

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

INDEPENDENT DOMESTIC ABUSE SERVICES

PARTNERSHIP WORKING

Purpose

To set out the approach of the Independent Domestic Abuse Services (IDAS) to consulting, involving and working effectively with partner agencies and stakeholders.

Other related policies

Complaints

Confidentiality and Access to Information

Consulting and Involving Clients

Individual Support Planning

Referral, Initial Assessment and Application

Risk Management and Assessment (Clients)

Introduction

This document contains a policy statement (Part One) and procedural guidance (Part Two). The functions of each are set out briefly below.

Part One – Policy Statement. The policy statement sets out the broad framework of principles within which the particular area of work will be carried out. It sets out the IDAS's broad style and approach to the issue, including any aims and guiding principles.

Part Two – Procedural Guidance. The procedural guidance sets out the details that staff will require to carry out their duties in this particular area of work. It also sets out the specific tasks involved in undertaking this area of work and identifies who is responsible for carrying them out.

Policy Statement

Aims and Principles

1. IDAS is committed to providing the highest standard of service to clients and potential clients.
2. IDAS is committed to the principle of positive partnership working in terms of sharing information, skills and knowledge.
3. IDAS is committed to continual improvement in the delivery of its services.
4. IDAS will consult with and learn from stakeholders and partner agencies and will develop new approaches and services as a result of this.
5. In order to meet the often changing and complex needs of clients, we will develop protocols and best working practice with relevant external agencies.
6. We believe that positive interagency working at a strategic level is essential in order to ensure a coordinated local approach to the development and delivery of services for those who have experienced domestic abuse.
7. We are committed to interagency working as a means of raising awareness and educating other agencies and individuals about the causes and effects of domestic abuse.

The scope of partnership working

8. We provide core support in relation to domestic abuse but are reliant on working with other agencies and individuals on a range of day-to-day, practical issues. An indicative list is set out below, although this is not intended to be exhaustive:
 - Health – GPs, Health visitors, Community Mental Health teams,
 - Counselling services
 - Social welfare – Adult and Children’s Safeguarding teams
 - Housing – the local authority, housing associations and other charities
 - Legal – the Courts, solicitors, the Police, Court Welfare Officers
 - The voluntary sector – general advice services and specialist services
 - Education, training and employment – provision for children and adults

9. In addition we aim to work with agencies on an organisational, strategic level in relation to a number of areas. Again the list is indicative rather than exhaustive:
 - Funding, tendering and procurement,
 - Multi-agency domestic violence forums,
 - Homelessness forums,
 - Providing training and presentations, including on-line training,
 - Attending training provided by other organisations
 - Campaigning, awareness raising and research.

Procedural Guidance

This procedural guidance sets out in more detail the areas of work where we seek the co-operation of and work jointly with our partners. It is set out in relation to two areas: Operational co-operation in respect of service delivery and joint working at a strategic level.

Provision of Support

1. We involve agencies and professionals in the support planning process in accordance with our Confidentiality Policy.
2. We work with partners to gain both advice and information and, at times, their practical help.
3. Some of the examples where we involve other agencies in the provision of support are listed below:
 - Contact with specialist services in the statutory and voluntary sector relating to support for mental health illnesses and drug or alcohol dependency.
 - Involvement of Adult and/or Children’s Safeguarding relating to the health, well-being and/or protection of individuals.
 - Close joint working with the police, solicitors and the courts. This will sometimes but not always be through the MARAC process.
 - Advice around physical health issues.
 - Co-operation and discussions with the Local Authority and landlords in respect of move on and resettlement issues.
 - Close liaison with specialist services that provide additional support to specific groups of people e.g Traveller’s Trust and LGBT groups.

- Work with schools, colleges, training agencies and employers to identify and resolve problems and pursue opportunities on behalf of clients.
- Contact with general advice agencies such as CAB, Shelter, HARP and Age Concern in relation to general legal issues, housing advice, maximisation of income and debt management.

Circulation of information on services

1. We circulate information such as leaflets and posters to all local stakeholders and encourage them to contact us to find out more about the service.
2. We ensure that all agencies that may refer to us are aware of our referral/eligibility criteria. This applies to a wide range of agencies but we have particularly close contact with the agencies that make up the majority of our referrals e.g.
 - The local authority housing department
 - Social services
 - The police
 - Other supported housing providers
 - Social landlords
 - Other refuges
3. We encourage referring agencies to provide full and clear information about the referral and particularly regarding information relating to risk.
4. We ask local agencies to display our information to potential clients and referrers.
5. Our website provides full details of our services and access to downloadable leaflets and posters.
6. We use Facebook and Twitter as a means of communicating current news and information about IDAS.
7. We have produced DVDs which explain our services and are regularly used in training sessions.

Maintaining an understanding of other local services

1. The organisation keeps an up to date list of contact details of all relevant local agencies in the office. This is updated when details changed and is reviewed on a periodic basis.
2. Our website provides links and information about a range of other support agencies.
3. This policy and procedure and the above document is drawn to the attention of new staff and volunteers during their induction.
4. We include information regarding relevant agencies in our staff induction packs and encourage staff members to build links and meet with appropriate agencies and professionals.
5. We have named link workers in key agencies.

Joint Working at a Strategic Level

Protocols and formal arrangements

1. We have agreed working protocols with a range of agencies including the Women's Housing Project, probation and health.
2. We are fully committed to and engage effectively with MARAC, MAPPA and Making Safe.

Local forums and strategic work

1. We participate effectively in a range of local forums and strategic groups including the Domestic Abuse Joint Strategic Group, mental health forum, homelessness forum, Countywide Making Safe meeting and so on.
2. We work with agencies in various ways to promote the needs of people affected by domestic abuse and/or sexual violence e.g. raising awareness of the needs of young people with the Youth Offending Team, by assisting local organisations to develop domestic abuse policies and so on.
3. We ensure that funders and key stakeholders are aware of our services through our strategic work, through applications for funding and by including them in our reviews of services.
4. Through both our strategic work, whilst representing victims at MARAC and through our day to day contact with other agencies we seek to improve responses for victims and survivors.

Consulting and involving stakeholders

1. We receive formal feedback from stakeholders through our annual stakeholder questionnaire. (attached as Appendix 1)
2. We send out referrer's questionnaires regularly.
3. We involve relevant funders and stakeholder in our business planning process and make them aware of and consult with them with regards to significant service development and/or alterations to existing services.
4. Where we make changes to key documentation such as the referral / eligibility process we ensure that key agencies are aware of this and are able to give us their views.
5. We co-operate positively with external reviews of our services by funders and stakeholders.

Complaints

1. We have a separate, well documented and publicised complaints procedure.
2. We encourage feedback from our partner agencies and as an organisation we deal positively with and learn from comments and complaints.
3. Information received via our complaints procedure is fed into our business planning process where this is appropriate.



IDAS Stakeholder Survey

IDAS provides a range of services for victims of domestic abuse and/or sexual violence including:

- York Women's Aid & Harrogate Women's Aid – emergency temporary accommodation
- Outreach Support – York, Hambleton & Richmondshire, Selby, Harrogate and Craven.
- IDVA Support - Hambleton & Richmondshire, Selby, Harrogate and Craven
- ISVA Support across the County to victims of sexual violence.
- Domestic Abuse Helpline
- Rape Support Helpline
- Training – online and face to face
- Support to children and young people through our Respect project.

As someone who works closely with our service we'd really appreciate it if you can complete the questions below and return the survey to us at: info@idas.org.uk.

Your answers will be used by us to monitor the services we provide and help improve and develop service delivery.

Thank you!

REFERRALS & SERVICE DELIVERY

- 1. Looking at the list on the first page, were you aware of all our services?**
(Please highlight your answers)

Y / N

If no, which ones hadn't you heard of?

- 2. Have you referred someone to one of our services?**

Y / N

If so, to which service?

- 3. What did you think of the referral process (consider how easy it was to refer and how quickly the referral was dealt with)?**

Excellent

Good

Fair

Poor

Additional comments:

- 4. How do you rate the support / service that the person you referred received?**

Excellent

Good

Fair

Poor

Additional comments:

5. Do you have information and leaflets about our service?

Y/N

Are they easy to read and understand?

6. Are we easy to contact?

Y / N

Additional comments:

7. When you do contact us, what standard of service do you receive?

Excellent

Good

Fair

Poor

Additional comments:

8. How well do you think we work with organisations like yours?

Very well

Fine

Not very well

Not at all

9. Would you refer to our services again?

Y / N

Additional comments:

DIVERSITY

1. To what extent do we meet the diverse needs of your clients?

Very well

Well

To some extent Not at all

2. Are you aware of any potential clients that you'd like to refer but are unable to access IDAS for reasons connected to their race, disability, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, language barrier or for any other reason?

Y / N

If you've answered yes, please provide further details.

STRATEGIC RELEVANCE

1. If our contact with you is largely strategic rather than operational, how well do we contribute to your strategic aims and objectives?

Very well

Well

Partly

Not at all

Additional comments:

2. In terms of our overall service, how do you think we compare in general with other support services you've worked with?

Much better

Slightly better

About the same

Worse

Please tell us why:

GENERAL

Do you have any comments from yourself or clients about IDAS services or any complaints, concerns, compliments or ideas for improvement?

Thank you for your time!