

# **Safety and Support (SAS) Assessment for Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVAs)**

Regional Workshops – March 2017

# Agenda

10.00am/2.00pm - Welcome & Introductions

10.10am/2.10pm - Background to Project

10.30am/2.30pm - Benefits & Key considerations

11.00am/3.00pm - Refreshment Break

11.15am/3.15pm - How to use the SAS Assessment & Plan

11.35am/3.35pm – Implementing the SAS Assessment

11.50am/3.50pm - Suggestions & Help

12.00pm/4.00pm – End of Workshop



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# Background to Safety and Support (SAS) Assessment

- No bespoke Risk and/or Needs Assessment for ISVAs to use with their clients
- Many ISVA services carry out informal risk assessments (based on a mostly unstructured approach)
- Stats from 'Audit of ISVAs' (2015) & anecdotal evidence from ISVAs suggest that a proportion of ISVAs are not using any standard risk assessment
- Concerns raised by individual ISVAs, ISVA Managers and Commissioners about safety of current risk assessment processes and consistency of needs assessment.
- Some ISVA services have developed their own risk and needs processes & documentation- much of it is good, but generally it is anecdotal and inconsistent across the ISVA workforce.



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# Is there a need to formalise ISVA risk & needs assessment?

- ISVA workforce are growing & increasing in recognition but still inconsistencies in practice and lack of understanding about what ISVAs do/how they work
- Need to reduce the variance in quality of ISVA Service provision
- Standardisation can be a good thing.....as long as it doesn't stifle service innovation
- Home Office Guidance (currently in development) states that ISVA are responsible for completing the following for each client:
  - Needs Assessment- conduct a thorough needs assessment which is reviewed on an on-going basis;
  - Risk Assessment- conduct a thorough risk assessment which is reviewed on an ongoing basis;
  - Support Plan - develop a support plan to meet the identified risks and needs.

# Development of the SAS Assessment

## Project Timescales

- **Home Office approved funding** to develop a bespoke tool for ISVAs in Autumn 2016.
- **Phase 1: Development** including consultation workshops and written consultation to ISVA – Feedback from more than 50 ISVAs/Services - October 2016
- **Phase 2: Testing** - 5 Pathfinder Services - January / February 2017
- **Phase 3: Roll out and Implementation** - 10 regional workshops and tool available online - March 2017



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# Feedback & Consultation with ISVAs

## All agreed

- the importance of risk and need assessing individual clients
- this should lead to the development of an individual support plan for the client
- it should be client centered
- that risk and needs assessment should build rapport - not break it or create a difficult relationship with client.



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# Feedback & Consultation with ISVAs

## Mixed responses about:

- Documentation
- Questions v Prompts
- Language
- Scoring
- Ordering of questions
- Professional judgement and how that should be included
- Length of time to spend on a risk and needs assessment.
- **Concerns** about how it will fit to existing practices, data systems, management requirements.



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# Key Considerations

## Embedding risk and needs assessment in everyday practice

This should not be viewed as an ‘add-on’ to practice, but should produce a structured and documented version of the professional judgments that ISVAs make everyday.

## Client Involvement

Full engagement of the client in the risk and needs assessment is sometimes not possible, but the potential for it should always be considered.

## Recognition of the fluidity of risk

Risk can change – sometimes over very short timescales. Given the fluidity of risk, there should be an established procedure to formally review the full SAS Assessment at regular intervals.



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# Key Considerations

## Confidentiality and disclosure

ISVA services should have in place clear agreed policies on information-sharing, which advises on the 'need to know'. For example, if the client is at risk or if someone other than the client is at risk, safeguarding procedures may be invoked.

## Diversity

Professional judgement is based on perceptions that can be biased without the ISVA being aware. Therefore all staff involved in risk and needs assessment must be capable of demonstrating an appropriate level of cultural sensitivity and competence.



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# Benefits of Implementation

## Benefit to Clients

- tailored to the clients changing risk and needs through dynamic assessment , planning and review.
- allows a more seamless transfer of support for the individual client where clients move between ISVAs and/or other services.

## Benefit to Service Managers

Feedback from the consultation showed that ISVA Managers were highly in favour of this approach which enables managers to

- assure effective risk and needs identification and management and put in place effective and appropriate escalation processes.
- monitor the intensity of staff case loads, helping them to reduce the risk to their ISVAs and the organisation by providing a measure to allocate caseloads.



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# Benefits of Implementation

## Benefit to ISVA Services

- ensure risk and needs assessment and support planning are an integral aspect of service provision, build a culture of safety that supports clients and staff
- develops more effective ISVA services are they able to monitor to report on activity demonstrating where the risks and needs add to delivery pressures.

## Benefits to Commissioners

- As services are better able to report on delivery pressures commissioners will be better able to judge the resources required to meet demand and therefore allocate resources more effectively.



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# From Cardiff Process Evaluation of ISVAs (2009)

- For the majority of the victims interviewed, the support provided by an ISVA was often cited as what enabled them to ‘pull through’ the trauma caused by the sexual violence. Again, it was the unique ISVA combination of **establishing an emotional connection** with the victim, in addition to **providing whatever practical assistance and ‘signposting’**”
- Victims also commented on the ability of ISVAs to ‘do everything’ in terms of helping them through the trauma of having experienced sexual violence. Having this one key worker helped to **prevent them from feeling shuttled between agencies**, and also helped to ensure that the **actions of other agencies were coordinated on behalf of victims, increasing their safety.**
- ISVAs had the expertise and knowledge to provide **practical advice and information** in a holistic way that covered all of the relevant systems, especially **health, housing and the criminal justice system** ”



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# What is the Safety and Support (SAS) Assessment?

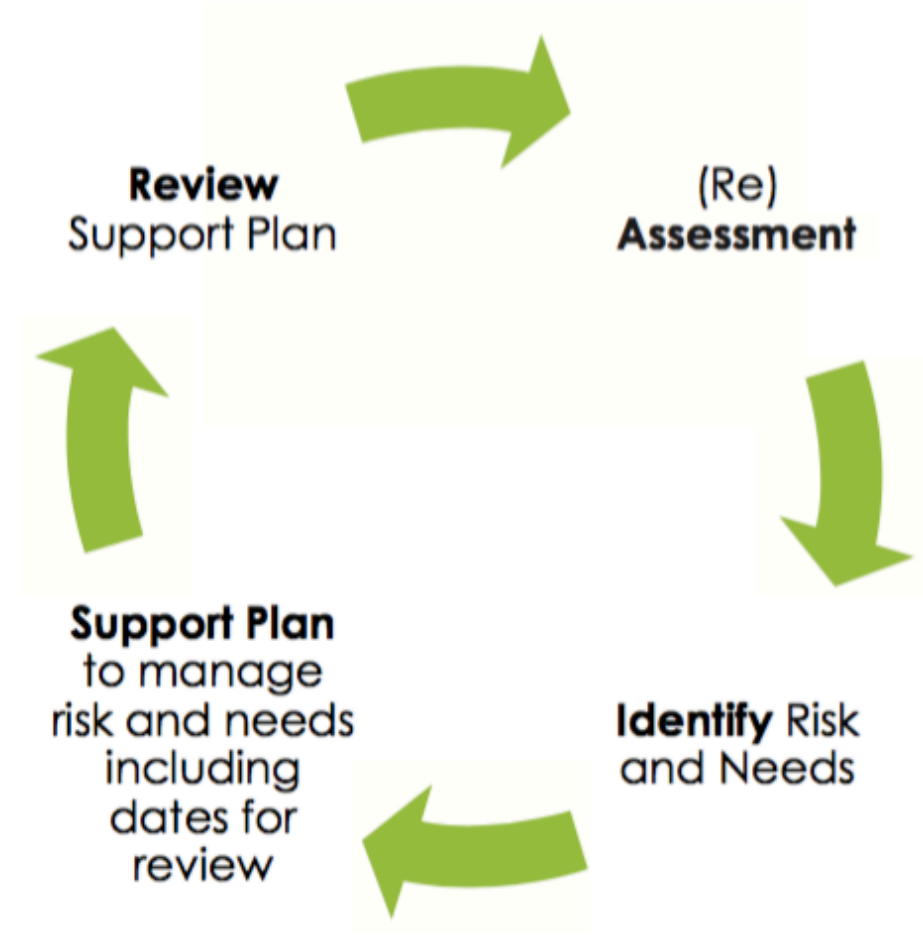
- A **domain-based assessment process** that allows the ISVA to identify their client's individual risks and needs (without prescribing a form of words or imposing a checklist)
- Allows ISVA to more **robustly identify, monitor and manage** the individual risks and/needs of their clients over time.
- Allows the ISVA to draw up an **individual and tailored Safety and Support (SAS) Plan** to meet all of the client's risks and needs, and provide clarity about the nature of support the ISVA will provide.
- **Safety and Support Assessment Toolkit for ISVAs** provides full details on the domains and the assessment , planning and review process.
- **Editable Safety and Support Assessment and Planning Templates** have also been developed
- All resources are available free of charge

# Safety and Support (SAS) Assessment - Domains

D1 Personal & Individual Requirements	D2 Harm from Other(s)	D3 Health & Medical	D4 Mental Health & Psychological Wellbeing	D5 Coping Mechanisms, Social & Cultural Support
D6 Alcohol & Drug Use	D7 Safeguarding	D8 Criminal Justice	D9 Employment & Education	D10 Finance
D11 Accommodation & Housing	D12 Immigration & Residence	D13 Risk to Professionals & Services	D14 Professional Judgment	

# Assessment & Review Process

- Full assessment to identify clients risk and needs as well as an **optional scoring element**
- Allows the ISVA to capture the 'Action Required' and/or 'Action Taken' in relation to the client's needs or to mitigate the risks identified
- Develop **a support plan** to manage risk and address needs and the plan should include planned re-assessments dates at regular intervals
- SAS is **used at every contact to review risks and needs** and update the support plan



# Safety and Support (SAS) Assessment Template

Domain 3 : Health & Medical			
	Information Summary	Risks Identified	Actions
Urgent medical attention			
Forensic medical examination			
Sexual & Reproductive Health		Needs Identified	
Medical Appointments			
Medicines			Score



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# Consider

*In small groups, discuss at what key points/stages/dates you might schedule to do a full re-assessment with your client?*

# (Optional) Scoring System

0 - No risk or needs identified.

1 - Mild Risk or Needs identified that can be managed by the client

2 - Moderate Risk or Needs identified that can be managed by the ISVA Service

3 - Significant Risk or Needs identified that require support from other services



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# Safety and Support (SAS) Planning Template

Domain 3 : Health and Medical			
Initial Safety and Support (SAS) Assessment			
Date	Score	Summary of Risks and Needs	Actions taken by ISVA or client to manage safety or risk needs
Update			
Date	Score	Summary of Risks and Needs	Actions taken by ISVA or client to manage safety or risk needs

# Safety and Support (SAS) Planning

Identify Client's Risks

Identify Client's Needs

```
graph TD; A[Identify Client's Risks] --> C[Safety and Support (SAS) Assessment]; B[Identify Client's Needs] --> C; C --> D[Safety and Support (SAS) Plan];
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**Safety and Support (SAS) Assessment**

**Safety and Support (SAS) Plan**

Actions taken/ to be taken i.e the support the ISVA will provide this may be supporting the client to act, referrals to other services , information gathering/provision and letters of support)

# Consider

- *How you will implement SAS Assessment in your service?*
- *Are there any barriers and hurdles?*
- *What can be done to overcome them?*
- *What help do you need to implement the SAS Assessment?*



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# Our Suggestions

- Use the Toolkit until you are familiar with the domains....it gets easier!
- Download the Support and Safety (SAS) Assessment and Planning Templates...and amend them to suit your own/your service needs .. add prompts, referral processes, contact details.
- Discuss with your managers use of the scoring system and escalation.
- Look at our Frequently Asked Questions - available to download from [www.limeculture.co.uk](http://www.limeculture.co.uk)
- Contact us for support!
- In time...ask other ISVAs to help

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/isva.network/>



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# Thank you!

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