

Commissioning of Specialist Domestic Abuse Services for Children and Young People

Guidance for organisations responding to the Request

The Domestic Abuse Commissioner's Office is mapping commissioned specialist domestic abuse services for children and young people. This guidance is to help local service commissioners respond to the Domestic Abuse Commissioner's request for information. It will explain why we are asking for this information, and what the request will involve. If you have any questions or would like further information, please email: research@domesticabusecommissioner.independent.gov.uk

Why are you requesting this information?

Domestic abuse can have profound and long-lasting impacts on children's health, wellbeing and development; however, this can be mitigated by positive relationships and getting support at the right time. Unfortunately, it is difficult for children within England and Wales to get the help that they need: in 2022, only 29% of parents who wanted support for children following domestic abuse reported that they were able to get help.ⁱ

The Domestic Abuse Commissioner's vision is that:

All babies, children and young people who are subject to domestic abuse should receive an integrated and comprehensive response, rooted in understanding, prevention, effective intervention and long-term support.

By mapping existing commissioned services, we hope to understand current provision in order to make recommendations about the funding of services for children in the future. We want to ensure that every Tier 1 and Tier 2 Local authority and all Police and Crime Commissioning (PCC) areas or Mayoral Combined Authorities across England and Wales and Violence Reduction Units are represented within the survey.

How should my organisation prepare for the request?

The request is being made under section 15 of the Domestic Abuse Act ([‘Duty to co-operate with the Commissioner’](#)).

First, you need to agree locally how your area will respond to this request. We recognise that many support services for victims of domestic abuse are jointly funded. We therefore welcome the following responses to the request:

- **Joint responses** from Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Boards within each Community Safety Partnership (CSP) responding on behalf of each commissioning organisation within the partnership, OR
- **Individual responses** from the different authorities within the CSP.
- PCC areas can either respond independently or join their response with that of the local CSP, if that is agreed locally.
- PCC areas should also report on any services commissioned by their local Violence Reduction Units where appropriate.

Second, you will need to ensure that you know or have easy access to the following information before you start the survey:

1. The services or interventions that your organisation commissions.
2. The name of the organisations that provide the service or intervention.
3. Information about the type of service or intervention and the target population of children and young people that it tries to support.
4. The amount of funding that your organisation(s) has provided.
5. The current funding period (including the Month and Year of when the funding starts and ends).
6. An estimate of the number of children seen during the financial year ending March 2024.
7. An estimate of the average waiting time for the service or intervention.
8. Whether the services or interventions have been evaluated.

Please do not ask service providers to collate information for you. You can answer 'don't know' if you are unable to answer the questions. The survey is live between Monday 22nd January until Monday 26th February 2024.

What will you do with the information we provide?

All responses will be stored for 2 years after publication of the report and then destroyed. All computers used by the research team are password protected.

We will publish our findings at a regional level only. We will not publish information from individual local authority areas or any information that could potentially undermine procurement or commercial processes.

Findings from the analysis will be written up into a report during 2024. We will share our learning via an external report published on the Domestic Abuse Commissioner's website. We will also discuss our findings widely through the social media, webinars, conferences, and articles to highlight the needs of victims and survivors.

Asking questions or making a complaint about the request

If you would like to ask a question or complain about any aspect of this request, you can do so to any member the Domestic Abuse Commissioner's Office. Please email research@domesticabusecommissioner.independent.gov.uk. To help us to respond to your comment or complaints effectively, please tell us it relates to the 'Commissioner Survey.'

Guide to working through the survey

Most questions within the survey are simple 'tick box' questions. The following table sets out the different questions within the survey.

Survey section	Guidance for these pages
Who is providing this information?	You will be asked for your work email address and to indicate on behalf of which organisation(s) you are responding. Next, you will be directed to drop down lists where you can choose your geographical area.

Comprehensive needs assessment	One question asking whether your organisation has conducted a local needs assessment that includes a comprehensive section on children and young people.
Commissioning services for children affected by domestic abuse.	<p>You are asked to indicate whether your organisation currently commissions any services designed for children affected by domestic abuse.</p> <p>If you answer 'Yes,' you will be directed to a further set of questions that you will be asked to complete about each service or intervention.</p> <p>If you answer 'No,' you will be asked whether you plan to commission a service during the next financial year and then will be directed to the end of the survey.</p>
About the services that you commission for children and young people.	<p>The following set of questions are for those organisations who have said 'Yes,' they commission services for children affected by domestic abuse. You will have space within the questionnaire to provide information on 10 separate services or interventions. This is because if one service provider delivers several different services, we want you to record these separately, so that we can understand the extent of provision in your area in detail. If you think you need more than 10 opportunities to capture all of the specialist services for children and young people in your area, please contact the research team at:</p> <p>research@domesticabusecommissioner.independent.gov.uk. We will arrange to discuss what would be the most convenient way to provide the information from your area.</p> <p>You do not need to record information about the following types of services or interventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When children are being helped indirectly because their parent or carer is being supported, e.g., parenting interventions. • Advocacy for a child's school place. • Creche facilities provided while the parent or carer is supported. • Children's Social Care

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Services or interventions for child sexual abuse and exploitation. <p>First, you will be asked to provide the name of the intervention or service and then also the name of the organisation providing the service.</p> <p>You will then be asked to indicate which children or young people are the target population for the service, e.g., a child or young person and also their non-abusing parent or carer. Next, the survey will ask you to indicate whether the service is community based or accommodation based, i.e., services that are part of the range of services provided through a refuge or safe accommodation. The last question in this section asks whether the service or intervention has been evaluated, and if so whether published findings are available.</p>
What type of service is it?	<p>Second you will be presented with a long list of different types of services. To help you navigate the list we have divided it into three different sections, however we want you to choose only one service type from the whole list and tick 'not applicable' within the sections that you did not use. The three sections are:</p> <p>(1) Services for individual children and young people (or to siblings),</p> <p>(2) Services or interventions delivered to groups of children and young people,</p> <p>(3) Other services for babies, children and young people and their families.</p>
Funding provided by your organisation or partnership	<p>For this third section you need the following information about the current funding arrangements for the service to hand.</p> <p>The total amount of funding that the organisation(s) that you are responding on behalf of has provided for the service. You do not need to provide information about other sources of funding that you may be aware of that the service receives.</p> <p>The start and finish dates of the funding period to the nearest month.</p>

	<p>Whether the type of funding for the service is provided via a grant, contract/commissioning, or is provided in-house.</p> <p>You will also be asked whether, <u>in your opinion</u>, the funding for this service will be at risk when the current funding ends. Remember we will only publish information at a regional level and not individual responses.</p>
Demand for services	<p>The final set of questions are designed to help us estimate the current demand for services across England and Wales. We will ask whether you can provide an approximate figure for the number of children and young people helped during the current financial year. We realise that this can only be an estimate. If you answer 'Yes,' you will be directed to space to provide a numerical figure. If you answer 'No,' you will be directed to the next question which will ask you to indicate the usual waiting times for children to receive the service.</p>
Do you commission any other services?	<p>You will have now completed all of the sections of the survey about the service you commission. Next, you will be asked if you commission any other services for children affected by domestic abuse. If you answer 'Yes,' you will be taken to the 'About the services you commission' section that will enable you to provide details about the second service you commission. If you answer 'No' you will be taken to the end of the survey. This process will continue until you have recorded information about up to 10 different services or interventions.</p>

About the Domestic Abuse Commissioner

The role of the Domestic Abuse Commissioner is to be independent and speak on behalf of victims and survivors. The Commissioner can use statutory powers, which are set out in the Domestic Abuse Bill, to raise public awareness and hold both agencies and government to account in tackling domestic abuse. For more information see the Commissioner's website here: <https://domesticabusecommissioner.uk/>

ⁱ Domestic Abuse Commissioner (2022) A Patchwork of Provision, How to meet the needs of victims and survivors across England and Wales <https://domesticabusecommissioner.uk/national-mapping-of-domestic-abuse-services/>