

Quality Standards for Independent Sexual Violence Adviser (ISVA) Services

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ISVA Service Providers

Amethyst Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)
Axis Counselling
Doncaster Rape & Sexual Abuse Counselling Service
East Kent Rape Crisis Centre (EKRCC)
Galop
Gloucestershire Rape & Sexual Abuse Centre
Family Matters
FreeVA
Herts SARC
Horizon SV Services @Cyfannol Women's Aid
Horizons – Lancashire
IMARA
IDAS
Jersey Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)
KCRASAC
Living Without Abuse
National Ugly Mugs
New Pathways
Nottinghamshire Sexual Violence Support Services
Rape & Sexual Abuse Support Centre (Guildford)
Rape & Sexual Abuse Support Centre (Cheshire and Merseyside)
Rape Crisis (South London)
Rape Crisis (Surrey and Sussex)

RASA Merseyside
Refuge
RSVP
Safeline
Safelink
Savana
Spires
Spring Lodge Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)
St Mary's Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)
Support After Rape and Sexual Violence Leeds
Survivors Manchester
Survivors UK
Survivors' Network
SV2
The Ferns Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)
The Havens – SARCs for London
The Hope Programme
Treetops Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)
Victims First Northumbria
Victim Support (Derby)
Victim Support West Yorkshire
Women@thewell
Yellow Door

Commissioners

Home Office
Islington Borough Council
London Borough of Camden
Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)
Ministry of Justice
NHS England
Public Health England

Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner:

- Avon and Somerset
- Cambridgeshire and Peterborough
- Devon and Cornwall
- Durham
- Gloucestershire
- Hertfordshire
- Humberside
- Kent
- Lancashire
- Leicestershire
- Lincolnshire
- Merseyside
- North Yorkshire
- Northumbria
- South Yorkshire
- Sussex
- Thames Valley
- West Mercia
- West Midlands
- West Yorkshire

Foreword

Through our work in this important area, LimeCulture has witnessed first-hand the increased demand for high-quality ISVA services for victims and survivors of sexual violence. There are currently around 110 ISVA providers operating across the UK. While services are not always set up, funded or delivered in the same way, their existence is testament to an ongoing and growing recognition that ISVAs provide vital support for children, young people and adults, and that victims and survivors should be able to access ISVA services in their local area.

However, there is more work needed to ensure greater consistency in the quality of support being provided across ISVA services. It should never be acceptable for victims and survivors to have a postcode lottery. Every victim and survivor of sexual violence should be able to access a high-quality, well managed ISVA service, wherever they are in the country, regardless of their age, gender, ethnicity, sexuality or beliefs; and whether or not they have chosen to engage with the criminal justice process. We believe the Quality Standards for ISVA Services take us significantly closer to making this a reality.

We are delighted with the level of support that LimeCulture continues to receive for the development and implementation of these Quality Standards for ISVA Services, which have been informed by the views of ISVAs working on the frontline, ISVA service providers, commissioners and, most importantly, those who have accessed ISVA support – who were able to share with us their personal experiences of what it is like to receive support from ISVA services.




We are keen to ensure that these Quality Standards are available free of charge to any ISVA service that wishes to work towards meeting them. We believe they provide a benchmark for individual services to monitor their provision against, and act as a driver to improve quality and consistency across ISVA services collectively.

Importantly, sitting alongside these Quality Standards is an Independent Accreditation and Monitoring Programme, which provides impartial verification of the quality of ISVA services, something which commissioners increasingly demand through their service specifications.

Background

1. Independent Sexual Violence Adviser (ISVA) Services play an important role in providing specialist tailored support to all victims and survivors of sexual violence.
2. In September 2017, the Home Office published national guidance setting out the essential elements of the ISVA role. This sits alongside the National Occupational Standards and provides a comprehensive approach to individual ISVA practice. However, this guidance does not describe the standards of provision that are required to assure safe and effective ISVA service delivery.
3. Additionally, given the complex nature of support provided by ISVA services, and their important role in supporting both health and well-being and the criminal justice process, the provision of ISVA services must be of the highest quality in order to provide effective, professional and boundaried support to clients, who are often extremely vulnerable.
4. Through LimeCulture's extensive training and consultancy work in this area, we are frequently approached by commissioners and providers to identify "best practice" for ISVA services to adopt, provide specific advice on cases, undertake independent review of ISVA services, and support the development of ISVA service specifications and procurement exercises.
5. Based on our work around ISVA services, our independence from service providers and our work to develop Quality Standards for Services Supporting Male Victims and Survivors of Sexual Violence, LimeCulture was repeatedly asked by commissioners and providers to develop Quality Standards for ISVA Services.
6. Consequently, with the support of and in consultation with policy leads, ISVA service providers, commissioners and individuals who have accessed support, LimeCulture undertook the development of these Quality Standards for ISVA services.
7. Three years after the initial publication of the Quality Standards for ISVA Services in 2018, LimeCulture has worked with ISVA providers and commissioners to enhance the Quality Standards to explicitly capture the key elements of delivering high quality support for children and young people, recognising the way in which ISVA services for children and young people have developed and matured in recent years.
8. The key benefits of the Quality Standards for ISVA Services are set out below.

Benefits of the Quality Standards

-  Victims and survivors of sexual violence will have confidence in the quality of the ISVA Service they are accessing
-  Service Providers will be able to evidence the quality of their ISVA Service provision against the Quality Standards
-  Commissioners will be able to commission against these Quality Standards, which assure the provision of quality support and enable effective performance

Developing the Quality Standards

Consultation with Service Providers and Professionals

The development of the Quality Standards in 2018 included consultation with a wide range of services delivering ISVA support.

Two consultation workshops were held with more than 60 individual commissioners and service providers to discuss ideas, gather views and collate suggestions about the breadth and detail that should be included in the Quality Standards.

The draft Quality Standards were circulated for a two-month consultation period to allow commissioners, providers and their partner organisations to provide comment.

More than 50 organisations (including providers and commissioners) provided feedback on the draft Quality Standards ensuring the language, scope and detail contained within the Quality Standards was fit for purpose.

In 2021 LimeCulture began working with ISVA providers and commissioners to review the Quality Standards in light of evolving best practice among ISVA services, and in 2022 introduced a new Quality Standard to further capture the importance of supporting clients to fully access and engage with ISVA support.

Consultation with ISVA Service Clients

An online survey was designed to capture the views of individuals who had accessed ISVA services on the efficacy of the service they were provided with, and their views on the ISVA support they received.

More than 60 individuals who had accessed ISVA support responded to the survey and shared their views, experiences and suggestions.

Implementation of the Quality Standards

These Quality Standards were formally launched in October 2018 at “Knowledge and Network”, the National ISVA Conference. The Quality Standards are available to download free of charge at www.limeculture.co.uk.

These Quality Standards have been developed for use by all services providing ISVA support, including all VCSE (Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise) sector organisations, SARCs (Sexual Assault Referral Centres), private providers, and services working within a statutory setting including the NHS, Police and Local Authorities.

For commissioners these Quality Standards provide a framework for the development and monitoring of the ISVA services they commission. Some commissioners have already begun to include the requirement for providers to achieve these Quality Standards in their service specifications. LimeCulture is keen to see this approach adopted by all commissioners to begin to improve the consistency of provision across the country and reduce the postcode lottery that can exist for service users accessing similar services delivered by different providers.

It is intended that the Quality Standards will be available to any professional, service provider, client or commissioner who wishes to access them to further the improvement of ISVA support.

Accrediting ISVA Services Achieving the Quality Standards

During the development and consultation phases, providers and commissioners reported that a robust process should be prioritised to independently determine whether ISVA Services are meeting the Quality Standards. To this end, LimeCulture launched an Independent Accreditation Programme for ISVA services wishing to adopt and implement these Quality Standards. ISVA services assessed as meeting the Quality Standards achieve an independent quality 'kitemark'.

The key driver for these Quality Standards is to improve overall quality and consistency across ISVA service provision. It is, therefore, crucial that the Quality Standards are, through the accreditation process, applied consistently and independently; and that accredited services are monitored to ensure they continue to meet the benchmark.

As these Quality Standards for ISVA Services are the first of their kind, they have not been included in, adopted or replicated by any other standards available to providers of sexual violence support services. No other kitemark or standards are verification for ISVA Services achieving these Quality Standards.

Using this Implementation Guide

This Implementation Guide sets out a series of indicators under each of the Quality Standards that articulate what a high-quality service means in practice for clients, staff and leaders; and includes a rationale explaining the purpose of each Quality Standard in the context of ISVA service provision. In the Guide, we divide these into services for adults, and services for children and young people.

All of the Quality Standards apply equally to ISVA services regardless of whether they support children, young people or adults. Where the indicators differ, this is to explicitly recognise the differences in the provision of ISVA support to children, young people and adults.

For very young children, some of the client indicators may and will have relevance for the experiences of parents/carers in supporting a child to access support, as well as for the child.

The Quality Standards

Domain 1 Leadership and Governance

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The Quality Standards within this Domain seek to ensure the ISVA service is able to deliver appropriate and sustainable support to victims and survivors of sexual violence through the effective management of the ISVA service and its staff.

The ISVA Service:

- 1.1 Maintains independence through the provision of accurate and impartial information to clients
- 1.2 Has distinct policies and procedures in place specifically for supporting ISVA service clients
- 1.3 Is underpinned by strategic partnerships to support multi-agency working, seamless pathways to support, and appropriate information sharing
- 1.4 Is managed by staff who have undertaken specific training to provide management of the ISVA service and supervision of caseloads
- 1.5 Ensures all staff with a caseload have undertaken (or are undertaking, with supervision) an accredited ISVA training course and have access to continuing professional development
- 1.6 Ensures all ISVAs have access to regular clinical supervision, of no less than 1.5 hours every 4-6 weeks*

**Applies to ISVAs working full-time*

Domain 2 Access and Engagement

23

The Quality Standards within this Domain seek to ensure that the ISVA service recognises the specific needs of ISVA clients.

The ISVA Service:

- 2.1 Provides an equitable service to clients, regardless of involvement with the criminal justice process and nature of abuse
- 2.2 Allows referrals from a range of referral sources including police, self and professional referrals, and has a process in place to safely manage self-referrals
- 2.3 Aims to provide initial contact with new clients within 5 working days of referral, or sooner
- 2.4 Puts in place an agreement with all clients that seeks to:
 - outline ISVA service provision
 - manage service and contact expectations
 - obtain consent and assure confidentiality
 - define professional boundaries
- 2.5 Proactively engages with third party individuals and/or professionals who support children and young people or adults with additional needs to ensure their client can fully engage with ISVA support

Domain 3 Service Delivery

34

The Quality Standards under this Domain seek to ensure that the ISVA service has processes in place to enable the safe, effective and appropriate delivery of services to its clients.

The ISVA service:

- 3.1 Ensures that individual risk and needs assessments are carried out with each client at every contact
- 3.2 Ensures that client-led support plans are developed for each client, based on their individual risks and needs
- 3.3 Delivers flexible support to meet the needs of the client, facilitated by effective case management
- 3.4 Has established referral pathways to other local services that may benefit ISVA service clients
- 3.5 Maintains robust management of client records to assure confidentiality, adherence to data protection legislation and, where appropriate, facilitate the sharing of information
- 3.6 Complies with all national and local safeguarding requirements
- 3.7 Ensures clearly defined exit strategies are put in place to enable the safe, timely and appropriate completion of support

Domain 4 Outcomes and Evaluation

49

The Quality Standards under this Domain seek to ensure that the ISVA service collects and monitors data sufficient to understand whether they are achieving equitable access and engagement and having a positive impact.

The ISVA Service:

- 4.1 Has a process for encouraging feedback from ISVA service clients, including those who do not continue with support
- 4.2 Collects and monitors a core data set to understand whether the ISVA service is achieving equitable access, engagement and a positive impact
- 4.3 Reviews data and feedback from clients to inform change and improvement, and to develop innovative ways of working

Domain 1

Leadership and Governance

1.1 The ISVA service maintains independence through the provision of accurate and impartial information to clients

ISVA services for adults

Rationale

Independence is a key aspect of the ISVA service's role in being able to provide impartial information to their clients. The ISVA service should retain and promote its independence from the police and/or other criminal justice agencies so that ISVA clients are free to make their own choices about reporting to the police and/or entering into a criminal justice investigation.

“Independence from the police is crucial for the ISVA service, which should be explicitly stated and stressed to our clients. This is particularly important for those who choose not to report.”

ISVA Service Provider

“My ISVA explained the different options available to me, without pushing or recommending any particular course of action. Because of my experience, it was important for me to have freedom of choice and my ISVA gave this to me.”

Survey Respondent

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders ensure the independence of the ISVA service is reflected in the governance and management structures as well as promotional literature and materials
- ✓ Staff demonstrate an understanding of the need to maintain independence and are able to provide accurate and impartial information to clients
- ✓ Clients are assured of the independence of the ISVA service and their role in providing accurate and impartial information

1.1 The ISVA service maintains independence through the provision of accurate and impartial information to clients

ISVA services for children and young people

Rationale

Independence is a key aspect of the ISVA service's role in being able to provide impartial information to their clients. The ISVA service for children and young people should retain and promote its independence from the police and/or other criminal justice agencies so that ISVA clients are free to make their own choices about how they access support and engage (or do not engage) with the criminal justice process.

“Following the disclosure of sexual abuse, children and young people and their parents/carers are often contacted by several agencies along with the initiation of numerous processes, all of which can feel overwhelming and confusing. ISVAs are independent, there to explain the information, services and roles with no hidden agenda so clients and parents/carers can make appropriate and informed decisions. The ISVA can answer questions or seek the answers, help manage expectations and explain possible outcomes, all while keeping the client's needs and wishes at the heart of everything.”

Children and Young People's ISVA Service Provider

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders ensure the independence of the ISVA service for children and young people is reflected in the governance and management structures as well as promotional literature and materials
- ✓ Staff demonstrate an understanding of the need to maintain independence and are able to provide accurate and impartial information to clients
- ✓ Clients are assured of the independence of the ISVA service for children and young people and the ISVA's role in providing accurate and impartial information

1.2 The ISVA service has distinct policies and procedures in place specifically for supporting ISVA service clients

ISVA services for adults

Rationale

Due to the complex nature of the support provided by ISVA services, it is important that there are clear policies and procedures to underpin the delivery of the service.

For ISVA service providers who also deliver other or additional services (for example, counselling/therapy services, IDVA or Crisis Worker services), it is important that distinct policies and operational procedures are put in place specifically for the ISVA service.

“When we established our ISVA service, we used the same forms and policies that we had used for the therapy and group support services. However, we quickly realised that the ISVA service is unique and needs to operate quite differently, with our own referral forms, client agreements, confidentiality agreements.”

ISVA Service Provider

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders ensure the service has ISVA specific policies, operating procedures and working practices that are reviewed on a regular basis
- ✓ Staff are aware of and demonstrate an understanding of the ISVA specific policies, procedures and working practices
- ✓ Clients can access the ISVA service's policies relevant to them and are encouraged to be part of the review process

1.2 The ISVA service has distinct policies and procedures in place specifically for supporting ISVA service clients

ISVA services for children and young people

Rationale

Due to the complex nature of the support provided by ISVA services for children and young people, it is important that there are clear policies and procedures to underpin the delivery of the service.

For service providers who also deliver other or additional services (for example, ISVA services for adults, counselling/ therapy services, IDVA or Crisis Worker services), it is important that distinct policies and operational procedures are put in place specifically for the ISVA service for children and young people.

An ISVA service for children and young people is likely to operate differently to an ISVA service for adults in several ways, including:

- The age and capacity of the child or young person will influence the approach and support offered
- Whether the child or young person can self-refer into the service
- Interactions with the client's parent/carer
- Client agreement, including confidentiality and information sharing
- Age-appropriate risk assessment, including the role of the parent/carer
- Multi-agency working, including safeguarding
- Flexible support
- Client participation in feedback and service development
- Transition into adult services where relevant.

These differences should be reflected in the service's operating procedures and reviewed regularly to ensure continuing adherence to local and national policy.

“When I commissioned the ISVA service for our county, it was extremely important to be assured the service would be delivered to the highest standard. It was essential the service could demonstrate they had made specific consideration of support for children and young people when putting their policies and procedures in place.”

Commissioner

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders ensure the service has ISVA policies, operating procedures and working practices specific to supporting children and young people, which are reviewed on a regular basis
- ✓ Staff are aware of and demonstrate an understanding of the ISVA specific policies, procedures and working practices
- ✓ Clients can access the ISVA service's policies relevant to them in a format accessible for children and young people, and are encouraged to be part of the review process

1.3 The ISVA service is underpinned by strategic partnerships to support multi-agency working, seamless pathways to support, and appropriate information sharing

ISVA services for adults

Rationale

It is important that the ISVA service develops and maintains effective strategic partnerships to ensure and encourage appropriate referrals into the ISVA service and pathways of support outside of the ISVA service.

Agreements should be put in place between the ISVA service and its partner agencies to support information sharing arrangements to enable the client's seamless referral to appropriate support and to inform risk and needs assessments.

Feedback from partner agencies should be encouraged to ensure a joined-up approach to working and to spread awareness of the support available from the ISVA service.

“I really didn’t know what an ISVA was, or what support they would give me – but my ISVA explained that she could help me access support from other services. She opened the door to support services that I didn’t even know existed.”

Survey Respondent

“Having partnership arrangements in place with other local services is key to an ISVA service, they cannot support their clients in isolation. There must be established and robust referral pathways to support victims to gain access to the ISVA service and allow referral by the ISVAs to other services too.”

Commissioner

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders have developed strategic partnerships with all relevant agencies to ensure seamless referral between services and that information sharing arrangements are in place
- ✓ Staff demonstrate awareness of the value of partnership working in order to support ISVA clients and enable appropriate referrals
- ✓ Clients experience seamless transitions from the ISVA service into other local support services

1.3 The ISVA service is underpinned by strategic partnerships to support multi-agency working, seamless pathways to support, and appropriate information sharing

ISVA services for children and young people

Rationale

Effective interagency working is a key element of an effective response for children and young people, and critical to the role of an ISVA in supporting a child or young person given the number of agencies that may be involved in a child or young person's life.

It is important that the ISVA service for children and young people develops and maintains effective strategic partnerships to ensure and encourage appropriate referrals into the ISVA service and pathways of support outside of the ISVA service.

Agreements should be put in place between the ISVA service and its partner agencies to support information sharing arrangements to enable the client's seamless referral to appropriate support and inform risk and needs assessments; and to ensure an effective multi-agency response in the best interests of the child or young person.

Agencies working with children and young people who have experienced sexual abuse may have little knowledge or understanding of the ISVA role – this can apply to children's social care, schools and other education settings, as well as health services and other child focused support services. Where this is the case, ISVA services often need to work proactively to explain their role and demonstrate the value of ISVA support to properly embed themselves within local pathways.

Feedback from partner agencies should be encouraged to ensure a joined-up approach to working and spread awareness of the support available from the ISVA service.

“The ISVA Quality Standards really helped us to make sure we were providing the best possible services for our clients. As a result of the process we have improved pathways, formalised our case management and review process, and built partnerships across the statutory and voluntary sectors.”

Children and Young People's ISVA Service Provider

“Effective information sharing within multi-agency strategic partnerships is of fundamental importance to the safe and competent delivery of ISVA services for children and young people. The value of information sharing shouldn't be underestimated, where broader relationships with schools, health services and social care can positively contribute to and strengthen ISVA support for young people.”

Commissioner

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders have developed strategic partnerships with all relevant agencies, including within local safeguarding and child protection arrangements, to ensure seamless referrals between services and that information sharing arrangements are in place
- ✓ Staff demonstrate awareness of the critical role of effective partnership working in supporting and safeguarding clients and enabling appropriate referrals
- ✓ Clients experience seamless transitions from the ISVA service into other local support services

1.4 The ISVA service is managed by staff who have undertaken specific training to provide effective management of the ISVA service and supervision of caseloads

ISVA services for adults

Rationale

Due to the complexity of managing an ISVA service, it is essential that those with responsibility for managing the ISVA service have completed ISVA manager training and have appropriate knowledge and skills to supervise and support ISVAs' caseloads.

ISVA service managers are responsible for ensuring the ISVAs within their service are:

- working within the professional boundaries of their role
- effectively identifying, monitoring and managing their clients' risk and needs
- putting in place effective support plans for their clients that enables them to refer to appropriate support services
- ending support with clients in an appropriate, sensitive and timely manner.

ISVA service managers should be confident to monitor service-level information and data to manage the capacity of and demand for the ISVA service. They should also have a role in the allocation of new cases to ensure that there is an appropriate spread of cases between ISVAs and reduce the risk of burn-out.

ISVAs within the service should be able to escalate problems, difficulties or complaints to their service managers, and be confident these will be addressed. Therefore, it is crucial for the ISVA service managers to have a thorough understanding of the support provided by an ISVA, have good relationships with partner agencies to meet the needs of the service, and communicate with commissioners where necessary.

“My last manager didn’t really understand my role [as an ISVA]. I didn’t get any useful support as she was used to managing counsellors and it’s different for them. That definitely made my job harder.”

ISVA

“I worked as an ISVA before I got the job of managing the ISVA team – so I get it. I can help the ISVAs with any problems and most importantly, I can check that the ISVAs are managing their caseloads. I still want to be trained though – to keep learning and stay on top.”

ISVA Manager

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders managing the ISVA service have completed ISVA manager training and can demonstrate they have the competencies to effectively manage the ISVA service
- ✓ Staff feel supported in the effective management of their caseloads and confident escalating issues through line management and caseload supervision
- ✓ Clients can be confident that their ISVA receives support and guidance through effective line and caseload management

1.4 The ISVA service is managed by staff who have undertaken specific training to provide effective management of the ISVA service and supervision of caseloads

ISVA services for children and young people

Rationale

Due to the complexity of managing an ISVA service for children and young people, it is essential that those with responsibility for managing the service have completed ISVA manager training and have the appropriate knowledge and skills to supervise and support ISVAs' caseloads.

Service managers are responsible for ensuring the ISVAs within their service are:

- working within the professional boundaries of their role
- effectively identifying, monitoring and managing their clients' risk and needs
- putting in place effective support plans for their clients that enables them to refer to appropriate support services
- ending support with clients in an appropriate, sensitive and timely manner.

Service managers should also have a thorough understanding of how the role of an ISVA for children and young people differs from the role of an ISVA for adults, including their role within local safeguarding arrangements, how to navigate the involvement of family whilst maintaining confidentiality with the client, and the impact of trauma on children and young people.

Service managers should be confident to monitor service-level information and data to manage the capacity of and demand for the ISVA service. They should also have a role in the allocation of new cases to ensure that there is an appropriate spread of cases between ISVAs and reduce the risk of burn-out.

ISVAs within the service should be able to escalate problems, difficulties or complaints to their service managers and be confident these will be addressed. Therefore, it is crucial for the service manager to have a thorough understanding of the support provided by an ISVA, have good relationships with partner agencies to meet the needs of the service, and communicate with commissioners where necessary.

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders managing the ISVA service have completed ISVA manager training, and can demonstrate they have the competencies to effectively manage the ISVA service for children and young people
- ✓ Staff feel supported in the effective management of their caseloads and confident escalating issues through line management and caseload supervision
- ✓ Clients can be confident that their ISVA receives support and guidance through effective line and caseload management

1.5 The ISVA service ensures all staff with a caseload have completed (or are undertaking, with supervision) an accredited ISVA training course and have access to continuing professional development

ISVA services for adults

Rationale

Due to the complexity of the support provided by ISVAs, it is crucial that all staff providing ISVA support to clients should have completed a full accredited ISVA training course to ensure they can support their clients safely and effectively.

The Home Office ISVA Guidance states “All ISVAs are expected to have undertaken a full, comprehensive, accredited specialist ISVA training course, which provides them with the core competencies and skills required to carry out their role”.

Where an individual is carrying out ISVA duties but has not yet fully completed their training this should be made clear, either, for example, in their job title, or in only working under the supervision of an ISVA who has completed an accredited training programme.

Access to continuing professional development enhances the support provided by ISVA services, including to clients with specific and additional needs, and ensures individual ISVAs remain current and confident in their role.

“We need more well-trained ISVAs everywhere. We make sure our ISVAs have completed the ISVA training and the advanced development programme, but we know that other ISVAs in our area haven’t and it’s a risk for all of us. They don’t operate in the same way we do, and it makes it difficult when other professionals think we provide the same level of service.”

ISVA Service Manager

“I’m aware my first ISVA had trained a while ago and I think had picked up some bad habits, which came across as unprofessional.”

Survey Respondent

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders ensure all ISVAs complete accredited ISVA training within a year of being appointed and that analysis of staff training needs is conducted annually to incorporate continuing professional development
- ✓ Staff complete accredited ISVA training and continuing professional development obligations and commit to advancing their knowledge of issues relating to ISVA support
- ✓ Clients can be assured of staff competency and qualifications to provide support. Statements of competence are made publicly available e.g. published on websites/literature or certificates displayed

1.5 The ISVA service ensures all staff with a caseload have completed (or are undertaking, with supervision) an accredited ISVA training course and have access to continuing professional development

ISVA services for children and young people

Rationale

Due to the complexity of the support provided by ISVAs, all staff providing ISVA support to children and young people should have completed a full accredited ISVA training course relevant for working with children and young people to ensure they can support their clients safely and effectively.

The Home Office ISVA Guidance states “All ISVAs are expected to have undertaken a full, comprehensive, accredited specialist ISVA training course, which provides them with the core competencies and skills required to carry out their role”.

For an ISVA to be competent and confident to carry out the role, they must have the appropriate knowledge and understanding of how to support a child or young person who has experienced sexual violence, and be skilled in engaging with those of different ages. ISVAs working with children and young people should be aware of:

- Legal definitions, rights and entitlements
- Specific support needs of children, young people, and their families
- Recognising the evolving capacity of the child or young person in making decisions about how they engage with support and/or the criminal justice process
- Impact of trauma on children’s development
- Higher prevalence of intra-familial abuse, often triggering significant impact on the family unit
- Impact of issues faced by children and young people online
- The role of the ISVA in safeguarding, and holding other agencies to account.*

Where an individual is carrying out ISVA duties but has not yet fully completed their training, this should be made clear, for example in their job title; or they should only work under the supervision of an ISVA who has fully completed an accredited training programme.

Access to continuing professional development enhances the support provided by ISVA services, including to clients with specific and additional needs, and ensures individual ISVAs remain current and confident in their role.

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders ensure all ISVAs complete accredited ISVA training and other relevant training for working with children and young people within a year of being appointed, and that analysis of staff training needs is conducted annually to incorporate continuing professional development
- ✓ Staff complete accredited ISVA training and continuing professional development obligations and commit to advancing knowledge of issues relating to supporting children and young people
- ✓ Clients can be assured of staff competency and qualifications to provide age-appropriate support. Statements of competence are made publicly available e.g. published on websites/literature or certificates displayed

1.6 The ISVA service ensures all ISVAs have access to regular clinical supervision, of no less than 1.5 hours every 4-6 weeks*

ISVA services for adults

Rationale

ISVAs require a formal process of professional support and learning which enables them to develop knowledge and competence, enhance client safety and promote self-care.

The Home Office guidance recommends “ISVAs are provided with access to separate clinical and management supervision...The Clinical Supervisor should also be impartial and where possible be external to the ISVA's organisation. It is important that Clinical Supervisors are aware of and understand the role of the ISVA, boundaries for the role and risk and needs management of cases in the criminal justice system. Clinical supervision is distinct to that provided during management supervision, which is primarily intended to support the operational management of the ISVA”.

Regular clinical supervision enables ISVAs to reflect on and challenge their own practice, explore their reactions to the challenges of their role, maintain boundaries, and provide high quality, safe and effective support.

“Ensuring ISVAs have access to external clinical supervision is really important. The ISVA role is a challenging job, they deal with traumatised people daily, with complex needs. We have a duty to try to prevent our ISVAs from burning out or becoming traumatised themselves.”

ISVA Service Provider

“Our manager makes us go to clinical supervision every month. We all moan that it's too much but I always come away from talking to my supervisor feeling much better able to cope with the challenges of my job.”

ISVA

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders demonstrate their commitment to the service and staff well-being by ensuring regular access to clinical supervision for all staff with access to ISVA clients
- ✓ Staff describe regular and routine access to effective clinical supervision and recognise the benefits to their clients and their own personal well-being
- ✓ Clients are confident they can work with their ISVA in a safe, supportive environment

* applies to ISVAs working full time

1.6 The ISVA service ensures all ISVAs have access to regular clinical supervision, of no less than 1.5 hours every 4-6 weeks*

ISVA services for children and young people

Rationale

ISVAs working with children and young people require a formal process of professional support and learning which enables them to develop knowledge and competence, enhance client safety and promote self-care.

The Home Office recommended “ISVAs are provided with access to separate clinical and management supervision...The Clinical Supervisor should also be impartial and where possible be external to the organisation. It is important that Clinical Supervisors are aware of and understand the role of the ISVA, boundaries for the role and risk and needs management of cases in the criminal justice system. Clinical supervision is distinct to that provided during management supervision, which is primarily intended to support the operational management of the ISVA”.

Regular clinical supervision enables ISVAs to reflect on and challenge their own practice, explore their reactions to the challenges of their role, maintain boundaries, and provide high quality, safe and effective support.

It is desirable for Clinical Supervisors of ISVAs working with children and young people to have knowledge and/or experience of working with children and young people who have experienced trauma. This would assist Supervisors to guide and support ISVAs with child-specific reflections and discussions which occur within clinical supervision.

“Clinical supervision helps us to be able to support young people by looking after our own emotional wellbeing.”

Children and Young Person's ISVA

“I focus on active listening and reflection, giving my client empathy without allowing personal thoughts, feelings or advice cloud the independent support children and young people are entitled to. The importance of good supervision is to have that same focus on yourself when you are so used to giving it to others. Good clinical supervision is key to ensure longevity in being able to do this job well.”

Children and Young Person's ISVA

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders demonstrate their commitment to the service and staff well-being by ensuring regular access to clinical supervision for all staff with access to ISVA clients
- ✓ Staff describe regular and routine access to effective clinical supervision and recognise the benefits to their clients and their own personal well-being
- ✓ Clients are confident they can work with their ISVA in a safe, supportive environment

* applies to ISVAs working full time

Domain 2

Access and Engagement

2.1 The ISVA service provides an equitable service to clients, regardless of involvement in the criminal justice process and nature of abuse

ISVA services for adults

Rationale

It is an important principle that ISVA services offer equitable access to their clients regardless of whether or not they have reported their abuse to the police, or whether they later choose to withdraw from criminal proceedings.

The ISVA role was originally championed because of the support they could provide to those who had not yet reported to the police. Therefore, to exclude clients who have not reported to the police is a departure from this principle. For example, self-referral to an ISVA service can ensure clients' risks and needs are assessed, referral is made to appropriate services, and they are supported to make a report should they decide to do so either immediately or at some time in the future.

It is also important that ISVA services are accessible to all victims and survivors of sexual violence, regardless of when the abuse took place, or the type of abuse that the client has experienced.

In seeking to manage large caseloads, ISVA services may be tempted to introduce arbitrary access criteria, for example by only providing a service to those who have been abused within the last year, or those who have experienced rape. However, these types of arbitrary access criteria reduce the overall quality of the ISVA service. It is important that the support provided by ISVA services should be led by the risk and needs assessments. Where caseloads become unmanageable, ISVA service providers should discuss the implications with their commissioners.

“Support through the criminal justice process is an important part of the support an ISVA provides, but it is not the only aspect. There are 13 other domains of risk and need on the Safety and Support assessment for ISVAs.”

ISVA Service Manager

“The ISVA service saved my life. The waiting time for counselling is long, but the ISVA support was almost immediate. [My ISVA] really listened and believed me, she offered advice, which I needed because my brain wasn’t functioning properly, and I needed someone to support me with coping with everyday life stuff like money, my job, my house. She informed me of the rights I have and how to access records that I needed.”

Survey Respondent

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders ensure an equitable ISVA service, routinely monitor uptake, and publicly promote engagement with clients regardless of their involvement in the criminal justice system, or the nature or timeline of abuse
- ✓ Staff can demonstrate they understand the importance of providing support to clients regardless of their involvement with the criminal justice process, or the nature or timeline of abuse, and are confident providing independent information to support their clients' decision making
- ✓ Clients report that their needs have been met by the ISVA service

2.1 The ISVA service provides an equitable service to clients, regardless of involvement in the criminal justice process and nature of abuse

ISVA services for children and young people

Rationale

It is an important principle that ISVA services for children and young people offer equitable access to their clients regardless of whether or not they have reported the abuse to the police, or whether they later choose to withdraw from criminal proceedings.

The ISVA role was originally championed because of the support they could provide to those who had not yet reported to the police. Therefore, to exclude clients who have not reported to the police is a departure from this principle. The ISVA service can ensure clients' risks and needs are assessed, and referral is made to appropriate services (including safeguarding referral where this has not already happened).

ISVAs also play a key role in ensuring that children and young people are not "swept up" in the criminal justice process, and that their wishes and feelings around proceedings are kept at the centre and brought to the attention of relevant agencies when necessary.

It is also important that ISVA services are accessible to all victims and survivors of sexual violence, regardless of when the abuse took place, or the type of abuse that the client has experienced.

In seeking to manage large caseloads, ISVA services may be tempted to introduce arbitrary access criteria, for example by only providing a service to those who have been abused within the last year, or those who have experienced rape. However, these types of arbitrary access criteria reduce the overall quality of the ISVA service. It is important that the support provided by ISVA services should be led by the risk and needs assessments. Where caseloads become unmanageable, ISVA service providers should discuss the implications with their commissioners.

"It is vital that support is available irrespective of a survivor's contact with the police, or indeed the nature of the abuse or when it happened. Only an ISVA service free from such restrictions, focused on the impact of what happened and the resulting needs of the victim, can truly support survivors to cope and recover."

Commissioner

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders ensure an equitable ISVA service, routinely monitor uptake, and publicly promote engagement with clients regardless of their involvement in the criminal justice system, or the nature or timeline of abuse
- ✓ Staff can demonstrate they understand the importance of providing support to clients regardless of their involvement with the criminal justice process, or the nature or timeline of abuse, and are confident providing independent information to support their clients' decision making
- ✓ Clients report that their needs have been met by the ISVA service

2.2 The ISVA service allows referrals from a range of sources, including police, self and professional referrals, and has a process in place to safely manage self-referrals

ISVA services for adults

Rationale

Providing a range of referral routes into ISVA services promotes equitable access to all potential ISVA clients.

The police will provide a large proportion of the referrals into most ISVA services. However, it is important to ensure that the ISVA service is accessible to victims and survivors who have not reported to the police (either because they have not yet reported their abuse, or because they have chosen not to report to the police).

Self-referrals to the ISVA service should be encouraged and supported wherever possible to allow clients to access the service when they choose and without the involvement of any other professional or agency. Enabling self-referral will require the ISVA service to promote itself to the widest possible audience, including utilising local networks and social media.

Many ISVA services report that, among professionals including within the police, health and social care services, there is a general lack of awareness about ISVA services and the support they provide. Therefore, the ISVA service should work in partnership with other local services to raise awareness of the support available from the ISVA service and encourage appropriate referrals.

Services should routinely monitor their referrals and sources of those referrals against key local demographics to identify whether further engagement is required to encourage specific groups or parts of the community to access the ISVA service.

“I never knew this service existed. I would recommend more open advertising of this vital service, not just restricted to the usual places but more info in GP surgeries, even places like the gym.”

Survey Respondent

“We’ve found that the majority of our referrals come from the police, but we have done a big push with health and other services to try and get them to be aware of what we do. It seems to be working as we’ve had increased referrals from other professionals.”

ISVA Service Provider

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders develop referral pathways with a range of organisations that may have contact with potential ISVA clients (such as police, health, social care, voluntary support organisations) and enable services to facilitate self and professional referrals
- ✓ Staff are confident promoting their service to facilitate referrals from a range of organisations and identify opportunities to improve knowledge of the ISVA service and increase rates of referral including self-referral
- ✓ Clients report that their access to the service was timely and straightforward

2.2 The ISVA service allows referrals from a range of sources, including police, self and professional referrals, and has a process in place to safely manage self-referrals

ISVA services for children and young people

Rationale

Providing a range of referral routes into ISVA services for children and young people promotes equitable access to all potential ISVA clients.

Children and young people cannot be supported in isolation. Safeguarding regulations ensure any disclosure of sexual violence is shared in a timely manner with the appropriate authorities so measures can be put in place to keep a child or young person safe. Most services will receive referrals through established pathways from the police, SARCs or other professionals, where the necessary safeguarding referrals may have already been made; however this will not always be the case.

Where ISVA services allow self-referral for victims and survivors under the age of 18, or where a child or young person contacts an ISVA service directly to request support, services must be prepared to respond appropriately, ensuring that:

- the child or young person can expect the same service as if the referral is a police referral
- the need to comply with safeguarding requirements is built into any response.

Many ISVA services report that, among professionals including within the police, health and social care services, there is a general lack of awareness about ISVA services and the support they provide. Therefore, the ISVA service should work in partnership with other local services to raise awareness of the support available from the service and encourage appropriate referrals.

Services should routinely monitor their referrals and sources of those referrals against key local demographics to identify whether further engagement is required to encourage specific groups or parts of the community to access the ISVA service.

“Sometimes it can feel like, within other services, that young people’s trauma isn’t taken as seriously as an adult’s is. There can be the expectation for them to ‘get on with it’ or doubt reflected about what has happened to them. It is our job to keep the impact of trauma at the forefront of other professionals’ minds, which is why close working and awareness raising is so important.”

Children and Young Person’s ISVA

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders develop referral pathways with a range of organisations that may have contact with potential ISVA clients (such as police, social care, health, education settings, voluntary support organisations) and have a process in place to safely manage self-referrals where these occur
- ✓ Staff are confident promoting their service to facilitate referrals from a range of organisations and identify opportunities to improve knowledge of the ISVA service and increase referrals
- ✓ Clients report that their access to the ISVA service was timely and straightforward

2.3 The ISVA service aims to provide initial contact with new clients within 5 working days of referral, or sooner

ISVA services for adults

Rationale

Following a referral to the ISVA service, initial contact should be made with the client as quickly as possible and within five working days of receiving the referral. This is important to ensure that the client is aware that the referral has been accepted and that support will be provided to them by the ISVA service.

Survey respondents indicated that they were dissatisfied with long waits between the referral being made to the ISVA service and the ISVA making initial contact with them. Survey respondents also reported that waiting for the ISVA service to make contact had a negative impact on their view of the ISVA service and their willingness to engage with the ISVA service.

“I knew that the police had referred my case to the ISVA service, but I heard nothing for weeks. I didn’t know what was going on and I wasn’t in the right place to chase. So I felt like I was in limbo at exactly the time that I needed the support.”

Survey Respondent

“We allocate all the new referrals on a Tuesday and a Thursday at our team meeting. The allocated ISVA then makes contact with the client that same day, so every new client is contacted within 2-3 days or sooner to arrange the first face to face contact. It works really well.”

ISVA

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders have a policy in place for initial client contact and regularly monitor performance against this to ensure clients are contacted in a timely manner
- ✓ Staff understand the importance of timely initial contact
- ✓ Clients are made aware of the timescales for contact and provided with the means to get in contact directly if contact is not made within these timescales

2.3 The ISVA service aims to provide initial contact with new clients within 5 working days of referral, or sooner

ISVA services for children and young people

Rationale

Following a referral to the ISVA service for children and young people, initial contact should be made with the client as quickly as possible and within 5 working days of receiving the referral. This is important to ensure that the client is aware that the referral has been accepted and that support will be provided to them by the ISVA service.

Children and young people often report that they feel very out of control after disclosing, particularly if they feel that decision-making is out of their hands. Therefore, timely initial contact may be especially important for children and young people accessing ISVA support, as this can help to mitigate the impact of adults managing their information, and the feeling of losing control.

It is important that the ISVA service has a process for managing referrals where the client is not contactable on initial contact.

“Rapid and consistent contact with our younger clients is important because, having already had trust broken, rapid relationship building with a trusted adult is paramount in continued engagement. Traumatized young people don’t easily put their trust in people. It takes a lot for them - so this should be respected and reciprocated with support that can be relied upon.”

Children and Young Person’s ISVA Service Provider

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders have a policy in place for initial client contact and regularly monitor performance against this to ensure clients are contacted in a timely manner
- ✓ Staff understand the importance of timely initial contact
- ✓ Clients are made aware of the timescales for contact and are provided with the means to get in contact directly if contact is not made within these timescales

2.4 The ISVA service puts in place an agreement with all clients that seeks to:

- outline ISVA service provision
- manage service and contact expectations
- obtain consent and assure confidentiality
- define professional boundaries

ISVA services for adults

Rationale

ISVA service providers stressed the importance of describing, at the earliest possibility, the support that will be provided to the client. This is important to ensure the client understands the purpose of the service and helps to manage the client's expectations.

The agreement put in place between the ISVA service and the client will ensure that there is clarity about confidentiality (and any limits), when the sharing of information will take place and in what circumstances, and importantly, provide a mechanism for the ISVA service to ensure the client has fully understood the arrangements and consents to working with the ISVA service.

“At the first meeting with my ISVA, he explained what support he could give to me and how our appointments would work. He also gave me a pack to take away that had all of it written down. This was really helpful because I didn’t know what an ISVA was until he explained.”

Survey Respondent

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders have developed service agreements which effectively outline the ISVA service provision – including when that provision will end, consent, and confidentiality – to manage client expectations and support the management of professional boundaries
- ✓ Staff are confident explaining the service agreement to clients and fulfilling their commitments under the agreement
- ✓ Clients report feeling confident in their understanding and expectations of the ISVA service

2.4 The ISVA service puts in place an agreement with all clients that seeks to:

- outline ISVA service provision
- manage service and contact expectations
- obtain consent and assure confidentiality
- define professional boundaries

ISVA services for children and young people

Rationale

ISVA service providers stressed the importance of describing, at the earliest possibility, the support that will be provided to the client. This is important to ensure that the child or young person understands the purpose of the service and the support being offered, and is fully informed and involved, helping to manage their expectations.

The agreement put in place between the ISVA service and the client will ensure that there is clarity about confidentiality, how information might be shared to keep them safe, and in what circumstances. It provides a mechanism for the ISVA service to ensure the client has fully understood the arrangements and consents to working with the ISVA service. Regularly revisiting the agreement with the child or young person encourages questions, and ensures the information stays fresh in their mind, enabling a collaborative approach and continued informed consent.

The ISVA service should consider adapting its client agreement to make versions available that are suitable for children and young people of different ages and levels of understanding.

The involvement of a parent/carers (where appropriate and possible, and taking the child's views into account) should be detailed in the agreement so the child or young person understands when information will be shared and why.

“Nobody really knows what an ISVA is, so I take plenty of time to fully explain what support I can provide, how I work and how often we’ll see each other. It’s important that the client has clear expectations of what an ISVA can do, and also can’t do. That’s important too.”

ISVA

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders have developed age-appropriate client agreements for children and young people, including for parents/carers as appropriate, which effectively outline the ISVA service provision. Agreements cover the involvement of a safe parent/carers in support, safeguarding responsibilities, consent and confidentiality, and when support will end
- ✓ Staff are confident explaining the service agreement to clients and fulfilling their commitments under the agreement, and regularly revisit the agreement with children and young people
- ✓ Clients report feeling confident in their understanding and expectations of the ISVA service

2.5 The ISVA service proactively engages with third party individuals and/or professionals who support children and young people or adults with additional needs, to ensure clients can fully engage with ISVA support

ISVA services for adults

Rationale

Some clients may require additional help to fully engage with ISVA support, from safe family members, other adults, or relevant professionals. These clients may include, but are not constrained to, adults with disabilities, older people, those with significant mental health needs, and adults lacking capacity, as well as other vulnerabilities.

Engagement with third party individuals and/or professionals should be – other than in exceptional circumstances – driven by the client's needs, and with their consent. The level and nature of involvement of third parties will vary considerably depending on the individual client: one client may require extensive additional support from several sources to engage with ISVA support, whereas another may need significantly less input. The ISVA should talk to the client about their existing support network to identify any relevant risks or support needs.

Setting clear and consistent boundaries when engaging with third party individuals and/or professionals supporting the client enables all parties to understand the role of the ISVA and the service being offered to the client. ISVA services should be clear on whether the support they are providing is for the client only, or whether they will seek to address the impact of the sexual violence on others such as family members. The service should be clear about whether it is able to facilitate onward referrals for those other than the client or will signpost to support where required.

“When a victim has a learning disability assumptions are often made about what that person needs or wants to happen. It’s vital our ISVA works closely with learning disability professionals and non-abusing family members/carers alongside the victim to enable effective communication about the victim’s needs, wishes and vulnerabilities so they have as much control as possible.”

ISVA Service Provider

“The third party can be integral to delivering high quality support. However, recognising and supporting the client’s autonomy is paramount. This can be achieved by strong boundaries and transparency, honesty and openness between all parties.”

ISVA Service Provider

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders put in place clear policies setting out how the ISVA service interacts with carers, family members and other relevant professionals to assist clients who are unable to fully engage in support
- ✓ Staff understand their role in working with other individuals supporting their client, and can explain the importance of clear boundaries and how this is communicated to both the client and relevant third parties
- ✓ Clients are made aware of the service's policy regarding engagement with family members, carers and/or other adults or professionals where relevant

2.5 The ISVA service proactively engages with third party individuals and/or professionals who support children and young people or adults with additional needs, to ensure clients can fully engage with ISVA support

ISVA services for children and young people

Rationale

Children and young people are seldom supported in isolation. ISVA services for children and young people often report that a good relationship with the client's family supports the recovery of the child or young person. This is especially so in the context of younger children, where services may communicate as frequently with a parent/carer as they communicate with their client.

Setting clear and consistent boundaries when engaging with the parent/carer enables all parties to understand the role of the ISVA and the service being offered. ISVA services should be clear about whether the support they are providing is only for the child or young person, or if it will also seek to address the impact of the assault/abuse on the wider family; it should also indicate whether it can facilitate onward referrals for family members.

It is important that the ISVA talks to the child or young person about their relationship with their parent/carer to identify relevant risks and needs. Situations may arise when the wishes of the child or young person differ from those of the parent/carer, and the ISVA should be prepared to navigate these discussions to help find a solution, where appropriate.

Where a child or young person may not wish for their parent/carer to be engaged or aware of their involvement with the service, it is the role of the ISVA to reiterate the boundaries of confidentiality with the client and work with the child or young person – and other professionals in the child or young person's support network where the client consents – to agree a way forward that is safe.

The ISVA should be aware of other agencies' involvement with the child or young person, and when engaging directly with specific professionals (with the child or young person's consent) may enable their client to fully engage with ISVA support.

“The impact sexual abuse has on a child is profound. Parents and close family members need support through what can be a devastatingly challenging time. A holistic whole-family approach to supporting a young person is essential. Keeping the child's voice and wishes central and working with the young person's family, peers and other professionals creates an environment where a child can recover and thrive.”

Children and Young People's ISVA Service Provider

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders put in place clear policies setting out how the ISVA service for children and young people will engage with parents/carers, and provide appropriate information and advice to enable them to support the child or young person
- ✓ Staff understand their role in engaging with their client's parent/carer, and can explain the importance of clear boundaries for information sharing and how this is communicated to the child or young person
- ✓ Clients are made aware of the service's policy regarding engagement with parents/carers and relevant professionals working with the child or young person

Domain 3

Service Delivery

3.1 The ISVA service ensures that individual risk and needs assessments are carried out with each client at every contact

ISVA services for adults

Rationale

ISVA services should aim to build a culture of safety that supports clients and staff by ensuring that the assessment of risk and needs are an integral aspect of service provision.

Recognising the dynamic nature of an individual's risk and needs, ISVAs should assess risk and need continuously and update and adjust support plans accordingly.

“We use the Safety and Support Assessment to risk assess all our clients. It draws our focus to each area of need that we should be focusing our support on. We use it at every appointment so that we can pick up any changes in our clients risk level.”

ISVA Service Manager

“I absolutely expect [our] ISVA service to be assessing the risk level of clients at each contact. If they don't, then how on earth does the ISVA know what support to put in place? Ongoing & routine risk assessment should be the foundation of the ISVA service.”

Commissioner

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders implement a clear policy for initial and continuous risk and needs assessment, facilitated by effective risk and needs assessment tools and information systems
- ✓ Staff are trained and experienced in delivering risk and needs assessments and able to translate these into effective support plans
- ✓ Clients are encouraged to engage with the process of risk and needs assessment

3.1 The ISVA service ensures that individual risk and needs assessments are carried out with each client at every contact

ISVA services for children and young people

Rationale

ISVA services for children and young people should aim to build a culture of safety that supports clients and staff by ensuring the assessment of risk and needs are an integral aspect of service provision.

The risks faced by children and young people can differ considerably from adults. Risks associated with social media and online activities, school or other educational settings, family, friendships and home life as well as potential grooming by older people must be identified and managed through appropriate assessment.

Recognising the dynamic nature of an individual's risk and needs, ISVAs should assess risk and need continuously and update and adjust support plans accordingly.

***“We know that communication with children and young people, can be much more helpful if it is non-verbal. We have adapted the assessment to be a drawing done in collaboration with the child or young person. We have added domains to meet the needs of our children, young people and families, and recognise that some are only relevant to discussions with parents or young adults.*”**

Assessments need to be adaptable to meet the varying ages, communication and developmental needs of children and young people, and assessment should also attend to the needs of the safe adults whilst keeping the child at the heart.”

Children and Young Person's ISVA Service Provider

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders implement a clear policy for initial and continuous risk and needs assessment, facilitated by effective and age-appropriate risk and needs assessment tools and information systems
- ✓ Staff are trained and experienced in delivering risk and needs assessments and are able to translate these into effective, age-appropriate support plans for their clients
- ✓ Clients are encouraged to engage with the process of risk and needs assessment

3.2 The ISVA service ensures that client-led support plans are developed for each client, based on their individual risks and needs

ISVA services for adults

Rationale

The development of individual support plans should be client led and based on the individual risks and needs of the client. The client should be empowered to take a lead role in developing plans for dealing with difficult situations, offering strengths and solutions where they feel have them and indicating the sort of support that they would prefer.

Support plans should be regularly reviewed and updated in response to any change in the individual's risk and needs.

“Too often we were developing a support plan at the start of support that wouldn’t be updated or changed. The SAS [Safety and Support Assessment] has changed this for our service. We do it at each contact and we update the support plan straight away, including to show when actions have been completed.”

ISVA Service Manager

“The support plan that my ISVA wrote put the responsibility on me to do things that would help in my healing process. It felt very empowering.”

Survey Respondent

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders implement processes to support the development and routine review of client support plans, including effective management supervision and information systems to facilitate recording support plans
- ✓ Staff are trained and experienced in developing and reviewing support plans based on the risks and needs of clients
- ✓ Clients are encouraged to engage with the process of developing their support plans

3.2 The ISVA service ensures that client-led support plans are developed for each client, based on their individual risks and needs

ISVA services for children and young people

Rationale

The development of age-appropriate individual support plans should be client-led and based on the individual risks and needs of the client, with reference to areas that specifically impact the child or young person, including life at home, in education and in the wider community as well as online. The client should be empowered to take a lead role in developing plans for dealing with difficult situations, offering strengths and solutions where they feel have them and indicating the sort of support that they would prefer.

Support plans should be regularly reviewed and updated in response to any change in the individual's risks and needs.

“Following a disclosure or discovery of child sexual abuse, children and young people often have to fit into adult systems. Support, assessments and service delivery to children and young people should be designed specifically with the child in mind, not as an add-on to adult assessments and processes.”

Children and Young Person's ISVA Service Provider

“A thorough risk assessment not only helps services identify all the past and current needs, but helps build resilience and a sense of protection for today and the future. A pathway that encompasses local services enables a robust support plan that meets the needs of the child or young person and gives them a voice in decision-making.”

Children and Young Person's ISVA

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders implement processes to support the development and routine review of age-appropriate client support plans, including effective management supervision and information systems to facilitate recording support plans
- ✓ Staff are trained and experienced in developing and reviewing age-appropriate support plans based on the risks and needs of clients
- ✓ Clients are encouraged to engage with the process of developing their support plans

3.3 The ISVA service delivers flexible support to meet the needs of the client, facilitated by effective case management

ISVA services for adults

Rationale

The ability of the ISVA and ISVA service to manage caseloads effectively is paramount. As ISVA services often support their clients for long periods of time (for example, if they are awaiting a trial) during which the individual risks and needs of the client often fluctuate, it is important that ISVA services are flexible in the way that they deliver their support. For example, it may be necessary to increase or decrease the frequency of the ISVA support depending on the risks and needs of the client.

Survey respondents reported being disappointed by the lack of availability or flexibility of their ISVA support, with many respondents saying they were unclear or unhappy as to how the frequency of ISVA support was decided.

It is vital that support provided by the ISVA service is frequent enough to identify, monitor and manage the risks and needs of the client and to enable routine review of those risks and needs. Support may be provided through different mediums, including face-to-face, telephone, text and online support. However, it should be led by the risks and needs of the individual client and based on a discussion with the client to understand their preferences and requirements.

“I didn’t want home visits but that’s all I was offered. I didn’t know how she planned my support and I had random appointments and could not contact her in between ... so a lot of waiting for her to contact me. When I moved, the new ISVA was much more structured and clear how I would be supported.”

Survey Respondent

“We use the SAS [Safety and Support] Assessment to drive the frequency of client appointments. If they’re a complex case with identified risks and needs, we may have weekly appointments until we’ve reduced these, but if there are few support needs but we’re awaiting a trial, we meet every 6 weeks. There is always the option of the client contacting us if something changes and they feel they need an appointment.”

ISVA

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders ensure, through management supervision, that the ISVA workforce has sufficient capacity and support to effectively manage their caseloads and provide flexible and frequent support
- ✓ Staff are able to case manage effectively to offer flexible and frequent support dependent on the needs of the client
- ✓ Clients report feeling support was flexible and frequent to meet their identified needs

3.3 The ISVA service delivers flexible support to meet the needs of the client, facilitated by effective case management

ISVA services for children and young people

Rationale

ISVAs will need to work in different ways with different children and young people depending on their age, capacity, needs and experiences.

The ability of the ISVA and ISVA service for children and young people to manage caseloads effectively is paramount. As ISVA services often support their clients for long periods of time (for example, if they are awaiting a trial) during which the individual risks and needs of the client often fluctuate, it is important that ISVAs and ISVA services are flexible and adaptable in the way that they deliver their support. For example, it may be necessary to increase or decrease the frequency of the ISVA support depending on the risks and needs of the client; or to work in different ways with different children and young people.

It is vital that support provided by the ISVA service is frequent enough to identify, monitor and manage the risks and needs of the client and to enable routine review of those risks and needs. Support may be provided through different mediums, including face-to-face, telephone, text and online support. However, it should be led by the risks and needs of the individual client and based on a discussion with the client to understand their preferences and requirements.

“My ISVA helped me realise that I’m not a victim. I’m a survivor. She kept in touch with me, every time I left a session with her I felt like a weight had been lifted. She used lots of different ways to help me understand properly what had happened, what was going to be the next step, and how to manage every day. I learnt to just think about now not then.

It was good to know that I could message her if I needed to talk to her sooner than our appointment. She made sure I knew when she was working. She always spoke to and treated me like a human being and not some kid who is a damaged mess.”

ISVA Client

“A flexible, comprehensive approach helps not just the child or young person but their families, schools, colleges and others who are often involved in providing support within other settings.”

Children and Young Person’s ISVA Service Provider

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders ensure, through management supervision, that the ISVA workforce has sufficient capacity and support to effectively manage their caseloads and be adaptable and flexible in how support is offered to children and young people
- ✓ Staff are able to be adaptable and flexible to case manage effectively dependent on the needs of the child or young person
- ✓ Clients report feeling support was flexible and frequent to meet their identified needs

3.4 The ISVA service has established referral pathways to other local services that may benefit ISVA service clients

ISVA services for adults

Rationale

A key function of an ISVA service is to enable clients to access services depending on their individual risks and needs.

ISVA services should identify local and national organisations available to provide appropriate support across all areas of risks and needs experienced by clients including:

- Health and medical
- Mental health and psychological well-being
- Coping mechanisms
- Social and cultural support
- Alcohol and drug use
- Safeguarding
- Criminal justice
- Employment
- Education
- Finance
- Accommodation and housing
- Immigration and residence

ISVA services should be able to facilitate their clients' access to these services through established referral pathways (with client consent).

“My local ISVA service was brilliant. They knew about local services and how I could access the support I needed. My ISVA was my lifeline. She was brilliant. Professional. Caring. Unflappable.”

Survey Respondent

“Sometimes other agencies think if the client has an ISVA that they don’t need to support them too, as the ISVA will do it. So I have to explain what my job is a lot and that it’s not instead of theirs!”

ISVA

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders work with organisations to ensure referral pathways are in place between their services to facilitate smooth transition
- ✓ Staff are competent making referrals to organisations to address clients' safety and support needs
- ✓ Clients experience timely and appropriate onward referral to meet their needs

3.4 The ISVA service has established referral pathways to other local services that may benefit ISVA service clients

ISVA services for children and young people

Rationale

One key function of an ISVA service for children and young people is to enable clients to access services depending on their individual risks and needs.

ISVA services should identify local and national organisations available to provide appropriate support across all areas of risks and needs experienced by clients including:

- Health and medical
- Mental health and psychological well-being
- Coping mechanisms
- Social and cultural support
- Alcohol and drug use
- Safeguarding
- Criminal justice
- Education
- Employment
- Finance
- Accommodation and housing
- Immigration and residence

ISVA services should be able to facilitate clients' access to these services through established referral pathways (with client consent).

“We have listened to the children, young people and families we support following sexual violence and abuse. They have helped us to understand that each child or young person’s experience is unique and that support needs to be tailored and age-appropriate, and take a multi-agency, whole family approach. Our dedicated ISVAs provide specialist support to children and young people to help them overcome the trauma they face, whilst also understanding the importance of making appropriate onward referrals to ensure they receive a holistic package of support.”

Children and Young People’s ISVA Service Provider

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders work with organisations to ensure referral pathways are in place between their services to facilitate smooth transition
- ✓ Staff are competent making referrals to organisations to address clients' safety and support needs
- ✓ Clients experience timely and appropriate onward referral to meet their needs

3.5 The ISVA service maintains robust management of client records to assure confidentiality, adherence to data protection legislation and, where appropriate, facilitate the sharing of information

ISVA services for adults

Rationale

Robust records management is essential in the safe and effective delivery of ISVA services.

Clients should be assured of the secure nature of records storage and processing, timescales for retention and their explicit consent recorded in accordance with data protection legislation for any disclosure or sharing of information.

“Effective records management ensure we are able to support clients while fulfilling our obligations around disclosure.”

ISVA Service Provider

“Our service is moving over to an electronic record keeping system. It’ll be much better as everything will be in one secure place. I’m really paranoid about paper files being left somewhere or going missing. So this is a huge step forward and will be easier to use.”

ISVA

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders have implemented a records management system that supports client confidentiality and complies with relevant data protection legislation and disclosure and safeguarding requirements
- ✓ Staff are confident in managing their records including their confidentiality and able to explain these policies to clients assuring their understanding
- ✓ Clients are made aware of how the service holds information about them and in what circumstances that may be shared (with or without consent)

3.5 The ISVA service maintains robust management of client records to assure confidentiality, adherence to data protection legislation and, where appropriate, facilitate the sharing of information

ISVA services for children and young people

Rationale

Robust records management is essential in the safe and effective delivery of ISVA services for children and young people.

Clients should be assured, in an age-appropriate manner commensurate with their maturity and understanding, of the secure nature of record storage and processing, timescales for retention and their explicit consent (where this does not increase risk in the safeguarding context), recorded in accordance with data protection legislation for any disclosure or sharing of information.

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders have implemented a records management system that supports client confidentiality and complies with relevant data protection legislation and disclosure and safeguarding requirements
- ✓ Staff are confident in managing their records including their confidentiality and able to explain these policies to clients assuring their understanding
- ✓ Clients are made aware of how the service holds information about them and in what circumstances that may be shared (with or without consent)

3.6 The ISVA service complies with all national and local safeguarding requirements

ISVA services for adults

Rationale

The ISVA service should be committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk. Safeguarding is the responsibility of all those involved in the delivery of the ISVA service.

The ISVA service should have up to date policies and ensure that training is in place to ensure all staff are competent in their responsibilities around the safeguarding of children and adults at risk. This may include but will not be confined to the children of clients.

The ISVA service should be aware of local processes to ensure referral of concerns to local Children's Services or Adult Services.

“Safeguarding is at the heart of everything we do.”

ISVA Service Manager

“We expect our [ISVA service] provider to ensure all their staff are completely up to speed on local safeguarding arrangements as standard. This is a key requirement of the ISVA service specification.”

Commissioner

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders have implemented and embedded safeguarding policies and escalation procedures in accordance with local and national safeguarding requirements. Leaders ensure staff are routinely and regularly trained in their safeguarding obligations, and have oversight of all safeguarding concerns
- ✓ Staff complete appropriate safeguarding training and are aware of their obligations and able to communicate these appropriately to clients
- ✓ Clients are made aware of the service's obligations around safeguarding

3.6 The ISVA service complies with all national and local safeguarding requirements

ISVA services for children and young people

Rationale

The ISVA service for children and young people should be committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults at risk. Safeguarding is the responsibility of all those involved in the delivery of the service.

Excepting in circumstances of imminent risk where immediate safeguarding referrals should be made, ISVAs and service managers should work together to discuss and escalate safeguarding concerns. A collaborative approach ensures that managers have oversight of high-risk clients, and that safeguarding concerns are held by a service, not by an individual. This protects the service as it ensures appropriate safeguarding referrals are made, and benefits the ISVA who then has shared responsibility for safeguarding concerns, reducing the risk of burn-out.

The ISVA service should have up to date policies and ensure that training is in place to ensure all staff are competent in their responsibilities around the safeguarding of children and adults at risk.

The service safeguarding policy should reflect the responsibilities set out in both the Working Together to Safeguard Children guidance and local safeguarding arrangements. It should detail the action services will take when a safeguarding concern is identified.

The ISVA service should participate in local safeguarding arrangements relevant to their clients by attending multi-agency meetings, sharing appropriate information, and building strong working relationships with key agencies.

The ISVA service should have an established escalation procedure in place to be able to promptly flag concerns to senior managers within statutory services when required. It is vital that the ISVA keeps the child's views, wishes and feelings at the forefront of all discussions.

“It is vital that ISVAs working with children and young people have confidence in recognising and responding to safeguarding concerns appropriately. Robust safeguarding procedures provide the structure and reassurance for staff to act and escalate concerns. There should be a space for reflection, debrief and learning as part of the process so the ISVA can ensure initial and ongoing concerns are communicated effectively, and the safety and well-being of children and young people remain at the centre of the ISVA role.”

Children and Young People's ISVA Service Provider

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders have implemented and embedded safeguarding policies and escalation procedures in accordance with local and national safeguarding requirements. Leaders ensure staff are routinely and regularly trained in their safeguarding obligations, and have oversight of all safeguarding concerns
- ✓ Staff participate in local safeguarding arrangements, know how and when to make child protection referrals, and how to escalate a concern externally when required. Staff attend safeguarding training, are aware of their obligations, and able to communicate these appropriately to clients
- ✓ Clients (and parents/carers where appropriate) are made aware of the service's obligations around safeguarding

3.7 The ISVA service ensures clearly defined exit strategies are put in place to enable the safe, timely and appropriate completion of support

ISVA services for adults

Rationale

It is an important principle that ISVA service support is not provided indefinitely. The support from an ISVA service will vary from case to case, meaning that some clients will be supported for longer than others. This should be led by the individual risks and needs of each client and the support plans put in place.

While it is not appropriate to implement an arbitrary limit on the support provided by an ISVA (as it may be with other support services), it is necessary to ensure that exit strategies are put in place to enable a timely, safe and appropriate end to ISVA service support.

ISVA service providers and survey respondents suggested that it was helpful to discuss the ending of support as early as the initial meeting between the ISVA and the client. Although it will not be possible to put a time limit on this, it may be useful to explain to the client when they may no longer be in need of support from an ISVA service (for example, when the support plan has been completed and there are no risks and needs that require action from the ISVA service, or at such a time that an alternative support service is more appropriate for the client).

Both clinical and management supervision provide opportunities to monitor and review the support provision and when to appropriately end support with each client.

“I believe some ISVA services automatically end support immediately after the CJS [Criminal Justice System] has finished but this can’t be right. The ISVA still has a role in making sure that the client’s other support needs are being met.”

ISVA Service Provider

“I think the ISVA could have struck around for longer. I know that they are busy but I needed to know my options after my case was NFA’ed [No Further Action].”

Survey Respondent

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders ensure, through effective case management, that ISVAs are supported to identify when cases are nearing completion to ensure the safe, timely and appropriate completion of support
- ✓ Staff ensure clients are involved in discussions around the completion of support, onward referrals and signposting
- ✓ Clients’ support plans document agreed actions and onward referrals to complete and finalise ISVA support

3.7 The ISVA service ensures clearly defined exit strategies are put in place to enable the safe, timely and appropriate completion of support

ISVA services for children and young people

Rationale

It is an important principle that ISVA service support for children and young people is not provided indefinitely. The support from a ISVA service will vary from case to case, meaning that some clients will be supported for longer than others. This should be led by the individual risks and needs of each client and the support plans put in place.

While it is not appropriate to implement an arbitrary limit on the support provided by an ISVA (as it may be with other support services), it is necessary to ensure that exit strategies are put in place to enable a timely, safe and appropriate end to ISVA service support.

Both clinical and management supervision provide opportunities to monitor and review the support provision and when to appropriately end support. Some ISVA services have also found it helpful to have a framework in place to guide decisions and communications about the ending of support for children and young people, enabling their ISVAs to maintain clear boundaries with their clients.

“Each young person we support is unique, therefore each needs considerable sensitivity when approaching case closure. It is important to ensure the child is involved with all choices and decisions around when their case closes - by doing so the child feels valued, heard and in control.

We cannot approach case closures as a rigid exercise, such as NFA, case closed, Court Trial complete, case closed. We need to adapt to the needs of each child ensuring they're well prepared, and that any additional support they need is in place before closing. We can then safely hand support back to the parent/carers or any other professional remaining involved with the child.”

Children and Young Person's ISVA Service Provider

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders ensure, through effective case management, that ISVAs are supported to identify when cases are nearing completion to ensure the safe, timely and appropriate completion of support
- ✓ Staff ensure clients (and parents/carers where appropriate) are involved in discussions around the completion of support, onward referrals and signposting
- ✓ Client support plans document agreed actions and onward referrals to complete and finalise ISVA support

Domain 4

Outcomes and Evaluation

4.1 The ISVA service has a process for encouraging feedback from clients, including those who do not continue with support

ISVA services for adults

Rationale

ISVA services should encourage all clients to provide feedback about the support they have received (or are receiving) from the service. A range of options should be available to encourage feedback, including face-to-face, written and online feedback.

Feedback should be routine during support; however it is important that organisations also encourage feedback from those who choose not to proceed with support as this can identify potential barriers to engagement and assist the development of new types of services or delivery methods. For example, a follow-up call may not be appropriate, but providing open mechanisms for feedback anonymously via service websites/ comment cards may encourage clients to explain why they chose not to continue with support.

“They had a box in the waiting room and sent me a questionnaire to complete afterwards but I never did either and they didn’t ask me again. They probably should have and I would have filled it in. My ISVA was brilliant and I never told her.”

Survey Respondent

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders recognise the importance of feedback from clients about the support they have received, have implemented various methods to facilitate this. Practices are informed and, where needed, improved as a result
- ✓ Staff encourage their clients to give feedback at any stage about the support they have received
- ✓ Clients are made aware of the methods for providing regular feedback and can engage in this process at any stage during or after their support

4.1 The ISVA service has a process for encouraging feedback from clients, including those who do not continue with support

ISVA services for children and young people

Rationale

ISVA services should encourage all clients to provide feedback about the support they have received (or are receiving) from the service. A range of options should be available to encourage feedback, including face to face, written and online feedback.

ISVA services often report they find getting feedback from service users challenging, and especially so from children and young people. Services should be creative in how they ask children and young people for their views and elicit their feedback on what more could be done to improve the support on offer. This could include options such as service user groups, the use of images/drawings or via other creative outlets. Services should also give children and young people the opportunity to input into service development and improvement, e.g. through participation in group-based activities.

Where an ISVA service uses a feedback form, this should be adapted to suit the varying ages of children and young people who access the service, as well as their parents/carers; provision should be made for respondents to complete this anonymously to elicit meaningful feedback.

Once services have gathered feedback from children and young people, a process should be in place to ensure this information is recorded, reviewed and acted upon; and the outcomes fed back to the client as appropriate.

Feedback should be routine during support; however it is important that organisations also encourage feedback from those who choose not to proceed with support as this can identify potential barriers to engagement and assist the development of new types of services or delivery methods.

“It is important to capture feedback from children and young people as we cannot assume their needs are the same as those of adult clients. Using the same form for children would be counter-productive. We want all clients to feel they have a voice and that we value their views on our service, so it’s crucial to capture this in an age-appropriate way. Children and young people often experience the criminal justice process in a different way to adults, so their feedback helps us to ensure we recognise this and offer appropriate support throughout.”

Children and Young People’s ISVA Service Provider

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders recognise the importance of feedback from clients about the support they have received and have implemented age-appropriate methods to facilitate this. Practices are informed and, where necessary, improved as a result
- ✓ Staff are creative in developing different methods to obtain regular feedback, and encourage their clients to give feedback at any stage about the support they have received
- ✓ Clients are made aware of the methods for providing regular feedback and can engage in this process at any stage during or after their support

4.2 The ISVA service collects and monitors a core data set to understand whether the ISVA service is achieving equitable access, engagement and a positive impact

ISVA services for adults

Rationale

An ISVA service core data set should be designed to enable the service to identify that they are achieving equitable access and engagement from clients across a range of protected characteristics.

The core data set should also include sufficient outcome measures to determine the ISVA service is having a positive impact for their clients.

“We require our ISVA service to collect specific information that I then monitor as the commissioner, but I’d really like to know how our ISVA service is performing against other ISVA services. This isn’t possible at the moment, but it would be fantastic if we could get all ISVA services to collect the same information. Really powerful.”

Commissioner

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders have implemented processes to collect and monitor a core data set. Data should be reviewed regularly to ensure the service is achieving equitable access, engagement and a positive impact
- ✓ Staff are involved in data collection and recognise the importance of ensuring accurate information is routinely collected
- ✓ Clients are made aware of the purpose of data collection from the outset and are assured of effective information management

4.2 The ISVA service collects and monitors a core data set to understand whether the ISVA service is achieving equitable access, engagement and a positive impact

ISVA services for children and young people

Rationale

A ISVA service core data set should be designed to enable the service to identify that they are achieving equitable access and engagement from clients across a range of protected characteristics.

The core data set should also include sufficient outcome measures to determine the ISVA service is having a positive impact for their clients.

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders have implemented processes to collect and monitor a core data set. Data should be reviewed regularly to ensure the service is achieving equitable access, engagement and a positive impact
- ✓ Staff are involved in data collection and recognise the importance of ensuring accurate information is routinely collected
- ✓ Clients are made aware, in a manner appropriate for their age and understanding, of the purpose of data collection from the outset and are assured of effective information management

4.3 The ISVA service reviews data and feedback from clients to inform change and improvement, and to develop innovative ways of working

ISVA services for adults

Rationale

Monitoring and reviewing data and feedback from clients will ensure ISVA services are able to spot any problems and change, improve and develop new ways of working accordingly.

Reviews should occur at both operational and strategic levels and may establish where there is an increase or decrease in demand or where further engagement is required to ensure equitable access.

Where possible, data should be made available to clients or potential clients, for example via Annual Reports or information published on websites or in other accessible formats.

“We know that we can keep improving our service. It would be great if we could make those improvements based on what the data and feedback tell us, rather than just guessing what we should be doing better or differently.”

ISVA service provider

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders have introduced processes to routinely review data and feedback from clients to inform change and improvement, and to develop innovative ways of working
- ✓ Staff are able and encouraged to contribute to the review of data and feedback
- ✓ Clients are empowered and encouraged to participate in service review, development and improvement

4.3 The ISVA service reviews data and feedback from clients to inform change and improvement, and to develop innovative ways of working

ISVA services for children and young people

Rationale

Monitoring and reviewing data and feedback from clients will ensure ISVA services are able to spot any problems and change, improve and develop new ways of working accordingly.

Reviews should occur at both operational and strategic levels and may establish where there is an increase or decrease in demand or where further engagement is required to ensure equitable access.

Where possible, data should be made available to clients or potential clients, for example via Annual Reports or information published on websites, or in any other accessible and age-appropriate formats.

“Data can be a useful tool in maintaining and driving an ISVA service’s performance. I don’t think we’re doing this well enough yet.”

Commissioner

Achieving the Quality Standard

- ✓ Leaders have introduced processes to routinely review data and feedback from clients to inform change and improvement, and to develop innovative ways of working
- ✓ Staff are able and encouraged to contribute to the review of data and feedback
- ✓ Clients are empowered and encouraged to participate in service review, development and improvement



LimeCulture is a specialist sexual violence and safeguarding training and consultancy organisation based in the UK. Through our breadth of professional knowledge and experience of working across the sexual violence sector, we support our clients to deliver excellent services to victims and survivors of rape and sexual assault/abuse.

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