



Marac Project commissioned by London Borough of Barnet

BARNET MULTI AGENCY RISK ASSESSMENT CONFERENCE (MARAC)

INDUCTION PACK FOR MARAC REPRESENTATIVES

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A. What is a Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC).

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.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. 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.

2. 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.
 - repeat cases where there are incidents reported within a twelve month period when the victim was first discussed at MARAC,

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

Only **practitioners** can make a referral into MARAC. You can call in the first instance to discuss this with the MARAC Co-ordinator or you can complete the Risk Identification Check list that forms part of the DASH referral form. This is available from the MARAC Co-ordinator, Susanna Ellis at susanna.ellis@hestia.org or by phone on 07787241805. Once completed, please return to barnet.marac@hestia.org.cjism.net by secure mail. If you do not have a secure mail please give the MARAC Co-ordinator a call.

4. How often does MARAC meet?

The MARAC meets once every month on Wednesday in Barnet House, 1255 Whetstone High Road N20 0EJ

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5. Who organises the meetings?

The MARAC Co-ordinator, Mee Cheuk organises the meetings and she is based within Hestia IDVA Services at Wembley Police Station.

6. 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.

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

Referrals to MARAC are made eight days before each MARAC meeting. 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, can be referred at short notice. With such referrals, the MARAC Co-ordinator 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.

8. 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.

9. Can I bring the victim to MARAC?

No, MARAC is strictly for practitioners only.

10. 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 (Social Care), Mental Health, Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy (IDVA) services, Probation, Substance misuse agencies and Victim Support.

MARAC training on how to identify domestic violence high risk victims

We roll out free MARAC training to practitioners in all agencies from the statutory and voluntary sectors within the London Borough of Barnet with responsibility for safeguarding vulnerable children and adults experiencing domestic violence. To access training programmes please click on the following link:<https://fstraining.barnet.gov.uk/cpd/portal.asp>

B. 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

C. Guidance for completing the Barnet MARAC DASH 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.

The part that indicates the level of risk and whether it is suitable for referral into MARAC is the Risk Indicator Checklist (RIC). The Checklist can be found on pages 5 and 6 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.

In situations where you cannot get consent you can complete an **information sharing without consent form** with an explanation of the reason why you think the victim is at high risk.

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.

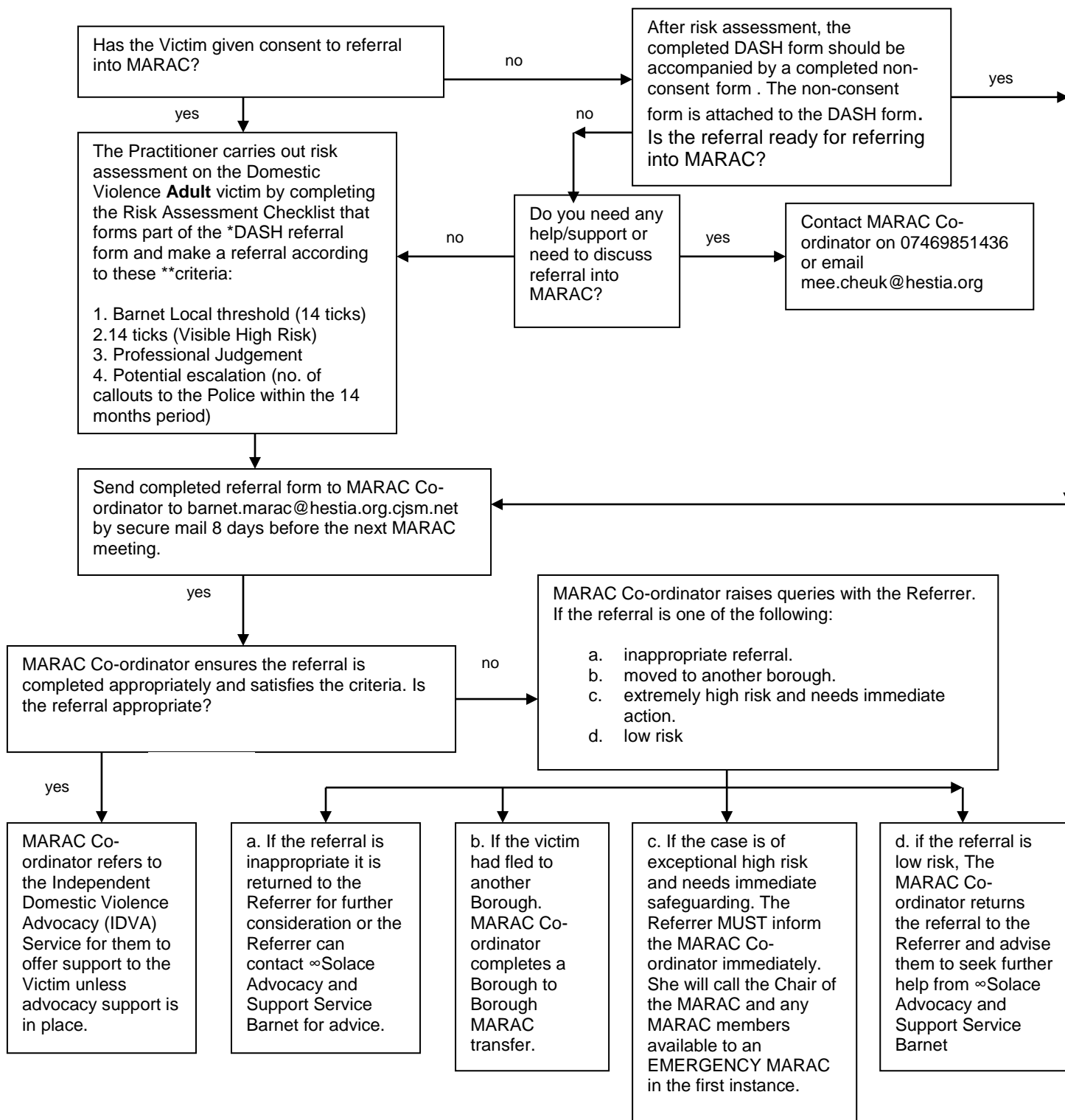
Note: This risk assessment is not to replace risk assessment for children but to provide valuable information where the presence of children increases the wider risks of domestic violence. If risk towards children is highlighted, a full assessment of the children's situation should be considered and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

Once you have completed the referral form get it signed off by your Manager and follow the **referral pathway** to refer into MARAC.

What happens next?

All referrals that are received by the deadline specified and meet the criteria for MARAC 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 in place, the IDVA usually presents the information at the meeting. In some cases where the victim is adequately supported by the key worker, he/she makes the presentation. After the MARAC, it is the responsibility of the practitioner supporting the victim to feedback to the victim and actions agreed are carried out by those tasked with the responsibility.

D. LONDON BOROUGH OF BARNET MARAC REFERRAL PATHWAY



*The DASH form is a referral form that practitioners use to risk assess a high risk domestic violence before referring into MARAC. The - DASH referral form can be accessed from the Intranet or mee.cheuk@hestia.org or contact 07469851436 **Criteria: 1. If the risk identification checklist in the DASH referral form has a score of 14 ticks, it meets the Barnet local threshold for referral into MARAC. 2. 14 ticks (Visible High Risk): means there is a combination of many forms and frequency of abuse that put the Victim in a high risk situation. 3. Professional Judgement: would be based on the practitioner's experience and/or the victim's perception of their risk without meeting criteria 1 or 2. Examples are extreme fear of disclosure or reprisal, harmful practice within some cultures such as Honour Based violence. 4. Potential escalation: 2/3 callouts and/or increasing number of callouts to the Police within a 12 month period. ∞ Barnet DV and Abuse Advocacy Service 294-296, Nether Street Finchley Central London N3 1RJ Office: 020 38745003, Secure email: sass.barnet@solacewomensaid.cjism.net

RESTRICTED WHEN COMPLETED

E. MARAC Research information form

Victim's full name and any aliases	
MARAC case number from case list	
OASIS number (if applicable)	
Your amendments to any incorrect details in relation to victim, alleged perpetrator and children	
Was victim or alleged perpetrator previously known to Solace? If 'yes' provide brief info:	
Survivor's safe contact number(s)	
if you haven't managed to establish a contact-please state:	<p>-Number of times survivor was contacted_____</p> <p>-Dates contact attempted_____</p> <p>-Has the referrer been contacted_____</p> <p>-Have you tried to contact the victim via a different agency (name of the agency)</p> <p>_____</p> <p>-Name and contact details of any BAMER agency involved_____</p>
<p>Please put risk factors in bullet points</p> <p>Highlight any relevant information in relation to identified risk factors including the last and worse incident, escalation, persistent harassment and/or stalking.</p> <p>What are the victim's vulnerabilities</p> <p>Please include any vulnerable adults and children in the household not identified in the referral</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
Children's needs – which school children attends	
Housing provider and the type of tenancy. If Housing Association please provide contact details.	
Immigration status.	Victim has no Recourse to Public Funds: Yes or N/A_____
	Others (please state) : _____

<p>Highlight any relevant information in relation to high risk factors of alleged perpetrator <i>including access to weapon, mental health issues, problematic substance misuse, being violent towards other people, non-compliance of orders.</i></p>	
<p>Please provide any orders that are in place <i>eg. criminal justice and civil orders, bail conditions, injunctions, child contact arrangement etc</i></p>	
<p>Completed actions, so far</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
<p>Has the victim indicated to you what would help her/him most to feel safe? <i>What IDVA requests</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
<p>Info Shared/Actions</p>	

F. ECINS Guide to adding MARAC Research

As a MARAC member your job is to ensure the most up to date information is available for MARAC meetings. Previously this research was sent to MARAC coordinators prior to meetings via email. Now with the introduction of ECINS in Barnet, research is going to be recorded on the ECINS system prior to MARAC. Here is a step by step guide on how to add research to the DA MARAC Caselist.

- Ensure you have an ECINS login
- Log on to ECINS System using username and password: <https://ecins.org/home/>
- On the home page click on 'cases'
- Then select 'cases gallery'
- Here a full list of cases will appear. You want to find the relevant case list for the upcoming MARAC it will be written as follows: 'BarnetDAMARAC with the relevant MARAC date' e.g. BarnetDAMARAC 01/05/2019. Click on the correct case list. This will be in the 'high priority area' and normally is the folder without any faces on. When you are in the system this will make sense.
- Once in the caselist, you will need to go to 'related cases' which is a tab on the right-hand side of the page. Click on the 'relates cases' tab. This will show a full list of all the associated cases due to be heard at the MARAC.
- Click on the first case. This will open up so you can see the details of the case. In the bottom right hand corner, you can see the information associated with the victim, perpetrator and children involved. Click on the Victim tab to see full details and you would do the same for each Victim, perpetrator and children (children are included under the 'family' tab).
- The rest of the information on the case will be in 'additional information' and the original referral form is stored under the 'docs' tab on the bottom left hand side.
- Now you have access to the case information, you can conduct your research.
- Once you have conducted your research, you will need to add appropriate information to the case. The way you would do this is click on the 'log & action' tab on the bottom left hand side of the page.
- When on the 'log & action' tab select 'add a log' which is highlighted in green. You can then add the information you have found and click on submit.
- Please note this information will be available for everyone to see, so only share relevant information.
- If you need any please contact the MARAC Coordinator: Barnet.marac@hestia.org.cjism.net

G. Guidance for handover.

When you leave your role as a MARAC representative, please complete the information below and send it to the MARAC Coordinator or alternatively notify the MARAC Coordinator.

Agency representative handover information.**Agency:****Name of former representative (who should complete this form):****Name of new representative:****Contact details of new representative:****Name of deputy representative:****Contact details****Date:**

H. Guidance notes for expectation in the representative's 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 MARAC cases flagged, de-flagged and tagged? Is there guidance on the identification of further incidents?
9. The current/out-going MARAC representative needs show his/her replacement how to use ECINS.
10. The out-going MARAC representative needs to let the MARAC Co-ordinator know to remove her/his name from ECINS.
11. The new MARAC representative needs to let the MARAC Co-ordinator know to set his/her name on ECINS.

I. The purpose of the documents.

Document	Purpose
The MARAC and Q&A	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). (attached separately)	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.
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 Form	To guide representatives when researching information.
ECINS Guide to adding MARAC Research	To guide representatives to upload researched information onto ECINS.
Dates of MARAC and deadline for referrals	For reference
MARAC members and contact details	For reference
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.

J. Additional information

The MARAC Representative Toolkit (access from www.Safelives.org), MARAC Information Sharing Agreement (ISA), MARAC Operational Protocol (MOP) attached separately should be read alongside this induction pack.