

# Applied Research Collaboration National Priority Area Prevention



## The RIVA Study

Evaluating models of health-based Independent  
Domestic Violence Advisor provision within  
maternity services



# Study Team



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# Background



- Around 1 in 5 pregnant women experience domestic violence and abuse (DVA).
- Increases risk of physical (pre-term birth, LBW) and mental health problems.
- Children exposed to DVA have poorer physical/mental health, lower academic achievements.
- Pregnancy is a time when women have repeated contact with health services.
- Maternity services routinely enquire about women's experience of DVA.

# Independent Domestic Violence Advisors

- IDVAs – Independent Domestic Violence Advisors
- Trained professionals who work to address the safety of people at high risk of experiencing harm from intimate partners, ex-partners or family members.
- They provide both emotional and practical support (e.g. general advocacy support, safety planning, supporting court processes, helping with accommodation/financial support)
- They support people for an average of 2-3 months



# Why the RIVA Study?

There is evidence of effectiveness of IDVA models across health services but...

Little is known about how IDVA models are implemented in maternity settings, and what the barriers and facilitators are to successful implementation.

Implementation studies seek to explore how to increase the uptake of evidence-based interventions.



# Workpackages

- **WP1** – national mapping of healthcare-based IDVA models across English NHS Trusts
- **WP2** – world café event to support the successful implementation and improvement of IDVA models in maternity services
- **WP3** - evaluation of the implementation of healthcare-based IDVA models in 3 NHS Trusts



# Co-production with PPIE members

- 4 PPIE members, incl. Independent Chair
- Quarterly meetings

## PPIE member activities:

- Author academic papers
- Write Lived Experience Commentaries on academic papers
- Undertake research interviews with service users
- Involvement with analysis of data
- Write academic article around Lived experience involvement







## Identify IDVA models

- 86/124 (70%) of eligible Trusts completed survey
- 47 (55%) Trusts had an IDVA programme
- 19 (40%) cases the IDVAs were permanently funded
- 30 (67%) Trusts had one IDVA in place
- 51 (58%) of all respondents had heard of Pathfinder Toolkit.

Blue- Maternity service without an IDVA

Red – Maternity service with an IDVA

Image from: Forbes, C. et al. A survey and stakeholder consultation of Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) programmes in English maternity services. *BMC Pregnancy Childbirth* 23, 404 (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12884-023-05731-1>



# Case study evaluation of 3 Trusts



- All sites receive implementation support from DVA specialist service
- Documentary analysis.
- Qualitative interviews with staff, DVA service, service users and commissioners.
- Regular brief structured calls with IDVA implementation staff.
- Analysis of routine clinical data.

# Summary

- RIVA aims to explore the implementation of IDVAs in maternity services.
- Nearly half of survey respondents did not have an IDVA in the Trust.
- Key barriers and facilitators existed at all levels of the system.
- Trusts that are implementing an IDVA service have multiple ongoing challenges to overcome and need to be focused and innovative to ensure the service functions well.

## Next steps...

- Evaluation of IDVA models in 2 additional NHS Trusts
- Develop recommendations for maternity services who are implementing an IDVA service.



# Thank you

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