

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Form

Please read EIA guidelines when completing this form

1. Name of Service Area/Directorate

Name of Head of Service for area being assessed: Hayley Doyle

Directorate: Adult and Community Wellbeing

Individual(s) completing this assessment: Hannah McSherry / Kate Thompson-Dixon

Date assessment completed: June 2023

2. What is being assessed

Activity being assessed (eg. policy, procedure, document, service redesign, strategy etc.)

Commissioning of domestic abuse support services

What is the aim, purpose and/or intended outcomes of this activity?

To provide a range of accessible services for survivors of domestic abuse and their children through a newly designed and commissioned services.

Name of lead for activity

Hannah McSherry

Who will be affected by the development and implementation of this activity?

- Service users
- Patients
- Carers
- Visitors
- Staff
- Communities
- Other:

Is this:

- Review of an existing activity/policy
- New activity/policy
- Planning to withdraw or reduce a service, activity or presence?

What information and evidence have you reviewed to help inform this assessment? (name your sources, eg. demographic information for services/staff groups affected, complaints etc.)

Performance information from existing contracts, Needs Assessment data for the 2021/22 financial year, Domestic Abuse Act 2021 guidance, feedback from stakeholders and people with lived experience of using domestic abuse services in Herefordshire.

Summary of engagement or consultation undertaken (eg. who and how have you engaged with, or why do you believe this is not required)

A detailed consultation and engagement process was undertaken in 2022 in order to gain feedback on the Domestic Abuse Strategy for Herefordshire which was updated in 2022 and more broadly on current services and gaps in services / support in Herefordshire. This work was undertaken by West Mercia Women's Aid.

Summary of relevant findings

The key finding of the consultation with people with lived experience of domestic abuse in Herefordshire undertaken in 2022 are as follows:

- Domestic abuse is found within every demographic group within Herefordshire
- Within varied cultural, social and economic contexts, the domestic abuse experience is remarkably similar
- Professionals and survivors alike had similar views on gaps and improvements for services
- Amongst survivors, many voiced a desire to become actively involved in fighting domestic abuse and supporting other survivors
- Across the board participants agreed that public education and awareness must be a priority
- Likewise, participants agreed that non-DA professionals are not sufficiently equipped to support survivors
- Much more work must be done to engage and include survivors from marginalised communities where domestic abuse is often not spoken about as a result of normative values e.g. the travelling community.
- Funding and/or alternative services are needed to alleviate the pressures on support workers as well as reduce the wait time for group work, 1-1 DA support and mental health support
- In order to meet the new statutory requirements, children must have better access to support as survivors in their own right

3. The impact of this activity

Please consider the potential impact of this activity (during development and implementation) on each of the equality groups outlined below. **Please tick one or more impact box below for each Equality Group and explain your rationale.** Please note it is possible for the potential impact to be both positive and negative within the same equality group and this should be recorded. Remember to consider the impact on staff, public, patients, carers, partner organisations, etc. in these equality groups.

Equality Group	Potential <u>positive</u> impact	Potential <u>neutral</u> impact	Potential <u>negative</u> impact	Please explain your reasons for any potential positive, neutral or negative impact identified
Age	✓			<p>Services are open to anyone that is a victim of domestic abuse regardless of their age.</p> <p>Despite the national prevalence of more females in younger age groups as victims, local service provision data shows that more females aged 25-44 have accessed help and support.</p> <p>Specialist services have been developed in Herefordshire to support children and young people and it is proposed that these continue.</p> <p>The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 recognised children and young people as victims of domestic abuse in their own right. There is also an increasing awareness of the needs of older victims of domestic abuse and particularly elder</p>

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				<p>abuse where the perpetrator is the son, daughter or grandchild of the victim.</p> <p>There is very little data available about this issue nationally, but local adult social care data and the findings of domestic homicide reviews indicate that this is a growing area of risk.</p> <p>Herefordshire Safeguarding board offers a range of training for professionals including domestic abuse and young people's relationships and domestic abuse and older people.</p>
Disability		✓		<p>Domestic abuse services in Herefordshire have and will continue to be accessible to disabled people.</p> <p>Disabled people are more likely to be victims of DA than non-disabled people. A study by SafeLives (2017) found that DA against disabled people is often more severe and frequent and occurs over longer periods of time than for non-disabled victims. SafeLives indicates that there are numerous factors as to why this is the case, including support being inaccessible, stereotypes of what a victim or perpetrator looks like and challenging dynamics e.g. where the perpetrator may also be the victim's carer and hold a position of power over the victim.</p> <p>More work is being done to promote domestic abuse services to people with protected characteristics through the new services.</p> <p>Herefordshire does not currently have any fully accessible units of safe accommodation in the community, but refuge accommodation is accessible. The availability of accessible accommodation in Herefordshire is and continues to be a significant challenge.</p>
Gender Reassignment		✓		<p>Acceptance to the service is not affected by gender reassignment; the service is open to everyone. Additional specialist support might be drawn upon from service providers like Galop where needed in order to ensure that the right support is given at the right time.</p> <p>Galop is an organisation that works directly with LGBTQ+ people who have experienced abuse and violence.</p> <p>Demand levels are very low, but the council aims to commission a wide range of services that can</p>

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				<p>respond flexibly to need; dispersed safe accommodation with support is an example of this as it is not a gender specific service.</p> <p>More work will be done to promote services to people with protected characteristics through the new services in line with the aims of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.</p>
Marriage & Civil Partnerships		✓		Acceptance to the service is not affected by marital status; the service is open to everyone.
Pregnancy & Maternity		✓		Acceptance to the service is not affected by pregnancy and maternity; the service is open to everyone. Refuge and dispersed safe accommodation is suitable for families.
Race (including Travelling Communities and people of other nationalities)		✓		<p>Acceptance to the service is not affected by race; the service is open to everyone.</p> <p>Local data indicates that the highest level of DA was prevalent among White and Mixed ethnic groups, this could be that DA is a hidden crime among ethnic minority communities. More is being done to promote services to people with protected characteristics through the new services in line with the aims of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.</p> <p>Herefordshire Safeguarding board offers a range of training for professionals including 'Practical considerations for effective practice with Gypsy and Traveller families'.</p>
Religion & Belief		✓		Acceptance to the service is not affected by religion and beliefs; the service is open to everyone. Service providers will be asked to take into consideration the needs of people with different faiths.
Sex (including issues of safety and sexual violence)	✓			Due to the risks associated with domestic abuse it has been agreed that support for male survivors will be separated out from support for female victims going forward. This means that a separate service will be commissioned to support male victims of domestic abuse.
Sexual Orientation	✓			Acceptance to the service is not affected by sexual orientation; the service is open to everyone. Crime Survey for England and Wales data shows that Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ) people are disproportionately affected by domestic abuse.

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				<p>Galop highlight that there are numerous myths and misconceptions regarding DA and the LGBTQ+ community which can make it more difficult for people from this community to seek help and be recognised as victims, such as thinking that women do not perpetrate abuse or that gay men can more easily protect themselves.</p> <p>More work will be done to promote services to people with protected characteristics through the new services in line with the aims of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.</p>
Other Vulnerable and Disadvantaged Groups (eg. carers, care leavers, homeless, social/ economic deprivation, etc)	✓			<p>The service is open to anyone who needs it. Many people come to the service homeless as a result of fleeing domestic abuse. Services are needed to support vulnerable and disadvantaged people to rebuild their lives.</p> <p>More work will be done to promote services to people with protected characteristics and those living in marginalised communities through the new services in line with the aims of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.</p>
Health Inequalities (any preventable, unfair & unjust differences in health status between groups, populations or individuals that arise from the unequal distribution of social, environmental & economic conditions within societies)	✓			<p>Support services are needed to ensure that survivors and their children are able to access services including education, health, housing and budgeting. The proposed services will offer support to people regardless of their health status.</p>

What actions will you take to mitigate any potential negative impacts?

Potential negative impact	Actions required to reduce/ eliminate negative impact	Who will lead on action?	Timeframe

Where an impact on any of the Equality Groups is realised after the implementation of the project/service/policy, the commissioners and/or providers of the project/service/policy will seek to minimise the impact and carry out a full review of this EIA.

4. Monitoring and review

How will you monitor these actions?

Quarterly once the new contracts are in place.

When will you review this EIA? (eg in a service redesign, this EIA should be revisited regularly throughout the design & implementation)

Annually

5. Equality Statement

- All public bodies have a statutory duty under the Equality Act 2010 to set out arrangements to assess and consult on how their policies and functions impact on the 9 protected characteristics.
- Herefordshire Council will challenge discrimination, promote equality, respect human rights, and design and implement services, policies and measures that meet the diverse needs of our service, and population, ensuring that none are placed at a disadvantage over others.
- All staff are expected to deliver services and provide services and care in a manner which respects the individuality of service users, patients, carers etc, and as such treat them and members of the workforce respectfully, paying due regard to the 9 protected characteristics.

Signature of person completing EIA

Hannah McSherry

Date signed

21/06/2023