

Producing Information for victims referred to MARAC – Scotland

The victim's safety should be at the centre of the MARAC. Keeping a clear focus on safety is easier when the victim is engaged in the process and their views are represented at the meeting. Normally the Independent Domestic Abuse Advocate (IDAA) is best placed to do this by both contacting the victim before and updating the victim after the meeting (where it is safe to do so), in addition to liaising with partner agencies. The referring agency should usually inform the victim of MARAC referral where it is safe to do so. This may be done by letter if there has been an incident of public record (e.g. reported to the police). If the perpetrator is unaware that the victim has sought help in relation to domestic abuse then it may be safer to discuss the referral by phone or in person (e.g. disclosures to a midwife).

To supplement these contacts, local areas often produce information for victims referred to the MARAC. In some cases a 'Leaflet Informing the Victim of the MARAC' is provided to the victim on referral where it is safe to do so.

Leaflet informing victims of the MARAC

This might contain:

Definition of a MARAC, including:

- What is the purpose of the MARAC
- Who is referred to the MARAC
- Which agencies would normally attend the MARAC
- How the victim is represented at the MARAC
- The role of the IDAA and how victims can contact them

Confidentiality at the MARAC:

- Define what is meant by confidentiality
- Identify exceptions to confidentiality, including links Child Protection and Adult Support and Protection

What happens after the MARAC:

- What kind of actions might come from the MARAC
- How will the MARAC help the client?

Contact details for IDAA service and local police

Useful contact numbers for your local area and websites



Ending domestic abuse

Letter informing the victim of the MARAC

Name of victim
Address of victim

Date [Insert]

Dear Ms/Mr [Insert name]

You have been referred to the [insert area name] MARAC, because we believe that you are at high risk of current or future harm because of domestic abuse. Domestic abuse is defined¹ '(as gender-based abuse), can be perpetrated by partners or ex partners and can include physical abuse (assault and physical attack involving a range of behaviour), sexual abuse (acts which degrade and humiliate [victims] and are perpetrated against their will, including rape) and mental and emotional abuse (such as threats, verbal abuse, racial abuse, withholding money and other types of controlling behaviour such as isolation from family or friends).'

The Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) is a meeting that brings together representatives from a number of agencies in the area (both statutory and voluntary) to talk about the safety, health and well-being of people experiencing domestic abuse (and their children) and draw up an action plan to make them safer.

Your case has been referred to the MARAC by [insert name of agency] because you have been identified as being at risk of current or future harm from domestic abuse. Normally this is because of the things that an abuser is doing or the things they are saying they will do. By referring you to the MARAC, we are trying to make you safer by working with other agencies to get help and support. We hope that you will support this process as with your involvement we can be best placed to address your safety concerns.

Anyone referred to the MARAC is offered support by an IDAA (Independent Domestic Abuse Advocate) from [insert area name]. The IDAA's role at the MARAC is to represent your views, act as link between agencies and to ensure that any actions agencies take will make you safer. Ahead of a meeting, they will contact you to talk about your situation, what would make you feel safer and identify any issues that you think should be addressed at the meeting. Usually, they (or sometimes another professional who you know) will contact you to provide feedback about the meeting. You do not attend the meeting yourself but are represented. Practitioners from a range of statutory or voluntary agencies attend. There is also a protocol between agencies participating in the MARAC which makes it clear what is expected of individual agencies, including how to store, manage and share any information they gain from the MARAC.

We work with many local organisations that may also be able to provide you with help and advice. I am enclosing a list of useful telephone numbers with details of some of these groups.

Yours sincerely,

MARAC Chair