

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD
THURSDAY, 5 MARCH 2015 AT 10.00 a.m.**

**Domestic Abuse – Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse
(CAADA) Review**

Report of: Assistant Director Performance/Business Support, Community
Protection Directorate

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1.0 Purpose of report

- 1.1 To inform the Health and Wellbeing Board of the main findings of the CAADA (Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse) review of Domestic Abuse services in Hertfordshire. A copy of the full report is attached as Appendix 1.

2.0 Summary

- 2.1 The review undertaken by CAADA into domestic abuse services in Hertfordshire found that focussed improvements were needed in;
- the governance and leadership arrangements for domestic abuse in Hertfordshire
 - the consistency through which victims are referred to services, and
 - the provision of services and support for victims and perpetrators
- 2.2 CAADA's overall recommendation is that Hertfordshire should create an effective care pathway for domestic abuse from initial identification to step down and recovery, so that families living with domestic abuse can be made as safe as possible.

3.0 Recommendation

- 3.1 To note the report, and provide views on the review recommendations.

4.0 Background

- 4.1 The County Community Safety Unit, with funding from Hertfordshire's Police and Crime Commissioner, commissioned the independent charity CAADA to thoroughly review how domestic abuse services in Hertfordshire could be improved. CAADA are a national charity who regularly advise police and crime commissioners and local services across the country how to improve their response to domestic abuse. The review started in September 2014, and the report was published on 9 January 2015.
- 4.2 The review follows the success of strategies put in place to make it easier and safer to report domestic abuse in Hertfordshire, resulting in a 47% increase in the number of victims coming forward over the last two years. The review focused on the response of the specialist domestic abuse services (both commissioned and grant funded), and the referral pathway into and out of these services from the main statutory agencies. CAADA did not review the direct response of the main statutory agencies however some of their recommendations are also relevant to them. CAADA looked at funding for domestic abuse services, staffing, ways of working and referral routes for the commissioned services that exist in Hertfordshire. They looked at data from the police and from domestic abuse services, and compared these with national benchmarks.
- 4.3 CAADA's report highlights where Hertfordshire is performing well, and the need for some focused improvements in governance and leadership arrangements, the consistency in which victims are referred to services, and the provision of services and support for victims and perpetrators. A copy of the full report is attached at Appendix 1.

Main findings – strengths

- 4.4 There is a real enthusiasm to better protect families amongst many of the committed leaders and practitioners in Hertfordshire, and widespread commitment and expertise among those providing services to victims of domestic abuse.
- 4.5 The process to refer high-risk victims from the police to the independent domestic violence advisor (IDVA) service is working well.

- 4.6 Domestic abuse services across the county are under one brand, Sunflower, and accessible through one website.

Main findings – areas for improvement

- 4.7 Current governance structures and arrangements could be improved. There is no single plan to respond to domestic abuse that is joined-up, funded at the appropriate capacity or enjoys the right support across all agencies. Some critical agencies are not engaged in the domestic abuse strategy, do not contribute funding or refer victims for help. Services are not commissioned together to give a whole-system response, based on risk and needs analysis.
- 4.8 Domestic abuse is significantly underfunded compared to other parts of the country. Hertfordshire spends £1.64m specifically on domestic abuse services (see Appendix 9 of the full report, page 60). This is low compared to other counties at just £120 per police incident compared to a usual range of £146-£236. The impact of this funding is diluted as it is divided across 36 funding streams, which leads to fragmentation in services. Funding and engagement from clinical commissioning groups, public health and council services is disproportionately low compared to the extent to which the cost of failure lands on these agencies. Funding for domestic abuse response is also fragmented across many funding streams, leading to inefficiency, and is not allocated on need and risk.
- 4.9 Relatively few victims (those in just 3% of incidents compared to a more usual range of 10 -22%) are assessed as high-risk compared to other police forces. There are also fewer referrals of victims with mental health and substance misuse issues than expected.
- 4.10 The capacity of the Independent Domestic Violence Advisor team and MARAC have been overstretched, limiting the effectiveness of the response to victims. The average annual caseload for the IDVA service is more than double CAADA's recommended level at 120 per IDVA per year meaning that the service is overstretched and outcomes for victims are suffering as a result.
- 4.11 Pathways to specialist support for medium-risk victims are unclear, leaving these victims to negotiate their own way among multiple agencies and providers.

- 4.12 While there is a system to look at the risk to children, there is currently no system to look at risk to adult victims and their children in the round or record data across agencies about the level of risk and needs of families. Services could be improved by expanding existing arrangements in the Targeted Advice Service to look at the risk to children and adults in their entirety. The agreement to implement a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) is a welcome development as is the proposal to develop Family Safeguarding Teams through the DfE Innovation Fund.
- 4.13 There is very limited provision for medium and standard risk victims. There is also little provision for children in specialist commissioned services, with around £100,000 allocated to supporting those whose mothers are living in refuges. There is little in the way of specialist commissioned support for families from minority communities or for families with complex needs although almost 800 families experiencing domestic abuse were supported through the Thriving Families programme up to the end of September 2014. Provision for perpetrators in and outside the criminal justice system is very limited.
- 4.14 Local services do not work to common standards or shared outcomes which inform service development or funding decisions. There is no scrutiny of how well the county as a whole is responding to domestic abuse, and the arrangements to ensure learning from innovative practice and from domestic homicide reviews are inconsistent across the partnership.

CAADA Recommendations

- 4.15 CAADA's overall recommendation is that Hertfordshire should create an effective care pathway for domestic abuse from initial identification to step down and recovery, so that families living with domestic abuse can be made as safe as possible.
- 4.16 To do this, CAADA recommend that Hertfordshire should aim to:
- Identify all victims, children, and perpetrators of domestic abuse, as early as possible and ensure robust referral and care pathways are in place.

- Make sure there is enough capacity to respond by risk and need to all families and perpetrators affected by domestic abuse
- Make sure that all domestic abuse services are accredited and effective.
- Foster innovation, learning and development across all agencies.

What this will look like:

- Bring in joint commissioning of all domestic abuse services countywide, based on an agreed understanding and thresholds of need and risk.
- Set up a champions' network, where workers in all agencies are trained in domestic abuse awareness and how to refer victims.
- Build on the Targeted Advice Service (TAS) approach for addressing risk to children, by including related issues such as parental substance misuse and/or mental health problems and by reviewing risk to both the victim and the child in the round with the aim of providing linked support. In the longer term, this can be the place where anyone can raise a concern about a victim. It would triage all children where there is a safeguarding concern as well as adult victims of domestic abuse, including those without children
- For victims and families at all levels of risk, make sure that universal services provide information and signposting.
- For victims and families at medium and high-risk, make sure there are enough IDVAs and specialist caseworkers helping victims and families to be safe. There also needs to be support to recover once the abuse has stopped, with linked support for children.
- For victims and families at high-risk, ensure that MARAC is appropriately resourced so it can make high- quality action plans to stop high-risk abuse. Make sure that there are enough specialist community and residential domestic abuse services. The Hertfordshire Partnership should also pilot proactive management of serial and repeat perpetrators.

- Build capacity for innovation, learning and development, so that Hertfordshire knows what works to stop domestic abuse, and can roll it out.

4.17 The overall cost of implementing CAADA's recommendations is £2.4m. This would mean Hertfordshire spending £175 per police incident and £1,200 per (expected) service user – closer to the range of spending CAADA see elsewhere. It would also allow a more balanced allocation of funding to community- based provision that supports families to live safely in their own homes. A significant investment via a pooled budget in the expansion of the proposed MASH (or One Front Door), the IDVA service for high-risk victims and specialist caseworkers for medium risk victims will be required. This should provide the basis for earlier identification and more consistent provision of a linked response to the non-abusing parent and their child.

5. Next steps

- 5.1 Strategic capacity at Assistant Director level has been created in the HCC Community Protection Directorate (Julie Chaudary) to oversee the programme of change required to bring about significant improvement in domestic abuse services. Specialist resource is being provided via CAADA on a consultancy basis.
- 5.2 Early efforts are being concentrated on improving governance and leadership arrangements. The current Domestic Abuse Strategic Programme Board is chaired by the police, and is a mixture of both operational and executive members. Public Health, the Clinical Commissioning Groups and NHS England (Herts and South Midlands Team) are existing Board Members. A workshop for the Board, extended to other key stakeholders (including the Hospital Trusts, HPFT, and Hertfordshire Community Trust), is planned for the 24 February.

This will be an interactive event with the following outcomes;

- agreement on the structure and terms of reference for the Domestic Abuse Board moving forward, and any associated sub-groups and forums required (with clear links into other Boards including the Health and Wellbeing)

- a draft action plan with leads assigned, and a headline timetable for completion
- a draft structure/suggested content for the strategy including vision/aims
- agreement on any wider improvements necessary (i.e. outside of the scope of the CAADA review)
- an understanding of the current activities underway to improve domestic abuse services and how they impact on strategy/plans

5.3 Formal recommendations will be made in April 2015. It is envisaged that a new executive Board, with a supporting operational group, will be established shortly afterwards to oversee the development of strategy, and associated actions.

5.4 In terms of better commissioning current spend, early discussions with the HCC Community Wellbeing Team have been held with a view to establishing a small working group to take forward CAADA's recommendations. A dedicated specialist domestic abuse commissioning manager will be recruited to oversee this crucial piece of work.

Report signed off by	Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership Board 10 Dec 2014 Children and Young People Commissioning Executive 4 Feb 2015 Hertfordshire Children's Safeguarding Board 13 Feb 2015
Sponsoring HWB Member/s	Jenny Coles
Hertfordshire HWB Strategy priorities supported by this report	Helping all families to thrive
Needs assessment (activity taken)	
Consultation/public involvement (activity taken or planned) All relevant stakeholders have been consulted and CAADA spoke to twelve women who had experienced domestic abuse about what more would have helped them	
Equality and diversity implications Equality Impact assessment is part of planned activity	
Acronyms or terms used	
Initials	In full
CAADA	Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse (independent charity)
IDVA	Independent Domestic Violence Adviser
MASH	Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub
HPFT	Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust
MARAC	Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference