



**Early Intervention & Accommodation Project:**

**Briefing for Participating Boroughs**

## **Background**

ALDCS, London Council and Respect/SafeLives have secured funding from MOPAC to support the delivery of an **early intervention programme for those who are at risk of perpetrating domestic abuse within families already in contact with social services**.

COVID-19 and lockdown has put increasing strain on individuals and families, in many cases escalating the risk of domestic violence and abuse. Respect has seen an increase in the number of people who are calling their phonelines not because they are experiencing abuse, but are experiencing increased conflict in the home, which could descend into abuse and violence.

In response to this, Respect/SafeLives will be delivering an emergency wrap around intervention to individuals who have been identified as being on the cusp of perpetrating abuse. This intervention will be designed to fully assess risk and potential for abuse alongside offering support and tools to help them manage their thoughts and behaviour in the longer term. Temporary alternative accommodation may also be offered to this individual, creating safe space to enable and appropriately respond to any further disclosure of abuse.

The aim of this intervention and accommodation pathway is to:

* provide a preventative intervention and potentially alternative accommodation for a temporary period until the added tensions of lockdown have eased
* reduce the risk of perpetration during lockdown and as restrictions ease
* increase safety of family members
* identify any additional previously unidentified risks or abuse and manage appropriately

This is a novel intervention, drawing on expertise developed through the delivery of [Drive](http://driveproject.org.uk/) and [Safe and Together](https://safeandtogetherinstitute.com/).

Funding for this initiative is being provided by MOPAC for a period of 6 months. The temporary accommodation element is being managed by the London Borough of Camden.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

### **Respect & SafeLives**

Funding has been provided by MOPAC to Respect & SafeLives to deliver the wrap-around intervention to individuals, identified by children’s social care in participating boroughs who are at risk of perpetrating domestic abuse.

Staff from Respect and SafeLives will be overseeing the project in terms of programme management, coordination of participating boroughs and project partners and reporting.

Drawing on knowledge and expertise from the delivery of Drive, Safe and Together, Make a Change and other interventions, Respect staff have designed the intervention model and tools – see *EIP Intervention Manual* for further detail. Respect will be overseeing delivery, continuing to develop the model in response to feedback and learning, and supervising the Early Intervention Practitioners.

### **Cranstoun**

Cranstoun will be the delivery partner for this project. Staff from Cranstoun will be fulfilling the role of Early Intervention Practitioner, with oversight and guidance from Respect. An SLA is in place between SafeLives, Respect and Cranstoun.

Cranstoun deliver domestic abuse services in several London boroughs, as well as the Drive Project in West Mercia.

### **London Borough of Camden**

The London Borough of Camden will be managing the temporary accommodation component of the intervention, on behalf of the ALDCS. The London Borough of Camden will be holding the funding available for temporary accommodation and working with participating boroughs to source appropriate temporary accommodation where required.

### **Participating Boroughs**

Participating boroughs will be responsible for:

* Working with Respect/SafeLives to develop and refine the model in response to feedback
* Identifying cases which may be suitable for the intervention and referring them to the service
* Working with the Early Intervention Practitioner to support the assessment, ongoing risk management and intervention planning and case closure process as outlined in the *Early Intervention Project – Guidance Pack for Social Care Practitioners*
* Supporting the partner and family during the intervention as outlined in the *Early Intervention Project – Guidance Pack for Social Care Practitioners*
* Sourcing appropriate temporary accommodation placements where it has been identified that it is suitable for an individual to be offered this alongside the behaviour change intervention.
* Facilitating access to alternative/additional child, victim and perpetrator services where required as part of the risk management and intervention plan, including onward referrals to perpetrator programmes, where an individual is assessed as not being suitable for this early intervention project.

Participating boroughs are to provide a named SPOC for the project. SPOCs will be responsible for engaging with model development and learning as well as supporting and facilitating relationships with relevant teams including children’s social care, housing, adult social care and information governance.

### **Intervention Overview**

### **Target group**

The primary target group for this intervention are individuals who are identified to be at risk /on the cusp of perpetrating abuse in families who are already in contact with children’s services. This is a lower risk cohort in need of early intervention to prevent abuse from occurring.

The intervention is designed to Intervene with abusive and harmful behaviours at an earlier stage before it becomes entrenched, thus facilitating enhanced safety for victims/survivors and their children before it reaches thresholds where intervention is mandated by courts or by child protection orders. Suitable families are therefore more likely to be identified through Early Help services.

### **Delivery**

1 X FTE equivalent Early Intervention Practitioner (employed by Cranstoun) will be in post for a period of 6 months, and will provide an anchor and core pan-London service.

For referrals identified by Children’s Social Care, the Early Intervention Practitioner will deliver:

* Consultation with social workers / Children’s Social Care Practitioners to develop risk management and intervention plans on cases that have been identified, including those that may not be suitable for the intensive behaviour change intervention
* 1:1 assessment and delivery of intensive behaviour change interventions to individuals at risk of perpetrating abuse where consent has been obtained from them and their partner. Where appropriate, this intervention will sit alongside the provision of alternative accommodation for the individual receiving the intervention for up to 4 weeks (although the behaviour change work may extend beyond the 4-week period).
* Identification and onward referral of cases where domestic abuse and risk is higher than originally identified, and more intense intervention required.

The Early Intervention Practitioner will also support social workers / Children’s Social Care practitioners to support the partner and family during the intervention. Further detail on this support, as well as the role of Children’s Social Care practitioner is available in the *Early Intervention Project – Guidance Pack for Social Care Practitioners.*

### **Referrals**

The Early Intervention Practitioners will work with SPOC and children’s social care teams to raise awareness of the intervention.

The Social Care practitioner, after identifying a case which fits the early identification risk markers, can refer The Early intervention Practitioner (referral form located in appendix A of the *Early Intervention Project – Guidance Pack for Social Care Practitioners*) with as much concise information around the case dynamic. Once completed the referral should be via secure email to the Early Intervention Practitioner, who, within 3 working days, will confirm receipt of the referral and advise on timelines for arrangement of the Case Consultation via telephone, or other suitable and secure video conferencing platform. Should you be unsure on the suitability of the case and require a discussion with the Early intervention Practitioners prior to completing the referral form, they can be reached on:

Phil Price: 07701 373131

Maria Cripps: 07843 386600

Referrals will be open between 19th Aug and 31th December. Referrals made after this date will only be accepted if a written agreement can be attained from Cranstoun, Respect/SafeLives and London Borough of Camden that wrap around support can be provided and ‘move on’ can be achieved by the time the accommodation has to be vacated.

### **Risk assessment and management**

While the focus of this intervention is on early intervention for individuals on the cusp of / at risk of perpetrating abuse, we recognise that it’s likely cases will be identified where domestic abuse is already present, and at higher levels of risk and harm. Risk assessment at intake, safety planning and joint-working on ongoing risk management are therefore core to the intervention model. Key processes include:

* Once a referral is accepted, during the initial case consultation, the Early Intervention practitioner and Children’s Social Care Practitioner will collaboratively formulate a domestic abuse informed Risk Management and Intervention Plan for the family.
* Following the Case Consultation with the Early Intervention Practitioner, if the assessment is that the case is suitable for progression to the intensive behavioural change pathway, the Social Care Practitioner will need to explain the service to both parties, obtaining consent.
* If the case is not deemed as suitable due to the level of risk or abuse occurring, the Risk Management and Intervention Plan will incorporate referral to relevant victims and/or perpetrator services in the borough.
* The Social Care Practitioner will be expected to work collaboratively on the case with the Early Intervention Practitioner in the pro-active management of risk for the duration of the intervention. The expectation is that the Early Intervention Practitioner and Social Care Practitioner will convene a professionals meeting a minimum of once per week to discuss updates, share information pertinent to risk, progress and intervention planning, including planning around the safety and wellbeing of the partner and family.
* Risk is reviewed frequently throughout the intervention using the DASH risk assessment tool. If during the intervention (or at any time thereafter) a victim is identified as being at high risk of harm, a referral should be made to the high risk IDVA team as soon as possible, and to MARAC if the client reaches the MARAC threshold.
* Moves to alternative accommodation with be risk assessed and any risks mitigated through the intervention planning and the accommodation agreement. Before the individual returns to the family, there will be further consideration of risks to children and adults, and an appropriate package of support agreed. If it is not safe and appropriate for the individual to return, there should be agreement about the steps that should be taken to protect and safeguarding the welfare and wellbeing of children and adult family members.

### **Partner/Victim and family support**

Support for the partner/victim and family will be planned collaboratively as part of the initial case consultation. Plans will be adapted throughout as part of the ongoing risk management process outlined above.

The role of the Social Care Practitioner in relation to support for the partner/victim throughout the intervention is detailed in the *Early Intervention Project – Guidance Pack for Social Care Practitioners.* The support provided must be in line with elements of the Respect standard[[1]](#footnote-1).

The Early Intervention Practitioner will engage with victims support services in each of the boroughs and will support onward referrals into these services where required.

### **Temporary accommodation and housing pathways**

On a case by case basis - where it is safe to do so and where both the client and partner consent, the client will be offered the opportunity to utilise a temporary accommodation provision for up to a period of four weeks.

This provision is available for those cases whereby the creation of a space for action for the partner is deemed safe and to enable, and appropriately respond to, any further disclosure of abuse; thus facilitating the opportunity for a more effective assessment and management of risk. During the client’s time at the temporary accommodation, the expectation is that they will be intensively engaging with the Early Intervention Practitioner whom will be providing bespoke support and the tools to help them manage their thoughts and behaviour in the longer term.

Suitability for a move into temporary accommodation assessed by Early Intervention and Social Care practitioners.

The Early Intervention Practitioner will work with an identified SPOC within the housing team of the relevant borough to arrange appropriate alternative accommodation, the costs of which will be covered by MOPAC, with payment facilitated by the London Borough of Camden. London-wide, funding for accommodation for up to 10 people is available, up to the value of £14,000.

Access to accommodation may be a challenge in some boroughs as options become more restricted as lockdown eases; however there may be more availability in other participating areas. Accommodation will be sought as close as possible to the family. Placements may be considered out-of-borough, where this is assessed as being safe and appropriate for the client and family and risks are appropriately mitigated.

Prior to any move the Early Intervention Practitioner will undertake scenario planning with the individual and family, so as to identify a plan should they decide that continuing to live separately following the 4-week intervention is the preferred outcome or it is assessed as being unsafe for the client to return to the family home. Both the client and their partner will be made aware of local options for housing prior to any move to temporary accommodation. The Early Intervention Practitioner will also look to support institutional advocacy to support access to appropriate accommodation where required.

### **Perpetrator pathways**

Access to other perpetrator programmes, for example a DVPP will be facilitated by the relevant borough if an individual is identified as being unsuitable for this intervention and requiring an intervention appropriate for higher-risk/harm behaviour. This may be provided in the borough, where a programme is available, or accessed elsewhere on a spot-purchased basis at a cost to the referring borough.

### **Information sharing and data protection**

Information sharing regarding individuals and families referred into the service will be based on consent (see the information and consent forms contained in the *Early Intervention Project – Guidance Pack for Social Care Practitioners*), and will occur within local statutory MARAC and MASH information sharing and data protection frameworks. Cranstoun and Respect will therefore need to be signed up to the relevant MASH/MARAC/Community Safety information sharing protocols to allow them to work and share information within these statutory frameworks. The SPOC will support this process.

Personal data captured for the purposes of case assessment, planning and risk management will be held on Cranstoun’s secure case management system (Iizuka), and will be shared only with the Early Intervention Practitioners and Respect staff member for the purposes of audit, quality assurance and case supervision.

Iizuka is in full compliance with ISO 27001, ISO 9001 and have Cyber Essentials and Cyber Essentials PLUS accreditation. These certifications indicate that the organisation has good information security and business management systems in place and subject themselves to external validation of this.

Anonymised data will be shared with SCIE for the purpose of the evaluation.

### **Evaluation and learning**

As a novel intervention, learning and evaluation is a key element of this project. We also see the opportunity that if effective, this intervention approach could be embedded in children’s social care teams as a tool to prevent the escalation of domestic abuse risk beyond COVID-19 lockdown.

An evaluation partner (SCIE, Social Care Institute of Excellence) will coordinate the evaluation and learning activities which are embedded in the day to day of the programme to allow for rapid feedback and learning around what's working, monitoring risk and impact.

The evaluation will focus on:

* Building a picture of who is referred, and the pathways/action taken, differentiating between cases consulted, those that received the intensive behaviour change intervention, and those that received the intervention and offered alternative temporary accommodation
* Understanding the impact of the intervention on the identification of risk / abusive behaviour
* Understanding whether the intervention reduces risk / increases safety for the partner/victim and family
* Assess what worked well and less well in the implementation and delivery

The evaluation will consist of:

* A small number of interviews with key stakeholders
* Analysis of anonymised data on cases collected throughout the course of the intervention. Given the small scale of both the intervention and the evaluation, SCIE will look to make use of information collected for practice purposes (e.g. referral data, assessments, Intervention plans etc.)

### **Additional Documentation**

Additional documentation to be provided to participating boroughs include:

* *Early Intervention Project – Guidance Pack for Social Care Practitioners,* which includes
  + Referral form
  + Referral guidance
  + Client and partner consent form
  + Risk Assessment and Intervention Plan templates
  + Accommodation Agreement
* *EIP Intervention Manual*
* *Briefing for Housing Teams*
* *Memorandum of Understanding – to be signed and returned to* [*meg.brodie@socialfinanceorg.uk*](mailto:meg.brodie@socialfinanceorg.uk)

1. https://hubble-live-assets.s3.amazonaws.com/respect/redactor2\_assets/files/105/Respect\_Standard\_FINAL.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-1)