

# Newsletter

## Spotlight!: AWRC Training

AWRC provides critical training to practitioners on harmful practices. Read more about how you can access AWRC's training services!

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## Celebrating 3 Years of Coaction Hub

Coaction Hub's learning event celebrated the achievements of a three-year collaborative project between AWRC and Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse.

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**Sign up to AWRC's HP IDVA Taster Session!**

Join taster sessions to gain insights into building specialist skills to tackle harmful practices within the VAWG sector.

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Created through live illustration, this artwork captures key moments from AWRC's 'Unlocking Doors' conference, embodying the lived realities, voices, and collective strength of BME women with NRPF. The event brought together survivors, advocates, and leaders to demand urgent action on housing justice and systemic change.



No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) and Housing, Asian Women's Resource Centre, Royal Society of Arts, March 2025. Graphics by Dr Pen Mendonça © 2025

# Spotlight on AWRC Training

## Tackling Harmful Practices with Cultural Competency

In May 2025, AWRC delivered a focused training session Harmful Practices, including, forced marriage, virginity testing, and cultural competency. The session brought together 20 dedicated professionals from across Wandsworth, Richmond, and nearby boroughs, including social workers, hospital IDVAs, health practitioners, refuge staff, and VAWG officers.

These practices continue to violate the rights and dignity of women and girls, often hidden behind cultural silence or systemic gaps. Our training challenged those silences, equipping professionals with the knowledge to identify warning signs, respond with empathy, and act with cultural sensitivity. Crucially, it reinforced that specialist services like AWRC are not optional add-ons, they are essential lifelines.

These services offer the expertise, trust, and tailored support that general services alone cannot provide.

Participants described the session as transformative, noting its direct relevance and immediate value to their day-to-day roles. The training sparked focused engagement and practical discussions that many said they could immediately put into action.

*“Incredibly insightful and eye-opening. This training helped me connect policy with real-world implications.”*

*“The session was well-delivered and balanced the sensitivity of the topics with the need for professional awareness.”*



*“I now feel more confident identifying and supporting clients at risk of harmful practices.”*

We offer training to frontline professionals (statutory and voluntary sectors) around domestic abuse, coercive control and harmful practices.

To find out more about our specialist training and how it can benefit your teams ↓

Email [training@awrc.org.uk](mailto:training@awrc.org.uk)  
Call us: 020 8961 6549



In April, the Coaction Hub's learning event celebrated the achievements of a three-year collaborative project between AWRC and Standing Together Against Domestic Abuse. The event brought together feminists, activists, VAWG sector organisations, by and for agencies, funders, and passionate individuals who build solidarity, share a commitment to learning, and support the ethos of the Coaction Hub. It created a powerful space to reflect honestly on what has been achieved, the learning generated, and the ongoing challenges in the fight for systemic change.

At the heart of Coaction Hub's success is its commitment to doing things differently—centring the expertise of 'by and for' organisations, challenging the status quo, building solidarity, co-creating resources and holding space for difficult but necessary conversations.

Coaction Hub has marked several significant milestones this year. Research was conducted into the effectiveness of MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences) in responding to harmful practices cases, accompanied by the development of a good practice toolkit to support professionals. Targeted training was delivered to MARAC Coordinators across England and Wales, focusing specifically on harmful practices and the role of MARAC in these complex cases. A Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) mentoring initiative was launched to support women working in specialist 'by and for' agencies to become DHR Chairs, alongside workshops for agencies interested in joining DHR expert panels.



## Reflections on the Coaction Hub Learning Event

Coaction Hub also carried out a review into the effectiveness of current risk assessment tools for Black and minoritised survivors of domestic abuse and harmful practices, identifying key areas for improvement. Additionally, international VAWG (Violence Against Women and Girls) intervention models were explored to assess which approaches could inform UK practice. Finally, a Knowledge Hub was developed to collate co-created learnings from the project and provide links to useful resources.

A participant reflected,

“Projects grounded in the ethos of equitable partnerships and collaboration, like the Coaction Hub, can only thrive when there is space for uncomfortable conversations and the courage to challenge and disrupt norms and structural hierarchies. There was deep learning around what it means to lead with care and lead with feminism. When we do, the impact becomes more reflective of the women we aim to support. This partnership is unique from their MARAC trainings, DHR mentoring to research to create systemic change.”



Coaction Hub's Learning Event with Poet Miss Yankey and sector partners

# Harmful Practice Independent Domestic Violence Advocate (HP IDVA) Programme

The Harmful Practice Advocate (HPA) Programme is a pioneering initiative developed by the AWRC to equip practitioners and advocates in the ending Violence Against Women And Girls (VAWG) sector with specialised knowledge and skills, essential for navigating challenges associated with harmful practices and effectively address and tackle harmful practices within VAWG. The course delves into the nuances of harmful practices and their impact on marginalised communities.

Our course is uniquely accredited by AAL and endorsed by the Ofqual regulated governing body NCFE. It stands as the only one in the UK specifically focused on Harmful Practices.

Rooted in a Black Feminist perspective and an intersectional approach, the Harmful Practice accredited Programme is designed to enhance the skills of frontline workers working within the ending VAWG sector.

## Learner's Feedback:

“Discussions around intersectionality and how it affects people, ourselves and our clients [...] opened my mind on talking about reflexivity as this helped me think about how I apply this in my own practice.”

**Find more information on our website**

[www.awrc.org.uk](http://www.awrc.org.uk)

**Are you a professional who wants to build expertise in transformative, specialist domestic abuse advocacy?**

**Curious how our course can amplify your potential?**

**Join our Online Bitesize Taster Sessions!**

\*Available dates

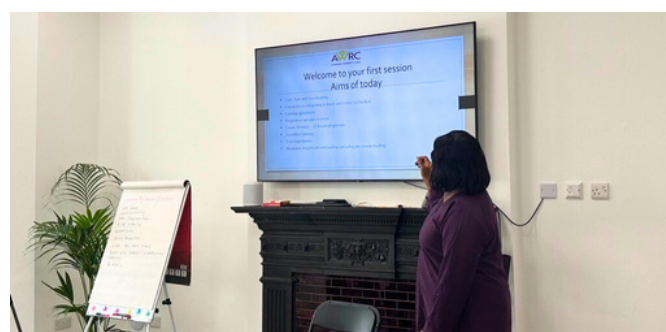
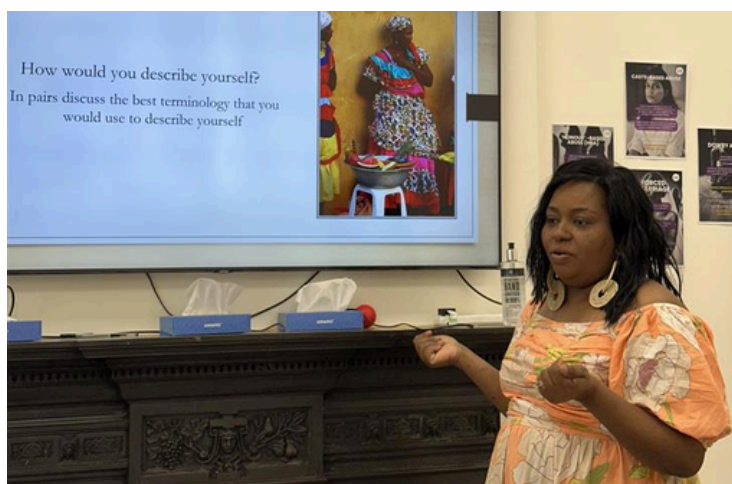
2 July, 2025

30 July, 2025

26 August, 2025

Limited spaces available.

To book your place, email [training@awrc.org.uk](mailto:training@awrc.org.uk).



# NEWS

Read Coaction Hub's latest research paper, **"Rethinking Risk Beyond the Checklist: The Need for a Holistic and Inclusive Framework."**

The paper addresses a critical gap: the lack of research exploring how current risk assessment tools reflect the lived experiences of Black and minoritised victim-survivors. Aimed at VAWG practitioners, policymakers, and frontline professionals, the paper calls for a shift from a solely risk-led model to one that integrates both risk and needs—centred on survivors' lives, not just incidents.

Key recommendations include:

- Making risk assessments inclusive, holistic, and trauma-informed
- Establishing long-term funding for consistent, survivor-centred support
- Reviewing and co-creating tools like the DASH RIC with input from survivors and specialist services
- Improving coordination across sectors by identifying and sharing best practices

## Donate to AWRC

AWRC continues to fundraise and welcomes all donations big or small.

All donations received will help us to continue providing lifesaving services to women across London.



Scan the QR code or visit **[www.awrc.org.uk](http://www.awrc.org.uk)** to donate!

## IRIS NEWS

AWRC  
CHANGING WOMEN'S LIVES

SAVING LIVES  
CHANGING LIVES



### We are now in Harrow!

We are thrilled to announce that IRIS has launched in Harrow! Advance, in partnership with IRISi, leads on the delivery of IRIS; a health project that is training Harrow's GP and practice staff to spot and respond to signs of domestic abuse.

Our mission is simple: Bridge the gap between healthcare professionals and Domestic Abuse/Violence Against Women and Girls services, ensuring a coordinated and compassionate response to those in need.

Clinician training covers 5R's:

- **Recognise** domestic abuse in health presentations
- **Ask** and **Risk** check
- **Respond** to disclosures ]Record in medical notes
- **Record** in medical notes
- **Refer** to IRIS

IRIS only accepts Standard and Medium Risk referrals and the training counts towards Level 3 Safeguarding. Our training is FREE!

## 68 Clinicians trained in total!

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