it will be used to inform about safeguarding news, events and training.

In December 2019 the board members met for its annual 'Away Day' to evaluate where they were and what needed to be improved going forward.

The focus for the day was on 'Ownership and Accountability'. Areas of discussion included:

- Mental Capacity Act
- Professional curiosity
- Information Sharing
- Responsibilities under the Care Act
- Case Programme Approach
- Risk Assessment and Management
- Self-Neglect/ Multi Agency working

Responses included:

- To develop a risk matrix for use across agencies
- To develop and establish a complex cases panel
- To use the MSAB website to outline basic awareness/application of key legislation.
- To raise awareness and promote the use of independent advocacy
- Produce a 'Professional Curiosity Resource Pack' for practitioners
- To develop a program for 'Deep Dive Audits' in particular for complex cases.

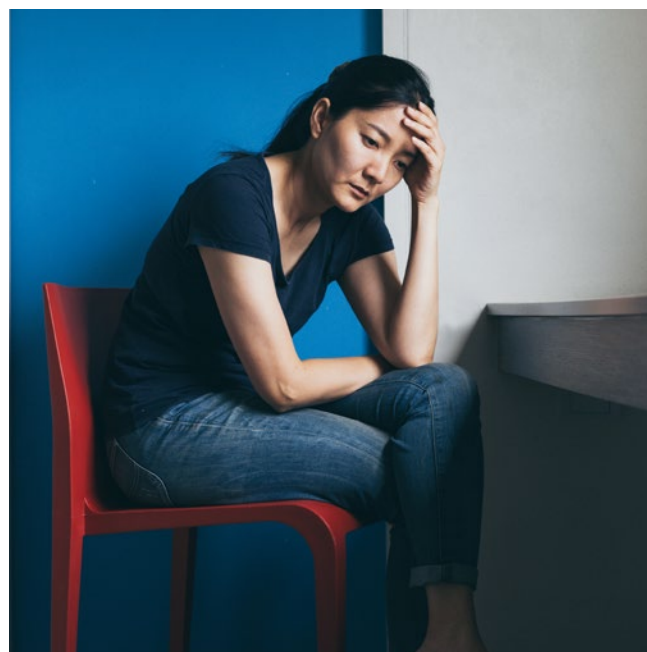


# National Safeguarding Week 2019 and beyond

Organised by Ann Craft Trust, each day focuses on a different safeguarding adults at risk issue. In Merton we organised a number of workshops to facilitate a better understanding of a wide range of safeguarding issues, including:


- Positive Risk Taking
- Restorative Justice
- Lived experience – Fire Brigade – presentation from the family of a victim of Carbon Monoxide poisoning
- SafeLives Dash risk checklist for Domestic Abuse
- Modern Day Slavery
- Scams


This is a specific week where safeguarding adults awareness raising is focused, however, the aim in Merton is to keep conversations going and build on what we have learnt. Partners are encouraged to embed the learning in their organisation and in their work with service users and carers to improve outcomes and quality of life.



# Partner Achievements


**London Borough of Merton** – Has focused on consistency of recording and the conversion of safeguarding concerns to safeguarding enquires. Training workshops have been delivered by the safeguarding adult's team manager to increase staff awareness of the processes and the importance of accurate recording.

**Met Police** –  Borough CU has appointed a dedicated Detective Inspector to lead on Adult Abuse, who will look to strengthen the response and engagement around the safeguarding adults, raise the adult abuse agenda within policing locally and develop a network of subject matter experts around adult abuse and embed learning from SARs.

**Community Rehabilitation Company CRC**  
 continues to work on reducing risk and supporting service users to transform their lives. London CRC delivers intervention programmes including, 'Making Amends' programme that has a restorative justice focus.



**Central London Community Health NHS Trust**  
– Hosted a Children and Adult Safeguarding conference Oct 2019 (Think Whole Family). Topics included, adverse child events contextual safeguarding, Making Safeguarding Personal, Safeguarding and homeless services, Prevent and the voice of patients with learning disabilities and their families.

**Merton Mental Health Service, SWLSTG Trust**  
 focused on improving consistency in recording safeguarding adult information across mental health and social care systems. Embedding practice is on-going. The end goal is to ensure that both organisations have consistent levels of recording and synergy in the Safeguarding information held by both.

**London Fire Brigade Merton** – A general Data Sharing Agreement for the Brigade has been documented, the agreement can be used and adapted for any local authority. In addition, over the last 12 months the information management team have been implementing an 'Information Sharing Gateway', aimed to simplify and increase information sharing between the Brigade and local authorities.



# The Learning Disabilities Mortality Review (LeDeR) Merton 2019/2020

This information is taken from the annual report of the Learning Disability Mortality Review Programme (LeDeR) for Merton and Wandsworth 2019/2020. We have separated the figures to give an overview of the activity for Merton and data shown is for Merton only.

Year	Merton April 2019-March 2020	Merton June 2017-March 2019
<b>Total notifications</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	5	7
Female	6	11
<b>Ethnic Group</b>		
BAME	3	4
White	8	13
Other		1
<b>Age Group</b>		
4-11	3	
Under 25	2	2
25-44		4
45-54		5
55-64		5
65-74	1	2
75 and over	3	

## **Overall Conclusions**

- A challenge was the lack of qualified reviewers. This meant there was a backlog of reviews. However an Independent reviewer and several other bank reviewer's were appointed to successfully clear the backlog.
- Good evidence that the LeDeR programme is making improvements in services for people with Learning Disabilities and autism by changing practice, including the involvement of multi-agency and essentially family members and carers in the LeDeR process.
- To ensure that actions were turned into meaningful learning, recommendations from completed reviews were widely distributed to primary care, hospitals, care homes, local authorities and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to ensure continuous improvement. An extra staff member was employed at the Learning Disabilities Team, St George's Hospital and was funded by the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG).
- Lessons learnt from Covid19 were particularly focused around legislation, issues of consent and acting in people's best interest. Also robust guidance to prevent premature deaths for people with learning disabilities in all settings and especially in Care Homes.



# Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SAR) 2019/2020

**A Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR) is a legal duty under the Care Act 2014. The purpose of a SAR is to learn from cases, on a multi-agency level, to prevent similar incidents occurring. The aim is not to apportion blame on an organisation or individuals for any failings that may be discovered.**

The criteria for a SAR states that we should consider a SAR if:

- An adult in its area dies as a result of abuse or neglect, whether known or suspected, *and* there is concern that partner agencies could have worked more effectively to protect the adult.
- If the same circumstances apply where an adult is still alive but has experienced serious neglect or abuse.

## **SAR Notifications**

The Board did not receive any SAR referrals during 2019-20 for consideration.

## **Ongoing SARs**

Four reviews continued throughout 2019-20. These reviews commenced in 2017/18 and have been delayed due to unforeseen circumstances. However, two are in the final stages of completion.

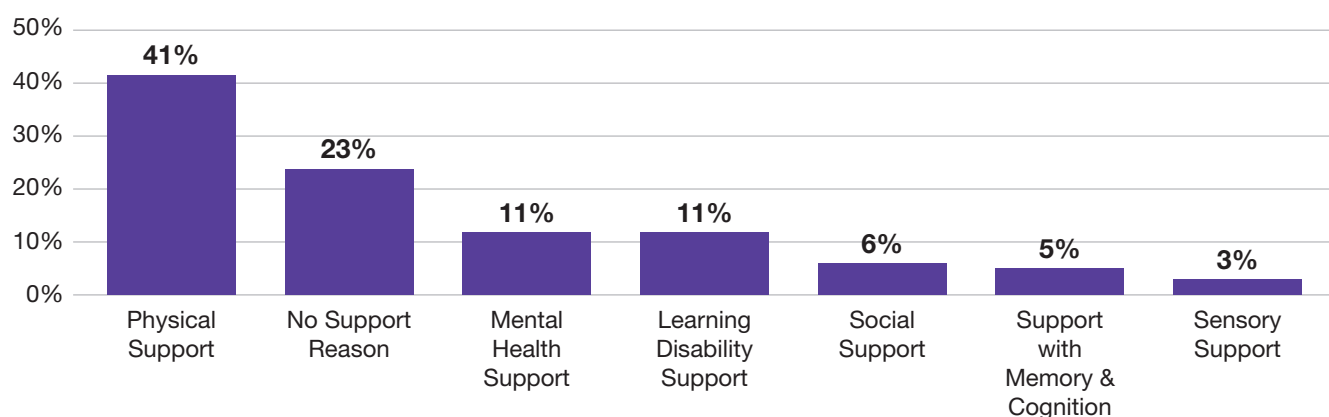
## **Learning from SARs**

There were a number of key areas identified early on in the SAR process. These included focusing on professional curiosity and ownership across the partnership. We have responded to this via reflective practice and learning and sharing at team meetings and more specific training is planned going forward.

# Safeguarding Adults Data

Year	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18
Total number of Adult Safeguarding Concerns raised during the year	732	483	322
Total number of Adult Safeguarding Enquiries commenced during the year	366	98	80
Conversion Rate (Number of Section 42 Enquiries + Number of Other Enquiries / Number of Concerns)	50%	20%	25%

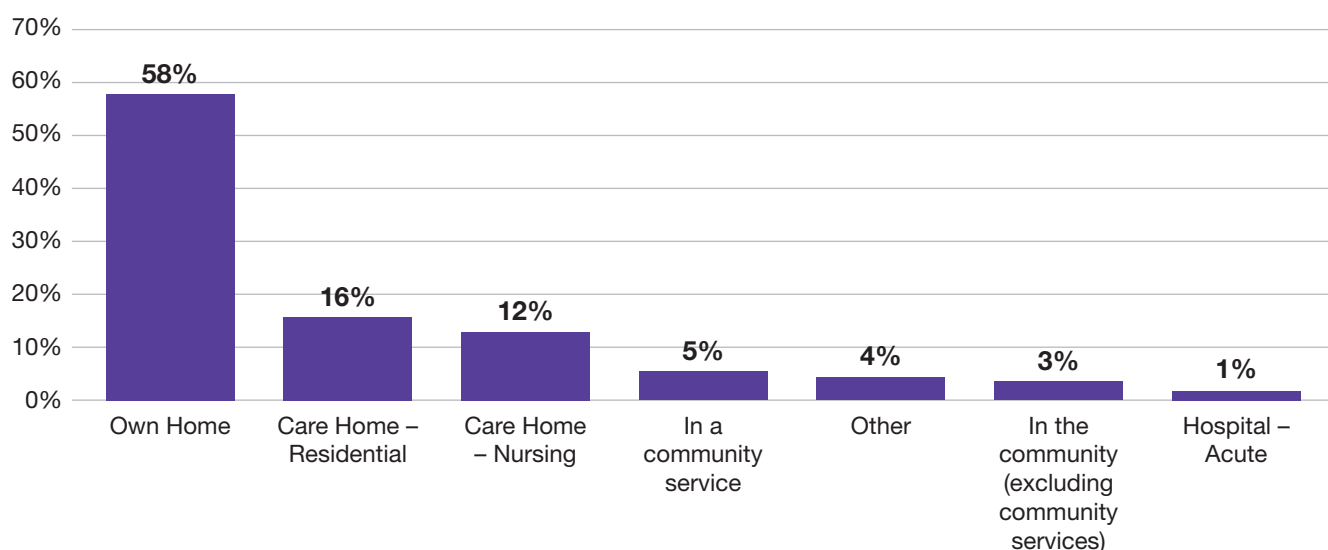
## Individuals involved in Safeguarding Concerns during 2019-20 by Primary Support Reasons



Type of Risk (Data source: concluded enquiries during 2019-20)	
Neglect and Acts of Omission	28%
Financial or Material Abuse	19%
Physical Abuse	18%
Self-Neglect	13%
Psychological Abuse	8%
Organisational Abuse	4%
Domestic Abuse	4%
Sexual Abuse	3%
Sexual Exploitations	1%
Modern Slavery	0%
Discriminatory Abuse	0%



### Location of Risk (Data source: Total number of concluded enquiries during 2019-20)



During 2019/20 732 concerns were received by Merton Local Authority in total. This is significantly higher than the number of reported concerns raised in 2018/19.

Safeguarding enquiries were started in 366 cases. This data shows a significant improvement in the numbers of Section 42 enquires with an increase from 20% to 50%.

In 2018/19 we identified issues in the way we recorded safeguarding information on our database. Although we were sure from our records that practitioners were upholding the principles of 'Making Safeguarding Personal' and that the risks for people had been reduced,

the way we recorded outcomes did not reflect this. As a result we reviewed and updated our recording processes on our database to ensure they reflected our performance management requirements as well as capturing the outcomes for our service users. This meant that our conversion rates from concerns to enquiries would be more accurate going forward.

As part of our response to improve recording, practitioners went through a series of training workshops to refresh their knowledge of the safeguarding process. This has meant data for this year, in relation to concerns converted to enquiries, have been considerably improved.

# Priorities for 2020/2021

## **At the beginning of our journey into 2020-21 we saw the emergence of a pandemic that forced us into a national lockdown.**

COVID-19 has and will continue to have an effect on our services, affecting service users and staff. We have seen increasing levels of mental ill-health related to social isolation, loneliness and bereavement and incidents involving domestic abuse are increasing across London.

Care and healthcare services are having to develop new ways of reaching people and delivering services. Local communities as well as the voluntary sector and charities have pulled together to support those in need.

Our priorities for 2020-21 are heavily based on our response to the current crisis and to do our utmost to ensure safeguarding adults at risk remains at the forefront of our work.

As well as learning lessons from reviews, what went well and where we need to make improvements, we are developing new and innovative ways to reach those we haven't communicated with in the past.

- We aim to hold a 'Challenge Event', focusing on the MSAB partnership and the effectiveness of partnership working. It will concentrate on what we do in partnership, rather than what we are doing within our own organisation. It is envisaged that it will enable the MSAB to demonstrate more clearly what contributors have achieved and where there are strengths and challenges in how partners work together.
- We aim to develop robust systems for the SAR process, as well as gaining assurance around multi-agency learning from SAR's. Learning will be shared via the Learning and Policy subgroup, before the Quality and Performance subgroup seek assurance from partners that learning has been embedded in their organisation.
- We aim to develop a multi-agency learning and development strategy, based on a competency framework and capturing safeguarding adult related training undertaken by all partners. Also, we will promote access to E-Learning training to the private and voluntary sectors.
- We aim to develop the MSAB data set and quality assurance framework. This will assist with measuring the impact of our work as well as identifying the need for improvements. We want to know that what we do is making a difference.
- We aim to develop our communication strategy to focus on building links with service users, carers and the local community. We will also reach out to Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people as well as people who are seldom heard to ensure their voices count.

## **Contact MSAB**

**If you have concerns about the wellbeing of a Merton resident, please raise your concern with our First Response Team:**

**[ASCfirstresponse@merton.gov.uk](mailto:ASCfirstresponse@merton.gov.uk)**

**or via telephone on 0208 545 4388**

You can also find online advice and information via our Merton Safeguarding Adults Website:

**<https://www.mertonsab.org.uk/>**



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