

This month, we saw the signing into law of the Domestic Violence Act by President Michael D. Higgins which signals the start of a safer future for women and children who experience domestic abuse in the family home.

As the lead agency in Co. Kerry supporting female victims of domestic abuse, we are very pleased with the new law which combines the existing measures in Irish law in relation to Domestic abuse. The Act will offer greater protection for victims in the legal systems including the extension for the eligibility for safety orders to women who experience abuse in dating relationships; the recognition of an intimate relationship as an aggravating factor in domestic violence cases and the recognition of the new crime of coercive control. The Act also allows for the possibility of electronic communication for the victim of domestic violence while giving evidence in Court proceedings where intimidation of the witness is an issue.

We believe that the domestic Violence Act will bring about much needed improvement for women experiencing domestic violence and, in particular, the legal recognition of the impact of coercive control in intimate relationships – This is psychological abuse in an intimate relationship that causes fear of violence, or serious alarm or distress that has a substantial adverse impact in the daily life of a victim.

ADAPT Kerry have offered ongoing emotional support for women who are going through Court proceedings and we are very welcoming of the new provision that victims will be able to bring a friend, family member or support worker into court to support them during the proceedings. This will allow our service to further support our clients throughout the process and allow the support worker to support the client through all aspects of the proceedings.

Based in Killeen Road, Tralee the organisation is a specialist Domestic Violence support service offering safe refuge and a range of supports to women and children across the County of Kerry whose lives are affected by the domestic abuse. Adapt Kerry also operate a charity shop on Matt Talbot Road, Tralee. If you have been affected by domestic abuse and would like to talk, our telephone support is available on (066) 712 9100, Monday to Friday 9am to 12 midnight, Saturday and Sunday 1pm to 11pm.