



Funded by the European Commission, Directorate General Justice, Freedom and Security



Research report II: General approaches of community response to domestic violence and the L(G)BT community

Galop

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1. Definition of “community response”

“The current movement is toward a broader and more coordinated response to domestic violence cases, referred to as coordinated community response (Pence&Shepard, 1999). The objective is to develop an even more comprehensive and certain system of intervention. Battered women’s services, for instance, might maintain contact and support for women whose partners are brought to criminal court. Civil court actions might be added to domestic violence cases to increase protection for women or help with child support. Police and court response to noncompliance might be swifter and more decisive. Specialised probation officers could better manage men in batterer programs. Men with compounding psychological and alcohol problems might be referred to other kinds of treatment as well as batterer counseling.

Much of this coordination is being achieved through domestic violence councils that include representatives from battered women’s services and batterer programs, police and probation departments, court officials and prosecution officers, and other community services. There are still challenges in breaking down “turf”, focusing on the victim’s well-being, and obtaining the time and resources for these councils to meet and act (Gondolf 1994). [...] batterer programs, rather than being singular treatments, are increasingly becoming part of a larger system of intervention.” (Gondolf 2002)

Key aspects are:

- Comprehensive system of intervention
- Networks and collaborations to improve protection of battered women

Since Gondolf (2002) the definition of “community response” has been broadened in including measures of prevention. The main aim of community response activities is to promote a societal atmosphere where domestic violence is stigmatized so that perpetrators do not feel supported by societal silence and victims will be protected.

2. Aim of the research

Societal silence did protect male perpetrators of domestic violence for a long time. Politicians and the law did react quite late and only with pressure of the women’s movement on domestic violence issues. Nowadays intervention networks are established in every bigger city and in most European countries. Those networks are intersectional and members are representatives of women’s shelter movement, police, state attorneys, women’s counseling services, child care, various departments of administration (youth, women, social affairs, health etc.), policy makers, etc. So, since the problem of domestic violence is multi-facetted, it is responded to in various ways as well. Nowadays measures are categorized in a system of prevention, that is activities of primary, secondary and tertiary prevention.

In LGBT communities we experience a silencing of domestic violence as well. Thus, it might be useful to build as well multi-agency networks (or to use already established ones) either within the LGBT communities or even with mainstream organisations.

We try to find answers for following questions:

- Which networks (within LGBT communities) are useful to raise awareness about domestic violence within those communities?
 - E.g. coming-out networks
 - UK: describe already existing LGB networks to fight dv, reflect their work, what could be done (better), get them on board for activities
- Which networks are useful to optimize the protection of the lesbian victims and to support lesbian perpetrators?
- Referring to already existing intervention networks: Which collaborations need to be discussed differently than in heterosexual oriented intervention networks? (Example: collaboration with police, perpetrator programs etc.) Which might be helpful to fight domestic violence addressing the LGBT communities?
- So, how should OUR networks look like in the future? What are special aspects? Which measures

3. Methodology

How to get the information:

- Online search: key terminology like the following (please use them in many different combinations to achieve better and more relevant results)
 - intervention network
 - annual reports of municipality
 - police
 - women's helpline
 - women's shelter
 - liaison officers
 - domestic violence
 - partner violence
 - spousal abuse
 - same sex
 - local municipality

- borough
 - lesbian
 - bisexual women
 - crime victim helpline
 - action plan
 - local network
 - sexual violence
 - partner sexual abuse
 - battered women
 - batterer
 - perpetrator
 - victim
 - migrants and domestic violence
 - Diverse communities within
 - Where there are evaluation reports make sure they are included: if there are evaluation reports, please have a look at them!
- Short telephone interviews. Use a snowball selection process and ask the following questions of women's' helplines, key persons within the community etc:
- Do they actively involve same sex partner violence in their regular work with perpetrators and/or victims of partner violence?
 - What methods are they using to include same sex partner violence?
 - How are they trying to affect community response?
 - Would they like to receive reports of the development and outcome of the LARS project? (This question allows you to build a list of contacts to invite to future meetings and inform about our findings so that they may be invited to co-operate in the future if appropriate.
 - Can they recommend that we talk to other helplines, institutions etc who may have more relevant information to give?

4. Research results

4.1 Description of local community response activities.

4.1.1 Mainstream secondary prevention systems

London is a large and complex city, and domestic violence prevention work is also therefore very complex. The city is divided into 32 sub-regions (boroughs) each of which has its own local response to domestic abuse. However boroughs approach their individual response within an overall structure, which is similar, or the same in every area. This structure is part of a coordinated community response.

Each borough has specialist police officers based in a community safety unit within the police, who investigate all reports of domestic abuse, including LGBT domestic abuse.

Every borough also has one or more Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs). These are specialist advocates who are independent of the criminal justice system (they do not work for the police or prosecutors), whose role is to represent the needs of high-risk victims and work with victims to assist them meet all their needs (safety, housing, employment, financial, childcare etc). IDVAs tend to be employed by voluntary sector organisations (such as Women's Aid) or local authorities (local government in each borough). However consistency of IDVA service is ensured because all IDVAs are trained and accredited by a national organisation (Coordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse – CAADA).

Each borough also runs a Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) which brings together the IDVA, the police, social services, and all relevant other agencies (including voluntary sector agencies), to discuss and action all high risk victims of domestic abuse within that borough. These MARACs are quality assured by being evaluated by CAADA, which provides guidance on setting up and running a MARAC.

Each local authority also has a locally-based strategy for combating domestic abuse within the local area. This strategy will usually be managed by a Committee which includes council workers and representatives from women's domestic abuse organisations, and other relevant departments such as housing and the police. There is usually also a Domestic Abuse Equality and Diversity Sub-Group which makes strategic decisions relating to minority groups who are affected by domestic abuse.

Local authorities can also make use of some of the pan-London resources which are available. This includes the detailed website 'Coordinated Community Response Model Online' which gives detailed guidance on planning a CCR and which also includes links to relevant research. There are some pan-London practitioners meetings which allow organisations to share learning as well as work more closely and make referrals more easily. There include, for example: a network which brings together workers from domestic abuse organisations with workers from drug and alcohol addiction services; and a network which brings together key agencies funded by one of the key funders. There are also London based strategic organisations which produce policy and strategy relevant to the CCR model. These include Against Violence and Abuse (AVA) and the Stella Project.

4.1.2 Mainstream primary prevention

Across London there are a bewildering range of primary prevention services. Most relevantly this includes women's refuges in most areas, which offer emergency safe accommodation, advice and outreach services.

There are an enormous number of information campaigns, some national, some London-wide and others specific to local areas. These are run by the voluntary sector, local government and local health trusts for example. Some assist people to know where to access help and information, others challenge myths about domestic abuse and encourage victims to come forward. School curriculum work includes some time spent discussing healthy relationships, and there are a range of school prevention projects, some including work with teachers, some including drama based interventions and others using peer education.

4.1.3 Mainstream tertiary prevention

The Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004 updated the legal protections for victims of domestic abuse, and included changes which made breaking a non-molestation order (a civil injunction which acts as a restraining order against a perpetrator of domestic abuse) a criminal act with a maximum five years in prison, and allowing non-molestation orders to be taken against non-cohabiting perpetrators.

The Crown Prosecution Service has published guidance on prosecuting cases of domestic abuse. This is in two parts, one of which is a public facing booklet which details the rights of the victim, how prosecution decisions are made and how the prosecution system works. The second part is aimed at prosecutors themselves and includes detailed guidance on how to prosecute these cases and standards of care that victims should expect.

The Government is also piloting specialist domestic violence courts, including one in one area of London. These courts fast-track prosecutions and ensure that victims are linked into appropriate support, including from an IDVA.

4.1.4 Primary, secondary and tertiary prevention for LGBT people

London also has partially developed prevention networks relating to LGBT domestic abuse. These work partly as mainstream services which also cater to LGBT victims and perpetrators, and also as activities which are conducted specifically by the LGBT community, targeted at the LGBT community. These LGBT prevention activities are described in more detail in section 4.2. In the following table we have mainly focused on listing LGBT targeted activities, however we have also included some of the key mainstream activities. This is not therefore a complete list of mainstream activities.

4.2 Compilation of community response activities

Primary prevention	Secondary prevention	Tertiary prevention
<p>Institution: Galop/LGBT Domestic Abuse Partnership</p> <p>Activity: Ability to report via a third party, casework/advice including support at court, basic legal advice, safety planning, risk assessment,</p> <p>Target group: LGBT people who have experienced domestic abuse</p> <p>Evaluated: no</p>	<p>Institution: Galop/LGBT Domestic Abuse Partnership</p> <p>Activity: Multi-agency intervention network coordinating linked primary prevention activities and sharing information between services</p> <p>Target group: members of partnership, which are organisations that provide services to LGBT victims/survivors of domestic abuse</p> <p>Evaluated: no</p>	<p>Institution: Crown Prosecution Service</p> <p>Activity: Policy for prosecuting cases of domestic abuse</p> <p>Target group: Victims/survivors of domestic abuse, perpetrators of domestic abuse</p> <p>Evaluation: no</p>
<p>Institution: Pace/LGBT Domestic Abuse Partnership</p> <p>Activity: support groups for LGBT victims/survivors of domestic abuse, plus one-to-one support</p> <p>Target group: LGBT victims/survivors of domestic abuse</p> <p>Evaluated: yes</p> <p>Evaluation result: group attendees reported they felt more confident and less isolated after attending support groups.</p>	<p>Institution: LGBT Domestic Abuse Forum</p> <p>Activity: networking and information sharing about LGBT domestic abuse and service provision, good practice guidance</p> <p>Target group: practitioners and organisations that support LGBT victims/survivors of domestic abuse</p> <p>Evaluation: no</p>	<p>Institution: Association of Chief Police Officers</p> <p>Activity: definition of domestic violence that includes all people regardless of gender</p> <p>Target group: no specific target group</p> <p>Evaluation: no</p>
<p>Institution: Stonewall Housing/LGBT Domestic Abuse</p>	<p>Institution: Stella Project</p> <p>Activity: training, consultancy,</p>	<p>Institution: Domestic Violence Responses</p>

<p>Partnership</p> <p>Activity: Specialists LGBT domestic abuse housing caseworker</p> <p>Target group: LGBT victims/survivors of domestic abuse</p> <p>Evaluated: no</p>	<p>networking, and toolkits related to domestic abuse and drug/alcohol misuse</p> <p>Target group: practitioners and organisations that work with people who have drug/alcohol misuse problems and problems with domestic abuse.</p> <p>Evaluation: yes</p> <p>Evaluation result: Participants in training reported increased confidence in ability to talk to clients, offer information, support and referrals to perpetrator, and to share learning. Also an increased in ability to identify domestic abuse and high numbers of referral to specialist agencies.</p>	<p>Activity: peer educator project – trained young people with drama skills as peer educators in domestic violence intervention – to deliver workshops in schools.</p> <p>Target group: school children.</p> <p>Evaluated: yes</p> <p>Evaluation result: Project was costly and difficult though only a pilot. It successfully engaged young people, who were often disruptive in lessons, and created excellent responses regarding consent and healthy relationships however it was hard to know whether sustained change would have been achieved.</p>
<p>Institution: LGBT Domestic Abuse Partnership</p> <p>Activity: leaflets and posters about LGBT domestic abuse and the LGBT Domestic Abuse Partnership</p> <p>Target group: LGBT victims/survivors of domestic abuse</p> <p>Evaluated: no</p>	<p>Institution: AVA (Against Violence and Abuse)</p> <p>Activity: consultancy, training, policy briefings, networking, toolkits about domestic abuse</p> <p>Target group: practitioners and organisations that support victims/survivors of domestic abuse, governmental bodies</p> <p>Evaluated: no</p>	<p>Institution: Respect</p> <p>Activity: 'Choose to Stop' booklets which give advice to perpetrators of domestic abuse on ways to stop being abusive, and challenge some of the traditional excuses</p> <p>Target group: perpetrators of domestic abuse</p> <p>Evaluated: no</p>
<p>Institution: Galop</p> <p>Activity: website explaining LGBT domestic abuse</p> <p>Target group: LGBT victims/survivors of domestic abuse</p>	<p>Institution: Jigsaw</p> <p>Activity: Multi-agency response for young LGBT people experiencing abuse and homelessness, including housing advice, support, and casework/advice</p>	<p>Institution: Specialist Domestic Violence Courts</p> <p>Activity: courts specially designed to hear cases involving domestic abuse, which have specially trained magistrates, Independent</p>

<p>Evaluated: no</p>	<p>Target group: young LGBT people at risk of homelessness</p> <p>Evaluated: no</p>	<p>Domestic Violence Advocates, and special measures in place to protect victims of domestic abuse</p> <p>Target group: victims/survivors of domestic abuse, perpetrators of domestic abuse</p> <p>Evaluated: yes (CPS evaluation report)</p> <p>Evaluation result: not relevant to this project</p>
<p>Institution: Antidote</p> <p>Activity: support groups and keyworking for LGBT people with drug misuse problems who are experiencing domestic abuse</p> <p>Target group: LGBT victims/survivors of domestic abuse that have drug misuse problems</p> <p>Evaluated: no</p>	<p>Institution: Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs)</p> <p>Activity: Multi-agency risk assessments of high-risk domestic abuse cases, action plans following risk assessments</p> <p>Target group: police, statutory bodies (e.g., housing, child services, vulnerable adult services), domestic abuse support agencies, other organisations that work with victims/survivors of domestic abuse, IDVAs.</p> <p>Evaluation: yes</p> <p>Evaluation result: between 4 in 10 and 6 in 10 victims reported no further incidents a year after the MARAC despite having previous long history as a victim of domestic abuse. Key success factors were information sharing between agencies, and all agencies using the same assessment tools. It was also noted the people who attend MACS need to be senior</p>	<p>Institution: UK Government</p> <p>Activity: range of UK laws including Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act, which explicitly includes same-sex couples in ability to get injunctions against perpetrator</p> <p>Target group: victims of domestic abuse</p> <p>Evaluated: no</p>

	<p>enough to make decisions actually at the meeting.</p> <p>However research shows that too few LGBT domestic abuse cases are being referred into MARACs.</p>	
<p>Institution: Stonewall Housing</p> <p>Activity: Housing guide for LGBT victims/survivors of domestic abuse</p> <p>Target group: LGBT victims/survivors of domestic abuse</p> <p>Evaluated: no</p>	<p>Institution: Standing Together Against Domestic Violence</p> <p>Activity: management of cross-borough coordinated community response to domestic abuse</p> <p>Target Group: police, statutory services, specialist domestic violence courts, independent domestic violence advocates, organisations that support victims/survivors of domestic abuse</p> <p>Evaluation: no</p>	
<p>Institution: Gay Men's Shared Housing (part of Metropolitan Support Trust)</p> <p>Activity: Supported accommodation for G/B/T men experiencing domestic abuse or violence.</p> <p>Target group: GBT men at risk of abuse or violence</p> <p>Evaluated: no</p>	<p>Institution: Rights of Women</p> <p>Activity: Training about domestic abuse and the law</p> <p>Target group: Domestic abuse support workers</p> <p>Evaluated: no</p>	
<p>Institution: AVA Project/Barking and Dagenham PCT</p> <p>Activity: Printed advice resources for trans people, lesbian/bisexual women, and gay/bisexual men experiencing domestic abuse</p>	<p>Institution: CAADA (Coordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse)</p> <p>Activity: training for independent domestic violence advocates, including training on LGBT domestic abuse</p> <p>Target group: organisations</p>	

<p>Target group: trans people, lesbian/bisexual women, and gay/bisexual men experiencing domestic abuse</p> <p>Evaluated: no</p>	<p>that support victims/survivors of domestic abuse</p> <p>Evaluated: yes</p> <p>Evaluation result: CAADA trains all IDVAs – see separate info on evaluation of IDVA programme for details.</p>	
<p>Institution: Rights of Women</p> <p>Activity: Legal advice line provided by solicitors and barristers</p> <p>Target group: Women who have experienced domestic abuse and need legal advice</p> <p>Evaluated: no</p>	<p>Institution: CAADA (Coordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse)</p> <p>Activity: MARAC quality assurance</p> <p>Target group: MARACs in local areas, statutory and voluntary sector organisations that attend MARACs</p> <p>Evaluated: yes</p> <p>Evaluation result: CAADA evaluates all MARACs as well as the efficacy of the MARAC programme – see separate section on evaluation of MARACs for details.</p>	
<p>Institution: Rights of Women</p> <p>Activity: Legal advice publications about domestic abuse (printed and on website), including information for L/B/T women</p> <p>Target group: Victims/Survivors of domestic abuse, domestic abuse support workers</p> <p>Evaluated: yes/no</p>	<p>Institution: CAADA (Coordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse)</p> <p>Activity: research and policy development around domestic abuse</p> <p>Target group: local and national government</p> <p>Evaluation: no</p>	
<p>Institution: Independent Domestic Violence Advocates</p> <p>Activity: provide advocacy, support, and advice to victims</p>	<p>Institution: Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) Domestic and Sexual Violence Board</p> <p>Activity: monitor and scrutinize</p>	

<p>of domestic abuse, including support at court and advocacy at MARACs</p> <p>Target group: victims/survivors of domestic abuse</p> <p>Evaluated: yes</p> <p>Evaluation result: Over half of victims who had received support from an IDVA experienced the end of their abuse. Benefits were largely because of multiple interventions over a long period by one worker.</p>	<p>the Metropolitan Police Service's response to domestic abuse</p> <p>Target group: Metropolitan Police Service, organisations that support victims/survivors of domestic abuse</p> <p>Evaluated: no</p>	
<p>Institution: Women's Aid and Refuge</p> <p>Activity: 24-hour helpline about domestic abuse</p> <p>Target group: women who are victims/survivors of domestic abuse</p> <p>Evaluated: no</p>	<p>Institution: Women's Resource Centre</p> <p>Activity: multi-agency meeting of London Councils funded organisations that work with victims/survivors of domestic abuse</p> <p>Target group: London Councils funded organisations that work with victims/survivors of domestic abuse</p> <p>Evaluation: no</p>	
<p>Institution: Refuge</p> <p>Activity: Emergency access refuges</p> <p>Target group: women experiencing domestic abuse</p> <p>Evaluated: no</p>	<p>Institution: Broken Rainbow</p> <p>Activity: Training about LGBT domestic abuse</p> <p>Target group: organisations that work with victims/survivors of domestic abuse</p> <p>Evaluated: no</p>	
<p>Institution: Eaves Scarlet Centre</p> <p>Activity: Drop-in centre,</p>		

<p>counselling, and practical support groups</p> <p>Target group: women who have experienced domestic abuse</p> <p>Evaluated: no</p>		
<p>Institution: Domestic Violence Intervention Project (DVIP)</p> <p>Activity: Violence Prevention Program</p> <p>Target group: Men and women who perpetrate domestic abuse</p> <p>Evaluated: no</p>		
<p>Institution: Domestic Violence Intervention Project</p> <p>Activity: Women's Support Service</p> <p>Target group: Women who have experienced domestic abuse</p> <p>Evaluated: no</p>		
<p>Institution: Women's refuges like Nia Project, Southall Black Sisters, Solace Womens Aid</p> <p>Activity: Refuge provision, casework/advice</p> <p>Target group: women who have experienced domestic abuse and are in need of emergency accommodation</p> <p>Evaluated: no</p>		
<p>Institution: AVA (Against Violence and Abuse)</p> <p>Activity: Coordinated</p>		

<p>Community Response Toolkit for addressing domestic abuse – detailed website which aims to help all agencies deliver a coordinated community response, is a ‘blueprint against which local services can map their provision and identify gaps.</p> <p>Target Group: practitioners and organisations providing services to victims/survivors of domestic abuse</p> <p>Evaluation: no</p>		
<p>Institution: Respect</p> <p>Activity: Men’s Advice Line – helpline for male victims of domestic abuse</p> <p>Target group: men experiencing domestic abuse</p> <p>Evaluation: no</p>		
<p>Institution: Bede House</p> <p>Activity: LGBT domestic abuse advice and advocacy service</p> <p>Target group: LGBT victims/survivors of domestic abuse in the London borough of Southwark</p> <p>Evaluation: no</p>		
<p>Institution: Solace Women’s Aid</p> <p>Activity: Specialist male domestic abuse worker (IDVA)</p> <p>Target group: Men (including G/B/T men) who have experienced domestic abuse</p>		

4.3 Description of multi agency networks

4.3.1 Mainstream prevention and LGBT-focused work

The level to which mainstream prevention activities take account of LGBT victims of domestic abuse varies in London. All mainstream services work within a paradigm of violence based on power and control where the victim is (biologically) female and the perpetrator is (biologically) male. Current trends are seeing domestic abuse strategy being approached within wider violence against women and girls strategies, and by their very nature these can either exclude or minimize violence against men, or violence which takes place outside of the accepted pattern of abuse. Even where strategies and services claim to be appropriate to all victims, or aim to be inclusive, they often do not refer in any depths to the differences in experiences of LGBT victims and simply state that where victims are men or LGBT, they are covered by services too. This means that services often do not meet the needs of LGBT victims.

Primary prevention rarely refers to LGBT victims, and widespread publicity campaigns feature heterosexual women as the victims.

Mainstream secondary prevention is slightly more inclusive. CAADA training for IDVAs includes half a day about LGBT domestic abuse (out of 15 days total). All IDVAs use the same risk assessment tool to judge risk for clients, and this tool has been designed to also be relevant to LGBT victims of domestic abuse. CAADA undertook consultation with the LGBT community to try to ensure that this is the case.

Some mainstream organisations direct services towards some or all of the LGBT community to a greater or lesser degree, and this is growing slowly. This includes, for example:

- Solace Women's Aid (a mainstream domestic abuse refuge and outreach service provider) has a male IDVA who targets the LGBT community specifically in Islington (one of the London boroughs).
- Respect (mainstream umbrella group for perpetrator programmes) developed a booklet targeted at gay and bi men who are perpetrators of domestic abuse, called 'choose to stop'.
- The National Health Service in Barking and Dagenham (a borough of London) in partnership with Against Violence And Abuse (previously the Greater London Domestic Violence Project) produced a set of three primary prevention leaflets targeted at victims who are gay and bi men, trans, or lesbian and bi women.
- Against Violence and Abuse, the London strategic domestic violence project supports the formation and running of the LGBT Domestic Abuse Forum, by funding its publication on housing rights for LGBT victims, and by providing a specific space on its website.
- CAADA, which trains all IDVAs, includes half a day on LGBT domestic abuse as part of its training programme. It also consulted with LGBT organisations to ensure that its training and risk assessment tool was relevant to LGBT victims.

Mainstream tertiary prevention always explicitly states that most victims of domestic abuse are women and that strategies and policies are designed with this in mind. However in recent years there has been official acceptance of LGBT victims, for example:

- The Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004 expanded the list of those who were eligible to apply for a non-molestation order, to include same-sex couples.
- The Crown Prosecution Service Guidance on prosecuting cases of domestic abuse refers to both men and women.
- The Metropolitan Police Service undertakes an annual high-profile arrest operation of perpetrators of domestic abuse (Operation Athena) and this includes LGBT perpetrators.

4.3.2 Galop's integration into mainstream intervention networks

Galop works across all of London, and is not therefore able to regularly attend every MARAC (there are 32 meeting monthly). However we are well linked in with services, and get invited to some MARACS where there are LGBT victims. We use the same risk assessment tool as IDVAs, and we are able to refer our own clients to a MARAC where this is appropriate, and then attend that meeting to advocate for our client's needs. We also work closely with the police on matters relating to domestic abuse. Some of Galop's funding comes from a pan-London funder (London Councils), and we work within a network of other domestic abuse organisations (which are all mainstream), to coordinate our work and refer clients to each other. This gives us the opportunity to help improve practice across the sector, for example working within this network to support mainstream providers in beginning to monitor the sexual orientation and gender identity of their service users. Galop lists its services in the 'Gold Book' which is a book published by Women's Aid which lists all refuges and domestic abuse service providers that provide services to women.

LGBT community joint work with the police has improved a great deal in recent years. The Crown Prosecution Service in London coordinates a Hate Crime Scrutiny panel of experts (including the Chief Executive of Galop) which examines closed cases that have been to court, and shares lessons learned. This includes domestic and sexual abuse and LGBT domestic and sexual abuse. Police practice is still patchy however and the low numbers of reports of LGBT domestic abuse to the police, coupled with the very low numbers referred to MARACs as high-risk cases, as well as some bad practice or lack of recognition of the nature of reports suggests that there is some way to go before there is parity of service.

4.3.3 LGBT community prevention activities

Over the past several years, the LGBT community has begun to respond to the need for a specialist community response to domestic abuse within the LGBT communities by developing a range of services. This work developed in direct response to need from the community, which was largely unable to access services, or appropriate services, from mainstream providers.

Primary prevention services include Broken Rainbow, which provides a national helpline run by volunteers, offering emotional support to victims of domestic abuse. Broken Rainbow also provides

training to mainstream service providers, and works strategically to try to improve services for victims.

The Gay Men's Shared Housing project is a medium support housing project (now run as a sub-section within a large mainstream housing association) that offers accommodation to gay, bi and trans men who have been the victim of violence including both domestic violence and homophobic violence. This is not emergency accommodation, and the waiting list is usually several months for a vacancy.

Stonewall Housing, which is an LGBT housing and homelessness organisation, has a specialist housing advice caseworker who works with victims of domestic abuse to help them get resettled and to advocate for them with housing providers and the local authority. Stonewall Housing also provides 41 bed spaces in shared houses with support workers, to young people LGBT people aged 16-25 who are homeless or in housing need. Although not specifically targeted at victims of domestic abuse, some of the tenants will have experienced domestic abuse as a cause of their homelessness.

There are also a number of isolated workers in different organisations whose main, or substantive post includes work with LGBT victims of domestic abuse. Some work for LGBT community organisations, others work for LGBT projects in mainstream organisations.

Services usually have leaflets which explain their services and may also place adverts in LGBT press, usually focused on helping potential victims access services, rather than being more generally part of a campaign challenging abusive behaviour.

There are also a number of victims rights type resources targeted at the LGBT community, for example the LGBT domestic abuse and housing rights guide which was developed by Stonewall Housing, and the victims advice sections on the Galop website.

In addition to these primary prevention activities, London has developed some specific LGBT secondary prevention networks. The two most relevant are the London LGBT Domestic Abuse Partnership (DAP) and the LGBT Domestic Abuse Forum (LGBT DAF).

Two years ago Galop and four other LGBT organisations (Pace, Stonewall Housing, Broken Rainbow and London Lesbian and Gay Switchboard) launched the DAP. The DAP is a multi-agency partnership which uses a coordinated community response model approach by creating a formal network of agencies working together to provide targeted primary prevention services (housing advice, safety planning, assistance with the police, reporting services, emotional support and survivor's groups), as well as using standard needs and risk assessment tools (the CAADA tools used by all IDVAs and MARACs) to meet the range of client needs. The project coordinator of this service attends some MARACs where a DAP client's case is being discussed. This project works where possible in partnership with mainstream providers. It provides training on the needs of LGBT victims, and is integrated into the mainstream CCR activities and networks. The DAP works to be a professional service where LGBT victims can experience the same level of coordination and response as a heterosexual woman might expect; however very limited resources and lack of access to appropriate emergency accommodation limits the extent to which the DAP is able to meet these aims.

The DAF began as an informal network of workers, activists and researchers who work in the area of LGBT domestic abuse. The forum is a space for workers to get together and share good practice, whilst supporting each other and working to professionalise their work. The Forum has until recently

not received any specific funding and has therefore been managed by volunteers. As a result it has been through periods of being more or less effective for members. Recently, Stonewall Housing was successful in being awarded funding for a part-time worker who will coordinate the work of the forum over the next two years. This will hopefully enable the forum to improve and further professionalize its work.

4.4 Reflection of community response and multi-agency networks

The MARAC and IDVA model of working has been thoroughly evaluated, and is situated within a coordinated community response model. CAADA, the organisation which trains all IDVAs, and develops the common risk assessment tools now used as standard within the sector, also has a quality assurance section, which evaluates the work of individual MARACS on a rolling basis. This model has been shown to impact positively by reducing risk and ending violence for individuals whose cases are referred to the MARAC.

However, the response within the LGBT community has not developed in a coordinated or planned way. LGBT organisations in the UK are chronically under-resourced, and struggle simply to maintain their existence, with staffing levels constantly changing. Any LGBT community response to domestic abuse must be viewed within this context.

The development of the LGBT community response occurred in response to gaps that the community perceived in service provision – most mainstream domestic abuse services work within a model of violence in which (biological) men are the perpetrators and (biological) women are the victims. Within this model gay, bi and trans men who experience domestic abuse cannot access any services, and lesbian and bi women can only access services which do not recognise their experiences within their model of violence. Trans women are also usually unable to access women's services due to a transphobic definition of women.

When LGBT services began, the division between LGBT work and mainstream work was more clearly defined because many organisations in the mainstream women's sector were suspicious of working outside of the usual paradigm. This seems to have been because LGBT domestic abuse work challenged the traditional men/women model of violence and because the work was seen as a financial threat, a 'minority' issue which would divert much needed funding from the women's sector. This meant the LGBT organisations developed services in isolation from the mainstream networks which were developing best practice around coordinated community responses.

As relationships and understanding have improved between the LGBT and women's sector, the LGBT sector has professionalized its approach. This has included, for example, the DAP using common risk assessment tools, LGBT organisation developing standard safety and information sharing protocols, and making referrals into MARACs. Some women's organisations have developed services for lesbian and bisexual women, and some are starting to monitor the sexual orientation of service users. Most women's organisations are still struggling with their narrow biological definitions of gender which prevent trans women from easily accessing their services, particularly gender-based emergency accommodation.

For LGBT organisations and networks that are now providing more professional and specialist services, there is a need to develop these so that they can fully meet the need of clients. These

services could also benefit from having a clearer set of criteria about what success looks like, and from external evaluation which could help the new sector to think strategically about what is working and where it could develop in the future.

The DAF has a key role in working with the LGBT community to find ways in which the community can further integrate the coordinated community response into its work.

However, although the model of the DAF and the DAP represent good practice, at present the DAP is over subscribed for clients and funding is far from secure. Whilst services are developing and improving, they work in an atmosphere in which expansion is very difficult and the end of funding is always potentially possible.

5. Discussion

The mainstream response to domestic abuse in London is very well developed. Although resources are always at risk, the high number of organisations and services and the relatively high political weight given to the issue, as well as the sheer number of years that the women's sector has been working and campaigning for the issue to be taken seriously, has allowed a complex understanding to be developed and for this complexity of understanding to be reflected in the work that takes place. This allows, for example, for specialist services which respond to sub-issues within the sphere of domestic abuse, for example services for victims with drugs and alcohol addictions, services targeted at perpetrators, services for people with mental health difficulties, approaches which take place within a health care setting, and campaigns aimed not just at helping victims to access services but also more generally at awareness and behaviour change.

In contrast the LGBT response is in its infancy. There are a small number of organizations which are working directly with LGBT victims, and they are in the most part providing primary prevention services. The DAP and the DAF are both secondary prevention networks, and these have proved effective for individual clients, however their level of effectiveness is limited by their very low resources. Neither service has undergone external evaluation, though both services collect internal evaluation data which is used to plan future service.

LGBT services are learning as they deliver services – there is not a large bank of research to support and inform their work. Much of the research that does exist focuses on establishing that the problem exists rather than interrogating its nature and complexities. LGBT services developed independently from mainstream services, and are now semi-integrated into the mainstream approach (for example in participation in MARACS and in risk assessment). This semi-integrated approach allows LGBT organisations to make use of best practice where it is relevant, and to influence the practice of mainstream organisations, whilst maintaining their own specialist approach. The development of the DAF is also providing LGBT organisations to share and develop their understanding of LGBT domestic abuse.

One benefit of the relatively small number of LGBT services is that joint working and information sharing functions well. Workers tend to know one another and this means that colleagues in different organisations can work together ore effectively to meet the clients' needs. This has also facilitated the development of the DAP and the DAF, and this partnership model is now largely accepted as the best way of working.

LGBT domestic abuse services are targeted at the whole LGBT community; however as with other types of LGBT services, they are accessed by more men than women. The lack of detailed evaluation means that it is hard to identify why this is the case (publicity does not target men so this is not the explanation). One possibility is that lesbians and bi women may be accessing mainstream services, however as most mainstream services do not monitor the sexual orientation of their clients, there is no way of knowing if this is the case.

6. Conclusions

London has developed the skeleton of an LGBT community response – in the shape of the DAP and the DAF. It is clear therefore that these two organizations will be central to the success of the LARS awareness raising activities.

Because the growing LGBT domestic abuse sector has worked from hand to mouth in the past, there is limited opportunity for it to be reflective about its own practice. The DAF may provide the forum for this reflective practice to grow, however the LARS project could assist in this by providing a framework of questions. These might include questions about how far colleagues consider the CCR model to be applicable to LGBT domestic abuse and how we might better plan for expansion of the sector in a strategic way.

The sector will not be in a position to mirror the kind of detailed secondary prevention activities that mainstream organizations participate in – for example MARACs. However in some sense the information sharing and joint work approach of the DAP does allow organizations to mirror some of the outcomes of the MARAC in managing risk effectively. It is important that high risk clients are more effectively referred into the mainstream MARAC however, and that effective advocacy takes place in the MARAC relating to their needs, as this is where LGBT victims can access appropriate criminal justice support.

Because LGBT activities thus far have mostly focused on raising awareness of the existence of services, it may be more effective for the LARS community response to focus on challenging attitudes and behaviours. The expert panels will be an excellent opportunity to discuss and decide what approach may work most effectively.

Casestudy

April, a 39 year old woman, had recently broken up with her girlfriend after her girlfriend had physically attacked her while they were on holiday. April and her ex-girlfriend Mary had been seeing each other for 6 months, and Mary had been increasingly abusive during that time. The police had been called out by neighbours at least three times that April could remember, even though nothing had come of it. Mary had a prior history of perpetrating domestic abuse that April was aware of. April has two children ages 6 and 8, who had witnessed several arguments between April and Mary, and had seen Mary throw a vase at their mother. Both children were frightened of Mary and consequently had been spending a lot of time at their father's house. The children's father - April's ex-husband - knew about the abuse and was very angry at April for getting herself and their children involved in such a situation, but despite this was being supportive of April and trying to help her get out of the relationship safely. Mary had also been calling and texting him to try to get him to have April contact her. Since April had broken up with Mary, Mary had been texting and phoning April over 30 times a day, and started to come round to April's flat and wait outside for her, where she would become threatening and abusive. She mainly did this at times of the day when she knew April would be coming and going, like in the afternoon when April's children were coming home from school. The last time Mary came around, she threatened April with a knife. This prompted April to ask for help, because she was very frightened and didn't know what to do. April rang Broken Rainbow UK¹ and talked to one of the helpline volunteers about the situation and

Because the caller was from London, and because Broken Rainbow UK is part of the Domestic Abuse Partnership², the helpline volunteer took down her details and passed them onto the Domestic Abuse Partnership coordinator at Galop, who rang April to carry out a risk assessment and see what help she may need. April expressed an interest in moving from her property, because she felt unsafe with Mary knowing where she and the children lived. She was also worried about the effect on the children of witnessing domestic abuse, and was frightened that Mary might try to hurt them in some way. April blamed herself for the abuse, since she knew before she entered into a relationship with Mary that Mary had had a past history of domestic abuse. She said that she had not been going out to see her friends because they all knew Mary and she was embarrassed and ashamed to tell them that she was experiencing domestic abuse.

The risk assessment showed that April was very frightened and that the abuse was increasing in intensity. The last incident had involved Mary attempting to choke April, and her constant stalking had involved threats to kill April and the children. April was isolated from her friends and family because of the abuse. The case was appropriate for a referral to the MARAC since April and her children were at high risk of further harm. The caseworker for the DAP helped April to make a safety plan and found April a solicitor who helped her take out a non-molestation order against Mary. They

¹ Broken Rainbow UK is a national charity which provides a helpline for LGBT victims of domestic abuse, as well as running campaigns and providing training to service providers. It is not affiliated to Broken Rainbow in Germany.

² The Dap is a CCR of five LGBT organisations in London which work together to provide services to victims of domestic abuse. Referrals are made between organisations when a client makes contact from London, and Galop coordinates the care package for each client.

discussed the option of going into a refuge. April also was referred into the domestic abuse support groups at Pace to help deal with her feelings of shame and guilt around the abuse.

At the MARAC, children's services allocated the children a social worker who met with them to make sure they were safe and enrolled them in a program for children who had witnessed domestic abuse. Because April and her children lived in council accommodation, the housing workers at the meeting arranged for April to swap to a different flat in the same area so that her children could attend the same school but she would not be as easily found by Mary. The police agreed to put a flag on April's address as well as her ex-husband's address so that if Mary turned up and police assistance was needed, they would know to attend quickly.