

Trafford Domestic Abuse Strategy

2022 – 2025



TRAFFORD
COUNCIL

A stylized logo consisting of a teal checkmark shape above the text "Davis and associates".
Davis and associates

Foreword

Agreed Cllr.

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Context

Introduction

The Trafford Domestic Abuse Partnership (DAP) sits under the Safer Trafford Partnership. The DAP is a multi-agency group that works together to meet our shared goals, defined through this strategy, on preventing and responding to domestic abuse. This strategy sets out our joint vision, priorities, and commitments.

Our overall aim is to reduce the prevalence of domestic abuse, and ensure that where domestic abuse takes place, all those affected get the right support, quickly. We are committed to enabling our residents, their families, and communities to live a healthy life, free from abuse and violence. We will work together to avoid duplication such as over-supply of one type of service, to the detriment of providing another, consolidate evidence, explore what works best, share information early and thus ensure the best use of available resources across the partnership.

What is domestic abuse?

The working definition of domestic abuse is “*any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, behaviour or abuse between those aged 16 and over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional*”

As well as developing a definition in statute, the Act (2021) also positions children as direct victims in their own right for the first time.

How common is domestic abuse?

The national picture

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) year ending March 2020 found an **estimated 7.3% of women (1.6 million) and 3.6% of men (757,000) in the UK experienced domestic abuse in the last year**. In 74% of domestic abuse-related crimes the victim was reported to have been female whilst 77% of victims of domestic homicide were female which compared with 13% of victims of non-domestic homicide.

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) year ending March 2020 showed that women aged 16 to 19 years were significantly more likely to be victims of any domestic abuse in the last year than women aged 25 years and over. For men, there were few significant differences by age, however, those aged 55 to 74 years were less likely to be victims of domestic abuse in the last year than those in most other age groups.

For the year ending March 2020, the Crime Survey of England and Wales showed that those in the mixed ethnic group were significantly more likely to experience domestic abuse within the last year than those in the Black or Asian ethnic group. For the year ending March 2020, the Crime Survey of England and Wales showed that those in the mixed ethnic group were significantly more likely to experience domestic abuse within the last year than those in the Black or Asian ethnic groups. In the White ethnic group, women were significantly more likely

than men to have experienced domestic abuse in the last year (7.7% of women, compared with 3.6% of men).

The picture in Trafford

In 2020 the total population in Trafford was 237,579 of which 186,884 individuals were aged 16 or over. Based on the age and sex demographic within Trafford we can estimate that around **32,700 will have experience domestic abuse over their lifetime**. On an annual basis, this equates to 9,840 individuals likely to have experienced domestic abuse making it a highly prevalent crime. In 2020-21 there were 3,103 incidents of domestic abuse in Trafford reported to Greater Manchester police which resulted in 2,504 crimes being recorded which equates to domestic abuse being 16% of all offences. Approximately 70% of domestic abuse incidents are assessed by the police as being standard or medium risk, with high risk cases accounting for 21% to 24% of the total.

In 2020-21 there were a total of 3,382 homelessness applications in Trafford of which 4% were due to domestic abuse. This is below the national picture in which 1 in 11 households (8.7%) recorded domestic abuse as their main reason for being homeless or threatened with homelessness

The number of referrals to Children’s Social Care has been showing an increase in recent years. In total in 2018/19 there were 2,440 referrals to Children’s Social Care, this increased to 2,823 in 2019/20 but reduced in 2020/21 to 2,015. It is possible that COVID-19 may have impacted figures in 2020/21 as before that referrals were on an upward trajectory. The proportion of referrals with domestic abuse as a factor has increased since 2018/19. Approximately 20% of all referrals had a factor of domestic abuse in 2020/21 (343 referrals), in 2018/19 this was 12% (265 referrals). Referrals with domestic abuse as a factor increased in 2019/20 when overall referral numbers increased, however, overall referrals increased by 4% whereas domestic abuse referrals doubled.

What have we achieved so far?

Our previous strategy included our key priorities to work to end domestic abuse. Over the course of the last few years implementing our strategy we have made a number of notable achievements which are important to reflect on as we work to develop our next strategy. The table below highlights our previous priorities and what we did to deliver them.

Our priority was	What we did
<p>To promote awareness; raising the profile of domestic abuse across all Trafford Partnership organisations and services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16 Days of Activism Social Media Campaign; in December 2020 Trafford launched an event for the 16 days of activism. This was a social media campaign, where different professionals provided information on their roles and organisation, so that victims could understand what support was available for them within Trafford • LGBT+ Week of Action; in May 2021, community safety and GMP launched a campaign which raised awareness of LGBT+ domestic abuse and encouraged LGBT+ victims to report to the police and access specialist support. The Domestic Abuse Manager delivered LGBT+ domestic abuse training to Trafford staff. There was also a poster campaign with LGBT+ domestic abuse posters put up around Trafford, a relaunch of D66 code (which

Our priority was	What we did
	<p>distinguishes reports in the police system where the abuse has occurred in a same-sex relationship and therefore that specialist referrals can be made, for example to the LGBT+ Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy Service) with daily inputs to front-line officers, and a social media campaign. We are starting to see an increase in the number of LGBT+ domestic abuse incidents being reported to the police.</p>
<p>To protect and support; we will work locally to ensure our services enhance the safety of victims and the support that they receive, promoting earlier identification and harm reduction.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training provided to the partnership – coercive control, LGBT+ domestic abuse, Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)¹ Chair and MARAC Attendee, domestic abuse and Housing Training. • Domestic Abuse e-learning has been reviewed and is due to become mandatory for all Trafford staff. • MARAC pilot launched October 2020 – April 2021. A review took place, and recommendations are being implemented, via the relaunch of the MARAC Task and Finish Group, which is chaired by the Domestic Abuse Manager. • Planning around the launch of Cut it Out Campaign – an accredited program, which trains hairdressers and barbers currently in college completing the course, on how to identify domestic abuse and deal with a disclosure. • Launch of the IRISi pilot, which places ‘advocate educators’² into sexual health settings and offers 1:1 support to patients who disclose domestic abuse and provides training and support to staff. • Launch of Operation Horizon, June 2021 – joint visits between GMP and Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA)³ to high risk victims of domestic abuse. • Trafford were involved in the national ask ANI campaign. This campaign was in collaboration with pharmacies. Victims could attend the pharmacy and access support around domestic abuse • Successful continuation of Operation Encompass, a joint protocol between Greater Manchester Police, Trafford Council and Trafford schools.
<p>To pursue and deter; we will work in partnership with Greater Manchester Combined Authority, (GMCA) and our</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 20/21, we agreed to work totalling £47,875 for heterosexual male perpetrators via spot purchasing. TLC and TDAS were successful with a joint bid for the Make a Change program. This launched in Trafford in August 2021. Trafford Council submitted a further bid to GMCA for some additional Home Office money to extend the Make a

¹ MARAC is a nationally recognised process developed by the national domestic abuse charity SafeLives . It is a process of identification, assessment and multi-agency safety planning for victims at the highest risk of harm or homicide.

² Advocate educators are domestic abuse specialists that offer training to all GP practice staff and act as a single point of contact for domestic abuse support referrals

³ IDVA’s are specialist domestic abuse workers that risk assess, develop safety plans and support victims at high risk of harm

Our priority was	What we did
<p>partners to ensure an effective, evidence based response to perpetrators through to conviction and management of offenders, including rehabilitation and behavioural change programs.</p>	<p>Change provision to children and young people. Trafford were successful, and will extend their service offer to a focus on 18 – 25 year olds who use abuse within their intimate partner relationships or familial relationships.</p>
<p>To improve performance – to drive consistency and better performance in the To respond to domestic abuse across all local areas, agencies and sectors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment of the Domestic Abuse Manager to community safety in October 2020, who will lead on the borough’s response to Domestic Abuse. • The Council’s Children’s Services database system was extended for use by the voluntary and community based sector for monitoring outcomes and used as a case management system. • Domestic Abuse Dashboard has been created and is updated monthly, to evidence need, demand and risks with Trafford. • Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and Domestic Abuse Strategy refresh completed. • Trafford Council allocated a Corporate Lead for Domestic Abuse. • Launch of multi-agency Covid-19 domestic abuse fortnightly meetings, which ensure a partnership approach to tackling the increase in demand in support and complexity during the Covid-19 pandemic. • Launch a Local Partnership Board, which holds the governance of the implementation of the Domestic Abuse Act, 2021.

How have we developed this strategy?

In April 2021 Trafford Council commissioned Davis and Associates to conduct a comprehensive needs assessment to understand the current landscape across Trafford. This included work to hear from people with lived experience across Trafford. Views were sought from residents across Trafford, and also specifically from people who had experienced domestic abuse, through our commissioned providers and VCSE sector. Through this work we were able to identify the key gaps and areas we should focus on over the next three years to strengthen our response. The findings of the needs assessment is presented within this strategy underneath each of our priority areas to help us understand where we are now, and where we would like to be in three years’ time.

In the development of our strategic priorities, we ran an online public consultation to hear what the public and professionals thought about our proposals, and their feedback has been included within this final strategy.

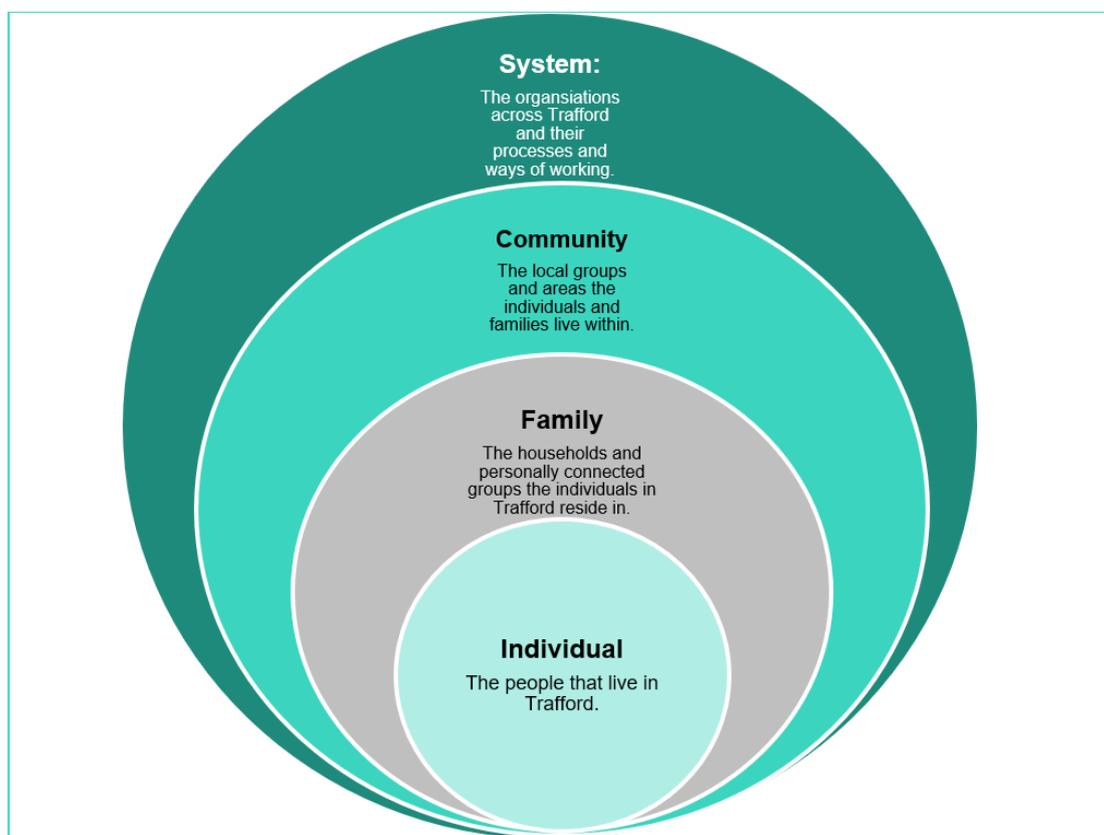
Our approach

This section sets our vision and strategic priorities over the next three years.

Our vision

In Trafford we are committed to enabling our residents, their families, and communities to live a healthy life, free from abuse and violence. We will support this by reducing the impact of domestic abuse on the population of Trafford by developing and implementing a sustainable system wide approach to prevention, early intervention, response, and support.

Our vision for a whole system response to domestic abuse means we need to consider our key priorities across each element of the ecological system. These elements will form the basis of our next strategy. They are:



Strategic and commissioning priorities

To develop our whole system response the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) highlighted some key areas for us to focus on in terms of our priorities for the next three years.

Our four priorities

These priorities will enable us to work towards a long-term response that meets the needs of victims, their children, and perpetrators across Trafford.



Delivering these priorities will be everybody's business and we will balance being ambitious with ensuring we target our resource and efforts on the key objectives we know we need to deliver immediately over the next few years.

The below table highlights our ambitions and focus under each of these priorities based on the research we have conducted to understand what is needed in Trafford. These specific objectives will be measured through the Domestic Abuse Partnership (DAP). The following sections of the strategy will provide an overview of each priority in turn, and the rationale for our approach. Overall we have thirteen objectives we will work towards to deliver our priorities.

Priority	Objectives
Individual	1. All victims of domestic abuse have access to safe accommodation and support within it, including children
	2. Service provision is accessible without delay to victims, their children, and perpetrators including from all protected characteristic groups or where there is a complexity of need
	3. A unified offer of support for those concerned about their behaviour within intimate and family relationships
Family	4. A coordinated safeguarding approach to assess the needs of each family member to ensure support plans are 'whole family' focussed
	5. Developed pathway for families experiencing domestic abuse that stay together
	6. Access to recovery support for children and the non-abusive parent
Community	7. A public awareness communications strategy that focusses on i) understanding domestic abuse, particularly non-physical forms of violence (such as economic abuse and coercive control), ii) where to get support and ii) removes barriers in seeking help
	8. A coordinated bystander approach within the community to ensure the public are confident in recognising abuse and dealing with disclosures with an initial focus on employers
	9. A multi-agency pathway for children and young people experiencing domestic abuse in the family home or their own dating relationships
System	10. Develop full system response to domestic abuse across primary care
	11. Aligned approach to domestic abuse and sexual violence
	12. Consistent data collection across all agencies in relation to domestic abuse including demographic and need related data so that we develop a better understanding of all those impacted by domestic abuse
	13. Coordinated training programme for professionals in all 'people facing' roles with a programme being made available for elected members.
	14. Clear expectations communicated to schools, and partner agencies about their commitments to training staff under their safeguarding arrangements.
15. Provision of an internal domestic abuse policy for Trafford Council staff and a commitment to encourage employers across Trafford to develop Domestic Abuse Employment Policies which focus on supporting victims, and providing appropriate time off.	

These objectives will be delivered through the Domestic Abuse Partnership (DAP) through an implementation plan which can be seen in Appendix A. An annual report will be produced each year by the DAP outlining achievements to date and providing a refreshed implementation plan.

Objectives for priority 1: *Victims*

**Priority 1:
WE WILL ensure that all victims experiencing domestic abuse are identified as early as possible and offered support that meets their needs**

1.1 All victims of domestic abuse have access to safe accommodation and support within it, including children

Why this is important

Victims, the majority of whom are women and their children have a right to be safe within their home. We want to ensure all victims and families have access to safe accommodation; whether that is support to stay safe within their current accommodation, or options to move (including to a refuge) where they need to.

Domestic abuse is a significant cause of homelessness in Trafford. In 2020-21 there were a total of 3,382 homelessness applications in Trafford of which 4% were due to domestic abuse. This is below the national picture in which 1 in 11 households (8.7%) recorded domestic abuse as their main reason for being homeless or threatened with homelessness. Those presenting as homeless with domestic abuse as a primary need were significantly more likely to have children than those whose primary need was not domestic abuse. Of the domestic abuse homelessness applications in 2020-21 just over half (54%, n=178) were households with children.

We currently commission refuge provision through a specialist domestic abuse service. Trafford Domestic Abuse Services (TDAS) provides 14 spaces for shared refuge accommodation, 2 dispersed refuge spaces and 9 other refuge provision. The majority of refuge provision in Trafford is suitable for women with 1 or 2 children. Provision significantly reduces when women have 4 or more children, with only 1 dispersed refuge space and 1 other refuge space available for women with 4 children and none for women with 5 children.

In the last 3 years referrals have increased by 32%, 50 more referrals than in 2018/19. In 2020/21, 19% of referrals for safe accommodation were accepted, this is similar to in 2018/19 where 18% were accepted. The majority of declined referrals were declined due to no space or no capacity to support. On average 65% of referrals were declined for this reason.

Measuring success

- **Fewer** victims need to flee their home as options to remain safe in their home are available, including perpetrator management
 - **How will we measure this?**
 - We will increase the provision of services to enable this, including training staff on Secure by Design surveys, providing Sanctuary and other target hardening measures, and trialling the use of doorbell cameras.
 - We will track whether these measures have enabled victims to remain in their home safely.
- **Reduction** in the number of victims that are in unsuitable temporary accommodation
 - **How will we measure this?**

- We will track this through HOST data.
- **More** victims and survivors are able to access specialist domestic abuse refuge provision with fewer declined
 - **How will we measure this?**
 - We have increased refuge provision in Trafford through TDAS and we will track whether additional provision is further required to meet demand. There are now three refuges in Trafford.

1.2 Service provision is accessible without delay to victims, children and perpetrators including from all protected characteristic groups or where there is a complexity of need

Why this is important

We know that service provision to support victims and children is essential in order to enable them to live healthy and safe lives. We also know that those using abusive and harmful behaviour are the cause of domestic abuse and so ensuring we have service provision available for them to change is vital if we want to reduce domestic abuse in Trafford.

As such we would like to ensure that our service offer is fit for purpose and any individual that experiences domestic abuse, or causes it, is able to access services. This means we need to understand the barriers some individuals may face in accessing services, as well as any support needs they have that are related to their identity.

From our needs assessment we know there are cohorts of victims who we need to consider in terms of our pathways in to support;

- **Older people:** Based on the age of the population in Trafford we estimate around 1,760 individuals over the age of 60 will experience domestic abuse every year. Older victims of domestic abuse are 'hugely underrepresented' in domestic abuse services. This is reflected in the results of the 2019 Women's Aid Annual Survey, which found that only around 3.4% of their service users were over the age of 60. In 2019/20, Neglect was the most common form of risk for those with a concluded section 42 enquiry, making up 39% of all risk types, followed by physical abuse and financial or material abuse. Just 15 were identified as experiencing domestic abuse.
- **Male victims:** The majority of victims of domestic abuse are women. This alone can cause barriers for men to disclose and seek help, as they may not identify their experience as abuse. Data provided by Greater Manchester Police in Trafford shows that between April 2020 and March 2021, 26% of victims of domestic abuse were men, whilst 74% were women. In the UK data supplied from 28 police forces for the year ending March 2020 showed the victim was female in just under three-quarters (74%) of domestic abuse-related crimes recorded by the police. Mankind (2021) discussed the complexity of this as a cohort that are; invisible, often unaware of existing support, not being referred/signposted to appropriate support, and, limited or no services for them already in place including accommodation services. Men are less likely to access services with men making up only 4.4% of victims of domestic abuse being supported by local domestic services.
- **LGBT+:** Based on this we estimate in Trafford that there will be around 1,200 victims of domestic abuse within the LGB+ community every year. SafeLives (2018) report 'Free to be safe: LGBT+ people experiencing domestic abuse' found a number of

notable findings in relation to victims and survivors identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer/questioning such as; LGBT+ victims of domestic abuse are almost twice as likely to have attempted suicide, LGBT+ victims are more than twice as likely to have self-harmed, LGBT+ victims of domestic abuse are more likely to be abused by multiple perpetrators (15% compared to 9% of non-LGBT+ victims).

- **Disability:** Overall we can estimate there are around 45,530 individuals with a disability in Trafford. Of those individuals around 5,260 are likely to experience domestic abuse every year. For the year ending March 2020, the Crime Survey for England and Wales showed that men and women aged 16 to 74 years with a disability were more likely to have experienced domestic abuse in the last year than those without. Research has shown that 'disabled women are twice as likely to experience domestic abuse and are also twice as likely to suffer assault and rape.
- **BAME:** The total non-white population in Trafford is 32,744 which is around 14% of the total population. Using this figure alongside the estimated prevalence of domestic abuse we can estimate that around 1,010 victims of domestic abuse in Trafford will be from a BAME community. Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) women are overrepresented in refuge spaces, with BAME women occupying 6 in 10 spaces despite occupying only 13% of the general population

Measuring success

- Barriers for victims to seek help are **reduced**
 - **How will we measure this?**
 - The numbers of people seeking support for specialist help will increase in line with levels expected for the particular demographic.
- **Improved** access to services for all protected characteristic groups
 - **How will we measure this?**
 - As above
- **Reduced** waiting times for specialist services
 - **How will we measure this?**
 - Through monitoring of waiting times for specialist services.

1.3 A unified offer of support for those concerned about their behaviour within intimate and family relationships

Why this is important

During the past 3-years, the highest volume of domestic abuse crimes and incidents were recorded during 2018-19, peaking at 2,677 domestic abuse crimes. This indicates a high prevalence of individuals within Trafford causing harm to their intimate partners or family members. Whilst support victims and children is pivotal, we want to work with the cause of the problem; perpetrators.

Our offer for support will be two-fold. We will create opportunities through service provision for perpetrators to access support to change their behaviour. Alongside this we will have a zero tolerance approach to holding perpetrators to account. There are a number of tools we can use to manage perpetrator behaviour including through the use of protection orders to keep them away from the home for up to 28 days whilst victims are supported. The number of Domestic Violence Protection Notices and Orders (DVPNs and DVPOs) has varied from year

to year in Trafford, peaking in 2019-20, during which 25 DVPNs and 25 DVPOs were issued. Our support offer going forward will ensure that we use these tools, and the new Domestic Abuse Protection Orders (DAPO) the Domestic Abuse Act (2021) will bring in to force alongside measures to support change.

We know that during 2020-21, a total of 84 perpetrators of domestic abuse were identified by Probation services within Trafford. 67 offenders had a domestic abuse flag on nDelius, the Probation service case management system. Domestic abuse perpetrators identified by the Probation service were almost all male; 66 male perpetrators were identified in 2020-21, as compared to 1 female perpetrator. We also would like to increase our offer outside of the criminal justice system so that we can work with those causing harm earlier, including through preventative work for first time offenders.

We know that there are cases where the victim supports prosecution, but that the perpetrator is not charged due to the CPS deeming there to be insufficient evidence. The number of such cases has remained stable over recent years at 20-22%.

We know that prosecution is only part of the solution and this is why we aim to provide, and evaluate other interventions which change behaviour, and reduce risk to victims and their families.

Measuring success

- **Increased** number of perpetrators accessing support and changing their behaviour
 - **How will we measure this?**
 - We will record the numbers of people accessing this support
 - We will monitor behaviour changes following course completions
- Perpetrators access support to change **earlier** before behaviour becomes entrenched
 - **How will we measure this?**
 - We will record the numbers of perpetrators who self-refer to perpetrator programmes and who subsequently complete the programme and do not go on to commit domestic abuse.

Objectives for priority 2: *families*

Priority 2:

WE WILL ensure that support for families is coordinated enabling the whole family to recover from the impact of abuse

2.1 A coordinated safeguarding approach to assess the needs of each family member to ensure support plans are 'whole family' focused

Why this is important

We know that individuals do not live in siloes, and domestic abuse can affect each member of the family in different ways. Whilst the needs of victims may be practical needs in order to stay safe, children may require emotional or therapeutic support. Whatever the support needs of each member of the family is, it is important that we understand and respond to those needs holistically, so that support is coordinated and works for them. In some cases families can be offered support from multiple organisations, at the same time, which can cause confusion, duplication or feelings of being overwhelmed. We want to change that.

Between June 2020 and January 2021, a total of 682 domestic incidents involving children of school age were identified across Trafford, an average of 85 per month. The proportion of referrals with domestic abuse as a factor has increased since 2018/19. Approximately 20% of all referrals had a factor of domestic abuse in 2020/21 (343 referrals), in 2018/19 this was 12% (265 referrals). In total there were 189 children subject to a Children in Need (CIN) plan with domestic abuse as a factor out of the 493 children with CIN plans in total in 2020/21, 38% of all CIN plans. These figures highlight the need for a whole system approach, to ensure that where there are children within the home, both they and the victim receive coordinated support that meet their collective and individual needs.

The impact of not getting this right can have long term detrimental effects on children and young people.

Measuring success

- **Improved** information sharing and accuracy of risk assessments
 - **How will we measure this?**
 - Through monitoring quality assessments and periodic review of the MARAC.
 - Through outcomes from learning activities such as case reviews, and DHRs
 - Through practitioner feedback
- **Increase** engagement of all family members in support
 - **How will we measure this?**
 - Through practitioner surveys and victim's self-reporting surveys

2.2 Developed pathway for families experiencing domestic abuse that stay together

Why this is important

Linked to our objective in relation to whole family coordinated support, we know that sometimes the whole family can include the person being abusive and causing harm. National evidence has regularly cited that separation from a perpetrator can cause significant risk to victims, and although in many cases that can be managed safely, in some instances victims decide to stay in the relationship. Our survey highlighted that almost half of victims wanted support within their relationship, or support for the person that was being abusive.

We need to be able to work creatively with families who do stay together to manage the risk of harm, and offer support to ensure victims and children are safe.

Measuring success

- **Improved** identification of unhealthy and abusive relationships within family and peer groups
 - **How will we measure this?**
 - We will track engagement data through our domestic abuse campaigns.
- **Increased** disclosure of abuse
 - **How will we measure this?**
 - We will measure the numbers of people who make requests for help or advice on behalf of family/peers.
- **Improved** positive experiences for victims disclosing to friends, family and informal networks
 - **How will we measure this?**
 - Through victim self reporting via the Victims Voice Panel and/or The Domestic Abuse Survey.

2.3 Access to recovery support for children and the non-abusive parent to ensure

Why this is important

In line with our whole family approach, we know that the impact of domestic abuse can affect the relationship between victims and children. National research has highlighted that victims can find it difficult to establish boundaries after abuse. In some instances perpetrators' abuse tactics can include targeting the ability for victims to be able to parent. From our local survey of victims and survivors in Trafford, we saw the impact of this with 50% of victims telling us they wanted support for the children and 30% wanted support around parenting. We want to pioneer approaches that work with non-abusive parents as allies, supporting them to recover from abuse and build positive parent-child relationships.

Measuring success

- **Increased** access to specialist therapeutic and parenting support for victims and children
 - **How will we measure this?**

- We will track the provision of specialist services and the numbers of sessions that are provided, the number of victims who have accessed the service, and demand versus provision.
- **Decrease** number of children experiencing negative outcomes
 - **How will we measure this?**
 - We will measure this through our CYP service where we will measure referrals known to have domestic abuse in the home as a factor.

Objectives for priority 3: *the community*

Priority 3:

WE WILL ensure our communities are able to spot the signs of abuse and both challenge it when they know it occurs and know where to go to get help

3.1 A public awareness communications strategy that focusses on i) understanding domestic abuse, particularly non-physical forms of violence (such as economic abuse, stalking and harassment, isolation, and coercive control), ii) where to get support and ii) removes barriers in seeking help

It is vital that our communities across Trafford understand what domestic abuse is, including where physical violence may not be present, as we know for some survivors they did not see their experience as abuse. This means victims and survivors do not disclose or seek help. This was a common barrier victims noted from our local survey was that they did not realise the behaviours the perpetrator was using against them did constitute abuse (29%). This is a significant barrier as victims will not access a domestic abuse service unless they identify their experience as that. One respondent provided comprehensive examples of this;

“I wasn't sure what I was going through was abuse as it was mostly threats to reveal personal and private information to my family and employer. The solicitor confirmed it was control and coercion. It was very helpful as I felt empowered and justified in my actions. It was also good to just tell someone and get it off my chest. I knew the law would be on my side if my (ex) partner tried to get full custody of my child, which was another threat I experienced often”.

Although it is clear from the survey sample that non-physical abuse is highly prevalent in abusive relationships in Trafford, with several behaviours being experienced on a frequent basis, some victims still do not think people will take these forms of abuse as seriously. The **most common** forms of non-physical abuse experienced in Trafford were;

- **Being shouted at:** The majority of victims (92%) had been shouted at 82% had experienced this behaviour more than 10 times, with a further 10% experiencing it more than three times.
- **Isolation from friends and family:** Over three quarters (85%) of victims reported having been isolated from friends and family members with 51% experiencing the behaviour over 10 times. We saw an anecdotal example of this in the free text box from one victim discussing how the perpetrator would directly contact her friend to keep her away.
- **Physical tracking and monitoring:** Over one in four victims (82%) had experienced being physically tracked in terms of where they went or how they spent their time. It was also a behaviour experienced frequently within the relationship with 49% experiencing the behaviour over ten times.

We asked victims in Trafford about the type of things they found to be a barrier in speaking about their experience or seeking help, from the responses it is clear that victims often face multiple barriers to seeking help. The most commonly experienced barriers for victims were;

1. **44%** felt ashamed or embarrassed
2. **41%** didn't know who to tell
3. **38%** fear about what the perpetrator would do if they found out
4. **38%** were concerned about being taken seriously
5. **35%** worried about being judged or blamed
6. **35%** did not think they would be believed

“Didn't believe me because I'm a male”.

“He would bully the organisation too if he found out. He was worse when I left which made it more difficult”

We want to work within the community to raise awareness of domestic abuse, remove the barriers to seeking help and ensure that victims know where they can go to get support.

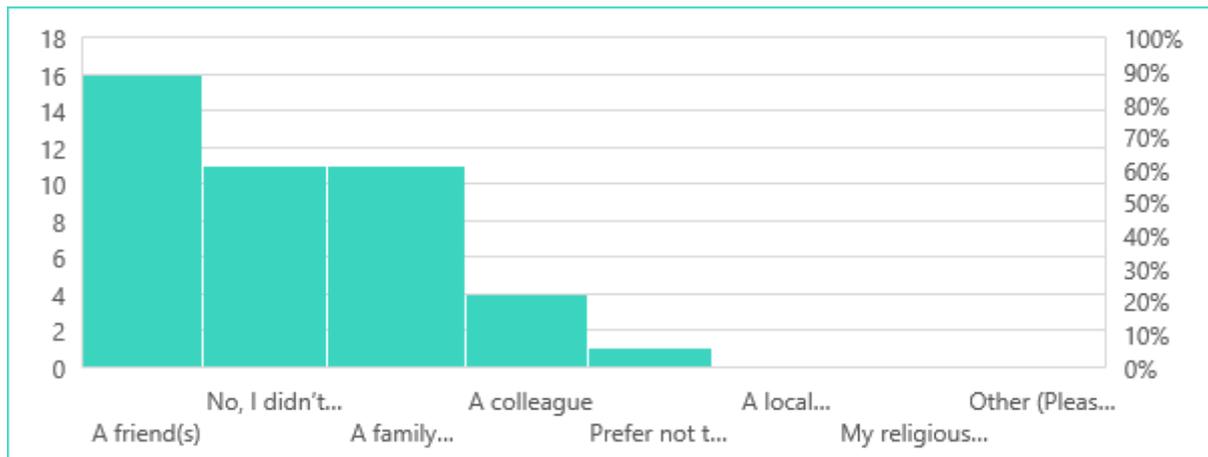
Measuring success

- **Improved** knowledge amongst residents about what constitutes domestic abuse
 - **How will we measure this?**
 - We will carry out awareness raising campaigns including through engagement events, and social media campaigns. We will track engagement with these.
- **Increased** proactive and self-referrals to services
 - **How will we measure this?**
 - We will collect data on the numbers of people making self-referrals.
- **Improved** confidence in disclosing and seeking help
 - **How will we measure this?**
 - We will measure this through victim's self-reporting through the Victims Voice Panel, and the Domestic Abuse survey.

3.2 A coordinated bystander approach within the community to ensure the public are confident in dealing with disclosures with an initial focus on employers

Part of our work in the community must be to ensure that understanding domestic abuse is common as friends and family members can often be the first ones to spot the signs. We want friends and family to understand what constitutes abuse and the support pathways available so that they are able to offer the right information and advice.

Our survey of victims and survivors of domestic abuse in Trafford highlighted that many had disclosed to people within the community which was most commonly a friend. However victims also commonly told family members and colleagues about what was happening. It is therefore vital that peer networks have the information and resources they need as a 'first responder'.



Measuring success

- **Improved** identification of unhealthy and abusive relationships within family and peer groups
 - **How will we measure this?**
 - We will measure the number of referrals that are received.
 - We will carry out case reviews to identify good practice, and areas for further development.
 - We will track the number of awareness training sessions we deliver, and campaigns that raise awareness around domestic abuse.
- **Increased** disclosure of abuse
 - **How will we measure this?**
 - We will track this through the Domestic Abuse Dashboard
- **Improved** positive experiences for victims disclosing to friends, family and informal networks
 - **How will we measure this?**
 - Through self-reporting measures such as the domestic abuse survey which forms part of the JSNA which will be carried out on a cyclical basis in line with the requirements of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

3.3 A multi-agency pathway for children and young people experiencing domestic abuse in the family home or their own dating relationships

The statutory definition of domestic abuse includes anyone over the age of 16. In Trafford, based on the number of young people in the population we estimate around **1,840 young people between 16-24** will experience domestic abuse every year. Of those around a quarter (n=260, 24%) will be 16-17 year olds. Despite this there remains limited identification of younger people across our services, so we want to ensure that our support meets the needs of young victims and survivors.

As well as those aged 16 or over in terms of the national definition, we know that many children and young people under the age of 16 are likely to experience abuse within their dating relationships that will require support. This should be both responsive where abuse is happening, but also preventative to ensure children and young people have the right education to understand what healthy relationships look like. There has been research by a number of organisations into the attitudes, beliefs and behaviours of younger people and how

perceptions of health relationships could provide an insight in to prevalence amongst young people under the age of 16;

- The Boys to Men Project undertook a survey of 13 to 17 year olds found that a quarter (25%) of girls and 18% of boys reported having experienced some form of physical violence from an intimate partner⁴.
- 49% of boys and 33% of girls aged 13 – 14 thought that hitting a partner would be 'okay' in at least one of twelve scenarios they were presented with.

Measuring success

- **Improved** recognition and awareness amongst young people about what constitutes abuse
 - **How will we measure this?**
 - We will record the number of sessions delivered in schools and feedback from these.
- **Increased** awareness and access to emotional and therapeutic recovery support
 - **How will we measure this?**
 - We will measure the numbers of people requiring support.
 - We will track the numbers of people who have been able to access support.
 - We will report to the Domestic Abuse Partnership Board if demand outstrips service provision – for example the carrying of extensive waiting lists.

⁴ Barter, C, McCarry, M, Berridge, D and Evans K (2009) Partner exploitation and violence in teenage intimate relationships, NSPCC

Objectives for priority 4: *our system*

Priority 4:

WE WILL ensure our multi agency system is joined up to make the process of seeking help for individuals, families and communities as effective as possible

4.1 Develop full system response to domestic abuse across primary care

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) highlights that *only* 18% of victims report domestic abuse to the police. Our local survey found that most victims (68%) reported domestic abuse to the police, although only 9% reported all of the incidents which highlights the need for us to understand and work with the organisations that victims to disclose to. The most common sector a victim would disclose their experience to was health;

- 35% told their GP
- 9% told hospital staff
- 9% told a mental health team
- 6% told their health visitor



35% of victims that did disclose told their GP, making it the most common service victims will tell.

Health is evidently a key route of disclosure for victims and survivors of domestic abuse, with primary care being the most common place a victim would go to seek support. As such we want to work as a partnership to ensure we have a model and developed pathways to support primary care in identifying abuse as well as how handle disclosures from patients.

Measuring success

- Victims are identified and supported **earlier**, preventing escalation and risk of harm
 - How will we measure this?
 - We will track the point at which victims first become engaged with services.
- **Improved** knowledge and confidence of GPs in identifying and managing disclosures
 - **How will we measure this?**
 - We will measure the number of GPs engaging with Domestic Abuse Training
 - We will track how many referrals are made by GPs
- **Increased** positive experiences of disclosing abuse to GPs
 - **How will we measure this?**
 - Through the 'victims voice' groups which report into the Domestic Abuse Partnership Board
 - Through the cyclical Joint Strategic Needs Assessment surveys.
- **Increased** referrals from GPs to specialist domestic abuse services
 - **How will we measure this?**
 - This will be measured numerically and considering the rate of referrals in line with the amount of referrals that we would expect for Trafford.

4.2 Aligned approach to domestic abuse and sexual violence

National evidence highlights that sexual violence within intimate partner relationships is prevalent. We know this is the case in Trafford too, with a high number of victims and survivors highlighting their experiences of sexual abuse within their relationships. As such it is important for us to ensure our pathways for both domestic abuse and sexual violence in Trafford are aligned so that domestic abuse victims are able to get the right support.

In our survey we purposely avoided using terms such as sexual assault or rape within our questions as research has shown there is a considerable stigma attached to both, but moreover many victims of these do not define their experiences as 'true rape' or 'true sexual assault' if they have internalised rape myths (Victim Focus, 2020). Instead, we asked victims about being either manipulated or physically forced in to sex or sexual activity. Being manipulated in to sex/sexual activity was the most commonly experienced form of sexual violence experienced with almost three out of five (59%) victims experiencing it, it was also relatively frequent with 40% of those experiencing it over 10 times. Victims also commonly experienced being physically forced to have sex/sexual activity with almost two in five (38%) have experienced this, albeit less frequently with 62% experiencing it between 1 to 3 times.

Measuring success

- **Improved** public awareness around definitions of sexual violence, including assault and rape within relationships
 - **How will we know if we have achieved this?**
 - We would expect to see an increase in reports following any awareness campaigns.
 - We will carry out surveys with the public to test their awareness.
- **Increased** capacity of services through **improved** partnerships between frontline domestic and sexual violence services
 - **How will we know if we have achieved this?**
 - We will measure numerically the provision of places within these services.
 - We will measure whether some service have demand that they cannot meet within current provision.
- Victims feelings of stigma or shame are **decreased**
 - **How will we know if we have achieved this?**
 - We will measure victim's perceptions and feelings following their engagement with services.

4.3 Consistent data collection across all agencies in relation to domestic abuse including demographic and need related data

For us to ensure we commission services appropriately and continue to monitor our pathways to ensure they are accessible to all victims and survivors, we need to understand who is disclosing, and where. This will help us to identify areas of unmet need where particular demographics of victims and survivors may not be visible across our multi agency system. To do this we need to collect robust data from across the partnership.

Our Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) highlighted the gaps and challenges in our current data with many organisations not collecting data around the demographics of individuals experiencing domestic abuse. For example, aside from age and sex there is currently no other demographic details collected consistently by the police in Trafford. This

was not unique to the police and something we found across all organisations. Our ambition through this strategy will be to work to improve data across the partnership to give us a more clear understanding of need across Trafford.

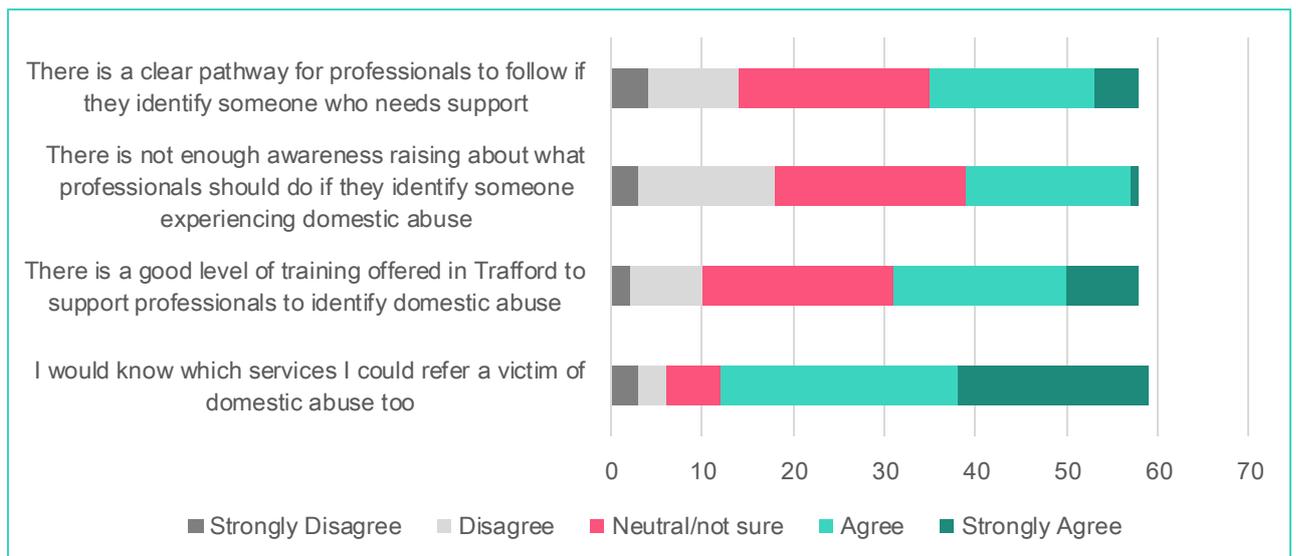
Measuring success

- **Improved** commissioning decisions based on evidence
 - **How we will know if we have achieved this?**
 - We will demonstrate through the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment an improved alignment between need/demand and provision.
- **Improved** strategy and policy development through evidence
 - **How will we know if we have achieved this?**
 - Through the production of a robust strategy which has been developed through consultation with residents, including victims and their families, specialist organisations and statutory bodies.
- **Improved** understanding of unmet need
 - **How will we know if we have achieved this?**
 - We have commissioned a service to ensure that the voice of victims is shared with the Domestic Abuse Partnership Board who make recommendations on service provision.
 - We will track requests for service which have not been met (for example CYP services, refuge placements, specialist provision, and services for those with no recourse to public funds)

4.4 Coordinated training programme for professionals in all 'people facing' roles

It is important that professionals understand the dynamics of domestic abuse in order to appropriately spot the signs, risk assess and offer the right support. We conducted a survey for professionals in Trafford finding that only three in five professionals (59%) had received domestic abuse training in Trafford in the last 2 years. We also explored how confident practitioners were in spotting the signs and managing disclosures, overall practitioners were more confident than not about spotting the signs but only 35% scored their confidence as 8 or above. Those with less confidence were professionals who stated they do not come across domestic abuse as frequently as other respondents.

We also asked frontline professionals how confident they would be in knowing what to do if they had spotted signs of domestic abuse. The result showed a more confident picture with 63% scoring their confidence as 8 or above. This finding highlights that professionals are less confident in being able to spot the signs, but reasonably confident in knowing what to do if they do spot them.



We want to use our findings as a baseline and continue to strengthen our training and education offer to ensure all relevant professionals are confident and able to respond effectively to domestic abuse. This includes roles such as Social Workers, Community Safety Officers, Housing Staff. Each Director is identifying the roles within their directorate who should receive mandatory training.

Measuring success

- **Increased** knowledge, awareness and confidence of all professionals about domestic abuse
 - **How will we know if we have achieved this?**
 - We will make Domestic Abuse training mandatory for key front line roles and report on the number of employees who have completed this training
 - We will monitor referrals from agencies and organisations across Trafford to identify where further training may be required
- **Improved** awareness of risk assessment and signposting processes
 - **How will we know if we have achieved this?**
 - We will monitor the appropriateness of referrals (for example to the MARAC) and the completion of Domestic Abuse Risk Assessments (DASH-RIC)
 - We will monitor referrals to our commissioned providers and identify if any agencies or organisations are not referring / under-referring.
- **Improved** use of signposting and referrals
 - **How will we know if we have achieved this?**
 - We will monitor the appropriateness of referrals (for example to the MARAC) and the completion of Domestic Abuse Risk Assessments (DASH-RIC)
 - We will monitor referrals to our commissioned providers and identify if any agencies or organisations are not referring / under-referring.
- **Increase** number of victims accessing specialist support
 - **How will we know if we have achieved this?**
 - We will provide annual data on the numbers of victims accessing specialist support

- We will continue to make best use of funding streams to increase the amount of provision of specialist domestic abuse services, including through the use of our Voluntary and Community Sector Grant.
- Victims identified **earlier**
 - **How will we know if we have achieved this?**
 - We will track the points at which a victim of domestic abuse engages with services through surveys, and referral data.

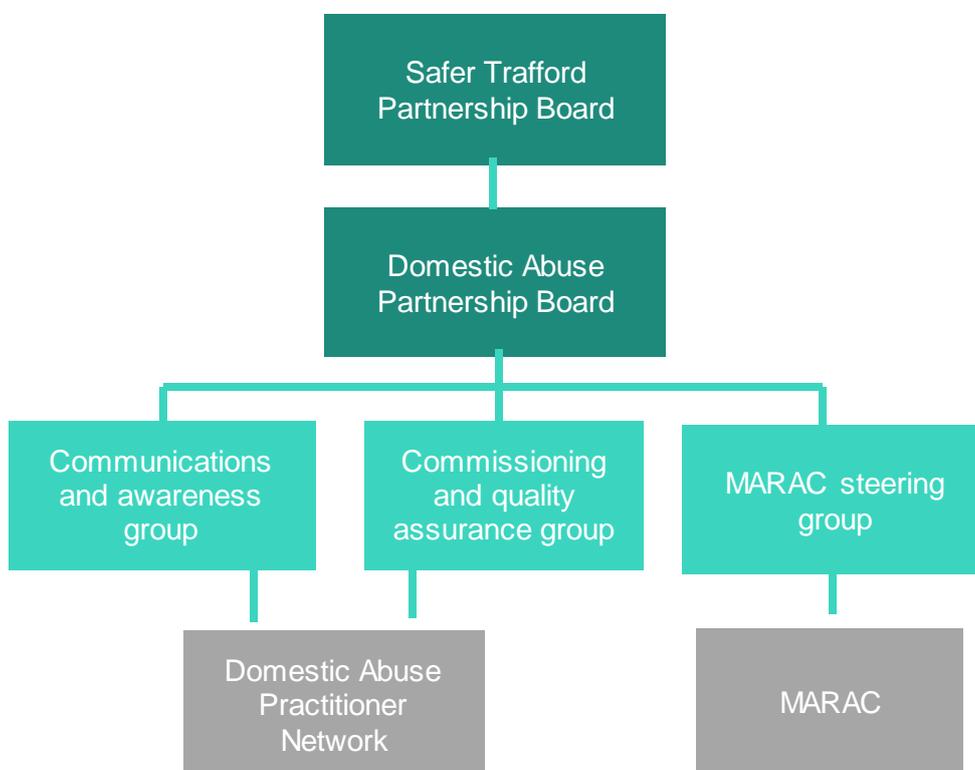
Delivering our priorities

This is an ambitious strategy that will require joined up working across the partnership to deliver our priorities. This section will outline our proposed delivery model.

Governance

The domestic abuse strategy will be overseen strategically through Trafford’s Community Safety Partnership Board. Responsibility for the implementation of the strategy will be devolved from the Board through to a sub group focused around domestic abuse.

The Domestic Abuse Partnership Board (DAPB) will perform the statutory duty for all Tier One Local Authorities to have a local partnership board, and the membership and function will be in line with the statutory guidance. However the Board will go beyond the safe accommodation related duties and implement our whole system strategy.



Safer Trafford Partnership Board	
Domestic Abuse Partnership Board	
Communications and awareness group	
Commissioning and quality assurance group	
Marac steering group	
Domestic abuse practitioner network	
Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (Marac)	

Measuring success

Strategy implementation progress

The DAPB will work through an implementation plan (in Appendix A) which will be reported against with an annual report going to the STPB. The implementation plan will include key data and a RAG rated system to measure progress.

Measuring the impact of our strategy

As part of the action around objective 4.3, we will work to develop data metrics for our key performance indicators which will help us to understand whether the delivery of our objectives are having an impact on the lives of victims and families in Trafford. Our key performance indicators that we will develop in to an impact evaluation are;

- Barriers for victims to seek help are **reduced**
- **Improved** access to services for all protected characteristic groups
- **Reduced** waiting times for specialist services
- **Increased** number of perpetrators accessing support and completing programmes
- **Reduction** in the number of victims that are in unsuitable temporary accommodation
- **More** victims and survivors are able to access specialist domestic abuse refuge provision with fewer declined
- **Improved** information sharing and accuracy of risk assessments
- **Decrease** number of children experiencing negative outcomes
- **Increased** disclosure of abuse
- **Improved** recognition and awareness amongst young people about what constitutes abuse
- **Reduced** waiting times **for** therapeutic support
- Victims are identified and supported **earlier**, preventing escalation and risk of harm
- **Improved** knowledge and confidence of GP's in identifying and managing disclosures
- **Increased** referrals from GP's to specialist domestic abuse services
- **Increased** knowledge, awareness and confidence of all professionals about domestic abuse

Appendix A: Implementation plan

Priority	Objectives	Activities	Responsible	Timeframe	Update(s)
Ensure that all individuals experiencing domestic abuse are identified as early as possible and offered support that meets their needs					
Ensure that support for families is coordinated enabling the whole family to recover from the impact of abuse					
Ensure our communities are able to spot the signs of abuse and both challenge it when they know it occurs and know where to go to get help					
Ensure our multi agency system is joined up to make the process of seeking help for individuals, families and the					

communities as effective as possible					
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