

Surrey Domestic Abuse Newsletter

Issue 4 May 2011



Surrey Multi Agency
Partnership
Against Domestic Abuse



Spring is with us, the sun is shining and here we are with a bumper edition of the Surrey Domestic Abuse Newsletter.

Firstly we have had two countywide events since the last edition and the various presentations can be found at <http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/domesticabuse> (News, Events & Downloads).

The February Domestic Abuse and Substance Misuse Networking Event was attended by around 100 people and the networking opportunities were full of business related chat. The March conference on Using Learning to Inform Practice was equally well attended and proved to be a challenging and stimulating day. Professor Louise Howard gave a relaxed but data packed canter through domestic abuse and mental health related research and will come back to Surrey on 4th November 2011 to talk to mental health professionals (invitation only event). Tricia Bernal gave a heartfelt account of losing her daughter to a stalker and made the whole audience think about their responses to such cases. Marie Berry of Surrey Safeguarding Children Board gave an update on lessons from Serious Case reviews and there was an update on work within the police and the Community Safety review.

Barbara French

Domestic Abuse Strategy Manager, Surrey County Council

Tricia Bernal spoke again at the launch of **National Stalking Awareness Week** that took place in week commencing 11th April. The following websites have useful information and are worth a look:



Protection against stalking:

<http://www.protectionagainststalking.org/>

Network for surviving stalking:

<http://www.nss.org.uk/>

National Stalking Helpline

<http://www.stalkinghelpline.org>

Congratulations to Ian Cole who does so much good work on the Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Trans agenda in Surrey and actively supports our local multi-agency domestic abuse training. Ian has recently completed a part-time MSc in Public Health and Health Promotion around a full time job. His dissertation focused on the experiences of male sex workers in Surrey. He said "I found the course hard work but very rewarding." He went on to add, "what became apparent was that men are victims of abuse in many forms and that we need to continue our work with the LGB&T population to tackle the issues faced by men in abusive relationships."



The training dates for the **Multi Agency Domestic Abuse Training** courses have now been commissioned for 2011-12. Further details of these are available on the [Domestic Abuse Awareness and Practice Training](#) pages of the Surrey County Council website.

We are thrilled to have a new course exploring Safely Engaging with Perpetrators of Domestic Abuse and have recently delivered a course looking at the issues around the Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual and Trans (LGBT) population. Future dates for the LGBT course have yet to be agreed.

If you have any queries on the Domestic Abuse courses or would like to reserve a place, please contact the Training Administration department via email on: scctrainingenquiries@surreycc.gov.uk

Surrey Police Central Referral Unit (CRU)

QUICKER decision-making regarding risk management and a single point of contact seven days a week are just two of the benefits of the new Surrey Police Central Referral Unit (CRU), which went live at the beginning of April. The CRU follows best practice guidance and complements a wider review of Surrey Police's Public Protection approach set to be delivered throughout 2011.

With a team of experienced police staff, two detective sergeants and a detective inspector, the centralised unit based at Guildford Police Station will now handle all Child and Vulnerable Adult Coming to Notice forms (39/24s) which, in 2010/11 totalled 22,500.

There they will be assessed to decide what action needs to be taken, providing a more consistent approach to case management, while adding value to each case.

DI Alistair Cox, who manages the CRU said "the formation of the CRU from existing resources is an excellent opportunity for Surrey Police to streamline business processes, provide better value for money and enable operational staff to concentrate upon their core business. We also look forward to working more closely with our partners to provide more joined up service for the public".

The CRU will also work closely with the Public Protection Units (PPUs) to manage the Police responsibility within the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) and the Child Case Conference processes across Surrey. In future it is hoped that partners will join the unit to further streamline the process.

You can contact the CRU team via the following ways:

Email: (for 39/24, MARAC & Child Conference purposes only)

centralreferralsunit@surrey.pnn.police.uk

Phone: 01483 639887

Please note all other public protection business (Investigations, MAPPA etc) remain as before, handled by the Public Protection Investigation Units based at Guildford, Caterham and Addlestone.



NHS DA Awareness Packs for Surrey GPs

Eye catching wallets emblazoned with the Surrey multi-agency DA 'teardrop' logo have been sent out to all Surrey GP practices over the last few weeks. Brimming with publicity materials, DVD's mouse-mats, and stick it pads displaying the local domestic abuse outreach and helpline numbers, the packs are designed to be an important information resource for all GP surgeries.

A covering letter from Gabby Alford, Associate Director at Surrey NHS PCT explains the packs and outlines the key role that GP's should play in the early identification of domestic abuse. This was supplemented with information from The Royal College of Practitioners on the GP role and a link to their guidance for GP's. We hope to follow up soon with a letter and online questionnaire for Practice Managers about how the packs are being used and to check if they need more publicity materials. Particular thanks to East Surrey DA Service who helped collate the packs.

The Solace Centre (SARC) is now operational at Cobham Community Hospital. Following the formal launch there will be monthly open mornings. The first open morning on 4th May is for professionals to have the opportunity to look around. The open mornings need to be booked by appointment only so for further information, please contact:

Email:

cobham@solacesarc.org.uk

Nathalie Faint is in post as the Solace Manager and can be contacted on:

Email:

Nathalie.faint@harmoniforhealth.com



Summary of Recent Benefit Changes

Since last May's election there have been a significant number of announcements concerning welfare payments. This article lists those that have already been introduced.

January 2011

- The Health in Pregnancy Grant was abolished
- For claimants receiving help with mortgage costs, the loan limit of £200,000 and waiting period of 13 weeks is extended for a further year until January 2012
- Jobseeker's Allowance claimants now lose the help with mortgage costs if they have been claiming for 104 weeks

April 2011

- The consumer Price Index is now used instead of the Retail Price Index to up-rate benefits. This is likely to result in lower increases
- The upper limit for Child Tax Credit is reduced from £50,000 to £40,000
- The baby element of £545 paid for baby's first 12 months with Child Tax Credit is abolished
- The Child Element of Child Tax Credit is increased by £150
- In-year income changes for Tax Credits will be disregarded below £10,000, reduced from £25,000
- Help with childcare costs through Working Tax Credit are reduced from 80% to 70% of eligible costs
- The basic element and 30 hour element of Working Tax Credit are frozen for 3 years
- The 5-bedroom rate of Local Housing Allowance for Housing Benefit purposes is removed
- For new Housing Benefit claimants Local Housing Allowance bands will be calculated using the 30th percentile instead of the 50th percentile. Current Housing Benefit claimants will be subject to the lower bands upon review
- Increased Local Housing Allowance may be claimed if you need an extra bedroom for a carer to stay over
- The £15 Local Housing Allowance incentive is abolished
- Child Benefit is frozen for 3 years
- Sure Start Maternity Grant is only payable for the first child

There are more planned changes during 2011. If you need to find out more contact your local advice agency.

Surrey Welfare Rights Unit

April 2011

Surrey Welfare Rights Unit provides specialist support to organisations on social security issues. You can find out about courses and subscriptions at www.swru.org

Local Specialist Domestic Abuse Courts

Although sad to see the imminent closure of Woking Magistrates Court, which currently houses one of the 2 specialist domestic abuse sittings in Surrey, this function will shortly move to Guildford Magistrates Court instead. The current weekly half-day sitting at Redhill will continue as before. Many thanks to all who have been involved in the hard work to sort all this out.

Surrey Community Safety Unit

Surrey County Council
Room 152: County Hall, Penrhyn Road
Kingston Upon Thames, Surrey, KT1 2DW

Tel: 020 8541 7337

Email: surreycommunitysafetyunit@surreycc.gov.uk

Websites: www.surreycc.gov.uk/communitysafety

www.surreycc.gov.uk/domesticabuse



Successful funding bids! The Home Office announced in March that we have secured funds for up to four years to support local Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs). The money will help the local outreach services maintain the Independent Domestic Abuse / Violence Advisors (IDVAs) who make MARAC's so successful and a further sum will support the police in carrying out all the administrative support for MARAC's.

The local Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) also worked with the Rape And Sexual Abuse Support Centre (RASACS) to secure funding to maintain the new Sexual Assault Referral Advisors linked to the SARC. Altogether these bids are worth £70,000 a year to the multi agency agenda on domestic abuse and sexual violence for up to four years.

We have also secured £10,000 for each of the four outreach services from the Ministry of Justice for three years. This is to maintain the Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs) who support domestic abuse victims as perpetrators are dealt with through the Specialist Domestic Violence Courts. Thanks are due to all involved but particularly Michelle at ESDAS. Having spotted this opportunity, she led on the bid and was very pragmatic and flexible when the bid needed to change.

How Surrey County Council's Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) can help their employees

Richard Fox from Surrey EAP writes:

Everyone has arguments and disagreements with partners and family members from time to time. However, if you are experiencing physical, psychological, sexual or financial violence or abuse, or feel trapped by a pattern of controlling behaviour, you may be suffering from domestic abuse.

Anyone can experience domestic abuse, it's not limited by race, ethnic or religious group, class, disability or lifestyle. Domestic abuse can also take place in lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans relationships. And it can occur within extended families and involve other family members, including children.

No one deserves to be a victim of domestic abuse. But it is common and can affect one in four women and one in six men during their lifetimes. Although breaking free from domestic abuse is not easy, it's important to seek help and support. Remember, you are not alone and you can break the cycle of abuse.

If you work for Surrey County Council, the 24 hour, 365 day Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) can provide free, confidential, practical information and support on a range of issues, including:

- Leaving an abusive relationship – your options
- Planning your exit, where to go for help, protecting yourself after you have left, retrieving your belongings, etc.
- Information on staying safe if you choose to remain in the relationship
- Legal information on your rights in relation to children, property etc
- Information to help on financial resources available, for example crisis loans and benefits
- Information on local support agencies, such as outreach services, accommodation services and support groups

Surrey County Council staff can find details of EAP on S-net. Staff in other agencies should ask their employer for details of what they offer.

Future Commissioning of Domestic Abuse Outreach

Following the countywide multi-agency review of Community Safety a Domestic Abuse Commissioning Group has been established to continue to work on arrangements for future domestic abuse outreach services. Gabby Alford, Strategic Director Partnerships at NHS Surrey, will chair this short-life group. The group will meet monthly for the next six months. More in the next newsletter ...