



Home Office

Violence Against Women and Girls National Statement of Expectations

Guidance on commissioning services to support victims and survivors¹ of violence against women and girls

March 2022

¹ For the purpose of this document, the terms 'victim' and 'survivor' are used interchangeably to refer to those who have experienced VAWG.



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National Statement of Expectations for Commissioning Violence Against Women and Girls Services

Violence against women and girls (VAWG) covers a range of unacceptable and deeply distressing crimes, including rape and other sexual offences, stalking, domestic abuse, 'honour'-based abuse (including female genital mutilation, forced marriage and 'honour' killings), 'revenge porn' and 'upskirting', as well as many others. These crimes disproportionately affect women and girls. However, men and boys can also be victims of violence and abuse and the approaches set out in this document will benefit all victims and survivors of these crime types.

These crimes and behaviours can affect victims of all ages, abilities, sexualities and backgrounds. They take place in every locality across the UK and can happen within current or previous relationships, in families, and in communities. We need to ensure each area has embedded a local infrastructure that raises awareness of VAWG among local agencies and people, robustly pursues perpetrators, supports reporting by victims and survivors and uses multi-agency approaches to understand and meet the needs of victims, survivors and family members to support a process of recovery and to achieve positive life outcomes. The Tackling VAWG Strategy and Domestic Abuse Plan are clear that the Government's long-term, fundamental ambition must be to reduce the prevalence of these crimes, and local areas have a key role to play in achieving this aim.

This National Statement of Expectations (NSE) sets out how local areas should commission effective services to ensure their whole system response to VAWG is as collaborative, robust and effective as it can be so that all victims and survivors, including children as victims in their own right, can get the help they need.²

Since the publication of the NSE in 2016, we have continued to work with local authorities, the NHS, Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) and the specialist VAWG sector to ensure a secure future for a range of VAWG services including rape support centres, national helplines and refuges. The 2016-2020 VAWG Service Transformation Fund allocated £17 million to 41 projects to support and embed programmes to make systemic change to local service provision across England and Wales. In 2021-22, the Government will provide just under £151 million for victim and witness support services, including over £20 million for local, community-based sexual violence and domestic abuse services.

The sheer scale and prevalence of VAWG has been brought to the forefront of the nation's attention in recent times following a number of tragic cases. Thousands of women and girls have also shared their personal experiences of abuse and harassment online via the 'Everyone's Invited' website and the Government's Call for Evidence on VAWG received more than 180,000 responses. Reports to helplines have also increased in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. We are determined to build on this awareness and momentum

² It should be noted that this document does not constitute legal advice and commissioners should obtain their own legal advice when commissioning services.

for change. In addition to passing the landmark Domestic Abuse Act³ in 2021, our VAWG Strategy and Domestic Abuse Plan are clear about the need to support victims and survivors, prevent offending and strengthen the systems in place to address all forms of VAWG.⁴

Our strategic vision continues to be ambitious. We believe that with effective earlier intervention, joint working and a drive to challenge the culture and attitudes that give rise to all forms of abuse, the number of these crimes can be substantially reduced. We will only achieve this by working together in meaningful partnerships with you on the front line.

Our Support Offer

The Government is providing a package of support to help local and regional commissioners fulfil these expectations, which includes:

- A new cross-Government VAWG Strategy and Domestic Abuse Plan which set out our vision to reduce the prevalence of these crimes and improve the support and response for victims and survivors.
- An updated commissioning ‘toolkit’ which underpins the NSE and should help in developing business cases for funding a whole system approach to all VAWG services.
- Implementing the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 (‘the Act’)¹, which introduces new measures to strengthen protections for those who have experienced abuse, some of which include:
 - new duties on local authorities to provide support to victims of domestic abuse and their children within safe accommodation, to ensure that victims and their children across England can access the right support in safe accommodation when they need it. This has been backed by £125 million of funding in 2021-22 and local authorities were provided with £6 million through the Domestic Abuse Capacity Building Fund in October 2020 to help ensure that they could undertake early planning and preparation work ahead of the implementation of the new duty. A further £125 million will be allocated to local authorities for delivery of their duties in 2022-23.
 - recognising children as victims of domestic abuse in their own right where they see, hear or experience the effects of domestic abuse. As such, any applicable duties in the Act toward victims apply to children falling under this definition to ensure they are duly supported in dealing with the impacts of experiencing abuse.
 - establishing the position of a Domestic Abuse Commissioner for England and Wales in law to act as an independent voice for victims and survivors, to hold local agencies and Government to account and promote best practice.
- New Domestic Abuse Statutory Guidance (due to be published in 2022) to support organisations with the identification of and response to domestic abuse, convey standards and promote best practice.
- Updated Controlling or Coercive Behaviour Statutory Guidance (due to be published in 2022) to assist police, the criminal justice system, and other agencies in understanding this form of domestic abuse and related harms; where the offence will apply; how to reduce risk to victims; and appropriately respond to perpetrators.

³ [Domestic Abuse Act 2021 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)

⁴ [Tackling violence against women and girls strategy - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk),

- A Cross-Government Supporting Male Victims of Crimes Considered VAWG document, to clarify and strengthen our response to male victims.⁵
- Increasing Ministry of Justice (MoJ) funding for victims of crime, including victims of VAWG, to £185 million by 2024/25 which will, in part, increase the number of ISVAs and IDVAs funded by the MoJ to over 1,000.⁶
- Publishing the Victims' Code⁷, which makes clear the levels of support victims and survivors can and should expect from the criminal justice system.
- Developing a new Victims Funding Strategy which will act as a framework to coordinate and align funding for victim and survivor support services across Government. The strategy will introduce national commissioning standards, core metrics and outcomes.
- Introducing a new Victims' Bill, to guarantee that victims are at the heart of the criminal justice system.
- Publishing the Strategic Direction for Sexual Assault and Abuse Services⁸, which sets out the Government's intention to better align funding to provide lifelong care for all victims of rape and sexual assault or abuse and provide them with timely, high-quality support.
- Extending the Rape Support Fund until March 2023 to ensure support services have the funding stability they need to meet demand.
- Continued funding for national helplines, including to support male and LGBT victims of domestic abuse and victims of revenge porn, stalking and 'honour'-based abuse. The Ministry of Justice will also commission a 24/7 rape victim support service in England and Wales.
- Appointing an Independent Government Adviser on Preventing VAWG.
- A new National Policing Lead for Tackling VAWG to drive forward the policing approach and action following the 2021 inspection by HM Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS).⁹
- A first of its kind Tackling Child Sexual Abuse Strategy published in 2021 setting out the Government's ambition to tackle all forms of child sexual abuse, root out and prevent offending and support victims and survivors to rebuild their lives.
- Through the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill the Government will also place new duties on a range of agencies to work collaboratively to prepare a strategy for preventing and reducing serious violence. When defining the scope of these strategies, local areas will be able to consider whether to include domestic abuse and sexual offences along with other types of serious violence.¹⁰

Our Expectation

We expect to see local strategies and services that:

1. Put the victim/survivor at the centre of service design and delivery;
2. Have a clear focus on perpetrators in order to keep victims and survivors safe;
3. Take a strategic, system-wide approach to commissioning, acknowledging the gendered nature of VAWG;
4. Are locally-led and safeguard individuals at every point;

⁵ [Position statement on male victims of crimes considered in the cross-Government strategy on ending Violence Against Women and Girls \(VAWG\) \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#). To note that an updated version of this document will be published in 2022.

⁶ IDVA: Independent Domestic Violence Adviser; ISVA: Independent Sexual Violence Adviser

⁷ [MoJ Victims Code 2020 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

⁸ [Strategic direction for sexual assault and abuse services - Lifelong care for victims and survivors: 2018 - 2023 \(england.nhs.uk\)](#)

⁹ [Inspection into how effectively the police engage with women and girls: Final report \(justiceinspectors.gov.uk\)](#)

¹⁰ [draft guidance - serious violence duty \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

5. Raise local awareness of the issues and involve, engage and empower communities to seek, design and deliver solutions to prevent VAWG.

Commissioners should also ensure that they comply with the Victims' Code, which makes clear the levels of support victims and survivors can and should expect from the criminal justice system.

1. The victim/survivor at the centre of service design and delivery: Every victim/survivor, whether adult or child, is an individual with different experiences, reactions and needs. Local areas should ensure that services are flexible and responsive to the victim's experience and voice, recognising both risk and need.

To deliver this, commissioners should:

- have a robust consultation process for identifying which services are needed locally and a safe, accessible and open forum to ensure victims (including children and young people) and service providers can share their views and experiences.
- conduct a comprehensive needs assessment to map the demographics and lived experiences of victims locally and ensure that a broad range of needs are met.
- see victims and survivors as part of a wider network. The whole family and wider safeguarding issues should be considered in the round – for example by making the links with child safeguarding structures and taking into consideration the needs of non-abusing parents.¹¹ Consider whether victims and survivors, including children as victims in their own right, need to be protected from extended family as well as the perpetrator, or whether extended family can provide additional support.
- have sufficient local specialist VAWG service provision, including provision designed specifically to support victims from ethnic minority backgrounds, deaf and disabled victims, victims with learning disabilities, male victims, LGBT victims, migrant victims, children and young people and older victims. This should include specialist 'by and for' services, which are uniquely placed to respond to the specific needs and experiences of the communities they support.¹² Commissioners should also consider investing in capacity building for specialist services and groups who face the greatest barriers in accessing support.
- collaborate and have protocols with other areas to allow victims easy movement from one area to another (including access to housing).
- consider whether an individual may face multiple barriers and, if so, what services are in place to support these. Research has identified mental health issues, drug/alcohol dependencies, poverty and homelessness as potential risk factors of domestic abuse

¹¹ For example, see SafeLives Beacon pilot: [Beacon specification - Appendix A_0.pdf \(safelives.org.uk\)](#)

¹² 'By and for' services are specialist services that are led, designed and delivered by and for the users and communities they aim to serve (for example survivors from ethnic minority backgrounds, deaf and disabled victims and LGBT victims).

and sexual violence.¹³ Victims of VAWG facing multiple barriers are likely to come into contact with other services and systems (such as mental health, substance misuse or homelessness). Commissioners should consider how these services identify and respond to women's experiences of VAWG, which are likely to be widespread amongst their service users, and ensure that services are trauma-informed.

- assess and build in access to mental health service provision for victims of all types of VAWG. Effectively link up such services with, for example, health services, rape support centres, specialist services for those from ethnic minority backgrounds or support for adult survivors of child sexual abuse to form resourced care pathways.
- consider specialist interventions that provide a complete and holistic programme of support to professionals and victims. This could include training and support for healthcare teams to spot the signs of abuse and understand the impact of trauma and simple referral pathways for their patients into specialist advocates and support workers based in VAWG services (in line with NICE guidelines).¹⁴

Support Within Safe Accommodation Duties

To ensure that all victims of domestic abuse and their children are able to access support within safe accommodation, the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 includes new duties on Tier 1 local authorities, which came into force on 1 October 2021. These aim to provide support to victims of domestic abuse and their children within safe accommodation across England.

Statutory Guidance has been published providing details on how the duties should be delivered on the ground. Under the new duties local authorities are required to convene a Local Partnership Board, assess the needs for all victims, prepare and publish strategies to meet the need, commission support services in line with the strategies, and report back to Government.

Serious Violence Duty

Through the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill the Government will also place new duties on a range of agencies to work collaboratively to prepare a strategy for preventing and reducing serious violence. When defining the scope of these strategies, local areas will be able to consider whether to include domestic abuse and sexual offences along with other types of serious violence.

¹³ See Bacchus, L., Ranganathan, M., Watts, C., Devries, K., 2018. Recent intimate partner violence against women and health: a systematic review and meta-analysis of cohort studies. *BMJ Open*, 8(7), pp. 1-20; Whittle, H., Hamilton-Giachritsis, C., Beech, A., Collings, G., 2013. A review of young people's vulnerabilities to online grooming. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 18(1), pp. 135-146; Quigg, Z., Bigland, C., Hughes, K., Duch, M., Juan, M., 2020. Sexual violence and nightlife: A systematic literature review. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 51; Cusick, L., 2002. Youth prostitution: a literature review. *Child Abuse Review*, 11(4), pp. 230-251.

¹⁴ [Overview | Domestic violence and abuse: multi-agency working | Guidance | NICE](#)

2. A clear focus on perpetrators: In order to keep victims and survivors safe, local areas should carry out needs assessments and ensure that there are robust, quality-assured services in place which manage the risk posed by perpetrators and offer appropriate behavioural change opportunities for those willing and able to engage with them, alongside separate support for any associated victims.

To deliver this, commissioners should:

- take a proactive and robust approach to perpetrators, in terms of the risk of harm posed to victims and effective interventions to challenge and change their behaviour.
- ensure that any interventions for perpetrators exist in addition to separate support for victims.
- proactively seek to increase knowledge and understanding of perpetrator behaviours, such that:
 - the tactics perpetrators use (such as manipulation, minimising, justifying and blaming others and/or external factors for their abuse) are recognised and understood;
 - frontline staff are able to correctly identify the primary perpetrator and respond appropriately, including in complex cases where a primary aggressor is not easily identifiable;
 - repeat and escalating offending can be tackled and reduced;
 - the family, community and societal context that perpetrators operate within are taken into account.
- have a robust needs assessment process for identifying which services are needed to meet local need and a forum to ensure victims and service providers can share their views and experiences to help shape services for perpetrators.
- assess and address local specialist provision¹⁵ and consider diverse specialist provisions where necessary in order to increase the safety of victims.
- commission services that meet the local need. In particular, commissioners should consider:
 - perpetrators with complex needs, who will come into contact with other services and systems (such as mental health, substance misuse or homelessness services, or services for people with physical and/or learning disabilities);
 - a multi-agency response, such as:
 - ensuring frontline professionals are trained to spot signs of abuse and understand the impact of trauma, and know how to recognise it, respond and refer perpetrators to appropriate services; and

¹⁵ Specialist provision could include: Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programmes; screening/routine identification in health settings; specialist workers within Children's Services teams; enhanced police/Criminal Justice System responses using disrupt tactics and enhanced evidence gathering to secure convictions

- having specialist workers in children’s services teams who can work with diverse groups of perpetrators who pose a risk to children and their parents, as well as children displaying harmful behaviours.
- ensure interventions are effective, efficient and safe for the victim and their children and meet the minimum Standards set out by the Government.¹⁶ Ideally, perpetrator programmes should also be accredited by Respect¹⁷ where applicable and consider programmes which target the most prolific or highest-harm perpetrators, such as Drive.¹⁸
- be cognisant that programmes that work with perpetrators should form part of longer-term strategies to prevent reoffending and have a clear plan for bringing perpetrators to justice. Interventions that are not ordered by the court are not an alternative to justice.

3. A strategic, system-wide approach to commissioning, including acknowledging the gendered nature of VAWG: Good commissioning always starts with understanding the issue and the problem you are trying to solve.

To deliver this, commissioners should:

- ensure that they understand the dynamics of VAWG and the issues that need to be addressed, for example by attending appropriate training delivered by specialist services where possible.
- adopt a whole system response to VAWG (for example through a Coordinated Community Response)¹⁹ and draw on learning from other pilots²⁰ to encourage more joined up working and drive improvements in early intervention and prevention.
- understand need and provision in the local area by accessing available data, evidence, service standards and intelligence from local and national specialist providers. Gather input from victims and survivors (including those who have never used a specialist service), local authorities, health, police²¹, education, housing, probation and the VAWG sector (including specialist ‘by and for’ services who may be able to offer specific expertise on issues affecting local communities).
- map local issues from safeguarding, crime, health, housing and specialist VAWG sector data (noting that most cases of VAWG are not reported to statutory agencies). For example, identify ‘standard’ risk perpetrators and develop early intervention plans to prevent escalation.

¹⁶ In the Domestic Abuse Plan 2022, the Government announced its intention to publish a set of Standards for quality of perpetrator interventions which are due to be published in Summer 2022.

¹⁷ [Respect Standard | Respect](#)

¹⁸ [About us – Drive Project](#)

¹⁹ [In Search of Excellence — Standing Together](#)

²⁰ For example, [One Front Door | Safelives](#)

²¹ See: [Policing violence against women and girls - National framework for delivery: Year 1 \(npcc.police.uk\)](#)

- understand local crime and other non-criminal justice data about the prevalence of VAWG crimes in the area, as well as national research on the likely prevalence of VAWG crimes.²²
- aim to have trained professionals in hospitals and other health and social care settings to identify and support victims and signpost them to services.
- have a robust and useful local VAWG disaggregated data set and develop an effective information sharing protocol that adheres to data protection requirements.
- have a concise local strategy setting out how the impact of local commissioning will be measured, and what victims and survivors can expect from services, including who is accountable locally, how concerns can be raised and how success will be measured and evaluated.
- have a meaningful process for measuring victims' satisfaction, including engaging with local specialist VAWG organisations to understand how they qualitatively and quantitatively measure victims' satisfaction with the services and support they receive.
- collaborate and develop shared goals and objectives across local authority and service boundaries to ensure a multi-agency response, recognising that services may be commissioned in partnership or at a regional level.

4. Is locally-led and safeguards individuals at every point: Commissioned services should make use of local initiatives and services already in place to utilise resource, share best practice and ensure that there are coordinated pathways of support.

To deliver this, commissioners should:

- identify a board of local champions or critical friends (including representatives from smaller specialist organisations from the VAWG sector) to drive challenge and learning on VAWG issues and local progress, identifying safe, accessible and open forums to bring relevant parties together to discuss all forms of VAWG and agree a local approach.
- consider pooling local budgets and funding sources and working with local providers to support a commissioning process that encourages consortia bids which recognise and allow for smaller local specialist providers. Where larger providers are proposing to work with specialist services as sub-contractors, commissioners should take steps to ensure that these services are aware of their inclusion in the bid. Where funding is awarded, they should follow this up to ensure that funding and referrals are reaching specialist services as expected.

²² See [Crime in England and Wales: year ending March 2020 - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk/crime-in-england-and-wales-year-ending-march-2020)

- ensure that larger tenders do not inadvertently favour bids from large providers. For example, tenders where there is a specific request for a single, large provider, insufficient time for consortia/partnership forming, or a small number of high-value lots requiring bidders to be in a strong financial position will limit the ability of local specialist services to bid. These local services will likely have developed as a response to the particular needs of the area and have specialist knowledge and expertise relevant to the communities they serve.
- assess new multi-agency approaches, including ways of streamlining structures and meetings whilst improving joined up case management.
- identify practical steps to take to ensure learning from reviews and inspectorate reports are maximised, put into practice and shared across local VAWG partnerships. These could include domestic homicide reviews, serious case reviews, deaths by suicide where the victim had a history of VAWG, HMICFRS²³ reports, and other inspectorates' reports on VAWG and child sexual abuse/exploitation.
- link HMICFRS and other inspectorate reports on police response and local agency action plans into local area strategies, working in partnership with the PCC. For local authorities, this should be linked to the work of the Local Safeguarding Adults Board and be informed by the Safeguarding Adult Board Annual Report and to Clinical Commissioning Groups and the new Integrated Care Systems.
- make proactive and constructive links with Supporting Families Co-ordinators (formerly the Troubled Families Programme) and local domestic abuse and sexual violence co-ordinators to build local networks and capacity.
- in family contexts, ensure the safeguarding and support needs of non-abusive parents alongside children are considered. Commissioners and providers should be sensitive to the harm that abuse can have on non-abusive parent-child relationships and not place responsibility for a perpetrator's abuse on non-abusive parents.
- consider how training provided to local professionals (on all types of VAWG) is evaluated, and how to ensure it is making a difference, increasing learning and awareness of local specialist services and that it builds in the voice of victims.
- identify any VAWG initiatives being delivered by the local police force with funding from central Government, and whether other VAWG initiatives are being delivered locally by the specialist VAWG sector. This could be, for example, via the National Lottery Community Fund or through other large charitable trusts or grant making organisations. If so, consider whether they can support local initiatives and whether there is learning to be shared.

²³ [Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services](#)

5. Raise local awareness of the issues and involve, engage and empower communities to seek, design and deliver solutions. Commissioners should work with local partners to provide a variety of reporting mechanisms to better enable victims to come forward and access the support services they need.

To deliver this, commissioners should:

- be aware of the statutory relationships, sex and health education curriculum which covers topics such as actively communicating and recognising consent and the concepts of, and laws relating to, sexual consent, sexual exploitation, abuse, grooming, coercion, harassment, rape, domestic abuse, forced marriage, 'honour'-based abuse and FGM.²⁴
- refer to the Respectful School Communities toolkit²⁵ for advice on creating a culture in which sexual harassment of all kinds is seen as unacceptable. The Keeping Children Safe in Education Statutory Safeguarding Guidance²⁶ provides detailed advice on managing reports of abuse and provides links to specialist advice and support.
- identify when this is being taught in schools and what additional activity is happening, including the use of nationally available campaign materials such as Government campaigns or local initiatives that raise awareness of the myths and stereotypes relating to VAWG. Encourage head-teachers and local specialist services to work together on these issues.
- reach out to universities and their representative bodies, to discuss their implementation of the Office for Students' Statement of Expectations for Preventing and Addressing Harassment and Sexual Misconduct.²⁷
- identify whether the right local connections are in place so that schools know where to ask for specialist advice, including whether children have the opportunity to talk to someone about their personal experiences. For example, referral pathways to specialist children's domestic abuse or sexual violence services. Consider whether there is access to provision that works with young people who are displaying sexually violent or inappropriate behaviour, and how young people displaying harmful sexual behaviours are being supported to change their behaviour.
- map out local VAWG support groups, including specialist 'by and for' organisations supporting victims from ethnic minority backgrounds, male victims, deaf and disabled victims, LGBT victims and other marginalised victims and survivors to find out who they reach and what expertise they have so that this can be aligned with the aims.
- identify and promote wider touch points in your community, including, for example:

²⁴ [Relationships and sex education \(RSE\) and health education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

²⁵ [Respectful School Communities Self-Review and Signposting Tool \(educateagainsthate.com\)](http://educateagainsthate.com)

²⁶ [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

²⁷ [Statement of expectations - Office for Students](http://www.officeforstudents.org)

- whether local employers have policies on VAWG, or whether the local Chamber of Commerce can encourage them to do so, or to sign up to the Employers' Initiative for Domestic Abuse.²⁸
- what steps local banks and building societies are taking to identify and support victims of financial and economic abuse, including how this may be part of a wider pattern of abuse, such as controlling or coercive behaviour.
- what steps local banks and building societies are taking to provide safe disclosure points for vulnerable customers, including disabled or elderly people who may not be able to attend a bank branch in person. This should include signposting customers to appropriate specialist support services.
- how local deaf and disabled people and people with learning difficulties are able to disclose violence or abuse safely to professionals, giving consideration to any difficulties they may have in leaving the house or in expressing themselves to receive the help they need. Information should be provided in accessible formats (to match the needs of those receiving it) and should include information describing what abuse is, as some people may not recognise that they are victims and require further support to understand what is happening.
- ensuring local health visitors, housing and health and social care professionals are trained to spot all forms of abuse and take the appropriate action.²⁹
- local initiatives like 'Ask Me'³⁰, 'Ask for ANI'³¹, 'Safe Spaces'³² and 'Ask for Angela'³³, and whether they can they be part of a strategy to provide safe spaces where people can disclose abuse in the course of daily life to someone who will know what to do.
- local authority housing and homelessness policies that include VAWG.
- sexual violence bystander programmes, and how they might be used locally to raise awareness and help increase reporting.
- opportunities to access the latest technologies and online methods to identify and support victims and survivors and those worried about their own behaviour, noting that online mechanisms are not a substitute for face-to-face provision.

²⁸ The [Employers' Initiative for Domestic Abuse \(EIDA\)](#) is a business network which empowers employers to take action against domestic abuse, for their staff, and their sectors.

²⁹ For example, the IRIS programme: [About the IRIS programme - IRISi](#)

³⁰ The Change That Lasts Ask Me Scheme trains everyday people to become community ambassadors with an understanding of domestic abuse: [Ask Me - Womens Aid](#)

³¹ 'Ask for ANI' (Assistance Needed Immediately) is a codeword scheme that operates in over 50% of pharmacies in the UK. Pharmacies voluntarily sign up to the scheme which provides a route for victims of domestic abuse to contact support services via pharmacy staff.

³² The Safe Spaces Scheme provides spaces from which anyone experiencing domestic abuse can safely make a phone call. It is facilitated in a large number of pharmacies and banks nationally: [Safe Spaces Locations - UK SAYS NO MORE](#)

³³ 'Ask for Angela' is a safety initiative in bars, clubs and other licensed businesses where people who feel unsafe, vulnerable or threatened can discreetly seek help by approaching venue staff and asking them for 'Angela'.