

## Newcastle Multi-Agency Criminal Exploitation and Serious Violence Referral Flow Chart

**This guidance is applicable to all victims of criminal exploitation.** Victims of criminal exploitation can be children, young people or adults, male or female. Perpetrators can be male or female. Perpetrators and victims are known to come from a variety of ethnic/cultural backgrounds. Criminal exploitation can and does happen in all parts of the country, whether in large towns/cities or rural areas. Victims are groomed and exploited in many different ways e.g. online, gangs, street, celebrity, religion, family, friends. Perpetrators may work together in groups or alone.

### Types of exploitation

**Sexual exploitation** - When someone takes advantage of a person sexually. Through threats, bribes, violence, humiliation, or by telling the victim that they love them, they force the victim to do sexual things for their own or other people's benefit or enjoyment (including: touching or kissing private parts, sex or taking sexual photos.)

**County Lines** – where illegal drugs are transported from one area to another, often across police and local authority boundaries (although not exclusively), usually by children or vulnerable people who are coerced into it by gangs. The 'County Line' is the mobile phone line used to take the orders of drugs.

**“Cuckooing”/home invasion/trap houses** – gangs using violence and abuse to target the homes of vulnerable people and use them as bases for crime, often drug dealing. Conditions can be squalid.

**Modern Slavery** – the severe exploitation of other people for personal or commercial gain. People can become entrapped making clothes, serving food, picking crops, working in factories, or working in houses as cooks, cleaners or nannies. It can include sexual exploitation and trafficking.

**Trafficking** – The use of violence, threats or coercion to transport, recruit or harbour people in order to exploit them for purposes such as forced prostitution, labour, criminality, marriage or organ removal.

**Financial** - including debt bondage, forced begging or criminality (e.g. pick pocketing/shoplifting), fraud

### Vulnerabilities which may increase risk

Bereavement; social exclusion; poverty/deprivation; personal/family learning disability/mental ill health/substance misuse; communication difficulties; prior personal/family experience of abuse/neglect/domestic abuse; personal/family history in the criminal justice system; breakdown of family relationships; low self-esteem; bullying; those from abroad with insecure immigration rights; Looked After Child or have children who are Looked After.

### Signs and indicators

Change in physical appearance/clothing; having money/mobile phones/burner phones/other items without a plausible explanation; becoming involved in criminality; getting into cars with unknown people; increased use of drugs or alcohol; sending sexually explicit content via phone/social media; unexplained injuries or other health concerns such as bruising, puncture/stab wounds, sexually transmitted infections; carrying weapons; unsuitable or inappropriate accommodation; developing inappropriate/unusual relationships/associations; missing from home/care/education/work.

### Encouraging people to seek help and support

There are many reasons why victims will not, or feel they cannot, speak about their experiences or seek help and support so it is important to build trust to enable this to happen.

- Always be alert to the possibility that an individual could be experiencing exploitation, regardless of their age or gender, and be prepared to offer support.
- When there are challenges of engagement, the person with the best relationship with them should lead discussions.
- Ensure professional interpreters are used, never use family members, children or friends where exploitation is known or suspected.
- Only ask questions about exploitation when victims are on their own and in a private place.

Deal with any immediate risks (risks to others and yourself). Contact emergency services if required. Check records for risk information or warnings. Remember that victims can deny exploitation is happening and minimise the risk and/or harm. Discuss with your line manager, assess the risk level and act accordingly. Some cases may meet multiple criteria described below – e.g. there may be children and adults at risk, multiple referrals will be required.



### Cases where children are involved

(people aged under 18)

A child is aged between 0 - 18 years. Exploitation of children is a form of abuse that is covered by legislation and multi-agency procedural guidance.

Where a child is a victim of, or potentially a victim of exploitation, he or she is either at risk of, or suffering significant harm.

If you have a concern that a child has been exploited, you should -

1. Telephone Children's Social Care Initial Response Service (0191 277 2500).
  2. Complete [online referral](#) to CSC including the MSET Stage 1 Screening Tool.
  3. All referrals are considered by the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH).
- If you feel the child is at immediate risk of harm due to exploitation, you should contact Police to inform them of the incident that is ongoing to ensure immediate protection of the child or young person.

### Case meets safeguarding adults criteria

(People aged 18 or over)

Exploitation is a form of abuse covered by multi-agency safeguarding adults policy and procedures.

Where the victim of exploitation is an adult at risk as defined by the Care Act 2014:

- aged 18 or over; and
- has needs for care and support (whether or not those needs are being met); and
- as a result of those needs is unable to protect him or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

[A safeguarding adults referral must be made.](#)

You can use the [Exploitation Risk Assessment Checklist](#) to assess the level of risk.

Follow your individual agency safeguarding process for making a referral or:

1. Complete a safeguarding adults initial inquiry form [written referral](#) (or Stage 1 and Stage 2 forms directly on Eclipse for Adult Social Care staff).
2. Decision made whether Safeguarding Adults Enquiry needs to progress and a Safeguarding Adults Plan developed.

### Case meets MARAC Criteria

(People aged 16 or over and the exploitation involves high risk domestic abuse)

1. Be clear with the victim about confidentiality and Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) procedures.
2. Complete the [Safer Lives DASH](#) with the victim where possible.
3. Complete MARAC referral form.
4. Contact your agency's Single Point of Contact (SPOC) for MARAC
5. Make referral for an Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) or Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA).
6. Agency SPOC sends referral to MARAC Coordinator.
7. IDVA or ISVA will contact the victim.
8. MARAC meeting takes place and victim's views are presented by IDVA/ISVA.
9. Action plan is developed.

Where the case is visible high risk (14 ticks); or based on your professional judgement you have serious concerns about a victim's situation you **must** make a referral into MARAC.

### Case does not meet safeguarding/MARAC criteria

- Consider immediate and long term risks.
- Signpost/refer the victim to relevant support/specialist services (see over).
- Share information with relevant agencies.
- Regularly revisit level of risk in terms of MARAC and safeguarding action.

If no victim is identified but you have information that suggests exploitation may be occurring you can inform the Police by completing and submitting the [Partnership Intelligence Form](#) to [forceintelligence@northumbria.pnn.police.uk](mailto:forceintelligence@northumbria.pnn.police.uk)

#### In all circumstances

- **Document** decision-making, actions taken and reasons for sharing/not sharing info.
- Be aware of your **professional role** and consult with other partners to: clarify roles and responsibilities and share information
- **Follow up** any referrals.
- When **signposting** to other agencies always consider the risks associated with the perpetrator finding leaflets/letters etc.

Exploitation is when a child or adult is controlled by an abuser who might use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to do so.

Criminal exploitation support services		Good practice guidance when responding to all victims of exploitation	Missing
Emergency always call 999			
<p><a href="#">Changing Lives GAP/MAP Project</a> (working with adults (male and female) vulnerable to sexual exploitation)</p> <p><a href="#">Liberty Project</a> (Modern Slavery)</p> <p>0191 273 8891</p>	<p><a href="#">NIDAS</a></p> <p>Working with high risk victims of domestic abuse, IDVA/ISVA Service, advice and support</p> <p>0181 214 6501</p>	<p>If you suspect that criminal exploitation is happening but it is not directly reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• It is important that you act on your suspicions. You could provide the only opportunity for the victim to tell someone.</li><li>• Ensure privacy – you are unlikely to receive a report from a victim if someone might overhear.</li><li>• Show the person you have time to listen – if you appear rushed or uninterested you are less likely to receive a report.</li><li>• Reassure about confidentiality and explain the limits of this, e.g. “I want you to know that whatever you tell me will go no further without your permission, unless I believe there are risks to others or a serious crime has or may be committed.”</li><li>• Begin with open questions, e.g. “tell me how things are going”.</li><li>• Follow up with direct questions, e.g. “I notice that you seem anxious/have some bruises/often miss appointments (whatever your concern is), is there anything happening that you are worried about? Is anything happening in your life that is making you feel unsafe? Is someone hurting you?”</li><li>• It may be necessary to ask more than once, as many victims do not identify that they are experiencing abuse.</li></ul>	<p>A child or adult going missing can often be a feature of criminal exploitation cases. Going missing might be a sign or indicator that the child or adult is at risk of harm.</p>
<p><a href="#">Housing Advice Centre (HAC)</a></p> <p>Emergency/temporary accommodation.</p> <p>0191 277 1711</p> <p>0191 278 7878 (out of hours)</p>	<p><a href="#">The Safe Project</a></p> <p>Advice and support including specialist forced marriage and honour based abuse.</p> <p>0191 273 4942 (WEWG)</p>	<p>Responding to an initial report of criminal exploitation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be sensitive, respectful, listen carefully, and believe what you are being told.</li><li>• Use language and questions that are appropriate for the child/adult’s age or development stage.</li><li>• Remain non-judgemental, reassure them that the abuse is not their fault and never imply that the victim is to blame for the exploitation. Give key messages, e.g. you are not alone, you do not deserve to be treated like this, there is help available for you.</li><li>• Seek to empower victims, not to take over or make decisions for them. Ask them what they want you to do. Ask them if they have any questions – they have told you a lot , they might have a lot to ask.</li><li>• Validate the victim’s experience; tell them you are glad they told you.</li><li>• Take particular care in your recordings, avoid victim blaming language. Recordings can influence how you and others perceive current and future risk and it also impact upon court cases. For more information, please read the Language Guidance documents for <a href="#">adults</a> and <a href="#">children</a>.</li></ul>	<p>There are specific procedures in place to respond to both children and adults who go missing. These closely align with multi-agency safeguarding procedures. When children or adults go missing, a Return Home Interview (RHI) will be conducted to understand the reasons behind the missing episode and to try and tailor support for the individual and reducing the likelihood of future missing episodes.</p>
<p><a href="#">Newcroft Centre</a></p> <p>Sexual health clinic and contraception information and advice.</p> <p>0191 229 2999</p>	<p><a href="#">Karma Nivana</a></p> <p>charity supporting victims of honour-based abuse and forced marriage</p>	<p>If the person doesn’t want you to take any action:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consider mental capacity, coercion, public interest, risks of significant harm. The Mental Capacity Act applies 16 years +. Focus on whether the person is able (understand, retain, weigh-up and communicate) to make the relevant decision first and if unable, then think about why this might be (impairment/disturbance of the mind/brain, control, coercion)</li><li>• Remember that exploitation is a serious crime and professionals have a duty to share information with the Police if they believe it may be occurring (even if this is reported via a third party).</li><li>• Always leave the door open for future discussion e.g. “You can contact me in the future if you feel you need help and support”.</li><li>• Consider whether anything might be impacting upon a child or adult stating that they don’t want anything to happen – e.g. could they be subject to threats or fear of serious harm; under the influence of alcohol or drugs, mental illness or disability.</li></ul>	<p>For more information, please see:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <a href="#">Missing Adults Protocol - Northumbria</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Children missing from Care, Home and Education procedures.</a></li></ul>
<p><a href="#">Angelou Centre</a></p> <p>Outreach, advice/support for black and minoritised women and children, women with no recourse to public funds</p> <p>0191 226 0394</p>	<p><a href="#">Newcastle Treatment and Recovery Service (NTaR)</a></p> <p>All-age service for people needing support with drug and alcohol use.</p> <p>0191 206 1117</p>		<p><b>Evidence gathering</b></p>
<p><a href="#">National Referral Mechanism</a> (NRM)</p> <p>Referral system for potential victims of modern slavery/human trafficking</p>	<p><a href="#">Mental health services</a></p> <p>Urgent help for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Adults – 0800 652 2863</li><li>• Children &amp; Young People – 0800 652 2864</li></ul> <p>Psychological wellbeing services (adults) – 0191 282 6600</p>		<p>The Police will always be responsible for the gathering and preservation of evidence to pursue criminal allegations against people causing harm. However, other organisations and individuals can play a vital role in the preservation of evidence to ensure that vital information or forensics are not lost:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Try not to disturb the scene, clothing or victim if at all possible.</li><li>• Secure the scene, for example, lock the door.</li><li>• Preserve all containers, documents, locations, phones etc.</li><li>• Evidence may be present even if you cannot actually see anything.</li><li>• If in doubt contact the Police and ask for advice.</li></ul>
<p><a href="#">Side Step (Action for</a></p> <p>Targeted support for 11-18-olds via one-to-one support, mentoring, education employment training to divert people who are at risk of exploitation.</p>	<p><a href="#">Streetwise</a></p> <p>Confidential advice, counselling, and support services for young people aged 11-25</p> <p>0191 230 5400</p>		<p><b>Transition</b></p>
<p><b>Other support and services to consider:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• General health or social care services</li><li>• <a href="#">Financial inclusion services</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Trading Standards</a></li><li>• <a href="#">Environmental Health</a></li><li>• Housing providers/landlords. Including the <a href="#">Private Rented Service</a> and <a href="#">Your Homes Newcastle</a>.</li></ul>			<p>Many victims of criminal exploitation are aged between 16-25 years. It is therefore important that transition arrangements for children approaching their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday are robust. Information related to criminal exploitation must be shared with the relevant adult services.</p>
			<p>Where a child is subject to safeguarding children procedures aged 17.5 years, the <a href="#">NSAB/NSCP Safeguarding Transition Protocol</a> must be followed and a formal handover of the safeguarding concerns considered and agreed.</p>
			<p><b>Alleged perpetrator considerations</b></p>
			<p>There are not always clear distinctions between those experiencing and those who are perpetrating exploitation. There can be complex hierarchies and dynamics which need to be considered. For example, a person may have been controlled or coerced into carrying out a criminal act or recruiting/facilitating someone else to be exploited. Practitioners should be professionally curious and avoid labelling a person as a perpetrator and/or a criminal until this has been established.</p>
		<p><b>Reporting criminal exploitation and serious violence anonymously</b></p>	
		<p>Concerns can be reported anonymously to <a href="#">Crimestoppers</a> on 0800 555 111 or <a href="#">online</a>.</p>	
		<p><a href="#">Fearless</a> is Crimestoppers’ dedicated youth service. Young people can access non-judgemental information and advice about crime and criminality. Fearless provides a <a href="#">safe place</a> for young people to give information about crime - 100% anonymously.</p>	

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