

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**](mailto:policy@womensaid.org.uk)