

Glossary of Terms

Domestic Abuse Stalking, Harassment and Honour Based Violence (DASH) Risk Indicator Checklist (RIC) – is a nationally recognised risk assessment tool used by domestic abuser services and the police to assess victims who are experiencing domestic abuse. There are 3 possible score outcomes; low, medium and high risk. Where a victim scores as high risk, this indicates that they are at risk of serious injury or homicide and should be referred to the local MARAC. The DASH is also a tool used by IDVA's and other DV workers to inform a safety plan with the victim.

Safety Plan – is a victim-led plan to help her/him and their children keep safe. The risk indicators and the specific circumstances of the victim are considered in order to devise a plan for how the victim can respond to future incidents and/or their worst case scenario, such as needing to flee in an emergency. Through the process of safety planning, victims can learn about their rights, what options are available to them and create a plan of action regardless of whether they chose to stay or leave the relationship.

Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) – are meetings where information about high risk domestic abuse victims (those at risk of homicide or serious harm) is shared between local agencies. By bringing all agencies together at a MARAC, a risk focused, coordinated safety plan can be drawn up to support the victim. Over 260 MARACs are operating across England, Wales and Northern Ireland managing over 57,000 cases a year (source: CAADA)

Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA) – The main purpose of independent domestic violence advisors (IDVA) is to address the safety of victims at high risk of harm from intimate partners, ex-partners or family members to secure their safety and the safety of their children. Some IDVA services will support a victim regardless of their risk level. Serving as a victim's primary point of contact, IDVAs normally work with their clients from the point of crisis to assess the level of risk, discuss the range of suitable options and develop safety plans. They are pro-active in implementing the plans, which address immediate safety, including practical steps to protect themselves and their children, as well as longer-term solutions. These plans will include actions from the MARAC as well as sanctions and remedies available through the criminal and civil courts, housing options and services available through other organisations (source: CAADA)

Independent Sexual Violence Advisors – offers support to victims of rape and sexual assault. They offer practical advice on the legal and criminal processes and help the victim decide what help and support they need by providing the full range of options available to them. They can provide support throughout the criminal justice process and liaise with the police for regular case updates (source: The Survivors Trust)

Refuge Accommodation – is a safe house where women and children who are experiencing domestic abuse can stay free from abuse. Refuges for men-only are available in limited areas and are not as common as women-only refuges. Victims can choose whether they travel far from where they are fleeing from or remain in the same area (depending on availability) although refuges are unlikely to accept women from their immediate local area as this is usually where they are most at risk (source: Women's Aid).