Mid and West Wales Safeguarding Board Covid 19- Press Statement

Headline: *Concern Social Isolation Increases Risk Levels to Vulnerable Children and Groups in the Communities of Mid and West Wales*

The Mid and West Safeguarding Board, CYSUR and CWMPAS, are leading a campaign to raise awareness amongst communities across the region (Pembrokeshire, Carmarthen, Ceredigion and Powys) to be extra vigilant for vulnerable groups and individuals who may be at increased levels of risk due to social isolation restrictions in place. Elderly members of the community who may be susceptible to scams, and children and adults who live in households where domestic abuse occurs are being specifically targeted by a series of staff briefings, website content and social media campaigns.

Scams

Particular concern has been raised in respect of financial abuse in the wake of COVID-19. Members of the community are urged to be vigilant, as reported scams so far include fake news updates, fake insurance, fake texts and tax refund schemes, and online sales of miracle cures, vaccines and home-testing. There is also an increased likelihood of fake cleaning services and health workers going door-to-door.

Although there have been some excellent voluntary programmes set up to help the vulnerable with shopping, cleaning, medical needs and so on, many of which are genuine acts of good, members of the public should be aware there are a small number of abusers who may take advantage of such a scheme to gain access to vulnerable people's homes for criminal purposes.

Domestic Abuse

Although the statistics do not show an increase in reports of domestic abuse in the wake of COVID-19, it is believed that actual instances are likely to have increased. The impact of COVID-19 and the isolation measures imposed are likely to be adversely affecting victims of Domestic Abuse.

There is concern financial pressures and restrictions to social life may place additional pressures on families and cause incidents of domestic abuse within the home to escalate. Measures such as home-working, school closures and social distancing also mean victims spend much more time at home, away from family, friends and other sources of support. As children are not attending school, it is less likely professionals will detect if something is wrong at home and there is less opportunity for children to express their worries or disclose abuse.

Reporting Concerns

The Regional Safeguarding Board has highlighted agencies are doing everything possible to operate business as usual. Any member of the community concerned about the protection or welfare of a child or adult who may be at risk should continue

to report their concern in the normal way. Information on how to report concerns are available on the Board's website, www.cysur.wales. Reports can also be made to Dyfed Powys Police by calling 101, for those at immediate and high risk of harm members of the public should always phone 999. Although all cases will be risk-assessed, there has been no change to reporting arrangements and all calls and referrals received are being screened and triaged in the usual way. The Regional Safeguarding Board are working closely with all their partner agencies to raise awareness of the increased risk, and in particular with Dyfed Powys Police to reassure members of the public no child or adult who may at risk and/or in need of protection will be left without a service or support.

Bwrdd Diogelu Canolbarth a Gorllewin Cymru COVID-19 Datganiad i'r Wasg

Pennawd: *Pryder bod Ynysu Cymdeithasol yn Cynyddu Peryglon i Blant a Grwpiau Agored i Niwed yng nghymunedau Canolbarth a Gorllewin Cymru*

Mae Bwrdd Diogelu Canolbarth a Gorllewin Cymru, CYSUR a CWMPAS, yn arwain ymgyrch i gynyddu ymwybyddiaeth ymhlith cymunedau ledled y rhanbarth (Sir Benfro, Caerfyrddin, Ceredigion a Phowys) i fod yn fwy gwyliadwrus ynghylch grwpiau ac unigolion agored i niwed a allai fod mewn mwy o berygl oherwydd y cyfyngiadau ynysu cymdeithasol sy'n bodoli. Mae aelodau oedrannus y gymuned a allai fod yn agored i sgiamiau, a phlant ac oedolion sy'n byw ar aelwydydd lle mae camdriniaeth deuluol yn digwydd, yn cael eu targedu'n benodol trwy gyfres o gyfarwyddiadau staff, cynnwys gwefannau ac ymgyrchoedd yn y cyfryngau cymdeithasol.

Sgiamiau

Mynegwyd pryder arbennig o ran camdriniaeth ariannol yn sgil COVID-19. Caiff aelodau'r gymuned eu hannog i fod yn wyliadwrus, oherwydd bod sgiamiau a hysbyswyd hyd yma'n cynnwys newyddion diweddaraf ffug, yswiriant ffug, negeseuon testun a chynlluniau ad-dalu treth ffug, a gwerthu meddyginiaethau gwyrthiol, brechlynnau a phrofion cartref ar-lein. Hefyd mae mwy o debygolrwydd gwasanaethau glanhau a gweithwyr iechyd ffug yn mynd o ddrws i ddrws.

Er y sefydlwyd rhai rhaglenni gwirfoddol rhagorol i helpu pobl agored i niwed gyda siopa, glanhau, anghenion meddygol ac ati, llawer ohonynt yn gymwynasau dilys, dylai'r cyhoedd wybod fod nifer bach o gnafon a allai fanteisio ar gynllun o'r fath i gael mynediad i gartrefi pobl agored i niwed at ddibenion troseddol.

Camdriniaeth Deuluol

Er nad yw'r ystadegau'n dangos cynnydd mewn adroddiadau o gamdriniaeth deuluol yn sgil COVID-19, y gred yw bod enghreifftiau'n debygol o fod wedi cynyddu mewn

gwirionedd. Mae effaith COVID-19 a'r mesurau ynysu a bennwyd yn debygol o fod yn effeithio er gwaeth ar ddioddefwyr camdriniaeth deuluol.

Mae pryder y gall pwysau ariannol a chyfyngiadau ar fywyd cymdeithasol roi pwysau ychwanegol ar deuluoedd ac achosi dwysáu digwyddiadau o gamdriniaeth deuluol o fewn y cartref. Mae mesurau fel gweithio gartref, cau ysgolion a chadw pellter cymdeithasol hefyd yn golygu bod dioddefwyr yn treulio llawer mwy o amser gartref, oddi wrth eu teuluoedd, cyfeillion a ffynonellau cymorth eraill. Oherwydd nad yw plant yn mynd i'r ysgol, mae'n llai tebygol y bydd gweithwyr proffesiynol yn gweld a oes rhywbeth o'i le gartref ac mae llai o gyfle i blant fynegi eu pryderon neu ddatgelu camdriniaeth.

Hysbysu Pryderon

Mae'r Bwrdd Diogelu Rhanbarthol wedi nodi bod asiantaethau'n gwneud popeth a allant i wneud popeth fel arfer. Dylai unrhyw aelod o'r gymuned sy'n pryderu ynghylch diogelwch neu les plentyn neu oedolyn all fod mewn perygl ddal i hysbysu eu pryder yn y ffordd arferol. Gwybodaeth am sut i hysbysu pryderon mae ar gael ar wefan y Bwrdd, www.cysur.cymru. Mae modd hysbysu Heddlu Dyfed Powys hefyd trwy ffonio 101. O ran y rhai sydd mewn perygl mawr a dybryd o niwed dylid ffonio 999 bob amser. Er y bydd holl achosion yn cael asesiad peryglon, ni fu unrhyw newid yn y trefniadau hysbysu ac mae holl alwadau a chyfeirebau'n cael eu sgrinio a'u blaenoriaethu yn y ffordd arferol. Mae'r Bwrdd Diogelu Rhanbarthol yn gweithio'n agos gyda'u holl asiantaethau partner i dynnu sylw at y perygl ychwanegol, ac yn arbennig gyda Heddlu Dyfed Powys, i dawelu meddwl y cyhoedd na fydd unrhyw blant neu oedolion a allai fod mewn perygl a/neu angen amddiffyniad yn cael eu gadael heb wasanaeth neu gymorth.