

STOCKPORT WOMEN'S AID INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT PLANNING - WOMEN AND CHILDREN

PURPOSE:

To set out the approach and processes by the organisation will undertake the assessment of need and the process of individual support planning with women and children.

INTRODUCTION

This document contains a policy statement (Part One) and procedural guidance (Part Two). The functions of each are set out briefly below.

Part One – Policy Statement. The policy statement sets out the broad framework of principles within which the particular area of work will be carried out. It sets out the organisation's broad style and approach to the issue, including any aims and guiding principles.

Part Two – Procedural Guidance. The procedural guidance sets out the details that staff will require to carry out their duties in this particular area of work. It also sets out the specific tasks involved in undertaking this area of work and identifies who is responsible for carrying them out.

PART ONE - POLICY STATEMENT

AIMS AND PRINCIPLES

1. To have a system of support planning which enables women and children to have their needs assessed and met in a consistent and planned way.
2. The system will be practised in a way that empowers women rather than overwhelms them. It is the woman's plan and therefore the aim is that she should see it as something useful that she is in control of. Therefore in the operation of the system every effort should be made to ensure that the system itself doesn't become the dominant factor so the process serves the women and children first and foremost.

3. To have a system which is easy to understand and user friendly from the point of view of women and children and also the staff.
4. To have a system which external partners can understand and have a role in, once it is agreed as useful by the woman/children concerned.
5. To have a system which looks at the issues of needs and wants. In this way the system should be used to support and facilitate discussion about women and children taking risks and trying out new things.
6. For the system to act as a record which can demonstrate the accountability of the service. Although access to this record will be in accordance with the approach set out in the Confidentiality Policy.

THE FORMAT OF THE INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT PLAN

7. There are two systems of support planning - one for women and one for children.
8. These systems may also be used for women and children who are receiving support in a floating support project although the headings and the emphasis placed on each area will vary e.g. there might be more of an emphasis on education and training and less on safety and security.
9. Both systems are made of three parts:
 - *An Assessment.* This section aims to identify the needs and aspirations of women/children and forms the basis for establishing the Action Plan.
 - *An Action Plan.* This section takes the elements that the woman/children and key worker feel it is most important to address and sets out what which needs to be done, who will take the areas forward and time scales.
 - *A Review.* This section reviews how things are going and identifies new areas that need to be addressed.
10. This system will be undertaken with all women and children who use either the refuge of the floating support service. The only exceptions to this will be where the women/children stay for a very short time i.e.

before the point, stated in the procedure, when the process should begin.

PART TWO - PROCEDURAL GUIDANCE - INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT PLANNING (ISP)

THE PRACTICE OF THE ISP PROCESS

Please read this in conjunction with the SWA Referral and Assessment Policy and Procedure and SWA Keyworking procedure.

1. The following arrangements apply in respect of the process for women and children and are made up of three stages:
 - The **Assessment begins** with the Referral procedure which includes a Risk Assessment. It is continued in the first Keyworking session in which the woman/ child completes a Self-Assessment. (Appendix Five) Information from these assessment tools then informs the Support Plan.
 - The **Support Plan (Appendix Six)** will be completed in partnership between the woman/ child and the Keyworker following completion of the Self-Assessment. This will take place as soon as possible after the woman/child's arrival at the Refuge and not more than five days after the completion of the Assessment. In the case of Floating Support Service this will take place within one week of Referral from Project Staff. This will depend on the requirements of the service user. Child Support Worker's will complete a Child Referral form within a week of arrival. The Support Plan provides details of the issue, the task to be completed, timescales and the named person responsible for the task. These are signed and dated by the Keyworker and the woman/child. Each woman's/child Support Plan is discussed and reviewed by the staff team at weekly staff meetings to ensure a consistent, high quality service.

- The **Review** will take place each week or each month for children. The Support Plan will be revisited regularly to take account of current and changing support needs the woman/child may have but these timescales may be amended dependent on the needs of the service user. Floating Support clients may opt to access support fortnightly or monthly if required. A new Support Plan will therefore be produced at each Keyworking session and will contain details of the practical or emotional support planned. It will be made clear to women and children that they can ask for a meeting to discuss their needs and particular issues when they feel it appropriate and important to them. For example, where a crisis has occurred, the Review may be carried out on a daily basis. It is important that all support planning is led by the woman/ child.
2. The Support Plan is therefore the main document to record each review and the progress on addressing issues on an ongoing basis.
 3. The above three formats frame the ISP process. In practice work will be carried out on a day-to-day basis in respect of the areas identified and it is this work that will progress the issues. It is important to recognise that the Support Plan is the formal device to record the Review and check, discuss and record how things are going.
 4. Other partner organisations will be involved in the support planning process. This may be in relation to particular areas such as education, Social Services or mental health issues etc. If there is a person that a woman or child is particularly close to whom they wish to be involved in the process on a more continuous basis this should also be accommodated.
 5. The level and type of involvement will be agreed to and led by the wants and needs of the women and children.

STYLE AND METHOD – WOMEN

6. All new residents will be allocated a nominated Keyworker on arrival at Stockport Women's Aid. Weekly Keyworking will take place in a quiet place to ensure privacy and a relaxed atmosphere for the woman. This should be in line with SWA policy in relation to professional boundaries.
7. All members of staff should have a clear and consistent view of the aim and practice of the ISP process. They will explain and go through the

process with the women and ensure that they have an understanding and feel relaxed about the system before embarking on the process.

8. Every effort will be made to ensure that the women/ child feel that they are in control of the process and see it as something helpful and empowering.
9. The key worker will complete the documents. This document should be seen by the woman and signed by her. It may be helpful for her to have a blank document as she and the staff member go through it..
10. The documents should be used flexibly and if the form intimidates a woman then the worker could use the headings as a reference and complete them after the meeting.
11. It may be the case that sometimes women will disagree with staff about the issues contained in the Support Plan. Where this is the case both sets of views should be documented on the form and noted as a disagreement.
12. All these documents should form part of woman's individual file and should be locked away when not in use. The confidentiality of this information should be managed in line with the confidentiality policy.

Completion of Support Planning Process

1. *A final Keyworking session should be arranged during the last week of a woman's stay at the refuge. This is an opportunity for the woman to reflect on her experience of the support she has received at SWA and to complete an 'Outcomes form' with her Keyworker.*
2. *Prior to this meeting, it is the Keyworkers responsibility to revisit all the ISPs completed over the course of the woman's stay and to prepare a summary of the significant outcomes. This will inform the completion of the Outcomes form.*

STYLE AND METHOD - CHILDREN

13. The Child Support Worker will complete the documents. How much of the document is shown to the child/young person will depend on the age and other factors such as their capacity to understand the document and their ability/want to engage with it.

14. Even where the form is not shown the worker must take care to explain the process and ensure that the child/young person understands the principles involved, as far as possible.
15. Every effort will be made to ensure that the child/young person feels central to the process and those decisions are being taken with them and they are making choices rather than things being done to or for them.
16. The same approach as that outlined above for women will be taken regarding any disagreements.
17. It is important that this document is used flexibly and the worker may not be able to formally sit down with the child/young person to complete the forms. The likelihood is that the worker will build up a picture of needs through informal chats and will complete the forms in a more piecemeal way away from the child after chats.
18. The relevance of the identified areas of support on the Assessment form will vary enormously and should only be used as a guide alongside an understanding that there may additional issues to those listed.
19. Where babies and children under five are concerned the paperwork must still be completed in respect of the headings in order to establish a picture of need. In reality it is likely that some this information will be gathered through chats with the mother.
20. All these documents should form part of child/young person's individual file and should be locked away when not in use. The confidentiality of this information should be managed in line with the Confidentiality Policy.