

Press release: £19 million fund to support victims of domestic abuse

Almost £19 million of funding to expand support for survivors of domestic abuse services across the country has been launched today (2 July 2018) by the Secretary of State for Communities.

Councils working in partnership with charities and other organisations will be able to bid for a share of funding to support survivors of domestic abuse.

This will be available for a wide range of services to help survivors rebuild their lives; including the provision of refuge beds, education, and employment and life skills training.

This funding builds on £20 million allocated in 2016 to 2018 which has helped provide more than 2,200 new bed spaces in refuges and other specialist accommodation, supporting more than 19,000 survivors with a safe space to rebuild their lives.

Secretary of State for Communities, Rt Hon James Brokenshire MP said:

Domestic abuse is a devastating crime and this government is committed to ensuring all survivors have access to the support they need, whenever they need it.

This funding will expand the support available for survivors to help them rebuild their lives.

This fund has already helped to support diverse projects across the country, including:

Lancashire County Council – Jane’s Place of Recovery Refuge

- Funding was used to establish ‘Jane’s Place’, to accommodate 46 residents, across 15 self contained flats. In the first 7 months the refuge, specialising in providing safe accommodation for those at most risk of harm, accommodated 52 women and their families.

The Hampshire Making Safe Scheme’, led by Hart District Council

- Covering 11 local authorities in Hampshire, this project aims to fund 3 approaches including access to safe houses, enhanced security measures within client’s own homes and effective ways for life after living in safe houses or refuges. This project is particularly targeted at those from BAME communities or those with complex needs.

The government has also published updated guidelines, created in partnership with experts for councils to share best practice with charities and other

organisations in meeting the needs of diverse communities including BAME, disabled and LGBT victims.

Katie Ghose, Chief Executive of Women's Aid, said:

The release of the next round of funding for refuges and other accommodation for women escaping domestic abuse is desperately needed, and much welcomed. Our national network of refuges not only save lives but transform them, helping women and their children to rebuild their lives.

With a decision about the future of refuge funding after 2020 due to be made in the coming months, we look forward to working with the government to ensure the future safety of survivors.

Together we need to ensure that there is a sustainable, long-term funding solution for all domestic abuse services, including lifesaving refuges. Only then can we guarantee that every survivor and her children can get the support they need to build a life free from domestic abuse.

Further information

The 2015 Spending Review contained dedicated long term funding of £40 million to support victims of domestic abuse.

- The first allocations of the £20 million fund was announced November 2016 led by local authorities working in partnership with service providers for work in 2016 to 2018
- A further £1.2 million will be allocated towards domestic abuse services in due course
- See the [full list of allocations](#)

Further case studies of the 2016 to 2018 fund:

- Royal London Borough of Greenwich – The Multiple Needs & Intensive Support Project
Greenwich used part of the funding to employ a Complex Needs support worker, providing intensive support to survivors across the lifetime of the project.
- North Lincolnshire Council
Grant funding was used to secure additional resources to ensure that both female and male victims of domestic abuse were able to access

immediate support at times of crisis.

Today's announcement builds on steps taken by government to end domestic abuse, support victims and ensure offenders are prosecuted. Including:

- new powers and laws – a new domestic abuse offence to capture coercive and controlling behaviour, the criminalisation of forced marriage, and the introduction of new stalking laws
- the national roll-out of domestic violence protection orders and the domestic violence disclosure scheme
- £15 million, 3-year Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Service Transformation Fund
- £3.5 million provided in 2015 that funded 46 successful bids from around the country, providing 710 extra bed spaces
- £10 million funding announced by the coalition government for strengthening provision of safe accommodation in the last Spending Review period
- we will shortly be introducing a new landmark Domestic Violence and Abuse Bill to protect and support victims, recognise the life-long impact domestic abuse has on children and make sure agencies effectively respond to domestic abuse

Applicants are required to submit bids no later than 5pm Friday 17 August to DomesticAbuse.Fund@communities.gsi.gov.uk

View the government's [updated priorities for domestic abuse services](#).

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[Press release: Regulator provides update on work of its interim safeguarding taskforce](#)

Reporting of serious safeguarding incidents by charities continues to increase, according to the Charity Commission. The regulator has published an update on the work of its interim safeguarding taskforce, and has confirmed that it received 620 safeguarding related reports in April and May 2018, compared to 196 during the same period in 2017.

In total, since February, the Commission has received and been responding to 1,152 reports of serious incidents (RSIs) about safeguarding (to end May 2018).

The Commission established a temporary safeguarding taskforce in February, which has been managing and handling increased serious incident reports, and undertaking a review of historic serious incident and whistleblowing reports on safeguarding issues.

New reports of serious safeguarding incidents

- 1,152 reports of serious safeguarding incidents received between February 2018 and May 2018, compared to 1,210 during the whole of 2016-17, and 1,580 during 2017-28
- 734 new cases have been opened relating to safeguarding concerns

As set out in [previous updates](#), the reports cover a wide spectrum; some relate to risks of harm that a charity has identified, rather than to incidents of harm – for example internal audits showing that safeguarding procedures were not followed in certain situations.

The Commission has previously [raised concerns about under-reporting of serious incidents by charities](#).

Among the reports are those from some of the 179 charities to which the

Secretary of State for International Development wrote in February to seek reassurances that all appropriate incidents had been reported to the Commission. Of the 179 charities DFID issued the assurance request letter to, 34 charities have submitted incident reports to the Commission. In total, these 34 charities have reported 298 incidents. Of these, 218 related to historic incidents.

The Commission has also opened 734 cases relating to safeguarding concerns raised in serious incident reports from charities, or complaints and whistleblowing reports. These have been prioritised according to risk.

Review of historic reports of serious safeguarding incidents

- 5,501 incidents received between 1 April 2014 and 20 February 2018 were selected for review
- 5,238 incidents (95%) have now been analysed

The taskforce has been undertaking a 'deep dive' of its records of serious incident reports on safeguarding matters to identify any gaps in full and frank disclosure by charities, and to establish whether appropriate follow-up actions were taken by charities, including whether incidents were reported to other primary regulators or agencies.

This has required the team to analyse a total of 5,501 serious incidents reported to the Commission between 1 April 2014 and 20 February 2018. 5,238 or 95% of the relevant records reports have now been analysed. Analysis so far has not identified any cases where the Commission has serious and urgent concerns that require it to take immediate action, or where it has had to engage with the authorities about any ongoing risk or unreported criminality.

Of these incidents, 3,000 involved allegations of potential criminal behaviour; the Commission's analysis has identified that in only one of those incidents was it unclear from its records whether it was reported to the authorities at the time. The Commission has now followed this up and verified that this incident was reported appropriately.

Once the work of the taskforce has concluded, the Commission will publish a report setting out the key findings and lessons for charities.

Ends

Notes to editors

1. Of the 179 charities to which the Secretary of State for International Development wrote in February, 158 are registered with the Commission, the remainder are registered with Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator ([OSCR](#)) or are exempt charities

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News story: Employed Bar Awards 2018

Two GLD lawyers have won prestigious accolades at the Bar Council Employed Bar Awards. The winners were announced at a ceremony held at the Imperial War Museum in London, on Friday 29 June.

Top award

Katherine Willerton from the Department for Exiting the European Union (DExEU) Legal Advisers team was named ‘Employed barrister of the year’ for her work on the European Union (Withdrawal) Bill. Katherine is the deputy team leader in the Legislation team of 12 lawyers who worked with ministers and officials to produce the Bill and get it through Parliament. The nomination referred to her drive and resilience as well as her ‘superb legal analysis and advice’. She was recognised for her substantial contribution to the rewriting of the UK constitution, in circumstances of political controversy and sensitivity.

Outstanding achievement

Aoife Drudy who works in the Home Office Legal Advisers (HOLA) team has won the award for ‘Outstanding achievement by a public service barrister’. She has been the lead lawyer advising the Northern Ireland Office on the EU Exit negotiations and led on technical discussions with the EU Commission and Irish Government. The nomination said her legal skills and practical advice have been widely admired across government, making her an essential component of the UK’s negotiating team.

Further finalist

A third GLD lawyer, Jonathan Orde, was one of the finalists in the ‘Young employed barrister of the year’ category. The nomination, sent in on his behalf, speaks of his contribution to increasing advocacy opportunities in GLD and the fact that as a direct result of the success he had in court as a pupil, all GLD pupils undertake advocacy during their second 6 secondment to Chambers.

High standard

Treasury Solicitor, Jonathan Jones was on the judging panel and said he was

highly impressed by the standard of the entries in this, only the second year of the Employed Bar Awards:

Congratulations to the GLD winners, Katherine and Aoife, for their outstanding success in winning their categories and to Jonathan for being short-listed in his category.

As a member of the judging panel I was, of course, scrupulously neutral (I played no part in the shortlisting) and found the standard of entries to be high right across the employed bar. I am particularly proud of all our GLD finalists, who exemplify the brilliant work we do in GLD.□

The full list of those shortlisted and all category winners can be found on the [Bar Council website](#).

News story: Essex healthcare firm to double overseas exports

BioSure, an Essex healthcare company that manufactured the first home testing HIV kit is expected to more than double its exporting sales in the next year as it expands in South Africa.

BioSure's kits require the user to simply prick their finger for a small drop of blood, which is then placed in the device. The process detects specific antibodies in the blood sample and produces an extremely accurate result in just fifteen minutes. The company, which was founded in 2011, originally supplied its product to hospitals and doctors across the United Kingdom, and in 2015 started selling its kits directly to individuals.

BioSure completed its first international order last year, seeing its products sold in over 500 pharmacies in South Africa. Demand for its products in the region has grown month-on-month since, and combined with other markets, exporting accounts for 40% of the firm's sales. This figure is set to grow to 90% in the next year as the business expand into new markets including Kenya and Brazil.

The business has worked closely with specialist trade advisers at the Department for International Trade (DIT) ahead of securing its first South African contract. DIT has also provided international market research and put BioSure in touch with distributors and potential buyers in East Africa and South America.

Brigitte Bard, Founder of BioSure, said:

Our self-testing HIV kits are the first step in helping people get diagnosed and support the United Nations' ambitious pledge to help end the HIV / AIDS epidemic. Its pledge aims that by 2020, 90% of all people diagnosed with HIV will receive treatment.

Exporting our kits was always part of our business plan – a goal we achieved last year with our first contract in South Africa where the virus is most prevalent. Since then, we've gone from strength to strength and now plan to establish our products in South America for the first time, as well as make inroads in East and West Africa.

When exporting to different international markets, it's vital to ensure the regulatory and tax landscapes have been thoroughly researched. As a healthcare business, all our products go through rigorous testing to comply with that specific country's regulation. Expert organisations like DIT can help navigate this process. If we can do it, so can many other local firms.

Alan Pain, Head of Exports for DIT East of England, said:

International expansion was always a great option for BioSure and we're proud to have supported its venture in South Africa and beyond. Exporting is a multifaceted process, particularly for healthcare brands, so thorough research is vital.

Firms should ensure they have processes in place to deal with language barriers, as well as differing tax and regulatory landscapes. While exporting can sometimes seem daunting for firms, particularly those with limited resources, they shouldn't feel like they have to go through the process alone.

We have more than 30 international trade advisers located across the East of England to support ambitious businesses looking to tap into the emerging opportunities overseas. The support is out there, and I'd urge anyone who is interested to get in touch.

[Firms looking for support should visit \[great.gov.uk\]\(http://great.gov.uk\)](#) which has around 1,000 live export opportunities currently listed and includes general information on exporting and events.

[News story: £215 million research fund](#)

to tackle the next generation of health challenges

Health and Social Care Secretary Jeremy Hunt has announced a £215 million package of funding for research that could transform the lives of millions of people who are living with a range of conditions, including life-long illnesses, mental health issues and obesity.

Leading academics and technology experts will be able to apply for research funding to develop health solutions for the future that give patients greater independence and choice about how they manage their healthcare.

An investment of £150 million will fund research over the next 5 years to tackle important emerging issues, including the pressures of an ageing population and the increasing demands on the NHS.

The remaining £65 million will go towards 13 National Institute for Health Research policy research units that will play a vital role in making sure the government and arm's length bodies have the best possible information and evidence available when making policy decisions about health and social care.

The units will cover a range of specialisms and conditions, including:

- behavioural science
- adult social care
- older people and frailty
- cancer awareness, screening and early diagnosis

Each university-based unit will host a multidisciplinary team of researchers from collaborating institutions to create a critical mass of experts for research in priority areas for health and social care policy.

An extra £3 million will also be invested in the creation of a new research leader programme for nurses and midwives. Their role will help to influence new approaches to health and care and improve patient experience.

Health and Social Care Secretary Jeremy Hunt said:

As the NHS celebrates its 70th birthday, more people than ever before are living longer lives thanks to the dedication of hardworking staff. It is therefore vital we harness technology to develop the next generation of innovative treatments as part of the government's long-term plan for the NHS.

That's why I want our world-leading academics, researchers and technology experts to work with frontline staff to develop the innovations which not only allow people to live longer, but also to lead healthier lives, so the NHS can continue to provide world-class care to all.

Health Minister Lord O'Shaughnessy said:

With a growing and ageing population, maintaining a world-class NHS depends on harnessing the discoveries of cutting-edge research and rapidly bringing them into everyday healthcare.

The UK has a proud tradition of ground-breaking medical R&D and this funding means our country can continue to lead the world.