

ASSIST NI



We are a team made up of Advocates, Lead Advocates and a Project Manager, all passionate about supporting victims of domestic and sexual abuse, including through the criminal justice system. The service is free and is delivered across Northern Ireland to provide trauma-informed support and vital information to qualifying victims of domestic and sexual abuse, primarily those engaging with the criminal justice process, the Rowan or Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences.



Access to the ASSIST NI service

Referral to the service can be made by the police, after a domestic or sexual abuse crime is reported, the Rowan Sexual Assault Referral Centre and as an action from a Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference meeting. Self-referrals can also be made from those in these three groups.



ADVOCACY

Every member of the team at ASSIST NI is passionate about giving victims the chance to have their voice heard, working with you and advocating on your behalf. We create a dialogue with qualifying victims, helping them navigate their journey with us as well as through the criminal justice process.



SUPPORT

Support is at the heart of ASSIST NI. Our support starts as soon as a person is accepted into ASSIST NI's service and takes into account their individual needs. This may also involve engagement with other expert service providers.



SAFETY

At ASSIST NI, we know that safety is paramount for victims. We use our expertise in the field to risk assess and safety plan for those engaging in our service.



INFORMATION

At ASSIST NI, we believe in involving victims using our service by providing information and assistance, helping them better understand what services are available and what the criminal justice process will entail.



SERVICES

We provide a range of services, care and support to those engaging with us and believe in facilitating this to the best of our ability.



TOGETHER

At ASSIST NI, we pride ourselves on providing a service for victims by working together with other support services within the community. Our service is available across Northern Ireland.

Engagement with ASSIST NI

We work closely with the Police Service of Northern Ireland, statutory services and voluntary sector organisations across the region to provide victims of domestic and sexual abuse, who are engaging with our services, with support and information (including on the criminal justice process). Our role is to undertake needs and risk assessments and advocate on the behalf of victims.

We provide a point of contact, as a frontline service, in supporting victims of domestic and sexual abuse, enabling them to better cope with the trauma of that abuse. We are dedicated to offering impartial support, providing general advocacy, practical support and information on domestic and sexual abuse. We also aim to help maintain any engagement with the criminal justice process.

Trust in ASSIST NI

The partnership underpinning ASSIST NI is by organisations that have a lengthy and wide range of expertise in the areas of domestic and sexual abuse. Those availing of services will be listened to, believed and supported.

Key areas of provision to service users

- Carry out an initial risk, safety and needs assessment
- Provide a point of contact, enabling qualifying victims of domestic and sexual abuse, to better cope with the aftermath of that crime
- Provide general advocacy, emotional and practical support and information as appropriate
- Work to identify any additional support needs
- Provide information about criminal justice system engagement
- Support service users within the criminal justice system, advocating for them during the process and taking steps to maintain engagement
- Adopt a trauma-informed approach that promotes the voice, participation and best interests of service users
- Work collaboratively with statutory and voluntary sector partners to ensure streamlined and effective service delivery
- Refer, signpost and facilitate access to a range of specialist services (statutory and voluntary sector) as required

ASSIST NI Members

The ASSIST NI service is provided by a partnership consisting of Belfast and Lisburn Women's Aid, Men's Advisory Project and Foyle Family Justice Centre. The three partners having been working in unison to coordinate a community response where victims are our key focus. We continue to focus on building and evolving strong relationships with other support services across the region to help qualifying victims access the support they need.

Service Users

Our service is available across Northern Ireland to qualifying victims of domestic and sexual abuse. Our team has the knowledge and skills to support victims of all genders, victims from the LGBTQIA+ community as well as victims from minority faith or race groups. Our team can support adults and young people, tailoring the service to each victim's specific needs.

