

Domestic Abuse Strategy for Surrey 2013 - 2018

Our aim

Domestic Abuse (DA) causes harm to both adults and children, is of high cost to public agencies and employers and produces behaviours that can be replicated generation to generation. Domestic violence is the highest reported violent crime in Surrey; domestic abuse affects both emotional and psychological wellbeing and occurs regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexuality, age, religion, mental or physical ability.

Reported levels of domestic abuse, either as first time incidents or repeats, are not reducing in Surrey despite efforts to tackle the problem and based on national research, per head of population, reported incidents are lower than would be expected indicating a level of hidden harm

This strategy is a commitment by all involved public, voluntary, community and faith organisations to work together as one, to raise awareness, to address both the causes and effects of domestic abuse and to improve lives. This will require changes to current working practices around education, information sharing, referral, service delivery and a refocusing of the money spent. The aim is to make changes that lead to improved outcomes for those affected through focussed interventions, and to reduce the total cost to the public sector through long term culture change and a reduced demand on services.

We have the opportunity of utilising the Transforming Public Services programme to drive our aim through the expanding Family Support Programme work stream.

What is our shared partnership vision for 2018?

To ensure all those affected by Domestic Abuse have the right information, services and support, at the earliest opportunity, to live lives free from domestic violence or abuse and gain the personal confidence to build healthy relationships for themselves and their dependants

What will our focus be?

To achieve our vision we will focus on three core areas:

Prevention: We will promote healthy relationships in children, young people and adults through schools, work places, targeted programmes and the community

Early Intervention: We will work as one team, pro-actively sharing information, intelligence and decision making to enable earlier interventions that prevent the escalation of abuse, reduce repeat incidents and minimise harm. We will encourage victims and perpetrators to seek help.

Response: We will provide a holistic response to all those affected; victim, dependants and perpetrator. We will ensure all staff are well trained and that there are appropriate services and support available

Government definition of Domestic Abuse:

'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: psychological, physical, sexual, financial, and emotional'

The Government definition, which is not a legal definition, includes so called 'honour' based violence, female genital mutilation and forced marriage, and is clear that victims are not confined to one gender or ethnic group. For information about the Government definition and services in Surrey -

<http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/adult-social-care/protecting-adults-from-harm/domestic-abuse/definition-of-domestic-abuse>

Domestic Abuse Statistics

Nationally, one in four women and around one in six men will be affected in their lifetime, and one in four young adults have lived with domestic abuse as a child. The Home Secretary has recently re-affirmed in parliament that, nationally, seven women per month die as a result of domestic abuse.

- There have been four domestic homicides in the County over the past 18 months
- The Specialist Domestic Abuse Court in Surrey has dealt with over 400 cases a year in the past two years.
- 12,481 incidents of domestic abuse were reported to Surrey Police between April 2012 and March 2013. This figure includes 3,625 incidents where the victim had previously experienced domestic abuse, a rate of 29%. 9,816 of the incidents reported to Surrey Police in 2012/13 were from female victims.
- The average number of referrals to domestic abuse outreach services in Surrey is 3,205 per year, based on the past seven years. Seventy percent of referrals to outreach each year are from Surrey Police, fifteen percent of victims self refer, and other agencies, such as social care, refer a small percentage of victims.

National research tells us the actual prevalence of domestic abuse in Surrey is likely to be much higher than the reported incidents. The latest domestic violence statistics published in February 2013 from the Crime Survey for England and Wales show that 7.3% of women aged 16-59 surveyed reported being a victim of any type of domestic abuse. Using 2011 population estimates, this equates to an estimated figure of 23,922 unique female victims in Surrey. These figures suggest that under-reporting in Surrey could be over 50%, meaning that there is a pool of people who are unknown and do not seek help.

In 2009, Professor Sylvia Walby calculated an estimated cost of domestic violence for each local authority area, based on the size of the 16-59 year old population. For Surrey the cost, not including human and emotional costs (the amount victims are willing to spend in an effort to reduce the risk of domestic abuse), was an estimated £114 million per year.

Surreys Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Chapter on Domestic Abuse*:

Many Surrey organisations deliver Services to those affected by domestic abuse however the existing JSNA chapter sets out a number of gaps in local services regarding the response to domestic abuse.

The key gaps include:

- Inconsistent and insufficient universal and specialist support services to children and young people in families where domestic abuse is a risk factor
- Inconsistent multi-agency approach to data collection.
- Insufficient local knowledge of the level of need and cultural practices that affect need within high need black and minority ethnic groups identified within national research.
- Local agencies should continue to work to encourage men and the lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender population to feel comfortable enough to approach services if they need support.
- Insufficient local support and interventions for perpetrators, beyond criminal justice.
- Insufficient understanding of, and support for, young people experiencing teenage relationship abuse.
- Insufficient awareness and appropriate training around domestic abuse within most agencies, and processes are not always sufficiently integrated to refer survivors at an early stage.
- A lack of support to individuals, organisations and communities across Surrey to engage in local action aimed at preventing and reducing the harm caused by domestic abuse to children, young people, their families and communities

The Ofsted inspection of the arrangements for the protection of children in 2012 found that better communication and risk management arrangements for multi-agency referrals were needed.

What are our priorities for 2013/2014?

There are some specific things we will focus on in the coming year as part of, or as well as, delivering the day to day work:

- To improve referral, information sharing and joint response to cases of DA that deliver on the basis of a whole systems approach. To utilise the Transforming Public Service Programme by integrating with the expanding Supporting Families work and utilising the developing Central Referral Unit or proposed MASH
- To understand current coverage of DA in the healthy relationship education packages delivered in schools and to develop and promote this further.
- To review and adopt education programmes aimed at adults, both victims and perpetrators
- Through evidence led investigation identify the interventions that are required to provide positive outcomes and to plan the joint commissioning of services as part of the Transforming Public Services agenda. These will encompass victims, children and perpetrators

What difference will the DA Strategy make up to 2018?

Prevention:

- Communications programmes to raise public awareness and change culture.
- Education programmes to help our young people build healthy relationships.
- Programmes for positive parenting, individuals and couples at risk of violence.

Early intervention:

- Services for children who have witnessed domestic abuse, individual and family based
- Integrated working with drug and alcohol and mental health services, to intervene to prevent repeat incidents of abuse and to reach victims who use these services.
- Programmes for perpetrators focused on re-education (self referral and agency led referral)
- Pro-active identification of at-risk adults and children and provision of support to them and their families
- Early sharing of information and agreed approach by agencies to known incidents utilising the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) approach and the Supporting Families programme
- An effective multi-agency training strategy covering early identification, response and professional skills
- Development of employee support programmes in work places

Response:

- An integrated, multi-agency approach to creating one team to share information appropriately and securely on children, families and adults around the child or young person, to ensure timely and appropriate decisions and actions are taken as one team around the 'family'..
- Support for services for domestic abuse victims including building self esteem and preventing re-victimisation
- Support and information services to help victims make safe decisions about their future i.e. Housing, legal, financial, refuge
- Working with known perpetrators, including offenders being released from custody
- Effective criminal justice interventions and effective enforcement of orders and injunctions.
- Work with the prison population, to provide support to those who have experienced domestic abuse both as victims and perpetrators.

Funding and Commissioning to 2018

Resources from each organisation are used to deliver current Services, with a shift in emphasis there will inevitably be some organisations that take a larger role in the new process and others that will benefit from reductions in demand on their services. With reductions to the public sector budget it will be essential to map the changing costs and for organisations to work together on funding issues to ensure success through “Transforming Public Services”.

It is also essential that the current spend on domestic abuse related services be pooled to jointly commission interventions and services that maximise the use of the monies available to best serve those affected by DA in Surrey..

Governance

In order to deliver the outcomes strong governance will be required, to gain the sign-up and commitment of each organisation and partnership involved in the delivery of services to the shared outcomes, delivery model and agreed action plan.

Range of organisations involved:

police; domestic abuse services; drug and alcohol services; primary and community health services; ambulance service; acute hospitals; mental health services; GPs / CCGs; probation; youth justice; youth services; Court services; prisons; schools; children’s social care; adult social care; housing, voluntary, community and faith sector.

What will success look like by 2018?

All those affected have the knowledge to access help or advice; for example increased referrals, increased access of services

Interventions are in place that evidence improving outcomes for those affected; for example less repeats; less people on long term support

Less young people becoming involved in DA either as perpetrators or victims; for example a change in the age profiles of victims and perpetrators

Pro-active interventions with perpetrators keeping victims and their children safe and away from required statutory interventions; for example more actions recorded against perpetrators, less children reported as affected by DA