



Questions and Answers

Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programme (DVPP)

Q: Is there a DVPP referral process and guidance and a list of approved providers?

A: Yes. Cafcass Service Managers and Providers should ensure that teams are familiar with the DVPP referral process guidance and that it is followed. The guidance and a list of approved providers are available as the Commissioning and Partnerships Directory on the intranet and internet at:

http://cafcassintranet/Intranet/departments/partnerships_circular/dvpp.aspx

http://www.cafcass.gov.uk/commissioning_and_partnership/dvpp.aspx

Q: There are two DVPP Providers in my area, what are the criteria for selecting one?

A: Service users can choose a provider and venue on the basis of convenience.

Where there are more than one provider covering an area the providers must work together with local Cafcass service managers to agree, venues, days and times of delivery so that service users individual needs regarding access to services are met. When local arrangements have been agreed providers should inform the C&P team who will update the Directory.

Q: There is no DVPP provider in my area yet. What should happen to cases that are potentially suitable?

A: There are a small number of areas where we have not yet been able to secure DVPP coverage. There may be a provider in the adjacent area that can deliver, and we can fund travel costs for participants (see below). The Commissioning and Partnership team are working with new providers to gain accreditation – but because of the complexity of the service this takes time to achieve.

Q: There are other providers of Domestic Violence services that are not listed by Cafcass. Can these be used?

A: You cannot use a non-approved provider for a Contact Activity funded case. The providers that we list meet Respect or Probation Standards, and have been through a grant application process. You can only use providers that are listed on the Cafcass website.

Q: Is DVPP suitable for Non English speaking participants?

A: DVPP group work is only available for participants who have sufficient understanding of English to participate fully in a group programme.

The DVPP suitability assessment may include an assessment of whether the perpetrator has sufficient understanding of English to participate fully in a group programme. An interpreter may be required for this assessment in which instance providers should use

The Big Word interpreter service. Information about booking the service and how to make a claim is available on the Cafcass web pages:

http://www.cafcass.gov.uk/about_cafcass/commissioning_and_partnership/face_to_face_interpreter_services.aspx

Q: Can DVPP be delivered as a One-to-One Programme?

A: Experience shows that group work is usually the most cost effective and appropriate setting for work with most domestic violence perpetrators. However, there are circumstances when group work is not possible or desirable. Individual work is a developing option but is not widely available – the Cafcass website listing will show services accredited to offer 1-1 work.

Q: Can participants claim travel costs?

A: No willing participant should be prevented from attending a DVPP through the exceptional cost of travel or distance involved in attending the programme. A provider can present a business case to claim public transport rate travel costs for participants of any DVPP. Cafcass will not pay travel costs directly to the participant.

The business case need only be a short summary indicating:

- Suitability assessment demonstrating that the participant is suitable to attend the DVPP and motivated to attend.
- Service user is on benefits or will suffer hardship caused by paying for travel – the provider will need some level of proof of this.
- Details of exceptional distance travelled – especially for ‘out of area’ cases.
- The type of travel and cost per session, including the number of sessions expected to extend.

Q: Are there any programmes for women perpetrators, or people in same sex relationships?

A: We do not yet have any accredited programmes that would meet the needs in these cases. Provision is developing but is not yet able to offer suitable programmes as a Contact Activity.

Q: How does the use of expert reports fit in with Contact Activity DVPP?

A: It is a matter for Family Court Advisor’s professional judgement in consultation with the court. Expert reports might assist in clarifying mental health issues that could affect responsiveness to a DVPP. Expert reports can sometimes identify treatment pathways and motivation in higher risk cases, but these are not likely to be suitable for DVPP within a reasonable timescale.

Q: If a service user shows insufficient motivation for DVPP what routes are open?

A: Some level of motivation is key to successful DVPP. Insufficient motivation – cases assessed as unsuitable for DVPP, where there is evidence that DV is an issue in need of work, can lead to consideration of there being no contact.

Q: If a service user is unsuitable to attend at one provider can I refer him to another provider?

A: If a service user is assessed unsuitable for a programme because of a fundamental issue such as lack of motivation, seriousness of the violence, risk to staff – then it would be inappropriate to refer him to another provider for a repeat assessment. All DVPP programmes work to the same basic standards. Providers will not be funded for a repeat assessment in these circumstances, as the fee has already been claimed.

A service user can be reassessed by the same or another provider after a gap of three months in the event that motivation has changed, or other change in circumstances.

If the unsuitability relates to a language issue, conflicts of interest or knowledge of other group members, then referral to another provider might be appropriate.

Q: Are DVPP cases suitable for Separated Parenting Information Programme (SPIP)?

A: No. Cases with unresolved DV issues are not suitable for a SPIP. In a few cases SPIP may become appropriate following successful completion of a DVPP and where there are no unresolved DV issues and safe and beneficial contact is assessed as being a realistic outcome.

Q: How can I best use commissioned child contact in parallel with DVPP?

A: Commissioned child contact services can offer safe contact arrangements before, during and after a DVPP, and/or as a staged contact development, such as moving from indirect to supervised contact to independent contact, following successful attendance (either at midway or on completion of the programme). In both cases contact is a limited resource and should be commissioned with care. Child and adult safety are the paramount considerations, but attention should also be given to obtaining best value.

Q: Can service users attend supported contact centres alongside DVPP?

A: No. If the case has sufficient safety issues for a DVPP to be considered, it will not be suitable for a supported contact centre. Commissioned Child Contact (supervised contact) is the only safe contact route for these cases (see above).

Q: Will DVPP be funded if the Contact Activity order is made by a Court in Wales?

A: Yes, so long as the programme participant lives in England.

Q: What do providers do if they are not getting referrals or if referrals are inappropriate?

A: Providers and Cafcass teams have told us what is working and good practice for receiving appropriate referrals and their feedback is listed below:

- Develop good local relationships and communications with stakeholders.
- Cafcass Head of Service / Service Managers and providers in Cafcass Head of Service area establish regular meetings to discuss DV briefings, marketing needs, referrals process, case management and any snags or issues (minimum quarterly).
- Appoint a single point of contact for Cafcass and Providers. Designated FCA's hold all the DVPP cases in a Cafcass team and receive all Provider reports. These FCA's are Cafcass 'experts' acting as link workers and hold regular meetings with providers.
- Monitor providers are consistently taking referrals.
- Provider to attend local FJC meetings.

- Cafcass to attend Specialist DV Court Steering Group (where available).

Q: Can a DVPP be funded in a private law case where the Local Authority are responsible for the Section 7 Report and the case is closed to CAFCASS?

A: Funding is available for all Contact Activity ordered DVPP in Private Law cases. When the Local Authority is responsible for the case and the section 7 report the Cafcass 'DVPP Referral Process Guidance' still applies, however the Local Authority are responsible for completing the referral, the case management and receiving reports from the provider. Providers should forward the Local Authority information pack, which includes the DVPP guidance, service user leaflet, introduction letter and referral form. The Cafcass reporting templates should be used and reports forwarded to the LA on assessment, midway and on completion. Cases must be included in the provider's monthly monitoring and claims returns.

Q; Can providers claim a payment for non attendance of suitability assessments or sessions?

A: No, not at this time, however we want to review this but don't have enough information. Providers will be asked to include information on their monthly monitoring returns regarding non attendance. The information will be collated and reviewed in due course.

Q: Does the suitability assessment have to include a face to face meeting with the perpetrator or can referrals be screened as unsuitable though examination of the paperwork only?

A: In all cases where a Contact Activity DVPP is ordered a Contact Activity Suitability Assessment must be undertaken prior to commencing the full programme. Payment for a suitability assessment can only be claimed following a face to face meeting with the perpetrator, assessment of risk and treatment viability and by providing a written report using the Cafcass report templates.

.