

Respect

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

1st May 2020

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Respect recognises that social distancing guidelines developed in response to the COVID-19 pandemic present major challenges for frontline service providers. We are also acutely aware 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 01/05/20.

Remote service provision

All of our surveyed members (28) continue to offer telephone or video-conferencing support on a one-to-one or in small groups of three to four participants. Where services are using video calling/conferencing platforms there are a range of challenges for some clients who do not have access to the necessary devices or lack the data/wifi plans to engage. Respect is additionally concerned that whilst delivery of service through this medium may be suitable for some clients. For others, the emotional connections and peer challenge of a physical group are essential to their learning and development.

In-person provision

There continues to be limited in-person provision available. Only one service provider of group-work interventions is offering in-person delivery.

New referrals

Consistently there are reports of increases in the number of referrals and enquiries services are receiving. The proportion of those which are self-referrals is also on the increase. We will seek to establish the factors influence this with accredited services.

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 losses 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. Of concern, are reports from agencies of clients who live with their victims disengaging from service.

Additional Financial Support

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Only four of 27 surveyed services have been able to access Covid-19 specific financial support. Of those four, three have been given additional means to purchase phones and tablets for clients to enable them to receive services during this period of lockdown.