

Annual Progress Report of the Domestic Violence Co-ordinator (West Lancs) 2009/2010

Purpose of report

This report is intended to give an overview of the activities of the DV Co-ordinator in West Lancs and the prevalence of domestic abuse and to provide a progress report.

Background

The Domestic Violence Co-ordinator came into post on 1st December 2006 and is jointly funded between Central Lancs NHS and West Lancashire Borough Council. The post is part-time, 20 hours a week.

There were no specific council targets in 2009/2010; I have been working to the NHS service level agreement and job description, along with two overarching targets:

- Reducing repeat incidents of domestic violence (as measured by the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC))
NI 32 Local Area Agreement local indicator
- Increasing reporting of domestic violence
West Lancs Community Safety Partnership target

Work activities

- *Independent Domestic Violence Adviser (IDVA) Service*

A substantial amount of time during the year was spent addressing a potential shortfall in IDVA funding. The IDVA service is a vital component of the Specialist Domestic Violence Court (SDVC) and Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs). A number of statutory organisations were approached to assist with the shortfall, in the end funding was secured via the Local Strategic Partnership Second Homes Fund for 2010/2011. There is still work to be done in relation to 2011/2012, when both the Second Homes and Ministry of Justice funding will end.

The IDVA therefore relates to the success of a performance indicator: NI32 Reduce repeat incidents of DV (as measured by MARAC).

- *Forums*

The DV Co-ordinator has provided support to, participated in and reviewed the two key domestic violence forums in West Lancashire, the West Lancashire Domestic Violence Forum (primarily but not exclusively for practitioners) and the Executive Level DV Forum (senior officer level).

Practitioner DV Forum

For the foreseeable future Forum meetings in their current format will not take place. In conjunction with partner agencies we will look to West Lancs holding periodic events during the year to bring people together and address specific issues and will use the circulation list to advise about these. Most issues will be discussed at a regular pre-MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) meeting.

Executive Level DV Forum

Some issues that would have been discussed at the Exec Group will now be discussed at a regular pre-MARAC meeting. Any issues that can't be addressed at the pre-MARAC meeting will need to be discussed separately or routed through the Community Safety Partnership

In advising attendees of these changes it has been stated that if it becomes apparent that the position needs reviewing again then it will be no problem to do so.

- *National documents:*

There have been some significant National Documents during 2009/10

1. Map of Gaps – produced by the Equality & Human Rights Commission and highlighting a 'postcode lottery' in relation to women who experience violence

2. Violence Against Women and Girls: A Strategy – a cross government strategy which looks at
 - o Domestic violence
 - o Forced marriage
 - o Prostitution
 - o ‘Honour’ crimes
 - o Sexual violence
 - o Trafficking for sexual exploitation
 - o Stalking
 - o Female genital mutilation

Additional to the strategy itself is draft guidance on “Mainstreaming the Commissioning of Local Services to Address Violence Against Women and Girls”

It is unclear at this point whether there will be a Lancashire Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy, a component of that being around local delivery or whether we will need to have a local VAWG strategy.

Something that we will wish to continue to be mindful of is that although it is accepted that the majority of domestic violence that exists is perpetrated by men against women, it does cut across all social groups and men can be victims as well. In West Lancs we have maintained some balance with regard to this.

Also, the domestic violence strategy needs updating and will need to be mindful of the VAWG strategy when doing so.

- *Domestic Violence Policy*

A major piece of work that is still ongoing is the development of a Domestic Violence Policy for West Lancashire Borough Council. It is hoped that a draft policy will be ready to go before Councillors during the summer. It is intended that a domestic violence policy will be supported with guidance for managers, alongside briefing sessions.

- *Christmas/New Year 2009.*

We re-ran the previous years materials again this year. The effectiveness of domestic violence awareness campaigns can be difficult to assess however an appendix at the end of this report shows a comparison between stats at the start of Specialist Domestic Violence Court status (2007/2008) to date. Although underreporting continues to be an issue, progress is being made. Ongoing sustained messages around domestic violence potentially stand the greatest chance of influencing reporting figures and the longer term education in domestic violence in the same way that sustained messages with regard to drink driving have over time made drink driving socially unacceptable. However sustained campaigns required sustained funding.

- *Partnership meetings.*

The DV Co-ordinator has contact with or attends a number of LSP & multi-agency partnership meetings, this is not an exhaustive list

Regular attendance:

Community Safety Partnership
 Health & Wellbeing Group
 Strategic Review Group
 Local Priorities Group

Southport & Ormskirk Hospital DV Forum
 Youth Issues Group
 Prolific and Other Priority Offenders
 Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs)

Specialist DV Court Meetings

West Lancs MARAC
 South West Lancs Local Operational Group

SDVC Project Management Group
 Lancashire MARAC Steering Group

Intermittent attendance/maintain link with

Safeguarding Adults Locality Network Meeting

Targeted Youth Support

Meetings attended for specific purpose

Multi Agency Licensing Team

LSP Executive Group

Annual or other events:

Lancashire MARAC Conference

South West Lancs Hidden Harm event

Central Lancs Needs Assessment and Overview of Modernisation event

Face the People event

Strategic Partnerships - Confidence Summit

West Lancs Domestic Violence Support Services AGM event

Problem Orientated Policing (POP) Conference

Working in conjunction with partner professionals the DV Co-ordinator contribute to the Local Operational Group (part of the Specialist DV court structure), where issues in relation to court processes and the experiences of victims are brought by various agencies, especially the IDVA services for South West Lancs.

Regular contact with the DV Co-ordinators counterpart in South Ribble/Chorley means that DV/MARAC training that is delivered across the South West Lancs area is consistent. The three areas are served by the one police Public Protection Unit and many professionals work across the three areas. As such some issues and pieces of work benefit by us working together.

- **MARACs**

As stated at the start of the report, one of the Local Area Agreement local indicators is around NI32 Reducing repeat incidents of domestic violence (as measured by MARAC). As well as supporting MARACs by way of training and attending meetings regarding the Specialist DV Court process, I am directly involved in MARAC meetings, attending each meeting and taking away appropriate actions while also acting as a link between MARACs, the MAPS team, Prolific and other Priority Offender and Youth Issues Group meetings.

The DV Co-ordinator also facilitates a short pre-MARAC meeting; the purpose is to raise any general issues around domestic violence with those attending the meeting, and recently has also included instigating discussion and involvement with the county MARAC Steering Group.

- **Training/Information provision.**

Domestic violence/Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference Training – These were multi agency training sessions delivered by the DV Co-ordinator to a total of 29 professionals from a range of services e.g. drug alcohol service, CAF/CASS, children's centre, NHS staff, school, council staff (housing & homelessness). The sessions took place in November and December 2009 – further details, evaluation, and feedback are attached at Appendix 2.

Domestic violence training for drug and alcohol workers – delivered by an outside specialist worker to drug and alcohol professionals from across South West Lancs and funded by Drug and Alcohol Action Team (LDAAT). This initiative was instigated by the Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator in South Ribble/Chorley who engaged the West Lancs DV Co-ordinators support for the West Lancs aspect, this involved contacting substance misuse workers who work in West Lancs, drawing their attention to the training and the link between DV and substance misuse, then co-ordinating attendance with South Ribble/Chorley.

The DV Co-ordinator attended the Skelmersdale College Freshers Fair in September 2009; this was a chance to directly participate in an event for young people and promote DV using a booklet directed at young people called 'Expect respect'

- **Identification of Gaps in services.**

Gaps in services will continue to be identified, but by the forums and structures that are current. The start of a Sanctuary Scheme was a significant step forward in service provision and addressing a known gap. We are aware of some gaps, counselling for under 18s, addressing the needs of women offenders (a high proportion of women offenders identify themselves as

being victims of domestic violence) however, in the current financial climate securing existing services continues to be a priority.

To outline some of the issues that we have in relation to services and funding:

Refuge accommodation and floating support

Funded through Supporting People on an ongoing basis, however the refuge may need to tender for a continued contract in 2011/2012

Information Centre & Helpline

No funding currently in place

Independent Domestic Violence Adviser

Funded to March 2011

Ladybird Project

SureStart Children's Centre funding a further group in September 2010

Voluntary Perpetrator Programme

The Child Contact Centre in West Lancs previously won a tender from the Department of Children, Schools and Families to provide a perpetrator programme. However, the centre were unable to progress this, setting up and running a perpetrator programme to Respect standards is a considerable piece of work. The DV Co-ordinator had contact with the children's centre about their intention and had some lengthy discussion about the operation of a perpetrator programme.

Having stated the above the DV Co-ordinator would like to give some positives and since coming in to post she have been involved with securing:

- £20,000 per year over three years of Ministry of Justice funding (2010/2011 is the last year of funding that will be available)
- £19,000 Lancashire SSCF funding in conjunction with counter-part in South Ribble/Chorley to run the Ladybird Project (NSPCC therapeutic groupwork for children and their non abusing parent/carer) across the three areas (2008/2009)
- £10,000 Second Homes funding for IDVA 2010/2011
- Various smaller amount of funding for specific purposes e.g. resources (posters/lipbalms/mint cards/resources relating to young people)
- £1,500 Lancashire funding to deliver MARAC training (2008/2009)
- Supporting a bid the refuge made for £5,000 to provide DV awareness training for members of the community

These funding streams have not been secured in isolation by the Co-ordinator alone; the majority have been partnership or joint bids for money to address identified needs.

- *Sanctuary Scheme*

Introduced a two year pilot Sanctuary Scheme in 2009 with Laura Gee (WLBC Strategic Manager - Homelessness) utilising funding related to preventing homelessness.

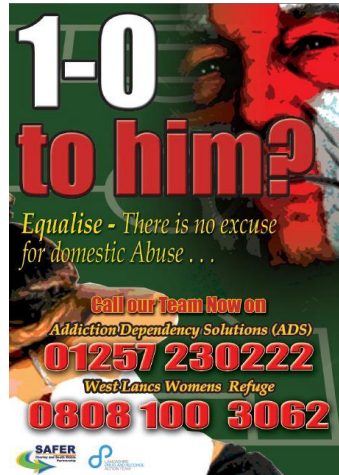
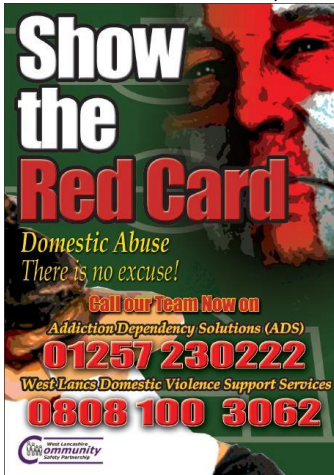
The DV Co-ordinator provided support to the introduction of this scheme and it's promotion once launched.

- *Other Projects*

Provided resources funded through Community Safety Partnership via LDAAT to a project that they were joint funding which promoted domestic violence services to students on campus and at licensed premises.

The various statistics and figures used in this report are drawn from various sources such as the Safer Lancashire Community Safety Website Multi Agency Data Exchange (MADE) which includes statistics collated by the Crown Prosecution Service; Lancashire Constabulary; IDVA service, voluntary sector agencies, Probation.

Work prior to the end of the financial year began to address the increased risk of domestic violence during the world cup period. Increased alcohol consumption increases the risk of domestic violence, and the likelihood of harm.



DOMESTIC ABUSE

If you're in immediate danger call the POLICE 999

If you do not want to report the abuse to the Police call a domestic abuse help line
Speak to your GP, Midwife, Health Visitor or your Child's Teacher about what is happening

Pack a small bag & leave with a trusted friend for emergencies
Save some money each week even if it is just a couple of pounds

Keep important documents together in a safe place for easy access (you could have copies/supplies in your prepared bag)

Addiction Dependency Solutions (ADS)
01257 230222
West Lancs Domestic Violence Helpline
0808 100 3062
www.womensaid.org.uk

West Lancs is working on a campaign around the world cup, with a focus on engaging the support of the licensing trade in promoting messages about alcohol and domestic violence.

West Lancs has previously purchased lipbalms for domestic violence victims; these are resources that have a helpline number hidden in the barcode. This year we ordered some mint cards, these have the same style of helpline number hidden in a barcode; they are particularly useful for victims whether male or female for whom keeping any obvious reference to helplines in their possession would place them at greater risk. Good feedback has been received from the Domestic Violence Information Centre about the mint cards.

It is worth noting an exceptional project that the refuge undertook. Service users of West Lancs Domestic Violence Support Services were core contributors to a DVD that the refuge have produced, as well as participating in the refuge AGM. This event was supported by the council; by the attendance of Bill Taylor, and the DV Co-ordinator. The event was particularly useful to the DV Co-ordinator because of the input of and contact with the service users during the event.

The future

- Council targets in 2010/2011 include:
 - Production of council DV policy
 - Review of West Lancs DV Strategy
 - Delivery of five awareness raising sessions to relevant groups
 - Awareness raising initiative around the Football World Cup 2010
 - Attendance at Prolific and other Priority Offenders meetings, Youth Issues Group meetings, Community Safety Partnership meetings, among others
 - Incorporation of Violence Against Women and Girls strategy
 - 'Touch' project – some cards were provided in 2009/2010 to contribute to this project. And although a useful additional, on discussing it further with the person who manages the project and following an evaluation we have agreed that training for the peer volunteers would be valuable, and that we review the resources that are used.
 - Lancashire Education programme – this has been awaited for sometime. I would expect that once it is being rolled out there will be some information/support that it would be appropriate for me to be involved in. Advice is awaited as to when this will happen and what support is required

Appendix 1

STATISTICAL OVERVIEW AND NARRATIVE

	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010	Change since start of SDVC 07/08
Estimate of the number of victims of domestic violence aged between 16-59 in West Lancs in the last year (Using Violence Against Women and Girls 'Ready reckoner')			3,306	
Calls to West Lancs Domestic Violence Support Services e.g. helpline/support calls (West Lancs DV Support Services)	644	2993	3314	10.72% Since 08/09
Incidents reported to police	798	1013	1140	42.85%
DV incidents classified as crimes	324	372	400	23.45%
Cases at court These figures relate to South West Lancs	456	609	518	13.6%
Successful cases at court	336	486	383	13.9%
Custody to Prosecution Rate (This is a county statistic that cannot be broken down further at this time)	63.8%	78.3%	At end Qtr 3 09/10 77.7%	
Offender enrolments on Probation DV Programme		18	67 (46 completions)	73.13% Since 08/09
Criminal cases unsuccessful - witness related issues		59 (12%)	54 (10.4%)	-8.5% Since 08/09
Admissions to refuge - women	58	55	75	29%
- children	66	68	82	24%
Refuge unable to accommodate - women	11	62	25	-59%
- children	11	94	40	-57%
Referrals to IDVA service	36	91	104	14.28%
Cases heard at MARAC (started December 2007)	20	44	119	495%
NI32 Repeat Incidents as measured by MARAC Cases heard at MARAC more than once	0	2 (4.5%)	22 (18.5%)	
Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) 225 Reported on for the last time 08/09	45.45%	54.54%	63.64% Estimate	

Wherever possible the figures quoted are West Lancs statistics, however it is not always possible to achieve this

Although these statistics are as complete as possible, some figures were not readily available at the time of writing

Narrative

Calls to the DV services there is a steep increase between 2008/2009 figures because the West Lancs DV Support Services changed how they record helpline calls to them. The stats prior to 08/09 counted the calls they received on the dedicated helpline only. Their experience though is that people actually use whatever number they have or could find, and that where victims had previously for example received a service from Floating Support, they would re-contact Floating Support if needed later on rather than go through the helpline, plus some calls weren't recorded at all if they didn't go via the helpline. This meant that the refuge felt that their earlier stats did not reflect the amount of helpline work that was taking place overall. The 2008/09 represents all victim related contacts to West Lancs DV Support Services.

Sustained advertising of this service is key to enabling people to access the helpline and DV services.

Incidents reported to police. Increasing reporting is a local target for West Lancs. Although other agencies routinely collecting information about reports would be useful, it relies on agencies taking on a monitoring role in addition to their current workload. A gradual sustained increase in reporting is welcome, we should not be complacent though, research can give us estimate of the number of victims that actually exist, which could be anywhere between 3,306 and 4,623. We know from those people who do report an incident that they do not report every incident.

DV Incidents classified as crimes It is worth noting that it can take time for a case to come to trial, and this can cross the reporting periods that most agencies would use.

Cases at court have risen considerably across four years. These figures relate to the whole of the South West Lancs area, it is not possible at this time to break them down into the particular courts. However, even doing so may not produce an entirely accurate figure because there are times when cases are adjourned and heard in different courts, Ormskirk cases could be heard in Leyland and vice versa. In addition, it's possible for some cases to be heard outside of the SW Lancs area, e.g. at Preston Crown Court

Successful cases at court. The figures suggested that the percentage rate of successful cases has increased but not very significantly (79.8% in 08/09 compared to 67.8% in 05/06) however it is encouraging that many more cases are to go to court and the success rates remain positive.

Custody to prosecution rate waiting for information.

Offender enrolments on DV Programme. These figures relate to the Probation DV Programme. Enrolments on this programme rely on perpetrators being sentenced to the programme through court. Some areas (St Helens and Knowsley for example) have voluntary sector programmes, where perpetrators can present themselves and undergo a programme (following assessment). Like many other areas West Lancashire does not have a local voluntary programme of this sort.

Criminal cases unsuccessful - witness related issues. These are figures I extrapolated from the CPS statistics.

Refuge Unable to Accommodate The figures relate to the people the refuge have had direct contact with, there is a service called 'Refuges online' which other domestic violence services can use to check availability without needing to contact the refuge directly, this means that more people could have been seeking refuge space in West Lancs than is recorded in these stats.

Referrals to IDVA service have increased dramatically. The service started late in 2007 and as is usual with a new service has taken time to become established.

Cases heard at MARAC. MARACs started in West Lancs in December 2007. Referrals are on the increase, with some more being made by other agencies and services, however the majority continue to be from police. Ideally this imbalance needs to be addressed to properly address the needs of victims of domestic violence in the community.

The three areas of South Ribble/Chorley/West Lancs are served by the same police Public Protection Unit (PPU)

NI32 Repeat incidents as measured by MARACs. The repeat incident figures are becoming more meaningful as MARACs mature. There is still an issue about the majority of referrals being from police and that agencies need to be identifying and referring cases back in when they become aware of a repeat incident. However, the increase in repeats is a positive step at this time; the figure reducing will be a measure of effectiveness over time.

Best Value Performance Indicator 225 is no longer a performance measure that the authority is required to be measured against. However it has been suggested that the BVPI should remain as a voluntary measure, and as such I have estimated and included it here.

Appendix 2

Feedback from multi-agency MARAC training 25th November, 1st December and 9th December 2009

Multi-agency attendance

Addiction Dependency Solutions
Breast Feeding Support Service
CAFCASS
Central Lancs PCT
Childrens Centres
DISC (tenancy related support)
Group Intervention Project (GRIP)
Health Visitor

NHS Central Lancashire
Parent Support Adviser
School
Southport & Ormskirk Hospitals
Staff Nurse, School Health
Victim Support
West Lancs Alcohol Team
West Lancs Borough Council – Homeless Prevention Team
West Lancs Borough Council – Housing Officers

MARAC Training Sessions - November/December 2009

34 people booked places on three MARAC training sessions: 25th Nov; 1st Dec; 9th Dec 2009

29 attended; 26 evaluation forms returned

	Yes	No	Unsure
<p>Do you feel you know more about MARAC now than you did prior to the course</p> <p>Comments Definitely - I have received lots of invaluable knowledge</p>	26		
<p>Do you feel that you now understand the Risk Assessment process?</p> <p>Comments Of course and it certainly make made me look at our cases and how we can deal with cases or assess if high risk</p>	26		
<p>Do you know how to refer a case to a MARAC?</p> <p>Comments</p>	26		
<p>Do you know who to refer a case to?</p> <p>Comments Amy Grundy, e-mail or fax</p>	23		
<p>What was the most useful part of the training? The entire process from the knowledge of what a MARAC is, checklist for risk, how to define risk, how to define risk, consent and no consent, IDVAs etc Understanding the referral process Understanding the process and implementation Felt I understood previously, now increased my confidence when advising staff re process How to rate the risk of domestic violence and risk factors / information sharing Referral process Step by step guide to identifying and referral system Using the scenario to complete form Learning how to assess different cases/problems. What other agencies do. Agencies helping each other. Filling out risk assessment and filling out MARAC referral form Being made aware of how police and other agencies deal with referrals. Learning about IDVA. Going</p>			

<p>through referral process. Going through the risk assessment using the case study The discussion Looking at the whole process and risk assessment Good overall update session Revision of MARAC All was relevant Practical sessions Getting more information about what a MARAC is Gaining an understanding of all forms of domestic violence and knowing how to make a referral. Risk assessment process Risk assessment All information was useful</p>			
<p>What was the least useful part of the training N/A. I found it all useful and will certainly help when we get self referrals for DV N/A N/A No introductions Nothing N/A N/A Difficult to hear in the venue due to heaters All useful None It was all useful None All useful</p>			
<p>Is there any information you would have liked from the training that was not clear/not given? Not that I am aware of. There was a lot of information which I found incredibly informative and useful N/A No No N/A No, information given was clear and concise None More about each agencies role in MARAC, and information more specific to that No No</p>			
<p>Future training requirements? I would be interested in any DV training/awareness which would help as an organisation work with others to provide a service to victims of DV Updates regarding changes None at present N/A Rolling this out to other relevant staff Would really like training for outreach workers to boost their confidence and filling in referrals to MARAC None To be kept up to date of any changes Training on domestic violence General refresher events</p>			

Any more information that would be useful as follow on					
	Poor	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Unsure
Booking arrangements		10	8	6	
Venue	1	12	9	3	
Catering		15	4	1	
Any other comments made I have enjoyed the training and found that it will be extremely useful. Thank you for the opportunity.					