

From: The Multiagency Risk Assessment Conference Project Group
To: Kent Community Safety Partnership
Date: 21st March 2023
Subject: MARAC review and implementation of new model: update report

There is significant evidence from research, Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) and Serious Case Review (SAR) findings and recommendations that Multiagency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) processes require improvement.

A review was instigated in Jan 2022 brought together by a cross partnership project group (The MARAC Project Group¹) working with a wider Steering Group which involved stakeholders from across public and voluntary sector partners.

A model was signed off by the Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group in July 2022. Funding for the model has now been agreed and Kent Police have allocated project resource to support implementation.

The new model supports increased oversight of progress, strengthening research supporting children's voice, consistent Chairing and management, prioritisation of case meetings for complex cases involving multiple partners and additional coordination resource allocation. It also gives the opportunity to strengthen protocol and training.

The model will be in place by July 2023.

This paper is being brought to the Community Safety Partnership as an update on progress.

1. Background

- 1.1 A MARAC is a forum to discuss how to help victims and survivors at high risk. The aim of the process is to create a system that enables prompt and relevant information sharing across agencies in a way that brings about effective safeguarding action to prevent death and serious harm. Meetings enable agency specific research to be shared and actions allocated to increase the safety of adult and child victims and survivors of abuse to create a joint safety plan.
- 1.2 Currently in Kent and Medway this system is managed by the Police but is attended by local authorities, domestic abuse services, Health and other agencies. While challenging to quantify, significant staff resource is utilised across these services in supporting the MARAC process.

¹ Listed in report authors.

- 1.3 MARAC is non statutory, and there is no government funding allocation available for this work. There are over 290 MARACs across the UK and MARAC data is submitted to Safe Lives on a quarterly basis².
- 1.4 A number of significant issues have been raised around MARAC processes in Kent & Medway. This includes via Domestic Homicide Review and Serious Case Review recommendations. Past efforts to improve Kent & Medway's MARAC model have centred on increasing the length or frequency of meetings to grow the number of cases heard. However, the capacity within staff teams has not increased with the number of meetings, and this has led to unsustainable pressure on the MARAC coordination team as well as core partner agencies. It has also meant limited capacity to improve the systems around MARAC.
- 1.5 Research by Kent Analytics identified improvement priorities as including strengthening meeting management and meeting attendance, establishing clear pre and post meeting processes and introducing consistent Chairing.

2. Current MARAC model

- 2.1 In Kent & Medway there were 2689 cases discussed across 13 area MARACs (March 2021- March 2022). MARACs are held over 13 district and unitary areas. Meetings are held fortnightly with the exception of Medway which meets weekly. Meetings in one area (such as West) are held on the same day and attendees are asked to participate in every case. In practice this can mean that professionals are in MARAC meetings all day. Chairing is currently rotational and done on a voluntary basis.
- 2.2 The current model has 2.95 full time equivalents with staff supporting both the MARAC coordination and the Police research required to support the MARAC process. There is no capacity within the current model to support the Chairing of MARACs.

3. Review process

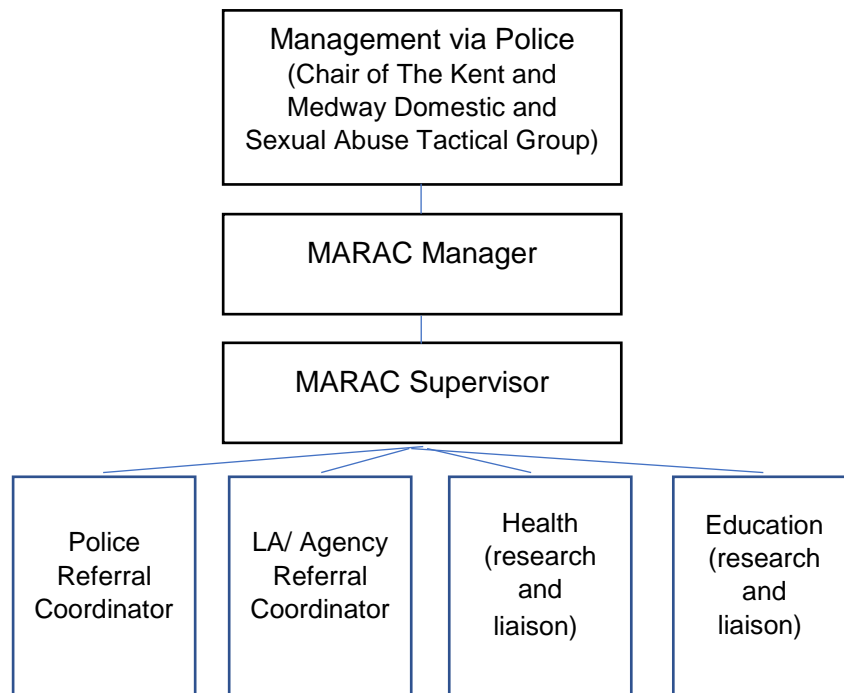
- 3.1 In Jan 2022 a review commenced into MARAC led by the MARAC project group. This was supported via the MARAC Steering Group, which includes representation from across Police, the ICB, Local Authorities, Community Safety Partnership officers (DHR), Probation, Kent Fire and Rescue and domestic abuse providers. The review sought to find a sustainable model for MARAC which addresses the key issues highlighted from DHR and SAR recommendations and Kent Analytics findings.
- 3.2 A funding model comparison was completed by the MARAC project group, and a discussion was held with regional leads across the South-East where information was shared across area. The MARAC project group worked to bring together best practice learnings from multiple models.

² [Latest Marac National Dataset | Safelives](#)

- 3.3 The MARAC project group presented a proposed model which centres around a co-funded multi-agency MARAC Hub Team that manages a MARAC system based on strong information sharing and agency accountability. The Hub will enable all high-risk cases across Kent and Medway to benefit from multiagency information sharing and closely monitored action planning whilst reducing the amount of time spent in MARAC meetings which works to ensure meeting prioritisation to complex multiagency cases, and discussion of any incomplete actions. It also supports consistent Chairing.
- 3.4 In May 2022 Assistant Chief Constable Tracy Harman formalised the Police position to partners asking organisations to consider appropriate resources and funding to support the future MARAC model. Funding has now been agreed and will be shared by Police, Kent County Council, Medway, Probation and Kent Fire and Rescue.
- 3.5 The model was presented and agreed at the Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group (July 2022). It was also presented to Joint Kent Chiefs (September 2022).
- 3.6 Nationally this is the only model which the group are aware of which has gained financial backing from such a wide range of partners, and we have had interest in the model from other local authority areas and Standing Together.

4. The New Model

Figure A: New MARAC structure



- 4.1 The new MARAC Hub team will include a MARAC manager, supervisor and four full time MARAC coordinators who will ensure consistency of Chairing and coordination across 5 monthly area MARACs. Coordinators will be trained across partner data bases to ensure resilience within the team. This is a 3 FTE increase in capacity from the current model.
- 4.2 A Case Management System (CMS) will be introduced which will allow all relevant agencies to access cases online, add information required, oversee actions, as well as request actions from partners as needed, monitored by the Hub Team. The system will monitor progress and flag actions which have not been met, which can be escalated as required.
- 4.3 The CMS will allow for some cases to be managed without partners meeting. This will ensure that complex cases which require significant consideration and resource are prioritised within the multiagency meeting space. A meeting on a case can be requested by partners at any time.
- 4.4 The CMS will support the collection of data against identified performance indicators. This will allow the MARAC Steering Group and the Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Tactical Group to monitor the success of the model, developing changes if necessary.
- 4.5 The MARAC Manager and MARAC Supervisor posts will support consistent Chairing of all MARAC meetings. The Manager will be asked to support decisions around risk level as needed.
- 4.6 The Hub will be hosted by the Police which allows for smooth transition between the current Police led model and new model, and for close links to be made to the management of high risk perpetrators through the MATAC process managed by the Police. The MARAC Manager will be managed by the Chair of the Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Tactical Group which holds oversight for the MARAC process.

5. Implementation

- 5.1 Kent Police have allocated programme management resource to support the implementation of the new MARAC hub. Work to date has prioritised resourcing and recruitment to posts and working to identify options for the implementation of the case management system and any necessary information agreements.
- 5.2 The implementation of the new model offers the opportunity to review training, and the MARAC Steering Group will be asked to support the identification of training opportunities and requirements. Both staff within the coordination team and staff who attend MARAC (and will utilise the CMS) will be offered training as scoped via the Project Group.
- 5.3 MARAC protocols will be revised and published. The MARAC project team will work with partners to support agreement on partner resource allocation to ensure that staff within agencies have the capacity to engage fully and as required within the MARAC process. Non or low attendance at MARAC will be

escalated to the Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Tactical Group, and, if required, to the Kent and Medway Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 Learnings from research, stakeholder engagement events, and Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) and Serious Case Review (SAR) findings have identified specific areas of improvement for MARAC processes. A new model has been developed through collaboration across partners.
- 6.2 The new model supports increased oversight of progress, strengthening research supporting children’s voice, identified health resource, consistent Chairing and management, prioritisation of case meetings for complex cases involving multiple partners and additional resource allocation. It also gives the opportunity to strengthen protocol and training.
- 6.3 Currently work to support recruitment and the implementation of the Case Management System is being prioritised, however opportunities to support clear performance indicators, to develop and improve training and strengthen the MARAC protocol which will include agreements against attendance by agencies, will be utilised. The new model is due to be in place by July 2023.

Report author:

Serine Annan-Veitch

Projects and Partnership Manager

Strategy, Policy, Relationships Corporate Assurance (SPRCA)

Multiagency Risk Assessment Conference Project Group:

Alex Tyler Alex.Tyler@kent.police.uk	Claire Kennedy claire.kennedy@medway.gov.uk	Iona Hunter-Whitehouse iona.hunter-whitehouse@kent.gov.uk
Serine Annan-Veitch Serine.annan-veitch@kent.gov.uk	Sophie Scott sophie.scott@kent.police.uk	Zoe Beard zoe.baird1@nhs.net
Annabel Hayes Annabel.Hayes@kent.gov.uk		