

## PAN LONDON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### LOCAL INTEGRATION

**A number of questions were raised about how the pan London domestic violence service would integrate with existing local services covering the following points:**

- **single point entry/referrals to ensure there are no complications for victims and professionals;**
- **removing the risk of high risk victims “falling through the gaps”;**
- **duplication of existing services;**
- **location of the new services;**
- **capacity of new service provider to attend local borough meetings; and**
- **integration with other VAWG services, for example rape crisis centres.**

MOPAC recognises the critical importance of the new provider/s integrating well with local services to avoid duplication of provision or further confusion with regard to assessment and referral; and as such partnership development and integration of service models is a central part of the service specification and a core part of the evaluation criteria. With regard to the specification we will also be submitting information on the nature and structure of local services and models to inform the providers’ tenders. Furthermore the requirement to work in partnership and to develop effective referral pathways for the victims will be made part of the formal contract, the critical outcome being to maximise the value of local and regional services to support the victims of DV. It should also be noted that a local borough representative has agreed to be fully engaged in the commissioning process alongside broader health and CJS leads, which has allowed for a detailed review of the specification and for full engagement in the evaluation process of tenders.

MOPAC will arrange for providers to meet with boroughs as soon as possible after grant(s) have been awarded to facilitate detailed discussions on local integration, including effective referral pathways with single points of entry and the other points highlighted above. A three month mobilisation period has been timetabled before services go live to ensure that there is adequate time for these discussions and development work to take place. Our aim is to ensure that successful providers work with existing services, referral pathways and partner agencies to ensure that there is a seamless experience for victims accessing local services.

Regarding the additional IDVA provision the specification states that the service will need to identify the unmet need by existing IDVAs, where and how referrals will be received and respond to this. We have made it clear that there **must** be no risk of local confusion resulting in no agency taking responsibility for a high risk victim that has been identified.

We recognise the hard work some boroughs have put into joint commissioning of service across boroughs and we would hope that the pan London domestic violence service will further strengthen the support being provided to survivors of domestic abuse. We expect providers to work with boroughs to identify the best way to link into existing meetings and we are asking providers to map out existing services across the sub region(s) as part of the service we are commissioning to ensure that there is no duplication. Whilst we understand that needs assessments and co-ordination are already undertaken in each borough by VAWG coordinators, MOPAC expects providers to work with boroughs to gather existing needs assessments, service models and referral pathways and collate this on a sub-regional basis. We hope that the service

will be able to enhance services for victims by maximising existing sub regional provision for individual victims and identifying any gaps to be filled. It will also enable MOPAC and partners to better understand the pan London picture and will inform future service models.

In terms of the links between different VAWG service provisions, MOPAC expects providers to integrate locally with what is already happening, with referrals from and to different VAWG services. In the future we will look to how these different services can be integrated to ensure a wraparound service that is victim, rather than service focused. The alignment (as far as possible) of the borough cluster model with that used to commission rape crisis centres will assist with this future work.

## **0.5 POSTS IN EACH BOROUGH**

### **A number of questions were raised about the 0.5 posts in each borough including their purpose (could they be used for SDVC coordination) and location.**

The 0.5 posts are an element of Service Part 1, which includes the broader recruitment of IDVAs to a minimum level for London along the requirement to co-ordinate and integrate with wider services and providers. These posts are for direct support to medium and standard risk victims who are going through the criminal justice process (i.e. any victims who have reported domestic abuse to the police). This may involve direct one to one support, or referral onto other specialist and /or mainstream services. We do not expect these posts to be IDVAs i.e. working with high risk victims, as we have addressed the need for IDVAs separately and we are aware of the need for support for medium and standard risk victims going through the criminal justice system.

The intention of this part of the service is to provide direct support to victims rather than coordination type roles. Service Part 2 provides for innovation in the criminal justice system, which could include co-ordination roles. MOPAC is not commissioning these posts to meet the specific needs of particular groups (groups such as males, "travellers" and those with mental health needs were raised by boroughs) or to be based in particular locations. It will be for service providers, working with boroughs, to conduct a needs assessment (building upon work that has already been undertaken by boroughs) for the sub region and to map existing services and identify gaps for the service to address. MOPAC has included in the specification the need for the service to work with both male and female clients according to levels of need. MOPAC has specified that providers will need to outline how they will deliver services for men in addition to provision of women-only spaces and services that we know that women and girls value, and that make them feel safer, protected and understood.

MOPAC will expect providers to consider how best these posts can be shared across the sub region for which they are providing a service. MOPAC expects providers to discuss this with boroughs during the mobilisation period along with where the posts will be located across each sub region. MOPAC is expecting each half post to support victims in the borough for which it is allocated and to ensure that the location of the post best meets the needs of the victim.

## **IDVAs**

### **A number of questions were raised about how the required numbers of IDVAs were calculated as well as the purpose, location and training of these posts.**

MOPAC intends to provide an uplift of additional IDVA posts in some boroughs to work with high risk victims of domestic abuse, so that IDVA provision across London meets a minimum level across. MOPAC has calculated this required level in each borough using the Coordinated

Action Against Domestic Abuse (CAADA) recommendation that to achieve optimal social and financial impact there needs to be 4 IDVAs and 1 MARAC coordinator for every 100,000 of the adult (16 years and over) female population in every area<sup>1</sup>. A MOPAC survey of local authorities undertaken in August 2014, and follow up communication to confirm our understanding of provision, has revealed that the total number of additional IDVAs needed across London to bring each borough to the optimal level (using 2019 population estimates to incorporate projected demand) is 40.5.

MOPAC has not considered prevalence (i.e. numbers of victims reporting to the police or others services) to calculate required IDVA provision, as we have used the industry standard and part of the service will be focused on ensuring accessibility of services and outreach to ensure that more victims from under-represented groups are coming forward to seek help. Service Part 2 is based on prevalence, with funding allocated according to reported crime levels and cases that go to court.

The IDVAs that MOPAC is commissioning as part of the service will work to complement existing IDVAs in boroughs to ensure that all high risk domestic violence victims receive IDVA support. This includes those that report to the police and those that do not.

MOPAC will be requesting through the commissioning process that the bidders set out their implementation plans, which will need to set out how they can ensure high quality and trained staff whilst balancing the timeframes to begin services to support victims from July 2014. The contractual payment schedule will support the level of upfront costs expected from a contract with high levels of new personnel.

## **NEEDS OF VICTIMS**

**Some boroughs asked how the approach supports the 'cope and recovery' of victims and also asked how victims who do not want to report to the police will be supported by the service.**

MOPAC expects the service to provide a strategic pan London picture of need and services that are in place to meet this need. As MOPAC looks to 2017 and beyond, this information will be used to inform a sustainable service model that will seek to join up with other services, for example those concerning sexual assault, and provide a holistic response to victims.

Part 1 (IDVA provision and strategic co-ordination) is about providing support to high risk victims whether they choose to report to the police or not. MOPAC is aware that there is a high volume of medium and standard risk victims who do not want to report to the police who will not be supported via this service; however part of the service will be focused on ensuring accessibility of services and outreach to ensure that more victims from under-represented groups are coming forward to seek help.

## **FUNDING**

**A number of questions were raised concerning funding, including the:**

- **inequality of allocation of IDVA funding;**
- **impact of the service on existing local funding and resources;**
- **implications of local authority budget cuts on IDVA services; and**
- **sustainability of the service beyond 2017.**

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<sup>1</sup> 'CAADA Insights 1: A greater place of Safety', Coordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse (CAADA), November 2012

MOPAC seeks to ensure a level of consistency in the support offered to victims of DV in London irrespective of where they live, with a view to improving the experience of victims through the CJS. On this basis alongside broader economy of scale considerations MOPAC will be directly commissioning IDVA provision to be delivered at a sub – regional and local level.

We know from our work with boroughs, including the through the London Crime Prevention Fund money that we provide for IDVAs, that the cost varies significantly from borough to borough. MOPAC is not able to purchase IDVAs from existing local providers (suggested by some boroughs), as MOPAC is running a competitive grant award process that aligns with MOPAC’s outcome-based and value for money commissioning principles.

MOPAC recognises that it is a challenging time locally, with regard to potential reductions and changes to the structures of community safety services, of which in some cases IDVA provision maybe affected, however it is important to continue to seek to develop consistency of service offer to victims of DV in London. MOPAC acts on this basis, and will continue to offer strategic leadership in this area as well a continuing to work proactively with LA to understand service changes.

MOPAC does not anticipate the need for an exit strategy, as MOPAC will be working with boroughs and other partners through the London Crime Reduction Board to develop a sustainable funding model for the next stage of the service for 2017 and beyond.

## **COMMISSIONING PROCESS**

### **Questions were asked about the commissioning process, including development of the service specification and timeline.**

MOPAC will be going out to market shortly and will be running a competitive process to award conditional grant(s) in March 2015. A three-month mobilisation period will take place between April and June 2015 and the service will run from July 2015 to June 2017.

MOPAC is commissioning the service on a sub-regional basis, with boroughs clustered in four areas of London (North, South, East and West), meaning that there could be up to four different providers or consortia providers. The South sub-region is being commissioned as a single sub-region, but MOPAC is asking providers to deliver the service as two separate clusters of boroughs to make it more manageable.

In developing the approach MOPAC has been mindful of the strong representations that were made during the VAWG strategy consultation about potential negative impacts of pan London commissioning on smaller and specialist VAWG and BME organisations which are valued. For this reason MOPAC is commissioning the service in the sub-regions mentioned above and is open to consortia as well as single provider bids that provide the range of skills and experience needed to work worth all groups of victims. MOPAC is aware that there are some specialist VAWG and BME providers that work across the whole of London. The commissioning arrangement that MOPAC is operating does not preclude these providers from being involved in multiple consortia/ partnerships who are bidding for the service.

MOPAC operates on an outcome based commissioning model, to ensure quality of service delivery and value for money. These principles are, therefore, being applied to both parts of this service. The overall outcomes are clearly laid out in the specification; however specific

outcomes and targets will be discussed and agreed between MOPAC and the selected provider(s) during the three month mobilisation period.

## **EVIDENCE TO INFORM THE APPROACH**

### **Boroughs asked about the evidence that was used to inform the service, the consultation and engagement with boroughs that had taken place and learning that had been applied from other pan London commissioning approaches.**

The following consultation and analysis was undertaken to inform the development of this service:

- Consultation for the Mayor's VAWG strategy 2013-17 refresh, which included consultation on delivery of the pan London domestic violence service. The following key points that were raised have been considered as the commissioning approach has been developed:
  - Good practice is identified and applied to a wider London model;
  - Gaps are addressed and existing forms of provision are not duplicated;
  - The commissioning framework at a pan-London level does not impact negatively on smaller or specialist VAWG and BAME organisations which are valued; and
  - Consideration is given to the development of a commissioning alliance for London where specialist providers, commissioners and practitioners are engaged in model development.
- Analysis of the domestic abuse victim and offence profile and existing service provision.
- A MOPAC survey of local authorities in London in summer 2014 to identify current IDVA service provision and likely changes to this.
- Borough engagement (outlined below).

MOPAC has been keen to ensure that the service enhances and adds value to existing local services, so engagement with boroughs has been key. MOPAC organised a small focus group session with boroughs in November to seek initial feedback on the proposed service. To ensure that there was a cross-section of London boroughs present (there was a random selection process for each area of London), the following boroughs were invited to attend the session: Ealing, Westminster, Lewisham, Kensington & Chelsea, Newham, Croydon, Richmond, Tower Hamlets, Sutton and Hounslow. Following this session, all London Heads of Community Safety and VAWG Coordinators were sent communication about the development of the service. They were also provided with 'frequently asked questions and answers' that were raised at the focus group session and given the opportunity to ask further questions, which this document is responding to.

MOPAC wants to continue to work with boroughs in a collaborative way as the service is commissioned. The VAWG lead from the London Heads of Community Safety group has been invited to sit on the assessment panel for the grant award and MOPAC will facilitate meetings between selected provider(s) and boroughs after the grant has been awarded. Officers of MOPAC have discussed the ASCENT programme with London Councils and applied learning from this in the commissioning process. For example, we have built in a mobilisation process and we are ensuring that integration is a key part of the quality criteria for the service.

A question was asked about how the approach supports an increase in timeliness of the criminal justice process for victims. MOPAC is working to establish the link between CJS effectiveness and timeliness outside of this work and is looking at this for different offence types, including DV. Whilst we understand that there may be increased demand on the system, we feel that increasing effectiveness, through reducing attrition, will impact positively on timeliness. For example, one of the key areas we are looking at is improving effectiveness so that there are

more early guilty pleas, which will impact on timeliness. MOPAC's timeliness dashboard can be found here <https://www.london.gov.uk/priorities/policing-crime/data-information/criminal-justice-timeliness>