



Department for Levelling Up,
Housing & Communities

Domestic Abuse Local Needs Assessments – Why are these important?

Begoña Vilaplana – Domestic Abuse Team (DLUHC)

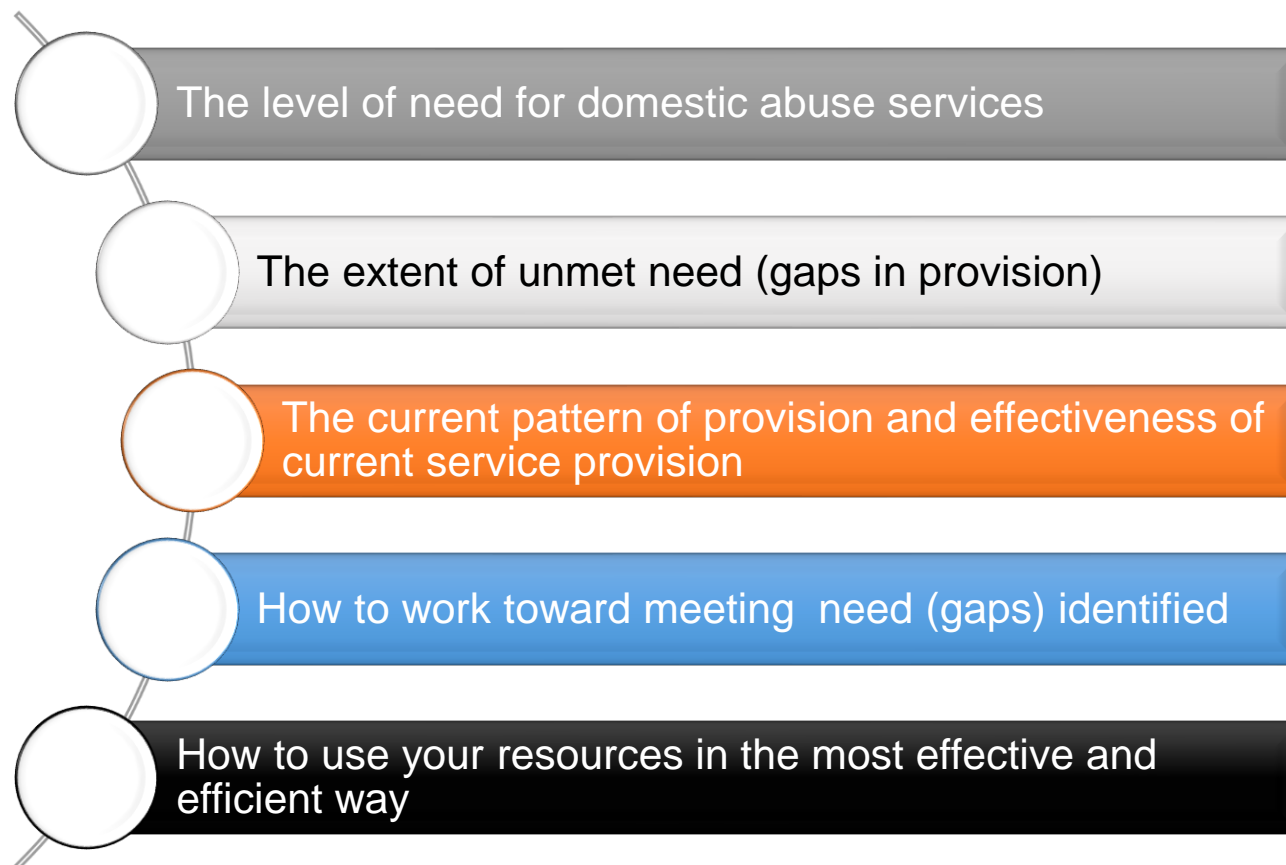


Local Domestic Abuse Needs Assessments

Why are these important?

- ❑ Recommended tool to provide evidence - allows to develop a comprehensive understanding of need for all victims of domestic abuse (including their children) locally
- ❑ Helps identify gaps in current provision, examining their nature and causes (including system issues impacting provision of services) and what needs improvement
- ❑ Opportunity for cross-sectoral partnership (through the Local Partnership Board) and to engage with survivors
- ❑ Helps identify opportunities for join up working and partnership arrangements between DA and other LA commissioners (e.g. health, social care, safeguarding, homelessness, housing)

A need assessment should tell you:





Part 4 requires local authorities required to provide clear accountability in the commissioning and delivery of domestic abuse services:

Undertake a Needs Assessment (as a minimum every 3 years)

- Vital in ensuring the needs of all victims, including those with protected characteristics, are properly met
- Ensuring LAs commission appropriate service provision
- Light touch annual review to ensure local authorities capture in any changes in between full assessments

Prepare and publish local strategies

- Setting the approach for the provision of support based on the evidence provided by the needs assessments, and done in consultation with the Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board

Give effect to strategies by making commissioning / de-commissioning decisions

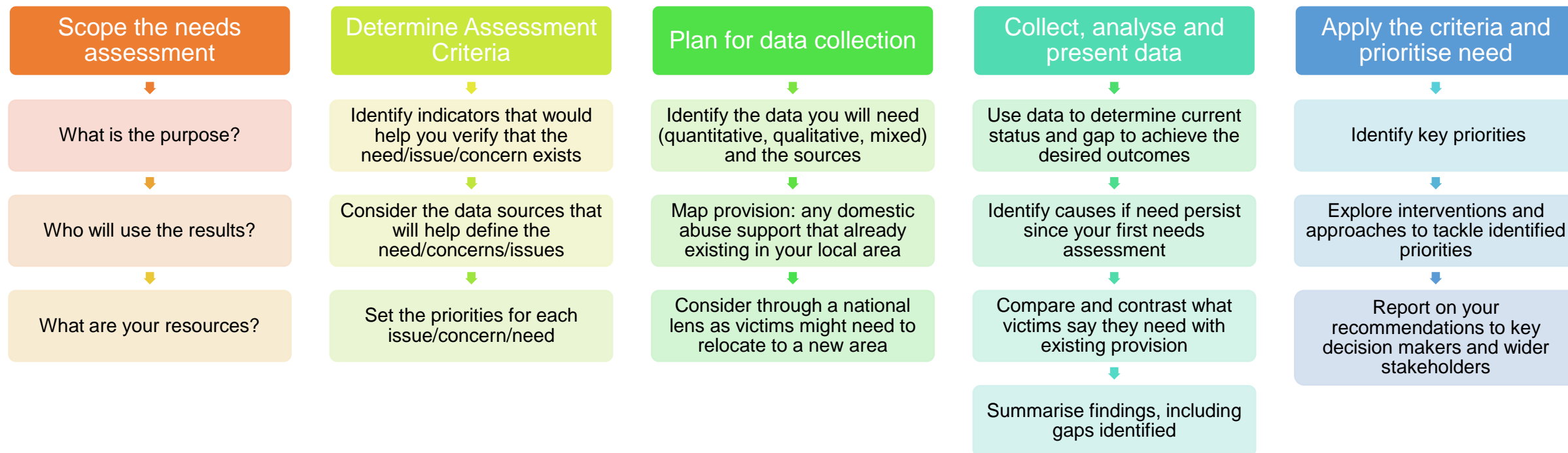
Monitor and evaluate local delivery, reporting annually to DLUHC

- On how they are meeting their duty - providing an overview of how many victims are receiving support through local authorities' commissioned services and the nature of these services



Key steps for producing a needs assessment

Working closely with the Local Partnership Board, including the voice of survivors

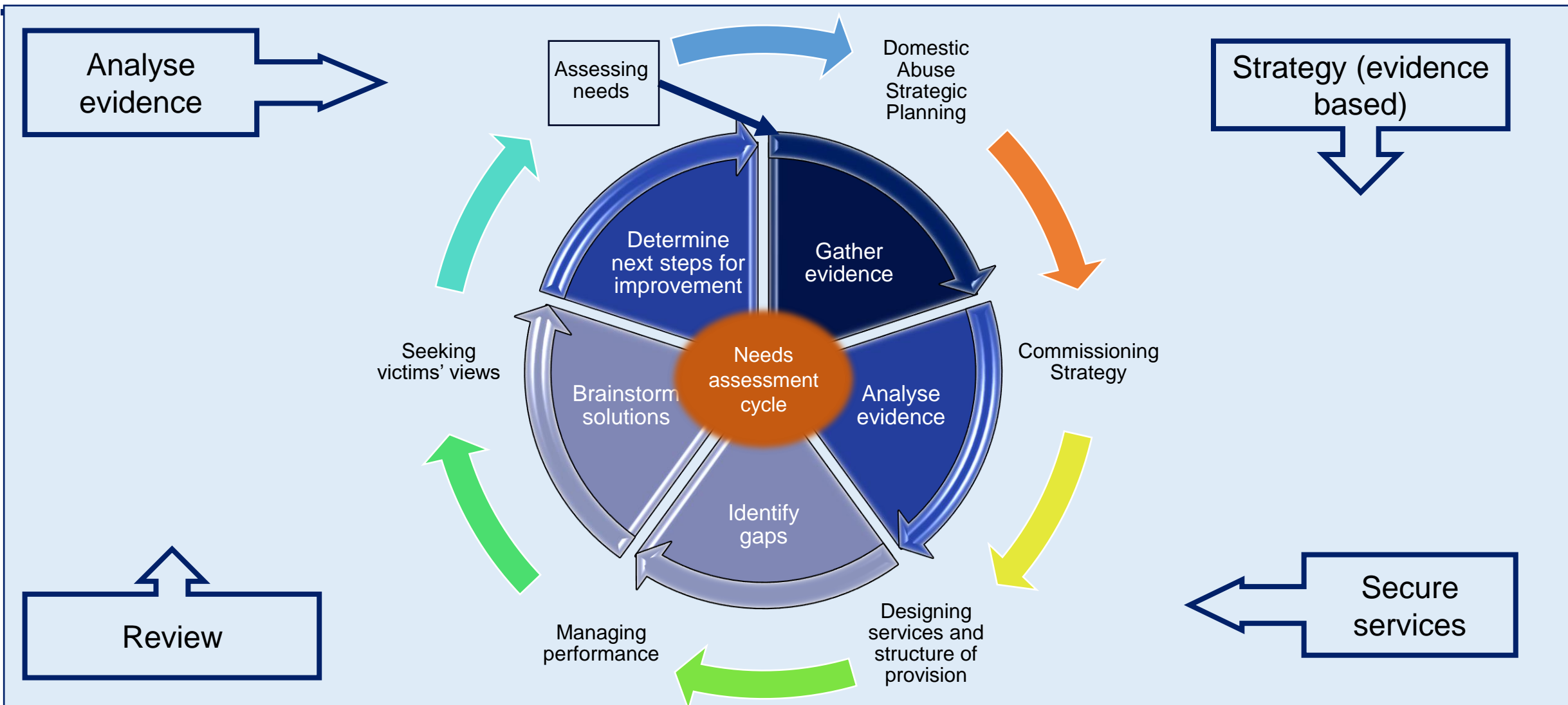


Main focus: to deliver improved outcomes for victims of domestic abuse and their children through the provision of support in safe accommodation



Delivering best outcomes for victims

A continuous improvement cycle





Key points to consider when planning a needs assessment:

How will the needs assessment meet the council's key strategic objectives for tackling domestic abuse?

What is your plan for engaging with the Local Partnership Board?

How does the needs assessment timeline align with your commissioning cycles?

What is currently funded and how long is funding for?

What works in achieving outcomes for victims?



- ❑ **There is no single correct method**
- ❑ **Needs assessment should not become an end in itself** – should be used to inform and influence strategic priorities and commissioning-decisions, and help drive an outcome-focused approach, for example, an all-housing or a public health approach to domestic abuse
- ❑ **Review and evaluate** – understanding the impact that your service provision is having on survivors, building on your previous needs assessment analysis and your strategic and commissioning priorities
- ❑ **Your need assessment would be as good as the engagement you build through the Local Partnership Board** – a shared view of what partners expected to get from their input in the needs assessment; and a shared agreed vision; and explore how best to embed the DA sector and survivors’ lived experience in the needs assessment
- ❑ **Designated capacity** – having a permanent, co-located analytical team to ensure DA data and action plan and continually improved and refreshed
- ❑ **Training and knowledge sharing** – show others within your local authority how to understand and make the most of the needs assessment. Also, explore opportunities to learn from others’ experiences - looking at your neighbour’s needs assessments and Domestic Abuse Strategies could assist with highlighting important cross-boundary issues