

# Domestic Abuse Services across Lancashire 12 Districts

## Briefing Note – April 2016

### Continuation of Domestic Abuse Provision for a further twelve months

Since the completion of the Domestic Abuse Joint Strategic Needs Assessment [JSNA] in 2013, a number of domestic abuse services were commissioned from a pooled budget made up of contributions from Lancashire partners.

This budget was established to act on the recommendations of the JSNA which included the provision of Women's Support Services and a Lancashire Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programme [LDAPP] for a three year period which spanned 2013 to 2016. The commissioning of services from this budget has been overseen by a Joint Commissioning Reference Group made up of those contributing partners.

However due to unavoidable delays in the commissioning of some services, it has been possible to extend the services for a further twelve months up until the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017.

### What is the situation in Lancashire?

The Community Safety Assessment for 2016 identifies domestic abuse as one of the top three priorities in every one of the twelve districts across Lancashire. It is also important to recognise that 90% of domestic abuse is witnessed by children and young people, as highlighted recently by the *Be a Lover not a Fighter* campaign across Lancashire.

### What now needs to be done to provide for the future?

Domestic violence and abuse is a complex issue that needs sensitive handling by a range of partners, including health and social care professionals. The cost of domestic abuse to Lancashire residents is significant. It has a serious and lasting impact on a victim's sense of safety, health, well-being and autonomy, and can severely restrict victims' ability to fully participate in society.

Apart from the effect on individuals, domestic abuse impacts across many partnership outcomes so a multi-agency approach is the most effective way to address the issue at both an operational and strategic level. Initial and ongoing training and organisational support is also needed. Tackling domestic abuse is a priority for a number of strategic partnerships in Lancashire, such as the Health and Wellbeing Board, safeguarding boards, children's trusts and the Lancashire Community Safety Strategy Group. A Pan Lancashire Domestic Abuse Strategy is currently under development, with the Board chaired by DSI Sue Clarke from Lancashire Constabulary.

Funding from the existing pooled budget arrangement will come to an end on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 making 2016-17 a year of transition to a more mainstreamed and integrated approach across partners and Lancashire.

The Joint Commissioning Reference Group has agreed to undertake a benchmarking / evaluation exercise against recent National Institute of Health and Care Excellence [NICE] Guidance which looks at a holistic picture of domestic abuse across the life course (from pre-birth to death) of the Lancashire population. This work will influence the direction of travel for potential mainstreaming of activities and identification of potential funding to support commissioned services and / or to develop community assets. This work will need wide partnership support and engagement.

In addition to this desk top exercise, a stakeholder workshop will be held in early summer. More information on this will follow in due course.

As this is an issue that is not the sole responsibility of one agency, a partnership approach and full participation of all stakeholders is required.

## **What services are in place?**

**The Medium and High Risk Domestic Abuse Victim's Support Service** is provided by the Greater Together Consortium in Central and East Lancashire and Letgo [Impact Housing] in North Lancashire. The aim of this service is to increase the safety and wellbeing of victims and children & young people who have been exposed to domestic abuse to ensure that they are enabled to lead healthy and safe lives now and in the future. This includes:

- Increasing the confidence of victims to access services and support.
- Identifying, assessing and providing evidence based targeted interventions for victims of DA.
- Reducing the harm caused by domestic abuse in Lancashire by taking a whole family approach to preventing further abuse.
- Protecting victims including children and young people, by challenging the behaviour of perpetrators and enhancing partnership working and practice to deliver positive outcomes.
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From April 2015 to December 2015 Letgo received 387 new referrals to this service from Wyre area.

You can make contact with these services by clicking on the [Safer Lancashire](#) website and viewing the 'commissioned services' link.

**The Lancashire Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programme** is provided by Relate Lancashire. The aim of this service is to provide specialist preventative support to perpetrators of domestic abuse. This support will reduce the harm caused by domestic abuse whilst encouraging behaviour change and increasing perpetrator and offender knowledge regarding the negative impact domestic abuse has on victims and children and young people. The service is designed for adult heterosexual men who have been abusive to female intimate partners.

Currently there are no referrals to this service from the Wyre area.

You can make contact with this service by telephone on 01772 717597 or by email on [ldapp@relatelancs.org.uk](mailto:ldapp@relatelancs.org.uk). Referral forms are available from the website [www.relatelancs.org.uk](http://www.relatelancs.org.uk).

**The Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference [MARAC]** is co-ordinated by Lancashire Constabulary and funding is provided from the joint budget to facilitate this partnership activity.

The 'conference' is a meeting is to share information on the highest risk domestic abuse cases between practitioners, including representatives of local police, health, adult services, child protection, housing services, Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs) and other specialists from the statutory and voluntary sectors.

A victim should be referred to the relevant MARAC if they are an adult (16+) who resides in the borough and are at high risk of domestic violence from their adult (16+) partner, ex-partner or family member, regardless of gender or sexuality. The primary focus of the MARAC is about safeguarding the adult victim and managing the risk to that individual. The MARAC will also make links with other key agencies to safeguard children and other vulnerable persons and manage the behaviour of the perpetrator.

For more information please contact DCI Vicki Evans on email [vicki.evans@lancashire.pnn.police.uk](mailto:vicki.evans@lancashire.pnn.police.uk).

## **What else is commissioned in Lancashire?**

The domestic abuse support services commissioned through the Children's Trust Board, in conjunction with the Schools Forum, will also be continuing until the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017. These services include:

**Specialist support to children, young people and their schools in relation to domestic abuse** is provided by Core Asset for Central and East Lancashire and Empowerment for North Lancashire. The aim of this service is to provide specialist support to staff in Lancashire maintained schools, and to targeted children and young people, in relation to domestic abuse. This will include:

- The establishment of locality based network meetings to act as a forum for peer support for school staff in relation to domestic abuse. The meetings offer consultancy and share good practice
- The provision of consultancy support and resources to staff in schools, identified as having a high level of need, in order to develop their knowledge, skills and confidence to deliver effective, protective interventions
- The development and delivery of a programme of direct work with groups or individual children and young people who have been identified as being at risk of or experiencing domestic abuse

Contact has been made, by Children's Independent Domestic Abuse Advocates from this service (CIDVA's), with a number of schools in Wyre since the start of this contract.

You can contact Empowerment on 01254 389637 or email on [admin@empowermentcharity.org.uk](mailto:admin@empowermentcharity.org.uk). More information is available on [www.empowermentcharity.org.uk](http://www.empowermentcharity.org.uk).

**Domestic Abuse Early Intervention Service for Children and Young People in Lancashire** is provided by Greater Together. The aim of this service is to support children living with the impact of abuse, and to empower them to achieve positively in their lives. A range of therapeutic interventions are delivered which are designed to improve the relationships between mother and child, whilst also helping children to overcome the effects of witnessing and/or experiencing domestic violence. This includes;

- One to one sessions and group sessions around the impact of domestic violence to equip children and young people with protective factors to enable them to thrive now and in the future.
- Group Interventions for the mother to ensure families are equipped to develop protective factors which enable them to manage domestic abuse risks appropriately and have and use effective social networks of support

### Wyre Statistics 2015/16

For the period 1 Apr 2015 to 31 Mar 2016 there have been 61 requests for domestic abuse early support provision. These requests have involved 87 individual children and young people.

Of these cases 48 families were assessed as at level 2 of Lancashire's Continuum of Need (just coping) with 13 families assessed at level 3 of Lancashire's Continuum of Need (struggling to cope) when the Request for Support was submitted.

Of the 61 requests for support received;

- 16 cases are closed (the intervention has been delivered)
- 9 cases are currently open (the intervention is currently being delivered)
- 4 cases are pending (the case is currently on a waiting list)
- 32 cases were not progressed (cases don't progress for a variety of reasons but mainly due to the fact that the family do not consent to receipt of support or they disengage with the intervention before it is complete)

The commission operates on a payment by results basis based on an improvement in the families assessed needs on Lancashire's Continuum of Need and/or a positive outcome using the distance travelled 'My Star' tool. The table below illustrates the outcomes for families that have received support.

Wyre	% of cases with positive distance travelled overall evidenced using the appropriate tool	% cases where continuum of need level improved.	% of cases that escalated to children's social care
Domestic Abuse	100%	56%	0.0%

You can make contact with this service by contacting the Wellbeing, Prevention and Early Help Service on [preventionearlyhelp@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:preventionearlyhelp@lancashire.gov.uk).

**Refuges** provide supported accommodation for people at risk of domestic abuse, with the accommodation being funded through rents/housing benefit and the support being funded from Lancashire County Council's Supporting People budget. There are 9 refuges in Lancashire, including one in Wyre. . Owing to the financial challenges facing the County Council, it has been proposed that the support funded from the Supporting People budget ceases in March 2017. Despite the proposed changes, the council recognises the need to make urgent support available to individuals and families when they need it the most, which is why a £3m annual Prevention and Early Help Fund is being established. Although details of the support this funding

will provide have not yet been finalised, victims of domestic violence have been identified as a priority group and the County Council anticipate some of the funding will be invested in supporting them. However, these discussions are ongoing and the final decision will not be made until further work has been completed.

The County Council is continuing to consult about these proposals and would encourage people to come forward with their views and suggestions. Questionnaires are due to be sent to all residents of refuges within the next few weeks. In addition, there will also be specific electronic questionnaires aimed at providers, districts and other stakeholders, on Lancashire's Have Your Say website, regarding the proposed reduction to the Supporting People funding.

For more information please contact Sarah McCarthy on email [sarah.mccarthy@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.mccarthy@lancashire.gov.uk)

This is not an exhaustive list of activity to prevent domestic abuse and support its victims. Many Lancashire partners also engage in this work too.

## **For more information**

If you have any queries or need further information please do get in touch.

### **Andrea Smith**

[Andrea.Smith@Lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:Andrea.Smith@Lancashire.gov.uk)

Partnerships Officer

Health Equity, Welfare & Partnerships, Lancashire County Council

Mobile: 078760844093

### **Debbie Thompson**

[Debbie.Thompson@Lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:Debbie.Thompson@Lancashire.gov.uk)

Partnership Manager

Health Equity, Welfare & Partnerships, Lancashire County Council

Mobile: 07795 044642

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