

Blackpool Council - Equality Impact Assessment Record Form from March 2007

Department: Adult Social Care and Housing

Team or Service Area Leading Assessment: Domestic Abuse Team

Title of Policy/ Service or Function: Domestic Abuse Strategy 2009-2014

Proposals to introduce/ **alter/** delete policy, service, expenditure etc:

Date of proposals: November 2009 Committee/Team: Domestic Abuse Team

Lead Officer: Jean Hedley/ Andrea Thorley-Baines

STEP 1 – IDENTIFYING THE PURPOSE OR AIMS

1. What type of policy, service or function is this?

Existing New/ proposed Changing/ updated

2. What is the aim and purpose of the policy, service or function?

- To provide a strategic direction for the Blackpool Domestic Abuse Partnership.
- To provide a focus for service planning and development to meet identified need.
- To establish high quality service responses across Blackpool.

3. Please outline any proposals being considered.

See Strategy and Delivery Plan

4. Why are the proposals being made – for what reason?

See Strategy and Delivery Plan

5. What outcomes do we want to achieve

- Improved services to survivors of domestic abuse.
- Education of children and young people.
- Hold perpetrators accountable for their actions and support them to change their behaviour.

6. Who is the policy; service or function intended to help/ benefit?

Everyone affected by domestic abuse – victim/survivor, children and perpetrators.

7. Who are the main stakeholders/ customers/ communities of interest?

Blackpool residents and visitors to the town.

Age Concern
Alcohol & Drugs Solutions
Alcohol Dependency Solutions
AWAKEN
Barnardos
Blackpool 6th Form College
Blackpool Advocacy
Blackpool and Fylde College
Blackpool Care and Repair
Blackpool Coastal Housing
Blackpool Council
Blackpool Council Adult Social Care and Housing Department
Blackpool Council Children and Young People's Department
Blackpool Council Culture and Communities Department
Blackpool Council Mental Health
Blackpool Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership (BSafe)
Blackpool Housing Options
Blackpool Legal Services Partnership
Blackpool LGBT Forum
Blackpool Local Public Service Board
Blackpool Local Safeguarding Children Board
Blackpool Safeguarding Adults Committee
Blackpool schools
Blackpool Youth Offenders Team
Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre NHS Hospitals Trust
CAADA
CAFCASS
CAMHS
CATALYST

Childrens Centres
Connect
Connexions
Contact Point
Council for Voluntary Services
Drugline
Fylde Coast Magistrates Courts
Fylde Coast Womens Aid
Her Majesty's Court Service Lancashire
Homestart
Kensington Foundation Trust
Lancashire Care Trust
Lancashire Constabulary
Lancashire Crown Prosecution Service
Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service
Lancashire Probation Service
Muir Housing
NHS Blackpool
NHS Direct
North Lancashire PCT
North West Ambulance NHS Trust
NSPCC
Pupil Welfare
Sanctuary service
Springboard
Surestart
Targeted Services
The HUB
Victim Support
Victim Support Lancashire
Windmill Housing
WISH

8. Does the policy, service or function have any existing aims in relation to equality, social inclusion or community cohesion?

Yes – see Delivery Plan.

9. How is the resulting service or function delivered/ administered?

Via the Domestic Abuse Team, overseen by the Strategic Management Board.

STEP 2 - CONSIDERING EXISTING INFORMATION AND WHAT THIS TELLS YOU

10. Please summarise the main data/ research and performance management information in the box below.
11. What are the impacts or effects for communities?

The EIA looks at areas of discrimination and inequality and gathers what information is currently known about each in relation to domestic violence and abuse. The annual action plans will describe how the impact of inequalities identified and policy changes needed will be incorporated into campaigning and service delivery.

In all areas of inequality, discrimination that is practised in society can both be a barrier to seeking help and can be used by an abuser to compound the abuse inflicted on the survivor/victim. Victims of minority group abusers may be loathed to seek redress in law against the abuser, because they fear the abuser will not be punished fairly.

From data collection we know that 17% of MARAC families feature in at least one of the six main diversity strands:

- **Age (under 18's and over 65's)**
- **Disability**
- **Gender**
- **Race**
- **Religion**
- **Sexual orientation**

As MARAC families represent approximately 10% of the reported incidents to Police, we can estimate that this percentage is higher in general reporting population. Therefore, an informed response is needed in relation to the provision of services and an inclusive approach to dealing with the issues presented.

Women and Men

Baseline data and research shows:

In April – November 2009, 94% of MARAC referrals in Blackpool were females experiencing domestic abuse and 6% were males experiencing domestic abuse. 95% of these were male perpetrators and 5% were female perpetrators.

The difference impact is:

Of the three specialist support services in Blackpool (Fylde Coast Women's Aid, Victim Support, Blackpool Independent Domestic Violence Advisors and Children's Independent Domestic Violence Advisors), Fylde Coast Women's Aid is a women-only service, in keeping with the gender equality duty exemptions. All statutory services and legislation gives equal rights to male and female service users. Some believe that male victims feel they are not entitled to use domestic abuse services. This has not been tested locally. The assumption that domestic abuse is only done by men against women may mean that some professionals will not believe male victims who seek help.

Black and minority ethnic groups, refugees and new immigrants

Baseline data and research shows:

In April – November 2009, 1% of MARAC referrals were from BME groups. The ONS 2006 Mid Year Estimates indicate that Black and Minority Ethnic residents account for 5.7% of Blackpool's population. Further consideration will be given to the specific needs of BME residents as part of the development of the forced marriage/honour based violence focus. The recent Forced Marriage and Honour Based Violence multi-agency statutory guidance 'The Right to Choose' is issued under section 63Q (1) of the Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007 and came into force on the 25th November 2008. A triangulated response to the guidance incorporates key actions for the Domestic Abuse Strategic Management Board, Local Safeguarding Children's Board and Vulnerable Adults Committee.

People with physical/sensory impairments and learning difficulties

Baseline data and research shows:

In April – November 2009, approximately 2% of victims referred to MARAC have had a registered disability. Safeguarding Adults and Children with additional Needs services provide a basis for particular attention to disabled children and adults who are affected by domestic abuse and key actions have been outlined for the Domestic Abuse Strategic Management Board to consider the above.

Alcohol and substance misuse was a factor in 93% of MARAC referrals in Blackpool within this period and evidence shows that women experiencing domestic abuse are 15 times more likely to misuse alcohol and 9 times more likely to misuse drugs.

Between 50-60% of mental health service users will have suffered domestic abuse and up to 20% will currently be suffering domestic abuse.

The differential impact is:

The percentage of people with a limiting long term illness or disability is 20.1% so it can be assumed that 20% of victims of domestic abuse will have a disability – this may be greater. National research^{xvi} indicates that disability is an indicator of risk of more serious levels of physical violence. Mental ill health and the misuse of drugs/alcohol are known to commonly form barriers to individuals being given appropriate support against domestic abuse, where for instance, the drugs/alcohol misuse is seen as the primary problem to be dealt with, before the domestic abuse can be addressed. Where a disabled person's carer is abusive, the victim may be unable to survive without what care is given, however abusive. A victim of a disabled abuser may feel unable to leave that individual without care. Learning difficulties and/or speech impairments may mean that the victim needs the abuser to facilitate communication and therefore will not approach an agency without specialist skills of communication for support against domestic abuse.

Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual People

Baseline data and research shows:

In April – November 2009, 3% of cases referred to MARAC have been LGBT cases. 1% of these cases were female violence against another female and 2% were male violence against another male.

Approximately 7 – 10% of Blackpool's population is based in the LGBT community. This equates to between 10,000 and 14,000 people. If domestic abuse occurs in 25% of all relationships, then up to 3,500 people of the current LGBT population in Blackpool will experience domestic abuse. A joint NHS and Local Consultation in 2006 expressed concerns about the prevalence of domestic abuse in Blackpool and in particular, the number of Gay men who flee to Blackpool to escape abusive relationships.

The differential impact is:

There is currently no large-scale national research into the incidence of same-sex abuse. A 2006 study showed domestic abuse in a same sex relationship is experienced in similar way to abusive in heterosexual relationships. The assumption that domestic abuse is only done by men against women may mean that some professionals will not believe victims in abusive same sex relationships who seek help. Professionals may also presume that a same sex individual who accompanies a victim to a meeting is a beneficial friend, rather than perhaps an abuser.

Older and Younger People

In April – November 2009, 14% of MARAC referrals were victims aged less than 21 years. During this same period 1% of MARAC referrals were victims aged 60+.

There can be confusion about the difference between elder abuse and domestic abuse and the approaches and services to managing these may differ. Work is currently ongoing with Safeguarding Adults to ensure a joined up approach for disabled and older victims of abuse.

The impact of domestic abuse on children and young people is well documented; it affects all 5 outcomes of Every Child Matters and is recognised as a priority under Priority 3 – Staying Safe within the Blackpool Children & Young People's plan 2009. Specifically, children and families experiencing domestic abuse should receive a prompt and holistic service and there should be a reduction in re-referrals to children's social care as a result of domestic abuse.

The differential impact is:

Research carried out by London Metropolitan Police found that young women aged 16-24 who are in abusive relationships were at the greatest risk of physical injury. National research also shows that 4% of all older people experience abuse and neglect and that for more than half of them, the abuser is a partner or family member. Victims are predominantly women and the abuse increases with age.

12. What do you know about how the proposals will impact on different communities?

- Raise awareness and encourage reporting.
- Enable help-seeking.
- Provision of high quality services.
- Improved quality of life.

STEP 3 - ASSESSING THE IMPACT

13. Is there any evidence of higher or lower take-up by any group or community, and if so, how is this explained?

Due to the nature of domestic abuse, women are adversely affected.

Domestic Abuse is underreported within the LGB community – an additional barrier is for community members threatened with being ‘outed’ in relation to their sexual orientation.

Minority communities face additional language and cultural barriers.

14. Does the geography or demography of service users reveal anything?

Domestic abuse is widespread within Blackpool – across all social and economic classes.

There is a higher level of reporting in areas of deprivation.

There is a lower level of reporting in more affluent areas.

We can assume that people who are known to and dependent on services are more likely to report or come to the attention of services when there has been an incident of domestic abuse, whereas people from more affluent areas are rarely supported, due to the stigma associated with help seeking and in addition, they have the financial resources or the means by which they can help themselves. Many women choose to stay in abusive relationships because they do not know how to move on or they stay for the sake of the children and to keep the lifestyle to which they are accustomed.

15. Do any rules or requirements prevent any groups or communities from using or accessing the service?

The only women only service is Fylde Coast Women’s Aid, which excludes men and boys over the age of 15 years.

16. Does the way a service is delivered/ or the policy create any additional barriers for any groups of disabled people? (DDA duties arising out of DDA 1995)

No

17. Does the way a service is delivered/ or the policy create any additional barriers for any other groups or communities, for example, due to limited income or because of the time during the week or day when the service is available? E.g. women, cultural reasons.

People with English as an additional language may face additional barriers.
People from minority communities may face additional barriers.
People with no recourse to public funds may face additional barriers.
People with mental health issues may face additional barriers.
People with substance issues such as drugs and alcohol may face additional barriers.

18. Do any of these limitations amount to unlawful discrimination?

Yes No

If yes, please explain (referring to relevant legislation) in the box below

N/A

19. If No, do they amount to a differential impact, which should be addressed?

Yes No

If yes, please give details in the boxes below.

N/A

20. If the impact or effects are adverse for any community or group, can they be defended in order to provide equality for another community under legislation or policy?

Yes No

Please give details below.

Fylde Coast Women's Aid provide a women only refuge.

21. Do you have enough information to make a judgement?

Yes No

If no, what information do you require, about which communities?

N/A

22. Is it possible to get the information quickly and easily or is it recommended that the collection of such data be included as an action for the action plan that will be developed? Please detail below.

N/A

STEP 4 - DEALING WITH ADVERSE OR UNLAWFUL IMPACT

23. What can be done to improve the policy, service, function or any proposals in order to reduce or remove any adverse impact or effects identified?

- Multi-agency collaboration in responding to issues raised.
- The employment of an LGB Development Officer.
- Implementation of the FM/HBV Policy and Action Plan.
- Awareness raising across Blackpool.
- Staff training across Blackpool.
- Clear policies and procedures in place.
- Inclusion of issues at relevant forums.

24. What would be needed to be able to do this? Are the resources likely to be available?

Funding would be required to implement and sustain the provision.

The Strategy outlines that we are working towards achieving sustainable services and mainstreaming provision where feasible.

25. What other support or changes would be necessary to carry out these actions?

Multi-agency strategic buy-in.

STEP 5 - CONSULTING THOSE AFFECTED FOR THEIR VIEWS

26. Please outline the steps taken to test out your findings and possible courses of action below.

- Stakeholder Consultation events.
- Blackpool PRIDE Event Consultation.
- Violence Against Women Consultation.
- International Young Women's Day Consultation.
- Public engagement events – e.g. Not in my neighbourhood.
- Immediate and reflective feedback and service user evaluation.

27. What feedback or responses have you received to the findings and possible courses of action? Please give details below.

See Strategy and Delivery Plan.

28. If you have not been able to carry out any consultation, please indicate below how you intend to test out your findings and recommended actions.

N/A

29. If you are impact assessing some proposals, what steps have been taken to ensure that stakeholders have been able to voice their opinions on the proposals or the need for change?

Stakeholder Consultation Event and ongoing consultation during September 2008 – October 2009.

STEP 6 - ACTION PLANNING

Please outline your proposed action plan below.

Issues/ adverse impact identified	Proposed action/ objectives to deal with adverse impact	Targets/Measure	Timeframe	Responsibility	Indicate whether agreed
				(type to expand box)	
				(type to expand box)	
				(type to expand box)	
				(type to expand box)	

STEP 7 - ARRANGEMENTS FOR MONITORING AND REVIEW

Please outline your arrangements for future monitoring and review below.

Agreed action	Monitoring arrangements	Timeframe	Responsibility	Added to Service Plan etc.

Date completed:

Signed:

Name:

Position: