

Adult framework – Referrer overview

Purpose and overview: What the service offers

The service provides trauma-informed, recovery-focused support for adult victim-survivors of domestic abuse. The service follows a staged model to support individuals to build safety, engage in therapeutic recovery, and sustain long-term wellbeing. Support is flexible and needs-led, and individuals may access different stages depending on their circumstances.

Referral criteria and sources: Who can refer

Referrals are accepted from key partner agencies including IDVA services, Next Link, and Children's Services, as well as limited self-referrals where there has been recent engagement. Referrers must remain actively involved in supporting the individual. Referrals are acknowledged within 48 hours, ensuring timely engagement with the service.

Service model and interventions: Types of support available

The service offers a range of interventions to meet differing levels of need. This includes:

- group-based **pattern changing programmes** – focusing on relationship patterns, parenting impact and protective strategies,
- **pre-therapy stabilisation** – group or digital support to build safety and emotional regulation 6 weeks (2hours per week)
- **individual counselling/therapy** – up to 12 sessions of tailored counselling, and
- ongoing post-therapy peer and recovery support.

Interventions are designed to support emotional regulation, trauma recovery, and long-term resilience, with individuals allocated to the most appropriate stage based on need.

What happens after referral?

1. Triage (within five [5] working days)

All referrals undergo a brief, trauma-informed triage to assess risk, safety, and safeguarding concerns. This is not a full assessment but ensures that risk is identified early, priorities are set, and urgent cases are escalated where required. Triage determines whether the referral progresses into the service or is signposted elsewhere.

2. Panel and allocation (within 10 working days of triage)

Referrals are reviewed at a weekly multi-disciplinary panel, which considers risk, complexity, and individual needs. The panel determines the most appropriate intervention and allocates individuals to the relevant stage of support, ensuring a proportionate and needs-led response.



Individuals are allocated to a stage of support based on their level of risk, stability, and readiness to engage. This may include pre-therapy stabilisation, therapeutic intervention, or post-therapy support. Allocation also considers capacity to benefit, ensuring individuals are supported safely and effectively, with additional safeguards where required.

3. Initial Assessment (within 10 working days of allocation)

All individuals accepted into the service receive a comprehensive, trauma-informed initial assessment completed by a qualified professional. This explores current needs, relevant history, and goals for support, and informs the focus of therapeutic work. Wherever possible, the same practitioner will continue to deliver ongoing support to promote continuity and engagement. Therapeutic intervention will begin within 10 working days of assessment where possible, with regular contact maintained if delays occur. Therapy starts (within 10 working days where possible)

Risk management and scope

The service supports individuals experiencing domestic abuse, including post-separation abuse and stalking, where risks can be safely managed. It is not suitable for individuals in immediate crisis or those requiring statutory intervention without additional support. Referrers should ensure individuals have basic safety planning in place and are linked with relevant professionals to support risk management.

- The service is needs-led and trauma-informed
- Risk is assessed early; this is not a crisis service
- Individuals must have basic safety planning and professional support in place
- Referrers play an ongoing role in supporting engagement and safety

Summary of timeline following referral

- + 48 hours: Referral acknowledgement
- + 5 working days: Triage
- + 10 working days: Panel & allocation
- + 10 working days: Initial assessment
- + 10 working days (if possible): Therapeutic intervention starts

