

Respect

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

15th May 2020

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

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 15/05/20.

Service provision

Assessing the national picture across surveyed organisations (28) there continues to be a range of approaches from groupwork to one to one delivery. Where there are groups running these consist of three to four men and vary between the delivery of behavior change interventions and process groups. In all instances there continues to be an enhanced level of support for survivors and victims delivered through the Integrated Support Services.

Referrals and Caseloads

Discussion with surveyed agencies presents a differential response taken to clients who were in service at the onset of lockdown as opposed to those who were taken into service during lockdown. In instances where clients were in service prior to lockdown there is a confidence in undertaking behavior change work via video calling. Where new clients are coming into service the offer is of behavior management work via telephone. The rationale is very clearly focused on the removing risk and uncertainty. As a sector we are acutely aware that for some client's behavior change work can trigger a range of emotional responses and safety for survivors and victims is paramount.

Staff Wellbeing and Resilience

Service Managers in two services have reported taking on additional responsibilities during lockdown and are having to undertake client work as well their normal duties in order to meet increasing demand in referrals and the extra resource required to deliver interventions online or via phone. Because of this extra resource demand, Respect holds concern not only for the wellbeing of frontline practitioners but also the wellbeing of managers. We believe this to be a widespread challenge for services.

Furloughing and closure of services

There are currently no closed services amongst those surveyed. However, there remains ongoing concern around the sustainability of services who have experienced a decline in income as a result of a hold on referring clients who are involved in private law proceedings.