

The Coordinated Community Response (CCR) and the Specialist Domestic Abuse Court (SDAC) model

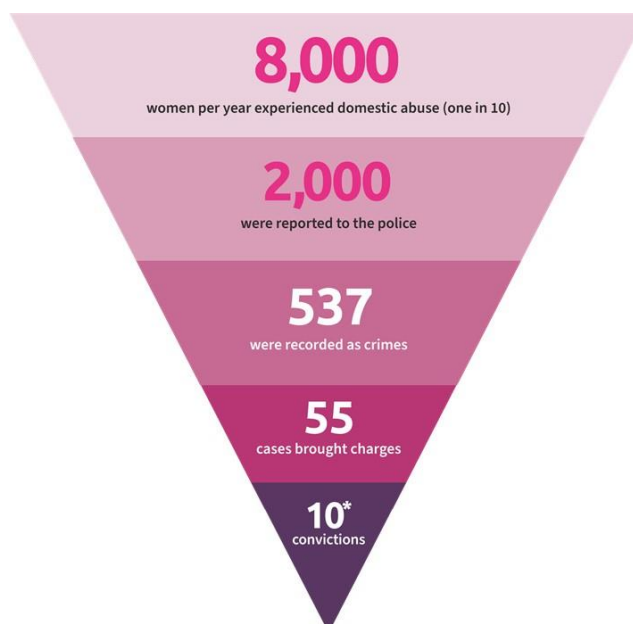
Standing Together pioneered the Coordinated Community Response (CCR), a whole-system response to domestic abuse shifting responsibility for safety away from the victim, and over to multiple agencies who can support them. In this briefing, we provide some information about the history of the CCR and how the model works, and how it specifically relates to the Specialist Domestic Abuse Court (SDAC) model.

The Coordinated Community Response (CCR)

The Coordinated Community Response (CCR) is a model of a whole-system response to a whole person, recognising the wellbeing and safety needs of victims and survivors, with communities and organisations working alongside them. Thus, the CCR recognises that:

- Responsibility for safety should not rest solely with individual victims but also with the community and services
- Perpetrators must be held to account for the harm they inflict and offered routes to change their abusive behaviours

Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse (Standing Together) pioneered the CCR model in West London in the 1990s with guidance from its creator Ellen Pence. From the beginning, the model aimed to tackle the huge gap in the criminal justice system in terms of the low reporting of domestic abuse to police and the even lower conviction rates, as shown in the diagram below:



Within a CCR framework, every agency has a responsibility for safely supporting victims of violence against women and girls and their children within their own agency **AND** with all the other agencies who also have that responsibility in order to secure the safety of the victim and their children and hold perpetrators to account.

The SDAC and the CCR

The Specialist Domestic Abuse Court is a key component of the newly implemented CCR model within the local criminal justice system. As well as the SDAC, STADA co-ordinates a range of criminal justice related activities which form vital parts of the CCR, including MARACs and Domestic Homicide Reviews. Our current criminal justice partnerships are structured in our Court Management Groups, MARAC Steering Groups and our Risk and Review Group which provides a wide breadth of criminal justice activity and improvement which keep the safety of the survivor at the centre of all of our work. The CCR model allows these workstreams to communicate with one another, and STADA's co-ordination of many of the services within boroughs means we are able to share information effectively and keep victims and survivors safe.

The importance of strong coordination within the CCR cannot be overstated. Whether this refers to individuals taking on coordination roles in specific areas (like SDAC court coordinators) or to higher-level coordination of services spanning housing, mental health, children's services and criminal justice, it is the foundation of a strong CCR. Within the SDAC model coordination of the multiple agencies is vital, and the co-location of coordinators and IDVAs in police stations allows information to flow freely but safely, and training needs to be quickly identified. It is key that this role is properly resourced and valued as a standalone position; those people providing direct victim and survivor support, or managing the functions of a statutory agency, cannot be expected to effectively bring multiple partners together in addition to that responsibility.

Our research [In Search of Excellence](#) outlines some key recommendations for coordination within a CCR, which are especially important to consider in the criminal justice context where funding continues to decrease, but multi-agency working only becomes more important:

“Recommendations for effective coordination:

- Each CCR should recognise the importance of having a coordinator to bring agencies together.
- Don't over rely on one person to coordinate everything; this won't work, so getting the balance right between have a coordinator and coordinating role but not overloading them or passing all responsibility to them, is important.
- Ensure all partners are clear on their roles in the coordination process, as well as the wider work to address DA / VAWG.

- Each CCR should give agencies and partners time and resources to address and mitigate for any coordination issues in order to improve joint working.”¹

¹ Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse, ‘In Search of Excellence: A refreshed guide to effective domestic abuse partnership work – the Coordinated Community Response (CCR)’, *Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse* (2020), p. 45.