

CSASP



Corporate Safeguarding, Adult Support & Protection

Annual Report 2023



Our Commitment

We are committed to empowering and safeguarding the people we support. We are passionate about delivering the highest standards of care and support. As a person-centred organisation it is vitally important for Real Life Options Group to ensure that we protect people's health, wellbeing, and human rights, and enable them to live free from harm, abuse, and neglect. This is fundamental to the high-quality health and social care we deliver. To make this all a reality Real Life Options Group established a Corporate Safeguarding, Adult Support and Protection Group (CSASP) which, on behalf of the Real Life Options Group Board, works in partnership to safeguard and promote the welfare of the people we support and our workforce. This report provides detail and insight into how we ensure that people are always safe in the organisation.

Ensuring We Get It Right

As an organisation we are fully focused on our safeguarding and Adult Support and Protection responsibilities. This ethos is at the centre of everything we do and integral to who we are as an organisation.

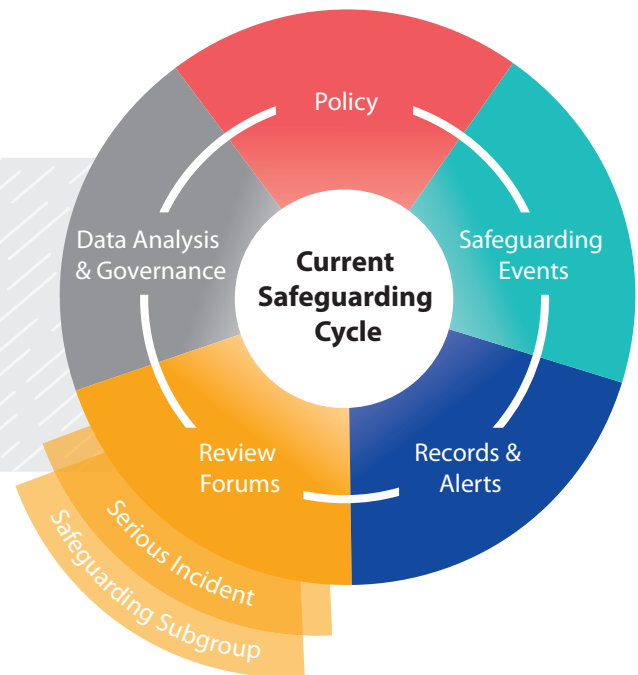
Getting it right for the people we support is our primary focus and to help us achieve this, it is essential that we continue to develop person centred safeguarding process that priorities the safety and wellbeing of the people we support and our staff teams.

The information within this report is a summary of what we have been working on over the last year and focuses on the following themes which are threaded throughout the narrative of this report:

- The **progress** we have made
- The **challenges** we have faced along the way
- Our **achievements** to date
- And finally our **future plans** and safeguarding outcomes

Internal Safeguarding Process

As you would expect the Real Life Options Group safeguarding process is very diverse and utilises several different strands of reporting, analytical and governance procedures from across the organisation ensuring a collective and proactive methodology that dovetails with our learning outcomes culture.



Policy: Our safeguarding policy and related procedures are reviewed at least annually in line with local government and legislative requirements and best practice initiatives.

Safeguarding Events: Safeguarding alerts come from various internal and external sources that include; the people we support/family members, staff, whistleblowing processes, local authorities, national regulators and members of the public.

Records and Alerts: Following a safeguarding notification, appropriate records are prepared and immediate actions are uploaded to our global events database which is CPOMS (an electronic system for recording all safeguarding incidents). Key individuals within senior management are alerted to each case. (This can include: Leadership, Heads of Operations, Group Risk and Compliance Partners, Administrators and Specialist Support Partners who will subsequently follow the case from the beginning to its conclusion).

Review Forums: All cases are collated, reviewed and appropriate actions identified within our weekly safeguarding/ASP meetings. Cases are only closed on agreement once the group are satisfied that all risks have been appropriately mitigated and associated learning has been utilised to inform future practice.

Serious Incident Panel Meetings: Where a safeguarding incident is deemed to have, or has the potential to cause serious harm: to the individuals we support and/or members of the public or the organisation as a whole, then we would escalate the incident to be considered within a Serious incident panel meeting. The panel would scrutinise the information and advise on appropriate steps to de-escalate risk. Key individuals within this process include: Group Trustees, Managing Directors, Risk and Compliance and relevant operational personnel.

Safeguarding Sub-group Meetings: Quarterly meetings provide the platform to review safeguarding data, identify possible common themes and agree corrective actions at both a local and group level. Comparison studies from year to year, quarter to quarter are also compiled and benchmarked to inform future practice and identify required resources such as additional training needs/additional operational resources and changes to policy.

Data Analysis and Governance: A variety of monthly and quarterly reports are compiled and these are disseminated to operational teams, organisational leadership (including the board of trustees) and when relevant to external partners such as local authorities/regulatory bodies. This ensures transparency, promoting shared learning and inclusive outcomes.

Challenges Faced Around Reporting

Some of the more prescriptive challenges we faced around CPOMS reporting in the year 2022/2023 include:

- Local authority safeguarding teams' response time.
- Police involvement/resolution and case closure time.
- Upskilling non-operational staff to recognise the signs and forms of abuse.

Our Achievements

Restrictive Practice

During 2022/2023 thirteen Person Centred Support and Enablement Academies were delivered to operational teams. The academies were aimed at developing knowledge and competence in the following areas:

- Active Support
- Capable Environments
- Restrictive Practice
- Active Support as a Primary Prevention Strategy
- Coaching and Modelling

The initial restrictive practice modules were a great success and ignited further discussion and interest within staff teams which resulted in a request for a further nine webinars to be rolled out cross the organisation.

In tandem to this, our continued development and enhanced implementation of our digital CPOMS system has resulted in a huge increase in the use of CPOMS over the last 18-24 months.

As result, we are now able to review all behavioural incidents in real time, using a range of analytical data to review incidents and evaluate the use of any agreed restrictive interventions. All of which increase our ability to highlight areas of risk and where required implement a targeted programme of individualised support, which is pivotal to our organisational goal of 'improving the quality of life outcomes for the people we support'.



Overall, our increased use of CPOMS and the implementation of more effective data collection and analytic processes has seen **a 35% reduction in physical interventions** over the last year.

Working example:

Over the last year we have been analysing CPOMS data for people like Mr T. The monthly data collated from CPOMS for this individual evidenced an increase in incidents relating to property damage. The Specialist Support Team worked in collaboration with the staff team and the Community Learning Disability Team to develop a robust Positive Behaviour Support Plan and following the implementation of this bespoke plan, property damage was seen to reduce by 71%.

Property Damage

 **71%**

Restraint Reduction

As we know the UK Restraint Reduction Network (RRN) in conjunction with our regulators: the Care Quality Commission (England) and the Care Inspectorate (Scotland) have been widely promoting restraint reduction over the last two years and as a result of our internal focus on Restraint Reduction the Real Life Options Group are confident that our Safeguarding processes now firmly align with the RRN objectives

Over the last year Service Managers, Risk and Compliance Partners, and the Specialist Support team have worked hard to raise awareness regarding the purpose of accurate incident reporting and recording in a timely manner through CPOMS. However, further work is still required to ensure the organisation has a robust understanding of the day-to-day restrictions that people may be living with.

Therefore, to move this forward the organisation is currently working on a cogent policy with a targeted plan and defined processes relating to:

- The organisations aims and objectives in relation to restrictive practice
- How progress will be monitored
- Understanding what future support operational teams require to fully embed our agreed plans and procedures

We are currently working on a **cogent policy**

Referral Procedure

As an organisation one of our core values is the safety and wellbeing of the people we support and as difficult as it may be, it is essential that we remain true to our value base and always prioritise the best interests of supported individuals. As a result, during 2022/2023 the organisation unfortunately had to make various difficult decisions in relation to some of our more complex support packages, in particular where the nature or complexity of their support was not highlighted or did not become evident during the referral and assessment process, which regrettably impacted on the organisations ability to fully meet individual needs to our expected standards.

As a result we are now in the latter stages process of finalising a robustly informed and more effective referral process that encompasses a detailed needs assessment signposting the assessor to any specialist assessments that may be required as part of the overall referral assessment.

In addition to this, the process will identify potential risks that on occasion may require support from an internal risk panel of suitably skilled senior managers from across the organisation. The panels purpose will be to explore the potential risks and subsequent mitigation and make joint decisions based on the facts presented to them, thus ensuring that any new people referred to the Real Life Options Group have a clear and detailed assessment which distinctly identifies the skills required to provide quality support, fully aligned to both internal and external standards.

Our Leadership Team and the Board of Trustees believe that this process will capture the learning required to mitigate the risk, protect people we support, staff and others and greatly reduce the opportunity for support packages to be unsuccessful.

We are finalising a **NEW robustly & more effect referral process**

We are introducing an internal risk panel **of suitable skilled senior managers from across the organisation**

Health and Wellbeing

To safeguard the continuous delivery of quality services we appreciated that our staff are best placed to achieve high standards when they are equipped and supported to maintain their own health and wellbeing. During the pandemic it became crucial that staff were able to access our ongoing Employee Assistance Programme as well as free health guidance and counselling that offered stability for themselves and their families.

As the impact of COVID-19 continues to recede it remains equally important to us as an organisation to continue this work stream in order to protect our employees and the overall quality of services delivered. As a result our teams are now able to download or access a large library of guidance and support in conjunction with our annual Health & Wellbeing calendar of campaigns.

Staff have access to a **large library of guidance & support**

My Voice

As a person centred organisation, we recognise the importance of the people we support having their voices heard in relation to every aspect of the support they receive. Our My Voice initiative not only provides the platform to hear about opportunities to enhance the services but also to share much needed feedback on areas for improved practice or even how people have felt during more difficult periods. People's feedback is then shaped into service delivery with outcomes being captured as part of our 'You Said, We Did' approach to service improvement and participation. Topics such as My Home, My Relationships, My Safety and My Money will all have been captured this year.

my voice

Invasive Practice

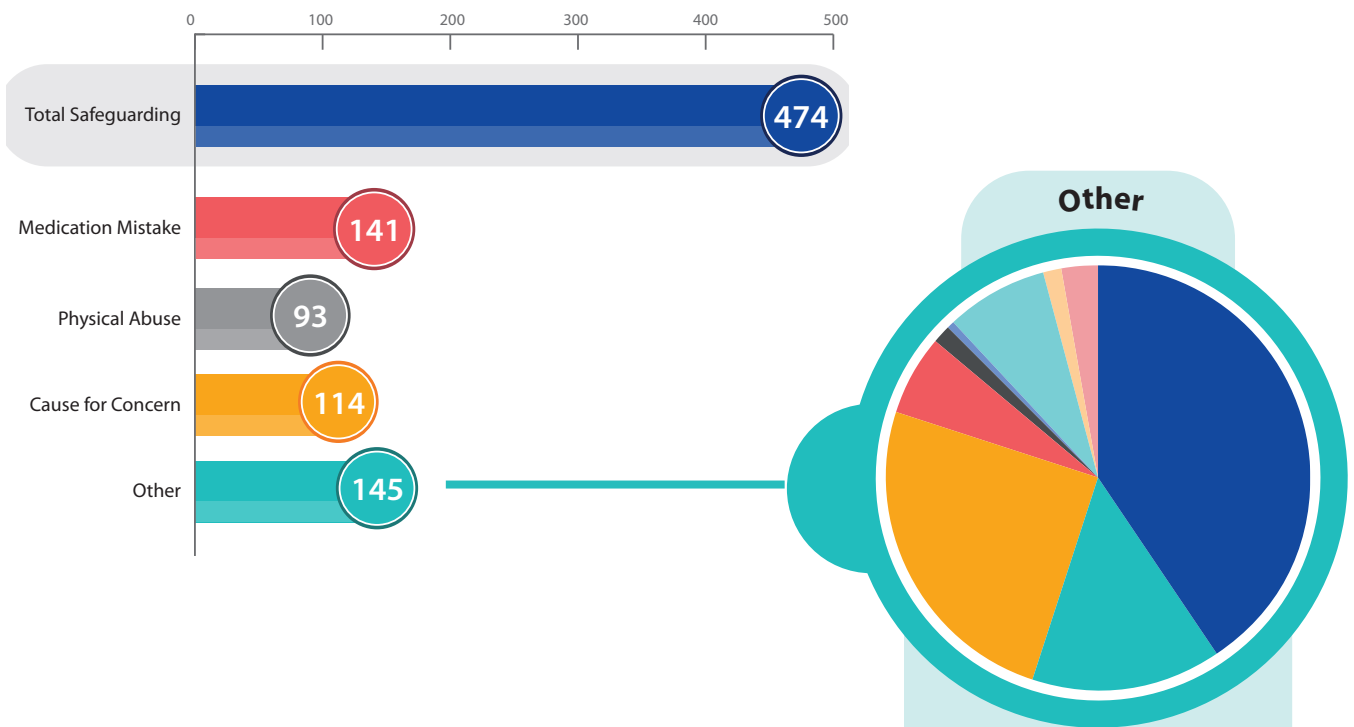
Day to day the support that we deliver can carry a risk for both the Real Life Options Group and the people we support but none more so than invasive practice. A smaller number of our services carry a higher risk meaning that we need to have clear processes and procedures in place to reduce that risk. We now have in place a dedicated clinical lead who alongside medical professionals/partners develops key guidance and training to support our teams to understand and deliver against best practice. To date this year, we have focussed on diabetes care, blister pack practice and administering ear and eye drops safely.

We have a **dedicated clinical lead** who works alongside medical professionals to support our teams

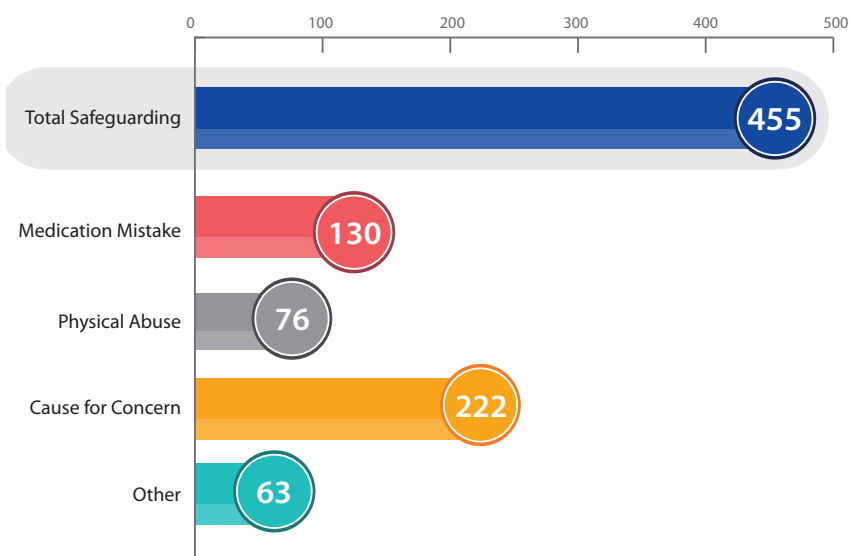
Our Safeguarding Year in Numbers

Below is a breakdown of all safeguarding events experienced in the organisation within the 2022-2023 financial year:

Safeguarding Events 2022-2023










Safeguarding Events 2021-2022



- 59 Self Harm
- 21 Financial Abuse
- 36 Psychological Abuse
- 9 Sexual Abuse
- 2 Person We Support Arrested
- 1 Staff Safety Concern
- 11 Neglect
- 2 Mechanical Faults
- 4 Neighbourly Disputes

Point of note: It should be remembered when viewing these figures that some safeguarding events will span multiple categories.

As illustrated there has been a slight increase in the total number of safeguarding events. The increase / decrease for each category is highlighted below:

Category	2021-2022 Total	2022 -2023 Total	Percentage increase or decrease  
Total Safeguarding	455	474	4.18% 
Medical Mistake	130	141	8.46% 
Physical Abuse	76	93	22.37% 
Causing Concern	222	114	48.65% 
Other	63	145	130.16% 

some safeguarding events WILL span multiple categories

Future Plans

Future safeguarding outcome initiatives for 2023/2024:

- Continue with our Restraint Reduction initiative, gaining a better understanding of the day-to-day restrictions that supported individuals may be living with
- Finalise the development of a cogent overarching policy with a targeted implementation plan
- Conclude the current development work relating to our Referral and Assessment processes
- Work with our external partners to reduce Safeguarding reduction and resolution time reduction
- Upskilling non-operational staff to recognise the signs and forms of abuse
- Continue to develop innovative ways to help and empower supported individuals who have suffered abuse.
- To identify and share lessons learnt more effectively and efficiently
- To identify and embed a process of referral (for staff members) to appropriate vetting and barring agencies

Our Promise

We are committed to putting people first: to empower the people we support and to provide professional, personalised services that recognise each person as unique. Our priorities are centred on the requirement to take account of the voice and lived experience of people we support in ways that influence services and planning at all levels in the organisation. Our staff and teams challenge one another to do better, to learn and to aspire for more. As an organisation we will continue to strive for excellence in how we support people in their homes and communities.



Real Life Options

a real choice | a real voice | a real difference

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Part of the Real Life Options Group

