

The Domestic Abuse Report 2019: Key Findings from the 2018 Annual Survey

Funding



56.7% of respondents were running an area of their domestic abuse service **without dedicated funding** in 2017/18.¹



54.5% of respondents commented on '**funding cuts and uncertainties**' as their **biggest challenge** in 2017/18.²



“... juggling many small funds that don't meet full cost recovery.”

“We have got increasing numbers of staff on short term contracts with new projects generally only being funded for one year and funders being unwilling to provide multi-year or continuation funding even for very successful projects.”

Demand for refuge³



59.7% of **referrals** to refuge service in 2017/18 were **declined** (for any reason).



An estimated **21,084** referrals to all refuge services in England were declined in 2017/18, averaging **405** each week.⁴



17.1% of all **referrals to refuge** were **declined** due to **lack of space/capacity** to support the survivor.



“We are receiving less money but expected to provide more per worker, and demand for the service has increased as well as the support that is required due to increased financial pressures on families and survivors.”

“Continued pressure from funders to provide services without the budget with increasing referral numbers.”

Changes in staffing since 2014⁵



A third (33.6%) said they had increasing **difficulty in recruiting and retaining staff**.



Almost a third (30.6%) had to **reduce the amount of support** (in terms of staff time) they are able to give to each service user due to funding.

“We experienced difficulty in recruiting staff to one of our refuge services - we think this is because it has a demanding shift pattern which was put in place to meet a tender for added value. Increasingly commissioned services funding does not cover core costs.”

“We have seen a hugely increased staff turnover leading to unsettled staff team and more and more management and admin time taken up with recruitment and HR tasks.”

What made services proud?

"The ability of our passionate and dedicated staff who continue to work beyond their hours free of charge to make sure the women and children get a good service. I'm so proud of the team's commitment - they give all of themselves to achieve better outcomes."

"The change in survivors after they have received support. Being able to see survivors on their own journey of change, living a life free from abuse and fear is rewarding. The positive impact that our support has on the wider family as well as the survivor."

"Supporting women to overcome their fears about moving on into independent living and to see them flourish and gain confidence, finding employment and education."

"The number of lives we have changed through supporting women to recover from the long term effects of domestic abuse."

"Against all the odds - dedicated workers gave good support and still made a difference to the lives of the women and children who came through our doors."

"Providing recovery, education, prevention, awareness, safety/risk management and holistic support to women and children."

"The number of lives we have changed through supporting women to recover from the long term effects of domestic abuse."

1 Women's Aid Annual Survey 2018 - 134 survey respondents (two did not respond to this question).

2 Women's Aid Annual Survey 2018 – 134 survey respondents (nine did not respond to this question).

3 Women's Aid Annual Survey 2018 – responses from 78 refuge providers.

4 Estimates based on responses to the Women's Aid Annual Survey 2018.

5 Women's Aid Annual Survey 2018 - 134 survey respondents (26 did not respond to this question). Respondents were asked to tick the statements that applied to them. More than one statement could be ticked.