

## Background

This SAR is about SW, a woman with a history of enduring mental health problems including depression, panic attacks and agoraphobia. She also reported suicide attempts and was diagnosed with borderline personality disorder. At times professionals found it difficult to engage with her. After moving to Havering in 2010, she received services and support from North East London NHS Foundation Trust (NELFT). After being made homeless in March 2017, following a 3-month eviction notice from her landlord, SW briefly lived with family. She was then re-housed in Harlow, Essex, by Havering Housing Services. Following this move, she had difficulty registering with a new

GP, which prevented her from accessing other local services. She took her own life in May 2017, 3 weeks after moving to Harlow. She was 56 years old.

## Further Reading

If you would like more information on the SAR about SW, please refer to the published [executive summary](#).

To receive information about the Havering SAB's multi-agency training programme, please email:

safeguardingpartnerships@haverling.gov.uk

## Review

In November 2017, following the inquest into SW's death, a multi-agency Case Review Working Group meeting recommended that a SAR be undertaken as [key statutory criteria](#) had been met, including concerns about how relevant agencies had worked together to safeguard SW. There was also a desire to learn from any lessons for future practice found in the review. The SAR, led by an independent reviewer and involving many agencies represented on the Havering Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB), was completed in 2020 and developed a number of professional and practice-related recommendations for improvement to the multi-agency system for safeguarding vulnerable adults in Havering.

## Key finding

**Commitment by all agencies but lack of multi-agency response.** A complex case meeting would have addressed all issues, including a multi-agency safeguarding risk assessment and a transfer plan for an out-of-borough move. Risk assessments should reflect risk across multiple areas and respond to changes in circumstances. Risk mitigation measures should include the involvement of service users in the completion of care plans. Any reduction of protective factors should be considered.

# Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) about SW

## Key finding

**Person-centred approaches.** Recognising complex needs of someone with multiple mental health needs, and how these might interact and overlap, can help in understanding the person as a whole and how best to assist them, particularly at times of acute stress, such as re-locating to an unknown and unfamiliar area. Holistic assessment and regular review of individual needs and risks can help to identify further needs for support, likely trigger points and possible mitigating factors.

## Key finding

**Support for family members as carers.** If the family members SW stayed with after being evicted had received more support from services, it may not have been necessary for SW to move from there so quickly, and she may also have received more family support after moving to Harlow. All organisations providing support to adults with mental health issues should consider how the learning from the [Open Dialogue](#) model could help to promote better outcomes by involving wider family and support networks.

## Key findings

**Recognition of the impact of cumulative losses, including the loss of protective factors.** SW experienced a significant number of losses and there was a lack of recognition of the impact of these in worsening her mental health over time; and of the effect of losing protective factors, such as family support or pets, through a move away from the area she had lived in for seven years. Multi-agency training for professionals about such issues would assist in identifying how to provide effective support at crisis points.

**There were occasions when regular processes were ineffective at problem solving.** [Escalating](#) the case to management could have helped unlock access to services.