

# Introduction to domestic abuse in Portsmouth

**This leaflet has been developed for professionals supporting those experiencing domestic abuse, with or without children, living in Portsmouth. It explains the importance of identifying and responding to domestic abuse and offers guidance on the process and support options.**

In Portsmouth, domestic abuse (DA) has been a community safety and health and wellbeing priority for many years. The Domestic Abuse Strategy Group oversees delivery and improvement of services based on evidence and client feedback. The Domestic Abuse Practitioners Forum provides opportunities to consult and engage with those delivering domestic abuse services in the city.

The definition of domestic abuse can be found here: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-bill-2020-factsheets/statutory-definition-of-domestic-abuse-factsheet](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-bill-2020-factsheets/statutory-definition-of-domestic-abuse-factsheet)

The majority of domestic abuse incidents come to the attention of professionals when victims contact the police; however it is important for professionals to create an environment where victims, children and those who are being abusive feel able to ask for help and for professionals to ask about domestic abuse when they are concerned, or where signs or risk factors are present.

If you are concerned someone may be a victim it is important that you ask them, **BUT do not** ask questions about domestic abuse in front of the alleged perpetrator, their children or close family where the relationship with the victim is not known.

Exploratory questions could include:

- You seem upset/frightened/anxious/low/quiet, is there something troubling you?
- Have you ever felt frightened or had to change your behaviour because of someone you have/had a relationship with, or a family member?
- I have noticed [be specific on what you have noticed, like a bruise or damage to the property]. Can you tell me how this happened?

The double-page schematic overleaf explains the journey for you as a professional when supporting a client, including assessing risk to clients and children, wider needs of the whole family or the needs of single adults with no children.

## What is a risk assessment?

Risk assessment is a crucial part of helping to deal with DA. Levels of risk need to be identified to ensure the most appropriate course of action, and to ensure the safety of the victim. In Portsmouth, we recommend all professionals use the Safe Lives Domestic Abuse Stalking and Harassment (DASH) risk assessment, which identifies high-risk cases that need to be referred to the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC). You can download the DASH assessment from the Portsmouth Safeguarding Children's Partnership website [www.portsmouthscp.org.uk](http://www.portsmouthscp.org.uk)

## What is MARAC?

A domestic abuse Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference combines up-to-date risk information with a comprehensive assessment of a victim's needs and links those risks directly to the provision of appropriate services for all those involved in a domestic abuse case – victim, children and perpetrator.

The back page of this leaflet includes a jargon buster and provides further information on support options and contact details.

## Training

Training for professionals on identifying and responding to domestic abuse is delivered by Stop Domestic Abuse (SDA). To book a place please email [portsmouthtraining@stopdomesticabuse.uk](mailto:portsmouthtraining@stopdomesticabuse.uk)

# Domestic abuse referral pathway for adults & families

## CALL FOR SERVICE

Disclosure by victim/abusive adult to professional, for example:

Social Worker	Substance misuse worker
Housing Officer	Hospital/other health worker
Housing Needs and Advice Officer	Early Help Midwife
Mental Health worker	GP/Health Visitor
	Nursery/School

## POLICE EMERGENCY 999 (or non-emergency 101)

### 999 Police Control Room

Call handler assesses risk – deploys Response and Patrol Officers

### 101 call

Call handler assesses risk and responds as necessary – this could be a phone call

### Police Response

**If recorded as crime:**

Tasked to investigations team via Police IT

**If arrest made and perpetrator taken to custody:**

- Victim updated (Victim Code)
- Officers consider immediate safeguarding of victim (and children if present)
- Obtain statements and other evidence
- Take positive action including arrest
- Complete PPN1\* including perpetrator details – risk level and rationale
- Send to Police MASH\*

### Police Investigations and/or High Harm Team

Police MASH check/ratify PPN1 details, forward to MARAC\* or specialist domestic abuse services

### Police MASH

Check/ratify PPN1 details, DASH\* forward to MARAC or specialist domestic abuse services

### Police investigation

And/or Portsmouth High Harm Team\*

## 1 STAGE ONE UNDERSTAND RISK AND DISCUSS IMMEDIATE SAFETY PLANNING

- Professional completes DASH risk assessment check list
- Check who is already working with victim/family with MASH

### HIGH RISK DASH SCORE 14+ OR PROFESSIONAL JUDGEMENT

Risk of death or serious harm

Police intervention, legal protection, child/adult protection, refuge, hotel and security measures

Complex needs, lives seriously affected by domestic abuse, coercive control, co-existing substance misuse/mental health issues

**Inform victim of referral to Stop Domestic Abuse and MARAC  
No consent required**

### MEDIUM RISK DASH SCORE 10-13

Could be vulnerable or subject to coercive control but not actively seeking help

**Police: signpost victim to support services**

**Other agencies: get consent – refer to Stop Domestic Abuse and/or provide advocacy and support**

### STANDARD RISK DASH SCORE 0-9

Could be aware there is a problem, may be minimal violence

**Police: get consent – refer to Victim Care Service**

**Other agencies: get consent – skilled workforce provides advocacy and support**

## 2 STAGE TWO UNDERSTAND WIDER NEEDS

### Adults

**Adult MASH review PPN1 and consider:**

- If adult has care and support needs – Sec 42 enquiry, or
- MARM\* meeting

And/or with consent, complete a needs assessment and/or refer to appropriate service

**Lead co-ordinator to:**

- Understand wider needs of victim(s) and abusive adult
- Check if the adult has care and support needs
- Consider MARM meeting

### Families with children

**Children's MASH review PPN1 and consider:**

- Sec 47 or Sec 17 – informed by DASH and safety planning conversation Allocation to T4 Children's Social Care/Family Safeguarding Service

- Early Help Allocation to T3 Early Help or T2 co-ordinators

**Lead professional to:**

- Understand wider needs of victims, children and abusive adult
- Develop whole family plan

### Abusive adult only

**Lead professional understands whole family support needs, including:**

Substance misuse, mental health, behaviour change programme, housing, employment, etc.

**and for abusive adult only:**

Enforcement options, Domestic Violence Protection Order (DVPO), prosecution, McGrady Notice (eviction), etc.

## 3 STAGE THREE DELIVER AND REVIEW

**Lead officer to:**

- Manage dynamic risk (across partnership)
- Refer to MARAC if victim's risk increases to high
- Deliver appropriate service/intervention
- Review risk and need
- Collaborate and co-ordinate service delivery

**Lead officer pulls in specialist services:**

Stop Domestic Abuse (high and medium risk, refuge, and support for children)

Victim Care Service

Society of St James (drug/alcohol misuse)

Wellbeing Service  
Solent Mental Health Trust  
Talking Change

Two Saints (homeless/housing)

Employment support  
Housing management

### Families with children

Family Safeguarding Service

Early Help Service

Family Hubs

Schools

GP surgeries

### Abusive adult

Police progress enforcement activity

Domestic Violence Protection Order (DVPO)

Prosecution

Notice to Quit (eviction)

Behaviour change programme

CARA

UP2U: Creating Healthy Relationships

Building Better Relationships (CRC)

Community Mental Health Team

SSJ Drugs Services

Housing Needs and Advice

Employment

and/or consider support options above

\*See jargon buster overleaf

Police – On-going investigation or enforcement action

# Jargon buster

<b>DA</b>	Domestic Abuse
<b>DA Navigator</b>	Keyworker employed by SDA who supports any client referred to their service
<b>DAPN/O</b>	Domestic Abuse Protection Notice/Order
<b>DAPP</b>	Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programme
<b>DASH</b>	Domestic Abuse, Stalking & Harassment and Honour Based Violence – a risk assessment checklist
<b>DVA</b>	Domestic Violence and Abuse
<b>FSS</b>	Family Safeguarding Service who support parents who have children open to Children Social Care
<b>High Harm Team</b>	A Neighbourhood Policing Team focussed on tackling the highest harm issues in the district including sharing information to protect victims and working with Up2U to engage with perpetrators
<b>IDVA</b>	Independent Domestic Violence Advocate
<b>MARAC</b>	Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference for high-risk cases
<b>MARM</b>	Multi-Agency Risk Management meeting for vulnerable adults
<b>MASH</b>	Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (see contact details below for both Children and Adult MASH teams)
<b>PPD</b>	Public Protection Department, Hampshire Police - specifically deals with safeguarding issues, incl. DVA
<b>PPN1</b>	Police form - Public Protection 1
<b>'Professional judgement'</b>	If DASH is below 14, but your professional judgement tells you it should be referred to MARAC, provide written reasons and refer
<b>Right to ask (Claire's Law)</b>	Gives someone the right to ask the police if their partner poses a risk to them or their family
<b>Right to know (Claire's Law)</b>	Allows the police to disclose information to someone if their partner does pose a risk to them
<b>Safe accommodation</b>	Refuges or other safe accommodation and move-on accommodation for victims who are at risk of death or significant harm in their own home
<b>SPOC</b>	Single Point of Contact

## Further information and useful links

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-bill-2020-factsheets/statutory-definition-of-domestic-abuse-factsheet](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-bill-2020-factsheets/statutory-definition-of-domestic-abuse-factsheet)

# Support

## What support is available?

Support for victims assessed as standard risk (1-9 on DASH risk assessment) is delivered via the Victim Care Service (formally Victim Support).

Stop Domestic Abuse are contracted to provide the following services in Portsmouth:

- Refuge service
- Support for victims assessed as high risk (scoring 14+ on DASH risk assessment or professional judgement indicates a victim at high risk)  
Support for victims assessed as medium risk (scoring 10-13 on the DASH assessment) of domestic abuse
- Support to those who use unhealthy or abusive behaviours and want to change by delivering Up2U: Creating Healthy Relationships (Portsmouth's domestic abuse perpetrator programme). Includes partner support
- Support for 13-15-year-olds experiencing domestic abuse in their relationship

Group provision includes:

- **Who's in Charge?** A course for adolescent to parent abuse
- **DA Recovery Toolkit** – a 12 week course for male and female victims of DVA who are no longer in an abusive relationship
- **Freedom** – an 11 week course for female victims of DA who have left, or are still in, an abusive relationship
- **Up2U: Creating Healthy Relationships** – 6 to 40+ week programme (based on level of risk) to anyone aged 16+ who admit to using abusive or unhealthy behaviours in their relationship and want to change
- **Up2U: My Choice** – for victims with complex, multiple needs and chaotic lifestyles displaying unhealthy relationship attitudes and behaviours to prevent re-victimisation and to end the cycle of abuse.

## Contact details

**Hampshire Police:** 999 in an emergency and 101 for all other calls/enquiries

**Police MARAC coordinator:**

portsmouth.mash.admin@hampshire.pnn.police.uk or 101

**Stop Domestic Abuse:**

email [portsmouthreferral@stopdomesticabuse.uk](mailto:portsmouthreferral@stopdomesticabuse.uk) or [portsmouth.referral@stopdomesticabuse.cjsm.net](mailto:portsmouth.referral@stopdomesticabuse.cjsm.net) or call 023 9206 5494

**Victim Care Service:** call 0808 1781641 or email [hiow.referrals@victimsupport.cjsm.net](mailto:hiow.referrals@victimsupport.cjsm.net)

**MASH Children and Families Services:** call 0845 6710271 or 023 9268 8793 (out-of-hours service on 0300 5551373) or email [mash@portsmouthcc.gov.uk](mailto:mash@portsmouthcc.gov.uk)

**MASH Adult Services:** call 023 9268 0810 or [portsmouthadultmash@portsmouthcc.gov.uk](mailto:portsmouthadultmash@portsmouthcc.gov.uk)