



What are Integrated Care Systems?

Integrated Care Systems (ICSs) bring together **NHS** organisations, **local authorities** and the voluntary community and social enterprise (**VCSE**) sector to plan and commission local health services. There are **42** ICSs across England. In 2022, ICSs replaced Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) when they were **formalised as statutory bodies**.

 To find out more about ICSs, check out The Kings Fund's explainer article [here](#).

 You can find a list of all ICSs, their websites, and the names of leaders [here](#).

ICSs are made up of two structures:

Integrated Care Boards (ICBs):

Responsible for planning and commissioning most NHS services.

Integrated Care Partnerships (ICPs):

Responsible for developing the health and care strategy.

ICSs have four key aims:

Improve population health



Tackle health inequalities



Enhance efficiency



Help the NHS support social and economic development



Integrated Care Systems and domestic abuse

A duty has been placed on all Integrated Care Boards to address the **'needs of victims of abuse' (including domestic and sexual abuse) in Joint Forward Plans**.

Each ICB has also been asked to appoint a Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (DASV) Lead at board level.

Despite this, **few ICBs currently commission specialist domestic abuse services** to provide vital mental health support for survivors such as counselling.

How Women's Aid are influencing Integrated Care Systems

Women's Aid are contacting **all 42 ICSs** to let them know how they can better address the needs of survivors by investing in specialist domestic abuse services.

 To read our briefing and full recommendations [click here](#).

Our recommendations to ICSs:



Commission **needs-led mental health support** for survivors delivered by **local, specialist domestic abuse services**, including 'by and for' services.



Provide **mandatory, specialist, and continuous domestic abuse training** for all healthcare professionals.



Ensure any Mental Health Strategy includes **specific actions to address the mental health needs of survivors**.



Appoint a **representative from a local specialist domestic abuse service** to sit on the ICP.



Fund evidence based domestic abuse interventions in health settings.

Engaging with your ICS

Contact your ICS



Do your research:

- Read our ICS briefing to see how funding specialist domestic abuse services can help ICSs.
- Check out your ICB's Joint Forward Plan and ICS website to understand their priorities.
- Make sure you're a member of any local 'VCSE Health Alliance'.



Identify your targets:

- Key targets include: ICB DASV Lead, ICS and ICP Chair(s), ICB CEO, Mental Health Lead and Safeguarding Lead.
- See if any council contacts can help you engage with the ICS. Some councillors sit on the ICP.
- Attend a local ICB or ICP meeting. Meetings are generally held publicly and anyone is welcome to ask a question, although normally these should be submitted prior to the meeting.
- Keep an eye out for consultation and engagement events.



Be supportive:

- Help your ICS to understand the needs of survivors by supporting them to organise meaningful survivor engagement and/or arrange a visit to your service.
- Inform the ICS of any health-related services you provide to survivors of domestic abuse.



Contact the Policy Team

If you have any difficulties engaging with your ICS, or you have any other questions, please contact policy@womensaid.org.uk