

CASE STUDY: Glasgow City Partnership approach for upskilling the financial inclusion and domestic abuse sector on the wider impacts of economic and financial abuse

Equally Safe is Scotland's delivery plan for the strategy to prevent violence against women and girls. It was developed by the Scottish Government and COSLA in association with a wide range of partners from public and third sector organisations.

Glasgow City Council Financial Inclusion Partnership established a 'gender-based violence working group' to consider the financial challenges, issues and barriers faced by women whose lives were affected by gender-based violence (GBV). The group's view was that it had to be achieved through multi-agency ownership and recognised that poverty and financial inclusion impacted on women who engaged with other wider groups in the city out with the traditional partnership.

It was therefore felt that the development of an action plan should form part of the GVAWP city-wide strategic plan to tackle violence against women as well as being an integral part of the Financial Inclusion Partnership plan.

Through a process of consultation, it was agreed to widen this to include all forms of gender-based violence. This recognised that issues in relation to poverty and financial exclusion impacted on women who experienced rape, sexual violence, those exploited in prostitution, women with no recourse to public funds and survivors of child sexual abuse.

The working group was chaired by Glasgow City Council Financial Services and included representatives from Glasgow Violence Against Women Partnership (GVAWP), One Parent Families Scotland (OPFS), Wheatley Group, Women's Aid, and money and advice projects. It had responsibility to develop a plan to increase women's financial inclusion.

Two specialist sub-groups were established within the Financial Inclusion Partnership: one to focus on the financial inclusion and legal advice needs of single parents, and the other for people who experience GBV. As the evidence gathered within the financial inclusion partnership highlighted that most single parents had experienced domestic abuse, there is significant cross over between the two. The aim was to make sure that the needs of these people were fully recognised and integrated into service planning and delivery.

The Challenge

The GVAWP and Financial Partnership were trying to find a suitable solution to help address the needs and barriers of vulnerable women.

An existing project, the Women's Financial Support Project, was the catalyst and springboard for developments in this area, providing the evidence base of the challenges to be addressed.



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The project was a partnership between Glasgow East Money Advice Partnership (GEMAP) and Glasgow East Women’s Aid, funded by the Glasgow City Community Health Partnership North East Sector and NHS Carers Information Strategy Fund. It was formed with the purpose of providing a holistic service specifically for female carers, to address and reduce the financial barriers women face when leaving an abusive relationship. The partnership delivered a service encompassing a range of emotional, financial and practical advice.

[Download the Women’s Financial Support Project evaluation report.](#)

Intended Outcomes

The solution needed to:

- help raise awareness of domestic abuse
- make best use of existing networks and groups
- upskill both the GBV and financial inclusion sector in the city and build the capacity of the front-line sector
- build on referral pathways
- improve access to advice services for the people who need it most
- understand more about the difficulties and challenges for women and how to address them

Action/Approach Taken

A workshop was held in October 2015 which brought together key stakeholders to identify the challenges and barriers that existed for women when seeking to gain financial autonomy, and whose lives had been affected by some form of gender-based violence.

From that workshop, the group produced a [draft action plan](#) which was endorsed by the Glasgow Violence Against Women Partnership. (GVAWG is the overarching group and covers three locality groups which report in to the city. The locality groups deliver on their action plans.)

In the first phase, it was recognised that money advice project staff needed to have a basic awareness of violence against women; one of the key actions was to consider training for all the financial inclusion front-line workers funded through Glasgow City Council. Kirsty Hay, Glasgow Violence Against Women Coordinator, says, “Usually our training programmes are run on an annual basis but we recognised through discussions at this working group that we needed to try to do more. We needed to do more with partners to upskill front-line staff to spot the signs of domestic abuse and especially early on, when the financial and wider impacts of the economic abuse could be happening.”

The Glasgow Violence Against Women Partnership (GVAWP) had developed a [training matrix](#) for violence against women. This was distributed across all partner agencies.

A programme of [half-day workshops](#) were delivered by the GVAWP Multi

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Agency Facilitators to staff working for organisations who formed the Glasgow Advice Information Network (GAIN). These were face-to-face sessions which covered basic awareness of violence against women and included case studies linking violence against women and financial inclusion. Approximately 100 front-line financial inclusion workers attended the workshops.

Glasgow City Council Financial Inclusion Team co-ordinated the bookings for these sessions. Carolyn Armstrong, Glasgow City Council, Financial Inclusion Team, says, “The training was very well received across the sector and helped frontline advisers understand more about the barriers faced in accessing services for this client group. At the same time, it also helped facilitate ongoing discussions about how the city could respond better and adapt the way services are delivered.”

This programme has been further augmented by [training staff](#) working in the GAIN network to facilitate the workshops themselves. There are currently 15 volunteer facilitators supporting the delivery of the awareness raising workshops.

Obstacles and Issues

The financial inclusion sector deals with a high proportion of clients who have suffered abuse and who may have experienced economic and financial abuse. The training, didn't go in to any great length about the wider impacts of economic and financial abuse and covered a basic general awareness around the subject matter.

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Results

Mapping exercises and workshops have now been carried out and identified how services could be improved, as well as gaps in provision.

A range of activities will encourage closer partnership working between third sector organisations which provide services for the specialist groups, and financial inclusion services provided by the [Glasgow Advice and Information Network \(GAIN\)](#).

The training has identified that support for individuals on this subject must be about the quality rather than the quantity.

Lessons Learned

A key learning point is to perhaps start off small scale, at a locality level, and learn from that what works well. You can then grow and develop from this rather than take a whole systems approach from the start.

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Next Steps

- To look at what further contributions and recommendations can be made to the strategic plan for implementation. To develop the monitoring and evaluation.
- To review the financial inclusion partnership specialist sub-group action plan for GBV to see if it is fit for purpose and identify which organisations can take forward some of the specialist areas for development and assign timescales for implementation.
- To review the terms of reference for the group.
- The priority for the GVAWP would be to work with GAIN, Cabx and money advice services to help reach and engage with the front-line advice sector.
- The GVAWP will look to implement the triage holistic needs assessment system and build on what already exists and work with existing groups including Wheatley Group. Meeting arranged to discuss and link to the plan.
- Look at the best way of trying to mainstream a routine enquiry across organisations and to develop a screening tool at entry point to the service.
- To develop a more sustainable training solution for domestic abuse and financial inclusion partners, building on the existing training approach.
- GVAWP will consider how to use the NHS Health Scotland domestic abuse in health materials, and the techniques and learning from that approach, to train front line financial inclusion staff.
- To develop a 'train the trainers' 2-3 hour course which will go in to more depth about how to ask questions about and help others draw out, early in the process, where domestic abuse is present.
- To establish a short life working group with key stakeholders across other local authority areas and umbrella organisations to explore a collaborative approach to developing a practitioner toolkit and training model across the domestic abuse and financial inclusion sector, and how this can become accredited and rolled out Scotland wide.
- To contribute to the review of the Financial Inclusion strategy, delivery and action plan going forward.

Additional Information

[Financial Inclusion Referral Pathway Toolkit](#)

In September 2008, the NHS issued a letter to all health boards to introduce routine screening for GBV in key services. It was aimed at reducing the negative health impact of domestic abuse and other forms of gender-based violence in key services. Routine enquiry is now cited in *Equally Safe* as an NHS priority.

[National Gender Based Violence and Health Programme](#)

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[Gender Based Violence in Health – NHS Health Scotland](#)

NHSGGC has developed [guidance for staff on money worries](#). This guidance includes working with patients and sources of support for staff who have money worries.

[GEMAP](#) continues to provide an outreach within Rape Crisis and other agencies in Glasgow.

Kirsty Hay, Glasgow VAW Co-ordinator, participated in the [16 Days of Action](#) event 2017 organised by the Improvement Service and a webinar about [Supporting Survivors of Financial Abuse](#). Learning and discussions taken from these events will help with some of the developments of the training programme for Glasgow and beyond.

[GVAWG Staff Training Guidance](#)



Contact

Kirsti Hay

Violence Against Women Coordinator, Glasgow City Council

kirsti.hay@glasgow.gov.uk

(to discuss the content of this case study and training programme across the GBVP and financial inclusion partners across Glasgow City)

Sandra Sankey

Project Manager, Improving Outcomes in Money Advice Project, Improvement Service

sandra.sankey@improvementservice.org.uk

(to discuss any knowledge, learning and outcomes from the Money Advice Outcomes project)