

## Statement on Nottinghamshire Helpline

9 April 2020

Nationally there has been a well-publicised 25% increase in the number of calls to the domestic abuse helpline. The national helpline aims to support women living in abusive relationships and where appropriate help them to flee their current situation.

Locally Juno Women's Aid provide a free 24 hour helpline for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire women, offering the same support as the national helpline. They also provide advice for professionals and members of the public who are concerned for women experiencing domestic abuse.

Since the covid-19 lockdown restrictions were issued on 23 March 2020, the Nottinghamshire domestic abuse helpline has seen an increase in calls. This has been at a time when operating pressures have resulted in reductions in the lines available. In the week of 30 March 2020, the helpline received an 8% increase in call from before lockdown. There was also a further 205 (47%) unanswered calls due to operating issues. This demand is higher than the service has previously experienced at a time when there was staffing challenges and operating changes. The call rates are continuing to be monitored by Juno and Commissioners and additional staff are being sourced from the domestic abuse system to meet the local need.

The calls to the helpline are increasingly seeking safe emergency accommodation and the system is looking into the best way to address this locally as refuge capacity across the Country is very low.

In order to address the increase in demand, new operating systems are being established to increase the lines available from 16 April 2020. Approximately 3 calls in every 10 to the Helpline are from Professionals seeking information or advice. Professionals are now being asked to email their issues or questions to the helpline email address below to free the phone line capacity and ensure the phone lines are available for women in their time of need.

It is recognised that the current lockdown situation is very difficult for women and children living in abusive relationships. We ask all partners to support all the Providers who are providing information, advice and support to survivors and their children.

Please only call the Helpline if it is urgent.

### **Nottinghamshire 24 hr Freephone helpline**

Help and support for people experiencing domestic and sexual violence

For Women 0808 800 0340

Email [helpline@junowomensaid.org.uk](mailto:helpline@junowomensaid.org.uk)

Helpline for Men call 0115 960 5556 is available office hours (Mon-Fri)

Provider contacts: Juno Women's Aid – [www.junowomensaid.org.uk](http://www.junowomensaid.org.uk) Nottinghamshire Women's Aid – [www.nottswa.org](http://www.nottswa.org)

Equation (Men) – [www.equation.org.uk](http://www.equation.org.uk)