



## **Response to Bakar Safeguarding Adults Review from the Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership**

In October 2022, Bakar tragically took their own life at the age of 54. Bakar was originally from Somalia and migrated to the UK around 17 years before their death. Bakar’s brother told us that “everyone liked Bakar” and they were described by professionals as friendly, respectful and “a really nice person”. Bakar identified as transgender and in keeping with the stated wishes on their health and social care records, we have adopted they/them pronouns.

Bakar had frequent involvement with agencies in the years running up to their death. Bakar suffered a significant period of mental-ill health and hospitalisation, and they struggled with increased alcohol use. They also were regularly in contact with probation services due to a forensic mental health history and a significant time spent in prison.

Dr Adi Cooper and Karl Mason were appointed as independent consultants to lead the Safeguarding Adults Review process to co-chair the panel and co-author the report.

As Independent Chair of the Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership, I am responding on behalf of the Partnership to the findings from this review. I would like to start by expressing my sincere condolences to everyone affected by Bakar’s death and to thank Bakar’s brother for his contributions to this review.

The purpose of a Safeguarding Adult Review is to use learnings from the case under review to promote and reinforce effective practice and identify where improvements or adjustments to the system need to be made. Reviews should be open and transparent and present the learning identified in an effective and accessible way. The purpose of a Safeguarding Adults Review is not to apportion blame.

As part of this review, representatives from the agencies involved with Bakar during the period under review provided written reports and attended a multi-agency reflective workshop to share their perspectives, self-assess multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and consider what could have been different.

The independent review authors identified sixteen recommendations for the KBSP to improve practice in Bristol for adults with care and support needs. The recommendations focus around four key areas:

- direct practice
- inter-organisational working
- organisational environment
- Keeping Adults Safe (formerly the Safeguarding Adults Board) governance and leadership

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The Partnership fully accept these recommendations and are committed to working with agencies in Bristol to deliver changes as a result of the review's findings. These recommendations as well as our plan for addressing the recommendations can be seen below.

The Partnership welcomes the areas of good practice that were identified in the review. The review authors found that Bakar's relationships with professionals were person-centred and relationship based. They found that agencies had strong work relationships with each other, particularly between probation, housing association and Stand Against Racism & Inequality (SARI) colleagues. The review authors also recognised that SARI and Bristol City Council Housing and Landlord services had already begun to liaise about training regarding transgender people's needs.

It is our intention that this Safeguarding Adults Review will result in collective action from all agencies to implement the recommendations and improve cultural competence to support our workers to meet the needs of local people.

If you've been impacted by this review or you know someone who is struggling, please reach out for help. There are many local and national support services that can help you:

- SARI provides free and confidential support for anyone who is a victim of hate crime - call 0117 942 0060 or email [sari@sariweb.org.uk](mailto:sari@sariweb.org.uk)
- Mindline Trans+ offers emotional support and signposting for trans and non-binary people who are experiencing mental health issues - call 0300 330 5468
- Nilaari is a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic led community-based emotional wellbeing and mental health charity - call 0117 952 4742 or email [nilaari@nilaari.co.uk](mailto:nilaari@nilaari.co.uk)
- Samaritans is there for people who are experiencing a mental health crisis and are there if you need someone to talk to urgently- call 116 123, open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week



**Sally Rowe**

**Independent Chair  
Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership**

## **Recommendations and Partnership response**

### **Direct practice**

**Recommendation 1:** The Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership should ensure that practitioners across agencies have a better awareness of the unique dynamics of discriminatory abuse and should monitor and audit practice in this area.

A new resource page on the Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership website is currently in development. The page will provide information and resources about discriminatory abuse. This will be promoted by the Partnership via agencies and newsletters so that the workforce will have better awareness of the unique dynamics of discriminatory abuse. The Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership has also agreed to undertake an audit of discriminatory abuse cases as part of the Adult Quality Assurance Framework for 2024/25.

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**Recommendation 2:** The Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership should ask agencies to assure the board that alcohol pathways are being used correctly and monitor practice in this area. This should be assured through a multi-agency audit of practice.

The Substance Use Transformation Programme has been working with existing Bristol providers to remove systemic barriers to referral, assessment, and delivery. Recommissioned specialist alcohol treatment services will be in place from April 2025. A multi-agency safeguarding network event took place in March 2024 to increase knowledge and understanding of substance use treatment services and pathways, and to build relationships between agencies.

**Recommendation 3:** Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership should develop guidance for closing cases where there is significant multi-agency involvement and consider their referral or re-referral pathways.

Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership will develop guidance for closing cases where there is significant multi-agency involvement within their new person-centred replacement for Care Programme Approach and review their referral and re-referral pathways.

**Recommendation 4:** The Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership should ensure that Mental Capacity Assessments are being done by partner agencies for people experiencing severe mental ill-health, substance misuse or medication non-compliance and that practitioners understand how executive and fluctuating mental capacity needs careful assessment.

The Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership Business Unit will review research on effective practice of Mental Capacity Assessments. This will help inform improved approaches to these assessments and increase understanding of the complex effect that addiction and mental health have on mental capacity.

**Recommendation 5:** Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership partners should work with voluntary sector services to create pathways for working with people who have severe unmet basic needs or destitution and develop an escalation protocol for unblocking problems.

The Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership Business Unit will work with voluntary organisations to update the partnership website with an up-to-date directory of services and pathways that can help people with severe unmet needs and those with insecure immigration status. The directory will be promoted across the partnership and voluntary sector.

### **Inter-organisational working**

**Recommendation 6:** The Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership should ensure that the referral pathway to Adult Social Care is functioning. This serious governance issue needs audit, testing and safeguards such as a checking system while the system is being examined.

Safeguarding referral technology has been reviewed, is functioning correctly and updates will ensure that users cannot save a referral without it being submitted to Adult Social Care.

**Recommendation 7:** Adult Social Care should review closure decision making if a person is in hospital. Practitioners should remember that a hospital stay is not a permanent safety measure and hospital discharge can be a time where fractures in the system can place people at further risk.

Adult Social Care will review guidance around case closures when a person is in hospital, ensuring that temporary accommodations are not considered as a place of safety within needs assessments and risk assessments.

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**Recommendation 8:** The Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership should audit out of area mental health hospital discharge arrangements.

Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership will undertake an audit of out of area mental health hospital discharge arrangements as part of their quality assurance framework and report findings to the Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership.

**Recommendation 9:** The Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership should review the range of panels and pathways and ensure that all partners are informed of what exists, how to refer, and any gaps are identified. Proposals to meet identified gaps should be presented to the Safeguarding Adults Board, including protocols for any partner initiating a multi-agency meeting about someone with complex needs, where there are safeguarding concerns.

The Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership Adults Self–Neglect Steering group reviewed the range of panels that exist and have proposed the formation of a Multi-Agency Risk Management Meeting (MARM). The Keeping Bristol Safe Executive is also committed to the Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub in accordance with the priorities in the Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership Strategic plan.

### Organisational environment

**Recommendation 10:** The Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership should review multi-agency policies and procedures to ensure that these aspects of safeguarding practice are clarified: mental ill-health and substance misuse do constitute care and support needs; self-neglect can include medication non-compliance; lack of access to appropriate nutrition is a care and support need; fear of hate crime can constitute a risk of discriminatory abuse.

The Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership Policy and Quality Assurance Officer will review all multi-agency policies to ensure that mental ill-health and substance misuse do constitute care and support needs. All policies are due to be reviewed by March 2025. Any changes to policy will be promoted across the partnership. A dedicated webpage is currently in development for information about discriminatory abuse.

**Recommendation 11:** The Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership should ask Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership and Adult Social Care to monitor and report back to the partnership on the interface between their services relating to self-neglect referrals. Adult Social Care should also report on the effectiveness of their internal arrangements in addressing safeguarding needs of people with mental illness, substance misuse and self-neglect.

The Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership are now members of the Self-Neglect Steering Group and are committed to improving the interface. Adult Social Care will be reporting to the board in the next quarter on the effectiveness of internal arrangements.

**Recommendation 12:** The Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership should review the interface between safeguarding adults strategic plan, particularly in relationship to understanding and responding to self-neglect, and relevant aspects of the suicide prevention strategy and action plans, to establish whether there is a shared priority for improvement.

Self-neglect has been included as a priority in the Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership Strategic Plan 2023-2026 and will be monitored in the Keeping Adults Safe action plan.

**Recommendation 13:** The Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership should ensure that all partners are offered training on discriminatory abuse and should monitor and review take-up. We have suggested

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monitoring because multi-agency hate crime training was suggested in a previous Bristol Safeguarding Adults Review.

The Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership will commission a training webinar on discriminatory abuse and will host a recording on the partnership website so it can be used as a professional resource.

### **Safeguarding Adults Board governance leadership**

**Recommendation 14:** The Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership should seek assurance from relevant Board partners that the forthcoming implementation of the policy 'Right Care, Right Person' maintains effective protection for people experiencing mental health crises. Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership should report on the use of police welfare checks in the context of bed unavailability.

The 'Right Care, Right Person' Project Lead has updated the Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership Executive, Keeping Adults Safe Group and Keeping Children Safe Delivery Group on project progress and delivery. The Project Lead will continue to update the groups throughout project implementation and any issues or barriers faced.

**Recommendation 15:** The Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership should consider escalation of the issues of scarcity of supported housing, scarcity of mental health inpatient beds and places of safety at a national level.

The Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership have reviewed and refreshed their bed availability policy to address local supply challenges. The Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership will also escalate issues of scarcity of supporting housing, mental health inpatient beds and places of safety nationally through the National Safeguarding Adults Board Chairs Network.

**Recommendation 16:** The Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership to engage the Community Safety Partnership function of the partnership in relation to discriminatory abuse in view of the two Safeguarding Adults Reviews that Bristol has commissioned on this theme, to consider actions for improvement in understanding across the whole system.

The Keeping Bristol Safe Partnership will share the learning from this Safeguarding Adults Review with the Strategic Partnership for Hate Crime group to make sure that learning is considered in their action plan.

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