**APPENDIX A**

**Addition to schedule A2 Service Specification**

**New paragraph 3.20**

**Definition**

“Refuge” - a residential service – a safe house – provided for adults (usually women) and children who are experiencing domestic violence and abuse as defined by NICE.

**Refuge service aim and objectives**

To reduce the impact of DVA through the provision of specialist DVA support services specifically to women and their children who are residing within refuge in Nottinghamshire.

The provision will be in relation to the women and their children that stay in a minimum of 15 units of refuge accommodation spread across more than one district of Nottinghamshire.

**Population served**

Women and their children affected by DVA who are residing in refuges in Nottinghamshire. These women and their children may derive from Nottinghamshire or elsewhere in the country.

**Demand**

The Provider shall deliver specialist DVA support to women and their children residing in 15 units of refuge accommodation in Nottinghamshire. Demand for these refuge spaces arises from national and local need. Although it is anticipated the provision of the 15 units will be well utilised this is not at the control of the Provider. However, it is expected that 100% of women and their children who stay in refuge are provided with specialist DVA support.

Data for 2014-15 the 15 units were utilised by 65 women and 81children.

Data for 2013-14 the 15 units were utilised by 80 women and 90 children.

Data for 2012-13 the 15 units were utilised by 71 women and 90 children.

**Outcomes**

See paragraph 2 (Key Service Outcomes). The emphasis of support provided to women and their children staying in refuge will, more often than not, be longer term.

**Provision**

The Provider shall deliver the Service to a minimum of 15 units of accommodation spread across more than 1 district of Nottinghamshire. The Service shall be linked to the national refuge network and integrated with the wider DVA system in Nottinghamshire.

**Service description**

The Provider shall deliver specialist DVA support services to women and their children upon referral, during their stay and throughout their transition from refuge. Such support services may include:

* needs assessment and support planning
* practical and emotional support
* safety planning
* skills, knowledge and awareness about safe, equal and violence free relationships
* referral and signposting to external agencies
* partnership working with external linked services
* parenting advice
* building on any awareness around domestic abuse
* confidence building
* advocacy
* escort to any legal and /or court appointments
* key work with regular face to face support sessions
* facilitating service user participation through groups, house meeting, service user groups
* specialist children’s services face to face and group work, stay and play sessions, therapeutic sessions
* providing access to equipped play rooms
* group work with women or children and young people
* support for women to understand her child’s/ adolescents emotional needs and their individual experiences of DVA
* support with health appointments including maternity services & sexual health
* housing applications and the housing processes in or outside of the area including attending appointments also includes private sector
* welfare benefits
* school places
* registering and accessing GP’s
* child protection and safeguarding issues
* support to access other services e.g. drug, alcohol and mental health services, children’s centre, women’s counselling services
* exit planning including safety planning and referral to outreach services
* support to enable to move on to reasonable and safe resettlement and independent living arrangements

**Out of scope**

The specialist DVA support service to women and their children in refuge does not include the following as provision for these service is covered via other means e.g. housing benefit:

* The provision of housing management as agreed with the property’s landlord
* Setting up a new tenancy/licence agreement
* Cleaning of the refuge
* Payment of rents
* Key allocation
* Renewals, repairs and maintenance of the refuge and grounds
* Evictions and warnings
* Charges to the landlord for rent and administration of this

**Location of premises**

The Provider shall deliver the Service within refuges in Nottinghamshire. The Provider shall provide the Council with the details of current refuge provision and any future proposed locations for delivery of the Services. Owing to the nature of the Service the location of these premises will not be made public knowledge nor promoted outside of the national refuge network.

The Provider shall be responsible for securing and developing any fixed site premises and shall be responsible for any rent, maintenance, running costs, safety and upkeep of any premises used for the provision of the Service for example entering into a contractual arrangement with an RSL or a Local Housing Authority for the refuge premises.

The Provider shall inform the Council of circumstance that could potentially result in an untenable arrangement between the Provider and the owner of the refuge. Where such circumstance leads to the loss of the refuge premises the Council shall withdraw temporarily or permanently the specialist DVA support funding until a suitable alternative venue can be found.

**Access**

The Provider shall deliver relevant and accessible specialist DVA services within refuges between 9am-7pm during weekdays (currently 9-5pm in Mansfield and 9-7pm in Bassetlaw) and from 9am-1pm on Saturdays. Outside of this time an on-call service is to be provided in order to respond to referrals and other emergencies such as safeguarding and child protection issues, urgent Service User issues, Service Users being locked out and Police callouts etc.

The Service shall be part of the national refuge network and deliver gender and culturally appropriate that is inclusive of all Service Users including those with protected characteristics.

**Exclusion criteria**

The Provider shall deliver specialist DVA support to all women and their children during their stay in refuge. Recognising that refuge has elements of communal living e.g. kitchen or lounge areas, circumstances may arise where support needs to be withdrawn temporarily or permanently. Where this is the case the Provider shall work with other agencies such as the Police or Health service to ensure continuity of support. Examples of circumstances where the Provider may consider withdrawing DVA support include:

* A mental health crisis
* Chaotic alcohol or substance misuse
* Violent behaviour towards staff, other women or children using the refuge
* Repeated behaviours that jeopardise the safety of other Service Users such as informing a perpetrator about the location of the refuge
* Breach of License or Tenancy agreement including House Guidelines for refuge and Children’s services.