

Respect

The Impact of the COVID-19 crisis on Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Services

24th April 2020

The Impact of the COVID-19 crisis on Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Services

Respect recognises that social distancing guidelines present major challenges for frontline service providers and that furloughing staff and withdrawing domestic abuse perpetrator services will have a significant impact on the safety and wellbeing of survivors and their children.

Respect-Accredited Members' and Drive Service Provision Update for the week ending 24/04/20.

Remote service provision

All of our surveyed members (27) continue to offer telephone or video-conferencing support on a one-to-one basis. Only three services are also facilitating group delivery of their programmes. This is being considered by other organisations but there is a pressure on resources needed to develop appropriate material and online content. From some services there is a standing request for support from Respect to lead on this.

Online group-work

Delivery of online group-work continues to gain momentum with 15% of services offering group programmes. A further 22% report exploring the capacity to deliver group-work online. It is noted by services that some men are requesting whether services can deliver group-work because they missed the peer challenge/support component of the intervention. Asides from cost this is also a factor in driving consideration of the capacity to delivery group-work.

In-person provision

There continues to be limited in-person provision available with only high-harm clients who cannot engage online or via phone being offered appointments. This is unlikely to change and there are only a handful of services considering offering these appointments. Where it is being considered by one group-work provider, the safety and welfare of clients and practitioners is consistently the focus of the dialogue surrounding this.

New referrals

Eighteen of the surveyed agencies (67%) continue to accept new referrals. Highlighted in the decision making regarding whether to offer service to new referrals is the ongoing staffing resource as well as the ability to suitably complete the programme for service users. Our dialogue with service providers has highlighted an unease in writing completion reports for clients in the absence of final face to face assessment meetings.

Furloughing and closure of services

At this time no further services are reporting having to furlough staff. The early weeks of this period of lockdown saw swift decision making to minimize financial loses through decreased income. In two instances, services who had furloughed staff

are absorbing the cost of bringing the practitioners back into service to meet the increased need and pressure on the service.

Survivor and children's safety

Feedback on the delivery of Integrated Support Services for survivors has reported a trend for survivors who had previously declined the offer of support re-establishing contact and seeking advice and guidance.

Additional Financial Support

Only four of 27 surveyed services have been able to access Covid-19 specific financial support. This support has come via individual grants made by non-statutory funders and their local PCC. There is still a need for clarity from government as to how financial support announced can be accessed.