

This information sheet provides you with key information for the Black Country Sexual Violence Service.

The main purpose of the independent sexual violence advisors (ISVA) service is to provide a sexual violence service that offers support, advocacy, safety planning, and risk management to victims/survivors of sexual violence/abuse (both recent and historic)

 Our objectives are to provide:

* A confidential sexual violence/abuse service that meets the needs of victims/ survivors
* Robust referral pathways into and out of the service, regular individually tailored support planning and risk assessment that is subject to a minimum 12 week review, and structured exit planning that provides sustainable support for victims/survivors
* Appropriately skilled staff who have the knowledge and skills (ISVA National Standard)
* Specialist knowledge and expertise to provide advice , training and support to health professionals, relevant third sector organisations and police.

***How does an ISVA work?***

A new referral is contacted within 24 hours of the referral being received, high risk cases within 1 hour. An initial appointment is arranged to meet the needs of the individual. During this initial appointment a comprehensive assessment of need is conducted which formulates a risk assessment and management plan as well as an individually tailored support plan. A review date is set with the individual within at least 12 weeks (but may be within a shorter time scale dependent on risk and need). A range of evidence based psychosocial interventions as well as practical and emotional support is offered by the ISVA during the intervention. When the original support plan aims have been met, an exit plan is discussed with the individual. If they have any remaining needs a new support plan is created in partnership with the client. If they have no remaining needs an exit plan is devised in partnership with the client in which aftercare is defined and sourced. Clients can engage with the ISVA service for as long as they require the service and the interventions provided will be comprehensively reviewed every 12 weeks as a minimum standard to ensure they are effective and that they are continuing to meet the needs of the client.

An ISVA will develop SMART risk assessments and support plans with victims/survivors which include:

* Risk Assessments (to include identification of vulnerable adults & children at risk)
* Safety Plans covering full range of safety options
* Timely referral to appropriate agencies
* Referral to MARAC or other multi agency risk management referral if necessary
* Plans to meet victims/survivors specific individual needs
* Documented victim/ survivor’s input, and person-centred goals
* Referrals and/or advocacy to other agencies/services
* Information about understanding and living with trauma and other effects of sexual violence

**What is the purpose of risk assessment?**

* To help frontline practitioners identify a risk level (high, medium and low) and tailor the type and intensity of support they offer accordingly
* To assess whether this service is the appropriate service for the victim/survivor and if not make immediate referrals to the appropriate services.
* To identify the risks and then formulate management plans to mediate those risks and increase the safety and well-being of individuals
* To enable agencies to make defensible decisions based on the evidence from extensive research of cases which underpins most recognised models of risk assessment.

**SELF REFERRAL**

**It is important that victims of sexual abuse/violence understand that they can self refer into service and in order to keep this process as easy as possible we have one number for everyone to call – 01384 455 411**

We will need to complete a referral form and take some initial information over the phone. All self referrals will be offered an initial appointment at our offices in Dudley (or at a location that is safe and convenient for the service user, where we will complete an initial assessment and a risk assessment to assess service eligibility.

 Home visits will only be carried out in exceptional circumstances and in partnership with other agencies where there is a clearly identified need to provide the intervention/assessment at home. All home visits need to be approved by a line manager prior to taking place. The name of the service user and their address must be detailed for every visit on staff members’ outlook online diaries – along with the name of the manager who has authorised the visit. The manager will then take responsibility for checking with the staff member when a visit has ended and that the staff member is safe.

Depending on the level or risk service users will either be allocated an ISVA or proactively referred and supported to appropriate services.

**Self referrals can call our team on 01384 455 411**

**AGENCY REFERRALS**

Agencies will need to complete a referral form.

To request a referral pack to be emailed out your agency please email stefania.cerritelli@sandwellwomensaid.co.uk and we can arrange for referral forms to be emailed to you.

If you are in any doubt if you should refer into our service then it is always best to call and speak to a member of the team.

**What will happen next after I have made a referral**

An ISVA will make contact with the referral and inform if they have been accepted into service and the reasons why.

**Clients accepted into service** - All clients accepted into service will be offered an assessment in our offices where we can assess their needs, and create a support plan of tailored support for individuals. Ongoing support will be provided through a range of one to one, telephone support, referral to group work and in partnership with other agencies.

**Clients NOT accepted into service** – reasons will be provided as to why clients were not accepted they will be referred on to appropriate services accordingly. If this is an agency referral, agencies will be notified of the referral outcome. All referrals to other services will be followed up by the ISVA before the case is closed.

**Why might a client not be accepted into service?**

* They may have needs that can’t be met by the ISVA service
* They may have complex needs and require additional services, if this is the case we will support a referral to appropriate services
* They may not be a Black Country resident (in which case we will provide support to refer them to the appropriate ISVA service

**Court support** – court support for criminal matters will be supported through ISVA’s

**MARAC** – An ISVA will attend MARAC and support clients who have been referred in

**HOME VISITS** – due to safety and working with a small team, home visits will only be carried out under exceptional circumstances. The majority of support will take place in our offices in the Cedar Centre.

**Counselling –** Referrals into the counselling service will be accessed through the IDVA service – this will be for medium/high risk clients who have engaged in support

**Referral to refuge –** where service users require support to access refuge accommodation – we will provide this support across borders as we understand the importance of safety

**Other services operating from the Cedar Centre**

Independent domestic violence service – this is for adult victims of sexual violence, for more information on this service email Dudley.IDVA@sandwellwomensaid.co.uk

Young people sexual violence service – this is for young people aged 11 – 18 who have experienced sexual violence/abuse. For more information on this service email Dudley.YP@sandwellwomensaid.co.uk

Female offender programme – this is a programme for female offenders – for more information contact Dudley.Mariposa@sandwellwomensaid.co.uk

Counselling service – this is a service to provide counselling to victims of domestic abuse, sexual violence. For more information contact Dudley.counselling@sandwellwomensaid.co.uk

***Who are the key people and how can I contact them***

Telephone number: 01384 455 411

General information requests: Dudley.ISVA@sandwellwomensaid.co.uk

Secure email address (all referral/sensitive data) Dudley.IDVA@sandwellwa.cjsm.net