



# Gloucestershire Constabulary's approach to tackling domestic abuse

HMIC Revisit 9 – 10 June 2014

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ISBN: 978-1-78246-505-8

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## Introduction

This report sets out Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary's (HMIC's) findings following our revisit to Gloucestershire Constabulary in June 2014 to assess progress made against the 13 recommendations in the report Gloucestershire Constabulary's approach to tackling domestic abuse published on 27 March 2014.

## Summary of the revisit findings

The constabulary has invested a considerable amount of time and resource within a very short period following the publication of HMIC's original report to improve its response to victims of domestic abuse and their families. The chief constable has placed tackling domestic abuse as the constabulary's number one priority. Evidence of this approach is shown by a constant presence of computer screen-savers, posters, personally-issued staff leaflets and promotion. The chief officer team has shown active leadership in this area.

The constabulary has understood the identified risk areas and put measures in place to improve service delivery to victims and make people safer in Gloucestershire in the short and longer-term. The identification of victims, particularly vulnerable and repeat victims, has improved, and there is a greater understanding of the need to safeguard victims, most noticeably from frontline officers and staff who provide the initial response to victims of domestic abuse. Although further clarity is required, there is an improved understanding throughout the organisation about who is responsible for managing the safety of victims at each stage of an investigation. We found areas of clear progress and some areas where more work is necessary to deliver intended improvements. There is a great deal of energy being applied to make sure that these improvements will be put in place and provide sustainable and lasting benefits.

Our findings in response to each of the 13 recommendations are set out beginning on page 8.

## HMIC 2013 Domestic Abuse Inspection

In September 2013, HMIC was commissioned by the Home Secretary to inspect the police response to domestic violence and abuse. Our report, *Everyone's business: Improving the police response to domestic abuse*, found that while most forces and police and crime commissioners said that domestic abuse is a priority for their areas, this is not being translated into an operational reality. HMIC was concerned to find that, despite the progress made in this area over the last decade, not all police leaders are ensuring that domestic abuse is a priority in their forces – it is often a poor relation to other policing activity.

We were asked to consider:

- the effectiveness of the police approach to domestic violence and abuse, focusing on the outcomes for victims;
- whether risks to victims of domestic violence and abuse are adequately managed;
- identifying lessons learnt from how the police approach domestic violence and abuse; and
- making any necessary recommendations in relation to these findings when considered alongside current practice.

To answer these questions, HMIC collected data and reviewed files from the 43 Home Office funded forces. We spoke to 70 victims of domestic abuse in focus groups throughout England and Wales and surveyed over 100 victims online. We also surveyed 200 professionals working with victims of domestic abuse.

We inspected all police forces in England and Wales, interviewing senior and operational leads, holding focus groups with frontline staff and partners, and carried out visits to police stations (which were unannounced) to test the reality of each force's approach with frontline officers. Our inspection teams were supplemented by expert peers, including public protection experts from over 15 forces and those working with victims of domestic abuse in voluntary and community sector organisations.

HMIC inspected Gloucestershire Constabulary between 2 and 5 December 2013. The report was published on 27 March 2014.

HMIC's inspection of Gloucestershire Constabulary raised significant concerns about the ability of the constabulary to deal consistently and appropriately with victims of domestic abuse and to reduce the risk of harm to them. There were

weaknesses in the way the constabulary dealt with domestic abuse at the first point of contact and its ability to provide consistently an effective response to help safeguard victims. We found the systems in place incoherent and confusing which meant the service received by victims was fragmented. Specialist resources were stretched and the strong commitment to tackling domestic abuse within the constabulary's public protection bureau (PPB) was not replicated across the constabulary leadership as a whole. Given the scale of the areas for improvement, HMIC concluded that swift action was needed by the constabulary to address the risks identified in its 27 March 2014 report:

## **Identifying victims**

HMIC found risks in the way the constabulary managed the initial service to victims. While there was commitment at the first point of contact to identify victims of domestic abuse, processes were not routinely followed to ensure a consistent approach. Risk assessment was inconsistent and, as a result, those victims most at risk might not have received the best available service at the earliest opportunity. Supervision in the control room and on the front line needed to be enhanced to support immediate action and safeguarding so that the constabulary could have confidence that victims consistently get the service they need.

## **Keeping victims safe**

Although there was strong commitment to tackling domestic abuse within the constabulary's PPB, HMIC found that across the constabulary as a whole there was a lack of clear ownership and, other than where a serious crime had occurred, there were weaknesses and inconsistencies in the response to domestic abuse victims, especially in relation to safeguarding. The governance structures for domestic abuse acted as a barrier to effective strategic oversight and direction for the constabulary as a whole. The result diluted any common understanding that domestic abuse is everyone's responsibility resulting in the risk that some victims might not get the service they need.

## **Management of risk**

Victims of domestic abuse who were subjects of serious crime received a good service from the PPB. However, the service to victims not dealt with by the PPB was disjointed and inconsistent. The PPB only dealt with a very small proportion of domestic abuse incidents, though these were the highest risk victims. The vast majority of cases were dealt with by other local teams across the constabulary, where the focus was on the crime and the offender, not the victim.

There was a lack of clarity about roles and responsibilities for victims' safety and there was a risk that safeguarding was not effective for all victims.

Partnership working in Gloucestershire in relation to high-risk domestic abuse cases was a real strength and effective relationships between the PPB and partners were focused on making victims safer. The daily multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) pilot is innovative and promotes early multi-agency intervention and information sharing.

## **Organisational effectiveness for keeping people safe**

HMIC found various points in the process where the systems were not sufficiently robust to manage effectively future risk to victims. The constabulary recognised that it needed to evaluate outcomes for domestic abuse and to manage domestic abuse and risk to victims properly in the future. However, there was no consistent understanding of what good or improved performance looked like, performance was not considered across the constabulary and monitoring did not lead to management and performance improvement. Established processes were in place to embed corporate learning following recommendations from serious case and domestic homicide reviews and there was some encouraging work being done to identify and manage high-risk perpetrators of domestic abuse.

# Gloucestershire Constabulary Domestic Abuse

Revisit 9-10 June 2014

## Introduction

Gloucestershire Constabulary was one of four forces identified by HMIC to be revisited to examine progress against the 13 recommendations in the report *Gloucestershire Constabulary's approach to tackling domestic abuse* of 27 March 2014.

During the revisit, we used the same inspection criteria as in the original inspection:

- the effectiveness of the police approach to domestic violence and abuse, focusing on the outcomes for victims;
- whether risks to victims of domestic violence and abuse are adequately managed;
- identifying lessons learnt from how the police approach domestic violence and abuse; and
- making any necessary recommendations in relation to these findings when considered alongside current practice.

To answer these questions, HMIC reviewed Gloucestershire Constabulary's domestic abuse-related documents, including domestic abuse policy and guidance, continuous improvement action plan and performance results. We spoke to chief officers, senior managers (including those from the constabulary's PPB) and carried out visits to police stations (which were unannounced) to test the reality of the constabulary's progress in promoting understanding of procedures, roles and responsibilities and how these made victims safer.

## Revisit findings set against the recommendations from the 2013 report

- 1. The constabulary should review its processes at the first point of contact to ensure callers and risk levels are assessed consistently, in particular, to clarify and apply definitions of 'repeat victim' and 'vulnerable victim' to ensure that staff can better identify those most at risk and provide an appropriate service.**

The constabulary has introduced a detailed *Policing Domestic Violence - How to?* guide that clarifies definitions around repeat and vulnerable people for all staff. This is supported by a comprehensive training programme. The guide contains a mandatory question set for call-takers to use in all domestic abuse incidents. These questions include whether there has been previous contact and considerations about vulnerability.

Within the control room the definitions of domestic abuse, repeat victim, vulnerability, stalking and harassment are generally well known and understood. The question set is being used and systems are being checked to provide a better understanding of previous contact with the police. This was evidenced in the review of recent incident logs and through talking to staff. There was an awareness of the *Policing Domestic Violence - How to?* guide and where to find it. This means that call-takers are more likely to identify repeat victims of domestic abuse and those who are more vulnerable.

- 2. The constabulary should strengthen its supervision of domestic abuse incidents to ensure immediate action taken and closure of incident logs is appropriate.**

The constabulary has introduced authorisation structures for closure of domestic abuse incidents in the control room, accompanied by stronger quality assurance processes.

The constabulary has trained 30 officers to operate as an incident assessment unit (IAU) within the control room which offers the potential to strengthen arrangements. This is aimed at improving the recognition of risk and vulnerability and resolution at first point of contact, improving the investigation and management of crime by the early identification of appropriate investigative resources and allocating those resources efficiently.

Similarly the introduction of the domestic abuse teams on policing areas should enhance supervision. The teams, managed by an inspector, will deal with some



medium- and standard-risk domestic abuse incidents and offenders, and act as a centre of advice and guidance for local officers dealing with the remainder of medium- and standard-risk cases, for example around safety planning.

These additional layers of supervision and quality assurance will mean that if mistakes are made, then they are more likely to be identified and rectified at an early stage, providing an opportunity to safeguard victims at the earliest opportunity.

**3. The constabulary should streamline its governance structures to ensure appropriate partnership and operational oversight to drive performance and improvement.**

The constabulary has streamlined its overarching governance arrangements. The assistant chief constable (ACC) (operations) is now the chief officer responsible for the oversight of domestic abuse policing and the constabulary's work with partner organisations in tackling domestic abuse in partnership. The ACC chairs the constabulary's strategic performance operations meeting (POM), which feeds the tasking and co-ordination of resources, alongside the public protection service delivery board (PPSDB) that drives service improvement.

Partnership relationships remain strong and the constabulary and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) continue to build on these, for example with the introduction of the new county-wide, multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) and commissioning framework.

**4. The constabulary should consider a domestic abuse communications strategy to:**

- **promote constabulary policy and guidance;**
- **clarify roles and responsibilities of various functions in relation to domestic abuse investigation and keeping victims updated; and**
- **articulate a clear message that addressing domestic abuse and making people safe is everyone's responsibility.**

The constabulary has introduced a domestic abuse communications and engagement plan which outlines operational objectives, provides a clarification of roles and responsibilities, describes working with partners and sets out how best to engage with communities. The plan clearly reinforces that addressing domestic abuse and keeping people safe is everyone's responsibility. This has

been supported by the strategic priority and a comprehensive training strategy, promoted throughout the constabulary, and received increased publicity in the media.

We found an increased awareness, understanding and recognition that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Our inspectors were particularly impressed with the increased level of understanding and confidence around dealing with domestic abuse across frontline response and neighbourhood staff.

**5. The constabulary should conduct a training needs analysis and develop a training development plan to include all those involved in dealing with domestic abuse.**

The constabulary has conducted a comprehensive training needs analysis (TNA) for all staff involved in dealing with domestic abuse. The TNA included staff needs in relation to the definition of domestic abuse, compliance and quality of domestic abuse, stalking and harassment and so-called honour-based violence (DASH) risk assessments, evidence-gathering, risk management and victim perspectives. As a result of the TNA, focus groups informed an initial (urgent) eight-week training plan commissioned through the PPSDB. The plan includes mandatory computer-based training modules, face-to-face briefings; and master class events. This phase of training is currently being evaluated. Our experience in speaking to a cross-section of staff was very positive with an improved level of understanding being demonstrated – the recent introduction of guidance on national Domestic Violence Prevention Notices was provided to frontline staff and understood by all staff that we spoke to.

At the same time a more sustainable longer-term training plan has been developed tailored to the audience with a variety of delivery methods supported by timescales.

**6. The constabulary should review its risk assessment and safety planning processes to introduce more robust compliance and supervision.**

The constabulary has reviewed its risk assessment and safety planning processes, reinforcing the importance of DASH so staff have a better understanding of the rationale and outcomes. As a result we have heard that both compliance and quality have improved significantly. In tandem, the constabulary has reinforced local supervisors' responsibilities to quality assure risk assessments, supported by improved checks and balances through the central referral unit (CRU) and PPB processes (MASH, MARAC).

In moving towards the new operating model the constabulary recognises that there are opportunities to refine the roles of the current MARAC and newly developing MASH in order to avoid duplication and enhance the strength of current arrangements.

All frontline staff now have to meet specific personal development review objectives around safeguarding. The intention is for domestic abuse teams on local areas to focus on safeguarding as a priority and to provide guidance and support to local staff.

These changes mean that staff understand their role in safeguarding victims and also know where they can go for advice. This means that victims are more likely to receive a better service from the police.

**7. The constabulary should undertake work to understand better the high level of cautions in relation to domestic abuse crimes.**

The constabulary has tightened processes and authority levels for cautions related to domestic abuse incidents. The PPSDB has also commissioned a wider constabulary review into cautioning practices to include investigative, qualitative and victim-focussed considerations. This will mean there is a better understanding of when and why cautions are given.

**8. The constabulary should clarify roles and responsibilities of the various teams in relation to:**

- **domestic abuse investigation;**
- **safety planning; and**
- **keeping victims updated.**

The *Policing Domestic Violence - How to?* guidance sets out the role and responsibility of the PPB staff in dealing with serious crime and serious harm associated with domestic abuse. However areas of responsibility between the PPB and local officers remain blurred because when capacity allows the PPB to act outside of their published terms of reference in a genuine attempt to apply their specialist capability to other high risk cases, the result is uncertainty around the ownership and accountability for different teams for both investigation and safeguarding.

The introduction of the new local area domestic abuse teams is a positive intervention by the constabulary to improve the standard of safeguarding and investigation in cases not dealt with by the PPB. We recognise that this new structure is embedding and, in order to maximise their potential, the

constabulary should clearly communicate the teams' roles and responsibilities. It is important that the teams develop good working relationships and practices with the PPB and local staff because currently their role has not been clearly articulated and is not well understood. This means that although there is some improvement, officers may still misunderstand who is dealing with a particular case and as a result victims may not receive the service they need.

**9. The constabulary should consider a greater role for neighbourhood teams in victim safety planning and safeguarding.**

Recent developments include improvements to tasking resources and the new local area domestic abuse teams to support greater involvement of neighbourhood staff in safety planning. Once these teams are established and begin to influence the activity of local teams, we recognise the opportunities this brings to place neighbourhood teams at the heart of victim safeguarding. At this time we acknowledge that this area is in development.

**10. The constabulary should clarify who is responsible for keeping victims informed when perpetrators are imprisoned to ensure risk is reviewed upon release.**

In line with the new Code of Practice for Victims of Crime, the constabulary's position is that the officer in charge of the case (OIC) is responsible for keeping victims informed. This approach is understood by staff.

The CRU, working with witness care teams and the national offender management service (NOMS), is currently developing a more coherent structure around notification of prison releases. The PPB holds a weekly meeting to discuss prison releases of domestic abuse offenders and inform OICs to enable them to review risk and update victims. Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service (GDASS) is also involved at this stage to provide support for victims. The full process is hoped to be up and running by July 2014. This will mean that there will be a clear process in place to notify victims of prison releases and ensure that appropriate safeguarding takes place.

**11. The constabulary should improve performance management of domestic abuse, agreeing success outcomes and introducing qualitative measures, holding all those involved to account.**

The constabulary has introduced a detailed domestic abuse performance dashboard, discussed at the POM, which provides information to help inform commanders about the level of risk and threat posed by domestic abuse. This is

the primary mechanism for holding performance owners to account and is a standard agenda item at performance and tasking meetings.

The PPB is looking to enhance the current performance reporting with a broader suite of quantitative and qualitative measures. The proposal sets out a two-tier structure of reporting to inform local management and strategic governance.

**12. The constabulary should disseminate domestic abuse performance information to support local area teams in the management of high-risk victims and perpetrators where appropriate.**

The performance dashboard is translated at the local level to inform tasking and co-ordination processes. High-risk perpetrators are managed through PPB and discussed through their intelligence tasking processes. This is a new process and the intention is to feed relevant actions into local tasking processes.

The constabulary envisages the newly-formed local area domestic abuse teams as having a key role in supporting high-risk victims at a local level.

**13. The constabulary should carry out work to better understand national crime recording standards (NCRS) compliance and develop an action plan to include training and active performance management.**

The constabulary has commissioned a review to evaluate and improve the current process of incident-to-crime conversion and partner referrals around domestic abuse. The intention is to improve transparency, accuracy and conversion. The second element of the recommendation will then need to be considered in relation to training and performance management.

This improved information will give the constabulary a clearer understanding of the risk posed by domestic abuse and enable them to manage this risk in an informed way.

## Summary

The constabulary has invested a considerable amount of time and resource within a very short period following the publication of HMIC's original report, to improve its response to victims of domestic abuse and their families. The chief constable has placed tackling domestic abuse as the constabulary's number one priority. Evidence of this approach is shown by a constant presence of computer screen-savers, posters, personally-issued staff leaflets and promotion. The chief officer team has shown active leadership in this area.

The constabulary has understood the identified risk areas and put measures in place to improve service delivery to victims and make people safer in Gloucestershire in the short and longer-term. The identification of victims, particularly vulnerable and repeat victims, has improved and there is a greater understanding of the need to safeguard victims, most noticeably in frontline officers and staff who provide the initial response to victims of domestic abuse. Although further clarity is required, there is an improved understanding throughout the organisation about who is responsible for managing the safety of victims at each stage of an investigation. We found areas of clear progress and some areas where more work is necessary to deliver intended improvements. There is a great deal of energy being applied to ensuring that these improvements will be delivered and provide sustainable and lasting benefits.

HMIC will continue to monitor progress against the 13 recommendations but commends the constabulary on the strong progress made to date.

## Glossary

### **Central Referral Unit – CRU**

Responsible for co-ordinating the referral and risk management process for child protection (incidents and concerns), domestic abuse (incidents and DASH reports) and vulnerable adults. There is a child abuse investigation team supervisor based permanently in CRU.

It is also first point of contact for the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS) (also known as Clare's Law).

### **Clare's Law**

Clare's Law – the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme – is designed to provide victims with information that may protect them from an abusive situation before it ends in tragedy. The scheme allows the police to disclose information about a partner's previous history of domestic violence or violent acts.

### **Code of Practice for Victims of Crime**

The Code of Practice for Victims of Crime (the Victims' Code) places a statutory obligation on criminal justice agencies to provide a standard of service to victims of crime or, where the victim died as a result of the criminal conduct, to their relatives. The obligations the Victims' Code places on the agencies concerned include that:

- they provide victims, or their relatives, with information about the crime, including about arrests, prosecutions and court decisions;
- they provide information about eligibility for compensation under the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme;
- victims are told about Victim Support and either be referred on to them or offered their service;
- bereaved relatives are assigned a family liaison police officer; and
- victims of an offender who receives a sentence of 12 months or more after being convicted of a sexual or violent offence have the opportunity to make representations about what licence conditions or supervision requirements the offender should be subject to on release from prison.

There are enhanced entitlements for victims of the most serious crime which includes domestic violence.

### **Control room**

A police control or communications room manages emergency (999) and non-emergency (101) calls, and sending police officers to these calls.

### **Domestic Abuse, Stalking, Harassment and so-called Honour-Based Violence – DASH (2009)**

DASH is a risk identification, assessment and management model adopted by UK police forces and partner agencies in 2009. The aim of the DASH risk assessment is to help front-line practitioners identify high risk cases of domestic abuse, stalking and so-called honour-based violence.

### **Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme – DVDS**

The domestic violence disclosure scheme is named after Clare Wood who was brutally murdered in 2009 by her former partner George Appleton, who had a record of violence against women.

### **Domestic Violence Prevention Notices – DVPN**

A DVPN is the initial notice issued by the police to provide emergency protection to an individual believed to be the victim of domestic violence.

This notice, which must be authorised by a police officer at the rank of police superintendent or above, contains prohibitions that effectively bar the suspected perpetrator from returning to the victim's home or otherwise contacting the victim.



A DVPN may be issued to a person aged 18 years and over if the authorising officer has reasonable grounds for believing that:

- the individual has been violent towards, or
- has threatened violence towards an associated person, and
- the DVPN is necessary to protect that person from violence or a threat of violence by the intended recipient of the DVPN

### **Frontline**

These are police officers or police staff who are in everyday contact with the public and who directly intervene to keep people safe and enforce the law. The HMIC publication, *Policing in Austerity: Rising to the Challenge* (2013) sets this out in more detail.

### **Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service – GDASS**

Gloucestershire Domestic Abuse Support Service is a county-wide service designed to reduce the level of domestic abuse and improve the safety of victims and their families. The service is delivered by two charities with over 40 years of experience supporting victims of domestic abuse in the southwest.

### **Harassment**

The term harassment is used to cover the 'causing alarm or distress' offences under section 2 of the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 as amended (PHA), and 'putting people in fear of violence' offences under section 4 of the PHA.

### **High-risk**

Term used when, following a DASH risk assessment, there are identifiable indicators of risk of serious harm. The potential event could happen at any time and the impact would be serious. Risk of serious harm (Home Office 2002 and OASYS 2006): 'A risk which is life threatening and/or traumatic, and from which recovery, whether physical or psychological, can be expected to be difficult or impossible'.

## **Incident Assessment Unit – IAU**

A core aspect of Gloucestershire Constabulary's new operating model was the implementation of a new incident assessment unit (IAU) based within the control room. It is aimed at improving the recognition of risk and vulnerability, and resolution at first point of contact, improving the investigation and management of crime by early identification of appropriate investigative resources and increasing efficiency of deployment or allocation.

## **Incident**

When a member of the public calls for police assistance, or a police officer observes or discovers a crime, the police usually create an incident record. This is the first step; the police will then decide whether a crime has been committed and, if it is appropriate, create a crime record.

## **Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference – MARAC**

MARAC are regular local meetings where information about high-risk domestic abuse victims (those at risk of murder or serious harm) is shared between local agencies. By bringing all agencies together at a MARAC, and ensuring that whenever possible the voice of the victim is represented by the IDVA, a risk-focused, co-ordinated safety plan can be drawn up to support the victim. There are currently over 270 MARAC operating across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland managing more than 64,000 cases a year.

## **Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub – MASH**

A Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) brings together staff from police and partner agencies who work from the same location, sharing information and ensuring a timely and joined-up response to protect children and vulnerable adults.

## **Medium-risk**

Term used when, following a DASH risk assessment, there are identifiable indicators of risk of serious harm. The offender has the potential to cause serious harm but is unlikely to do so unless there is a change in circumstances,

for example, failure to take medication, loss of accommodation, relationship breakdown, drugs or alcohol misuse.

### **National Domestic Abuse Helpline – 0808 2000 247**

A free-phone 24 hour national domestic abuse helpline, run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge, which is a national service for women experiencing domestic violence, their family, friends, colleagues and others calling on their behalf.

The helpline can give support, help and information over the telephone, wherever the caller might be in the country. The helpline is staffed 24 hours a day by fully-trained female helpline support workers and volunteers. All calls are completely confidential. Translation facilities for callers whose first language is not English, and a service for callers who are deaf or hard of hearing, are available.

### **Partnership**

A term used where collaborative working is established between the police and other public, private or voluntary organisations.

### **Public Protection Service Delivery Board – PPSDB**

The terms of reference for the board, chaired by the ACC Operations, include:

- reviewing and improving safeguarding performance across all areas of the constabulary
- overseeing strategic development of the constabulary's response to public protection
- monitoring and mitigation of key risk, threat and vulnerability issues.
- monitoring and drive progress from audit recommendations

## **Refuge**

A safe house where women and children who are experiencing domestic violence can stay, free from abuse. Refuge addresses (and sometimes telephone numbers) are confidential. According to Women's Aid, on a typical day over 7000 women and children are resident in refuge accommodation in England.

## **Repeat victim**

A repeat victim of domestic abuse is someone who experiences domestic abuse on more than one occasion. Gloucestershire Constabulary defines 'repeat victim' as: *"where a victim has been involved in more than one incident in a given period of a rolling 12 months. If several incidents are reported to the police at once, that would qualify the individual as a repeat victim."*

## **Risk assessment**

A risk assessment is based on structured professional judgment. It provides structure and informs decisions that are already being made. It is only a guide/checklist and should not be seen as a scientific predictive solution. Its completion is intended to assist officers in the decision-making process on appropriate levels of intervention for victims of domestic violence.

## **Safeguarding**

The term safeguarding is applied when protecting children and other vulnerable people. The UK Government has defined the term 'safeguarding children' as: *"The process of protecting children from abuse or neglect, preventing impairment of their health and development, and ensuring they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care that enables children to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully."*

**Standard-risk**

Term used following a DASH risk assessment where current evidence does not indicate likelihood of causing serious harm.

**Vulnerable**

A term used to describe a person who is in need of special care, support, or protection because of age, disability, or risk of abuse or neglect.