

SUMMARY
REPORT

The Impact of the Domestic Abuse Champions' Network

2019

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1. Introduction

1.1 Domestic Abuse and the Champions' Network

Recent statistics from the Crime Survey for England and Wales estimate that as many as 2 million adults (approximately 6 in 100 adults) experienced domestic abuse¹ in the last year (2018, Office for National Statistics²). This number represents 1.3 million female victims and 695,000 male victims.

Whilst prevalence rates of abuse are at a high level, the number of people reporting abuse or seeking help is significantly lower. Results from the survey revealed that 83% of those experiencing partner abuse did not report the abuse to police. Alternative routes to seeking help are often pursued with a large proportion of victims having contact with as many as five agencies before they find appropriate help and advice to stop the abuse³.

The Domestic Abuse Champions' Network approach was piloted in Oxfordshire in 2005 and subsequently rolled out across the county. It was conceived as a means of empowering front-line staff from a range of services to work together to improve the accessibility and quality of support for victims and survivors of domestic abuse. It was prompted by the local need for:

- safe early intervention: increasing the confidence and competence of front-line generalist staff to identify and respond safely and effectively to victims of abuse in order to prevent abuse continuing and escalating
- services to work together: particularly in light of the findings of serious case reviews that a key factor for effective safeguarding is coordinated practice
- victims to be able to easily access all the resources they might need both for safety and recovery without continually retelling their story
- a means to respond to an articulated concern by some front-line practitioners that they wanted to provide better support to victims of abuse and their children but did not know how
- added value: building on and maximising the potential of existing resources. *(an imperative which has become more pressing since 'austerity' - given the prevalence of domestic abuse and the limited capacity of specialist services.)*

Domestic Abuse (DA) Champions continue in their own role within their agency or unit but also act as the unit's lead for domestic abuse issues and as the contact in and out of their service. They are able to work directly with victims and also advise their colleagues on the management of cases and ensure that victims are aware of and have access to local resources and support. DA Champions are also able to link with other Champions through a

¹ The cross-government definition of domestic abuse is: "Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. It can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse: psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional."

² Domestic abuse: findings from the Crime Survey for England and Wales: year ending March 2018: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/articles/domesticabusefindingsfromthecrimesurveyforenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2018>

³ SafeLives (2015), Getting it right first time: policy report. Bristol: SafeLives.

network which can assist in providing the supportive services that a victim and their dependents may need.

Together they form a circle of support around a family and coordinate or coproduce services to meet their needs. Champions work in a range of professions and services including healthcare, social care, teaching, counselling, housing, child and family, legal and court, police, fire and rescue services. A pilot project has also been run with student hairdressers in an Oxfordshire Further Education college.

Champions usually receive two days in depth multi-agency training which helps trainees to understand the nature of domestic abuse, suitable services and support, and links the individual to the wider network. Bespoke options are provided for areas which require a more individualised approach. A 'Train the Trainer' scheme has also been set up which allows local authorities to implement and roll out the model at a faster and larger scale.

After completing the training, Champions become members of the Local Champions' Network, have access to a secure database in order to contact other DA Champions across the Network and meet on a regular basis through Network meetings. Additional specialist training and updates on practice issues are provided on an ongoing basis, reinforcing the Champion role and supporting the Network in a virtual team. A regular e-bulletin is sent out to Champions updating practitioners with the latest news about domestic abuse including legislation, services and research. Specialist information guides, consultancy and advice are also available from the training and development team at Reducing the Risk.

There were 19 Champions in the 2005 Network pilot in Oxfordshire. There are now over 2000 active Champions with Networks across Buckinghamshire, West Berkshire, Milton Keynes, Slough, the London Borough of Havering and Torbay in addition to the five districts which make up Oxfordshire. Appendix One provides a detailed outline of the number of Champions and agencies involved in the Network.

1.2 Key aims of the research

The current research has been funded by a grants programme, called 'Transform', from the Lloyds Bank Charitable Foundation. The programme involved investment in charities that have the potential to shape and influence the domestic and sexual abuse sector and lead to greater long-term impact.

The main aims of the research are to explore:

- the impact of the Champions' Network upon victims and survivors, organisations and workplaces, and local authorities
- elements of success - what works and how
- ways to improve sustainability of the Champions' Network in the future.

The results from the evaluation will be used to disseminate information about the impact of the Champions' Network and to inform future service development and impact measurement. This report provides a summary of the main research findings.

2. Research Methods

Research methods used to explore the impact of the Champions' Network included:

- ten qualitative interviews with Champions to find out more about their experiences of the Champions' Network and their beliefs, perceptions and observations about impact
- three qualitative interviews with the training and development staff from Reducing the Risk, exploring their perceptions and observations about the difference the Champions' Network makes
- results from an annual survey (2018), administered by Reducing the Risk, to gain Champions' feedback. This gathered data from 381 Champions across the country
- four case studies about the impact Champions had observed in either an individual case, their workplace or across their local authority.
- findings from 356 evaluation forms completed by trainees at the end of their initial training courses to become a Champion.

3. Research Findings Part One - Impact

The findings from the evaluation are divided up in order to represent the journey and stages of impact the Champions' Network involves. Part one of the findings details the activities of Champions, the Network, and resulting impact.



3.1 The beginning of the road to impact: Champions' Training

During the interview participants were asked in detail about their experiences of Champions' training and the impact they felt it had made. Participants had experienced different formats of training; some with two consecutive days and others in a modular format with bespoke schedules. Regardless of the training format, three main themes emerged about the benefits of training.

1. awareness: improvements in noticing and understanding victims and survivors of domestic abuse
2. knowing what to do: improvements in confidence and skills
3. knowing where to go: greater awareness of 'where to go' or 'who to go to' for support or services.

Awareness: improvements in noticing and understanding victims and survivors of domestic abuse

Interviewees felt their awareness about DA issues had improved in the following ways:

- greater alertness to the signs of abuse and an improved ability to recognise behaviour in adults and children that might indicate they are victims of DA
- insight and recognition that there is a high incidence of DA and that staying alert to the possibility of its presence was important for all professionals
- clearer understanding of the behaviour of victims, including difficulties in leaving perpetrators, cycles of change in relationships and the impact of DA upon children and adults.

Knowing what to do: improvements in confidence and skills

Interviewees believed that their confidence and skills in what to do in order to be supportive, to increase safety and meet the needs of victims, had grown significantly - and this was true of other Champions and colleagues. Many mentioned empathy and skills for working in a respectful and supportive way. Useful practical skills were also developed through learning how to conduct risk assessments and safety planning, which could be used in future practice. Interviewees commented on a tendency to reflect more on past and present practice, because of their increased knowledge and skill-set.

In line with these comments from interviewees, results from 356 trainees' evaluation forms administered by staff from Reducing the Risk confirmed the increase in knowledge about and insight into domestic abuse at the end of the Champions' training process.

Greater awareness of 'where to go' or 'who to go to' for support or services

All interviewees mentioned how valuable it was to have an increased understanding of what local areas have on offer in terms of support and services for victims and survivors. This occurred both through multi-agency participation in the training and also because of the detailed coverage by the trainers of local referral routes and procedures.

As well as points regarding the impact and benefit of the training, comments were also made about the methods employed during training. Many Champions referred to the skills of the facilitators and their employment of a useful mix of theory and practice together with interactive methods.

3.2 Help walking the road to impact: views about resources for Champions

Interviewees were asked their views about the benefits of resources for Champions. A number of themes emerged about the type of support they received and the difference it made.

- **Keeping up to date with the latest news about domestic abuse, knowledge, legislation and available local services.**

Both the e-newsletter and the Reducing the Risk website were frequently cited as useful resources for keeping up to date. Furthermore, Network meetings and training modules were thought to provide a useful space for learning new information, along with a reminder of issues learnt during training.

- **Accessible, summarised, free resources and advice.**

Interviewees frequently mentioned that they liked the informative and summarised information that the newsletters and Champion Guides provided. As a result, they had more time to process the information because it was so accessible. It was also felt to be important that the resources were free of charge and that staff at Reducing the Risk could offer advice and support.

- **Enhancing multi-disciplinary working and keeping the Network and links active.**

Champions believed that the Network meetings were particularly valuable as they allowed them to meet other professionals. This was extremely helpful for future collaborations and multidisciplinary working to keep victims of DA safe. It also provided a route for accessing specialist advice and resources. Interviewees mentioned that they had found the database of Champions very useful for finding relevant people with knowledge or resources in a specialist area.

- **Sharing and learning best practice.**

Network meetings were thought of as a useful place to learn and share best practice.

- **Interesting topics and speakers at meetings, keeping Champions energised and motivating continued action.**

Many interviewees mentioned that they liked the topics and speakers at Network meetings. The forum provided them with information and support both to strengthen their role as Champions and enhance their support for victims. They saw meeting together as helpful for solving problems and energising Champions into action. Both the trainers from Reducing the Risk who were interviewed also emphasised how the resources and Network meetings continue to reinforce the knowledge, skills, and multidisciplinary links developed during the training process. It was felt that the resources acted as the next step in building practice and provided a strong link in the route to impact.

3.3 The route to impact: what do Champions do that makes a difference?

In their roles as Champions people are able to support and help victims and survivors of domestic abuse in many different ways. The latest Reducing the Risk survey, administered in 2018, revealed that a large proportion of Champions work directly with victims (66.10%) and so are able to directly support and have an impact. Furthermore, as many as 25% had indirect contact by supporting colleagues to help victims. To gain further detail, interviewees were asked about the type of contact they usually have with victims and survivors and why they felt it was important.

3.3.1 Direct Contact

A number of themes emerged about important ways of working directly with victims which Champions believed were integral to their role and helped to make a difference. These elements were valued as best practice.

- **Empathy, warmth and understanding**
Champions drew on the knowledge gained from the Champions' training about domestic abuse to achieve this. The importance of exploring issues with the victim and validating experiences was also frequently mentioned.
- **Facilitating insight into the abuse the victim has experienced**
Champions felt that an important part of their role involved facilitating insight into the different types of abuse a victim has experienced. Frequently mentioned was the fact that victims were not always aware of the nature of psychological abuse and coercive control and time was needed to explore such experiences.
- **Working in the right way to increase safety and discussing options to achieve this**
Many interviewees felt that an important part of being a Champion was having a good level of understanding and knowledge about how professionals could impact the risk and safety of victims of DA. They referred to cases prior to their training where they had observed professionals having a negative impact and cited instances of staff sending assessments to home addresses which were almost discovered by perpetrators or where support was discontinued once a conviction of a perpetrator occurred. Many interviewees had initially sought the Champions' training because of their contact with victims and a desire to help them in a safe way through support or referrals. Once trained as a Champion, interviewees also felt they had acquired additional skills and tools which informed their support, for example through the assessment of risk and initiating safety planning. They felt their ability to rationally talk through available options for the victim, including actions and potential outcomes, reinforced this, facilitating insight into risk and adequate safety planning.
- **Empowering the voices of victims, young people and children**
Interviewees wanted to empower victims, young people and children and to counter the undermining impact of abuse on them. Thinking about the needs of everyone involved, hearing their perspective, affirming them and supporting them to express their views and wishes was thought to be important.

- **Supporting over time and building trust**

Champions felt that it was important to support victims over a period of time in order to build up trust and help with the complex needs they may have. Supporting a victim or survivor at different stages was thought to help with outcomes.

3.3.2 Indirect Support

During interviews Champions detailed many ways in which they worked indirectly to help victims and survivors.

- **Giving advice and support to colleagues**

Many Champions mentioned that they often give advice - both individually to colleagues about cases and more generally through providing information in team meetings. Managers also encouraged staff to attend Champions' training and supported their work with victims of domestic abuse.

- **Cascading knowledge or information**

Champions also regularly cascaded information from Network meetings, training or newsletters throughout teams and organisation.

- **Increasing awareness about domestic abuse and the Champions' Network, always on the agenda**

Key priorities for Champions included promoting information about the Champions' Network and spreading general awareness about domestic abuse at every opportunity. They did this through keeping the issue of domestic abuse and the Network on the agenda in meetings, by putting up posters and distributing leaflets, and using the Champions badge as a conversation starter.

- **Using the Champions' Network to gain multi-agency advice, make referrals and meet the support needs of clients**

Champions felt one of the most valuable aspects of being a Champion was being able to access other Champions. There was a shared feeling that, with the help of other organisations, the diverse support needs of victims could be more adequately and safely met. Champions regularly contacted other Champions for advice, making referrals or gaining support.

3.4 The impact of the Champions' Network: the destination

Interviewees were asked in detail about the difference they felt they had made in terms of outcomes for victims and survivors of DA, and any changes they had seen occur in their own organisations or local authorities as a result of the Champions' Network. Supporting data from case studies and the 2018 Champions' Survey were also collated.

3.4.1 Impact on the Individual – victims and survivors

Results from the 2018 survey revealed that as many as 185 (59.68%) Champions have supported one or more victim/s in the past year with case management, and 178 (57.79%) have supported at least one victim without case management. The numbers of victims supported varies by individual Champions, but many Champions (10%) have supported more than ten victims in the past year. Furthermore 216 (66.26%) had helped one or more colleagues to offer support. The majority of Champions (271 - 87%) answering the survey also felt they have made a difference to victims of domestic abuse.

When interviewees were asked about the type of difference or change they had helped with for victims or survivors, two main themes emerged.

- 1. Improvements in the safety of victims; adults and children**
- 2. Faster referrals with more effective support and signposting**

Improvements in the safety of victims; adults and children

A number of Champions talked in their interviews about how they had helped to improve the safety of victims where, without intervention, risk may have increased. At times this involved detailed risk assessment, safety planning or helping victims to increase their safety at different stages in relationships.

Survey results also confirmed that many Champions were involved in the completion of formal risk assessments such as DASH⁴ or safety planning procedures. As many as 36.63% of Champions were using DASH and 42.48% were carrying out safety planning either regularly or occasionally. Furthermore, 35.26% had advised a colleague to use safety planning and 32.85% had advised a colleague to use DASH.

The detection of domestic abuse by Champions, followed by facilitation of the victim's insights about the abuse and the discussion of options for improving safety, were all thought to be important steps to effective risk assessment and safety planning. Champions mentioned that since their training they had also spotted signs of domestic abuse in their own personal lives, with some citing examples of identification and the provision of support for friends or neighbours.

Along with increased detection of abuse, in both the survey and interviews, Champions also frequently mentioned that their support often lead to safety plans that enabled victims to safely exit and ultimately leave their abusive relationships. In doing so it was also felt to be important to offer support for children, to improve their safety and to lessen the impact of DA with earlier intervention. This is confirmed by findings from the survey, where as many as 186/334 (55.69%) respondents felt their Champions' training had helped them with safeguarding children. This is a high number, in context of the data, where 140 (41.92%)

⁴ DASH = The Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour Based Violence (DASH 2009) Risk Identification, Assessment and Management Model. For details see: <https://www.dashriskchecklist.co.uk>

answered that a safeguarding role was not applicable, due to the nature of their job or profession.

Faster referrals with more effective support and signposting

A strong and consistent theme from interviews about impact involved descriptions of how the Network helped Champions to find the right types of support for victims, with delivery of help in a faster and more co-ordinated way. It was felt that there was an increased understanding of the different types of services and help available and knowledge of how to access relevant help. This was thought to result in earlier intervention with better support for victims. The regular occurrence of Network meetings and contact between Champions often served to provide more efficient options for seeking help and future referrals.

Another theme that emerged from interviews involved the way in which Champions helped to support victims to access the diverse services they often need. This ranged from providing support and encouragement to overcome practical, emotional or cultural barriers to accessing resources utilising their professional knowledge to identify abuse and discern the most suitable option to meet an individual's specific circumstances. Champions believed that the outcome was a more efficient and faster response for the victim.

Results from the 2018 survey also provide useful detail about the way in which Champions help to make referrals or signpost victims to suitable services or support. When asked about the past year and the signposting they or a colleague had carried out, answers involved a large number of agencies and referrals. Helplines, statutory and voluntary sector services were all listed. It was also noticeable, from the data, that a large number of referrals were related to offering support to children and families as a unit, reflecting the way in which Champions consider the wider impact of domestic abuse.

3.4.2 Impact at a wider level – organisations, workplaces and local authorities

Interviewees were also questioned about any changes they had seen occur in their own organisations, workplaces or local authorities as a result of the Champions' Network. Changes noted by Champions fitted into five main categories.

- **Human resources and policy in organisations**

Many Champions noticed that consequential changes occurred in their own organisation when they or colleagues attended the Champions' training. Some discovered that their own organisation did not have a domestic abuse policy or that it needed some revision and so took steps to help put in place suitable policies and procedures. One HR Champion introduced a domestic abuse policy, where there had not previously been one in place, to an organisation of 13,000 staff. Monitoring the number of staff trained as Champions within an organisation was also part of operational processes. Staff from human resources departments found these processes helpful and many were reported to have trained as Champions and subsequently helped victims of domestic abuse.

- **Changes in attitudes, culture, awareness or practice in organisations**
 Interviewees referred to a number of positive changes in colleagues' attitudes and awareness about domestic abuse, because of the work and role of Champions. This was thought to help to increase capacity to identify abuse and effective practice at work. Many interviewees mentioned that they routinely kept domestic abuse 'on the agenda' in their everyday work with clients or in meetings. It was felt that this helped to promote the Champions' Network and increase the number of victims they and their organisation were able to effectively reach and help.
- **Using knowledge and resources to enhance practice and support interventions**
 The knowledge and skills gained from training also helped to inform the development of services or interventions, with Champions either setting up specialist services or holding sessions about domestic abuse. Many also used the Champions' resources from Reducing the Risk to enhance their practice individually or with groupwork.
- **Increased safety, confidence and wellbeing of employees**
 Interviewees felt there was a general increase in their morale and wellbeing as employees as they felt better equipped and prepared with the knowledge and skills that they had learnt from training to be a Champion. Consequently, they had been able to help and support colleagues more effectively to work with clients and the effect had rippled out. Some also mentioned that they had supported colleagues who have been victims of domestic abuse, as the promotion of the Champions' Network led to an increased number of 'internal' disclosures. The increase in confidence amongst employees was thought to increase the safety of victims and their ability to cope.
- **Improvements in local authority strategy, delivery plans and partnership working**
 The intrinsic way in which the Champions' Network improves partnership and multi-agency working, was also frequently referred to. This involved sharing strategies and the development of resources across agencies, which Champions believed improved efficiency and met the needs of victims more effectively. The training and Network meetings provided a forum where localised resources could be shared with other professionals and used more efficiently and effectively. This also helped to achieve targets and key performance indicators. Especially given the cut-backs in services occurring in local areas, this was thought to be an important way of managing in times of austerity.

4. Research Findings Part Two - taking the best route to impact, what works in the model and directions for the future

Interviewees made many suggestions and comments about what works well in the Champions' Network model and how things can be improved in the future in terms of impact and sustainability.

4.1 What works in the Champions' Network model and why?

Champions are committed to the Network because it is a much needed approach

Most interviewees became Champions because they had either frequently come across domestic abuse victims at work, were survivors themselves, or had known a family member or friend who had experienced domestic abuse. The incidence of domestic abuse in their daily professional lives was a common theme. Some of the interviewees mentioned that in their working lives, prior to becoming Champions, they had witnessed professionals carrying out actions that they felt potentially increased risk for victims. There was also an observation that victims' journeys had usually involved a large amount of contact with different professionals. It was felt that this could leave victims feeling helpless, alone and potentially increased the likelihood of them deciding to stay with/return to a perpetrator – to manage the risk themselves or because there seemed no other option.

In addition, some said that they felt that the existing system of services, without Champions, did not support the complex needs of victims. This combination of professional insight about the high incidence of domestic abuse, and/or lived experience, and/or the need for a system that created a more direct and supportive journey for victims, were key drivers for people wanting to become Champions.

It is a necessity in times of austerity

Due to cuts in services and resources in the public sector, it was felt that the Champions' Network and similar models become a necessity in order to meet the needs of vulnerable people. Creating an accessible network of existing support and services that are self-functioning, without the creation of extra roles, was thought of as a solution to resource shortages.

Multi-agency work – working together to co-produce support

Multi-agency working and access to other professionals was viewed by interviewees as one of the great benefits of being a Champion. Due to the complexity of victims and survivors needs it was felt that this was necessary in order to provide the right support, in the right place and at the right time. With the availability of the Champions' Network, many interviewees felt they had 'on tap' advice from experts in the field and knew who to contact for any needs the victim may have. Similarly, it was felt that they were able to learn from other experts and share best practice. There was also a perception that multi-agency working lead to a more efficient and faster route to helping victims gain the support they needed, and that this acted as earlier intervention or prevention of risk.

Authenticity

The Champions' Network was thought to be particularly effective because of the authentic input from Champions - and equally it empowered Champions by recognising and valuing the contribution of their individual professional and personal skills, insights and experience. Champions were helping people in the context of their own jobs, building on their existing expertise and then training others in the same field and this was seen as a huge strength. Many Champions were also survivors of domestic abuse themselves, with associated insight and understanding that would help victims of abuse. Champions had a range of socio-cultural backgrounds which was a strength for understanding important issues.

Champions have a common language and understanding

Many interviewees felt they had increased confidence in other Champions because of shared knowledge, learning and language. When talking to another Champion they felt confident they would effectively help victims and families due to their shared approach.

The value of support in a dynamic model

Whilst the multi-agency training itself was viewed as impactful, it was seen as more effective through the ongoing support, advice, updating and sharing provided by the Network and Reducing the Risk. The model was also seen as effective because of its dynamic, supportive and evolving nature.

The model applies to everyone – diversity

Staff from Reducing the Risk and Champions emphasized how the model and resources could be applied and used with anyone in society. This was due to:

- safe healthy relationships as an underpinning value: the model recognises that DA is a gender issue but holds this within a wider ethos of the importance of tackling abuse in all its forms
- a recognition that abuse could occur to anyone in certain situations
- the ability to adapt the resources and model for different professions
- the capacity of the Network to include practitioners and community members from a range of minority groups who could share their expertise and understanding with other Champions and so help the Network to effectively meet a diversity of need.

Working mutually together to provide content and share best practice

Another strength of the model was thought to be the nature in which Network resources and the content of the Champions' training were developed with mutual input between staff from Reducing the Risk and Champions. Staff mentioned that they responded to emails and comments from Champions in order to provide content for Network meetings, updates on best practice, the newsletters/website and changes in the training process.

Snowballing and simplicity

The simplicity of the Champions' Network was often cited as a key reason for its success. As the role can be fulfilled whilst carrying out one's normal job, it was thought to fit well with all professions and did not require a major role change. There was also a perception that once the Network was set up in an area, with investment of time at the beginning and a group of interested people, the model would carry itself and continue to grow. It still required some input further down the line, but at a lower level or intensity.

4.2 How can the model and sustainability be improved in the future?

Training, Network meetings and resources

Suggestions for improvements in training, Network meetings and resources were made by some interviewees. However, whilst doing so, it was acknowledged that resources and available funds would determine what would be possible in the future. Ideas included:

- more localised (geographically closer to different groups of Champions) Super-Network meeting or a higher frequency of Network meetings
- diversifying the available times for Champions' training with the possibility of day and evening sessions for workers.
- more regular newsletters
- reminders and prompts when Reducing the Risk have updated news stories or information
- allocating responsibility to an individual within an organisation to keep up-to-date with newsletters or information from Reducing the Risk and to regularly disseminate it to the other Champions
- webinars, where people could listen to talks online and send in questions or communicate with other watchers. An app for phones so Champions could keep up-to-date with the latest information or refresh their knowledge in different areas
- A 'graduate programme', whereby survivors of domestic abuse could go on to become advocates of the Champion process
- A larger number of existing Champions attending the training course to share details with others about what they've achieved as a Champion.

Diversity

There was a recognition that the Champions' training and the Network encouraged diversity and importantly upheld the ethos that help should be available to everyone. However, there was an observation that there were fewer services in the community for men as victims and where DA existed in LGBT relationships. Suggestions for further improvements in diversity training included:

- continuing with regular updates at Network meetings about specific services that are set up in the future and details about the needs of different groups
- further detailed information about transgender relationships or the nature of abuse in different types of relationships.

Maintaining the number and roles of Champions

Different options for sustaining the current Network and numbers of Champions were suggested by interviewees to prevent a decrease should people leave their jobs. This was thought to be of importance due to cuts in public and community services and high rates of redundancy and changes in the public sector. References were made to the usefulness of

the existing system whereby Champions could remain as Champions in their new jobs by updating the Reducing the Risk team with their new contact details. Other suggestions included:

- organisations making a commitment to ensure the number of Champions within their organisation remains constant, perhaps having Champions training as part of a new employee's induction process with a rolling programme of training and refresher training sessions
- introducing the 'train the trainer' process to a local area was thought as an ideal solution to ensure enough people could be trained and a network be sustained locally.

Wider access – more Champions and further promotion

There was a consensus amongst interviewees that the Champions' Network should exist across every local authority and area in the country. Many felt the model would be beneficial for a range of professions, jobs and in different contexts. Suggestions included:

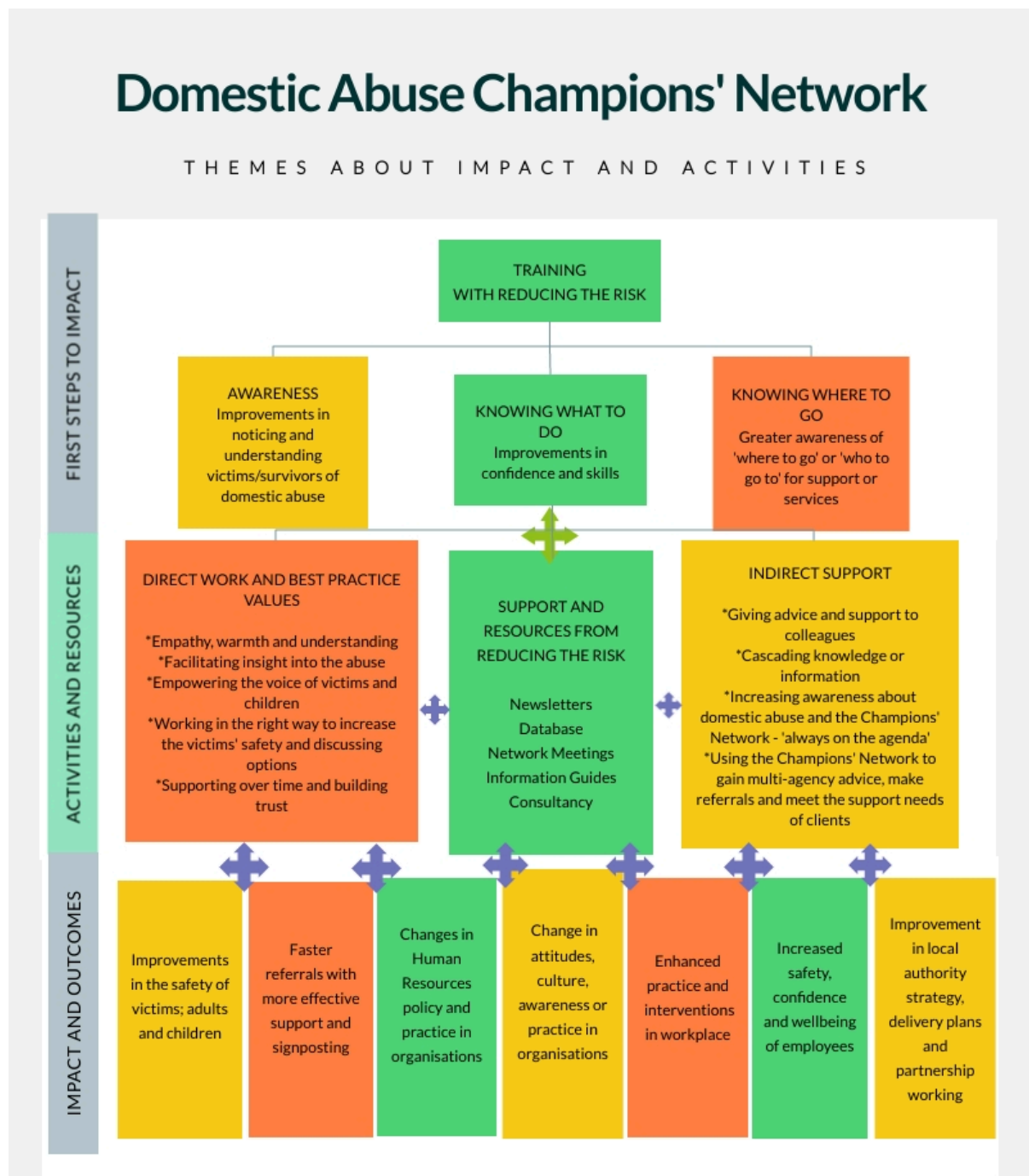
- continuing to introduce the Network to different professions across the public sector, state, voluntary and community services. These included: health (doctors, nurses, pharmacists), education (both state and private schools), housing, religious leaders, military and mental health organisations
- widening the Network to have Champions where people could access help in every day environments, such as supermarkets, hairdressers, beauticians, the gym and sports centres. Two interviewees proposed the introduction of a network of 'Mini Champions' based in these environments, who could act as an accessible initial contact for victims. They could then refer people to professionally trained Champions who have more specialist skills to support the needs of victims and connect them with relevant services
- Human Resources departments and corporate workplaces
- increasing awareness about the Champions' Network in different environments or professions. Options included putting contact details of Champions on notice boards in suitable venues, wider promotion campaigns involving radio or media, or running information sessions.

Efficiency in local areas - strong figureheads, management support and resources tailored to local areas

The efficiency and impact of Champions' Networks in local areas was thought to depend on the nature of implementation, and the availability of strong figureheads and management support. Success was also often achieved in areas where resources and training are tailored to meet local needs. In one area there was a newsletter tailored specifically to the local area and to the needs of 130 Champions. The 'train the trainer' scheme also provided an opportunity to meet local training demand and any bespoke needs, whilst simultaneously enhancing the sustainability of the Network. Another suggestion included joined up working across neighbouring areas (working across county boundaries) where services were often shared.

5. Summary

This research project has started to explore in detail the impact of the Champions' Network. Themes have emerged from the qualitative research about impact from the initial training process, through to outcomes after direct and indirect work with victims and survivors. The diagram below summarises these findings. Quantitative data from the annual Reducing the Risk Survey also provides supportive evidence of these impacts.



A key finding from this research has been that the impact achieved by the Champions' Network isn't a simple input of activities with associated outcomes, but rather success seems to occur via many different routes which are reinforced by resources and support provided by Reducing the Risk and local areas. Impact was thought to occur both directly at the individual level making changes for victims, and also at an organisational and wider local authority level, leading to widespread changes over time.

The findings also suggest that achieving impact for victims and survivors works well when a number of agencies co-produce support and work together to meet the complex needs of both adults and children. This is especially so in the current economic climate where there is less available money for specialist posts.

Furthermore, the efficiency and impact of the Champions' Network in local areas seems to depend on the nature of implementation, and the availability of strong figureheads and management support. Impact and development within an area appears to evolve and takes time to work at an optimum level. These findings have the important implication that the impact of Champions' Networks can be further developed and extended with the right infrastructure and support.

Ideally, the next steps for research and evaluation would be to collect data about impact over a longer period of time and with a larger sample. This could involve the collection of quantitative baseline data as the Network is introduced into an area, or before people enter their journeys to become Champions. Research measures could then be repeated at a later follow-up date once people have been Champions for some time (e.g. one to five years later). Similarly, qualitative and quantitative data, from victims and survivors would provide vital information about impact.

The evidence of the impact of the Champions' Network approach provides compelling rationale for Reducing the Risk to:

- work with their current partners to further develop, enhance and extend the existing Networks, drawing on the model's flexibility to respond to needs in each area
- engage with new partners to extend the approach to other areas of the country
- incorporate measures for longer-term evaluation into the approach
- facilitate the exchange of good practice and learning amongst the Networks.

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Reducing the Risk of Domestic Abuse is an Oxfordshire based charity established to:

- increase the safety and wellbeing of adults and children at risk through domestic abuse
- foster healthy relationships and protect people who are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation
- promote good practice and strengthen multi-agency partnership to tackle domestic abuse safely and effectively.

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6. Appendix: Number of Champions & agencies involved in Networks

Across all Networks (data and summary produced by staff at Reducing the Risk)

Agency Classification	No
Adult social care	106
Children, Education and Families	839
Domestic and Sexual Abuse Services	156
Drugs and Alcohol services	51
Employability and Training in the Community	1
Faith groups	22
Fire & rescue	7
HM forces	12
Government & Politics	47
Health	304
Housing & homeless	195
Human resources	6
Information & Advocacy	26
Legal & court services	13
Leisure & Tourism	2
Mental Health	93
Other	91
Police	203
Probation	30
Talking Therapies	35
Universities & colleges	31
Voluntary/Community Work	69
Youth Offending service	11
Blanks	17
Total as at August 2019	2367

Introduction

When Domestic Abuse Champions apply to join their local Network they classify themselves into one of the agency categories above. This appendix details these further to highlight the range of organisations and expertise linked together through the Domestic Abuse Networks.

Adult Social Care – 106 Champions

This category includes Champions from a range of local authority adult social care services, NHS services for adults, housing trusts supporting adults such as Sills Supported Living, drug and alcohol services, other charities such as Family Mosaic, Shekinah, Connection Support, Pandora Inc CIC, and university pastoral workers.

Children, Education & Families – 839 Champions

This group includes:

- Charities such as Barnardo's RU safe practitioners, SSAFA forces support, PACT, Spurgeons, Young Carers services, Donnington Doorstep, Action for Children, Father Hudson's Society, Oxford Against Cutting, Home-Start and youth trusts.
- Schools also feature in abundance from early years to tertiary colleges and universities. Some special school staff are Champions including an educational psychologist. Many mainstream schools have either teachers, Teaching Assistants, safeguarding leads, SENCOs or SENDCOs in the Champion Network.
- Local Children & Family Centres and community-based groups such as play-bus schemes have staff who are Champions.
- Several Department of Work and Pension staff have selected this grouping as they work as Troubled Family Coaches.
- Local social service departments such as Family Solutions, Residential 7 Edge of Care, Early Years and Childcare Advisory Service, Family Wellbeing Hubs and MASH staff feature.
- Individual professionals such as counsellors, psychotherapists
- Midwives, school nurses and health visitors together with staff in hospitals including doctors in A&E.

Domestic & Sexual Abuse services – 156 Champions.

This includes Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA), Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVA), and outreach, helpline and refuge staff from organisations such as MKAct, Women's Aid, ODAS and WBDAS. It also includes community-based groups such as rape crisis services, SARCC staff, specially trained police officers, Led by Dreams, Banbury Sunrise Project, counselling and pastoral support staff, Victims First, Peninsular Women's Alliance, Safe!, One Recovery, Smart CJS, and child sexual exploitation teams.

Drug & Alcohol Services – 51 Champions

This category includes services and organisations providing services for this group such as Elmore, Turning Point, some NHS staff, Swanswell, Crisis, Aspire and Oasis Partnership.

Faith Groups – 22 Champions

This category is for Champions who hold a recognised DA Champion role within their church/mosque or faith setting. Most are from Christian denominations such as Catholic &

Anglican Diocesan Safeguarding leads, Mothers' Union, parish members, Vicars, Curates, a Methodist Circuit trainer and street pastors, and one Champion is based in a mosque.

Fire & Rescue Services – 7 Champions

People are often surprised by the inclusion of this service, but it is particularly useful. Very often fire service personnel are invited into homes (to perform safety inspections) where other services are not.

HM Armed Forces – 12 Champions

This group includes Champions from SSAFA support services, Unit Welfare, Army Welfare and RAF Welfare.

Government & Local Authorities – 47 Champions

This broad group includes such roles as Town Clerks and service commissioners. It also includes Anti-Social Behaviour Officers and DWP Work Coaches as well as local councillors, community safety staff and staff working for local MPs.

Health – 304 Champions

This group spans a broad spectrum of practitioners including named nurses, midwives, discharge coordinators, GP staff, health visitors, doctors, and health advisors. It mainly includes NHS staff in both hospital and community trusts and Ambulance Trust staff. There are also Clinical Commissioning Group staff, private nursing agencies, pharmacy staff, nursing students at university and yoga teachers.

Charities self-classified in this group include Terence Higgins Trust, Age UK and Care UK, Action to Prevent Suicide, Helen & Douglas House.

Housing & Homeless – 195 Champions

This group encompasses housing suppliers and social housing providers. Most Champions are based in local council housing departments. Some housing providers such as A2 Dominion also provide domestic abuse services. Many such as Stonham, Green Square and Two Saints provide supported housing. Champions are also based with floating housing support services such as Connection Support, OxHOP, Shekinah, and advice centres such as Leonard Stocks, and The Guinness Partnership.

Human Resources – 6 Champions

It is essential that employers understand how to support and provide care for staff at risk or affected by DA and provide a safe space in the work place. This category includes HR Advisers, Business Partners, one Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Officer and an RAF Personnel Officer.

Information & Advocacy services – 26 Champions

Champions from advisory centres and advisory roles within larger services: e.g. "what's Your Problem?" in Torbay and student advisors at Oxford University Students Union – and Champions from the Catholic Arch Diocese of Birmingham, the Shaw Trust, Mediation MK, Citizens Advice Bureaus, and (Slough) Building Futures Together.

Legal & Court Services – 13 Champions

This category includes:

solicitors specialising in civil and family law.

a council based lawyer who also works as a counsellor.

Flag DV, a West Berks based charity providing legal advice to victims of DA.

Mental Health – 93 Champions

A variety of professionals ranging from CAMHS and MH community and recovery team workers, to hospital and police custody-based staff and encompassing Elmore Complex Needs Service and Oxfordshire Mind. Champions also include psychotherapists, , a PhD researcher, a Relate Centre Director and a children's counsellor with Barnardos CAMHS.

Other – 91 Champions

This classification includes caseworker staff at MPs offices, Telefonica, a John Lewis Selling Coach, a councillor and a hairdressing salon owner

Charities listed include Family Mosaic, The Salvation Army, Katherine House Hospice, The Dogs Trust, Royal British Legion, Make Amends.

Police – 203 Champions

Specialist Domestic Abuse Investigation staff including detective ranks, and response & neighbourhood officers (who form the majority of Police Champions). Most are from Thames Valley with a few from military police, British Transport Police and the Metropolitan force in our Havering Network. Ranks vary from PCs to PCSOs, Designated Investigators, and from front desk staff to Sergeants, Inspectors and two Superintendents.

Probation – 30 Champions

Primarily Probation and Senior Probation Officers both in the National Probation Service and the CRCs (Community Rehabilitation Companies). A few Champions are based in prisons but most hold community-based roles.

Talking Therapies – 35 Champions

Champions in this category are principally counsellors and psychotherapists from a variety of agencies and private practice. These include Talking Space, Havering Women's Aid, amputee rehabilitation in an Oxford hospital, a University based clinical psychologist, Relate, Cruse Bereavement Care, OSARCC and other rape crisis centres.

Universities and Colleges - 31 Champions

This group includes a number of Colleges of Further and Higher Education: principally students or student advisors but also a University HR Officer.

Voluntary & Community Work - 69 Champions

Champions are based in Voluntary Sector organisations such as Age UK, Victim Support, Citizens Advice, Home-Start, Refugee Support, Heart for Truth, Aspire, Building Futures Together, Safe!, Ladies Lounge, Flag DV, Aylesbury Vinyard and a Care Act Advocate.

Youth Offending Services – 11 Champions

Principally Youth Offending Teams with one Champion based in Spark 2 Life (Havering).