

Children and Young Peoples Services – Toolkit for MARAC

Contents:

1. Frequently asked questions
2. Contacts for your local MARAC
3. Flowcharts tracking the research and referral processes for MARAC
4. Forms from CAADA (risk indicator checklist, referral and research forms)

What is a Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)?

The main aim of the MARAC is to reduce the risk of serious harm or homicide for a victim and to increase the safety, health and wellbeing of victims – adults and any children. In a MARAC local agencies will meet to discuss the highest risk victims in their area and safety plan around that victim. The safety of the children should be addressed via your existing CP procedures, although it will be reinforced by the information gained at MARAC. Information about the risks faced by those victims, the actions needed to ensure safety, and the resources available locally will be shared and used to create a risk management plan involving all agencies.

MARACs and Children and Young People

The MARAC will help you link up efforts to safeguard the abused parent and efforts to safeguard the child, helping you to intervene in vulnerable families before children are placed at significant risk. The MARAC will also help you to work with clients that are not engaging with you or need more support by involving other agencies, such as the IDVA service or specialist domestic violence services, to work with the victim.

'We are often at a loss as to how to progress if Mum says "nothing's happened and the children are fine". The MARAC gives us a way to get beyond that position' *Safeguarding Officer, Liverpool*

1. Frequently Asked Questions

Why does a representative from my agency attend?

The MARAC will normally achieve more successful outcomes in high risk DV cases than you would have achieved working with limited information on your own. You will receive information from a variety of agencies about what is going on in the family. This will allow you make better decisions on how to progress referrals where resources permit and to assess the risks to the family and therefore keep children safer at home.

What cases are discussed?

The highest risk cases of domestic abuse are discussed in your MARAC. These will have been identified by a practitioner from any agency using an evaluated risk assessment tool (see attached for CAADA recommended risk indicator checklist). It is recommended that the MARAC should initially see the top 10% of cases in your area in terms of risk profile.

What information should my agency bring?

The Children's Services representative at MARAC (normally someone with managerial responsibilities) should bring any relevant information regarding the family that might help to assess the risk to the victim and children or inform a safety plan. This might include whether or not the case is known to children's services, whether the child is on the child protection register, level of any current intervention, any assessments and the outcomes of those assessments.

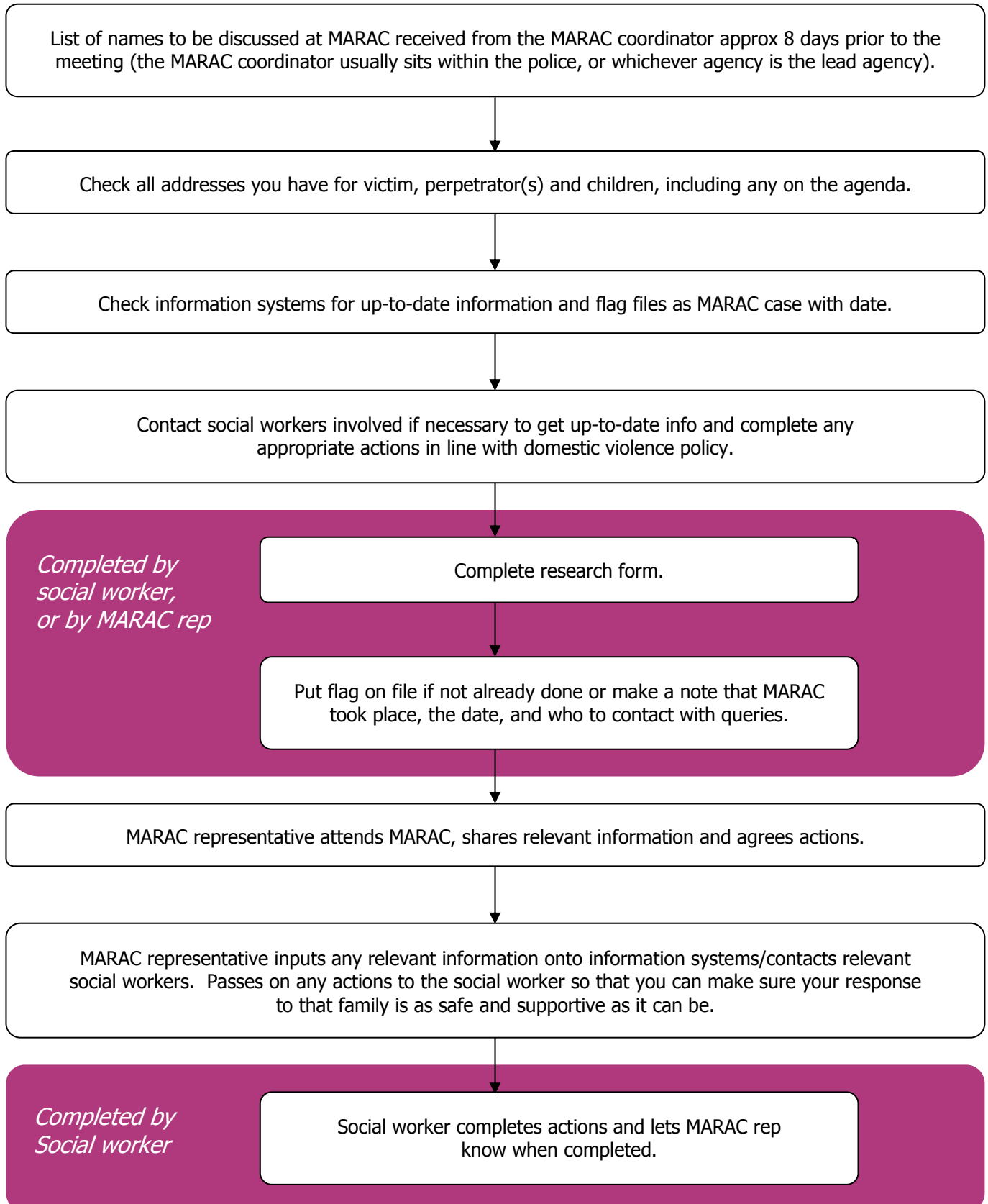
What actions can we offer?

The actions volunteered by Children's Services usually focus on increasing the safety of the children and working with other agencies to make sure that current support offered is safe for the victim involved. Specific actions for Children's Services might include agreeing to assess the children, referring the case to other services, or going on joint visits.

3. Flowcharts

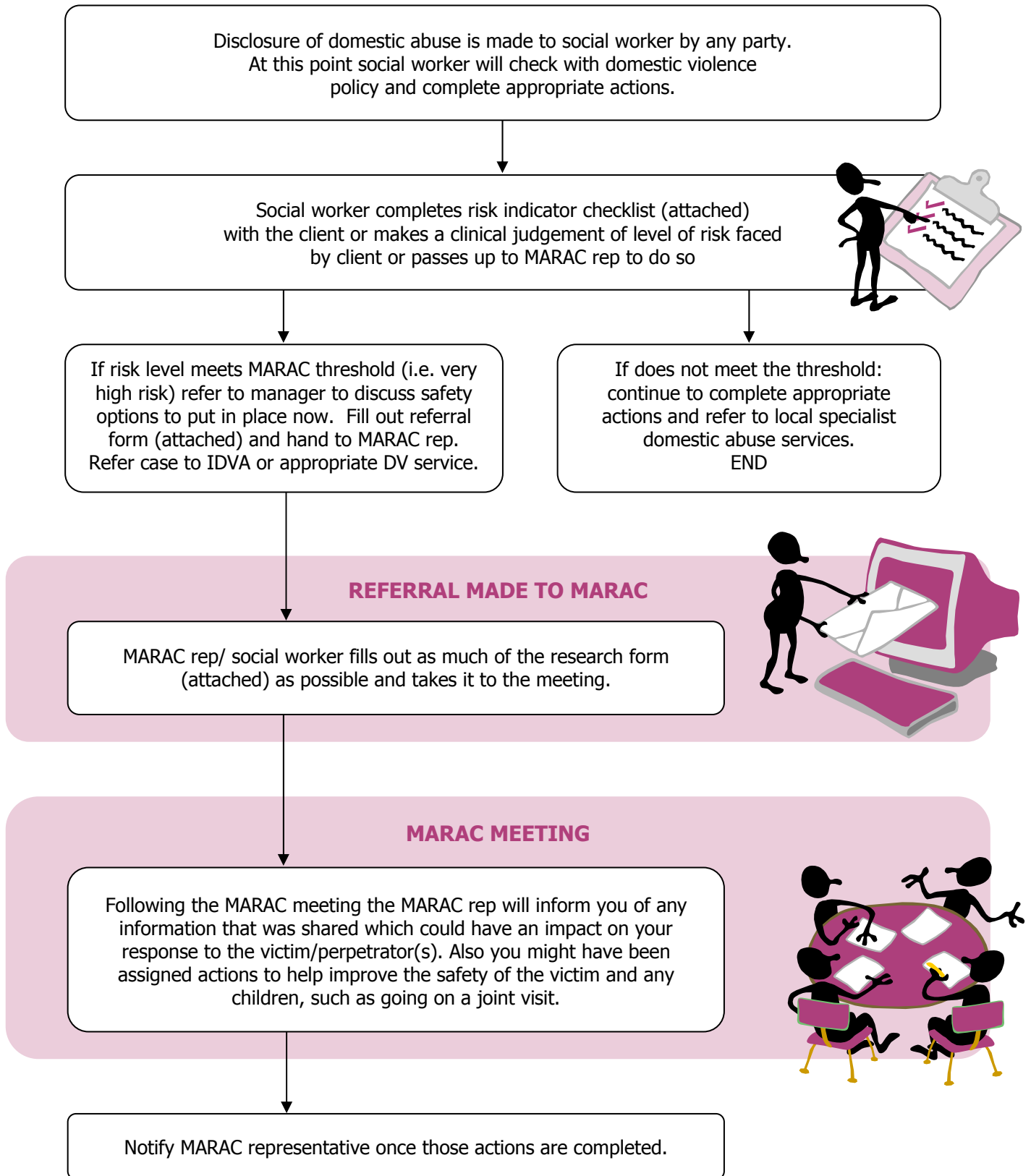
Researching for the MARAC

Practice in your agency will differ according to local policy and organisational structure, but below is an outline of the research process for MARAC. All the cells in white should be completed by your MARAC representative.



Referring a case to the MARAC

Policies on referring to your particular MARAC will be available locally but here is an outline of the process.



4. Forms

CAADA RECOMMENDED RISK INDICATOR CHECKLIST FOR IDVAS AND OTHER AGENCIES

(South Wales Police checklist but using non-police language assuming the IDVA or other professional will be discussing this with their client.)

Questions (DO NOT FILL IN SHADED BOXES)	Yes (tick)	No/ Don't Know (N/DK)	Significant Concern
1. Does partner/ex-partner have a criminal record for violence or drugs? If 'yes', is the record domestic abuse related?			
2. Has the current incident resulted injuries? If 'yes', does this cause significant concern?			
3. Has the incident involved the use of weapons? If 'yes', does this cause significant concern?			
4. Has your partner/ex-partner ever threatened to kill anybody? If 'yes', which of the following? <i>(tick all that apply)</i> Client <input type="checkbox"/> Children <input type="checkbox"/> Other Intimate Partner <input type="checkbox"/> Others <input type="checkbox"/> If 'yes', does this cause significant concern?			
5. Has the partner/ex-partner expressed / behaved in a jealous way or displayed controlling behaviour or obsessive tendencies? If 'yes', describe in summary:			
If 'yes', does this cause significant concern? Give details:			
6. Has there been/going to be a relationship separation between you and your partner/ ex-partner?			
7. Is the abuse becoming worse and/or happening more often?			
8. Are you very frightened? Give client's perceptions of the situation indicating what they think the partner/ex-partner will do.			
9. Is your partner/ex-partner experiencing/recently experienced financial problems?			
10. Does your partner/ex-partner have / had problems with the following: Alcohol <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health <input type="checkbox"/> Drugs <input type="checkbox"/>			
11. Are you pregnant?			

	Yes	No/ DK	
12. Is there any conflict with your partner / ex-partner over child contact? Describe in summary:			
13. Has partner/ex-partner attempted to strangle/choke you or past partner?			
14. Have you or your partner/ex-partner ever threatened/attempted to commit suicide? If 'yes', which of the following? Client <input type="checkbox"/> Partner/ex-partner <input type="checkbox"/>			
15. Has your partner/ex-partner said or done things of a sexual nature that makes you feel bad or that physically hurts you? Give details:			
16. Are you afraid of further injury or violence?			
17. Are you afraid that your partner/ex-partner will kill you? (See note on victim's perception of risk in Guidance at end of form.)			
18. Are you afraid that your partner/ex-partner will harm her/his children?			
19. Do you suspect that you are being stalked?			
20. Do you feel isolated from family / friends? Give details:			
Advocacy Worker's perception (please complete this section with your observations about the client's risk especially where there are lower numbers of 'yes' responses):	Total		Total Significant concerns from Q1-5

The guidance below is based on the experience of the South Wales Police force and the Womens' Safety Unit in Cardiff. You may need to adjust these levels to ensure that the volume of cases referred to your MARAC is in line with the recommended level of the top 10% in risk terms. You will need to analyse whether it would be more appropriate to adjust the number of call outs (say from 3 per annum to 5 per annum) or the number of 'ticks' on the checklist. The importance of clinical judgement remains unchanged whatever the level of actuarial threshold.

Guidance on identifying Cases for MARAC

MARAC Threshold =

10 ticks in the yes box OR
4 significant concerns (Q1-5) OR
If there are 3 police call-outs in 12 months
Maximum number of ticks = 20

(do not include 'significant concern' questions in this total)

In all cases, IDVAs should take the victim's perception of their risk very seriously and should use their professional judgement if a client appears to be at high or very high risk even if they do not meet the criteria outlined above.

This form, originally developed by South Wales Police, has been updated to reflect the research on its use by IDVAs both at the Womens' Safety Unit in Cardiff and the ASSIST advocacy service in Glasgow. CAADA has added a 'don't know' option as there is a risk of ticking 'no' when information is not known, which might be incorrect and give a false low risk level. The levels of risk are useful in clarifying the different response that a service will offer to a client depending on the severity of their situation.

MARAC REFERRAL FORM

CASE NUMBER

To Lead Agency:

Tel:

Fax:

Date:

Victim: Name and Date of Birth

Ethnicity:

Address of Victim:

Perpetrator(s): Name(s) and Date(s) of Birth

Address of Perpetrator(s):

Children: Names and Dates of Birth

Address of Children:

Is this a repeat? Y/N/DK

If yes, give date when
last at MARAC:

Reasons for Referral:

Background and Risk Issues:

Is the person referred aware of the MARAC referral? Yes/No

If person is aware of MARAC referral and it is safe to contact them please consider the following questions;

- Who is the victim afraid of? (to include all potential threats, and not just primary perpetrator)
- Who does the victim believe it safe to talk to?
- Who does the victim believe it not safe to talk to?

(Attach Risk Assessment where Completed)

Referring Practitioner and Agency:

Contact Details:

Telephone:

Mobile:

Email:

Address:

RESEARCH FORM FOR MARAC

Name of Agency:

Contact:

Tel:

Mobile:

Email:

Research all information, files and databases using NAME, DOB OR/AND ADDRESSES of ALL individuals concerned. Confirm basic contact information, ages of all concerned and number of children.

Contact relevant officer or support/key worker in your team and request current, accurate information and their professional opinion about the individuals concerned. Record this here.

Note records of last sightings, meetings or phone calls.

Note recent attitude, behaviour and demeanour, including changes.

Highlight any relevant information that relates to any of the risk indicators on the checklist e.g. the pattern of abuse suffered, abuse of immigration status, victim's greatest fear etc

Identify any other concerns your agency may have about the victim. Clarify any areas of potential misunderstanding for the partner agencies at the MARAC or inaccuracies on the agenda (e.g. information missing, more than one individual/alias names, conflicting information, more/less children than on agenda).

Has the victim indicated to you what would help them most to feel safe?