Lincolnshire Safeguarding Adults Board

LSCP
Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership

Multi-agency Domestic Abuse Protocol

Version Record			
NOTE: This note is to inform that this is not the first version of this document, but that as of the 1st of March 2018 all version records for this Protocol will be recorded below.			
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INTRODUCTION

Domestic Abuse has a significant impact on individuals, families and our communities. It also has major implications for service providers and agencies across Lincolnshire and increases the demand on our services and organisations. Nationally, nearly 1 million women experience at least one incident of domestic abuse each year. 1 in 10 men report they have experienced domestic abuse and at least 750,000 children a year witness domestic abuse. Accordingly staff working within our universal and targeted services, as well as the general public can be affected; whether through intimate partnerships, family members, friends or our colleagues at work.

By working together in Lincolnshire we can:

1. Reduce the number of people in Lincolnshire who experience domestic abuse;

2. Reduce the length and severity of abuse for victims;

3. Reduce the number of perpetrators of domestic abuse through prevention and criminal justice interventions; and

4. Create a culture in the County that never tolerates domestic abuse

Aim

The Safer Lincolnshire Partnership Domestic Abuse Core Priority Group, the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Adults Board regard domestic abuse as a priority issue to be tackled by partner agencies and have jointly produced this protocol as guidance on the action to be taken by practitioners.

These multi-agency procedures are for all staff and managers working within any Lincolnshire service that supports adults and/or children who may be experiencing domestic abuse directly or indirectly. It outlines practical, good practice approaches for responding to adults and families who are affected by domestic abuse.

Our vision is to prevent anyone in Lincolnshire suffering domestic abuse.

The guidance outlined in this document recognises that our priority in this area is the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. It does not replace existing safeguarding children or adults procedures. As such this protocol should be read in conjunction with;

- Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) Operating Protocol.
- Multi-agency Safeguarding Children Partnership Policies and Procedures
- Multi-agency Safeguarding Adults Board Policies and Procedures
- Your own internal agency policies and procedure

WHAT IS DOMESTIC ABUSE?

Definition of Domestic Abuse

The Home Office (2013) definition of domestic violence and abuse is:

"Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass but is not limited to the following types of abuse (adapted from the Home Office definition):

- *psychological/emotional abuse – intimidation and threats (e.g. about children or family pets), social isolation, verbal abuse, humiliation, constant criticism, enforced trivial routines, marked over intrusiveness;*

- *physical violence – slapping, pushing, kicking, stabbing, damage to property or items of sentimental value, attempted murder or murder;*

- *physical restriction of freedom – controlling who the mother or child/ren see or where they go, what they wear or do, stalking, imprisonment, forced marriage;*

- *sexual violence – any non-consensual sexual activity, including rape, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, refusing safer sex or human trafficking; and*

- *financial abuse – stealing, depriving or taking control of money, running up debts, withholding benefits books or bank cards.*

Controlling behaviour is: a range of acts designed to make a person sub-ordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is: an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

This definition, which is not a legal definition, includes so called 'honour' based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage, and is clear that victims are not confined to one gender or ethnic group."

ASSOCIATED FORMS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE

Teenage abusive relationships

As with adults, abuse in teen relationships doesn't just cover physical violence. Other examples of this type of abuse include:
Pressuring you into having sex.
Controlling behaviour including what friends you can see or speak to and where you go.
Jealousy or anger.
Threatening to put lies, personal information, pictures on social networking sites.

Constant name calling and comments.

Research completed by the NSPCC into partner exploitation and partner violence in teenage intimate relationships revealed that for girls in particular, having an older partner, and especially a “much older” partner, was a significant risk factor. Overall, three-quarters of girls with a “much older” partner experienced physical violence, 80 per cent emotional violence and 75 per cent sexual violence.

In those circumstances where the victim is under 18 years old and the perpetrator is 18 years or above, or if both victim and perpetrator are under 18 years, this should also be treated as a child safeguarding concern. A referral/signposting can also be made to specialist domestic abuse services when deemed appropriate. In the event that a child is known to be involved in a violent relationship, the practitioner should consider undertaking an Early Help Assessment. Should the practitioner subsequently decide they would like a consultation with an Early Help Advisor regarding their next steps this should be arranged**.** During the course of any such discussions the practitioner may find it helpful to consider with the Early Help Advisor whether the matter meets the threshold for social care intervention.

If the practitioner believes the child is at immediate risk then they should contact the police and initiate child protection procedures by contacting the Children’s Services Customer Services Centre (CSC) on **01522 782111** and reporting a safeguarding concern; e.g. a child involved in a relationship with a violent girlfriend/boyfriend. Outside of normal working hours contact should be made to the Emergency Duty Team on **01522 782333**.

Abuse through technology

As a professional, the case you are involved with may have elements of online/digital abuse. Many of us now use mobile, social media, e-mail and shop online for example. If someone wants to upset, scare or intimidate another person they may use technology to do it.

This abuse can take various forms: bullying, harassment, stalking, domestic abuse, trolling, and/or hate campaigns.

Questions you may wish to consider:

- Is the victim being abused in multiple ways and means?
- How long has it been going on for?
- Is it escalating?
- What is the motivation of the abuser?
- What is the victim worried will happen?
- Mental state of the victim – are they afraid/suicidal?

You may wish to refer to the Get Safe Online website for further advice as a professional, or to guide the person who is being abused online to advice on the steps they can take to improve their online security.

Child to Parent/Carer Abuse

The official definition of domestic abuse covers individuals from the age of 16 years. However, there are occasions of familial abuse where the parent/victim is over the age of 16 years but the child displaying abusive behaviour is under that age. As MARAC is victim focused, if the case is high risk, a referral of child to parent/carer abuse should be made to MARAC. If they are not at immediate harm, please contact the specialist domestic abuse services in the appropriate area, or if you want advice or support regarding a concern.

The child displaying abusive behaviour should be referred to Children's Services through the Customer Services Centre. It is important to note that whether a child is a victim or is displaying abusive behaviour, a referral should be made to Children's Services.

If the concerns do not meet the threshold for a social work assessment under the Children Act (1989), the referrer will be informed by letter. The practitioner may be advised by the Early Help Advisor to consider early help support which will be detailed within the outcome letter.

The practitioner may then decide they would then like a consultation with an Early Help Advisor regarding their next steps. The practitioner can also discuss any screening decisions given regarding their safeguarding referral with an Early Help Advisor. However no Early Help consultations can occur at this time, only a discussion regarding the outcome given.

Stalking or Harassment

The definition for Stalking is from the Suzy Lamplugh Trust as there is:

'A pattern of fixated and obsessive behaviour which is repeated, persistent, intrusive and causes fear of violence or engenders alarm and distress in the victim.'

Stalking can consist of any type of behaviour such as regularly sending flowers or gifts, making unwanted or malicious communication, damaging property and physical or sexual assault. If the behaviour is persistent and clearly unwanted, causing you fear, distress or anxiety then it is stalking and you should not have to live with it.

The British Crime Survey (2006) suggests that up to five million people experience stalking or harassment in any given year and that many victims will suffer up to 100 incidents before talking to the police.

The most common forms of STALKING/harassment are:

- Frequent, unwanted contact e.g. appearing at the home or workplace of the victim.
- Telephone calls, text messages or other contact such as via the internet (i.e. social networking sites).
- Driving past the victim's home or work.
- Following or watching the victim.
- Sending letters or unwanted gifts to the victim.

- Damaging the victim's property.
- Burglary or robbery of the victim's home, workplace, vehicle or other.
- Threats of harm to the victim and/or others associated with them (including sexual violence and threats to kill).
- Harassment of people associated with the victim (e.g. family members, partner, work colleagues).
- Physical and/or sexual assault of the victim and even murder.

Is someone at risk?

If someone feels they are at immediate danger then call 999. The National Stalking Helpline can help with advice and support. Telephone: 0808 802 0300 or http://www.stalkinghelpline.org

Paladin National Stalking Advocacy Service: https://paladinservice.co.uk/

Forced Marriage

A forced marriage is where one or both people do not (or in cases of people who lack mental capacity), cannot, consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used. The practice of Forced Marriage is recognised in the UK as a form of violence against women and men, domestic/child abuse and a serious abuse of human rights.

The pressure put on people to marry against their will can be physical (including threats, actual physical violence and sexual violence) or emotional and psychological (for example, when someone is made to feel like they're bringing shame on their family). Financial abuse (taking your wages, or not giving you any money) can also be a factor.

There are national guidelines for responding to cases of forced marriage.

Multi-Agency Statutory Guidance for dealing with forced marriage 2014. Practitioners should pay particular attention to Chapters 5 and 6.

Multi-Agency practice guidelines: Handling cases of forced marriage 2014

- Any case of Forced Marriage must be reported to Lincolnshire Police by calling 999.

- If the victim is under the age of 18 years, a referral should also be made to Lincolnshire County Council Children's Services. Telephone: 01522 782111.

- If the victim is over the age of 18 years and has additional care and support needs, a learning disability or there are any concerns about mental capacity, a referral should be made to Lincolnshire County Council Adult Care. Telephone: 01522 782155.

Additional support is available by contacting the Forced Marriage Unit: https://www.gov.uk/forced-marriage Telephone: 020 7008 0151

The Forced Marriage Unit has also developed an e-learning package: eLearning training for professionals
Information for people directly affected by forced marriage and this is also available.

Honour Based Abuse

Honour based abuse refers to crimes or incidents committed to protect or defend the honour of a family and/or community. It can take many forms including harassment, criminal damage, arson, sexual assault, forced marriage, kidnap and even murder. When dealing with potential victims it is important to recognise the seriousness/immediacy of the risk. Consider the possibility of forced marriage, abduction, missing persons and murder. Incidents that may precede a murder include:

- Forced marriage
- Domestic abuse
- Attempts to separate or divorce
- A pre-marital relationship
- Pre-marital conflict
- Pregnancy
- Threats to kill or denial of access to children
- Pressure to go abroad
- House arrest and excessive restrictions
- Denial of access to the telephone, internet, passport and friends

When dealing with victims, do not speak with them in the presence of their relatives. Women that return to their families should be offered escape plans.

Please seek further advice from Lincolnshire Police and if someone is at immediate danger then call 999.

Karma Nirvana provide information and support for male and female victims of forced marriage and honour based abuse. Telephone: 0800 5999 247 Website: www.karmanirvana.org.uk

Female Genital Mutilation

Female genital mutilation (FGM) is child abuse and violates the rights to health, security and physical integrity of the person and to be free from torture, cruel and degrading treatment. Professionals have a duty to safeguard everyone, including women and girls, which means tackling FGM is an integral part of their role. Effective action must be taken to do so, without allowing themselves to be inhibited by fear of doing or saying the wrong thing. FGM is sometimes known as ‘female circumcision’ or ‘female genital cutting’.

FGM is illegal in the UK. It is also illegal to take a British national or permanent resident abroad for FGM or to help someone trying to do this. Mandatory reporting of FGM has been in place since October 2015.

Even though FGM is part of the National definition of domestic abuse, the lead of FGM in Lincolnshire has passed to the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership.

Other Useful Key Links:

- The latest statutory guidance on FGM, published 1st April 2016: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-statutory-guidance-on-female-genital-mutilation
- The Home Office resource pack on FGM
- The Home Office FGM E Learning Module
- The Department of Health Publications:
  - Safeguarding women and girls at risk of FGM - This document provides practical help to support NHS organisations developing new safeguarding policies and procedures for FGM.
  - FGM E Learning – for Health colleagues is also available via NHS Health Education England
- The NSPCC runs a specific FGM Helpline:
  Email: fgmhelp@nspcc.org.uk or Telephone: 0800 028 3550

If you know someone in immediate danger, contact Lincolnshire Police. If you believe a child or young person under the age of 18 years might be suffering, or is likely to suffer significant harm (including any mistreatment or abuse), contact the Children Services CSC.

The latest statutory multi-agency guidance on female genital mutilation should be read and followed by all persons and bodies in England and Wales who are under statutory duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults.

This guidance should be considered together with other relevant safeguarding guidance, including (but not limited to):

- Working Together to Safeguard Children
- Working Together to Safeguard People (Wales) This guidance covers safeguarding children and adults.

It is not intended to replace wider safeguarding guidance, but to provide additional advice on female genital mutilation. The information in this guidance may also be relevant to bodies working with women and girls at risk of FGM or dealing with its consequences.

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Diversity

This section includes additional barriers, risks or considerations for practice relating to diversity including:

- Cultural and language barriers
- Disability
- LGBT
- Male Victims
- Older People

Cultural and language barriers

Consideration should be given by all agencies of cultural differences between people from communities within the UK and from other countries as they could impact on the recognition, disclosure and prevention of DA.

Appropriate advice should be sought by practitioners when dealing with cultural differences as these are significant to them seeking help. This may include traveller communities, different religions and a range of beliefs about marriage, divorce, gender, sexual orientation, and domestic abuse as a taboo issue.

Limited English language may also be a significant barrier for victims of abuse seeking assistance from support agencies. Where there are language barriers practitioners should always use an appropriate interpreter. Family and friends should not be used to interpret in domestic abuse cases.

Practitioners should consider general language used at all times when working with and making written records of service users, ensuring that the language used to describe a situation or person is accurate, clear, non-inflammatory or judgmental.

Disability

If a person has a disability, whether male or female, their chances of experiencing domestic abuse are greatly increased:

- Disabled women are twice as likely to experience domestic abuse as non-disabled women. (Women's Aid 2012). Disabled men and men with mental health problems are at greater risk of domestic abuse than non-disabled men. (Respect 2014).

- Studies show that 80% of disabled women have been sexually abused (Women's Aid 2012).

- 48% of cases involving older adults are those that cannot physically care for themselves (WA 2012).

- 1 in 4 women experience domestic abuse. Therefore 50% of disabled women experience domestic abuse.

Often the carer is a partner or family member. Research by Women's Aid (2008) found that many people with disabilities were afraid to speak out about the abuse due to fear of the carer (who is a partner or family member) leaving and them being left alone. They were reliant on the perpetrator for care and support, they were also afraid of losing their independence, and losing their care package. Many people

were afraid of not being believed as the perpetrator who the carer was seen by friends and family as a ‘hero’ and ‘selfless.’ The ability to disclose may be reduced if the carer/perpetrator attends all appointments and is at all contacts.

Research has also found that sexual abuse was used as another form of control and power over women with disabilities as well as being used to humiliate and degrade.

Abuse can include with-holding medication, over medicating, refusing care e.g. taking to the toilet, washing, not feeding the person, threats to leave. The person's impairments are used to belittle and exercise control.

Disabled victims of domestic abuse are more likely to develop care and support needs including mental health, substance misuse and long term health effects.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT+) – For more information on LGBT+ visit the Galop website.

There may be additional barriers to reporting domestic abuse for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender people. Approximately 25% of LGBT+ people suffer through violent or threatening relationships with partners or ex-partners, which is the same rate as in heterosexual women. As with all types of domestic abuse, the problem is under-reported, but in same sex relationships the victim is often afraid of revealing their sexual orientation or the nature of their relationship.

There are a number of aspects that are unique to LGBT+ domestic abuse. The perpetrator may threaten to ‘out’ the victim to friends, family, colleagues, and others as a method of control. For some people they may have been made to believe that they are experiencing this abuse because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender. In addition a lot of national publicity about domestic abuse has historically been about heterosexual relationships, which could mean that there is a lack of understanding of domestic abuse by people in same sex relationships. This lack of understanding means that some people may not:

- Believe it happens in LGBT+ relationships.
- Recognise their experience as domestic abuse if it does happen to them.
- Know how to respond if they see domestic abuse being experienced by their friends.

Male Victims

There are myths about men who suffer domestic abuse, with some people thinking that it doesn't happen to men. Men who are victims are not 'real men' and that the law only protects women. These myths are of course completely untrue, but it is possibly why 29% of male domestic abuse victims do not tell anybody about the abuse (Crime Survey England and Wales). Assuming Lincolnshire follows the national picture, this means that in the County there may be 2,439 male victims of domestic abuse who suffer in silence every year.

In Lincolnshire all domestic abuse services and support are available to ALL victims.

Older People

Older people might not identify themselves as victims of domestic abuse, particularly if the abuser is not their husband/wife. There is an increase in adult child to parent abuse - some research suggests in up to 25% of cases where older women are abused. Financial abuse is also a common factor, particularly when an adult child is the abuser.

There may be fewer services involved with older people and they could be more isolated, making it difficult to report the abuse or have someone else who will notice and report the abuse.

Additional barriers facing older people could include:

- Abuser may also be their carer.
- The victim may care for the abuser, making them feel additional guilt for leaving.
- The abuser may be his/her child(ren) – additional barriers to reporting a child and criminalising a son or daughter.
- Many older survivors have lived in the same area, or even house, for many years. It may be more difficult for them to access new social networks and facilities.
- Refuges are often not equipped to accommodate people with mobility problems or complex health problems

Perpetrators of Domestic Abuse

Lincolnshire Domestic Abuse Partnership is responding to the needs of all domestic abuse perpetrators through the development and delivery of training and interventions aimed to reduce interpersonal violence. Individuals who use violence often have difficulties with emotional management, substance use and mental health which, if addressed, may reduce the likelihood of ongoing domestic abuse. Some perpetrators of domestic abuse may not be motivated to seek help. Engagement with support and intervention is significantly increased if professionals remain open and non-judgmental in their attempts to understand the perpetrators' reasons and motivations for using abusive behaviours. Continuing to increase our understanding of the complex reasons for domestic abuse is an essential part of reducing the harm caused to the lives of those affected by it.

People can be abusive without using physical violence, and this can have a devastating impact on families. Some perpetrators can appear to be caring and co-operative with agencies. Practitioners should be aware that some perpetrators may also try to manipulate professionals, their partners and other family members. Perpetrators may deny or minimise abuse, focus on the actions of others as the reason for their behaviour or avoid contact with those who seek to challenge them.

Domestic abuse has traditionally been understood as a crime perpetrated by dominant controlling men against vulnerable women. In reality, the reasons for abuse occurring within intimate and familial relationships involve far greater complexity than this assumption would suggest. Research spanning over 50 years has consistently found that men and women self-report perpetrating domestic abuse at similar rates, but women are twice as likely as men to be injured or killed during a domestic assault. Like all behaviours, interpersonal violence is best understood as

being on a continuum of severity, and those at different points on that continuum require different approaches.

Respect, an organisation aimed at promoting best practice in work with perpetrators, has produced guidelines for working with male perpetrators.

AS A PROFESSIONAL HOW DO I RESPOND?

Professional Curiosity

Many Domestic Homicide Reviews and Serious Case Reviews refer to a lack of professional curiosity or respectful uncertainty. Practitioners need to demonstrate a non-discriminatory approach and explore the issues and formulate judgements that translate into effective actions in their dealings with children, adults and families. This should be matched by an organisational culture which supports its staff in open-ness, constructive challenge and confidence to practice sensitive and challenging circumstances at the front line.

It is vital that professionals understand the complexity of domestic abuse and are curious about what is happening in the child, adult and perpetrator's life.

Professional curiosity is the capacity and communication skill to explore and understand what is happening within a family rather than making assumptions or accepting things at face value.

Practitioners should never avoid asking the difficult questions, sharing concerns with colleagues or your supervisor as a "fresh pair of eyes". Looking at a case can really help to maintain good practice standards and develop a critical mind-set.

Professional curiosity is much more likely if practitioners:

- are supported by good quality training to help them develop;
- have access to good management, support and supervision when working with challenging situations of domestic abuse which will impact on staff working with families;
- 'walk in the shoes' (have empathy) of the child and/or adult to consider the situation from their lived experience; and
- remain diligent in working with the family and developing the professional relationships to understand what has happened and its impact on all family members.

Practitioners should always try to see all parties separately. However, when that is not possible, and particularly when a victim is not being seen alone, professionals should also be alert to the following behaviours they may observe. If these signals are present, the practitioner should find a way of seeing the suspected victim alone:

- the victim waits for her/his partner to speak first;

- The victim glances at her/his partner each time (s)he speaks, checking her/his reaction;

- The victim smooths over any conflict;

- The suspected perpetrator speaks for most of the time;

- The suspected perpetrator sends clear signals to the victim, by eye/body movement, facial expression or verbally, to warn them;

- The suspected perpetrator has a range of complaints about the victim, which (s)he does not defend.

Staff must be cognisant to the needs of young people (aged 16 years or above) who may be experiencing inequality and/or violence in their relationships and be able to advise on their right to pursue actions under the revised guidance.

Professionals, however curious cannot protect children and adults by working in isolation. Domestic abuse requires a multi-agency response and families and communities also have a vital role to play in protecting children and adults.

If any professional suspects or becomes aware of domestic abuse, they must notify their manager with their concerns, whether they work directly with members of the public or not.

Asking the Question

Victims of domestic abuse are often too afraid or uncomfortable to raise the issue of abuse themselves. Practitioners should be prepared to ask questions sensitively, but directly.

For example:

- Can you tell me what's been happening?
- You seem upset. How are things?
- Are you frightened of someone/something?
- How are things at home?
- Did someone hurt you?
- How did you get those injuries?
- Are you in a relationship in which you have been physically hurt or threatened by your partner?
- Have you ever been in such a relationship?
- Do you ever feel frightened by your partner or other people at home?
- Are you (or have you ever been) in a relationship in which you felt you were badly treated? In what ways?
- Has your partner destroyed things that you care about?
- Has your partner ever threatened to harm your family? Do you believe that he/she would?
- What happens when you and your partner disagree?
- Has your partner ever prevented you from leaving the house, seeing friends, getting a job or continuing in education?

- What would happen if you wanted to go out with friends?
- Does your partner restrict your access to money or access your Child Benefit or allowances?
- Has your partner ever hit, punched, pushed, shoved or slapped you?
- Has your partner ever threatened you with a weapon?
- Does your partner use drugs or alcohol excessively? If so, how does he/she behave at this time?
- Do you ever feel you have to walk on eggshells around your partner?
- Have the police ever been involved?
- Have you ever been physically hurt in any way when you were pregnant?
- Has your partner ever threatened to harm the children? Or to take them away from you?

Basic Principles:

Make sure that the time and place is appropriate when asking the question e.g. not when he/she is about to pick the children up, go to work or an appointment, or there are other people around. If you suspect domestic abuse make sure that the perpetrator is not likely to interrupt you/come home. If you need to complete a risk assessment, make sure you have plenty of time - there are 27 risk factors to go through.

Disguised compliance

As part of professional curiosity, practitioners should be aware of disguised compliance and use their professional judgment to question what is really going on.

Disguised compliance can take a number of different forms and parents, adults or perpetrators can use these techniques to avoid raising suspicions, to allay professional concerns and to delay or avoid professional intervention. Examples include:

- focus on engaging well with one set of professionals (e.g. education,) to deflect attention from their lack of engagement with other services;

- criticise other professionals to divert attention away from their own behaviour;
- promise to take up services offered but then fail to attend; or

- promise to change their behaviour and then avoid contact with professionals.

If disguised compliance is suspected this should be carefully recorded with evidence.

Risk Assessment

If you have evidence of domestic abuse, a disclosure has been made to you or an agency or a member of the public has shared concerns with you relating to domestic abuse you, or a competent practitioner within your agency, must make every effort to complete a DASH risk assessment with the victim. This will help you to explore the risks to the victim. There may be occasions when it is not possible to undertake a DASH risk assessment e.g. victim denies there is any abuse, you don't have any evidence or the individual leaves the service before a DASH has been completed. In

these circumstances you must ensure that you have tried to follow up any safeguarding concerns with the individual and, if required, followed Adult and Child safeguarding process. You should also provide information about support services and that you have carefully documented what you have done and the reason why the DASH has not been completed. Your decision needs to be defensible.

Practitioners must be aware that the responsibility for safeguarding and for managing risk does not end once a referral has been made to another agency or multi agency arena.

The DASH allows professionals to make an assessment of risk relating to domestic abuse and ultimately can help determine the course of action that is required. The assessment should be carried out at once, by the practitioner who identifies the concern wherever possible and safe. Where this is not appropriate, the assessment should be carried out as soon as possible by the practitioner who identifies the concern, or the colleague identified in the organizations internal procedures.

There are 27 questions, so please ensure that you are in a safe environment and that there is sufficient time to listen to the victim and complete the assessment. It is important that you document the answers and keep a record of the outcomes in line with your own agency protocols. Please refer to Appendix Three for the full DASH risk assessment.

Additional factors

There are a number of factors that have the potential to increase the risk of abuse in relationships and accordingly increase the risk of harm to victims, children, dependents and perpetrators. The impact of mental health problems/issues, problematic drug and alcohol use should be considered as additional risk factors which should be planned for accordingly in collaboration with the client and relevant professionals where they are involved.

It is highlighted in Serious Care Reviews and in statutory safeguarding guidance that known risk factors for families are where problematic alcohol and/or drug use and parental mental health problems co-occur with domestic abuse. Nearly a third of mothers (31%) and a third of fathers (32%) had disclosed mental health problems, problematic drug and alcohol use, or both. *(SAFELIVES, In plain sight: The evidence from children exposed to domestic abuse, February 2014)*

What Happens Next and Referral Pathways

On completion of the risk assessment you should decide on your course of action. The DASH risk assessment will help you to determine the most appropriate course of action and what response is required. It is important that practitioners become familiar with this risk assessment and referral pathways so that resources and intervention can be allocated accordingly.

Referral Pathway:

Complete DASH Risk Assessment

For Domestic Abuse including where there is a pattern of stalking or harassment behaviour then please complete the DASH Risk Assessment - for the latest version go to https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/downloads/download/18/domestic-abuse-information-for-professionals

If a child or adult is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm complete a referral to children or adult services In an emergency dial 999

If you identify a child/ren that need additional support complete an Early Help Assessment and initiate a TAC

High Risk Referral (MARAC)

If the risk assessment score is 14 or above, there is escalation of the abuse either in frequency or severity or you have a professional concern about risk (even if score is lower than 14) complete a referral to MARAC via your MARAC representative. Ensure that the service user(s) is flagged on

Specialist DA Services

If the service user is not deemed to be at high risk of further serious harm or death you must ensure that information has been provided about how to access specialist domestic abuse support and that they are able to access that support. This should be documented.

The IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Advisor) will attempt to contact the referrer and the victim prior to the MARAC (providing that consent has been obtained)

Refer to or signpost to specialist

- Specialist Domestic Abuse Support
  EDAN Lincs 01522 510041
  Email: info@edanlincs.org.uk
- National Domestic Violence Helpline
  0808 2000 247
- Forced marriage unit 020 7008 0151
- Galop 0800 999 5428
- Men's DA Advice Line 0808 8024040
- Refuge - Supported Accommodation for Male Victims 01753 549865
- National Stalking Helpline 0808 802 0300
- Victim Support 0300 3031947
- Sexual Assault Referral Centre 01522 524402 & out of hours 01371 812686
- Shelter 0808 800 4444
- Samaritans 113 123

Responsibility to safeguard adults or children remains the responsibility of the agency and is not transferred to the MARAC or specialist services.

If you become aware of further domestic abuse following the MARAC consider making a repeat referral to MARAC via your MARAC representative

Risk is dynamic. If the risk to a victim, previously not considered to be high risk, increases you should consider making a referral to MARAC

Risk assessment and risk management will not remove the risk entirely, but it can help to reduce the probability of harm. Always consider whether you need to take any immediate action to safeguard the victim, any children or vulnerable adults, or share any information with agencies to safeguard the victim/family.

On completion of the risk assessment you will be able to make a judgment of whether the victim is at high risk of significant harm or death. This is when:

- As a guide if the risk assessment score is 14 or above, there is escalation of the abuse either in frequency or severity or you have a professional concern about risk (no matter what the score is) complete a referral to MARAC via your MARAC representative. Professional judgment should be used to assess what the actual risk to victim is, using the DASH as a guide. If there is a high risk of serious harm or homicide the case should then be referred to the MARAC.

If you believe the victim to be at imminent high risk of significant harm or death and a crime has been committed you must contact the police, call 999 and make an emergency referral to the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC). If further significant harm or death is not considered to be imminent you should still encourage the victim to report the abuse to Lincolnshire Police and make a referral to MARAC. If a crime has been committed, but there is no immediate danger, dial 101. You must tell the victim that you are making a referral to MARAC and that he/she will be contacted by an Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA). Please refer to the MARAC referral process section below.

If you do not consider the victim to be high risk of serious harm and that the risk is not imminent then you should always ensure that details of specialist domestic abuse services are provided. Please refer to the specialist services referral process below.

If there are children linked to the victim or perpetrator and you believe that a child or children are being affected by domestic abuse then please refer to the Children's referral process below.

<u>High Risk Referral Process (MARAC)</u>

Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) - The MARAC process ensures a timely risk assessment of the circumstances affecting a victim of domestic abuse, ensures that those individuals believed to be at high risk of serious harm or death are linked directly with appropriate services, providing a co-ordinated multi-agency response to high risk domestic abuse cases in a single meeting.

You must tell the victim that you are making a referral to MARAC and that he/she will be contacted by an Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA). The role of the IDVA is to discuss risk and safety, provide information about options available and be the voice of the victim at the MARAC. A leaflet about the Role of the IDVA is available by request from the MARAC Administration Team via email maraclincolnshire@lincolnshire.gov.uk

You must then contact the MARAC representative for your service before submitting the referral. Under no circumstances should the perpetrator of domestic abuse be informed if a case involving them has been referred to MARAC. This includes Subject Access Requests.

If the victim has already been heard at MARAC and there has been a further significant incident with the same perpetrator, a repeat referral should be made via your MARAC representative. See the MARAC Operating Protocol for 'repeat referral' criteria and procedures.

Risk is dynamic and can change very quickly. If you feel that the victim is NOT at high risk of significant harm or death you should still ensure that they are referred or given information about local specialist domestic abuse services. Consider whether you need to share information with any other agency to safeguard the victim/family, or prevent a crime.

For more detailed guidance on the MARAC process contact your MARAC representative. If you do not know who your MARAC representative is, contact your supervisor. If you are still in doubt, or your agency does not have a MARAC representative, please contact the MARAC Administrators at Lincolnshire County Council on **01522 554596 or via email at maracReferral@lincolnshire.gov.uk** **(Please ensure you are sending from a secure connection)**

Adult Safeguarding Process

According to the Care Act 2014, the local authority **must** make enquiries**, or** instruct others to do so, if they reasonably suspect an adult who has care needs is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect. We have agreed that, in Lincolnshire, we will follow the DA SMB protocols, so if you follow the procedures (MARAC/non MARAC) as outlined in this document, you know that you are acting in the client's best interest and, at the same time, fulfilling your statutory obligations. This is both with regard to positive obligations under the Human Rights Act, as well as any other statutory legislation, for example, the Care Act.

To re-iterate, where domestic abuse is the only presenting factor, and no other additional vulnerabilities (for example mental health issues, physical disabilities) are identified, there is no need to consider making a referral to the local authority safeguarding team. If, however, when you are talking through the questions on the DASH risk assessment with the individual, it becomes apparent that the individual may, for example, need to be assessed for adult care services, i.e. an assessment for admittance into a care home, nursing home or a re-ablement (home care package) or a well-being service – then please discuss this with your client and if they are willing for you to make a referral for this type of service, then please contact the Local Authority's **Customer Service Centre** on **01522 782155**. If it is outside normal office hours you can contact the **Emergency Duty Team** on **01522 782333**. The main issue is that during your conversation with the client, you identify with the client which are the best services to assist them with the domestic abuse, their additional vulnerabilities and what the individual would like to do, in order to inform their decision-making.

People who are deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired can contact the Police typetalk service. The **typetalk** landline numbers are **01522 558263** and **01522 558140**. The mobile number is **07761 911287**.
For all Safeguarding Adults Policies and Procedures go to the LSAB website.

Early Help for Children

The EHA process has been designed to help practitioners assess needs at an early stage and then work with the child/young person, their family and other practitioners and agencies to meet these needs. As such, it is designed for use when:

- you are worried about how well a child / young person is progressing;
- you might be worried about their health, development, welfare, behaviour, progress in learning or any other aspect of their wellbeing;
- a child/young person or their parent/carer raises a concern with you;
- the child's or young person's needs are unclear, or broader than your service can address alone; and/or
- the child or young person would benefit from an assessment to help a practitioner understand their needs better.

If you have any of these concerns complete an Early Help Assessment Child and Family Assessment. If, on completion, a need is identified that you are unable to address, you will need to initiate a Team Around the Child (TAC).

If you are unsure what action to take you may want to have a consultation with and Early Help Advisor - telephone Children's Services Customer Services Centre (CSC) on **01522 782111**.

As the DASH form is an assessment tool for adult victims, practitioners need to consider using a risk assessment for the child(ren) with regards to the impact of the domestic abuse. Please consider the following tools for practitioners:-

- Barnardo's 'Assessing the risks to children from domestic abuse' [Risk Identifications Matrix].
- The Signs of Safety model should also be used, incorporating the direct work tool 'The Three Houses' for example.
- The practitioner should also consider Safety Planning with the victim, child(ren) and young people. Safety planning with the perpetrator can be undertaken if the abuse is acknowledged.

Children Safeguarding Referral Process

If you believe a child or young adult under the age of 18 years might be suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm (including any emotional harm, mistreatment or abuse), contact the Children Services CSC on **01522 782111**. If it is outside normal office hours you can contact the Emergency Duty Team on **01522 782333**. If your referral is assessed as a safeguarding concern then you will be required to complete the Safeguarding Referral Form as written confirmation of your referral. Send this via

secure email (or post) to the locality area team as directed by the call advisor at the time of referral.
If your concern is in relation to an unborn child then you should follow the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Pre-birth protocol.

For all safeguarding children policies and procedures go to the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership

Safety Advice and Planning

It is important that all agencies work with victims to plan ahead and stay safe so that in times of crisis decisions are made easier and safer. It is expected that where an Independent Domestic Violence Advisor is not involved with the victim, the agency aware of the domestic abuse will provide the function of safety planning and advice.

Victims of domestic abuse are at increased risk when they are planning to leave a relationship or have just left.

You should be very clear about who is at risk and consider other people in the household, other friends or relatives. If you have identified risks, you should ensure that appropriate actions are taken to acknowledge, remove or reduce the risk of harm. This may include:

- Contacting, or supporting the victim(s) to contact, the Police.
- Find suitable alternative accommodation, either with a safe and trusted friend, relative or through emergency temporary housing or refuge.
- Referral to Lincolnshire County Council Children's Services or Adult Safeguarding.
- Liaising with partner agencies to share relevant information that may reduce the risks.
- Referral to health agencies.

Here is some safety advice that you could discuss with a victim.

- Dial 999 in an emergency and teach your children to call 999 in an emergency, and what they would need to say (for example, their full name, address and telephone number).

- Ask her/him to plan in advance how they might respond in different situations, including crisis situations.

- Think about the different options that may be available.

- Does she/he have trusted neighbours, friends or family nearby where they could go in an emergency? If so, tell them what is going on, and ask them to call the Police if they hear sounds of a violent attack.

- Rehearse an escape plan, so in an emergency you and the children can get away safely.

- She/he should pack an emergency bag for themselves and their children and hide it somewhere safe, for example, at a neighbour's or friend's house. They should try to avoid mutual friends or family.

- She/he should try to keep a small amount of money on them at all times, including change for the telephone and for bus fares.

- She/he should ensure they have a safe mobile phone, try to keep it with them and charged up.

- She/he should keep credit on her/his phone.

- She/he should set up speed dials for emergency telephone numbers.

- She/he should try to memorise telephone numbers, or keep them in a place of safety.

- She/he to have Caller ID on their telephones where possible.

<u>If appropriate, set up signals or codes with neighbours and friends, for example:</u>

- Lights on/off in a certain room.

- Windows open/shut.

- Blinds/curtains half shut or half open.

- Sentences such as "I won't be able to come over for coffee as my Mum is here."

- Discuss with your neighbours when you would want them to call the Police (for example if they see your partner at your house).

- Pack a bag with important things that you would need if you had to leave in a hurry – this should include money, passport, medication, birth certificates and a change of clothes for children. Put the bag in a safe place or leave it with someone.

- Keep any court orders, injunctions and emergency numbers with you at all times.

- Diary/log any abuse including abusive calls, texts, emails, etc.

<u>If you are at home and being threatened or attacked</u>

- When in danger always ring 999 – you may want to ring other support agencies but remember, this may delay help arriving.

- Try to stay calm and use a calm voice (even though you may not feel calm inside!)
- Do not fight back – it will make you more unsafe (although you can still defend yourself).

- Try to stay near a door/exit.
- Try to stay near a phone.
- Be aware of rooms with potential hazards (stairs, windows etc.)
- Be aware of rooms with weapons such as knives, blades, etc.
- Exit as quickly as possible.
- Go to a neighbour, friend or shop and seek medical help if needed.

If you do leave in a hurry without taking important things, don't worry. Agencies can help you to retrieve them at a later date.

Keeping yourself safe at work

- Tell your line manager what is happening – you may be able to change duties/venue if necessary.
- If possible, give a copy of the abuser's photo to the security guard or reception staff.
- Keep a copy of any court order, injunctions etc. at work.
- Report any incidents to your line manager.
- Do not go to lunch alone.
- Ask someone to walk you to the car or bus.
- Diary or log any contact that the abuser has with you at work via telephone, e-mails, visits, etc.

Staying safe in your car

- Check around visually while you are parking the car and also before you get out.
- Park your car so you can drive straight off without making any manoeuvres, for example reverse into parking spaces and don't park behind closed gates.
- Park as near to a street light as possible.
- Keep the doors locked when driving and remember that when you have windows open fully anyone can reach in.
- Always check your petrol, oil and water to avoid breaking down.
- Join a breakdown organisation, or keep the number of someone you can call in the event of a breakdown.

- Keep your mobile phone charged, in credit and in reach (i.e. not at the bottom of a cluttered bag).

- If you are not sure about finding your destination, get the directions before you set out.

Safety when walking alone

- Walk as confidently as possible – hold your head up and try not to look frightened.

- Don't walk down alleyways, short cuts or across wasteland.

- Stick to routes that are well lit and near to residential areas if possible.

- If possible, tell someone where you are going, which way you are going and when you are expected to arrive.

- Keep your mobile phone charged, in credit and handy in a pocket or at the top of your bag.

- Have a torch with you and keep the batteries charged up. Check that it still works from time to time.

- Have a personal alarm with you if the Police or a domestic abuse agency has provided you with one.

Safety planning and children

- Talk to the children about what is going on – whatever you may think, children do know about it and do hear it. If you don't talk to them they will come to their own conclusions which may not be accurate.

- Try to be honest without frightening them.

- Talk to the children about why you have left, or why you haven't left – this is important as some children feel angry and upset when the victim does leave, but some children feel unprotected and let down when victims don't leave the abuse.

- Do not encourage children to join in with the abuse – this includes things like name calling.

- Do not tell children they are just like their father/mother when they are showing frustration or anger about the abuser.

Remember:

Children will feel more secure with one parent in a stable environment than with two parents in an unstable and violent environment.

Any plans undertaken with children must **NEVER** give them responsibility for anyone else's safety.

If appropriate, while making plans with your child, it is important to:

- Go through an escape plan with them – plan and find safe routes out of the home and to somewhere safe.

- Discuss how you would leave at different times, days and situations. Leaving in the dark or middle of the night would be different to leaving in the daytime.

- Discuss places they would run to or hide at in an emergency (such as a neighbour or corner shop) and agree a plan if you get separated from the children.

- Encourage the child to have a bag packed as well – this could include favourite things that they don't want to leave behind.

- Encourage children to stay out of the way during episodes of abuse.

- Show them how to use the telephone, including making a 999 call. Find somewhere for them to keep telephone numbers of who they can ring for help e.g. supportive family/friends.

- Discuss signals or codes, for example, agreed sentences, lights on/off, position of lamp, etc. These can help everyone living in the house. Also think about how children can raise the alarm to neighbours and/or family.

- Discuss who is going to know at school – this is important to a child who will usually be reluctant to talk about the abuse.

- Make sure the school knows who they can and can't talk to and that they have copies of any necessary paperwork such as court orders, injunctions etc.

- Discuss who will be picking the child up from school and possibly who they must never go with, even if there is a good story, e.g. "mum is poorly so 'X' has got to pick you up".

- Discuss which family, friends, babysitters, etc. who they can talk to or go to in an emergency – this is important to a child who may be confused about the abuse.

- Talk to the child about what to do if they see the abuser while at school or while with family or friends.

- Discuss not giving out addresses and phone numbers.
- Discuss what they can and can't say to the abusing parent (for example where they are living).

- Discuss safety during contact visits.

- Do activities with them that may encourage good conversation about what is happening.

- Perhaps encourage the child to keep a journal of how they are feeling, what has happened and what makes them scared/sad.

- Where possible, discuss any realistic options of the child having a telephone (including speed dials).
- Suggest your child looks at websites for children experiencing domestic abuse, for example: www.thehideout.org.uk.

Staying safe after the abuser has moved out

- Change the locks where possible – make use of security support that is available free of charge (see below).
- Where possible, shop and bank in a different place to before.
- Cancel any bank accounts, credit cards etc. that you have shared.
- Keep any court orders, injunctions, emergency telephone numbers with you.
- Keep a mobile with you at all times – try to keep it with credit on. Emergency calls can still be made without credit, and support agencies will accept reverse charges – but remember your battery needs to be charged!
- Set up speed dials for emergency telephone numbers.
- Change your regular travel routes/habits.
- Diary any abusive calls, visits, texts or email.

Mobile/internet safety and digital stalking

You can pick up an inexpensive pay-as-you-go phone at a supermarket for about £10. It is a good idea to try to get one and get it charged up with a small amount of credit on it before you leave. Once you are safe then you should clean the old information from your usual telephone.

- Clean your telephone: back-up your photographs, music, address book and any apps you want to keep then you should do a factory reset. This will delete any unwanted software. (If safe, do this after the Police have reviewed your telephone for evidence.)

- Secure your telephone: set the telephone so that if it isn't used for more than a minute you have to put in a PIN to use it. Make sure that your telephone is set to hide your Caller ID. Change your login name and password on your Google/iCloud/iTunes account.

- There are mobile telephone applications that will block calls. Choose an application that offers a 'whitelist' feature. This means that it will only accept calls from those in your contact list. If you are using a whitelist then remember to add contacts such as the doctor's practice, school, solicitor and your police contact details.

- Choice of phone: a low cost telephone (not a smartphone) is the safest. If you have to have a smartphone think about using two telephones. A low cost one for texting and calling and a smartphone for internet browsing, games, music etc.

- Gather evidence: save all texts but also take pictures or screenshots of any threatening messages on your telephone. That way if anything happens to your telephone, you still have evidence of the text. Make a recording of all voicemails left on your telephone. Mobile operators limit how long they will keep the voicemail on the system (on average one week). Once that time is expired they delete the voicemail and that evidence is gone.

Safety plans should be personalised so information above should all be considered and discussed with the victim where relevant. Any other additional risks and means of mitigating these should also be discussed with the victim.

Emergency safety plans should be in place whilst assessments, referrals and interventions are being progressed.

In some cases where there is a severe risk of harm to the child/ren, the emergency safety plan/strategy should be for the child/ren and, if possible, the non-abusive parent, not to have contact with the abuser.

It is important that Practitioners do not work in isolation and utilise the skills and expertise of specialist services in assessing, intervening and safety planning for the victim and the child/ren.

Local and National Specialist Domestic Abuse Agencies:

EDAN Lincs provide support for female and male victims and for children affected by domestic abuse.

County wide helpdesk service that operates Monday to Friday, 9am -5pm
01522 510041 or email: info@edanlincs.org.uk

SARC [Sexual Assault Referral Centre]:

Provides a safe environment where victims of Rape, Sexual Assault or Sexual Abuse can get support and advice. They also provide the possibility of making a report to the police and undertaking a forensic examination. They are open to all victims, regardless of whether they want to report a crime to the police or not.
lpn-tr.springlodge@nhs.net , www.lpft.nhs.uk/spring-lodge
01522 524402 - Mon - Fri 9 a.m. till 5 p.m.

National services:

24-hour national Domestic Abuse Helpline www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk 0808 2000 247	Shelter www.shelter.org.uk 0808 800 4444
Forced Marriage Unit www.foc.gov.uk/forcedmarriage	Samaritans www.samaritans.org.uk

020 7008 0151 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mon - Fri	113 123
Men's Advice Line www.mensadviceline.org.uk 0808 801 0327	Women's Aid https://www.womensaid.org.uk/
Mankind www.mankind.org.uk 01823 334244	National Stalking Helpline https://www.suzylamplugh.org/pages/category/national-stalking-helpline 0808 802 0300
Galop Support helpline for LGBT victims of domestic abuse www.galop.org.uk, 0300 999 5428	Information for children and young people: www.thehideout.org.uk www.nspcc.org.uk www.disrespectnobody.co.uk

Support for Perpetrators

Assisting Rehabilitation through Collaboration (ARC)

The ARC (formally known as Integrated Offender Management) team in Lincolnshire has been developed to include a wide range of crime types, including domestic abuse. The ARC process accesses and streamlines a wide range of support and services in order to most effectively manage the risk factors which contribute to repeat offending behaviour. The safety and support for victims of ARC perpetrators is also core to the initiative.

Building Better Relationships (BBR)

Is a programme for male perpetrators of violence and abuse within (heterosexual) intimate relationships. BBR is run within prison and community delivery sites and aims to increase understanding of motivating factors in domestic violence reduce individual risk factors linked to violence and develop pro-social relationship skills. Access to this programme is through the court following a conviction of a domestic abuse related offence, or through the family court and CAFCASS.

Respect Phone line

The Respect Phone line is a confidential and anonymous helpline for domestic abuse perpetrators looking for help to address their behaviour. The main focus of the Respect Phone line is to increase the safety of those experiencing domestic abuse by engaging with the abusers to reduce the risk.

The Phoneline helps men and women in heterosexual or same-sex relationships who want to stop being violent and/or abusive towards a partner or ex-partner. It's also available for frontline workers who engage with domestic violence perpetrators in their work.

Contact details of Respect for resource section

Opening hours: the Respect Phone line is open Monday - Friday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Call: free phone 0808 802 4040
Email: info@respectphoneline.org.uk (aim to reply within two working days).
Website: www.respectphoneline.org.uk

FURTHER INFORMATION

Information Sharing With and Without Consent

General guidance**:**

Knowing when and how to share information is not always easy, but it is important to get it right. Families need to feel reassured that their confidentiality is respected. In most cases you will only share information about them with their consent, but there may be circumstances when you need to override this.

If you are not sure, but in your view there is a risk of abuse to someone, you should speak to your supervisor, safeguarding professional or Information Governance Lead.

The seven golden rules for information sharing:

1. Remember that the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), Data Protection Act 2018 and human rights law are not barriers to justified information sharing, but provide a framework to ensure that personal information about living individuals is shared appropriately.

2. Be open and honest with the individual (and/or their family where appropriate) from the outset about why, what, how and with whom information will, or could be shared, and seek their agreement, unless it is unsafe or inappropriate to do so.

3. Seek advice from other practitioners, or your information governance lead, if you are in any doubt about sharing the information concerned, without disclosing the identity of the individual where possible.

4. Where possible, share information with consent, and where possible, respect the wishes of those who do not consent to having their information shared. Under the GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018 you may share information without consent if, in your judgement, there is a lawful basis to do so, such as where safety may be at risk. You will need to base your judgement on the facts of the case. When you are sharing or requesting personal information from someone, be clear of the basis upon which you are doing so. Where you do not have consent, be mindful that an individual might not expect information to be shared.

5. Consider safety and well-being: base your information sharing decisions on considerations of the safety and well-being of the individual and others who may be affected by their actions.

6. Necessary, proportionate, relevant, adequate, accurate, timely and secure: ensure that the information you share is necessary for the purpose for which you are sharing it, is shared only with those individuals who need to have it, is accurate and up to-date, is shared in a timely fashion, and is shared securely (see principles).

7. Keep a record of your decision and the reasons for it – whether it is to share information or not. If you decide to share, then record what you have shared, with whom and for what purpose.

Points for Consideration**:**

- Is there a legitimate purpose for sharing information?
- Does the information enable a person to be identified?
- Is the information confidential?
- If so, do you have consent to share?
- Is there a statutory duty or court order to share the information?
- If consent refused/there are good reasons not to seek consent
- Is there sufficient public interest to share information?
- If the decision is to share, are you sharing the right information in the right way?
- Have you properly recorded your decision?

For further details please refer to the information sharing guidance for practitioners.

MARAC – Information Sharing and Consent

For further guidance on information sharing please refer to the Domestic Abuse Information Sharing Agreement and the MARAC Operating Protocol

Specific Considerations in Relation to Children and Adults – Information Sharing/Consent:

There may be circumstances where a parent is not informed that a safeguarding referral is being made if you suspect:

- Sexual abuse, organised abuse or fabricated illness or injury (FII).
- It isn't possible to contact parents without causing undue delay in making a referral.
- The risk of destroying evidence.
- Possibility of increased risk of domestic violence.
- Possibility of the family moving to avoid professional scrutiny.

It is always essential in safeguarding to consider whether the adult at risk is capable of giving informed consent in all aspects of their life. If they are able, their consent should be sought. This may be in relation to whether they give consent to:

- An activity that may be abusive – if consent to abuse or neglect was given under duress (e.g. as a result of exploitation, pressure, fear or intimidation), this apparent consent should be disregarded.

- A Safeguarding Adults enquiry going ahead in response to a concern that has been raised. Where an adult at risk with capacity has made a decision that they do not want action to be taken, and there are no public interest or vital interest considerations, their wishes must be respected. The person must be given information and have the opportunity to consider all the risks and fully understand the likely consequences of that decision over the short and long term.

- The recommendations of an individual protection plan being put in place.

- A medical examination.

- An interview.

- Certain decisions and actions taken during the Safeguarding Adults process with the person or with people who know about their abuse and its impact on the adult at risk.

If, after discussion with the adult at risk who has mental capacity, they refuse any intervention, their wishes will be respected *unless*:

- there is an aspect of public interest (e.g. not acting will put other adults or children at risk); and/or

- there is a duty of care on a particular agency to intervene, for example the police if a crime has been, or may be, committed).

When an agency works alongside a victim to complete a MARAC referral, their ability and capacity to give informed consent to the information within the referral should be considered. Victims must be made aware that the information shared will be discussed with the other agencies at the MARAC meeting and these agencies will also share information which is relevant to the abuse and protection of the victim and their family. The fact that agencies who work with the perpetrator will also receive the information needs to be made clear, the purpose of this being so that all agencies can work to protect victims and their families. Information will not be shared directly with the perpetrator without the victim's expressed consent and all agencies store this information securely and in line with the Data Protection Act (1998).

Emergency accommodation for victims fleeing domestic abuse

Some victims will not be able to stay in their current home because they might not have a legal right to remain or the risk to them is too high.

Refuge

For advice and availability of refuges in the county you can contact either EDAN Lincs **or** SoLDAS**.**

If it is not safe for the victim to remain in the County, or it is out of normal working hours, contact the National 24 hour domestic helpline for availability of refuge accommodation throughout the Country. Tel: 0808 2000 247

District Council support

District Councils in Lincolnshire can provide support, information and advice about emergency accommodation and longer term housing options and solutions. Contact the local district council for further information.

Improved home security for victims of domestic abuse

District Councils in Lincolnshire operate schemes to help victims of domestic abuse improve the security of their home. The schemes, sometimes called 'Sanctuary' or 'Target Hardening' aim to provide additional security measures to deter and prevent someone from entering the property and reducing the fear for victims at risk of further harm.

The schemes are often run in partnership with Lincolnshire Police, who will advise on crime prevention, and with the specialist domestic abuse services which will look at risks and provide practical safety planning advice as well as emotional support.

Improved security measures could include:

- Door chains
- Covering over letterboxes and fitting external fire retardant letter boxes,
- Reinforcing exterior doors
- Extra door and window locks
- Alarms
- Smoke detectors and fire safety equipment

Victims of domestic abuse can find out more about what is available in their area by asking their Domestic Abuse Support Worker or by contacting their District Council.

Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS)

The Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme was launched in Lincolnshire in March 2014. A police led scheme, with two routes available 'Right to Ask' & 'Right to Know'. The applications are managed and held by Lincolnshire Police, with all applications processed and managed by the Protecting Vulnerable Persons Unit (PVP). Should a disclosure be agreed, the exact form of wording is agreed, and how that will be delivered is managed by the PVP Detective Sergeant.

The DV Disclosure Scheme has the following key principles:

- Introduce recognised and consistent procedures for disclosing information to persons with concerns about a current/ex-partner. It enables a current/ex-partner of a violent individual to make informed choices about whether, and how, to take forward that relationship.

- Disclosure is considered if it is lawful, necessary and proportionate to protect a potential person at risk from harm.

- Disclosure MUST be accompanied by a robust safety plan, based on all relevant information, which delivers on-going support to the potential person at risk.

- As a practitioner, if you believe someone you are working with, or know, is at risk of harm and could be eligible under the scheme, you should refer a person/case to Lincolnshire Police as follows:
    - Members of the public (person at risk, third party i.e. guardian, parent) telephone Lincolnshire Police on 101 (non-emergency).

    - Practitioners can also refer cases they are working on if they believe a disclosure may be required by Lincolnshire Police on 101 (non-emergency)

Should someone be at immediate risk of harm, always call 999 in an emergency. For further information on the scheme see the Lincolnshire Police website.

Domestic Violence Protection Notices/Orders [DVPNO] Scheme

From 23rd June 2014, Lincolnshire Police introduced the use of Domestic Violence Protection Notices (DVPN) and Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPO). The Crime and Security Act 2010 provides the Police with additional powers to protect victims of domestic violence and abuse, with the objective of securing a co-ordinated approach across agencies for the protection of victims and the management of perpetrators. The DVPN/DVPO process is not intended to replace the Criminal Justice system in respect of charge and bail of a perpetrator. A DVPN will be issued in circumstances where no enforceable restrictions can be placed upon the perpetrator. A DVPO can then be applied for from HM Magistrates Court Lincoln for a maximum period of 28 days. For Lincolnshire Police, a DVPN/DVPO will be required to be considered for all Domestic Abuse prisoners who are being released from custody with no further action being taken.

You can find more information on the scheme on the Lincolnshire Police website

MAPPA and Domestic Abuse

MAPPA stands for Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements. It is the process by which Police, Probation and Prison Services work together with other agencies to manage the risks posed by violent and sexual offenders living in the community in order to protect the public. This process focuses upon the perpetrator of the domestic abuse (or other offender) and managing their risk of serious harm and re-offending in order to protect current, previous and future victims.

Police, Prison and Probation make up the Responsible Authority which has a duty to ensure the risks posed by specified sexual and violent offenders are assessed and managed appropriately. There is a wide range of agencies with a duty to participate in MAPPA.

Should you feel that the perpetrator is high risk, then consideration should be given to referring the individual to MAPPA. If the individual is already involved with another

agency, such as mental health services, Probation or the Prison Service, it would be most appropriate to discuss a referral with the lead agency worker first.

Should you require any guidance to complete the referral form, or wish to discuss a case which you feel needs to be managed through MAPPA, you are able to contact the MAPPA Unit at Lincolnshire Police Headquarters on: on 01522 558668 or 01522 558255 or e-mail: EMNPS.eastwestlincolnshire.MAPPA@justice.gov.uk