

When someone is experiencing domestic abuse, it is vital to make an accurate and fast assessment of the danger they're in, so they can get the right help as quickly as possible.

The DASH risk checklist is a tried and tested way to understand risk.

DASH stands for domestic abuse, stalking and 'honour'-based violence. The DASH risk checklist involves asking the victim a simple series of questions, which then makes it easy to work out the risk someone is facing, and what they might need to become safe and well. The questions are based on extensive research of domestic abuse.

The DASH risk checklist can be used for all intimate partner relationship as well as for 'honour'-based violence and family violence. It is primarily intended for use by professionals such as IDVAs (Independent Domestic Violence Advisors). There is also a specific police version of the risk checklist, which is used by most police forces in England and Wales. It aims to provide a uniform understanding of risk across professions.



The MASH team will review every referral that comes in from the police. Information will be gathered from children's social care, adult social care, probation and health. Any concerns and risks highlighted will form part of the assessment within MASH.

All victims, whether assessed as high, medium or standard risk, will be offered support through the commissioned Domestic Abuse service.

A high score means the victim is at high risk of murder and/or serious harm and needs urgent help. These victims should get help from an IDVA and all the relevant local agencies should come together at a MARAC (multi-agency risk assessment conference) to make a plan to make them safe. When a victim is assessed as high risk, they remain classed as high risk even if any future incidents are assessed as lower risk.



The DASH risk checklist does not replace vital professional judgement and the need for training.

The DASH checklist includes questions relating to areas such as;

- The severity, frequency and escalation of violence
- The victim's fear and perception of the situation
- Mental health
- Drugs and alcohol
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Controlling behaviour
- Isolation
- Harassment and stalking
- Threats
- Previous incidents and criminal history
- Pregnancy
- Child contact issues
- Recent separation

It is important to remember that risk can change quickly and it should be frequently reviewed. Sharing information across agencies is a vital part of ensuring that risk is properly assessed and managed.