

October 2020



Asian Women's Resource Centre's Newsletter

**Hello, Assalamou alykoum, Namaste, Chonie, Selam!
Welcome to our first AWRC newsletter!**

Our newsletter will provide you with updates and news about what we are doing and any upcoming events for you to share with your teams! It has been a busy and productive 6 months in lockdown. We are proud of the resilience, hard work and sisterhood within the team that enabled us to keep our doors open 'virtually' and remotely for our service users and partner organisations.

Celebrating 40 years of service

This year the AWRC is celebrating 40 years of service, 40 years of providing life-saving support to women and children who have been affected by domestic abuse and harmful practice. Due to Covid-19, we have had to put the celebrations on hold, but we are delighted to share this momentous occasion with all of you in spirit.



The AWRC was founded to provide support to South Asian Women and children residing in Brent. Over the last four decades our organisation has grown manifold and we now lead on Pan-London partnerships, provide direct services in 11 London boroughs, have language proficiency in 17 community languages and continue to support campaigns and activism to foreground the multiple disadvantages faced by black and minoritized women in accessing support. As a by and for service, we uphold the legacy of providing specialist support to women within a rights based framework. This milestone in our journey is significant as a celebration of the her-story of the organization and the exciting journey ahead.

Centre Update:

Our centre is currently closed and all staff are currently working from home. In line with our COVID business continuity plan our services are open remotely.

Covid 19 has had a devastating impact on women & girls experiencing domestic abuse. Due to this unprecedented world pandemic we have seen a 50% increase in referrals to our services. In light of this, the AWRC has not slowed down; we have ensured that women experiencing VAWG are able to access the our vital support services. As the lockdown starts to ease we are seeing high demands on our services for advice and support. There have been challenges along the way but we keep the fight going!

- The AWRC is continuing to provide vital services to women in need. All staff have been working from home all services except face to face meetings have continued
- Partners have developed contingency plans on how we are going to deliver projects
- Partners have adapted quickly to remote working
- We are seeing increased referrals from statutory services
- Between March- April, referrals to the AWRC have doubled; main sources of referrals have been from the police, social services, IDVA services and voluntary sector organizations and self – referrals
- We have seen an increase in self- referrals for women who are in need of subsistence support

October 2020



Imkaan Accreditation

We are delighted to announce that AWRC has been awarded the IAQS award at Distinction level. We are extremely proud to have been recognized at such a high level for the quality of work that we do. The IAQS provides a quality framework that captures the expertise and on-going development of specialist BAME violence against women and girls (VAWG) organisations.



Imkaan
Accredited
Quality
Standards
2020

The Imkaan Accredited Quality Standards (IAQS) for working with violence against black and minority ethnic (BAME) women provide a quality framework that captures the expertise and on-going development of specialist BAME violence against women and girls (VAWG) organisations. They focus on specific forms of violence that disproportionately affect BAME women and girls and are sometimes referred to as 'harmful practices', specifically forced marriage, female genital mutilation, 'honour based' violence, and are also applicable to all forms of violence against women and girls experienced by BAME women.

IRIS Project:

The AWRC has partnered with Advance domestic abuse Charity to deliver the IRIS project in Brent/Ealing, Hammersmith & Fulham and Westminster. We are currently working closely with IRISi to roll out the project in the next quarter and grow our team!

IRIS a specialist domestic violence and abuse (DVA) training, support, and referral programme for General Practices that has been positively evaluated in a randomised controlled trial. IRIS is a collaboration between primary care and third sector organisations specialising in DVA. Core areas of the programme include ongoing training, education, and consultancy for the clinical team and administrative staff, care pathways for primary health care practitioners and an enhanced referral pathway to specialist domestic violence services for patients with experience of DVA. The IRIS programme is an evidence-based, effective, and cost-effective intervention to improve the primary care response to DVA and is nationally recognised. IRIS improves the General Practice response to DVA and improves the safety, quality of life and wellbeing of survivors of DVA. IRIS is funded by the Victims Reduction Unit.

Online Activities Timetable:

For more information about our classes and how to join please contact our Activities & Participation Officer Sahar:

Email: Sahar@awrc.org.uk

000.	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
CHAI AND CHIT CHAT	12PM-1PM				
ESOL		LEVEL 1 10AM-11AM LEVEL 2 11AM-12PM ENTRY LEVEL 12PM-1PM			
COMPUTER CLASS			BEGINNERS 10AM-11AM ADVANCED 11AM-12PM		
HEALTHY EATING				YOUTUBE UPLOAD: 12PM	
YOGA					11AM-12PM
Doodle Art					12:15PM- 1:45PM



Marriage to an Overseas Citizen

The trend of women from South Asian countries marrying men residing in foreign countries including UK has been increasing in number. Apart from other factors, there is feeling of prestige in South Asian families if their daughter is married to a person from abroad. It is perceived that men abroad have a better standard of living and it brings a sense of pride in 'marrying up'.

When parents are often in a rush to not let go of these 'lucrative' marriage offers. They ignore the fact that in case of things going wrong in this type of marriage, the woman's recourse to justice is greatly constrained and complex. The aggravated risk in such marriage is the woman is being 'isolated' far away from home in an alien land, facing language constraints, communication problems, lack of proper information about the local criminal justice, police and legal system. The situation is worsened by lack of support network of friends and family and monetary constraints which leaves the deserted wife completely helpless and stranded. Upon arriving where their husband lives, the wife is abandoned in a foreign environment, divorced either without their knowledge or their consent, and deserted without an understanding of the local legal system. In some cases, the men are discovered to be either already married or living with another woman. Some wives never even reach that stage. Some of the men get married in the country of the bride, promise to take their wife abroad with them, but upon receipt of a dowry, leave her stranded.

Unless these grievances are addressed, and an active solution is formed, the exploitation of these women will continue and the men will continue to escape accountability of their actions. AWRC continues to advocate for the rights of women who are abandoned or disadvantaged to seek support and justice due to overseas marriages and no recourse to public funds.

NRPF Project

The London Holistic Advocacy Wrap Around Service (LHAWAS)

Asian Women's Resource Centre, Southall Black Sisters, Solace, Nia, and Ashiana have come together to form a new London wide specialist holistic advocacy service to support migrant women who are seeking to escape GBV/VAWG and who are additionally subject to NRPF.

The London Holistic Advocacy Wrap Around Service (LHAWAS) 'No Recourse Fund' (NRF) has been set up to meet the needs of women and children who are victims of domestic and sexual violence and other forms of gendered violence, including prostitution, trafficking and harmful practices and who have insecure immigration status subject to no recourse to public funds (NRPF). The aim of this fund is to provide long term holistic advocacy and wrap around support to abused migrant women with NRPF. The LHAWAS project boroughs are Brent, Harrow, Barnet, Enfield, Hillingdon, Ealing & Hounslow

If you would like to access this Life Saving to Life changing service, please contact the AWRC.

Email: referrals@awrc.org.uk

Telephone: 020 8961 6549



Advice and Information:

During the pandemic, we have seen an increase of clients needing emergency accommodation, refuge or shelter. There has also been an increase in demand for social housing. The housing crisis in the UK and particularly in London has continued to worsen, with an ever increasing pressure to local boroughs. There continues to be an increase in clients not being able to find affordable housing and being forced to accept accommodation out of their income range. Many estate agents are reluctant to accept tenants in receipt of housing benefit. Our advice team continue to work with other agencies to help clients facing abuse and in need of safe and affordable housing.

Activities Timetable:

Our centre activities and classes continue to run using platforms such as Skype and Zoom. Through the difficult times in Covid-19, our clients are able to access the classes online.. Every Monday, our Chai and Chit Chat mornings are very popular with previous workshops have included Coffee Morning with McMillan, Music and motivation classes. You can subscribe to our YouTube channel and get fresh and healthy food recipes every week! We have just started our yoga classes every Friday! If you know someone that would benefit from our classes, please call the centre or send us an email info@awrc.org.uk

Useful Resources:

We have a new advice line set up by our young women's caseworker. Every Thursday between 2pm-4pm, we will have an active advice and multilingual line, to provide advice to women experiencing domestic abuse. During these 2 hours, clients and professionals can contact us if they are experiencing any forms of domestic abuse and so called 'honor based abuse'. For support or advice please call 020 8838 3462

Donations:

If you would like to donate to our organisation you can visit the below webpage:

www.paypal.me/AWRC1980

Social Media:



[asianwomensresourcecentre](https://www.facebook.com/asianwomensresourcecentre)



[@AwrcOfficial](https://twitter.com/AwrcOfficial)

Where to send referrals:

You can check out our website: <https://www.asianwomencentre.org.uk/>

Our centre number is 020 8961 6549

We are here Monday to Friday 10am-5pm (except bank holidays)

Referrals can be sent to: referrals@awrc.org.uk



AWRC Multi-Lingual Support Line for Women & Girls experiencing Domestic Abuse

Every Thursday 2- 4pm

0208 838 3462

Email: supportline@awrc.org.uk

- Confidential Advice and Support
- Information on rights and entitlements
- Referrals and signposting
- Emotional Support and Listening
- Identifying Abuse

This is a free service aimed at women and girls 16+ experiencing abuse including harmful practices across London

Asian Women's Resource Centre 100 Coopers Park, Hackney E8 1RQ. Charity Number: 1049058 website: www.asianwomencentre.org.uk Twitter: [@AwrcOfficial](https://twitter.com/AwrcOfficial) Instagram: [@asianwomencentre/](https://www.instagram.com/asianwomencentre/)

We hope you have enjoyed our newsletter!