



Violence Against Women and Girls Newsletter

Summer 2015

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Foreword

I am pleased to welcome you to the summer edition of the Violence against Women and Girls newsletter.

Much has happened since our last newsletter in March not least the election of a new Government which has made it clear that protecting women and girls from violence, and supporting victims and survivors of sexual violence, remains a key priority.

The Government is committed to publishing an updated VAWG strategy in the Autumn, and we are currently engaged in working with departments across government, and consulting with women's groups, third sector organisations and wider experts, on the development of that strategy. We are holding a number of Ministerial events over the summer and autumn, and meeting with a wide range of agencies to develop the Government's approach with a focus on preventing violence from happening in the first place and intervening earlier in cycles of abuse, as well as continuing to improve the protection for victims and bringing offenders to justice.

If you have any views or thoughts on particular areas which the Government should focus on in its updated strategy, please e-mail us at yawgenquiries. We would also be interested to know your views on how we can improve communication with key partners including through the quarterly newsletter. We have produced a short reader survey and we would be grateful if you could click on this [link](#) to complete it. It should take no longer than five minutes.

Christian Papaleontiou,

Head of Interpersonal Violence Team,

Home Office FGM Unit

The Home Office's Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) [Unit](#) was set up in December 2014, to coordinate efforts across Government and provide outreach support to local areas. In addition, the Unit acts as a hub for effective practice, gathering and sharing examples across local areas and professional groups.

The FGM Unit does not handle individual cases. If you are worried that a girl or woman is at risk of FGM or is a victim of FGM, contact the [police](#) or the [NSPCC helpline](#).

First Anniversary of the Girl Summit

On Wednesday 22 July, the Government marked the first anniversary of the Girl Summit – the first global summit to mobilise domestic and international efforts to end FGM and child and forced marriage within a generation. All of the commitments made at the Summit have now been delivered, including:

- strengthening the law on FGM significantly, including introducing FGM Protection Orders (further details below)
- providing resources for frontline professionals, including: a resource pack, e-learning, updated multi-agency guidelines and distributing over 440,000 communication materials.
- funding the £3m Department of Health national FGM Prevention Programme partnered by NHS England, with a package of measures to support NHS staff in preventing FGM, protecting girls at risk and caring for survivors.
- launching a force level inspection on the police response to Honour Based Violence with a focus on FGM and forced marriage.

Ministers signed a cross-Government [declaration](#) outlining this progress and reaffirming the Government's commitment to tackling FGM.

The day marked progress but did not lose sight of the fact there is more to do. This was underlined by the publication of a Home Office and Trust for London funded [report](#) into the prevalence of FGM in England and Wales which concludes that while urban areas, and specifically London, have the highest estimated prevalence, every local area is likely to be affected in some way.

Consultation on statutory guidance on FGM

Also on 22 July, we launched a public [consultation](#) on new draft FGM multi-agency statutory guidance for frontline professionals. The consultation is to enable the Government to ensure that the guidance captures the full range of evidence, responsibilities, duties and good practice to support professionals in safeguarding women and girls from FGM. It seeks views on the content and detail of the guidance, which will come into force towards the end of 2015.

The consultation closes on Wednesday 30 September. For more information, please contact: FGMconsultation@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

New measures to tackle FGM

The Serious Crime Act 2015, which received Royal Assent on 3 March, made a number of changes to the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 in order to strengthen the law on FGM.

On 3 May, three of these measures came into force:

- to extend the reach of the extra-territorial offences in the 2003 Act to habitual (as well as permanent) UK residents;
- to provide lifelong anonymity for victims of FGM; and
- to create a new offence of failing to protect a girl from risk of FGM.

The Act also introduces FGM Protection Orders which are new civil orders to protect victims or potential victims of FGM. An order could include, for example, a requirement for a passport to be surrendered to prevent a girl being taken abroad for FGM. The new orders came into force on 17 July; ahead of the summer holiday period, when girls may be particularly at risk.

In addition, the Act provides for a mandatory reporting duty which will require regulated health and social care professionals and teachers to report known cases of FGM in under 18s to the police. The duty will come into force in October 2015.

FGM Unit Outreach

The FGM unit have spoken at a number of events across the UK, including at a number of training sessions and at local and regional awareness raising events, to support the development of the local response to tackling FGM and to raise awareness of the Unit and the work of the Government. The unit has also attended a number of events run by community organisations and met with a range of charitable trusts and FGM campaigners.

Contact Details

We are interested in hearing about effective practice to tackle FGM across local areas and professional groups. We would also like to hear about events and initiatives.

If you would like the Unit to attend an event you are holding, would like to share best practice and resources you have developed, or for more information, please contact us at: FGMEnquiries@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk.

Department of Health, NHS ENGLAND and NSPCC join forces to fight FGM

The Department of Health, NHS England and the NSPCC have joined forces to support more frontline health practitioners to seek the information and support they need to tackle female genital mutilation (FGM).

The NSPCC's FGM helpline practitioners have received new training, supported by the Department of Health from FGM specialist midwives as part of the Department of

Health's national FGM Prevention Programme aimed at supporting health professionals to care, protect and prevent FGM.

The NSPCC FGM helpline (0800 028 3550 / fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk) can now provide an enhanced service for NHS staff to discuss any question or concern they have about FGM and what action to take. The initiative has been developed to provide health professionals who are directly working with women and girls that may be at risk or have been victims of FGM, with a dedicated 24/7 team of advisors who can discuss the often complex circumstances surrounding cases of FGM.

The HSCIC reported that 3,963 newly identified cases of FGM were reported nationally between September 2014 and March 2015. The three organisations want to ensure that all frontline health professionals are confident about the appropriate action and feel supported to take action to prevent this abuse from taking place and support victims.

Kam Thandi, Head of the NSPCC FGM helpline commented: "We understand the pressure that health professionals face in extremely fast-paced and busy environments and we're here to support them with any of the complex questions or concerns they may have about FGM. We are frequently approached for advice on how to help prevent siblings from being subjected to FGM and how women and girls who have undergone the procedure can access post-traumatic support. Our team of practitioners, trained by specialist FGM midwives, can help NHS staff assess the situation and discuss what to do next, including signposting to other services which may be able to help."

Public Health Minister Jane Ellison said: "We must do all we can to help NHS staff protect girls and care for women who have suffered FGM."

"We know doctors and nurses want expert and timely advice when dealing with this important issue. This helpline will support our front line professionals in the critical role they play in the fight to end FGM in a generation."

Vanessa Lodge, NHS England Director of Nursing (North, Central and East London) and Chair of the national FGM steering group for NHS England: "This is a great step forward in protecting women at risk of FGM. By calling the helpline, doctors and nurses can talk through their concerns, clarify risks and seek advice on taking appropriate action to protect the women and girls at risk. NHS England, the NSPCC and the Department of Health are working hard to help healthcare professionals reach victims of this terrible scourge."

Since launching at the end of June 2013, the helpline has received nearly 700 contacts from the public and professionals with concerns about FGM.

If you are uncertain about what to do in relation to a suspected Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) case - the NSPCC FGM helpline (0800 028 3550 / fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk) can provide you with advice and support.

NSPCC Head of Helplines John Cameron said:

"FGM is a barbaric practice and it is important for young girls have access to information and know where to seek help - which is why we welcome this new app."

“We know from the adults contacting our helpline that children are taken abroad in the summer months for FGM and we have to ensure they do not suffer in silence. We need to make parents understand the lifelong impact this hideous procedure has on their child and that FGM is child abuse.

“We understand this can be a difficult issue to talk about and our trained practitioners are here 24/7 to offer support or advice – you can contact our FGM helpline on 0800 028 3550 or fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk and you can remain anonymous if you wish.”

Crown Prosecution Service: VAWG Annual Crime Report

The effective prosecution of VAWG cases continues to be a priority for the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS). On 25 June 2015, the Director of Public Prosecutions launched the CPS VAWG Crime Report for 2014/15 ([link](#)).

The CPS has seen a dramatic increase in the numbers of cases concerning VAWG—including rape, domestic abuse and sexual abuse. This year the report shows that more cases are being referred from the police and are being charged, prosecuted and convicted than ever before.

In 2014/15, 107,104 of these crimes were prosecuted, an increase of more than 16,000 from last year (18.3%) and the highest ever in CPS records. Likewise, the numbers of those convicted rose by over 11,000 (16.9%) to its highest level ever.

This comes at a time when an increasing number of complex and non-recent cases are being brought through the criminal justice system, and significant work has been undertaken to recognise and tackle the key difficulties which affect these cases. This includes the implementation of a National Rape Action Plan, the publishing of toolkits for prosecutors and advocates on the issues of consent and offender tactics, and guidance for dealing with vulnerable victims.

For domestic violence, rape, sexual offences and child abuse, convictions reached the highest volume ever. In total 68,601 defendants were convicted for domestic abuse, a rise of 10,325, just under 18% from the previous year. 2,581 defendants were convicted of rape, an increase of 233, just under 10%, since the previous year. 631 more defendants were also convicted for child sexual abuse – a 19% rise, reaching the highest level ever of 3,975. Prosecutions commencing, in respect of stalking and harassment offences, also rose by 15.1% in 2014-15 from 2013/14.

The conviction rate for domestic abuse remained relatively steady at 73.9%, against the large rise in prosecution and conviction volumes that reached a record high. During 2014/15 we updated our guidance for prosecutors on domestic abuse and plan further guidance and training following the new legislation on coercion and control.

Despite the rise in conviction volumes for rape, the conviction rate fell to 56.9%. Work to address improving rape prosecution outcomes overall has been a priority during the last year. This is especially to address the fall in conviction proportions,

which should be seen in the context of the significant rise in the volume of completed prosecutions of nearly 17%. Please see the next CPS article which articulates the ongoing work on rape in more detail.

A key theme from the Report, and highlighted by victims' groups, is the increasing use of social media and new technology to perpetrate VAWG. This will be a focus for the CPS over the next year.

Crown Prosecution Service (CPS): update on Rape

An [Independent Review into the Investigation and Prosecution of Rape in London](#) by Dame Elish Angiolini QC was commissioned by the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and the CPS. The Review report and the [joint MPS/CPS London response](#) were published on the 2 June 2015. Lessons learned will be applied nationally as appropriate through the work of the National Rape Action Plan which forms part of a wider programme of work to address improving rape prosecution outcomes.

The DPP and the National Policing Lead for Rape published the joint CPS/Police National Rape Action Plan ([link](#)) in June 2014. The Action Plan outlines a number of important steps to ensure the effective investigation and prosecution of rape cases. This has been updated on several occasions since its launch in 2014 including at a CPS and Police Joint National conference on Rape in January of this year. As part of the National Rape Action Plan:

- A public-facing leaflet and toolkits for prosecutors and advocates in relation to consent were launched at the national conference;
- A toolkit for prosecutors dealing with violence against women and girls cases (including rape) involving vulnerable victims was launched at the national conference;
- A new Rape Protocol for the CPS and police was published, setting out how to deal with all rape cases from the initial complaint to after the verdict in a trial, was published on 8 January 2015;
- Research into reasons behind victim withdrawals in rape cases has been conducted;
- An internal review of the structure and resourcing of Rape and Serious Sexual Offence Units has been carried out and recommendations are being implemented;
- Information on timeliness relating to rape cases has been gathered will be discussed with the Senior Presiding Judge and CPS Areas.

Throughout 2015/16 the work on rape will continue to be a focus, further training for prosecutors will be rolled out and the legal guidance will be updated.

Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative (PSVI)

In June, the Prime Minister appointed Baroness Anelay, as his [Special Representative \(PMSR\) on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict](#). She takes over this role from Mr William Hague. This appointment underlines the Government's commitment to taking forward work on preventing sexual violence in conflict.

The FCO continues to be the policy lead for this work and through work with DFID, MoD and other departments has made considerable progress on PSVI policy goals but of course there is still much more to do. Going forward they have an ambitious strategy which will focus on:

- (i) Implementing the [International Protocol on the Documentation and Investigation of Sexual Violence in Conflict](#) through advocacy, capacity building and national application;
- (ii) Encouraging governments to do more to include sexual violence issues in their military doctrine and training and providing support to them to do so, as well as improving the performance of UN and other peacekeepers and the implementation of conduct and discipline procedures to tackle sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) offences committed by peacekeeping personnel;
- (iii) Providing ongoing support to survivor organisations and NGOs that work with them and increasing the capacity of human rights defenders to act in this area;
- (iv) Encouraging governments to accede to the Rome Statue of the International Criminal Court or to implement it fully in domestic legislation so as to increase accountability and help challenge impunity for sexual violence crimes; and
- (v) Embedding PSVI in the work of the multilateral institutions.

Over the course of the year the FCO plan to develop an additional area of work which will look at challenging traditional attitudes to sexual violence in conflict. This will build on the discussion the PMSR hosted in February with the [We Will Speak Out Coalition](#) which looked at the role of faith leaders in countering cultural and social attitudes to violence against women and girls, as well as the recent African Union Summit discussions on engaging men and boys.

So far this year the FCO has allocated approximately £6 million to support PSVI activity through country programmes. They will continue to deploy members of the UK Team of Experts to support these work streams, particularly training on the International Protocol and are currently identifying options for what more support we can provide to address the urgent needs in Iraq and Syria.

Department for Work and Pensions

Victims of domestic abuse are exempt from the £20 application fee for the Child Maintenance Service (the successor to the Child Support Agency). To claim this exemption, applicants to the Child Maintenance Service need to say that they have been a victim of domestic abuse when they make their application and to have reported the abuse to one of several appropriate persons (e.g. the police, a legal professional, a specialist domestic violence organisation). More information is available here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/261882/child-support-fees-who-to-report-domestic-violence-to.pdf).

Victims who are receiving Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) can also be given the time and space they need to resettle themselves and their children if they have been a victim of actual or threatened domestic abuse in the preceding 6 months. This 4-week easement relaxes conditionality rules for claimants, so they can continue receiving their entitlement, without having to look or be available, for work. The period can be extended subject to written evidence being provided. There is also an additional 'domestic emergency' provision available; claimants should speak to their Work Coach/local JCP office for more information on any of these provisions.

There are also provisions for migrant victims of domestic abuse. The Destitute Domestic Violence Concession (DDV Concession) allows migrant victims of domestic abuse access to income-related benefits when they have been granted 'limited leave to remain outside the immigration rules' by UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI). More information on eligibility and application can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/application-for-benefits-for-visa-holder-domestic-violence>

If you have any comments on the provisions available, please contact gabriella.chamberlain@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Government Equalities Office

Launch of Online Abuse Website:

<http://www.stoponlineabuse.org.uk/>

In June 2015, the Government launched a new website (Stop Online Abuse) to help people take action against offensive, damaging or threatening content in all forms of media, particularly online. The website provides practical advice for women and LGBT adults on how to recognise abuse, steps to take to report it and how to get offensive content removed.

Whilst online abuse can affect anyone, women and LGB&T people often experience abuse as a result of their sex, gender identity or sexual orientation - or may be targeted for these reasons.

The guidance was developed by Galop (a London based LGB&T anti-violence & abuse charity) and pulls together a range of information that is currently held across a range of organisations into one place, creating a simple, visually attractive and user friendly interface. The website provides advice and support to people who have experienced biphobia, homophobia, transphobia, or sexist abuse and threats of domestic and sexual violence. The content has been developed in close consultation with a range of stakeholders from the fields of gender and LGB&T rights and equality.

The guidance:

- offers simple, effective and easily accessible online advice and guidance on media portrayal & on-line harassment and bullying.
- provides guidelines on what constitutes illegal behaviour and how to address it.
- specifically targets (a) adult women and (b) adult LGB&T people on what action they can take against offensive, damaging or threatening content in all forms of media.
- covers both illegal and permissible material.

Department of Health

“The impact of domestic abuse on families and in the workplace”

The Department of Health invites you to attend an event on Domestic Abuse in the Board Room at Richmond House, 79 Whitehall, London, SW1A 2NS between 12.30 and 2 pm (reception from 12.00) on Wednesday 25th November 2015 - International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

Speakers include:

- Dame Carol Black – Department of Health
- Tina Markose – Office for Nuclear Development, speaking about her personal experiences of domestic abuse

All welcome please contact Brenda Hardcastle (Brenda.Hardcastle@dh.gsi.gov.uk) to save your place.

Welsh Government

Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act

The Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 (“the Act”) received Royal Assent on 29 April. This is a landmark law, the first of its kind in the UK and one of the most innovative pieces of legislation passed by the National Assembly for Wales.

Implementation of the Act is a key priority for the Welsh Government. Since Royal Assent, a detailed Implementation Plan for the Act and supporting policy programme has been agreed by Leighton Andrews AM, Minister for Public Services. The Plan sets out a comprehensive, ambitious programme of work to be delivered over the course of the current year and beyond.

Whole Education Approach to VAWDASV

We are taking forward a comprehensive programme of education measures to support the implementation of the Act. This package links to the Department for Education and Skills’ safeguarding in schools agenda and implementation of the Successful Future report, which made recommendations in respect of the future shape of the curriculum in Wales.

Central to this programme of work is the statutory guidance to be issued under section 15 of the Act. The guidance will outline the expectations on Local Authorities in relation to a whole education approach to healthy relationships, and in respect of Champions. It will build on the Whole Education Approach Good Practice Guide that the Welsh Government has asked Welsh Women’s Aid to develop.

The Good Practice Guide will outline the principles of a whole education approach and include examples of best practice from across Wales, the UK and internationally. A wide consultation on the content of the Guide was undertaken between 17 April and 19 May. 53 responses were received from a wider range of individuals and organisations including academics, education professionals, specialist services and third sector organisations representing the interests of children and young people. The Guide is currently being finalised ahead of publication in the autumn.

The Act includes provision to place a requirement on Local Authorities, through Regulations, to report annually on the action they are taking in their educational settings, including schools, to address violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence. This will be a key tool in holding Local Authorities to account. The requirement will be brought into force in time for the 2016-17 academic year

During the course of 2015-16 we will also:

- hold a national violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence in education conference in December;
- commission a review of healthy relationships teaching resources and publish a suite of best practice resources;

- produce awareness raising materials for school governors ;
- strengthen the Welsh Government anti-bullying guidance;
- scope a thematic review to be undertaken by Estyn in 2016-17; and
- continue to fund Hafan Cymru's Spectrum Schools Programme and Welsh Women's Aid's Children Matter Project.

National Adviser

The Minister for Public Services has announced the appointment of Rhian Bowen-Davies as Wales' first National Adviser for Violence against Women and other forms of Gender-based Violence, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence. Further information can be found via the following link:

<http://gov.wales/newsroom/people-and-communities/2015/national-adviser-for-violence-against-women-domestic-abuse-and-sexual-violence-appointed/?lang=en>

National Training Framework

Leighton Andrews, Minister for Public Services will publish the National Training Framework (NTF) for public consultation shortly. The NTF will ensure that high quality and consistent training is available to those across the public and specialist sector and, therefore, is a top priority.

The Welsh Government has invested heavily in the provision of training and recently completed testing of an eLearning package aimed at raising awareness amongst a quarter of a million Welsh public service workers. The ambition and reach of the Framework is unprecedented and marks the beginning of a fundamental shift in attitudes of our public service towards these important issues.

Statutory Guidance under the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act

To support public sector bodies to carry out their duties under the Act, the Welsh Government is preparing a suite of guidance documents. During the passage of the legislation through the National Assembly for Wales, examples of draft guidance were provided on the National Training Framework, "Ask and Act", and Multi-Agency Collaboration. All three pieces of guidance are currently being reviewed and will be issued for consultation in the summer, before being adopted in the New Year.

Additional statutory guidance on the effective commissioning of specialist services and working with perpetrators is also being prepared and will be consulted upon over the next 12 months.

10,000 Safer Lives

It has been confirmed that the Welsh Government's Programme for Government commitment, the 10,000 Safer Lives Project, has exceeded its target, with over 14,000 individuals reporting as being or feeling safer as a result of the direct support from specialist organisations funded by the Welsh Government.

Funding to tackle violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence

The increase in Welsh Government funding this financial year – from £4.5 million to over £5 million – will be used to support implementation of the Act. An exciting new approach to bring together funding sources on a regional basis in Gwent is being implemented on a pilot basis and will provide valuable lessons for the local government reform programme in Wales.

The Minister has also recently agreed additional funding of £123,500 for:

- an increase in services to help address historical sexual abuse;
- extending the coverage of the Dyn Project by appointing a male Independent Domestic Violence Adviser in North Wales;
- the review of healthy relationships teaching resources and education conference, service user engagement and workshops around implementation of the Act;
- awareness raising of the Live Fear Free brand and website; and
- a youth engagement programme in respect of Female Genital Mutilation.

Live Fear Free Helpline – All Wales Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Helpline

The Welsh Government has recently retendered for the contract to run the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Helpline. Welsh Women's Aid was successful in winning the contract- worth £1.3million over 3 years – which begins in October. The Helpline will be renamed the Live Fear Free Helpline to ensure a consistent single point of contact and branding in line with the Welsh Government's Live Fear Free website and campaigns.

Live Fear Free website

The Welsh Government's Live Fear Free website restructure has started and a draft structure and content has been mapped out to ensure it provides a holistic, user-friendly resource for victims and survivors, families and friends, as well as professionals.

Engagement with stakeholders and service users is underway to test the navigation as part of the design and build phase of the project; stakeholders in Wales are also working with the Welsh Government to provide appropriate content.

Publicity Campaigns for 2015-2016

The Welsh Government's high profile campaigns will continue to raise public awareness and change attitudes towards violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence. The 'Cross the Line' campaign earlier this year highlighted the signs and symptoms of domestic abuse, receiving positive feedback nationally.

The first of three campaigns planned for this financial year launched on 13 July. This general awareness campaign relating to domestic abuse, called Live Fear Free, included social media, radio and outdoor advertising.

The other two campaigns this year will deal with violence and abuse in respect of young people (November 2015) and a sexual violence campaign for victims of historical sexual abuse (February 2016). The Welsh Government will also look to develop a wider perpetrators campaign building on our campaign in March 2015, which was developed in partnership with National Probation Service Wales.

NSPCC

NSPCC report: How Safe are our Children?

In June the NSPCC launched their annual “How safe are our children?” report, widely recognised as the most comprehensive overview of the child protection landscape in the UK, at the “How Safe?” conference. Bringing together a broad range of child protection experts from across the UK, delegates were addressed by Edward Timpson MP, Minister of State for Children and Families, and Karen Bradley MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Preventing Abuse and Exploitation amongst a host of representatives from the leading child protection and social care bodies.

Child sexual abuse remains at the forefront of public consciousness in the wake of high profile abuse cases and reports of serious institutional failings; the NSPCC’s report found that police-recorded sexual offences against children have risen across the four nations of the UK by between 9 per cent and 40 per cent in 2013/14 compared with the previous year. The report showed a 124% increase in referrals about sexual abuse and online sexual abuse to ChildLine compared to the previous year. The NSPCC helpline has seen the number of sexual abuse contacts which result in referral increase by 14 per cent since 2013/14.

Across the UK, sexual assault or rape of a female child under the age of 16 remains the most common sexual abuse offence against children. Data from ChildLine and the NSPCC helpline echo recent police figures: the main concern in 45 per cent of all ChildLine counselling sessions was sexual abuse or online sexual abuse.

The report welcomes an increased willingness to speak out about abuse, which is cited as the driving factor for these increases. However it also highlights the inadequate level of support available to children once they have made a disclosure.

For too many children support following abuse remains limited. This is particularly true for child victims of sexual abuse, approximately 60 to 90% of whom are not accessing the therapeutic services they need to help them recover from their trauma.

For more information and the most up to date statistics on factors affecting child safety, the 2015 “How Safe are our children?” report can be found [here](#).

Jon Brown, Head of Strategy and Development (Sexual Abuse) at the NSPCC, has written an opinion piece for the latest edition of [Public Health Today](#) (p10) outlining the calls from the recently published NSPCC report Preventing child sexual abuse: towards a national strategy. This report provides evidence and recommendations on how to prevent child sexual abuse. It provides the basis for starting a discussion

about what a national public health strategy for prevention should look like in England. In Public Health Today, Jon writes: “We can stop child sexual abuse before it occurs (primary prevention) using a public health approach, but it will require effort from all areas of society. Those responsible for forming public opinion must urgently spread the message that all sexual abuse is wrong, and promote the importance of healthy, equal and consensual relationships.”

CEOP

A new campaign which aims to give parents and carers the tools to deal with their children sexting has been launched by the National Crime Agency’s CEOP Command.

‘Nude Selfies: What parents and carers need to know’ is a series of four short animated films for parents and carers offer advice on how to help keep children safe from the risks associated with the sharing of nude and nearly nude images.

They aim to empower parents and carers by helping them:

- Understand young people’s motivations for sending nude selfies.
- Plan to respond positively and constructively if they find out their child has shared a nude selfie.
- Gain confidence and skills in initiating preventative conversations.
- Identify risky behaviours or situations, and know when to seek help.
- Know how to get help if a child is at risk after sharing an image.

Parents and carers can view the animations at www.thinkuknow.co.uk/Teachers/Nude-Selfies/.

Are you a practitioner working with families?

The Nude Selfies films are accompanied by a Guidance Pack including a session plan and essential background information to help you deliver an effective workshop for parents and carers. You can also download a customisable poster/flyer to help you promote the session.

Download the Guidance Pack, poster and films from www.thinkuknow.co.uk/teachers.

Guidance and support for the Armed Forces community

A new website that provides guidance and support to members of the Armed Forces community affected by domestic abuse has recently been launched. The project is managed by the North East Hampshire Domestic Abuse Forum, and the website is hosted and overseen by the Ministry of Defence. www.gov.uk/mod/domestic-abuse-support-for-the-armed-forces

The site is funded by the Armed Forces Covenant (LIBOR) Fund.

Who is the website for?

The website is there to help victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse get the support they need and helps them make informed decisions. It is also there to inform the wider community such as the Chain of Command and military and civilian support providers. The website actively signposts through text, web-links and video to civilian and military support providers, and also provides a handbook for civilian practitioners to help them support victims and perpetrators from the Armed Forces community.

Why is this website needed?

A survey, conducted by the North East Hampshire Domestic Abuse Forum asked the Armed Forces community if they knew where to seek help and support for domestic abuse. A total of 30% of those asked did not know where to seek help.

There is no evidence to suggest that domestic abuse is any more common within the Armed Forces. However the following factors could place additional pressure on families:

- Research has indicated that people between the ages of 20 and 40 are at highest risk of experiencing domestic abuse – this age range is strongly represented in the Armed Forces.
- Regular assignments and geographic separation can isolate victims by cutting them off from their family and support systems.
- Regular assignments can make it difficult for a spouse to maintain a career, resulting in them being more economically dependent on the serving partner.
- Regular deployments and reunions create unique stresses on Armed Forces families.

What information is available through the website?

The message behind domestic abuse is a simple one, and is captured in the website:

- Domestic abuse is not right.
- You are not alone.
- It is more common than people think.
- Trained professionals can help victims, perpetrators and children.

- Help is available.

Members of the Armed Forces who are affected by domestic abuse may be concerned about specific issues when they are trying to make decisions around their future, including accommodation, impact on visas and the reality of leaving the military community. These and other issues are covered within a Common Concerns section of the website. There is also a section outlining where to go for help and support and another page detailing the support available for those living overseas. Case Studies detail how victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse are actively supported by welfare providers and there is a section providing information for practitioners.

New domestic abuse awareness campaign launches in West of England

A new campaign designed to raise awareness about how to spot domestic violence and abuse launches in Bristol and the surrounding area this week.

Run in partnership between Bristol City Council, Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner, Avon and Somerset Police, Neighbourhood Watch, Crimestoppers and other local charities and public sector organisations, the campaign calls on people not to ignore a gut feeling that something may be wrong.

The campaign has been launched in response to recent domestic homicide reviews which showed that victims weren't known to services, but their friends and family were aware that the abuse was happening. By raising awareness of the signs to look out for, and the fact that abuse can be reported anonymously to Crimestoppers, more friends and family may feel able to speak up.

George Ferguson, Mayor of Bristol, who is backing the campaign, said: "Earlier this year we committed to making Bristol a Zero Tolerance City for gender-based violence, which includes domestic abuse against women and men. Bristol has an excellent reputation for tackling domestic abuse and this new campaign focusing on friends and family shows how we're looking at the issue from every angle. We want to involve the whole community, ensure people know what happens if they report suspected abuse, and make sure they feel supported and able to do so."

As part of the campaign new help guides for friends and family have been produced and are available to download online. To reach as many people as possible, billboards will also be visible across Avon and Somerset along with posters and postcards in key locations such as leisure centres, health centres and libraries. Radio adverts will also inform people about the signs to look out for.

Sue Mountstevens, Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner said: "Domestic and sexual abuse is never the victim's fault. I want any victims listening to

know that they can come forward and report knowing that they will be taken seriously and will be believed.

“In many cases family and friends can offer a vital lifeline to those in distress. It’s important that if you suspect someone you know is being abused you can seek help and share your concerns. Even if it’s something small, it could be nothing, but it might mean everything.”

Chief Inspector Andy Bennett, force lead for domestic abuse at Avon and Somerset Police, said: “Domestic abuse is an abhorrent crime in all its forms and we all have a responsibility to help tackle it.

"Many people who've experienced domestic abuse say they didn't recognise they were in an abusive relationship until they were out of it. With this campaign, we hope to encourage everyone to recognise the signs of abuse and feel empowered to report it.

“When police receive information about domestic abuse it’s always treated extremely seriously. We’ll do everything we can to ensure victims of domestic abuse get the support they need and we have a whole range of tools at our disposal to help us do this.”

The campaign is supported by Nick Gazzard, father of Hollie Gazzard who was tragically murdered by her ex-boyfriend in 2014. Nick set up the Hollie Gazzard Trust last year to raise awareness about the issue and leave a positive, lasting legacy for Hollie.

Nick said: “Domestic abuse is not a private matter, but often victims will suffer in silence. I've met a lot of survivors of domestic violence who are just trying to make things work. It’s important that people know how to support a friend or family member who might be a victim of domestic violence. Controlling or harassing behaviour is a form of domestic abuse, and shouldn’t be accepted as the norm.”

The help guides, support services and more information about the campaign can be found at www.thisisnotanexcuse.org. To report suspected domestic abuse anonymously, call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Women’s Aid

Following Women’s Aid’s successful SOS campaign which secured a £10million Government fund for specialist women’s refuges in November 2014, The Sun in partnership with Women’s Aid, launched the Give Me Shelter Campaign in May 2015. This joint campaign asked the Government to invest in refuge places and develop a long-term solution for refuge funding.

This campaign achieved a huge amount of public support and the Prime Minister ensured campaign supporters he was examining the issue ‘very carefully’.

As a result of the campaign the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Rt Hon George Osborne MP, announced a further £3.2m for protection for domestic violence victims in his Summer Budget. Women's Aid will be working with the Government to ensure this fund targets the services and geographical areas most in need to financial support.

Change that Lasts

As was publicised in the last VAWG newsletter Women's Aid has been working to develop a strengths-based, needs-led model that supports domestic violence survivors and their children to build resilience, and leads to independence.

The key principles of this model, Change that Lasts, are:

- Listen – always listen to survivors and place their needs at the centre
- Ask & Act – ask the right questions safely & act appropriately
- Specialist support – know when and how to refer to your local specialist service
- Tools – provide clear procedures, roles, information and training across agencies
- **Sustained independence and freedom** – work together for an independent future for survivors

At Women's Aid National Conference this year we launched a report on the Change that Lasts model that brought together the voices of survivors with decades of expertise of specialist domestic abuse services. This report looks at the key principles and outcomes we are aiming to achieve through Change that Lasts. You can find out more about Change that Lasts and read a summary of this report on our website www.womensaid.org.uk/change.

If you are interested in piloting Change that Lasts in your area and are keen to find out more please contact Clare Laxton on c.laxton@womensaid.org.uk.

You can also catch up on what happened at Women's Aid National Conference this year [here](#) which includes a [Storify](#) of all the social media action at Conference.

On Track: The Women's Aid Outcome Measurement System

National roll-out of On Track begins!

- What is On Track?

On Track is a package of resources and support to help Women's Aid member services evidence their impact by collecting data quickly, simply, and as part of their everyday work. The system has been developed in consultation with survivors, members, commissioners and academics, and is being rolled out to the membership from the 1st October 2015.

On Track supports member services to demonstrate the difference their service makes by collecting data against the jointly-developed Imkaan and Women's Aid National Outcomes Framework, which sets out the outcomes that matter most to survivors and their children.

- How does it work?

On Track is designed to support case workers to collect data as part of their usual working processes. Using simple case management forms, data is collected at referral, assessment, review and exit.

This information is then entered into a bespoke case management system. At the touch of a button, service managers can generate local reports, and submit data securely to a national dataset held by Women's Aid.

This sector-wide, national dataset will allow for regional and national benchmarking, provide robust evidence of survivor needs, support journeys and outcomes, and inform policy, practice and research. Participating services will receive help with evidencing their work, and using their data to learn more about 'what works' within their own service.

- What are the benefits?

It doesn't involve any extra paperwork

On Track provides a single, integrated solution for case management and outcome reporting – which means there is no duplication, and no extra forms. The information needed to manage the case and to evidence outcomes is gathered at the same time, stored in the same place, and reported on locally at the touch of a button.

It's owned by our membership

On Track was developed in partnership with our members, and the programme will continue to be shaped by the needs and input of participating services.

It's designed to develop local capacity

Implementation support and local ownership of data empowers individual services to streamline their monitoring and evaluation processes, to get to grips with outcome measurement, and to make the most of their data for learning and service improvement.

It shows the whole support journey

On Track supports data collection across the whole range of interventions with survivors and their children, allowing us to follow their journey through a number of overlapping types of support. This data will help us to understand more about which combination of support works best to keep women and children safe.

- How can I find out more?

To find out more about On Track, please contact Eve Blair, National Impact and Evaluation Officer (E.Blair@womensaid.org.uk).

Women's Aid Presents First Diplomas in Tackling Domestic Violence

Women's Aid presented its first Diplomas for Tackling and Preventing Domestic and Sexual Violence/Abuse at a ceremony in Middlesbrough.

The Women's Aid National Training Centre awarded its first National Diploma in Tackling and Preventing Domestic and Sexual Violence/Abuse to six students at an awards ceremony at the Thistle Hotel in Middlesbrough on Wednesday 6 May 2015.

The ceremony was led by Women's Aid CEO Polly Neate, with the certificates presented by Graham Hastings-Evans, Managing Director of NOCN, which is the leading Awarding Organisation that worked with Women's Aid to gain Ofqual recognition of the qualification and the assessment of the learners' achievement for their Diplomas.

Barry Coppinger, Labour Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) for Cleveland, paid tribute to the six students who received their certificates. Mr Coppinger was one of the three PCC's who funded the presentation ceremony, alongside Vera Baird and Ron Hogg.

The University of Worcester has agreed to accept the Diploma as meeting the entry requirements for their MA in Professional Development: The Dynamics of Domestic Violence. All holders of this NOCN Diploma will from now on be guaranteed an interview for this course.

Graham Hasting-Evans, Managing Director of NOCN, said:

"Domestic violence and abuse should not happen in our society, but it does. Therefore we must make sure that people supporting victims have the right skills to help them and these skills need to be recognised. I am delighted to have awarded the certificates to the first group of successful graduates. Well done to you all – you do such an essential and difficult job."

SafeLives - Addressing the needs of the whole family

New guidance: managing domestic abuse cases involving complex needs - a whole family approach

The 'toxic trio' of domestic violence, mental health and substance use is well documented. SafeLives' research suggests more than 1 in 3 victims of high-risk domestic abuse have mental health issues, while 11% misuse alcohol. Maracs, regular meetings in which local frontline services share information and work out how

best to help victims at high risk of serious harm or murder, tell us that cases involving complex needs are increasingly common. Knowing how to respond to the additional needs and risks posed - and how this affects the whole family - is essential.

New guidance was developed following a recent national Marac scrutiny panel hosted by SafeLives, and chaired by the Home Office. The guidance explores how the basic principles of Marac can be applied to cases involving substance misuse and/or mental health issues. It offers tips for researching cases, and sharing information and action planning at the meeting, while supporting the whole family. It also provides advice for commissioners and strategic groups.

To access the guidance visit: <http://www.safelives.org.uk/complexneedsguidance>

About the national Marac scrutiny panel

The national Marac scrutiny panel is chaired by the Home Office and organised by SafeLives. The panel gathers together experts from all Marac agencies to reflect on anonymised cases, with the aim of troubleshooting particular themes – such as coercive control, and supporting 16-17 year olds. The panel meets twice a year, with the next event due to take place in the autumn.

An update on Marac development programme

SafeLives is developing a national knowledge hub. It will form part of our national knowledge team and replace our previous Marac development programme. The hub will be a single port of call for professionals looking for the best advice about how to respond to domestic abuse, including the multi-agency working which remains so vital. Through the hub you'll be able to work interactively with us to access key updates and insights on policy and legislation changes, training and training materials, template documents and tools, information on less common types of domestic abuse, quarterly trend data, and national datasets which help you benchmark progress. If you have ideas about early priorities for the hub, do get in touch by emailing info@safelives.org.uk and let us know – we're listening!

Do you work with families who are living with domestic abuse?

New training available

You'll know that it can be difficult to deal with the impact the violence has not just on the victim but on every family member.

SafeLives' *Working with families* course will give you the practical skills and confidence to help families who are living with abuse. It will challenge you to really think about how you engage safely with them and will encourage you to try new approaches. It will improve the support you offer domestic abuse victims and their families. This training is suitable for anyone working with families, including social workers, Troubled Families teams, family support workers, and Cafcass officers.

To find out more and apply, visit: <http://www.safelives.org.uk/training/if-you're-frontline-professional/working-families>

Karma Nirvana - Day of Memory

More than 100,000 of the British public joined our Britain's Lost Women campaign, to remember women and girls killed in the name of 'honour'. This was a joint campaign with Cosmopolitan magazine that led to mobilising support from the public through a change.org petition who felt as strongly as we did that these British women must be honoured and the perpetrators dishonoured.

The campaign petitioned both the Prime Minister and Home Secretary and jointly we met other leaders across government to seek their support as every year many women are killed by their own relatives, for betraying their so-called 'honour'. We secured the support of the three main political parties who not only listened to the campaign but gave support to the day which will be marked on July 14th 2015.

Why 14th July?

This was the birthday of Shafiea Ahmed-a 17 year old murdered by her parents. Shafiea was born in Britain and embraced all that Britain stands for being democracy, freedom, independence and the right to an education with the ambition of being a lawyer. This normal behaviour for any teenager in Britain led to her demise as both parents believed she was acting too 'westernised' and this was a cause of shame. Shafiea reported to many statutory agencies and her family eventually flew her to Pakistan whereby she was presented with a forced marriage. To prevent this she swallowed a toxic substance that meant she was returned home for urgent medical attention. After this she was returned home and months later murdered by both parents her body was found in 2003. Both parents were sentenced in 2012 and the judge remarked how **'although Shafiea lived in Britain that once the front door closed it was as if she were living in rural Pakistan in Warrington.'**

Shafiea's story is typical of cases we hear on the Karma Nirvana helpline every-day, which currently receives over 700 calls a month. July is also a key time to get the message out. The school holidays are when these girls are at most risk of being taken aboard, forced into marriage or suffer honour abuse for the most basic freedoms.

A day of memory will honour these women and be an opportunity nationally for all to raise awareness so we are leaving a legacy. The support has been immense from both the public and professionals and we launch a social media campaign to make as much noise as possible to break the silences of many we have yet to reach.

Rape Crisis supports hard-hitting new Army campaign on sexual consent

[The Army has launched a bold new campaign intended to raise soldiers' awareness and understanding of rape.](#) In a series of hard-hitting posters, the campaign stresses the importance of gaining full, freely given consent to any sexual activity and on every occasion. Unlike many campaigns aimed at sexual violence prevention, the posters address their messaging towards those with the real power to prevent rape, the rapists and potential rapists, rather than trying to 'educate' victims and potential victims about how to 'keep themselves safe' from attack.

The Army consulted with Rape Crisis England & Wales, the national sexual violence charity for women and girls, and Stonewall to ensure that the campaign materials were appropriate and couldn't be construed as victim-blaming or –shaming in any way; they were clear that their intention was to target men within the Army who are the potential perpetrators of rape and sexual assault. The Army was also anxious that those who have experienced sexual violence were able to access appropriate, specialist support services, and to this end they've included Rape Crisis and other support details, along with further information about consent and sexual violence, on the Army's internal website.

This campaign coincides with the re-launch of the new-look Rape Crisis website: www.rapecrisis.org.uk. More accessible, easier to navigate and with more information for sexual violence survivors, their friends and families, professionals, students, the media and supporters, Rape Crisis hopes this new site will help to raise further understanding and awareness of sexual violence and ensure more survivors can access the specialist services they want and deserve.

Peabody Housing– Young people's conference on consent and healthy relationships

Around 100 youngsters and delegates attended a conference organised by housing association Peabody, to discuss why the government should make sex and relationships education (SRE) compulsory, increasing access to education on forming healthy relationships, and encouraging young people to understand and question what consent means in a digital age.

The conference, which took place at Notre Dame School in Southwark, gave young people an opportunity to showcase their campaign work, and attend workshops delivered by organisations including The Schools Consent Project and London Citizens.

This is part of a project funded by [Erasmus+](#), which gives young people a chance to take part in master classes, organise events, and influence politicians and decision makers on the issues that are most important to them.

Rosemary Riafaat (Notre Dame School) and Ben Weisz (BBC Radio News Programmes) co-chaired a panel of speakers which included:

- Georgia Gould, Cabinet member for Young People at Camden council
- Chlo Winfield (Young Person of the Year, UK Sexual Health Awards 2015, and author of The Speak Out Project)
- Aby Murray (Elected Young MP Westminster)
- Gudrun Burnet (Senior Business Partner, Domestic Abuse, Peabody, and co-founder of the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance).

Chinelo Nnadi, a student at Notre Dame School said:

"I think it's really important to have SRE in schools, to help young people become more informed and make safer and wiser choices. This event has helped me connect with many organisations I didn't know existed, who can provide practical help and support. It's great that Peabody have organised this and we should definitely have similar events in the future."

Gudrun Burnet said:

"This youth-led event was the first of its kind led by a housing provider in the UK and I am extremely proud of how successful it was in raising awareness on how vital SRE is for young people and why it should be mandatory for all schools and part of the national curriculum. I have not enjoyed a conference so much in a long time and there was such a buzz created on the day by the young people. We are planning our next youth led event in September 2015 so watch this space!"

White Ribbon Campaign Music Project

The White Ribbon Campaign's new Music Project has been created to enlist the support of the music industry to eradicate violence to women and girls.

The project works with live music venues and festivals to sign up to the campaign and its pledge: Never to commit, condone or remain silent about violence to women.

"Frequently women are asked to modify their behaviour by the way they dress, speak and where they go." Said Music Project Co-ordinator Dave Boardman.

"However, the White Ribbon Campaign is about challenging men to act. Nobody tells men what to wear, where to go and who to go there with. We are merely asking them to act in ways that have respect for others at the heart of their behaviour – and to never 'turn a blind eye' to acts of violence or abuse. It is time women were able to dress as they wish without words like 'provocative' being used".

Some Festival promoters and artistes are already working with us, while pubs, nightclubs and concert arenas are among the venues which are supporting the campaign.



Ralph McTell (left) and Seth Lakeman Band showing their support at Beverley Folk festival.

To obtain a White Ribbon award the campaign asks music venues and festivals to

- Show support for the White Ribbon Campaign's aims by displaying appropriate materials on posters and/or website
- Use their training programmes with staff and security to raise issues about respect and spotting the signs of potential abuse
- Encourage male customers to 'keep an eye 'on their mates and intervene before behaviour becomes abusive.
- Organise funding or awareness raising events. These can be done at any time of year but particularly around the 16 days of action either side of White Ribbon Day on 25 November.



Staff at Liquid Nightclub in Halifax showing their support for the campaign.

For further information contact Dave Boardman, White Ribbon Campaign at 01422 884565 & info@whiteribboncampaign.co.uk

LimeCulture CIC develops specialist training for ISVAs working with children and young people.

LimeCulture CIC has recently entered into a secondment arrangement with Barnardo's and Norfolk Constabulary to recruit two experienced Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs) specialising in supporting child victims of sexual violence. Following a competitive recruitment process, Clare Sullivan from Barnardo's SECOS Project and Gemma Kirby from the Harbour Centre, Norfolk's Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC), were selected to work with LimeCulture to assist us to develop a competence-based training programme to support ISVAs working with children and young people

LimeCulture has recognised the increasing number of ISVAs who now work to support people under the age of 18 who have been sexually assaulted, many doing so without any training at all. We believe it is important to ensure that ISVAs working with children and young people are competent and confident to navigate the (very different) processes and procedures that are in place for the younger age groups. ISVAs will need to draw from different skills sets and expertise to support children and young people (and their families) effectively and safely. ISVAs too have told us that they think it is important to develop their skills in this area of their work and requested that specialist training be developed.

Last year, LimeCulture launched the Advanced Development Programme (ADP), - a series of specialist programmes for trained ISVAs providing them with further training and professional development in specialist topics. The ADP complements LimeCulture's comprehensive and accredited 6-module professional ISVA course, the ISVA Development Programme, which provides new and experienced ISVAs with the knowledge and specialist skills to support the needs of victims of sexual violence to access the support they need, including through the criminal justice process.

The first of the APD courses is a 3 day specialist course focusing on working with males (unit 1a), supporting sex workers (unit 1b), working with young women who are affected by gangs (unit 2), and supporting people with mental health problems (unit 3). This course has now been delivered to over 40 ISVAs, with more due to attend the next course at the end of September.

This new programme will form the second of the ADP courses. By seconding two excellent ISVAs who specialise in supporting children and young people, to design the course content LimeCulture will ensure that it meets the practical needs of ISVAs working in a range of organisations and geographical areas. The 3-day course will be available to fully trained ISVAs later in the year.

For more information about LimeCulture training, please email info@limeculture.co.uk or go to our website www.limeculture.co.uk

St Mary's Sexual Assault Referral Centre

Earlier this year, St Mary's Sexual Assault Referral Centre's team of Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs) were given the chance to shadow criminal barristers from Northern Circuit in a bid to improve services to people who report rape

The aim of the scheme was to improve knowledge and understanding of the challenges complainants of rape face during a court trial and ensure better support is provided.

Many victims are extremely anxious before their court case. They are unfamiliar with the court process, what will be expected of them and what to expect. Delays and uncertainty as well as the trial itself can result in emotions being difficult to manage.

The role of the ISVA is to support victims of rape and sexual violence through the criminal justice system. It is not just about being at court during the time of the trial it may also involve familiarising the client with the court, explaining what will happen and why, well before the case commences. Clients may also need support with issues to do with their family, housing or employment. The ISVA will provide support before, during and after the trial, reassuring and building confidence throughout.

The aim of the shadowing scheme was to enable ISVAs and barristers to understand the challenges faced in supporting victims through the trial and in preparing and presenting their cases. This benefits the victim in that the ISVA can advise on the court processes from an objective position and explain to the victim why legitimate delays may occur. From a barrister's perspective it assists their understanding of the support an ISVA can provide and the boundaries of that support so that there is less concern about potential contamination of evidence.

Barbara-Louise Webster, of 7 Harrington Street Chambers in Liverpool, has worked with St Mary's SARC in developing the scheme. She said: "In some court centres, St Mary's ISVAs have met with resistance to their presence with the victim either in court or in the video link room, during the giving of evidence, perhaps fearing that they are there to coach the victim.

"This scheme will hopefully better educate those within the court system of the important role ISVAs have to play in supporting and building the confidence of these witnesses so they can provide the best possible evidence in court. "

Under the shadowing scheme, members of the Bar in each court centre, whether prosecuting or defending, will be asked to permit an ISVA to shadow them at court during the trial of a case where the ISVA has no involvement.

Bernie Ryan, St Mary's Centre Manager, said: "All our ISVAs have received comprehensive training and this scheme will enhance their understanding of the court process and the role of the independent Bar. We also hope it will raise the profile of ISVAs among court staff, barristers and judges."

Ian Rushton, Temporary Chief Crown Prosecutor for the North West, said: "We greatly value the work of ISVAs in supporting people through the criminal justice system and fully support this shadowing scheme. I am sure it will help increase knowledge and understanding about the court process among ISVAs but also ensure greater awareness of the importance of their role in supporting people before, during and after a court trial."

His Honour Judge Stockdale, Honorary Recorder of Manchester, added: "The presentation in court of cases involving allegations of sexual assault is never a straightforward matter. Each case raises its own challenges for prosecution and defence. I welcome the introduction of this shadowing scheme, under which ISVAs will become acquainted at first hand with the whole court process. It can only assist them in their valuable work at St Mary's."

The shadowing scheme follows on-going discussions and awareness raising sessions hosted by St Mary's SARC with the Crown Prosecution Service, judges and barristers from the Northern circuit on how to better support people making complaints of rape and sexual assault.

St Mary's Young Person's Advocate Yvonne Haworth was the first member of the team to take part in the scheme. She commented: "This experience has been so valuable. I feel more confident in my ability to reassure my clients and ease their anxiety about delays and why they might occur. It has given me an excellent insight into the court system, processes and methods which means I can be a better advocate for my clients."

DART (Domestic Abuse and Stalking Reference Tool)

The Domestic Abuse and Stalking Reference Tool (DART) is a package of evidence based materials designed to help professionals respond confidently and consistently to disclosures of domestic abuse and stalking. It is currently in both practical use, and ongoing evaluation and pilot, by police and other agencies. The tool is especially effective when considering 'course of conduct offending' and coercive control, and is a valuable addition to existing policies, practices and training, working well with risk assessment tools such as DASH or DIAL. DART is not a risk assessment tool, it is a reference tool which helps professionals respond to victims consistently and confidently and gives evidence based guidance for practice.

The defining part of the package is a set of evidence-based cards, which are in physical or app format. Handouts for victims and offenders are also included. The reference tool itself is designed to be easily updated or supplemented with additional material. There have already been guidance cards added which are focused on CSE and diverse victim groups. It has also been found in pilot that DART helps with achieving positive charging decisions for domestic abuse.

The significant changes which have occurred over recent years, including the introduction of Domestic Homicide Reviews and new legislation, are an acknowledgement that we now have more evidence based knowledge about domestic abuse and stalking which needs to be disseminated and put into practice. The research which produced DART was driven by a desire to align the professional and victim perspectives around calls for assistance. So the researchers interviewed widely with police officers, paramedics and other professionals, as well as with victims, and the families of deceased victims. They looked at the emerging findings from DHRs, and the research which exists in the area; they went to international experts and experienced practitioners. The analysis of all that data produced a reference tool and response model which takes full account of the victim and professional perspective, and the needs of both.

DART was developed by Dr Jane Monckton-Smith, Senior Lecturer in Criminology at University of Gloucestershire. An award-winning researcher on domestic abuse and homicide, Jane's primary research underpinning DART is published in the 2014 book [*Domestic Abuse, Homicide and Gender: Strategies for Policy and Practice*](#). DART has been developed with input and support from a range of partners in the police service, other public protection organisations and charities.

For further information:

www.domesticabuseandstalking.com

jmoncktonsmith@glos.ac.uk

National Centre for the Study and Prevention of Violence and Abuse

The National Centre for the Study and Prevention of Violence and Abuse (NCSPVA) was launched on the 20th June 2014 by the late Lynda Bellingham OBE. The NCSPVA, based at the University of Worcester, is an interdisciplinary and inter-professional centre which aims to "provide a stimulating and inclusive environment in which to study and understand violence and abuse, and its prevention". We do so by providing taught accredited courses, seminars, continuing professional development, training, conferences, consultancy and partnership working. Current partners include: the Police, Probation, ISVAs (Independent Sexual Violence Advisors) and health services, particularly midwives, nurses and social workers.

Annual Conference

The 17th June 2015 saw the first annual NCSPVA conference. The theme of which was 'Violence, Abuse and Cross Cutting Issues', recognising that violence and abuse can be cross cutting in nature, and the impact can cut across generations of families, communities, cultures and nations. Similarly, the responses to violence and abuse should also be cross cutting, with voluntary sector agencies, the statutory sector, the corporate sector, educational and legal institutions; working together to support victims and to prevent re-victimisation; educating and challenging perpetrators of abuse; and supporting research to better understand the causes and prevention of violence. The Conference identified three strands as a means to explore the cross cutting themes of violence and abuse with a view to showcase research, policy and practice:

1. Diverse populations, including gender, age, ethnicity, class, sexuality and disability.
2. Interventions to include examples such as support services, protection and prevention.
3. The Services User voices of victims, survivors and perpetrators.

Conference delegates represented a range of professional disciplines and organisations, both statutory and voluntary sector, working directly with victims, survivors and perpetrators of violence; more specifically domestic violence. The conference attracted much attention on Twitter, with delegates using the hashtag #NCSPVA. An edited volume will follow shortly.

Training and courses

We offer postgraduate academic courses in Domestic and Sexual Violence, and individual short courses on topics such as: 'Black and Minority Ethnic and Refugee people: Family based violence and implications for professional practice'; 'Children, Young People and Domestic Violence'; and 'Domestic Violence: Perpetrators and Prevention'.

The NCSPVA also offers bespoke training and courses by request. For example we are currently delivering our Postgraduate Certificate in Professional Management: The Dynamics of Domestic Violence for Social Workers in the Essex Local Authority.

Further Information

Staff profiles including awards received, publications and research/consultancy work undertaken can be found at: www.worcester.ac.uk/discover/health-staff-profiles

If you would like to find out more about the NCSPVA please email ncspva@worc.ac.uk or visit our [Facebook](#) page or the NCSPVA [blog](#).

To sign up to our newsletter and be sent information about upcoming events please subscribe to our JISCMail: NCSPVA@JISCMail.ac.uk

Citizens Advice - gender violence and national publicity campaign

The Government has recently made some positive announcements on support for those people facing domestic abuse: increased funding for refuges and a Government-wide review of support for victims and survivors are both encouraging moves, which we welcome.

Citizens Advice is continuing to develop our work on this issue - we began the ASK Routine Enquiry (ASK RE) Programme in September 2014, following a successful pilot in 2013. It is a four year programme to train and support all local Citizens Advice in England and Wales to use a routine enquiry of clients in face to face unaccompanied debt and benefit advice sessions about their experience of gender violence and abuse and then offer advice and support if there is a disclosure. The Programme has begun with 50 voluntary early adopter bureaux. Citizens Advice are working in partnership with Against Violence and Abuse who provide specialist training to supervisors in bureaux.

During the initial early adopter phase 705 clients were ASKed the routine enquiry. The disclosure rate was 24%. (This is similar to 27% disclosure rate in the pilot of ASK RE).

5.5% of those clients disclosing were currently experiencing abuse. Citizens Advice advisers assessed likely client outcomes of using ASK RE as: helping a client out of, or avoiding an emergency situation; increased self-confidence in the client; clients having a better understanding of what a healthy relationship is; the debt or benefit enquiry being resolved better, or improved advice on these matters. The Programme will continue with a further evaluation being carried out in April 2016.

The service has developed an e-learning module, *An Introduction to Gender Violence* that has already been used by over 600 advisers to support the face to face training. Our advisers reported increased confidence in using the routine enquiry over time, but also emphasised the importance of quality training, on-going support and the need for local specialist support.

Citizens Advice have recently produced two research reports: '*Controlling Money, Controlling Lives*' and '*Victims of Domestic Abuse: Struggling for Support*'. These reports look in detail at the problem of financial abuse, and assess the access victims of abuse have to specialist support, housing and legal aid. Forthcoming research will explore the difficulty which friends, family and colleagues have in identifying abuse and supporting the people going through it.

This summer, we will be launching a national campaign which will build on this research and our first-hand experience of helping victims of abuse. We'll be running a national publicity campaign to increase awareness of the range and prevalence of abuse, and looking at what can be done to help frontline professionals, including in high street banks, to identify abuse and support those people subjected to it.

If you're interested in further information about the ASK RE Programme at Citizens Advice contact Helen.Scadding@citizensadvice.org.uk or Imogen.Parker@citizensadvice.org.uk about the campaign.

AVA Training

AVA have organised the following open training events for 2015:

- Working with children and young people exposed to violence against women and girls : 14 September - 11 November 2015, London
- Children under 10 years old and domestic violence: 23 September 2015. London
- Vulnerable adults, Domestic violence and Abuse and the Care Act , October 8th 2015
- Community groups project 3 day training 22,23 and 29th October 2015, London
- Understanding Domestic violence and Abuse , 12th November 2015, London
- How to use a Response based approach with survivors of domestic violence, sexual violence and sexual exploitation , 8th December 2015, London

Full details of how to book can be found at: <http://www.avaproject.org.uk/our-training-events/open-training.aspx>

New London Stella Project

Access to Safety: Housing Women with Multiple Needs. AVA have received funding from Trust for London to run a three-year project to improve the provision of safe accommodation in London for women with experiences of gender-based violence, problematic substance use and/or mental health support needs. The project will work with six refuges and 2 housing services. If you would like to hear more about the project or if you think this would be of benefit to your local area then please contact the London Stella project coordinator - lucy.allwright@avaproject.org.uk

AVA Seminar: The Care Act six months on... early lessons to keep vulnerable adults safe from domestic and sexual abuse.

Weds 4 November 2015, 1.30pm - 4.30pm

The Care Act 2014 came into force in April 2015 and is aimed at creating a single, modern law that will ensure the physical, mental and emotional people of vulnerable people. Six months on we are looking at the early lessons from its implementation and models of good practice. The seminar will have presentations from leading practitioners, academics and policy makers. There will also be opportunities to discuss ideas and network with other delegates.

Objectives of the seminar:

- Explore whether the Care Act is helping protect vulnerable adults safe from domestic and sexual abuse and share good practice.
- Explore on-going challenges in using the Care Act to keep vulnerable adults safe from domestic and sexual abuse.
- Learn how the Care Act can help safeguard older women and disabled women from domestic and sexual abuse.

Where: Central London (venue to be confirmed)

The cost: £35 per delegate

Who is this seminar for?

This seminar is for people who work to the Care Act and who want to know more about how the Care Act can protect vulnerable people from domestic and sexual violence and abuse. It will assume some prior knowledge of the Care Act in relation to domestic and sexual abuse. For more information about the Care Act Seminar please [click here](#).

If you need an introductory course to the Care Act please look at the one day course AVA are running on 8 October 2015 - [Vulnerable Adults, Domestic Violence and Abuse and the Care Act](#).

About AVA: AVA (Against Violence and Abuse) works across the UK to improve services to prevent violence and abuse, meet the needs of survivors and their children and hold abusers accountable. Our vision is a world without violence and abuse. We deliver a range of ground-breaking and award winning services including learning and skills, consultancy and funded projects.

BAWSO - Working with Men in the Fight Against FGM

Men in Swansea are getting involved in the fight against female FGM. The Bawso FGM Health and Safeguarding Community project has seen an increase in the number of men engaging in the fight to stop the practice. Since last year the project has been working closely with 22 men from diverse communities affected by FGM in Swansea who recognise the importance of their role in ending FGM. Some of the men have become champions in their communities, encouraging others to talk about the practice more openly.

Initially the men were not keen to openly discuss FGM and did not understand why they should be involved in the matter as “[...] *it was a woman’s issue*”. The men

requested a session separate from the women because it was a taboo to discuss the issue jointly.

During the first session it emerged that majority of the men were familiar with the practice but did not fully understand how it affects women and girls. They just accepted it as a cultural practice or a religious obligation without really questioning what, how and why women underwent FGM. A discussion looking at FGM from a woman's perspective was an eye opener to the men as it explained the health consequences, including limited sexual responses which in the long term lead to marriage breakdown.

After a number of sessions the men began to open up and share experiences of FGM. For example, one of the men said he now understood why there was so much death during child birth in his community back home. Another mentioned that his sisters had undergone FGM but he never knew they had suffered so much as it is a taboo subject only discussed amongst the women.

The men now understand that they can play an important role in rejecting the practice because they are typically considered the decision-makers in their families, and they wield most of the power in their communities. They can become change makers in their communities in the fight against FGM. By engaging with the men, educating them, the women will have their support with the decision of not having FGM conducted on women and girls in the family.

Since the first workshop in November more men have become vocal in condemning FGM. One man from Senegal said that *"it was high time men stopped hiding behind culture and tradition and start questioning the value of some practices"*. He went on to share that he came from a family and community that practices FGM but never questioned why or really looked at how it affects women. In addition, the man stated he now would not marry a woman who has undergone FGM.

The Bawso FGM Health and Safeguarding project was set up in Cardiff in 2010. In March last year the project was extended to Swansea.

Bawso is a leading all Wales specialist support provider for Black and Minority Ethnic people suffering from domestic abuse and all forms of violence against women; including Female Genital Mutilation, Forced Marriage, Honour Based Violence and Human Trafficking. For information about Bawso and the FGM Project visit; <http://www.bawso.org.uk/>

EDV Global Foundation

EDV Global Foundation and the Corporate Alliance against Domestic Violence have been engaging in a series of innovative ways to raise awareness and tackle domestic violence worldwide.

EDV E-Learning Domestic Violence Modules

In Dec 2014 EDV launched our E-learning training modules on domestic violence through the British Medical Journal (BMJ) E-learning. The modules are free to access, for over 4 million medical practitioners, nurses and students worldwide. The module has been well received receiving international accreditation from medical councils in over 15 different countries. Over 95% of users surveyed believe they are now more confident in dealing with patients who have experienced domestic violence and over 86% believe they have improved their medical practice after undertaking the modules. So far there is an 87% completion rate. The module was peer reviewed and accredited by Medical Councils around the world.

You can access this module at: <http://learning.bmj.com/learning/module-intro/.html?moduleId=10052466>

Books Beyond Words

EDV Global Foundation has partnered with Baroness Hollins and 'Books Beyond Words' and to develop a series of picture books to help individuals with learning difficulties recognise domestic abuse and how to seek safety and support. So far we have launched two titles in the series: 'When Dad Hurts Mum' and 'Finding a Safe Place From Abuse'. In addition to the support for victims and witnesses, there is information for carers, practitioners and social workers in the back of each book.

These books can be accessed and purchased at:

<http://www.booksbeyondwords.co.uk/>

EDV Youth Council

EDV's Youth Council (EDVYC) has achieved incredible success since the launch in Sept 2014. EDV Youth Council (EDV YC) is a pioneering initiative set up by the Global Foundation for the Elimination of Domestic Violence (EDV) to establish a platform in which young people can actively work to eliminate domestic violence (DV) in the UK. They have their own Board of Directors, media and research team. EDV YC intend to raise awareness of DV among young people aged 16-24 through innovative initiatives in an accessible and relatable dialogue. The YC has led several workshops at universities and has created a toolkit on domestic violence in partnership with the NUS for all Universities in the UK.

EDV YC's toolkit can be found on: <http://beta.nusconnect.org.uk/resources/edv-youth-council-and-nus-eliminate-domestic-violence-toolkit>

You can follow EDV YC's work via Twitter @EDVYouth and on Facebook.

Geena Davis Institute

We are partners with the Geena Davis Institute global gender in film study. The findings will be launched at the London Film Festival in October.

<http://variety.com/2015/film/festivals/geena-davis-to-speak-at-londons-global-symposium-on-gender-in-media-1201525950/>

EDV Italy Project

Our EDV Italy project, led by Professor Marina Calloni, has been conducting policy consultation at national level in Italy and recently sent a delegation to London on a highly successful conference and fact-finding mission.

Peace One Day

For Peace One Day Sept 21st 2015 EDV is working with several NGO partners to conduct an awareness raising event. This project is in association with the College of Policing, with whom we have worked extensively in the past. Peace Day is an ideal time to conduct wide-ranging awareness events.

Launch of Athena, run by Refuge

A brand new service, called Athena, which provides support to people experiencing a range of gender-based violence, has just opened its doors in the London borough of Lewisham. Athena, run by Refuge and funded by Lewisham Council, provides a single point of access for confidential, non-judgmental support to those experiencing domestic violence, rape, female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, stalking, prostitution, trafficking and so-called 'honour' based violence. Available to women and girls over 13, men over 16 and trans-gender clients or those questioning their gender identity, this service offers a single-point of access to an assortment of essential, specialist support for those who have experienced violence and abuse.

One in four women will experience domestic violence in their lifetime and one in five women will experience sexual violence. There are nearly 3,000 cases of so-called 'honour' violence reported in the UK each year and it is estimated that there are 66,000 women and girls living with FGM in the UK. With violence being experienced by women and girls on this scale, it is vital that those who have experienced abuse, and who have often experienced multiple forms of abuse, are able to access support quickly and easily.

Refuge's expert team at Athena ensures that everyone who contacts the service receives a tailor made support plan based on their unique needs. The team offers the opportunity for clients to talk about their options with someone who understands what they are going through; supporting them to stay safe; helping them, should they want to, to contact the police, or other state services, or to access refuge accommodation; whilst working with them more broadly to rebuild their lives.

The Athena service's independent gender-based violence advocates (IGVA) support clients who are at high risk of homicide or serious injury; offering support to navigate the criminal and civil justice systems. The Athena service also provides services for 13-19 year old girls, as well as group support sessions and peer support schemes. By providing a variety of confidential services in one safe location, the Refuge team can offer a holistic approach which addresses a range of complex needs.

Refuge's national network of services supports 3,300 women and children on any given day. This new service will enable us to reach out to even more people in need of our specialist life-saving and life-changing support. The Athena Service will be officially launched during an event at Lewisham Council in September 2015.

For more information about Athena, please visit www.refuge.org.uk/Athena

Her Centre

Her Centre has new and renewed funding for some targeted support work addressing issues of abuse.

Independent Sexual Violence Advocate (ISVA)

The Her Centre employ two ISVA's for working with women and Transgender individuals aged from 13 years up, who have been effected by sexual violence of any degree and regardless of whether they have reported to Police or other services. One post works with adults, the other is a young IDVA/ISVA role working with 13 to 19 year old girls and young women.

The ISVA role is to provide, confidential, non –judgemental, emotional support and practical help & advice, to assist the client to stay safe and eventually bring closure to their experience. This can be achieved in many ways, like reporting to Police, housing, obtaining Injunction, Benefits, giving evidence, safety planning, sexual health, counselling or support groups.

Black and Minority Ethnic Engagement IDVA

The Her Centre has a new post addressing the limited engagement by women from BME communities with domestic and sexual abuse support services. This post will work with our basic English courses and other courses we run for women, raising awareness, mapping local services, and discussing the misconceptions around immigration rights that keep many women from reaching out for support. This post starts July 15 and is funded by the Big Lottery Reaching Communities Fund.

IKWRO

The Iranian and Kurdish Women's Rights Organisation (IKWRO), a leading women's rights charity campaigning to end all forms of "honour" based violence, including forced marriage, child marriage and female genital mutilation, has published new research revealing that from 2010 to 2014 police have recorded more than 11,000 cases of "honour" based violence.

The figures, which were obtained under the Freedom of Information Act from 39 of 52 UK forces, show 11,744 incidents and crimes, which include abductions, beatings and "honour" killings.

The Metropolitan Police recorded the highest number at 2,188, followed by the West Midlands with 1,269 and Bedfordshire recording 1106. Over the five-year period “honour” based violence cases were recorded across the UK demonstrating that this is a nation-wide problem.

Diana Nammi, Executive Director of IKWRO said;

“The figures show that “honour” crimes remain consistently high, are happening across the country and that the issue is not going away. They demonstrate the extent of need from vulnerable women and girls for protection and support and positively, show that many have seen the light at the end of the tunnel and sort help. But unfortunately the figures do not even show the real extent of the problem. So many crimes are never reported because the perpetrators are the victim’s own families and/or community members, who often have convinced them that going to the police is shameful and they fear retribution.”

IKWRO Opens UK’s first specialist refuge for Middle Eastern and North African Women

The Iranian & Kurdish Women’s Rights Organisation (IKWRO) has opened the first specialist refuge for Middle Eastern and North African women.

The refuge is in London and accommodates and supports vulnerable single women at risk of “honour” based violence, forced marriage, female genital mutilation and domestic abuse.

Women in the refuge receive specialist support from IKWRO’s expert team who speak six community languages as well as English and provide advice, advocacy, training and counselling. Last year IKWRO assisted over 780 clients face to face and gave advice to over 2500 clients and professionals over the telephone.

RESPECT

Working with the Cause of the Problem

Respect Networking Event

Human Rights Action Centre, London EC2A 3EA
Wednesday 7th October 2015| 10:00 - 16:30

The UK event for everyone working with Perpetrators of Domestic Violence or in Linked Partner Support Services

Respect’s annual Perpetrator Event will showcase a range of current policy, research and best practice in this line of work. The day will be highly interactive with several workshops to choose from with the aim to share knowledge from all around the country.

The day is looking great with the speakers and workshops below already confirmed, and more to be announced shortly!

How to book:

Click [here](#) to book your place now!

CONFIRMED SPEAKERS:

Introducing the Drive Project

Diana Barran | CEO, SafeLives

National Offender Management Service and the New Probation Landscape

Paul Weatherstone | MAPPA Development Manager and Domestic Abuse Policy Lead, NOMS

Membership and Partnership

Eleri Butler | CEO, Welsh Women's Aid

CONFIRMED WORKSHOPS:

Working with Fathers who Perpetrate Domestic Abuse

Jenkins Centre

Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance: Holding Perpetrators to Account Through Housing

Gudrun Burnett, Peabody | Jessica Donnellan, Standing Together Against Domestic Violence

The Drive Project Partnership

Neil Blacklock, Respect | Jo Silver, SafeLives

Insecure Attachment & Controlling Behaviour

Paul Wolf-Light, Himsa

Ticket Costs:

Respect Members - £72

Non-members - £90

(All prices include 20% VAT)

Who should attend?

- Perpetrator Programme Facilitators/ Managers
- Commissioners
- Probation/CRC
- Police
- Community Safety
- ID(S)VAs
- Adult/Children Social Workers
- Housing
- Mental Health Staff

For any queries, email us on events@respect.uk.net

Equally you can call us on: 020 7549 0585

[BOOK NOW!](#)

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