



# Evaluation of Welsh Women's Aid Change That Lasts project Interim report

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Respect



## Executive summary

Change That Lasts is a new model of intervention in relation to violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence (VAWDASV) that places survivors at the centre. The model was developed by Women's Aid Federation England in partnership with Welsh Women's Aid and survivors initially (and still the case for England) as a response to domestic abuse. Funding from the Home Office's VAWG Transformation Fund provided the opportunity for Welsh Women's Aid, in partnership with South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner, to adapt and pilot Change That Lasts to respond to VAWDASV, taking account of national policy and priorities.

Three strands of work sit at the heart of the Welsh model:

### Ask Me

Training and support of 'community ambassadors' to improve awareness, understanding and responses within the wider community.

### Trusted Professional

Training of non-specialist professionals to enable them to identify and respond better to survivors and perpetrators.

### Specialist Support Services

Provision of needs-led, trauma-informed specialist services for survivors.

A complementary strand of work was also developed in partnership with Respect through CLEAR (Change that Lasts Early Awareness Raising). This is a course working with those using abusive behaviours in relationships at an early stage.

The evaluation uses mixed methods to document the process of intervention, assess the impacts on victim-survivors and perpetrators and draw lessons for Welsh Women's Aid and their partners. Linked to a theory of change for each strand, a combination of qualitative and quantitative data has been gathered by project staff and the evaluators. Progress on each strand of the model is summarised below.

### Ask Me

- 12 courses run and 117 ambassadors trained
- Ambassadors distributed 3,998 pieces of literature to members of the public
- Ambassadors reached 13,747 individuals through activities and 20,310 through social media

The Ask Me strand has recruited far higher numbers than anticipated, with ambassadors diverse in terms of age and ethnicity. There was high praise from ambassadors, not only for the initial training, but also the ongoing input and support from the co-ordinator, the latter of substantial importance for the success and sustainability of Ask Me. Ambassadors are undertaking a wide range of activities, some integrated into their everyday lives and some more specifically organised. There is considerable room here for expansion: community led and based prevention as an everyday activity has huge, as yet, untapped potential.

## **Trusted Professional**

- 12 training days run and 108 professionals trained

The Trusted Professional strand was just beginning to embed when lockdown happened in March 2020. The number of professionals trained exceeds the original target, and there was strong and positive feedback from participants. There is follow-up work to do on whether and how this has changed practice.

## **Specialist Support Services**

- Specialist support provided to 212 survivors

Specialist Support Services for survivors was the last strand of Change That Lasts to be implemented. The training package for staff in specialist services has been developed, but training had to be postponed because of the national lockdown. It is currently being redesigned for online delivery. In the meantime, the targets for delivery of specialist support have been surpassed.

## **CLEAR – Specialist Services for Perpetrators**

- 27 referrals to the project, including 8 self-referrals
- 17 men have completed one or more sessions

CLEAR is becoming established and receiving referrals from a range of professionals and individuals as self-referrals. There is good retention and staff report that the men are motivated to change. A small number of men have completed the course and both they and their partners report improvements. In addition to the impact of Covid-19, the unanticipated closure of the local DVPP has implications for CLEAR in terms of referrals in and where to route men out to for further work.

Change that Lasts has made good progress to date, particularly in relation to Ask Me, which is the most developed strand of the work to date. However, Covid-19 has disrupted momentum and planned activities. In the next evaluation report, we intend to capture additional learning on adapting to Covid and what has been learnt in this unprecedented time.

# 1 Introduction



This is the first interim report for the evaluation of Welsh Women's Aid's Change That Lasts project. The introduction to this report begins by outlining the background context to the development of Change That Lasts in Wales and describes the model. This is followed by a section outlining the aims and methods used in the evaluation. The main section describes findings from the evaluation to date in relation to the three key strands of the project: Ask Me; Trusted Professional; Specialist Support Services and CLEAR (Change That Lasts Early Awareness Raising) – a supplementary strand of work to raise awareness of the impact of using abusive behaviours. This is followed by reflections on the project so far. This interim report focuses on the period from the project start in summer 2018 to March 2020. A final report will cover the period March to October 2020, as well as looking at the project period as a whole.

## Background to the project

Support services for victim-survivors emerged in the 1970s, focused around the provision of safe accommodation – refuges. That said, many local groups also offered telephone support and advocacy to women not living in refuges and to residents when they resettled (Humphreys & Kelly, 2000). These services were rarely time limited and tended to work with women until they were ready and able to 'move on'. There was not a 'one size fits all' approach, rather an expanding menu of forms of support, blended into bespoke responses to each woman's circumstances: what Purna Sen (1997) termed a 'basket of resources'. An example here would be the development of second-stage housing for women and children who had more extensive support needs (Hague & Malos, 1998). Recognition of the additional needs of minoritised women and women with disabilities were less in evidence and it took, and many would argue is still taking, the advocacy of women within those groups to mainstream their additional needs (Imkaan, 2017).

In the 1980s, there was an increased focus on systems change and on work with perpetrators, with the most influential model the Co-ordinated Community Response (CCR) which originated in Duluth, Minnesota<sup>1</sup>. This combined safety for victims with accountability for perpetrators within shared principles of practice across agencies. The CCR model was adopted in the late 1990s in an early version of the Westminster government's domestic violence policy. Policy development since that time, particularly in England, has increasingly relied on criminal justice responses, with communities limited to statutory and voluntary services.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.theduluthmodel.org/what-is-the-duluth-model/>

A decade later, following campaigning by women's organisations (Kelly & Lovett, 2004) the agenda shifted to a focus on violence against women and girls (VAWG), with a Westminster policy renewed in the years since. There are commitments within various of the government VAWG strategy iterations to integrated approaches, work with perpetrators and prevention, but all have received limited and intermittent attention.

Wales responded to the challenge of creating an integrated approach to VAWG through a legislative route, passing the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) (Wales) Act in 2015. This law underpins national and local strategies with implementation duties and annual progress reports. Welsh Women's Aid works within this framework.

The objectives of the national strategy in 2016-21 were to:

- increase awareness and challenge attitudes of VAWDASV across the Welsh population;
- increase awareness in children and young people of the importance of safe, equal and healthy relationships and that abusive behaviour is always wrong;
- increase focus on holding perpetrators to account and provide opportunities to change their behaviour based around victim safety;
- make early intervention and prevention a priority;
- train relevant professionals to provide effective, timely and appropriate responses to victims and survivors;
- provide victims with equal access to appropriately resourced, high-quality, needs-led, strength-based, gender responsive services across Wales.

As with its Westminster counterpart, the emphasis in support provision in Wales remains most extensive in relation to domestic abuse.

## **From Needs-led to Risk-based approaches**

For over a decade, responses to domestic abuse have been framed through risk discourse. This arguably has a place in assessing those who are the risk, that is perpetrators, but has increasingly been focused those who are 'at risk', namely victim-survivors (Coy & Kelly, 2019). As the language of risk came to dominate, the focus of interventions shifted from safety to risk reduction, and in the process became increasingly time limited. This is most evident in the IDVA and MARAC models (Coy & Kelly, 2011), both of which were promoted by CAADA, later to become Safe Lives. Originating from the Women's Safety Project in Cardiff (Robinson, 2003, 2004), the rationale was twofold: to reduce domestic violence homicides and to

extend support to more of the increasing number who were reporting to the police. The former has not been achieved, with the numbers of women killed each year remaining stubbornly persistent.<sup>2</sup> At the same time, increasing doubts have been expressed about both whether short-term risk reduction is the type of support victim-survivors need: it has also been criticised for bypassing their experiential knowledge, positioning professionals as the knowers (Walklate & Mythen, 2011). A more recent research project, drawing on all-day focus groups with professionals – including in Wales – asked whether risk discourse has also resulted in ‘responsibilisation’: professionals shifting responsibility for safety, including of children, to survivors (Coy & Kelly, 2019).

These shifts have been reflected in commissioning, with funders increasingly specifying the length of interventions, volume of cases and risk reduction outcomes. This has affected all survivors and support services, but it has had particular consequences for the specialist BME sector. As a recent briefing paper (Kelly & Dhaliwal, 2020) notes, support work with minoritised women should be considered ‘case work plus, plus, plus’: the issues to be dealt with are never just about VAWG, but traverse racism, immigration, poverty and community. This was not reflected in previous funding frameworks, but the mismatch has been exacerbated through the one-size-fits-all framing of most commissioning.

## Changing the framing

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Change That Lasts was built from a research project, Finding the Costs of Freedom (Kelly, Sharp Jeffs & Klein, 2014): a study which followed 100 women and their children after they had received support from Solace Women’s Aid. The key findings from the study – that the majority experienced abuse post separation, that this and national and local policies were barriers to rebuilding lives, and that many had unmet support needs three years on – provided an evidence base from which to argue that support services should be needs led. One of the core concepts from the study – ‘space for action’ – points to the ways in which the confidence and capacity of survivors is undermined by the processes of abuse. Interventions, therefore, should endeavour to reverse this by expanding their space for action.

Change That Lasts, took the research findings and the concept of space for action as foundations for developing a new model of intervention that places survivors at the centre, as knowers about their needs and situations. It explicitly challenges the ways in which risk has rationed access to support if it is deemed low or medium, arguing that early intervention, alongside interventions that result in longer-term changes both reduce harm and save money.

<sup>2</sup> <https://femicidescensus.org/>



## Change That Lasts in Wales

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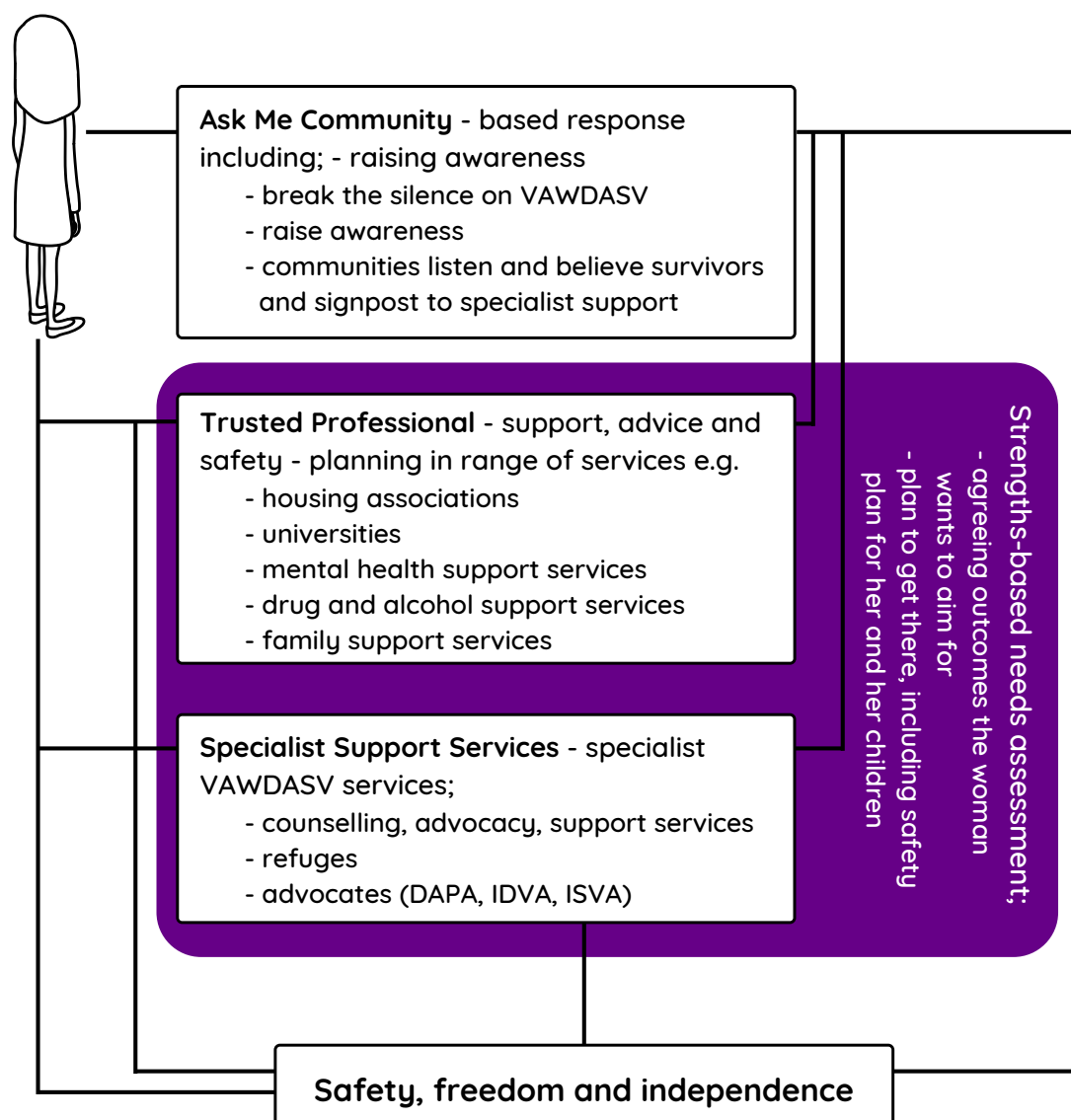
Welsh Women's Aid adapted the initial model to better reflect the VAWDASV framework of the legislation in Wales and the early learnings from implementation in England. The Change That Lasts programme in Wales is located within this overall history and the local Welsh policy parameters.

There are three main strands of work at the heart of the Welsh model (see Figure 1):

- **Ask Me**  
Training of 'community ambassadors' to improve awareness, understanding and responses within the wider community.
- **Trusted Professional**  
Training of non-specialist professionals to enable them respond better to survivors and perpetrators.
- **Specialist Support Services**  
Provision of needs-led, trauma-informed specialist services.

Early in the development of Change That Lasts it was identified that conversations about the perpetration of abuse were crucial to ensure a shift in focus for individual behaviour change on to those perpetrating abuse. In 2017, Welsh Women's Aid and Respect were successful in securing funding to be able to develop this strand of work. This meant that awareness and identification of perpetrators was embedded in Trusted Professional, and a complementary strand of work was developed to enable those using abusive behaviours to name their behaviour, take responsibility for it, and be ready to engage with longer-term behavioural change work, if needed. CLEAR was developed as an Early Response and Awareness Raising course and entailed working with perpetrators at an early stage.

Figure 1: The Change That Lasts model in Wales



Our understanding is that these strands are intended work together to create longer-term change – Change That Lasts – by:

- promoting greater understanding and awareness in a range of communities about survivors and perpetrators of VAWDASV;
- achieving an earlier, more informed and supportive response from community members and professionals, providing survivors with more space for action;
- providing earlier, more sustained and more effective support to survivors based on their needs and strengths;
- equipping professionals to recognise the role of perpetrators in VAWDASV and reduce their space for action to commit further violence; and
- responding to their behaviour in order to take responsibility and be able to engage in behavioural change work.



## 2 Evaluation design and methodology

This section outlines the evaluation aims, design and methods.

### Evaluation aims

The overall goal of the evaluation was to create an evidence base to inform the further development of the Change That Lasts model across Wales and elsewhere. The specific aims are detailed below.

- 1 Evaluate the impact of empowering communities with the knowledge and skills to contribute towards a coordinated response to male violence against women, by increasing knowledge, challenging attitudes and current social norms and signposting to services.
- 2 Examine how a trained, non-specialist workforce can change their approach to improve responses to survivors and perpetrators by:
  - using the knowledge and skills from training to identify survivors and perpetrators early within their services/engagement;
  - responding appropriately to survivors and perpetrators, informed by survivors needs and strengths in that response;
  - referring to specialist support services.
- 3 Evaluate the effectiveness of the needs-led, strengths-based and trauma-responsive support by specialist services in Cardiff.
- 4 Provide an evidence base for embedding strengths-based, trauma-responsive and needs-led responses to survivors, founded on the experiences of survivors.

## Evaluation design

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The contract for the evaluation was not secured until part-way through the pilot, meaning that Change That Lasts had already been operating for some time when the evaluation team was engaged. A Theory of Change had been developed by Welsh Women's Aid at the outset of the project, and in November 2019 the evaluators ran a Theory of Change workshop with Change That Lasts staff, specialist services and other key stakeholders to revisit this. The purpose was to clarify the activities being carried out within each of the four strands and further develop thinking around the outcomes the project was seeking to realise. The workshop explored each strand of the Change That Lasts model separately, surfacing the underlying assumptions and their relationship to the intended outcomes. Through this process, existing data sources within the project were identified, as well as those that needed to be created within the evaluation to monitor and evidence progress. From the workshop an individual Theory of Change was produced for each strand of the project, as well as an updated Theory of Change for Change That Lasts overall. In the Impacts of the Project section below, the relevant Theory of Change is used to introduce the findings on each project strand.

The evaluation uses a mixed methods approach to document the process of intervention, assess the potential range of impacts on victim-survivors and perpetrators and draw lessons for Welsh Women's Aid and their partners. A combination of data has been gathered by project staff and the evaluators to reflect the perspectives of the range of stakeholders and enable triangulation of data sources to strengthen findings. This includes quantitative data on those using the services or undergoing training and qualitative methods designed to capture more in-depth responses and reflections. Not all aspects of the data collection have been implemented yet, as several were interrupted by the conditions created by the Covid-19 pandemic and the impacts on services and the evaluation team. Each aspect that has been undertaken to date is outlined in more detail below.

## Evaluation methods

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In this report we combine:

- secondary analysis of project monitoring data and feedback;
- expert interviews with project workers and staff in specialist services;
- focus groups with ambassadors.

## **Quantitative data on Ask Me and Trusted Professional**

In relation to the two training components, project monitoring data regarding Ask Me ambassadors and Trusted Professionals has been analysed. This includes data on who attended, feedback provided during training and follow-up monitoring data.

Ask Me ambassadors complete evaluation forms, which document their level of knowledge and understanding of VAWDASV and their response to key myths pre- and post-training. Active ambassadors complete a monthly spreadsheet about their activities and how many people they have reached through them. This is returned to the Ask Me co-ordinator for monitoring. Trusted Professional trainees also complete similar pre- and post-training evaluation forms.

These data are maintained in an Excel spreadsheet, updated with each new cohort of trainees, and anonymised versions have been shared with the evaluators for analysis.

## **Qualitative work with Ask Me and Trusted Professional trainees**

In March 2020, we conducted two focus groups with the Ask Me ambassadors to obtain more in-depth insights into their views of the training and what difference it has made. Participants were recruited via a request circulated by the Ask Me coordinator to the Facebook group and email list. They were held at different times – one in the daytime to enable those with school-aged children to attend and one in the evening for those who were working or had other daytime commitments. Both were conducted at Welsh Women's Aid, a venue that participants were familiar and comfortable with. Five ambassadors took part in the first focus group and two in the second. Questions explored:

- what interested them about the ambassador role;
- how they found the training;
- what their experience has been of carrying out the role, including any successes and challenges; and
- whether there is anything they would have found useful to be added to the training.

Follow-up questionnaires will be sent to the ambassadors for further evaluation of their role. We will adopt similar approaches when examining the effectiveness of the training for those working in non-specialist agencies, this work was interrupted by COVID 19.

## Qualitative work with key informants

In February 2020, we conducted one-to-one interviews with project staff and those in specialist services. This included the Ask Me co-ordinator, the managers of the two specialist services and the now new CEO of Welsh Women's Aid, who had previously been involved with CLEAR in her role as research and development manager with Respect. She was interviewed while still holding her Respect position, so provided input on the CLEAR work. All interviews were conducted face to face. Questions explored:

- their hopes and expectations of the project;
- their understandings and views of the Change That Lasts model;
- whether they have seen any impacts of the Ask Me and Trusted Professional strands on their work;
- their views of the training; and
- what they think Change That Lasts will mean for their service users.

Table 1 summarises the full range of data used in this report.

Table 1: Summary of evaluation data gathered

Data source	Number achieved
Ask Me ambassadors focus groups	2 groups 7 participants in total
Trusted Professional training observations	1
Interviews with project staff and key informants	4

Table 2: Summary of project data analysed

Data source	Number achieved
Ask Me ambassadors monitoring data	100 cases
Trusted Professional monitoring data	51 cases
CLEAR men monitoring data	27 cases

## Limitations

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Despite the intention to conduct a wide range of data collection activities for the evaluation, a number of factors have meant that not all of this has been possible to date.

The training of specialist services was the final strand of Change That Lasts work to be implemented. There were plans to begin delivering this just as the national lockdown was announced. New Ask Me and Trusted Professional trainings were put on hold during the pandemic, as it was not possible to deliver the courses in their existing face-to-face format. This meant that the mode of delivery and course content had to be revisited. Distribution of an evaluation survey designed to capture pre- and post-training attitudes that was due to go out to staff in the specialist services had to be postponed. Routes to accessing survivor feedback was also halted.

Given the additional pressures on frontline services from March 2020, it was considered inappropriate to place further burdens on staff by requesting that they participate in focus groups or complete follow-up evaluation surveys. Therefore, these follow-ups will be carried out in the coming months.

It was also not possible for the evaluation team to travel, meaning that the implementation of some data collection items, such as focus groups was delayed.



## 3 Evaluation findings

The findings below are based on the evaluation activities and evidence gathered to March 2020. They are divided into sections on the four strands – Ask Me, Trusted Professional, Specialist Support Services and CLEAR - Specialist Services for perpetrators. Each section begins with the Theory of Change for that strand as a reference point. Sub-sections follow progress in relation to each milestone, and there is an overall conclusion on progress at the end.

### Ask Me

Ask Me was originally piloted by Women's Aid Federation of England in 2017/18, in partnership with Welsh Women's Aid, and there are now Ask Me projects running in multiple sites in England and Wales. The original model is primarily domestic abuse focused, but Welsh Women's Aid wanted to make the Welsh model inclusive of VAWDASV to reflect the broader nature of the legislation in Wales.





## Theory of Change for Ask Me

Where now	Activities	Milestones	Outcomes	Where want to be
Communities have little knowledge or understanding of VAWDASV, meaning that perpetration is tolerated, and survivors are not enabled to access support that expands their space for action	<p>Development of training</p> <p>Recruitment of community ambassadors</p> <p>Delivery of training to community ambassadors</p> <p>Ambassadors use and share learning/ resources in their communities</p> <p>Support and self-care for ambassadors</p>	<p>Training sessions delivered</p> <p>A strong network of community ambassadors</p> <p>Individuals benefiting from ambassadors' activities</p> <p>Ambassadors are reaching a range of communities</p> <p>Widened access to safe disclosure</p>	<p>Enhanced understanding of VAWG among ambassadors, and through them, communities</p> <p>Greater awareness of local services and where help can be found is shared with communities</p> <p>Disclosures within community spaces, which are responded to positively (e.g. listening, recognition, signposting, accessing information)</p> <p>Reduced tolerance and excusing of perpetration</p>	Enhanced knowledge and less tolerance in communities of VAWDASV leads to support for survivors that expands their space for action and reduces that of perpetrators with respect to abuse

### What is Ask Me?

The aim of Ask Me is to improve the community response to VAWDASV. The ambassadors are not specialists or working in the VAWDASV sector but have everyday roles in their local communities. There are three parts to what is expected of them:

- initiating conversations and discussion about VAWDASV;

- using opportunities to share their learning, knowledge and understanding;
- providing a safe, appropriate and supportive response to survivors.

The two-day Ask Me training course is designed to give them the skills and confidence to do this work, including making them aware of relevant services they can signpost to. The training covers information and statistics about all forms of VAWDASV, gender, perpetrators, local services and safeguarding. The training methodology includes a combination of presentation, discussion and group activities. It also covers the ambassador role, practical examples, and strategies for self-care. The stated aims of the course are to enable participants to:

- understand what VAWDASV looks like;
- understand the impact of it;
- feel confident in responding to myths and victim blaming;
- know what to do if someone shares their personal experience of abuse;
- know where survivors in their community can get support;
- understand what ambassadors are expected to do and how to stay in touch after the training.

Those interested in taking the course have to submit an expression of interest to show their level of previous training and awareness of the issues. If selected<sup>3</sup>, they are invited to take part in the two-day training. The process includes a pre- and post-training assessment of their beliefs and values regarding VAWDASV. Following the course, there is a week's reflection space and those selected are invited to become ambassadors.

Ambassadors are given Ask Me branded merchandise, such as a badge, lanyard, literature and leaflets to use in their interactions with the public. An Ask Me toolkit has been designed containing tips, ideas about different types of activities they could undertake and how to deal with common issues.

In order to track their activities, ambassadors are encouraged to fill out a tracker form (referred to within the project as a HAYGO – How Are You Getting On?) on a monthly basis. This provides the Ask Me co-ordinator with a picture of the types of activities they are carrying out and how many people they are reaching, and it also serves to highlight any areas where there have been successes or gaps.

The Ask Me scheme is staffed by a full-time funded co-ordinator, based at Welsh Women's Aid, whose role is to promote the scheme to the community, recruit ambassadors, train them, provide after support to encourage and enable them and monitor their activities and impact.

3 A small number of applicants are not accepted. To date, this has happened in only four cases.

## **Activities undertaken as part of Ask Me**

The main activities carried out by Welsh Women's Aid to implement Ask Me are the redevelopment of the training package, recruitment of ambassadors to the training, delivering the training and supporting the ambassadors in their role. Ambassador activities have involved putting into practice what they have learned on the training within their communities and networks.

## **Has Ask Me met the intended milestones?**

The original target for this strand of Change That Lasts was to recruit and train 30 ambassadors, reach over 1,000 members of the public through a variety of communications and awareness raising activities, and signpost 1,400 survivors and perpetrators to appropriate services and support.

This section assesses the progress of Ask Me in relation to these original targets and the Theory of Change developed with the evaluators, drawing on project monitoring data, pre- and post-training feedback from ambassadors, focus groups with ambassadors and interviews with key informants.

## **Training sessions delivered**

The Ask Me scheme has been running in Cardiff since August 2018. Training sessions for ambassadors began in August 2018. From then to March 2020, Welsh Women's Aid have run 12 courses and trained 117 ambassadors – almost four times the target number. Of these, 100 are active ambassadors.

## **Recruitment**

In terms of recruitment, an early idea in previous pilots before Cardiff had been to target particular types of settings, such as hairdressers, and to train up all staff in them as ambassadors so that they could act as 'disclosure points'. This did not work in Wales, since it proved hard to find sites where all staff agreed to be trained, whereas there were lots of interested individuals. Welsh Women's Aid have therefore used their own channels, particularly social media, to recruit ambassadors and there has been a certain amount of word of mouth through the ambassadors and co-ordinator themselves.

There have been some issues about the best way to manage recruitment in order to ensure that it converts into course attendance. The Ask Me co-ordinator has trialled different methods: initially, she advertised a training event and people could get a ticket, but they did not secure a space until they had sent the expression of interest paperwork in. This was a lot of effort and there was a 50 per cent fall out rate between people getting a ticket and completing the paperwork, so she moved to a system of registration via the website. This was much easier for the co-ordinator to

manage, but although people were eager to sign up, they still did not necessarily end up attending, and there was one course where only one third of those who had got a ticket attended. The current process is for online registration, but an email is sent out one month before to get confirmation of attendance, and they are also trying out overbooking to compensate for dropouts.

### Feedback on the course

Trainees have provided very positive feedback about the course. Reflecting on what they have gained from it, these are common responses.

I feel better informed about how to respond to a survivor who confides in me. I am also aware of my role as an ambassador and what it entails. My knowledge of the help available and how to point someone in the right direction has given me this confidence (Ask Me training feedback).

Being more confident to engage in 'difficult' conversations e.g. misogynists to challenge their views more effectively e.g. with survivors to better handle disclosures and support them (Ask Me training feedback).

It was such a positive inclusive training course I'm not sure I could suggest any improvements (Ask Me training feedback).

What I gained was I didn't have very much knowledge about local and national services, and [...] I really valued the stuff which was like interpersonal skills and it was more thinking about how you would react either to a disclosure or how would you react to challenge a problem that somebody had expressed (Ask Me focus group 1).

## Individuals benefiting from ambassadors' activities

Ambassadors have carried out a huge range of activities in their local communities since undertaking the training. The Ask Me tracker shows that between October 2018 and March 2020, they distributed 3,998 pieces of literature, including posters, stickers, leaflets, business cards, with stickers being the most common (n=1,428).

Ambassadors were also asked about their social media activity and estimated that they had reached 20,310 individuals through this. The sites where most people were reached were Twitter (n=7,357), Instagram (n=5,550) and Facebook (n=5,131). It should be noted that these are the cumulative totals achieved by all ambassadors over the whole period. If it had been possible to train all 100 ambassadors at the start so that all had been active throughout, even higher figures would have been reached. Since there were some issues with non-completion of the tracker (see Capturing impact section below), these should also be seen as underestimates.

Detailed activities undertaken and the numbers of people reached by them are detailed in Table 3.

**Table 3: Activities carried out by Ask Me ambassadors and numbers reached**

Activity	Number of people reached through activity
Challenged victim blaming/myths and stereotypes (either online or in conversation)	3,627
Worn branded merchandise	2,196
Discussed the training and my role as an Ask Me Ambassador	2,040
Given a talk in my community	1,167
Given information to someone else about becoming an Ask Me Ambassador	1,129
Attended a community event	641
Organised a community event	192
Other <sup>4</sup>	2,755

<sup>4</sup> This category includes a wide variety of activities, including: setting up groups; speaking about VAWDASV in a range of settings and contexts; and providing information about VAWDASV and/or services.

Table 3 shows that the most common activities ambassadors are engaging in are challenging myths and stereotypes about VAWDASV, wearing branded merchandise and discussing the ambassador role with others, but they have also participated in or organised many different types of community events.

There were also examples of ambassadors who had got involved in volunteering and fundraising, which also benefits the sector and survivors, and one had even been inspired to get a job in a charity.

### Community conversations

A lot of what the ambassadors do is initiate conversations with people where opportunities arise. This may be with their family and friends, colleagues or individuals they meet at events or in public spaces, and it can involve providing information to those who are not directly affected but may know someone who is. The Ask Me co-ordinator describes this as a 'ripple effect'.

A lot of them are supporting people to support other people, so it's kind of like a ripple effect. So they might not be directly supporting the survivor themselves, but their friend [...] So it's about building other people's capacity (Interview with Ask Me co-ordinator).

Examples from ambassadors' feedback illustrate this.

I had a conversation with my son and my daughter about sexual harassment, which was really interesting to see their perspectives but also to offer some light education to my son about what constitutes sexual harassment and keeping himself safe while being respectful of women (Ask Me tracker).

My friend is going on a stalking awareness course and feels that he sees abuse towards women very differently because of me. He in turn has questioned himself and also been able to provide advice and support to one of his friends, who approached him with a situation about domestic abuse (Ask Me tracker).

The information you shared about training related to FGM on Facebook was really helpful for me to be able to pass on to a friend who gets asked a lot about the subject and had been looking for something just like it to share with community members she works with (Ask Me tracker).

Some had created opportunities within their personal or professional networks to hold discussions and talks at a group level.

The ladies' night I held at my house was a great success. everyone went home with a different perspective and a strong commitment to challenge VAWG and community perspectives (Ask Me tracker).

I have agreed to do a talk with children's ward nurses about my role (Ask Me tracker).

Challenged some narratives among colleagues who thought domestic abuse was only about violence and losing control, and caused by chaotic lives/poverty/alcohol/drugs. At least one of them reconsidered her view (Ask Me tracker).

One of the ambassadors is a doula and runs a parenting group, so she promotes awareness among pregnant women and new mothers.

One ambassador, who had previous experience of working as a frontline practitioner in the VAWDASV sector, described how the relationships she built with individuals in her ambassador role were different, 'because it's people talking to people [...] you're not a professional person, so [...] the conversations are just between two human beings'. This made conversations easier, and less guarded, but she found that the engagement could sometimes be harder without the tools and processes professionals have as an aid to guide discussion.


## **Holding institutions to account**

The ambassadors are connected to a range of different sectors and, as part of holding communities to account about VAWDASV, it was apparent that they are also holding to account the institutions they encounter in their everyday lives. This includes schools, health settings, unions and the Church. One strategy is getting posters and other literature into public places like GP's surgeries, hospitals, cafes, libraries, nail salons and other places where they see a lack of information or a need for more. Often this comes from their own awareness that there are information gaps in these environments, sometimes because of personal experience of VAWDASV and not having been able to obtain support.

Some have created impacts in their workplaces. For example, Cardiff Women's Aid run a scheme where they will help businesses write a domestic abuse policy for free, so some have advocated for their workplaces to do that. One lobbied for her colleagues to get domestic abuse training and others have asked their businesses to donate to Welsh Women's Aid. Another, who worked for a national car insurance

company, highlighted the links with domestic violence, with a view to possible staff training, as there are insurance claims where cars are damaged by VAWDASV perpetrators. Another had contacts in the police and has had fruitful discussions with them about why it is difficult for domestic abuse survivors to leave abusive partners using information from the training.

One of the key challenges that ambassadors mentioned was about letting people make their own decisions, especially when they were not yet ready to leave abusive situations.




After finding out from one disclosure that a woman had just been badly beaten, I really wanted to call the police. But she didn't want to. It was hard. Really hard. But now she is considering contacting them herself, which is much better, much more empowering for her. I am really glad I had the training or in the past I might have called the police for her, which she didn't feel was the right thing to do in that moment. I had to remind myself that she is the expert (Ask Me tracker).

Ambassadors also found they frequently had to deal with responses that asked, 'What about men?'

The same old 'what about the men' question (Ask Me tracker).

I have been met with some hostility to the agenda. I have been able to have healthy and challenging discussion about this which I hope will lead to an improved understanding and response (Ask Me tracker).



The Ask Me co-ordinator arranged a dedicated session on this, in which ambassadors were able to explore some of these arguments and identify possible counter-arguments, and this was described as extremely beneficial.

## Capturing impact


Measuring the impact of Ask Me presents several challenges. Ambassadors are free to implement the role quite flexibly in terms of who they approach and how, and whether they even make it known that they are an Ask Me ambassador. It is, therefore, hard to link ambassador activities with concrete outcomes beyond their own reports of how many people they have had contact with, and they are not in a position to have follow-up contact with everyone they may engage with to know what the implications of this may be. Where appropriate, they may signpost people to suitable agencies, but whether these materialise is hard to track since they are not formal referrals and, in any case, may not result in someone contacting a service




immediately. Even if someone an ambassador has reached out to does contact an agency, they may not be asked or even know to attribute this to the ambassador, for example, if they have seen a poster or picked up a leaflet, or if they have received a recommendation from a friend. This means their activities must be seen as a longer-term project producing a series of 'ripple effects' that is more about promoting conversations and dialogue and signposting, even though the hope is that it will have concrete effects further down the line.

Another issue is getting ambassadors to record all of their activities. The Ask Me tracker is the main method that has been used by the project so far to monitor activity. However, only 20-30 per cent of ambassadors have been filling in the tracker regularly, so the activity numbers above should be seen as underestimates. Some ambassadors have stated they have difficulties using the spreadsheet. Others may conduct multiple activities throughout the month, or even daily, such as posting on social media, so it can be hard to recall and go back and record all of those a month later.

A number of focus group participants described completing the tracker as a chore, or something they felt guilty about not doing, although they understood it was necessary. Several said it was hard to capture something that was integral to what they did on a day-to-day basis. However, one described how it gave her a sense of achievement.



When I start putting those numbers together, I think, “Oh okay, so we have been at it,” it gives me a sense of satisfaction that it carries on, it doesn't have to be just statistics to be churned out into bars and diagrams. It's something that's happening, it's very much alive in my life, so it gives me that kind of acknowledgment that it's there (Ask Met focus group 1).




One ambassador described how she sends herself a WhatsApp message if she has done something to log it. This sparked a discussion in the focus group about whether WhatsApp might be a good medium for sharing their activities with the coordinator. Another participant stated that turning a computer or laptop on in your downtime feels like 'doing something worky' and agreed she was more comfortable with using WhatsApp on her phone, as she does this regularly anyway, socially.

The greater ease with this type of instant logging via a smartphone has led Welsh Women's Aid to engage a consultant to design a mobile app that will enable recording activities at the time they are completed. The hope is that this will make logging easier and more effective, thereby maximising the recording of ambassador activities, and it will also provide regular motivational prompting (e.g. positive notifications about what they have achieved that week/month) to encourage ongoing reporting.

## Further skills needed

When asked to give feedback about whether there was any way in which the ambassador training could be improved, many trainees answered that the training was excellent as it was, and they could not see any improvements that were needed. One area that was mentioned by four interviewees was the need for greater input on other forms of VAWDASV than domestic violence.



A little more info on FGM, honour-based violence, forced marriage would be beneficial. I felt it focused more on DA + assault (Ask Me training feedback).

Perhaps more on sexual violence?? (Ask Me training feedback)

Although two others said they had learnt more about honour-based violence from the course.

Most ambassadors in the focus groups said that additional training in general would be helpful. This was mainly in the form of follow-up or refresher training, with some mentioning campaigning. The Ask Me co-ordinator has responded by putting on themed sessions on topics that have come up for ambassadors, but she pointed out that they do not need to feel they have to be experts on everything.


## Strong network of community ambassadors


It was clear from the focus groups with ambassadors that Ask Me was responding to a need that was already felt by those accessing the course, who wanted to do something to help but required some further information and guidance in order to do so confidently. By providing the ambassador training, Ask Me has been able to harness a wealth of individual commitment and drive to address VAWDASV.

I knew that it was an area where I could make a difference if I had just a bit more knowledge and awareness (Ask Me focus group 1)

I jumped at it, because I feel like... Not only get experience for myself, but also like raise awareness in my community, because I don't think there's enough people like me doing courses like that (Ask Me focus group 1).

I was already blogging and writing about domestic violence [...] So I was looking for something where I could become more informed and better able to signpost really, because when you write about this on social media, I find that people write and send you messages and I didn't really know what to do with them. [...] I feel that the Ask Me has really helped me because I get quite a lot of disclosure or people who have already disclosed but want to talk about what they've been through (Ask Me focus group 1).






I was looking for something voluntary, but what attracted me about this is that I wasn't going to be part of something that was quite prescriptive, so I liked the fact that the opportunities for me to do the work is when I'm out there in the moment and I'm using those interactions with people (Ask Me focus group 2).

Some ambassadors had personal experiences of VAWDASV and recognised in the ambassador role a figure that would have been helpful for them.

I'm a survivor [...and...] the Ask Me project was indicative of what I would have wanted at that time, had I known someone in my community with an Ask Me badge, "What is that about, can I talk to you a minute, I'm not quite sure what I'm going through here?" (Ask Me focus group 1).


Creating a supportive network is a crucial aspect of strengthening this individual activity by providing a base that ambassadors feel part of and can return to if they have questions or concerns.

I thought [the training] was excellent, I really did, and I'm quite aware of stuff around domestic violence anyway, but it's also given me somewhere to go if I have a concern, or if I want to ask a question, or if something crosses my path and I don't quite know what to do with it. It's that support that's come with doing the training, [...] which will better enable us to support, or me to support, my local community (Ask Me focus group 1).



As ambassadors work as individuals in their local communities, the Ask Me project team tries to provide a wider support system for them through various means. Ambassadors receive a monthly newsletter with news about recent achievements and upcoming events. The Ask Me co-ordinator runs monthly 'connect' sessions, which offer a space for peer support and other online group forums. The face-to-face meet ups are not that well attended, with only six or seven coming regularly. This may simply be a question of time, with ambassadors often fitting the role around work and/or caring responsibilities, but it is lower than the take-up for these sessions in mid-Wales, where the Ask Me scheme is also running (together with west and north Wales) as part of a different funded project. To try to overcome this, the Ask Me co-ordinator has arranged themed sessions, on wellbeing, media training and 'What about men?' (a topic that comes up regularly for ambassadors in their conversations), which have been more successful. In addition, there is a closed Facebook group for ambassadors, which includes a daily post with an article to give them topical material they can share with their networks.

Focus group participants valued the contact with other ambassadors that came from being able to meet in person.



I think it's quite important to keep the continuity being connected and have the meet ups and learn from each other and support each other (Ask Me focus group 1).


One participant in the ambassador focus group preferred not to be on Facebook for personal reasons, so she admitted to feeling a bit excluded from what was being shared on the Facebook group, but others found Facebook a good tool to share recent developments and opportunities.

All participants thought the Ask Me co-ordinator did a lot to support them and found her extremely approachable and helpful.

I think the main support is access to [the Ask Me co-ordinator] as well, like just a couple of occasions when I've spoken to her about things, I think that's been most useful (Ask Me focus group 1).

I think as a coordinator [name] is brilliant, she's excellent at what she does, about giving ambassadors what they need (Ask Me focus group 2).

There's nothing more that [the co-ordinator] could do for me, and I hear her talk and engage with the other ambassadors all the time, and she's fabulous (Ask Me focus group 2).



Participants in the focus group seemed to relish the opportunity to discuss their role, and that conversation alone sparked off several ideas in terms of activities they could try, both individually and jointly, or ways of expanding the role. One participant asked if it would be possible to introduce established ambassadors to those who were newly trained as a way of showing them what it was possible to achieve. This highlights the value of providing opportunities for face-to-face meetings where ambassadors can share ideas, support and motivate each other.

These insights suggest that there is ongoing and evolving engagement with ambassadors. The importance of this aspect of Ask Me to ambassadors is a reminder that the training is only one component of what is being delivered and it may be that the regular communication, workshops and open ear that are what sustains the activity in the longer term.

## Boundaries

In general, the ambassadors liked the fact that the role was very flexible, not overly prescriptive and could be enacted in many different situations. This means that ambassadors have to be quite self-directing, which some found empowering. However, it also highlights the importance of establishing boundaries about what the role entails, both to keep ambassadors and others safe. The Ask Me scheme does not aim to train people to identify survivors or perpetrators, rather the emphasis is on enabling dialogue, being supportive and signposting.

Across the whole of the UK working with the other co-ordinators, there's a lot of concerns about making sure the ambassador role is safe but they're not stepping out and doing things that they shouldn't. We don't want them to safety plan, we don't want them to be trying to replace specialist services who are trying to do that work. Or feeling like they have to provide ongoing emotional support where it's not like appropriate or relevant. So I think some of the concerns that I had was how people might manage situations particularly where it might feel a bit muddy (Interview with Ask Me co-ordinator).

Although a number of ambassadors had encountered situations that they had found difficult, the general feedback was that they did have a clear sense of the limits of their role and how to conduct it safely.

I think one of the really important things that [the Ask Me training] did was make me confident about drawing boundaries and how to do this work safely. And I don't think I would have felt comfortable being just doing any of this stuff if I didn't have that reassurance that what I was doing was sensible and safe (Ask me focus group 1).

I've gained more confidence about my level of knowledge and where to access support and also reassurance about what I do not know, or can't be expected to know or advise about (Ask Me training feedback).

## Reaching a wide range of communities

Ask Me seeks to capitalise on the diverse community bases, backgrounds and networks of individual ambassadors in order to reach as wide an audience as possible. The idea is that information and messages will be received more readily from people already based within these communities.

I think there's real power in having the same messages through lots of different voices and from voices that people already have that relationship with [...] I think that's the real power of that community response is I could have gone into a training course and said exactly the same thing, but it just wouldn't have landed. But hearing something from your sister, your best friend, you know, really has a different impact (Interview with Ask Me co-ordinator).

One ambassador commented on the mix of people attending the training.

The group dynamic was amazing, there was two tables, from the get-go we all got on really well, and there was laughter pretty much straight away, different ages as well, different backgrounds, we all introduced ourselves, different cultures, so I loved that, the mix, it was pretty broad (Ask Me focus group 2).

Although there are Ask Me ambassadors from a range of different backgrounds, one of the concerns voiced by project staff is whether the pool of Ask Me ambassadors is diverse enough to reach those whose attitudes really need to be targeted, including men and young people particularly. Participants in the ambassador focus groups also mentioned the particular importance of involving more men and young people in changing and challenging attitudes, stating: "unless we can reach more men through this work, it's not going to be having the greatest impact it could do" (Ask Me focus group 1). It was mentioned that the White Ribbon campaign is already working with men on this, so some questioned whether it was necessary for Welsh Women's Aid to duplicate this work.

According to analysis conducted by the Ask Me co-ordinator (based on 2011 Census data), in the cohort of ambassadors trained so far, females are over-represented in the ambassador pool (86% of active ambassadors) compared with the Cardiff population (51%), with males being under-represented (3% of active ambassadors compared with 49% in Cardiff). The only age group that is over-represented by the Cardiff Ask Me ambassadors is the 30-44 age group. All other age groups are under-represented among the active ambassadors, but those aged 45-59 only marginally so. Regarding ethnicity, there are slightly fewer White active ambassadors than the proportion in the general community (76% compared to 80%). In the active ambassador group, White Irish, Asian Chinese, Black African and other ethnic groups are over-represented in relation to the Cardiff population. The categories used for Asian ambassadors are slightly different to Census categories,<sup>5</sup> but if taken as a broader grouping, a similar proportion of both active ambassadors and the general community are Asian. It should be noted that numbers in minority groups are small, both in the population and the ambassador cohort, so these findings should be

<sup>5</sup> The category 'Asian British' was used in the Ask Me paperwork used to capture the ethnicity of trainees.

treated with caution. There are currently no ambassadors of mixed parentage.

There have been discussions about how to involve more men in the training and how best to manage this – for example, whether to run mixed or separate training sessions. Many of the ambassadors are themselves survivors of VAWDASV, so it is seen as potentially sensitive to hold mixed sessions, and Welsh Women's Aid would not want to put men with less understanding in a room with women ambassadors at training. However, others have suggested that it could aid understanding on both sides if mixed sessions were held. One option that was suggested was to hold initial training separately to ensure that male ambassadors are screened and exposed to appropriate messages about VAWDASV, with the potential for some mixed sessions at a later stage.

Four men have attended the training to date and all have undertaken it in a mixed group. Feedback from the Ask Me co-ordinator suggested that this had worked well, albeit there were some challenges. For the women, she suggested that having a man in the group gave them practice at expressing the ideas they were learning on the training with men in a safe space. Additionally, two of the male trainees were survivors themselves. Having them on the course was good practice for all attendees in learning how to talk sensitively about the gendered nature of abuse and validate the experiences of male survivors without diluting the importance of the role gender plays. During the training itself, the co-ordinator observed that some men were very quiet and did not contribute a great deal, although others could sometimes be overly vocal. Monitoring data showed that the male ambassadors had not been very active after completing the training.

An alternative strategy that has been pursued is CLEAR and the Respect workers going into male-dominated spaces, such as sports clubs, veterans clubs and other community spaces to try and promote the idea of men becoming Ask Me ambassadors there. While this did not meet with the hoped for take up in terms of ambassadors, it nonetheless proved useful in 'creating an appetite, creating an engagement, an interest' in the topic.

BME communities have also historically been under-represented as support service users, so this is another group it was hoped could be made more aware of local options. The Ask Me co-ordinator was aware that more ambassadors from certain individual BME groups were still needed to achieve parity, but pointed out that even where proportionality with national statistics had been achieved in relation to minority groups, this still only amounted to a handful of ambassadors who could not be expected to reach all of their communities single-handedly.

The original target for this strand of the project was 30 ambassadors. The Ask Me co-ordinator recognised that it was overly ambitious to expect this number to make significant inroads and pushed for more to be recruited. Although almost four times



this number have actually been recruited and are active to date, in order to reach a population of over 300,000 in Cardiff, and a variety of different groups within it, arguably many more are needed.

The demographics of the ambassadors are likely to be influenced by the fact that they were largely recruited through Welsh Women's Aid networks. For future recruitment, it may be good to look at additional channels.

### **Widened access to safe disclosure**

According to the monthly tracker, in the period October 2018 to March 2020, the Ask Me ambassadors had spoken to 3,987 members of the public, 687 survivors and 97 people concerned about their abusive behaviour. For three quarters of the survivors (73%, n=504), the abuse they had experienced had happened in the past, and for one quarter it was happening currently (27%, n=183). One fifth (22%, n=148) had not disclosed this to anyone before. Almost half (47%, n=46) of those concerned about their abusive behaviour had not discussed this with anyone before. They shared information with and helped signpost 400 (58%) survivors and 81 (79%) of those concerned about their abusive behaviour. These figures show how crucial the ambassador role can be in providing information and direction to services to people who have never disclosed before, but also in enabling discussion for those who have. It should be noted that not all those disclosing wanted or needed to seek support at that time: many of these experiences were historical, and some had already received the help they needed. Making the issues more 'speakeable' for this group, however, has the potential to widen the awareness-raising ambition of Ask Me.

Further detail was provided by some ambassadors in their feedback about the results of their interactions.

“ One girl who came to me talking about a physical abusive relationship she'd experienced at uni, has now gone to student support to talk about the past relationship and sort out how her and the man in question will be treated in university to avoid any cross overs. She's now opened up and understands more and does not blame herself, she seems more empowered and last week told me she doesn't feel weak anymore like she used to (Ask Me tracker).

I was part of two disclosures and successfully signposted to the Live Fear Free helpline and Women's Aid. I had a discussion with a survivor about her relationship and engaged in subtle, compassionate conversation about healthy and unhealthy relationships (Ask Me tracker).

”



The Ask Me co-ordinator was clear that obtaining disclosures was not the key purpose or expectation of the ambassador role, which was rather to promote a more understanding and supportive climate within communities to be able to discuss VAWDASV. Data on the number of disclosures achieved was, therefore, seen as limited as a primary indicator of success.

I think we're quite clear, the aim isn't necessarily to solicit disclosures, it's to create an environment where people can disclose if they want to. And I think there's a big difference. But, I mean, even then the aim is more to create a community that better understands abuse, better understands its causes, and is better equipped to kind of seek support or find support if they need it (Interview with Ask Me co-ordinator).

### Conclusions on progress

The Ask Me strand of Change That Lasts in Wales has been successful in recruiting higher numbers than anticipated, and within the ambassadors there is diversity in terms of age and ethnicity. There was high praise for the training and for the support and input from the co-ordinator. Ambassadors were undertaking a wide range of activities, some integrated into their everyday lives and some more specifically organised. Whilst the tracker has worked to some extent, issues raised by the evaluation have led to the development of an app to enable reporting in real time and hopefully capture more of the activity. Whilst not intended to only focus on disclosures, this has been a notable feature for a number of ambassadors. There is considerable room here for expansion, and for the ripple effect to become more pronounced: community led and based prevention as an everyday activity has huge, as yet, untapped potential.

## Trusted Professional

Professionals in non-specialist agencies have multiple opportunities to intervene to support survivors of VAWDASV, but they are not always equipped with the knowledge and awareness to recognise the signs or know how to respond in order to assist. Given how hard it can be for survivors to speak out and ask for help, it is vital that when they do, they receive a positive and informed response, as an unsympathetic response can have harmful consequences. Change That Lasts takes as a starting point that the same agencies are equally likely to encounter perpetrators of VAWDASV, so it is also critical that they can spot the signs and respond and refer appropriately.

### Theory of Change for Trusted Professional work with survivors

Where now	Activities	Milestones	Outcomes	Where want to be
Generic services do not respond to survivors in helpful or supportive ways, so their needs are not met	Training of key non-statutory professionals who are in contact with survivors  Supporting organisations to develop VAWDASV policies and procedure	Professionals are more confident responding to survivors  Workplace policies have sections on survivors' needs	Services develop cultures of belief  Professionals meet the needs of survivors  Survivors feel listened to, not judged, and believed about their experiences	Survivors' space for action is increased because their needs are met/responded to by agencies they are in contact with, enabling them to make Change That Lasts

## Theory of Change for Trusted Professional work with perpetrators

Where now	Activities	Milestones	Outcomes	Where want to be
Perpetrators of VAWG are not being identified, effectively challenged or offered opportunities to address their behaviour by generic services	<p>Training key non-statutory professionals who are in contact with survivors and/or perpetrators</p> <p>Supporting organisations to develop effective VAWDASV policies and procedures that include perpetration</p>	<p>Enhanced understanding of perpetrator tactics (including recognition of use of services to control survivors)</p> <p>Professionals feel more confident to engage with perpetrators</p> <p>Professionals are aware of specialist support that is available</p>	<p>More perpetrators are offered opportunities to address their behaviour</p> <p>Increased willingness amongst professionals to engage with perpetrators directly and with attitudes amongst colleagues that excuse them</p>	Perpetrators' space for action with respect to abuse is reduced by professionals being confident to engage them about their behaviour

## What is Trusted Professional?

Change That Lasts aims to reduce the barriers to those seeking safety and support in relation to VAWDASV by ensuring that more professionals across agencies already used by survivors and perpetrators are trained to safely and supportively identify and respond to all forms of abuse. Trusted Professional is a one-day training targeting staff in non-statutory<sup>6</sup>; non-specialist agencies. The training seeks to enable participants to:

- recognise the early signs of VAWDASV;
- respond appropriately, informed by research and practice; and
- refer to appropriate services.

An innovation of Welsh Women's Aid delivery of the Trusted Professional strand of Change That Lasts is the integration of content on perpetrators. While training for professionals often focuses on the needs of survivors, Change That Lasts seeks to ensure that a substantial focus on perpetrators is also included. This is not only because agencies are equally likely to come into contact with both survivors and perpetrators, but to encourage professionals to see that perpetrator work is also survivor work in that its ultimate goal is to make things safer for survivors. To incorporate both elements, the Trusted Professional training is co-delivered by trainers from Welsh Women's Aid and Respect.

## Activities undertaken as part of Trusted Professional

The main activity for delivering Trusted Professional has been the training of professionals from non-specialist agencies. An additional piece of work has been helping to develop workplace VAWDASV strategies. This has been open to those agencies participating in the training and any other interested organisations.

## Has Trusted Professional met the intended milestones?

This section looks at the extent to which Trusted Professional has achieved the original targets set out in the project bid and the milestones laid out in the above Theories of Change, drawing on project monitoring data, pre- and post-training feedback gathered by Change That Lasts trainers and one training observation conducted by the evaluators.


The original target for Trusted Professional was to train 80 professionals. From the start of the project to the end of March 2020, 12 training days have been held and 108 professionals have been trained. The first 56 were trained as part of a pilot, after

6 A separate law, the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015, designates/mandates training for statutory staff Under the National Training Framework on violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence mandated by.

which the course was improved on the basis of feedback. Since then 52 further professionals have been trained. Those who have attended the training have been from housing associations, homelessness, custody staff, Drug and Alcohol services, single parent family groups. The training sessions have been predominantly for individual organisations, but there have also been two open-access training sessions with a mixed group of professionals. Although these have not been as well attended, some individuals who have participated in them have gone back to their managers and recommended that the rest of their organisation attend the training.

There has been interest in further courses. Several GPs have expressed interest, which may be linked to the IRIS project in Cardiff, and a private sector company.


Overall feedback from professionals about the course has been excellent, with a wide range of comments about how useful it was.



This is one of the best trainings I have been on. Thank you (Trusted Professional training feedback).

Excellent facilitators, very informative (Trusted Professional training feedback).

All of the training was fantastic and useful (Trusted Professional training feedback).




One course that involved participants from a range of ethnic backgrounds caused Welsh Women's Aid to reflect that they needed to ensure diversity among the facilitators, as only two white British facilitators were available to deliver the training on that day.

### **Professionals are more confident responding to survivors**

In their pre-training evaluation feedback, just under half (43%) of trainees said they were able to recognise whether someone was experiencing VAWDASV, but more than half (55%) of professionals were not sure. The proportion who said they could recognise it rose to 87 per cent post-training. After the training, respondents were more aware of a 'wider picture' of patterns of behaviour, other than physical, that could indicate abuse.

Pre-training, well below half of professionals (43%) said they were confident about responding to a survivor of VAWDASV, but this rose to 100 per cent post-training.

Qualitative feedback suggested that trainees gained more knowledge of how to ask questions and a better understanding of the position that survivors are in from the training.



Has challenged my thinking of victims in terms of how hard it is for them to leave an abusive relationship and what they lose. Provided sign posting info that I was unaware of (Trusted Professional training feedback).

Being confident to ask the questions I need to ask to support a survivor (Trusted Professional training feedback)

### Professionals feel more confident to engage with perpetrators

Before the training, only eight per cent of professionals said they were sure of how to respond to perpetrators of VAWDASV, whereas after the training, this had risen markedly to 89 per cent. Qualitative post-training feedback indicated that they would respond by questioning in a non-confrontational manner, remaining neutral and referring onwards if appropriate.

Learning how to speak and approach questions to possible survivors and perpetrators without causing more risk (Trusted Professional training feedback).

Raising awareness of DAPP (Domestic Abuse Prevention Programme) work. Awareness of Change That Lasts approach (Trusted Professional training feedback).

### Professionals are aware of specialist support that is available

Before the training, just over half (53%) of professionals said they knew where to refer survivors, but this increased to 98 per cent following the training.

Awareness of referrals available for both victims and perpetrators (Trusted Professional training feedback).

Knowledge of practical tools, knowledge of services available (Trusted Professional training feedback).

When asked where they would refer survivors to, responses moved from generic examples such as 'the police' or 'Women's Aid' pre-training, to understanding that there are referral pathways other than the police and that they should 'consider the needs of the survivor' post-training.

Before the training, only 11 per cent said they knew where to refer perpetrators of VAWDASV. Following the training, this had increased dramatically to 93 per cent. Those who indicated, pre-training, where they would refer perpetrators to answered DRIVE, the police or Women's Aid, whereas after the training, some named Respect

and Change That Lasts.

At the conclusion of the training, participants were asked to rate out of 5 their confidence in referring survivors and perpetrators to relevant services. For the survivors, the average confidence rating was 4.19, while for perpetrators, it was 4.14.

### **Enhanced understanding of perpetrator tactics (including recognition of use of services to control survivors)**

It has not been possible to assess this at this stage due to the additional demands on the specialist services and the evaluators due to Covid-19, but this is something that will be explored in future interviews/focus groups. What can be said, however, is that this was one of the elements of the training that was most welcomed and that many thought they learnt most from.

### **Training observation**

One Trusted Professional training session was observed by the evaluators in January 2020. It should be underlined that these are observations from one session and may be not be representative of all participants in the training. This training session was with five staff from a community-based family support organisation and two social work students who were on placement with them. All staff were female and the two students were male. Their main hopes for the day were to bring their knowledge up to date, learn about good practice approaches to responding and available services. A concern raised by some was whether their intervention would make matters worse. This highlights how vital the training is, as it helps professionals learn how to provide a supportive and non-collusive response. It is also an indicator of how important it is for both survivor and perpetrator services to deliver the training in partnership.

Early discussions highlighted that the group was not aware of VAWDASV legislation. This may be common to other non-specialist organisations and is an important thread to feed into the training in order to develop awareness that extends beyond domestic violence. There was not a lot of specific experience of VAWDASV issues among the social work students, but some of the staff who were key workers had had contact with survivors, though this tended not to be in situations involving perpetrators or couples where the perpetrator was present. Two of the participants voiced that they had personal experience of domestic abuse. This did not present any obvious issues during the day, and the facilitators were mindful of this, but it highlights the fact that any group may contain survivors, some of whom may not feel able to disclose this, so facilitators need to be alive to this possibility. It is important to note that the Trusted Professional training is delivered by two facilitators, and if there was a situation of this nature, one of the facilitators would be available to support someone affected by the material.

One of the aims of the course is to expand non-specialist practitioners' knowledge of VAWDASV. Various forms of forms of VAWDASV were mentioned during the day, such as forced marriage, FGM and honour-based violence, but many of the substantive examples and videos focused on domestic abuse. Whilst it is a tall order to include a detailed focus on all forms of VAWDASV, there is scope to expand this aspect of the training and include a more diverse range of examples. An emphasis on domestic abuse was also evident in the qualitative feedback on the training provided by participants, suggesting either that this was the main learning that professionals took away from the training or that a domestic abuse framing is very embedded in their thinking.

In line with the holistic nature of the Change That Lasts model, another stated aim of the training was to include a strong focus on perpetrators, rather than just limiting discussions to survivors. An afternoon session was devoted to perpetrators. Less time was spent on this than other sections, however reference to perpetrators was threaded throughout the day. This aspect of the training could be strengthened by making reference to perpetrators of VAWDASV other than domestic abuse. While it is certainly a challenge to incorporate both a focus on perpetrators and on wider forms of VAWDASV in a one-day training, some variation in the examples used in content and exercises could create greater balance.

Participants were engaged and appeared to find the training a positive experience. They particularly enjoyed the film, illustrative videos and discussion exercises, such as the myth statements. They also found coercive control to be a helpful concept.

### Conclusions on progress

The Trusted Professional strand was just beginning to embed when the national lockdown happened in March 2020. The number of professionals trained has comfortably exceeded the original target and the training day has received very positive feedback, although there is still work to do to ensure it addresses a range of forms of VAWDASV. Partnerships are key to addressing all forms of VAWDASV and working in partnership means that more specialism can be built in. Partnering with Respect to design and deliver Trusted Professional has also meant that a focus on perpetrators has been built into the training, which is crucial to a comprehensive response to VAWDASV.

As evaluators, we have not been able to undertake the follow up work which was intended to document the impact in terms of policy and practice. This is due to the restrictions on face-to-face fieldwork and the increased pressure on frontline services brought about by the pandemic.



## Specialist Support Services

This section looks at the Specialist Support Services strand and what progress has been made in relation to achieving the milestones established in the Theories of Change for Cardiff Women's Aid and Streetlife, drawing on interviews with service managers. Although the aim is to ensure that both services capture these common elements in their response, separate Theories of Change have been developed for each because the nature of the work they undertake is quite different.

### Theory of Change for Cardiff Women's Aid

Where now	Activities	Milestones	Outcomes	Where want to be
Survivors are not being enabled to make a Change That Lasts	CTL training with staff in the integrated services to broaden approach to VAWDASV and to adopt a more needs-led way of working	<p>Delivery of CTL training and SV training</p> <p>Increased co-production of services with survivors, including peer support</p> <p>Increased work on other forms of VAWDASV</p> <p>Staff see each contact as an opportunity to expand women's space for action</p> <p>Staff working with CTL have greater job satisfaction</p>	<p>Women's needs on VAWDASV met more holistically, including over medium and longer term</p> <p>Support is specialist, relational, responsive and appropriate</p> <p>Expanded space for action enables women to make changes for themselves</p> <p>Staff feel their space for action to make a difference is expanded</p> <p>Increased recognition by commissioners of difference between short term risk reduction and the CTL approach</p>	Survivors' space for action is expanded enabling them to make a Change That Lasts

## Theory of Change for Streetlife

Where now	Activities	Milestones	Outcomes	Where want to be
Women in and on the fringes of sexual exploitation are not able to make Change That Lasts because services are crisis led	<p>Staff trained to respond to women's needs</p> <p>Service provides resources that women need</p> <p>Services available in the evening and daytime</p> <p>Access to meaningful activities</p> <p>Increased access to information and signposting</p> <p>Stronger inter-agency partnerships</p>	<p>An increased needs-led response across the service</p> <p>More continued engagement by women</p> <p>Increased co-production</p>	<p>Survivors see the service as a safe space to meet their needs</p> <p>Enhanced sense of self and space for action for women using the service</p> <p>Staff are able to respond to women's needs</p>	Services transform to being needs led, seeking to expand women's space for action in order to enable Change That Lasts

### What is Special Support Services?

Both the Ask Me and Trusted Professional strands of Change That Lasts include signposting/referring to appropriate specialist services, but the corollary of this is whether appropriate services exist and are able to respond. There is, therefore, a recognition within Change That Lasts that current specialist services need to be supported and strengthened so they can manage the potentially additional referrals and address survivors' needs in a longer-term way.

As part of Change That Lasts, Welsh Women's Aid are working with two specialist VAWDASV services to provide earlier support for survivors that places survivors at the centre, builds a response around women's needs, and the strengths and resources available to them. These are Cardiff Women's Aid and Streetlife (part of the charity Safer Wales), which works specifically with women at risk of/being sexually exploited in street-based prostitution. Both services are well established in

Cardiff: Cardiff Women's Aid has been in existence since 1978 and Street Life since 2005.

An integral part of working with specialist services through Change That Lasts is to shift the emphasis on developing longer-term support work as opposed to crisis intervention. Welsh Women's Aid argue that over the past decade funders have prioritised short-term, risk-based approaches. These have determined both who receives support and what support women get and meant the focus is predominantly on cases deemed to be high-risk. If support is accessed at the point of crisis rather than an earlier stage, it amounts to short-term crisis management with few possibilities for longer-term stabilisation, empowerment and rebuilding lives. Once the risk is seen to have reduced, support ends and any control survivors may have gained over their lives is jeopardised.

Specialist services described how they have found that a risk-based approach to support shuts out survivors who do not meet the required thresholds.

All the funding was around high risk, so if you weren't high risk you didn't get an IDVA [...] and I think that was really frustrating for the frontline workers, that they were hearing all of this trauma but unless somebody scored something on a risk there was nothing that we could do at that point apart from other maybe some group work or a legal appointment and things like that (Interview with specialist service manager 1).

Competitive tendering and commissioning approaches have also given rise to an environment where the service response is target driven rather than needs led. This leads to a support environment where there is an emphasis on paperwork, duplicative questioning because of the reporting requirements for different funders, and little time for staff to reflect, all of which takes away from listening to and supporting survivors. Even though Cardiff Women's Aid has now moved to a trauma-informed approach with the support of their current funders, the weight of key performance indicators still inhibits working with women as individuals and focusing on their needs at that moment.

I feel that it's not really come into its own because we still have those KPIs, we still have those timescales, for example, in our organisation we can work with an intensive case, high risk needs trauma for four weeks, what we can do then is step down that support for an additional 12 weeks, so 16 in total, but I think the way that we've introduced it, I'm taking full responsibility for that as well, is too KPI led, it's too time scale led, and people have not got the autonomy to really just see it as, "This is a woman in front of me, let's find out exactly what she's going to need. I know that may change during this journey, let's try and offer that at the time that she needs it throughout this journey" (Interview with specialist service manager 1).

It's the women that are impacted then because the quality of the service may not be [...] you know that kind of like organic kind of services. Sometimes I think we lose that because everything is so, "We will deliver this between one and two years, we will deliver these outcomes and we will..." [...] I think some of the stuff that I'll be delivering on, it's going to be difficult to quantify but I know from the short time that I've been doing it, the impact is greater than any KPI (Interview with specialist service manager 2).

As well as affecting the response to survivors, this way of working has had an impact on staff morale and on how staff connect, both with each other as a team and with their own role as advocates and specialists. One of the service managers said that what was needed was not to do away with performance indicators altogether but to make them more reflective of survivors' experiences.

In the Change That Lasts model, the key to a successful response is seen as providing support earlier, giving survivors more choice and ensuring that support is needs led, meaning that it is based on the needs that survivors themselves, rather than professionals, identify.

With the women that we're working with, their needs that they identified that they would want to address may be different from us with the professional hat on (Interview with service manager 2).

I think with needs-led it's about what is important right now [...] it's about getting those balls that she's juggling and taking one, what is the most important thing to deal with right now, but acknowledging that all of those other things are really important to her, but what can we solve right now, "What can we help you solve right now?", and giving the tools to be able to do that as well (Interview with service manager 1).

Co-production, where the services work with women enabling them to feed in directly about what their needs are and what they want from the service, will be key to this. Streetlife, for example, conducted initial consultations which showed that this includes providing a centre for homeless and street-based women to access, facilities like showers, food, clothes washing and more daytime activities.

Another aspect is a strengths-based approach so that survivors can recognise and harness their own strengths to move forward with their lives.

It's looking at the strengths that they've really developed that's inherently in them, even things like how they survive day to day, and really using that (Interview with service manager 2).

I think the strengths-based is about stripping that back, almost leaving your paperwork to one side for a little bit and just going back to the basics of what is really happening in this individual's life, not going in with a preconceived idea [...] it's just stripping all of that back and actually, "What works for you?" [...] because everyone has their strengths, and it's recognising that as well (Interview with service manager 1).

The specialist services were fully behind what Change That Lasts is trying to achieve.

The whole theory around Change That Lasts, I think it can't go by the wayside, this has to be the way that we move forward, and we just need to do whatever we can, every single one of us, from frontline staff to commissioners, to really buy into it and make that change [...] because it the best thing for our clients (Interview with specialist service manager 1).

### Activities undertaken as part of Specialist Support Services

Change That Lasts training for staff in specialist services is designed to develop their awareness and skills around a needs-based, strength-based, trauma-informed approach. Rather than being purely knowledge-based, it is also intended to be motivational and reflective, seeking to re-connect participants with what originally led them to work in this role and wider feminist theory.

Training for staff in the specialist services was scheduled for March 2020, but this has had to be postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic. Around 40 staff in four groups were due to receive the one-day training course, but this coincided with the period when the national lockdown was announced. The course was devised for face-to-face delivery and it has had to be re-designed for an online format. Welsh Women's Aid have used this opportunity to make the course modular, more in-depth, and with some home-based learning options. The hope is that it may be possible to deliver some face-to-face sessions as well.

Staff in the specialist services will complete a baseline evaluation survey before undertaking the training, with questions focusing on how they see their role, the work they do and their organisation, as well as what their hopes and expectations are of the training. A follow-up survey will be sent out once training has been undertaken to assess whether it has contributed to a culture shift among staff in relation to provision.

## Has Specialist Support Services met the intended milestones?

The original target for the Specialist Support strand of Change That Lasts was that the specialist services would support 180 survivors during the period to March 2020. This has been surpassed, with 212 survivors receiving support from Cardiff Women's Aid and Streetlife. This was achieved even without the full Change That Lasts response model informed by staff training being in place, although it was evident from the Theory of Change workshop that Streetlife had already begun to adapt what they do based on discussions with the women they work with.

The Theory of Change milestones for Specialist Support Services are all dependent on the training having been delivered, so they will be addressed in the next report once the training has taken place.

### Conclusions on progress

Specialist Support Services was the final strand of Change That Lasts work to be implemented in Cardiff. Although the training package was developed and the training dates set, this had to be postponed and the course redesigned because of the national lockdown in March 2020. Evaluation activities around this will resume once it is possible to deliver the training remotely or otherwise. In the meantime, the targets for delivery of support have been surpassed.

## CLEAR – Specialist services for perpetrators

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When Change That Lasts started, there was already some emerging work on perpetrators in Cardiff.

There were two main interventions in place:

- The DRIVE project (a partnership between Safe Lives, Respect & social finance), which was set up at a similar time to work with high-harm serial perpetrators.
- There was also a member organisation of Respect running a Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Programme (DAPP) that was delivering a 20-week programme in Cardiff and the Vale and was in the process of working towards full Respect accreditation.



Both interventions provided a strong intervention for different cohorts. Drive is often focused on those who will not, or cannot engage in a DAPP. This could be due to complex needs that meant they were unable to engage or a lack of motivation to join a behaviour change group.

There was a gap in the area for men who knew there was 'a problem' and wanted to do something about it and so were motivated to change, but were not yet disclosing or taking responsibility for their abuse. This was particularly relevant for those who had had little or no intervention in the past, who did not yet have an understanding or language to describe their behaviour. CLEAR (Change That Lasts Early Awareness Raising) was therefore developed to support those using abuse to identify their abusive behaviours and be ready to engage in behavioural change work.

Since CLEAR was implemented, the DAPP ceased to operate in the area. This has been a challenge for the delivery model meaning that there has been an additional burden on existing interventions to work with those who would be most suitable for a DAPP.

## Theory of Change for CLEAR – specialist services for perpetrators

Where now	Activities	Milestones	Outcomes	Where want to be
A minority of perpetrators of VAWDASV are being offered opportunities to make Change That Lasts	<p>Delivering CLEAR interventions to men concerned about their behaviour towards women</p> <p>Offering integrated support service to those affected by the behaviour of CLEAR participants</p> <p>Integrating perpetration in VAWDASV training</p> <p>Establishing working relationships with partner agencies</p> <p>Promotion and liaison with local agencies in order to generate referrals</p> <p>Professional consultation on how to engage with perpetrators</p>	<p>Professionals referring in to CLEAR</p> <p>Self-referrals to CLEAR</p> <p>CTL training results in referrals</p> <p>CLEAR is embedded in existing pathways</p> <p>Additional services buying into early intervention model (e.g. police)</p> <p>Increased numbers of men seeking to address their behaviour</p> <p>Respect extending reach beyond DV to other forms of VAWDASV</p>	<p>More perpetrators are engaged with earlier and their space for action (with respect to abuse) is narrowed</p> <p>Partners and stakeholders recognise their role in engaging with perpetrators and early intervention</p> <p>A layered and connected response to perpetrators</p> <p>Increased safety of women and children</p> <p>More attention to perpetrators of all forms of VAWDASV in Wales</p> <p>Survivor support services recognise their role in relation to women whose partners are engaged in perpetrator interventions</p>	More perpetrators of VAWDASV are offered opportunities to make Change That Lasts



## What is CLEAR?

CLEAR was developed by Respect in partnership with Welsh Women's Aid as an integral part of Change That Lasts. It is aimed at working with men who are using abusive behaviours in their relationships, but have not yet received services and may not be ready to disclose. In this sense it is pre-contemplative and provides a space for them to develop a narrative and language for their abusive behaviours and so begin to take responsibility for them. Key to this is that CLEAR does not require disclosure prior to involvement, meaning this is a goal of the intervention rather than a pre-requisite to accessing the service.

Another aspect of the intervention is that it is prior to becoming 'entrenched' in services and so reaches out for men to self-refer, and works with those with self-motivation. It is not a behaviour change intervention but more a motivational project that tries to identify patterns and address issues that may be impacting on men's use of violence, as well as linking them into other services. In a similar way to how Ask Me and Trusted Professional seek to enable conversations and signpost people to relevant services at the earliest possible point, and Specialist Support takes a longer-term rather than crisis-based view of support, CLEAR attempts to offer opportunities to reflect and seek help to those displaying a propensity to VAWDASV before that escalates to an established pattern of behaviour leading to serious harm.

Each referral to CLEAR is assessed for his capacity to engage, motivation and also the level of harm. This represents a move away from measuring risk based on incidents and looks instead at where those using abuse are with taking responsibility and their process of change. When there is a very 'high-harm' individual, CLEAR would also refer to other processes such as MARAC and possibly, based on their needs, DRIVE.

In all cases there is an assessment that includes multi-agency information that means someone is either worked with by CLEAR or signposted to another intervention or process.

This strand is an innovation within Change That Lasts in Wales and reflects the commitment to integrating perpetrators and work with them into the model.

There is a greater prevalence of information for survivors, so that at the earliest opportunity, when people are thinking, "This is not good for me", there's somebody that they can talk to and there's signs out there that say, "No, you're right, this is not okay, there's something you can do", and there isn't something similar in any sort of volume for perpetrators or for those who are concerned about their own behaviour, it's just not out there enough (Interview with Respect).

It also represents a major cultural shift for specialist services regarding the relationship between survivor and perpetrator work. Connecting the two within Change That Lasts is seen as benefiting both services and their users, as it is enabling perpetrators to take responsibility for and address their behaviour, rather than 'responsibilising' survivors, with the ultimate goal being survivors' safety.

We have allowed this disconnect between survivor services and perpetrator work being a whole different other beast and that that isn't helpful or healthy for survivors. And, it actually isn't helpful or healthy for perpetrator work either [...] Actually, the person that I claim to benefit from this collaboration is survivors and it's all of Welsh Women's Aid specialist services that I think is my end beneficiary. So, what have I learned the most is that actually, when brave survivor organisations say, "Yes, actually this is our business" then we can do something which I think is really powerful and I think it has ripple benefits because they are endorsing a training that makes generalist services look not just at the survivor, not just at responsibilising the survivor, [...] if we're bold enough to try, everyone benefits (Respect).

The CLEAR project is a short, structured awareness raising course. To date this has been delivered on a one-to-one basis, but it can also be delivered in a group format. The sessions are for men whose behaviour towards women and girls is a concern for themselves or individuals close to them. It is intended primarily to capture men who are at a very early stage of being concerned about their behaviour 'to acknowledge that actually what they were worried about was a valid thing to be worried about'.

What the CLEAR intervention is modelled around is that people are self-identifying what's worrying them and then they're self-directing how they're going to address that with the practitioners. Fifty per cent of their time across the short course is about, "What's worrying you? How are you going to do something about that?" Goal setting and action planning [...] And, the other fifty percent of the content [is] actually understanding violence against women and girls [...] helping people to identify that actually there is a context to this, that there are messages all around them that are saying low-level abusive behaviour is one of those things that's okay (Interview with Respect).

CLEAR staff work with the presenting issues of the men undertaking the work and aim to address individual needs, so the content has been designed to be delivered quite flexibly, with most sessions possible on either a one-to-one or group basis. However, as this is a new project and has not yet built up large numbers of men to work with, all sessions so far have been delivered one-to-one to capitalise on their momentum: "early intervention stuff is about grabbing it now. "You're worried now, we're doing it now" (Interview with Respect).

For some, the seven-week course may be all that is needed, but while the DAPP was running there was also an option for referral into the full DAPP. CLEAR can also be used to help men whose patterns of abusive behaviour are somewhat more established, but who are not seen as high harm, to become ready to access the DAPP and undertake further group work.

It is vital that there are ongoing and suitable services for men who are perpetrating abuse. If training with professionals is undertaken that seeks to raise awareness of the issues and includes recognising and referring perpetrators, it is also essential that there are services and programmes in place to refer them to.

This strand of the Change That Lasts model is staffed by a Respect perpetrator lead and two full-time frontline perpetrator practitioners who deliver the material to the men and co-train on the Trusted Professional course.

### **Activities undertaken as part of CLEAR**

The CLEAR project was a new intervention and has been running since July 2019. The project is open to self-referrals and referrals from other agencies and is available to men who are 18 years or over, living in the Cardiff area who are concerned about their own behaviour or accept concerns of somebody else regarding their behaviour. Engagement is voluntary and referrals can be taken from the men, their partners or professionals. Participants must not have any outstanding civil or criminal matters relating to their behaviour at the point of referral. Alongside the course, an integrated support service for current/ex-partners (or other person identified at risk) is available through Cardiff Women's Aid, who are one of the providers of specialist support for Change That Lasts.

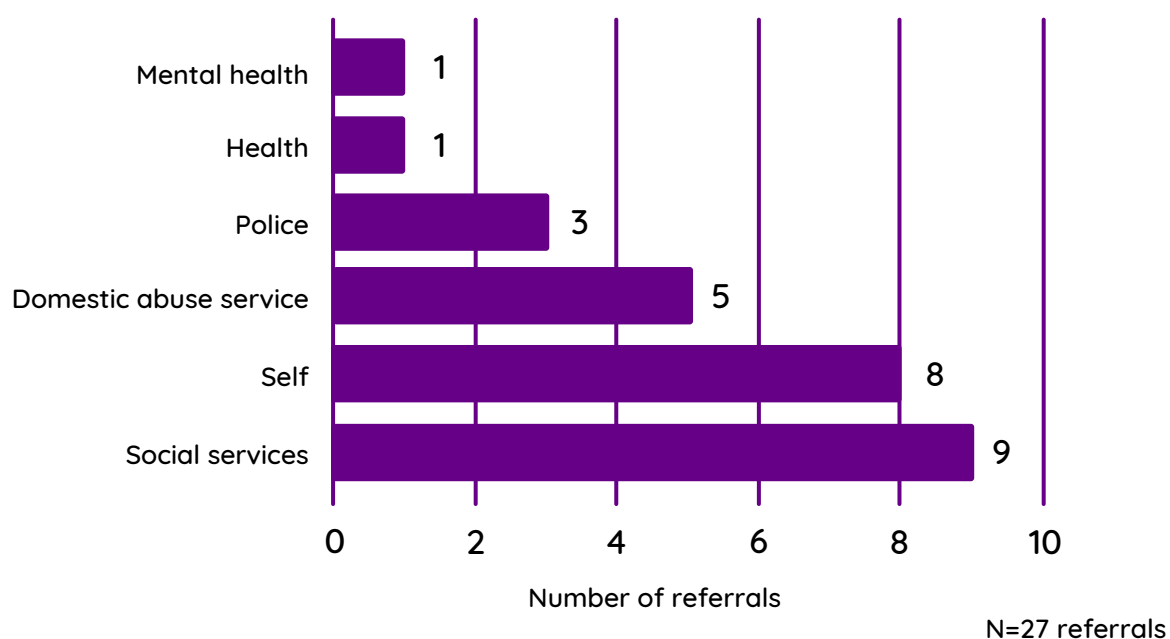
### **Has CLEAR met the intended milestones?**

This section looks at the progress CLEAR has made in relation to achieving the milestones established in the Theory of Change, drawing on communications with the Respect perpetrator lead, interview with the Respect research and development manager and project monitoring data on men using the service.

### **Professionals referring in to CLEAR**

From July 2019 to March 2020 there were 27 referrals to the project and a total of 32 enquiries about it. It should be noted that this is a new service, so there are no baseline referral levels to compare with. Project monitoring data suggests that referrals are coming from professionals in a range of sectors, with the biggest proportion from social services (see Figure 2) closely followed by self-referrals.

Figure 2: Referral source for CLEAR project



All referrals were men, as the project is currently open to men only, and they were aged between 19 and 52 years. Ten were under 30 years old, but the biggest group were aged 30-39 (n=15), and just two were aged 40 or above. Two thirds (n=18) were White British and one third were BME (n=9: n=7 Asian, n=1 Black Caribbean and n=1 Black British). The proportion of BME men referred to CLEAR is slightly higher than population figures shown by national statistics for Cardiff, which was estimated to be 21 per cent (StatsWales, 2020).

One third (n=8) had current mental health issues, predominantly anxiety and depression, and one had had issues in the past; one had been diagnosed with schizophrenia and two had a disability. Five had a history of substance misuse, but this was only a current issue for one.

Of the 27 referrals, 22 were accepted onto CLEAR, although one of these was subsequently referred to DRIVE. Those not accepted were deemed unsuitable for the programme as they had already been involved with many other services. One was involved with Prevent and was referred on to the community mental health team. The other four had all had contact with the DAPP: two had completed this through a probation route, another had started the DAPP but a referral was sought to CLEAR because its funding was ending, and the fourth had been unable to attend the DAPP due to work commitments. However, all were reportedly keen to engage with the service and/or continue the work. Under the current design, which prioritises earlier intervention, none of these are suitable referrals for CLEAR and were not accepted on to the course, but this highlights the current lack of options for perpetrators in Cardiff.

CLEAR project staff were aware that they had received some inappropriate referrals to the project. This had been a problem particularly recently due to the DAPP losing its funding, which DRIVE confirmed had been the case for them too. A number of these referrals came from children's services regarding young people, and apart from being too young to be eligible, they would not have been voluntary referrals. In fact, there had been nine requests to CLEAR for a DAPP since October 2019. This also shows a lack of options particularly for young male perpetrators in Cardiff.

### **Self-referrals to CLEAR**

Self-referrals are the second largest group (see Figure 2 above). The retention rate among self-referrals has been high, estimated at close to 100 per cent by project staff, suggesting there is a real desire to change among this cohort. This is despite considerable caution as regards the commitment of this group based on staff's previous experience of DAPPs.

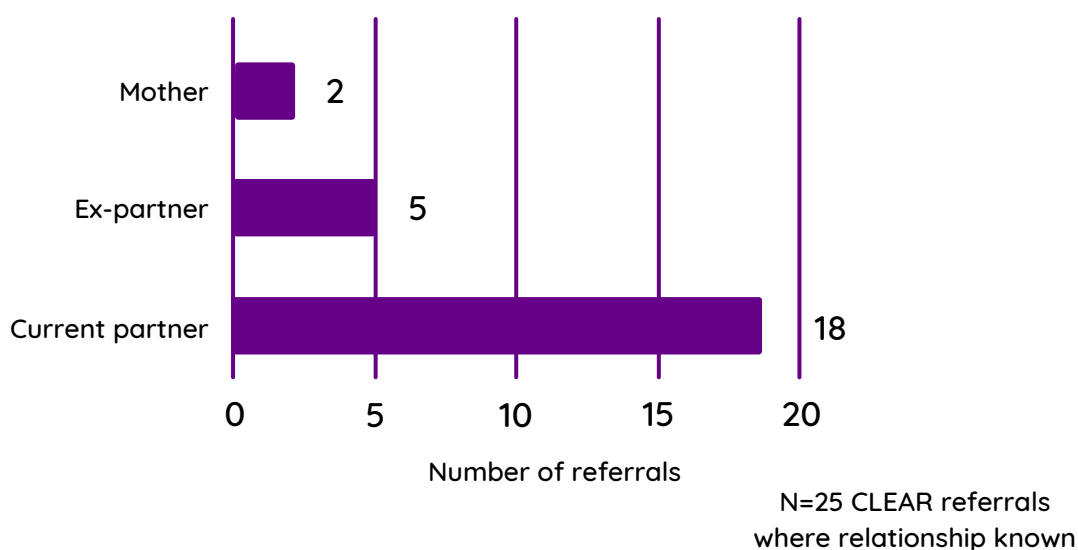
I'm used to coming from a very suspicious place where self-referrals are people who got nicked yesterday and they would very much like to turn up in court tomorrow and say, "Oh yes, I've booked myself on to a course" but that's not these people. These are people who've been given the information, there's even a couple of them that had been given information by their partners, who have brought the CLEAR leaflet home and said, "Why don't you go and have a chat to this lot", and they have done it, they have gone and had a chat to CLEAR staff and have stuck with it. We are getting about 50 per cent of our referrals are self-referrals and they are having, they've got an almost 100 per cent retention rate on the self-referrals (Interview with Respect).

### **Increased numbers of men seeking to address their behaviour**

The reasons for referral included displays of anger, aggression, arguments and controlling behaviour towards partners or family members, which had either been reported by the man or the victim-survivor or flagged up by agencies. Some had already assaulted partners and there had already been police and child protection involvement. Four men were actively seeking support regarding their behaviour.

Those affected by their behaviour were almost exclusively partners, with two victim-survivors being the men's mothers (see Figure 3). Twenty also had children.

Figure 3: Relationship of CLEAR referrals to victim-survivors



Information was recorded by CLEAR on the men's view of their referral. All but one, who did not see that there was a problem, were positive about the referral and saw it as an opportunity to change.

Needs support; identifying he is a DV perpetrator (Referral 8).

Acknowledges concerns and would like to address (Referral 14).

Wants healthy relationship (Referral 16).

Keen to change his behaviour (Referral 20).

Project staff described how those attending demonstrated commitment to the course by completing the homework tasks set for them. They were also surprised to note that these men acknowledged that their behaviour was having a negative impact on those around them, answering 'Yes' to the DASH question "Is she afraid of you?", whereas previous experience had been that this would not be the case.

Of the 22 who were accepted onto CLEAR, 17 had attended one or more sessions. Three had completed the course, one was on hold due to a recent incident and four had dropped out. The remaining nine were still at different stages of taking part.

All partners of those referred to the CLEAR project are referred on to Cardiff Women's Aid, and in some cases mothers and ex-partners have been, where relevant. As of March 2020, the partners of six men were currently accessing support. The remaining partners were offered support and either declined or were happy with the basic safety advice they had received from CLEAR.

The feedback the CLEAR project has received from both men and their partners is that it is making a marked difference to their behaviour.

The sense I'm getting is that actually those people who we designed it for are actually getting something out of it, as reported not just by them but also the feedback from their partners, of actually, "This is an improvement, he has stepped back and stopped", which is great (Interview with Respect).

One of those who had completed the course had reported good progress, and his partner was also positive about his change. Interviews due to take place will explore this with the men themselves.

However, despite these successes, without the DAPP in place, there is a risk that some men finishing at CLEAR are stepping into a void, as there is no other programme for them to move on to. It is vital that areas have strategic priorities to work with perpetrators and a range of interventions otherwise survivors and children are less safe.

### **Change That Lasts training results in referrals**

It is not currently possible to say whether the Trusted Professional training is leading directly to referrals to CLEAR, as the monitoring data held by CLEAR refers to the agency that is the source of the referral rather than individuals who may have attended the training.

### **CLEAR is embedded in existing pathways**

Given a number of referrals come via social care it would appear that CLEAR is becoming embedded in existing pathways. This is a continuing piece of work and can be developed further with awareness raising, training and promotion.

### **Conclusions on progress**

CLEAR is becoming established and receiving referrals from both a range of professionals and individuals as self-referrals. There is good retention among those accessing it and staff report that the men are motivated to change. A small number of men have completed the course and both they and their partners report improvements. When it was first set up, CLEAR slotted well into the configuration of evolving perpetrator provision, but there is presently a vacuum left by the departure of the DAPP. Perpetrators do not present as one homogenous group and are at different stages in recognition of their behaviour, motivation to change and involvement with services. It is crucial that all elements of perpetrator work are in place so that those perpetrating abuse can be offered the 'right' service and the right time.

## 4 Reflections



Change that Lasts has made good progress to date, particularly in relation to Ask Me, which is the most developed strand of the work to date. That South Wales PCC is supportive of the model is evidenced by the extended funding for Welsh Women's Aid to implement it beyond the original timetable. Additional extension funding further into 2021 is also being considered. There have been conversations between Welsh Women's and the local authority about expanding Change That Lasts to another area. South Wales Police have commissioned bespoke Trusted Professional training for officers working in Youth Offending and with sex offenders. This has been led by Respect and has centred on early intervention using the principles of Recognise, Respond and Refer.

Unfortunately, Covid-19 has severely disrupted momentum and planned activities, which has also had a knock-on effect on the evaluation. In future evaluation activities and data collection, we intend to capture additional learning on adapting to Covid and what has been learnt in this unprecedented time.

To conclude this interim report, we reiterate the conclusions regarding progress on each strand of Change That Lasts and flag up a number of challenges that have been noted.

### Ask Me

The Ask Me strand of Change That Lasts in Wales has been successful in recruiting higher numbers than anticipated, and within the ambassadors there is diversity in terms of age and ethnicity. There was high praise for the training and for the support and input from the co-ordinator. Ambassadors were undertaking a wide range of activities, some integrated into their everyday lives and some more specifically organised. Whilst the tracker has worked to some extent, issues raised by the evaluation have led to the development of an app to enable reporting in real time and hopefully capture more of the activity. Whilst not intended to only focus on disclosures, this has been a notable feature for a number of ambassadors. There is considerable room here for expansion, and for the ripple effect to become more pronounced: community led and based prevention as an everyday activity has huge, as yet, untapped potential.



## Trusted Professional

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The Trusted Professional strand was just beginning to embed when lockdown happened in March 2020. The number of professionals trained has comfortably exceeded the original target and the training day has received very positive feedback, although there is still work to do to ensure it addresses a range of forms of VAWDASV. As evaluators, we have not been able to undertake the follow-up work which was intended to document the impact in terms of policy and practice.

## Specialist Support Services

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Specialist Support Services was the final strand of Change That Lasts work to be implemented in Cardiff. Although the training package was developed and the training dates set, this had to be postponed and the course redesigned because of the national lockdown in March 2020. Evaluation activities around this will resume once it is possible to deliver the training remotely or otherwise. In the meantime, the targets for delivery of support have been surpassed.

## CLEAR

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CLEAR is becoming established and receiving referrals from both a range of professionals and individuals as self-referrals. There is good retention among those accessing it and staff report that the men are motivated to change. A small number of men have completed the course and both they and their partners report improvements. When it was first set up, CLEAR slotted well into the configuration of evolving perpetrator provision, but there is presently a vacuum left by the departure of the DAPP. This unanticipated development is already having an effect on referrals to the project and may affect CLEAR's future position.

## Challenges

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Although Change That Lasts is designed and implemented by Welsh Women's Aid and their partners, it operates in a wider local and national context of services, commissioning frameworks and legislation. The model seeks to address VAWDASV in its entirety, but most existing interventions in terms of services remain DV focused. To some extent, this limits the reach it can have, as even if awareness is being raised and support is being sought for all forms of VAWDASV, adequate responding services are simply not in place. This may be linked to the fact that the Welsh legislation, whilst formally VAWDASV, actually has an implicit domestic abuse framing, with sexual violence featuring as an add-on.

The Change That Lasts project is also exposing gaps in relation to perpetrator work. For example, the DAPP has closed, there are limited options for young men and there is nothing available for sexual violence perpetrators outside the criminal justice system, with the exception of those offending against children. There is also nothing mandatory in Probation for low-risk perpetrators, and men have to be medium and above for an intervention.

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