

Executive Summary

National Framework for Independent Modern Slavery Advocates™

2023



National Framework for Independent Modern Slavery Advocates™
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This draft of the National Framework for Independent Modern Slavery Advocates™ (IMSA) has been coordinated and compiled by Hope for Justice, The Snowdrop Project, British Red Cross, Bakhita Centre for Research on Slavery, Exploitation and Abuse, and independent consultants with lived experience of modern slavery.

The publication of this draft framework is for the purposes of Stage Two of the IMSA Model Development, during which the framework will be piloted. On successful completion of this stage in the development, the final National Framework for the IMSA Model will be published.

Limitations: The IMSA Model Development standards cannot replace the IMSA employing organisations' or individuals' responsibilities to ensure their systems, structures, approaches and practice comply with their legal and professional duties.

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Dame Sara Thornton

Foreword

As the UK's Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner I welcomed the partnership between British Red Cross, Hope for Justice, The Snowdrop Project, and survivor leaders to develop a framework for the accreditation of Independent Modern Slavery Advocates (IMSAs) in the UK in June 2021. It is great to see that this work has progressed and that the framework will now be piloted.

IMSAs seek to empower survivors to make informed choices about their options and recovery, working with the survivor and their existing support mechanisms to open doors and create opportunities. By providing advocacy that looks at someone's social needs and legal rights together, IMSAs provide support that is holistic and tailored to the individual, and helps them overcome barriers and navigate complex systems.

As commissioner, I was particularly concerned about the many barriers which survivors faced to becoming sustainably independent - accessing education, training and employment, which are vital for recovery, as well as basic needs such as accommodation. They frequently have to navigate extremely complex systems in order to access entitlements such as legal advice and welfare benefits that can be so important for recovery. Advocates who bring specialist knowledge about modern slavery services available to survivors and understand how these systems operate, as well as the impact of the significant trauma that so

many have endured, can, therefore, play a vital role in empowering survivors to access these services and systems and in reducing the risk of re-trafficking.

This project ticks many boxes. The framework builds upon the good practice which has been developed by Hope for Justice for several years. It develops a framework for the accreditation to promote consistent standards in care.

Importantly, it is based on an independent evaluation of Hope for Justice's IMSA model that was carried out by Alexandra Williams-Woods, a researcher at the University of Liverpool. The report, published in June 2021, found that the IMSA Model at Hope for Justice provided a tested Model for responding to the significant needs and structural disadvantages that survivors of modern slavery encounter, and led to considerably improved outcomes for survivors. The report recommended that organisations which provide advocacy services for modern slavery survivors should work together to build an accredited IMSA role and framework in line with other independent advocacy services, such as Independent Domestic Violence Advocates.

This framework is the product of both the wisdom of the evaluation and two years of hard work which is now ready to be tested across the country.

Dame Sara Thornton



Introduction

This Executive Summary provides insight into the full framework for interested parties. In order to ensure that a standardised model of independent advocacy is achieved throughout the UK, the full National Framework for Independent Modern Slavery Advocates 2023 is available, in its entirety, to the organisations participating in the pilot stage of the National IMSA Model Development. This restriction, of the full content of the draft framework, provides a period for rigorous testing of the draft framework. This will ensure that the expected outcomes for survivors of modern slavery and human trafficking are not compromised in any way before the framework is finalised, accredited and rolled out, offering a professional and consistent standard of independent advocacy for adult survivors of any nationality based in any locality within the UK.

The full framework comprises four key areas: values and governance, the role and remit of an IMSA, training for IMSAs and employing an IMSA.

What is an Independent Modern Slavery Advocate?

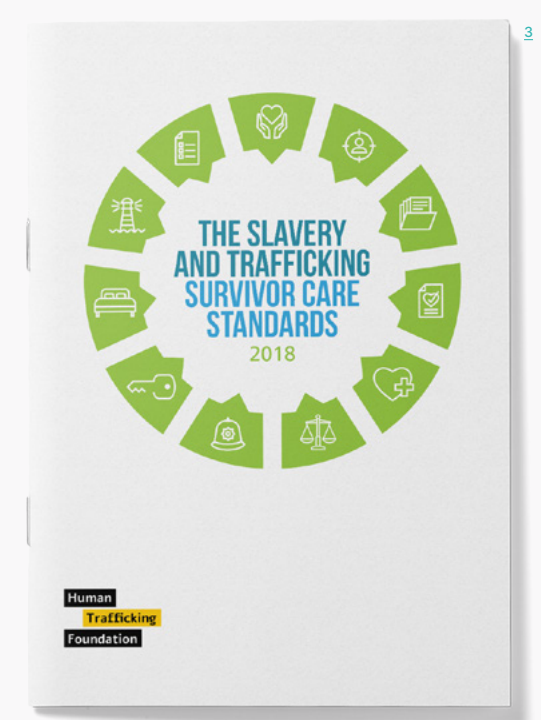
An Independent Modern Slavery Advocate (IMSA) provides independent socio-legal advocacy that ensures survivors of modern slavery and human trafficking can make informed choices about their entitlements and recovery. IMSAs provide advocacy that is person-led and trauma-informed to improve the safety, resilience and empowerment of each survivor.

The role of an independent advocate has been shown to have a significant impact on outcomes for individuals within many spheres, including domestic abuse, sexual violence, mental health and victims of stalking crimes. The lack of the provision of independent advocacy within the modern slavery sector has been noted, and recommendations from a range of actors, including professionals within non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and academics¹, have been extensively documented. The second National Referral Mechanism (NRM) handbook, *Joining Efforts to Protect the Rights of Trafficked Persons: A Practical Handbook*,² published by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) for NRM participating states, recommends that:

“Adult victims of trafficking should have an allocated advocate to provide individual support, needs and risk assessment, and act as a co-ordinating focal point for all involved professionals and services. The role of the independent advocate should be a recognized professional role, accredited or officially recognised by competent authorities, national authorities, law enforcement authorities and statutory social services.”

The IMSA Model Development Project has set out to address this gap and to deliver a best practice model of independent advocacy for survivors of modern slavery throughout the United Kingdom (UK). The model is designed to replicate best practice for use in the four UK nations.

The Independent Modern Slavery Advocacy (IMSA) Model provides a standardised approach with a minimum level of accredited training, creating professional recognition and differentiating between the role of the advocate and that of a support worker. The IMSA Model offers a best practice framework for independent advocacy for survivors of modern slavery within the UK context.



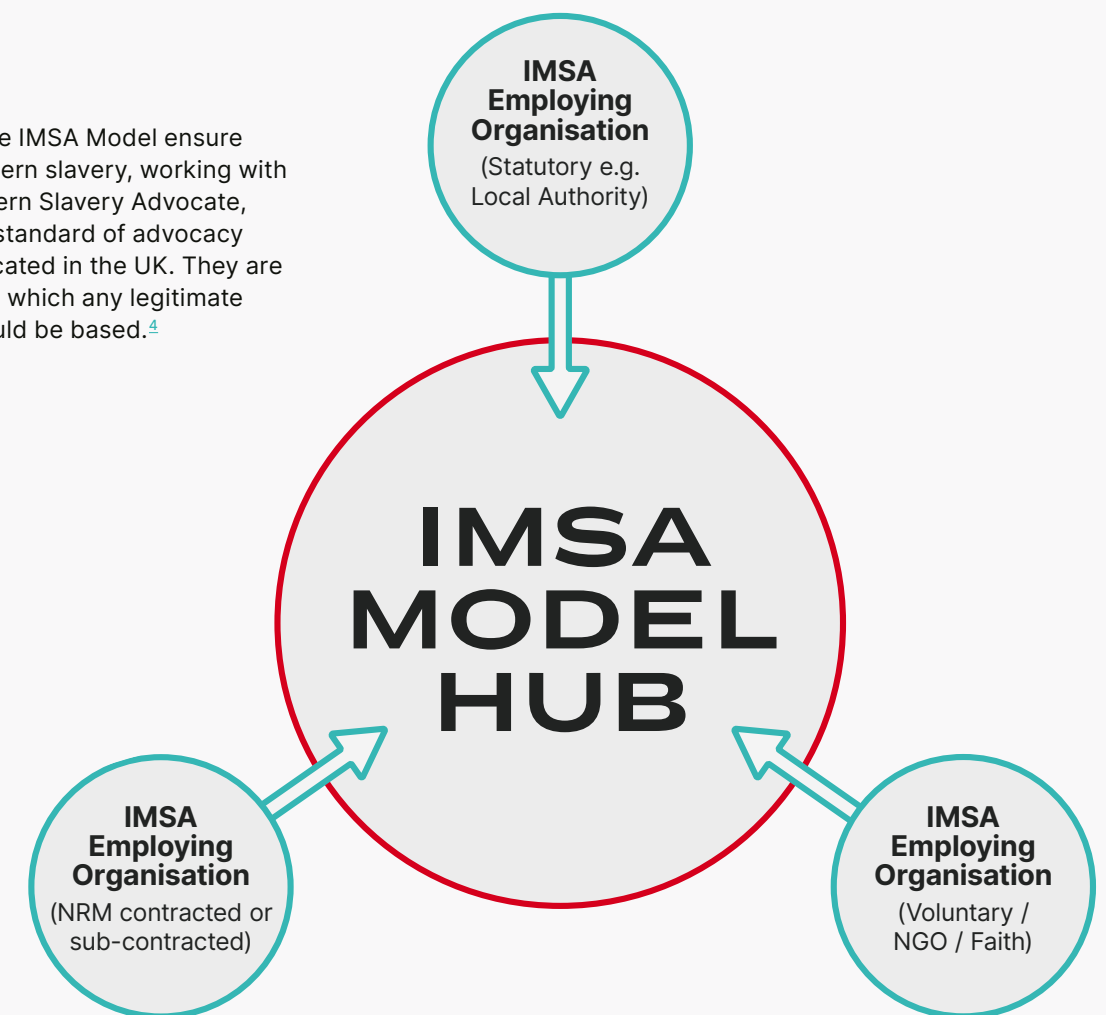


Chapter 1 Values and Governance

The core values and strong governance structure of the Independent Modern Slavery Advocacy (IMSA) Model provide a firm foundation on which the IMSA Model can operate. The model is flexible and agile in its delivery, reflecting the individual needs of survivors, the broad range of IMSA employers and the diverse organisations involved in responding to survivors of modern slavery in the UK. This flexibility enables the model to adapt to the cUK's constantly changing political and policy landscape.

Values

The core values of the IMSA Model ensure that survivors of modern slavery, working with an Independent Modern Slavery Advocate, receive a consistent standard of advocacy wherever they are located in the UK. They are the foundations upon which any legitimate advocacy model should be based.⁴



Governance

The IMSA Model offers a framework for best practice independent advocacy for adult survivors of modern slavery. Governance of this best practice model sits within the IMSA Model Advisory Board and the IMSA Model Hub.

The IMSA Model Advisory Board

The IMSA Model Advisory Board's primary function is to promote adherence to the IMSA Model values.

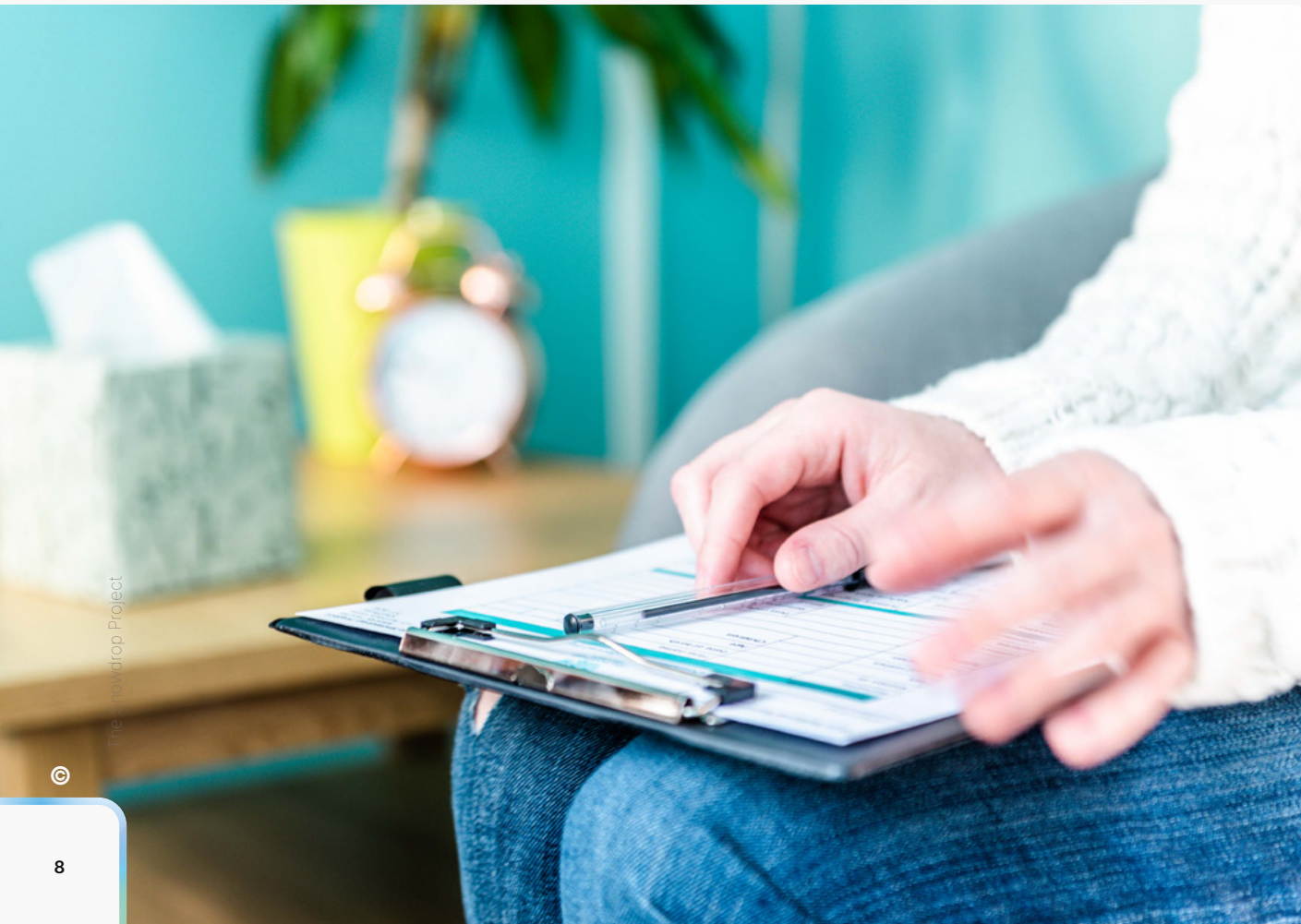
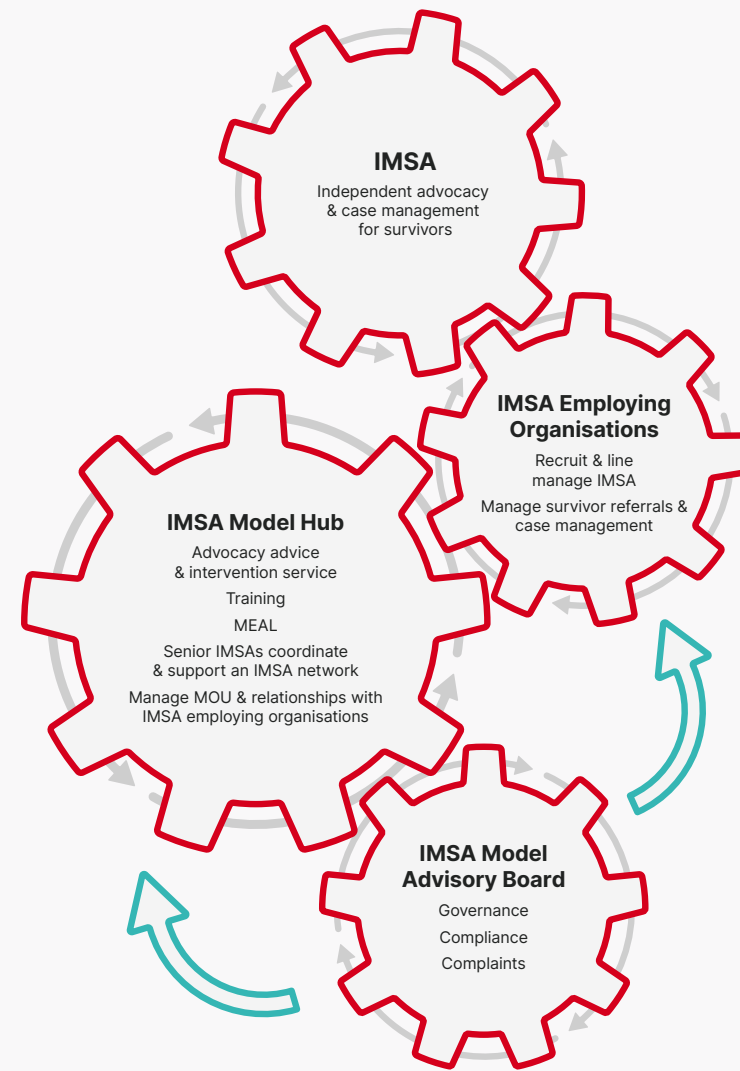
The IMSA Model Hub

The hub comprises:

- the IMSA Model Hub Manager
- the Advice and Intervention Coordinator
- senior IMSAs.

The IMSA Network

The network will be developed throughout the pilot stage and as the number of IMSAs grows. It is envisioned that the network will offer support on complex cases, provide a confidential setting to discuss challenges, share best practice and develop understanding of different employment contexts.





Hope for Justice

Chapter 2 The Role and Remit of an Independent Modern Slavery Advocate

What do Independent Modern Slavery Advocates do and how do they operate?

The IMSA Model offers a 3-tiered approach to advocacy, recognising that survivors' advocacy needs differ from individual to individual and change at different points throughout each survivor's process of recovery. All areas of independent advocacy within the IMSA Model are delivered by specially trained, experienced and highly skilled IMSAs.

The Role of the IMSA

The IMSA should have successfully completed the accredited IMSA training course and be equipped to work for survivors of modern slavery, ensuring the survivors' voices are heard and that they are empowered to make informed, meaningful decisions. The IMSA builds a collaborative relationship with the survivor, providing clear explanations of relevant legal and technical language. This enables the survivor to make informed decisions as they navigate complex pathways and situations.

The IMSA acts as a single point of contact, providing specialist social and legal advocacy, which is independent of support or service provision, funding, or legal decision-making processes. This ensures the IMSA can provide a safe space for survivors to voice concerns over support or service provision they are in receipt of or entitled to.

IMSA Specialisms

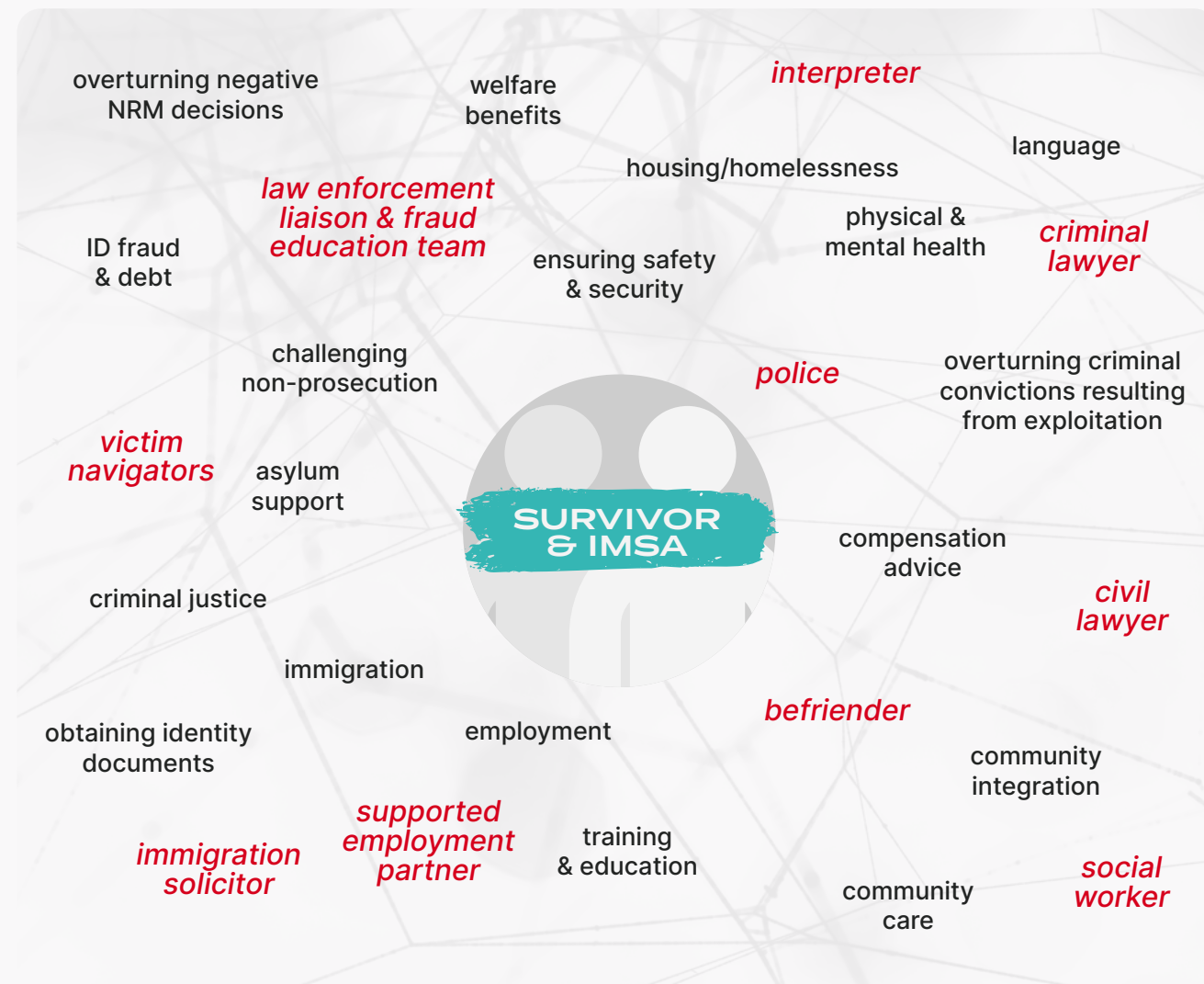
The breadth of systems, services and legislation that survivors of modern slavery have to navigate is vast, requiring IMSAs to have the necessary technical knowledge and skills to advocate within different areas and know when to seek appropriate expert assistance.

For example, the role of a Child Trafficking Transition Specialist IMSA exists to work specifically with young adults as they transition out of children's services. It bridges the gap when the intensive support available to young adults suddenly ends, and they must then navigate new services and systems on their own. This is a time of high risk of further exploitation and re-trafficking for many young people and requires specialist knowledge of both child and adult services.

The Remit of the IMSA

There are no restrictions placed upon the point at which a survivor can enter into the IMSA provision. The IMSA Model recognises that the earlier a survivor can access independent advocacy, the quicker they can access their rights and entitlements and, therefore, progress through recovery.

The IMSA service is not time-limited, and the IMSA will work with the survivor for the duration of their advocacy needs. IMSAs can remain a consistent presence during transitions, for example, if there is a relationship breakdown with the support provider or if the support services are time-limited or locality-based.



This graphic shows the complex web of needs that many survivors of modern slavery have to navigate, together with examples of other professionals who may be working with the survivor. Survivors may need to work with some or all of these different services.





Conclusion

IMSA Model Development

The IMSA Model offers a best practice framework for independent advocacy for survivors of modern slavery within the UK context. The framework comprises four key areas: values and governance, the role and remit of an Independent Modern Slavery Advocate, training for IMSAs and employing an IMSA

Draft National Framework for Independent Modern Slavery Advocates 2023

The framework is a working document and constitutes a draft version to support the second stage of the IMSA Model Development Project – the pilot. This version of the National Framework for Independent Modern Slavery Advocates 2023 incorporates pilot project-specific restrictions serving three primary purposes:

- to ensure, throughout the pilot, the independent advocacy that is delivered and the expected outcomes for the clients, the survivors of modern slavery and human trafficking, are not compromised in any way;
- to strengthen the project development process by ensuring that this pilot phase involves rigorous testing, providing comparable data to inform learning and demonstrate the impact of the IMSA Model in different contexts and geographical localities;
- to ensure the final version of the IMSA Model is one of proven best practice, suitable to be replicated and scaled up throughout the UK.

With Thanks

The completion of this draft National Framework for Independent Modern Slavery Advocates 2023 has only been possible because of the extensive commitment and contributions from individuals and organisations throughout the UK. The project group – Hope for Justice, British Red Cross, The Snowdrop Project, and the independent consultants with lived experience of modern slavery – would like to extend our thanks to everyone who has contributed to the National Framework for Independent Modern Slavery Advocates 2023, including, but not limited to:

- Adavu
- Bakhita Centre

- Bramber Bakehouse
- Bright Future
- Crown Prosecution Service
- Ella's
- FLEX
- Flourish
- G's Fresh
- Greater Manchester Police
- Greencore Group
- Helen Bamber Foundation
- Hertfordshire Constabulary
- Hope at Home
- Human Trafficking Foundation
- Human Trafficking Foundation, Lived Experience Advisory Panel
- Jericho
- Khai Tzedek
- Migrant Help
- Modern Slavery Human Trafficking Branch, Department of Justice, Northern Ireland
- Modern Slavery Intelligence Network
- Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Modern Slavery Partnership
- Nottingham City Council
- Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Nottinghamshire
- Pilgrims Ltd
- Rebuild East Midlands
- Romanac Consulting
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- Stevenage Borough Council
- The Passage
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- Victim Support
- Warwickshire Police

Glossary

Advocacy

Supporting someone to speak out about their rights, their needs and what is important to them (The Advocacy Charter 2018)

Expected Outcomes

An outcome is 'expected' if it is in line with outcomes achieved through independent advocacy when provided within Hope for Justice, British Red Cross and The Snowdrop Project

Human Trafficking

[The UN Palermo Protocol](#)⁴ defines human trafficking as *the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons by means of threat, or use of force or other forms of coercion with the intent of exploiting that person for sexual exploitation, forced labour, or slavery, among other forms*

IMSA

Independent Modern Slavery Advocate, someone who has successfully completed (or is actively working towards) completion of the IMSA accredited training

IMSA Advisory Board

A board of modern slavery and human trafficking professionals, lead IMSA Model partners and consultants with lived experience of modern slavery and / or human trafficking

IMSA Framework

The document outlining the model and detailing how it will operate in practice

IMSA Model

A three-tiered model of independent advocacy for adult survivors of modern slavery. The model offers best practice, non-time-bound, independent guidance, values and governance

IMSA Model Hub

The IMSA Model central hub works to support and coordinate the national IMSA service. The hub is comprised of the Hub Manager, Senior IMSAs, Advocacy Advice and Intervention Coordinator

MEAL

Monitoring, evaluation, accountability and learning

Modern Slavery

Where one person controls another for profit by exploiting a vulnerability. The victim can be forced to work or exploited sexually. This control can be physical, financial or psychological

NGO

Non-governmental organisations

NRM

National Referral Mechanism, the UK framework for identifying and referring potential victims of modern slavery and ensuring they receive the appropriate support

OSCE

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe

Survivor

The individuals accessing independent advocacy through the IMSA service. Survivors referred to throughout this document are adult survivors of modern slavery and / or human trafficking. The term survivor is used to encompass victim / client / beneficiary / service user

Endnotes

Introduction

¹ <https://www.antislaverycommissioner.co.uk/media/1259/day-46.pdf>

² https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/f/5/510551_1.pdf

³ <https://www.humantraffickingfoundation.org/-trafficking-survivor-care-standards>

Chapter 1 - Values and Governance

⁴ <https://www.ndti.org.uk/assets/files/Advocacy-Charter-A3.pdf>

Glossary

⁵ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/protocol-prevent-suppress-and-punish-trafficking-persons>

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Stage 2 Overview

IMSA Model Development

The second stage of the IMSA Model Development is intended to test the National Framework for Independent Modern Slavery Advocates 2023. This pilot phase will ensure that the draft framework, the accredited IMSA training and the IMSA Model, values and governance are rigorously tested in all four nations, in different localities and different types of organisations.

Learning throughout this stage of the IMSA Model Development will inform and determine the final model, ensuring it provides a best practice model that will underpin a nationwide, standardised independent advocacy service for adult survivors of modern slavery.

Ways to Get Involved

During Stage 1, the consultation and drafting of the framework, there was an overwhelming interest and support for the project. There is a tension between the huge need for this service and the importance of ensuring that it is proven and demonstrable best practice and achieves a standardised model. There have been a number of enquiries about how individuals and organisations can get involved and support the project.

Opportunities will continue to arise but at this stage some suggestions are to:

- train to become an IMSA within the pilot phase;
- work with the project team and/or MEAL team to undertake related academic research;
- employ an IMSA within your organisation;
- make a financial contribution towards the model development.

The Project Team would be keen to discuss any input or support that individuals or organisations are able to provide.

Please email: advocacy.imsa@hopeforjustice.org and provide details about your area of interest and expertise.



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