

## Cumbria Police

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Cumbria Police together with partner agencies including Health, NSPCC, Victim Support, and Adult Social Care have launched a domestic abuse question and answer session on Facebook, which launched today (15 April).

This afternoon at 3pm a panel of safeguarding experts worked together to answer domestic abuse related questions from the public on the Cumbria Police Facebook page. We received a fantastic response with lots of questions asked, which led to us receiving two reports about two victims who police and partner agencies are now supporting.

The public have the option to send a private message to us if they wish to remain anonymous, or they can simply post the question on our Facebook wall.

Detective Chief Inspector Dan St. Quintin said:

"Today we reached over 10,000 people and we now know about two new victims of domestic abuse who we are supporting. This new channel of communication has been successful and more web chats will be arranged for next week.

"In the meantime, I urge anyone who is a victim of domestic abuse to come forward and report their experiences. I also urge any friends, family members or colleagues to report any concerns they have on 101.

"For Cumbria Constabulary it is business as usual for domestic abuse regardless of Coronavirus. Domestic abuse is a key priority for the constabulary and we are good at responding to it. Please report it. We will keep you and your family safe".

Cumbria Police and Crime Commissioner Peter McCall said:

"It is vital now, more so than ever, that people are aware of the Domestic Abuse services operating in Cumbria during the Covid-19 lockdown.

"This weekly on-line session is another valuable service for people to gain advice and information about domestic abuse support available in the county.

"I urge people to take these opportunities to ask questions to our multi-agency team and receive timely, well-informed responses. It is essential that victims know how and where to access support during isolation as the lockdown around COVID-19 continues.

"I want those individuals who need help and support to know they have not been forgotten, help is available and we are here to support you."

Sharon Tingey, who represented the NSPCC on the panel, said: "It was important to be part of today's Facebook Q&A as many domestic abuse victims struggle behind closed doors.

"Support needs to be extended to the many children who will be affected by domestic abuse but are at risk of being invisible during the coronavirus crisis.

"As well as encouraging individual victims to reach out for help, we want to see everyone play a role in safeguarding children so the adults and communities around a child can spot any signs of abuse.

"Simple guidance should be given to everyone who continues to have contact with families - including delivery drivers, postal workers and retail staff - about what to look out for and how to report any concerns they may have."

The Q&A session will be held again next Wednesday 22nd April from 3-5pm on the Cumbria Police Facebook page which can be found here: <https://www.facebook.com/cumbriapolice/>

If you need to speak to someone regarding domestic abuse or would like to make a report please call 101, or use our online reporting form here: <https://www.cumbria.police.uk/.../Non-Emergency-Crime-Online...>

Always call 999 in an emergency.

