

DOMESTIC ABUSE BARNET MULTI AGENCY RISK ASSESSMENT CONFERENCE (DAMARAC)

INDUCTION PACK FOR MARAC REPRESENTATIVES

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A. Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is a Domestic Abuse Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (DAMARAC)?

Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) helps to ensure that high risk victims are supported and better protected from further abuse by a coordinated effort from all agencies and organisations. Local multi-agency partners will meet to discuss the highest risk victims of domestic abuse in the borough. Agencies will agree and undertake actions that form part of an effective safety plan for the victim and the children.

2. Why refer to MARAC?

Referring to MARAC enables timely interventions for the purpose of reducing the risk of serious harm or homicide for a victim and to increase the safety and wellbeing of victims - adults and children.

3. What types of cases are discussed at MARAC?

The highest risk cases of domestic abuse are discussed at MARAC. The referral criteria for high risk in Barnet are: -

- (i) Professional judgement where the professional has serious concerns about the victim's situation.
- (ii) 'Visible High Risk' if you have 14 ticks in the Community Action against Domestic Abuse DASH risk identification checklist including extended family violence so called 'honour' based violence.
- (iii) potential escalation is where there are numerous incidents reported or Police call-outs and where there is not a positive identification of a majority of the risk factors but abuse appears to be escalating.
- (iv) The local threshold of 14 ticks for Barnet in the DASH risk identification checklist.
 - a. repeat cases where there are incidents reported within a twelve month period when the victim was first discussed at MARAC,

4. What do I do if I think I have a case for the MARAC?

Only **practitioners** can make a referral into MARAC. If you are not sure, you can call in the first instance to discuss this with our Domestic Abuse Advocacy and Support Service, email barnet.advocacy@solacewomensaid.org or call 020 3874 5003 or there is a MARAC representative in each core agency who can assist you.

Otherwise please contact the MARAC Coordinator at barnet.damarac@barnet.gov.uk or email Mee.Cheuk@barnet.gov.uk

Please complete the MARAC referral using web-based link below:

[Barnet DA MARAC Referral Form](#)

5. How often does MARAC meet?

The MARAC is held virtually every Wednesday via Microsoft Teams (MST) at 11.20am.

6. Who organises the meetings?

Barnet Council organise the MARAC meetings and the deadline for referrals is Thursday, 3pm.

7. How do I know if the MARAC supports victims properly?

After a case is discussed in the MARAC, the Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (IDVA) or the lead agency that supports the victim will feedback the outcome from the MARAC to the victim.

8. Can I refer a case to MARAC at short notice?

Notify your emergency referral by emailing barnet.damarac@barnet.gov.uk and the MARAC Coordinator mee.cheuk@barnet.gov.uk In circumstances only when a victim is assessed as being **'Very High Risk', and the risk of harm is so imminent** that statutory agencies have a duty of care to act at once. With such referrals, the MARAC Coordinator will contact the relevant agencies and make them fully aware of the current situation, and an emergency meeting will be set up as soon as possible.

9. On referring to MARAC do I need to tell the victim?

Yes, you have to seek consent from the victim when making a referral to MARAC. There are circumstances when you have to make a referral without consent. This is when you make a judgement that the risk to the victim is so high and it is not possible to carry out risk assessment with the victim but you have access to information from other sources such as the Police or supportive members whom the victim had disclosed the abuse.

10. Can I bring the victim to MARAC?

No, MARAC is strictly for practitioners only but the voice of the victim is represented by the allocated IDVA at the MARAC.

11. What other agencies attend MARAC?

Most safeguarding and domestic violence agencies in the statutory and voluntary sectors such as the Police, Social Care, Housing, Education, Health, Mental Health, Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy (IDVA) services, Probation, Substance misuse agencies and Victim Support.

12. Is MARAC training on how to identify domestic abuse victims who are at high risk of harm available for agencies ?

MARAC training is available to practitioners in all agencies from the statutory and voluntary sectors within Barnet who have responsibility for safeguarding children and adults experiencing domestic abuse.

Details about what the training includes along with the dates, times and venue information are shown on the [Barnet Learning Management System \(POD\)](#)

B. Guidance for completing the online Barnet MARAC DASH referral form:

[Barnet DA MARAC Referral Form](#)

The Barnet MARAC DASH referral is ONLY for practitioners to complete for the purpose of referring high risk domestic violence victims with an aim to reduce the level of risk in the first instance by multi-agency efforts.

Before making a referral as far as possible ensure that you carry out a risk assessment with the victim and seek consent for referral into MARAC.

Find out as much information from the victim to complete the details in relation to the perpetrator, children and any other agencies that she had involvement with. These questions form part of the referral form.

When you carry out risk assessment with the victim go through the 24 questions in the RIC to ascertain the level of harm the victim is at. The number of ticks indicates whether it satisfies the criteria for referral into MARAC. Always include the date that you carried out the risk assessment. Below are the recommended criteria.

Guidance on how to fill in the Risk Indicator Checklist of 24 questions can be found using the link below:

[Dash risk checklist quick start guidance FINAL.pdf \(safelives.org.uk\)](#)

Cases which do not make the 14 tick threshold but where, in your professional judgment when undertaking the assessment, the risk is still high then a referral to MARAC should be considered (particularly if any of the top risk indicators have been recorded or where there are concerns about escalation). A professional must be prepared to provide sound, evidence-based rationale to support your decisions. There is a box in the DASH form for you to provide a summary of your reasons why the case in your professional judgment deems to be high risk.

In situations where your professional judgement cannot get consent , the online referral form contains an **information sharing without consent form** to complete

Recommended Referral Criteria to MARAC

1. **Professional judgement:** if a professional has serious concerns about a victim's situation, they should refer the case to MARAC. There will be occasions where the particular context of a case gives rise to serious concerns even if the victim has been unable to disclose the information that might highlight their risk more clearly. ***This could reflect extreme levels of fear, cultural barriers to disclosure, immigration issues or language barriers particularly in cases of 'honour'-based violence.*** This judgement would be based on the professional's experience and/or the victim's perception of their risk even if they do not meet criteria 2 and/or 4 below.
2. **'Visible High Risk':** the number of 'ticks' on this checklist. If you have ticked 10 or more 'yes' boxes the case would normally meet the MARAC referral criteria.
3. **Potential Escalation:** the number of police callouts to the victim as a result of domestic violence in the past 12 months. This criterion can be used to identify cases where there is not a positive identification of a majority of the risk factors on the list, but where abuse appears to be escalating and where it is appropriate to assess the situation more fully by sharing information at MARAC.
4. **The local referral threshold** for Barnet is 14 ticks.

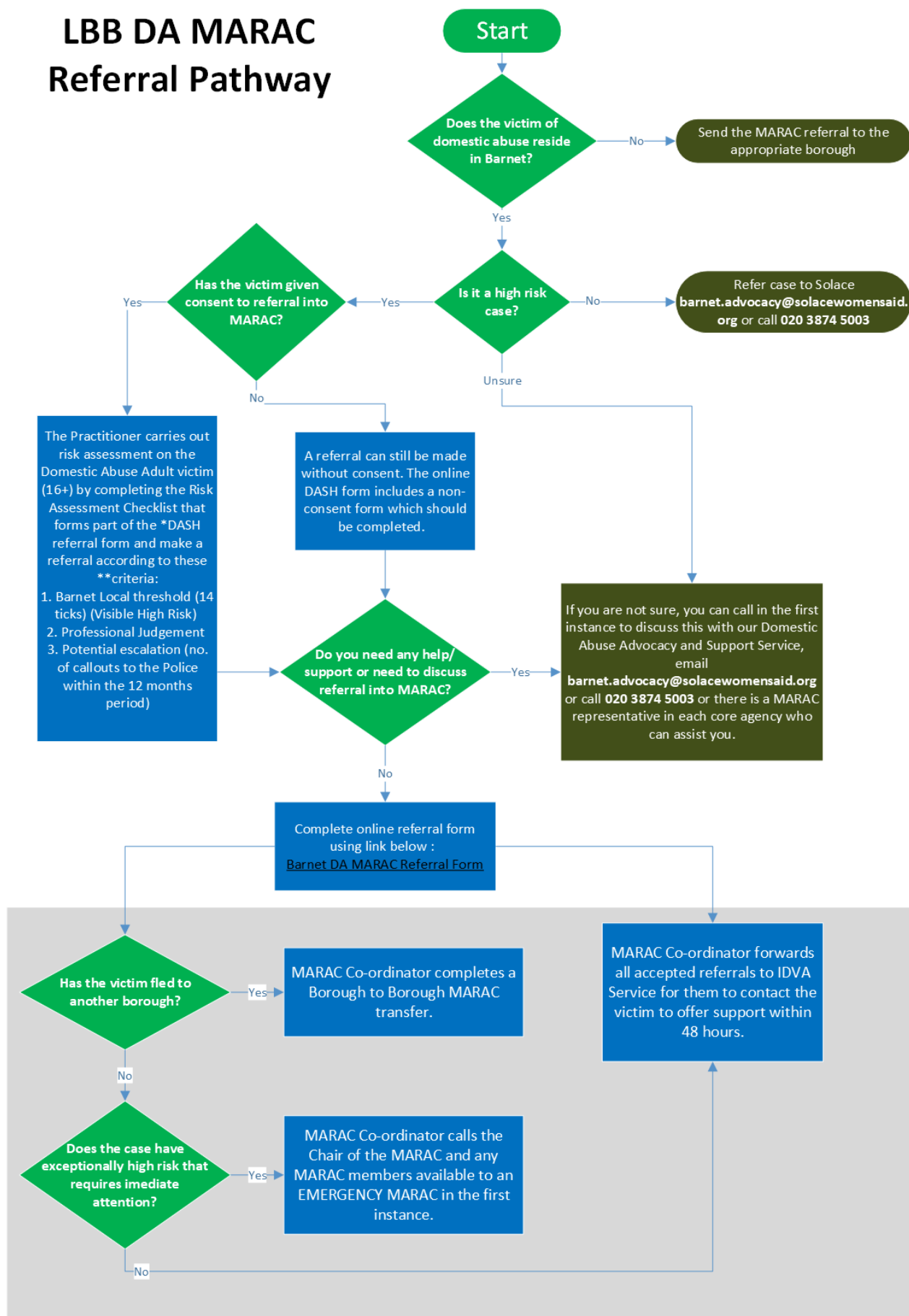
Note: This risk assessment is not to replace risk assessment for children but to provide valuable information where the presence of children increases the wider risks of domestic violence. If risk towards children is highlighted, a full assessment of the children's situation should be considered and the appropriate referral made for child protection.

What happens next?

All referrals that are received by the deadline which is every Thursday by 3pm are listed for discussion at the upcoming MARAC. The original referrer should come and present information at the MARAC. Only in exceptional circumstances when the original referrer cannot present information, the Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) can share information on their behalf. Referrals that have an IDVA/key worker supporting victim in place, the IDVA/key worker usually presents the information at the meeting. After the MARAC, it is the responsibility of the IDVA/practitioner supporting the victim to feedback to the victim and actions agreed are carried out by those tasked with the responsibility.

C. LONDON BOROUGH OF BARNET MARAC REFERRAL PATHWAY

LBB DA MARAC Referral Pathway



D. The principles of an effective MARAC.

At the core of each principle is the safety of the victim, which needs to be considered at all stages of the process from identification to information sharing, and from action planning to governance. Ensuring that the victim is supported throughout the process and represented at the MARAC is crucial to managing risk, improving safety and reducing repeat victimisation.

1. Identification

All agencies and services identify high risk victims through completing a risk assessment and/or referral to a specialist agency within safe timeframes once domestic abuse is disclosed.

2. Referral to the MARAC

All high risk victims who meet MARAC referral criteria are referred to the MARAC by a range of agencies within safe timeframes.

3. Multi-agency engagement

All relevant agencies are appropriately and consistently represented at the MARAC.

4. Independent representation and support for victims

All high risk victims are consistently supported and represented by an Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) or other independent representative who prioritises safety throughout the MARAC process.

5. Research and information sharing

MARAC representatives research cases and share relevant and proportionate information that identifies risk and informs safety planning. Procedures are followed to ensure that safety and confidentiality are maintained at all times.

6. Action planning

Action plans are developed which address the risks identified.

7. Number of cases and capacity

The MARAC has the number of referrals and capacity to ensure that all high risk victims who meet the MARAC threshold can receive support from their local MARAC.

8. Equality

The MARAC is committed to delivering equality of outcome to all.

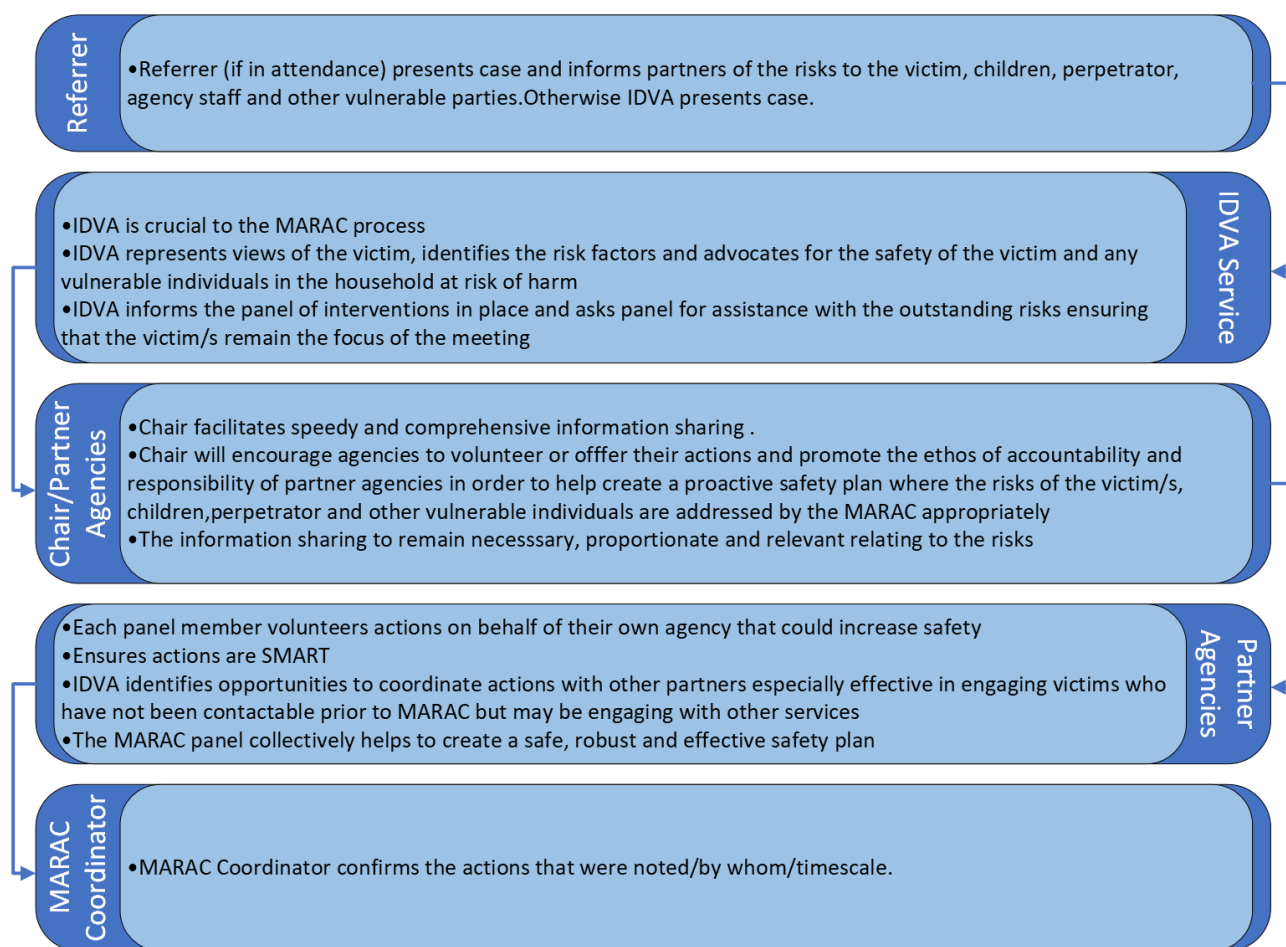
9. Operational support

Consistent coordination and administration support the effective functioning of the MARAC.

10. Governance

Effective governance oversees the performance, sustainability and accountability of the MARAC. The 10 Principles and the sub-principles were updated in October 2011. Please note that the changes to the Principles are for clarification and do not alter the basic advice and guidelines given by Safelives

E. The structure of the MARAC.



F. About E-CINS (Empowering-Communities Inclusion & Neighbourhood management System)

Barnet MARAC is using E-CINS as a platform for sharing information that is balance and proportionate to the case discussed. It is expected of all MARAC members to be trained on ECINS and proactively using ECINS to log researched information, add in most up-to- date information and complete actions. Information on ECINS is only accessible to those who are registered and given login rights.

For E-CINS training please contact Mee.Cheuk@barnet.gov.uk

Guidance for RESEARCHING INFORMATION FOR MARAC using Ecins

- Consistent and accurate research will help attendees at MARAC to build up as comprehensive a picture as possible of a case at the meeting.

- In practice, most agencies will frequently be unaware of information held by others. If research is done before the meeting, it can be shared where appropriate and an action plan can be established in the timeliest way possible.
- When undertaking research in advance of the meeting, it is important that agencies do not automatically contact the victim unless they need to take immediate actions to address risk. In most cases, the IDVA service will contact the victim in advance of the meeting and agencies should contact either Solace Advocacy and Support Service (SASS), the IDVA service, or the referring agency in the first instance.
- The information within the research log on Ecins should be current, accurate and, where necessary make a distinction between fact and professional opinion.
- SafeLives would recommend that research log are internal information for use by the relevant agency and the information contained within them should be shared
- Researched information should be entered into ECINS by all agencies one day before each MARAC meeting

G. Guidance for handover.

When you leave your role as a MARAC representative, please notify the MARAC Co-ordinator.

H. Guidance notes for expectation in the MARAC Representative role.

1. What is your agency process for identifying and risk assessing domestic abuse and making referrals to MARAC?
2. How does your agency ensure that, wherever possible, all victims are safely informed of their referral to MARAC? Is there any guidance for frontline practitioners on how to check that informing the victim is safe and what to tell them? Is there a leaflet which can be handed to the victim, when it is safe to do so?
3. How is research for the MARAC completed prior to the meeting? What information systems are searched?
4. How is information from the MARAC shared with colleagues within your agency? Is there any guidance for frontline practitioners about the use of MARAC information?
5. What sort of actions does your agency routinely offer at the MARAC?

6. How are actions from the MARAC fed back to frontline line practitioners? How do these practitioners report on action completion to you and how is this fed back to the MARAC Co-ordinator?
7. How are MARAC cases flagged, de-flagged and tagged? Is there guidance on the identification of further incidents?
8. How are actions from the MARAC fed back to frontline line practitioners? How do these practitioners report on action completion to the representative and how is this fed back to the MARAC Co-ordinator?
9. How are MARAC cases flagged, de-flagged and tagged? Is there guidance on the identification of further incidents?

I. A guide to useful information about MARAC

Document	Purpose
The MARAC and Q&A They are found on our website www.barnet.gov.uk/domesticabuse on practitioner page	To inform representatives of the aims and objectives of the MARAC.
10 principles of an effective MARAC.	To ensure MARAC is efficient.
Guidance for completing the MARAC referral and thresholds.	To make representatives aware of the MARAC criteria for referrals.
Representative's Toolkit www.safelives.org	To ensure representatives understand how the MARAC works and as a reference.
MARAC Information Sharing Agreement (ISA).	To define the specific purposes for which the signatory agencies have agreed to share information, describe the roles and structures that will support the exchange of information between agencies, set out the legal framework within which the information is shared and describe the security procedures necessary to ensure compliance with responsibilities under the Data Protection Act and agency specific security requirements. ISA underpins the MARAC Operational Protocol.
MARAC Operational Protocol (MOP). (attached separately)	To act as a terms of reference and guidance for MARAC members during the course of agreed information sharing between multi-agency partners during MARAC meetings.

Research Information - Research log which is found on Ecins	For information sharing to build up as comprehensive a picture as possible of a case at the meeting.
MARAC Handover Guide	To ensure continuity of representation at the MARAC.
MARAC Steering Group	The Steering Group oversees that MARAC is of quality and performs to Safelives standard.
MARAC Quality Assurance Panel(held every 6 months)	To improve the quality of the presentation of cases heard at MARAC by scrutinising 2 MARAC referrals and the subsequent action plans that are agreed at meetings.