



**North East and
North Cumbria**

NENC ICB Responsibilities: Domestic Abuse & Children

Protecting vulnerable children from domestic abuse harms

Our Statutory Duties



Legal Recognition of Child Victims

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 officially recognises children affected by domestic abuse as victims needing specific care and support.

ICBs' Strategic Planning

The Health and Care Act 2022 requires ICBs to develop five-year strategic plans addressing needs of domestic abuse victims including children.

Proactive Safeguarding Role

ICBs must actively safeguard vulnerable individuals by integrating healthcare services focused on domestic and sexual abuse victims

Safeguarding Children



Executive Safeguarding Leads

Appointing executive leads ensures safeguarding responsibilities are prioritized at the highest governance level.

Statutory Guidance Compliance

ICBs comply with 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' to coordinate multi-agency protection efforts.

Local Safeguarding Partnerships

Active participation in local partnerships ensures adherence to safeguarding standards across services.

Safe Healthcare Services

Healthcare services must be safe and responsive to children's needs, promoting their welfare and protection.

Commissioning & Service Planning

Trauma-Informed Service Commissioning

ICBs must commission services that are trauma-informed and centred on supporting children affected by domestic abuse.

Strategic Planning and Needs Assessment

Domestic abuse considerations should be integrated into strategic planning and needs assessments by ICBs.

Early Identification in Healthcare

Services must identify and respond to domestic abuse early, particularly in primary care, maternity, and emergency departments.

Accessible Referral Pathways

ICBs must ensure referral pathways are accessible and effective for children and families affected by domestic abuse.



Workforce Training & Accountability

Comprehensive Staff Training

Healthcare staff must be trained to identify domestic abuse signs and understand referral pathways for victim support.

Compliance with SAAF Framework

Staff roles and responsibilities in safeguarding are defined by the NHS England Safeguarding Accountability and Assurance Framework.

Ongoing Role-Specific Training

Training is continuous and tailored to specific staff roles to ensure confident and appropriate responses to safeguarding issues.

Accountability Mechanisms

Effective monitoring ensures compliance and maintains safeguarding as a priority across all organizational levels.



Multi-Agency Collaboration

Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences

MARACs bring together professionals from various sectors to share information and develop safety plans for high-risk victims.

Domestic Homicide Reviews

ICBs participate in DHRs to learn from past incidents and improve future safeguarding responses.

Holistic Safeguarding Approach

Collaboration among local authorities, police, and voluntary organisations ensures comprehensive support for children and families.



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National, Regional, Local

National

National Head of
Safeguarding
Kenny Gibson

Responsibility for:

- Domestic Abuse
- Violence Against Women and Girls
- Sexual Violence

Regional

Chief Nurse
David Purdue

Chris Brown NHSE
Safeguarding Lead

Local

Molly Larkin
Deputy Director of
Nursing-
Safeguarding

NENC ICB - Internally

- Domestic Abuse is one of the main priorities of the ICB
- Domestic Abuse is in all NHS contracts, and the Trusts are expected to ensure that the workforce can:
 - Prevent
 - Identify
 - Respond consistently through a Think Family First lens
- The ICB is a strategic partner on the:
 - Community Safety Partnership Boards across the 14 LAs
 - Domestic Abuse Board
 - ICB publish every month a link around DA and safeguarding
 - Safeguarding Network for Health Professionals across the area
 - NENC ICB signed up to the Sexual Safety Charter in 2023

NHSE – External

- Standing Together for DA – A network with learning opportunities
 - Meets 4/6 times a year

National Initiatives



NHS England Safeguarding Accountability and Assurance Framework (SAAF)

Updated in 2024 to reflect the role of ICBs in safeguarding children and adults.

Emphasises **multi-agency collaboration**, training, and **localised safeguarding leadership**.

Supports implementation of **Children's Social Care Reforms** and revised **Working Together to Safeguard Children** guidance.

IRISi & NHS Collaboration

IRIS and ADViSE programmes are being expanded to support ICBs in embedding domestic abuse identification and referral pathways in general practice and sexual health clinics.

Focus: Early intervention, clinician training, and direct referral to domestic abuse specialists.