

Councillor Peter John OBE  
Chair, Health & Wellbeing Board  
Southwark Council  
160 Tooley Street  
London, SE1 2HZ

16 November 2016

Dear Councillor John,

I am writing to you in your capacity as Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board to request your support for providing specialist domestic abuse support onsite at our local hospital sites.

As you may have seen, SafeLives recently published 'A Cry for Health' which makes the case for health providers being a part of the long-term solution to tackle domestic abuse. SafeLives found that on average, adults at high risk live with domestic abuse for 2.6 years before getting help, and an estimated 85% of victims sought help from professionals an average of five times in the year before they got effective help to stop the abuse.

Given my role as Chair of the Healthy Communities Sub-Committee, I understand the pressures that our health services are under both nationally and locally, but I believe that tackling domestic abuse is an incredibly important issue which we should be actively taking steps to prevent. There is an estimated cost of £1.73 billion to health services as a result of domestic abuse, and we therefore very much need to find ways in which to support victims to alleviate this financial pressure on our health services.

The SafeLives research has found that locating a team of Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs) within a hospital is a key way to address this. I very welcome the Southwark Domestic Abuse Strategy 2015-2020 but believe that we can continue to go further.

The SafeLives report makes a number of recommendations, and I would be keen to understand the position of the Health and Wellbeing Board in regards to their findings, and ensuring that our local hospitals are in a position to provide these specialist domestic abuse support services onsite.

I am copying this letter to all members of the Health and Wellbeing Board, and will be publishing a copy of this letter in the public domain.

I look forward to your reply.

Yours sincerely,



Councillor Rebecca Lury  
Chair, Healthy Communities Scrutiny Sub-Committee  
Councillor for East Walworth