

CC(3) DA22

**Communities and Culture Committee  
Scrutiny Inquiry : Domestic Abuse  
Response from Delyn Women's Aid**

6<sup>th</sup> May 2008

**F.A.O. – National Assembly for Wales  
Committee Enquiry into Domestic Abuse  
Call for Evidence**

The primary objective of Delyn Women's Aid is to provide a service to women and their children who are – or have been – subjected to emotional, physical and or/sexual abuse in their home.

Delyn Women's Aid coordinates an office in Holywell with an open-door policy during normal office hours, further drop-in sessions can be arranged both in Flint and Mold. The refuge can accommodate up to 7 families which includes bed space for a maximum of 22 children. We operate a 24-hour emergency information/ refuge service. The Mental Health Outreach Project is accessible for women only – this is funded by the WCVA. A Child and Family Refuge Resettlement post with additional responsibility for Community Education is funded by BBC Children In Need. The Group also provides a free confidential counselling service for women. Clients also have the opportunity to participate on the Freedom Programme which is coordinated by the Group.

The appendices enclosed clearly identify the core funding discrepancy with regard to providing support to children and young people whilst residing in a domestic abuse refuge- 36% of women residing in our refuge during 2007/08 were aged 24 years and under of which 50% had children. Additionally the Welsh Assembly Government need to place far greater emphasis on the needs of women and children living in the community who are or have been affected by domestic abuse – during 2007/08 we supported 97 outreach families.

A more sustainable funding structure (ring-fenced) would categorically enable our organisation to more effectively address the needs of children affected by domestic abuse and implement a more intense programme for women whereby they can recognise and independently provide the basic emotional and practical requirements for their children to attain an adequate level of development; subsequently allowing them to prosper both within the family environment and society in general.

We anticipate huge funding obstacles with effect from March 2009. Obviously any income deficit will have a severe negative impact on our current levels of service.

I trust this information is of assistance, if you do require any further data please do not hesitate to contact me.

**Claire Lamberton  
Finance Administrator**

## Funding Structure

2008/2009

| Source                               | Welsh Assembly Government (SPRG) | Flintshire County Council | Wales Council for Voluntary Action | BBC Children In Need |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Area</b>                          |                                  |                           |                                    |                      |
| Refuge Support                       | 76                               | 29                        | 0                                  | 0                    |
| Percentage/<br>Area Total            | 72%                              | 28%                       | 0%                                 | 0%                   |
| Grant Expiry                         | Continual                        | 31/03/09                  | -                                  | -                    |
| Child & Family<br>Refuge<br>Support  | 31                               | 11                        | 0                                  | 35                   |
| Percentage/<br>Area Total            | 40%                              | 14%                       | 0%                                 | 46%                  |
| Grant Expiry                         | Continual                        | 31/03/09                  | -                                  | 31/03/09             |
| Outreach<br>Support                  | 0                                | 0                         | 28                                 | 0                    |
| Percentage/<br>Area Total            | 0%                               | 0%                        | 100%                               | 0                    |
| Grant Expiry                         | -                                | -                         | 31/03/09                           | -                    |
| Volunteer<br>Coordination            | 0                                | 0                         | 4                                  | 0                    |
| Percentage/<br>Area Total            | 0%                               | 0%                        | 100%                               | 0%                   |
| Grant Expiry                         | -                                | -                         | 31/04/09                           | -                    |
| Finance<br>Administration            | 35                               | 0                         | 0                                  | 0                    |
| Percentage/<br>Area Total            | 100%                             | 0%                        | 0%                                 | 0%                   |
| Grant Expiry                         | Continual                        | -                         | -                                  | -                    |
| <b>Total</b>                         | <b>142</b>                       | <b>40</b>                 | <b>32</b>                          | <b>35</b>            |
| <b>Percentage/<br/>Total Funding</b> | <b>57%</b>                       | <b>16%</b>                | <b>13%</b>                         | <b>14%</b>           |

## Comparative Data

| <b>Referrals</b> |                  | <b>2006/2007</b> | <b>2007/2008</b> | <b>% (+ / -)</b> |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Category         | Single Women     | 147              | 184              | + 25%            |
|                  | Women            | 222              | 450              | + 103%           |
|                  | Children         | 437              | 516              | + 18%            |
|                  | Absent Children  | 63               | 76               | + 20%            |
|                  | Pregnant         | 7                | 16               | + 128%           |
| Age              | 16 > 25 yrs      | 75               | 125              | + 66%            |
|                  | 26 > 35 yrs      | 39               | 91               | + 133%           |
|                  | 36 > 45 yrs      | 68               | 88               | + 29%            |
|                  | 46 > 55 yrs      | 15               | 33               | + 120%           |
|                  | 55 + yrs         | 11               | 13               | + 18%            |
|                  | Unknown          | 161              | 100              | - 38%            |
| Support          | Refuge           | 226              | 287              | + 27%            |
|                  | Outreach         | 85               | 115              | + 35%            |
|                  | Advice           | 58               | 48               | - 17%            |
| <b>Refuge</b>    |                  | <b>2006/2007</b> | <b>2007/2008</b> | <b>% (+ / -)</b> |
| Category         | Single Women     | 20               | 39               | + 95%            |
|                  | Women            | 47               | 49               | + 4%             |
|                  | Children         | 69               | 106              | + 54%            |
|                  | Absent Children  | 23               | 38               | + 65%            |
| Age              | < 24 yrs         | 25               | 32               | + 28%            |
|                  | 25 > 34 yrs      | 12               | 25               | + 108%           |
|                  | 35 > 44 yrs      | 24               | 20               | - 16%            |
|                  | 45 > 54 yrs      | 5                | 10               | + 100%           |
|                  | 55+ yrs          | 1                | 1                | 0%               |
| Medical          | Mental Health    | 12               | 27               | + 125%           |
|                  | Alcohol/Drug     | 11               | 24               | + 118%           |
| Interagency      | Probation/Police | 4                | 5                | + 25%            |
|                  | Social Services  | 9                | 26               | + 188%           |
|                  | C.D.A.T.         | 3                | 3                | 0%               |
|                  | C.M.H.T.         | 2                | 2                | 0%               |

Welsh Assembly Government

Refuge Child Support Ratio

The Welsh Assembly Government currently funds a total of 31 hours towards Child and Family Refuge Support – Delyn Women’s Aid refuge can accommodate up to 22 child places.

|                                  |      |     |     |
|----------------------------------|------|-----|-----|
| Refuge Capacity                  | 100% | 80% | 60% |
| Weekly Support (hours/per child) | 1.4  | 1.7 | 2.4 |

N.B. - 2007/2008 average refuge capacity 80%.

**Case Study**

Mother-DM (23 years), son-DM (4yrs) and daughter-TM (17 mths) entered refuge for a period of 10 months escaping her mother's abusive partner (DM's mother also has 2 young sons currently subject of Social Services Child Protection Register due to domestic abuse).

Son-DM on fixed term exclusion from primary school due to behaviour issues – aggression towards peers and teaching assistant – and transferred to a special education unit. Mother-DM in receipt of middle rate disability living allowance due to son's behavioural issues.

Although presentation of both herself and the children was good actual emotional/physical elements severely inferior. Whilst residing at our refuge it was clearly obvious that son's behaviour was a direct result of him witnessing domestic abuse and his mother's parenting skills. DM did not talk to her son, she either shouted or screamed often manhandling him, subsequently son shouted/screamed back and invariably used extremely bad language. During one incident - whereby mother did not realise that a worker was present – worker witnessed mother screaming threats to kill son, son reciprocated the abuse. DM is frequently told by his mother that he is a 'bad boy' and positive exchanges are rare.

Alone in the presence of staff DM was primarily able to control his behaviour however he used bad language when frustrated equally he would immediately apologise when challenged. Overall he was a pleasant character who embraced positive attention within a stimulated environment.

It was evidenced that daughter-TM spent majority of time either placed in her cot or pram, with minimal verbal communication from her mother.

**Summary**

This family has now resettled in a different County and currently do not receive support from any other agency albeit we have submitted our concerns to the relevant Children's Services department and duly anticipate that upon assessment the case will be categorised as 'Child at Risk' – alternatively if this case is only considered as a 'Child in Need' there is a significant possibility Social Services will be unable to allocate support due to the lack of resources.

Delyn Women's Aid is well equipped and qualified to support issues of domestic abuse within families including children's behavioural problems and in all instances we do actively encourage positive parenting however, at present we do not have the resources to address such severe parenting inabilities.

We are fully aware that the overall attitude of many mothers towards their children may be directly linked to the difficult circumstances they confronted in their own childhood.

This situation is a common occurrence within families both in refuge and the community - such aggression and emotional/stimulation deficiency is widespread.