

## IDVA's – Independent Domestic Violence Advisors

A referral should be made to the IDVA service immediately once a person has been risk assessed as High Risk. This is in addition to the MARAC referral. The IDVA is a trained specialist whose goal is to ensure the safety of domestic abuse victims, with a particular focus on victims at high risk of harm. Upon receipt of the referral the client will be contacted by the service. The IDVA will ensure the client is aware of the MARAC referral & process. They will take the views of the victim to the meeting and feedback on all the outcomes following the meeting.

To make a referral to the IDVA service working in Oxfordshire, email [IDVA@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:IDVA@oxfordshire.gov.uk) or contact Reducing the risk 'IDVA' on 01865 788320.

### Recommended Referral Criteria to MARAC using DASH risk indicator checklist

1. **Professional judgement:** if a professional has serious concerns about a victim's situation, they should refer the case to MARAC. There will be occasions where the particular context of a case gives rise to serious concerns even if the victim has been unable to disclose the information that might highlight their risk more clearly. **This could reflect extreme levels of fear, cultural barriers to disclosure, immigration issues or language barriers particularly in cases of 'honour'-based violence.** This judgement would be based on the professional's experience and/or the victim's perception of their risk even if they do not meet criteria 2 and/or 3 below.

2. **'Visible High Risk':** the number of 'ticks' on this checklist. If you have ticked 14 or more 'yes' boxes the case would normally meet the MARAC referral criteria.

3. **Potential Escalation:** the number of police callouts to the victim as a result of domestic violence in the past 12 months. This criterion can be used to identify cases where there is not a positive identification of a majority of the risk factors on the list, but where abuse appears to be escalating and where it is appropriate to assess the situation more fully by sharing information at MARAC. It is common practice to start with 3 or more police callouts in a 12 month period.

## MARAC

### Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference

- A guide for professionals

For victims of domestic abuse identified as being at high risk

Reducing the Risk  
of Domestic Abuse



Working together to transform lives



Ending  
domestic  
abuse

**NB when making a referral DO NOT WAIT until the MARAC to do a safety plan** with the client. You can access information on safety planning at <http://www.reducingtherisk.org.uk/cms/content/safety-planning>

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## What is the MARAC?

The MARAC is a monthly multi agency meeting, which focuses on the safety of victims of domestic abuse identified as being at high risk. A risk identification tool, **DASH**, is used by all agencies to identify victims at high risk and refer them to the MARAC. This can be obtained from the police (see below).

Once referred the victim is discussed at the next MARAC meeting. All available information is shared, safety actions are identified & responsibilities taken by the appropriate agency. The MARAC combines up to date risk information with timely assessment of a victim's needs and links those directly to the provision of appropriate services for high risk victims of domestic abuse.

The responsibility to take appropriate actions rests with individual agencies; it **is not** transferred to the MARAC. In a typical meeting, 15-20 high risk cases are discussed each meeting with brief and focused information sharing taking place, followed by creation of a multi agency action plan.

## Who should attend?

The MARAC is made up of a core group of trained designated MARAC officers, (DMOs), from agencies across the statutory and voluntary sectors. The meeting requires contribution and commitment by key agencies including police, probation, children's services, adult's services, health, education, housing, substance misuse services, specialist domestic abuse services and the Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) Service. IDVA's have accredited training, support high risk victims of domestic abuse, assist the work of the MARAC and, where appropriate, act as lead professional in coordinating multi agency action plans.

Other agencies attend on an ad hoc basis, when they have involvement in one of the cases being discussed.

## Referrals and further information:

Referrals can be made, and are encouraged, by any agency which identifies a victim of domestic abuse as being high risk. The formal risk identification tool (DASH) should be completed by the referring agency and upon meeting the MARAC threshold for high risk, the risk identification form and referral form (both of which can be obtained from Police) should be sent to Police at:

MARAC Administrator  
Alan Thompson  
mashoxon@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk

Once the MARAC administrator receives the referral form they will acknowledge receipt of the referral and confirm the date at which the client will be discussed by way of minutes.

## The MARAC Process:

