

Name of Project: ASCENT Ending Harmful Practices (EHP)

Lead partner: Asian Women's Resource Centre (AWRC)

Borough: Brent

Case Study

AWRC received a referral from XY. During the first contact, XY was very scared that her in laws would become aware that she was seeking help.

Background

XY disclosed to us that she married in 2016 which was arranged by her family. She had not seen her husband during the wedding ceremony, and she did not see him till she came to the UK on a spouse visa.

XY said that when she came to London, mental and physical abuse started straight away as the husband had severe mental health issues which she was not aware of before getting married.

XY informed us that on the last incident in late 2016, she ran away and went to her auntie's house as she was also living in London. However, her auntie did not allow her to stay with her as she said that her husband did not want a young woman to stay with them. She then stayed with a friend for a while who introduced her to her second husband in early 2017. They married and she had her first child in 2018.

XY said that from the beginning of this second marriage there was also ongoing abuse from the husband, mother-in-law, sister-in-law, and the wife of her brother-in-law.

Referral

XY was referred to us in 2018 by the social service, the AWRC supported her, and the local service placed her in temporary accommodation. But the husband found her, forced her to have sex with him and XY became pregnant. Due to emotional abuse and control from her family, husband, and with the added uncertainty of her immigration status, she moved back to the in laws house.

During this time, XY's husband was sent to prison due to a GBH crime he committed in 2019. Since he has been incarcerated, XY has been subjected to emotional and

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financial abuse by her mother-in-law as XY is a divorcee and comes from a different tribe/caste from the rest of the family.

XY had also been treated like a modern-day slave as she had to wake up before everyone else, clean the house, cook for everyone, and when they were around, she had to keep her children in her room as the rest of the family would tell her she was not the woman they wanted their son to marry. Her husband called regularly from prison telling her that she was not a good wife, did not listen to his mother, and she should go back to Pakistan, taking the children from her.

XY informed us that the mother-in-law gave her £10 or £20 so she could buy stuff for her children but was never given any money for her own personal needs. The husband and mother-in-law continued to pressure her to leave the children and go back to Pakistan.

Risk factors:

Honour Based Abuse (HBA), gaslighting, emotional and financial abuse, No Recourse to Public Funds, child neglect/abuse from the in laws.

Support and Needs

CAADA RIC has been done

Safety plan has been done

Ongoing emotional and practical support provided

The DDVC has been done

UC application has been done

MARAC referral has been done

Child safeguarding referral has been done

Encouraged the client to report to the police but police advised the client to approach the council as they only threatened her and did not see the HBA, coercive control, gaslighting, modern day slavery and child abuse due to language barrier and not asking the right questions.

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Client approached the council but due to being NRPF (spouse visa), council did not accommodate her this time.

Outcome

DDVC application granted by HO.

XY finally found the courage to leave the house as she was gaslighted and heavily coerced by in laws and the husband.

Opened a bank account

Receiving UC.

Refuge search and placed in refuge

Immigration Support letter provided for ILR application

Feedback

XY said that after a long time she felt relieved because someone listened her and she no longer feels alone.