



# An evaluation of services provided to high-risk victims of stalking by Paladin: The National Stalking Advocacy Service

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 About this Evaluation

Paladin: the National Stalking Advocacy Service requested Kingston and St George's undertake an evaluation of their services in 2014, as they completed their first year of operation, as a means to identify the quality of service offered to victims, to provide qualitative evidence of the impact of the support provided by Paladin and to offer an indication of ways in which the service might be developed in future. The evaluation was carried out during the period 2014-5 and provides a snapshot of the service in this time period. It highlights some of the early impact of the organisation in terms of gaining a profile with referring organisations and providing direct support to victims of stalking.

Paladin's key objectives are to:

1. Provide advice and support to high risk victims of stalking
2. Raise awareness of dangers and risks of stalking
3. Provide training to professionals
4. Scrutinise the new stalking laws
5. Campaign on behalf of victims
6. Develop a victims' network of support<sup>1</sup>

This evaluation supports the appraisal of Paladin's services in relation to providing advice and support to high risk victims of stalking and developing a victims' support network only. This evaluation report does not provide a descriptive account of Paladin's day to day operations during its first years of operation, its advocacy and campaigning work on the national stage, its training services or statistics on how many people have accessed Paladin's services. Details of these may be found in Paladin's Annual Reports<sup>2</sup> which are available on their webpage. Rather, this evaluation focuses on the individual and personal nature of service provision by Paladin to victims of stalking, from the perspectives of both victims who used Paladin's services and the Independent Stalking Advocacy Caseworkers (Paladin case workers) who supported them.

The evaluation sought to answer two questions about Paladin's case work services:

1. Does Paladin enable victims to feel safer and manage the risk posed by their stalkers?

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<sup>1</sup> Paladin Annual Report 2015, p2 <http://paladinservice.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Paladin-Annual-Report-2015.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <http://paladinservice.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Paladin-Annual-Report-2015.pdf>



2. Does Paladin enable access to services and support those victims and referrers perceive as relevant?

## 1.2 How the evaluation was conducted

The scope of the evaluation was agreed with Paladin and ethical approval was sought and obtained from the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Health, Social Care and Education, Kingston University and St George's, University of London. The evaluation approach was informed by Pawson and Tilley's<sup>3</sup> (1997) proposition for realistic evaluations that services achieve their outcomes as the result of causal mechanisms being triggered in particular contexts. This means that evaluations should pay as much attention to 'why' a service works as to 'whether' it works – as this will usually provide important information for their future development of the service. The methods used to collect data included:

- A questionnaire sent by Survey Monkey to referrers to the service and police single points of contact for Paladin for their service. The survey link was sent to 100 agencies with which Paladin has had contact. There was a disappointing response to the survey with only 10 respondents from agencies including police services and victims' support and advocacy services.
- 9 in-depth interviews with clients who had used Paladin's services. These individuals were not receiving a service from Paladin at the point of interview. They were recruited by Paladin who contacted former service users to invite them to participate in the evaluation.
- Interviews with Paladin case workers who had worked with these clients regarding their perceptions of the service they had provided. In cases where the original Paladin case worker who had worked with the client was no longer employed by Paladin, another Paladin case worker reviewed the case file with the researchers.
- Interviews with Laura Richards (Chief Executive and Founder of Paladin) and the Paladin case worker team.

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<sup>3</sup> Pawson, R. and Tilley, N. (1997) *Realistic Evaluation*, London: Sage Publications.



- Observation of a victims' support network meeting

All interviews were recorded, transcribed and analysed.

## 2. Advice and support to high risk victims of stalking: what is known about the needs of victims?

Paladin operates within a context where stalking is increasingly recognised as a social problem, attracts public and media attention and is criminalised in the UK and many other jurisdictions because of its impact on victims. Paladin, as an organisation, aims to raise awareness of the dangers and risks of stalking, change law and practice through the courts and train organisations and individuals in this field. In addition, accredited caseworkers provide strategic advocacy to high risk victims of stalking. As this evaluation focusses on estimating the efficacy of Paladin's service to clients, a literature review of what is known of the needs and issues faced by victims of stalking and interventions to support victims was conducted. There are limited studies of this area in the UK so studies from other jurisdictions have been helpful to inform the outcomes of this evaluation.

As Mullen et al (2009) note, victims of stalking cut across gender, age, socioeconomic status, occupation and cultural background, with public figures and health practitioners being at greater risk.<sup>4</sup> An important Canadian study of 7472 victims, demonstrated that stalking is regularly brought to the attention of police with over 7,000 reports of crimes. Men accounted for 20% of this victim population and the majority of victims were stalked by people who knew them either because they were in a previous intimate relationship or as a result of a casual acquaintance. The main perpetrators of stalking were men and most cases led to the prosecution of the perpetrator but were more likely to result in probation rather than imprisonment.<sup>5</sup> Data from the Crime Survey of England and Wales shows up to 700, 000 women are stalked each year (2009-12) although the British Crime Survey (2006) estimated 5 million people experience stalking each year. There are no official statistics on the percentage cyberstalked.<sup>6</sup> In 2011 statistics from the National Stalking Helpline showed that the majority of stalking victims (80.4%) were female while the majority of perpetrators (70.5%) were male.<sup>7</sup>

Mullen et al (2009) describe the huge impact that stalking may have on victims:

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<sup>4</sup> Mullen, P, Pathe, M and Purcell, R. (2009) *Stalkers and their Victims* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition) Cambridge University Press, New York, p.35

<sup>5</sup> Jones, C. (1996) Criminal harassment (or stalking). [www.chass.utoronto.ca/~cjones/pub/stalking.html](http://www.chass.utoronto.ca/~cjones/pub/stalking.html) as cited in Mullen et al (2009)

<sup>6</sup>As reported by Paladin <http://paladinservice.co.uk/key-facts-and-figures/>

<sup>7</sup> National Stalking Helpline: stalking statistics (2012) available at [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/118099/national-stalking-helpline.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/118099/national-stalking-helpline.pdf) accessed on 19.02.2016



“Effectively entrapped in an aversive situation as a result of human rather than natural causes, and subject to repeated intentional harm, the stalking victim experiences helplessness, powerlessness and a loss of self-determination. Their beliefs regarding personal agency and autonomy are undermined, as is their view of the world, especially in relation to safety, predictability and justice.”<sup>8</sup>

In offering a relevant service that enables victims to feel safer, to manage the risk posed by their stalkers and to enable them to access services Paladin must be cognisant of the impact that the stalking has on their clients. Amongst other criminal behaviour, stalking is notable for its repetitive and persistent nature. Victims of stalking are usually exposed to a variety of harassing behaviours which both traumatise and threaten and can lead to longstanding fear and apprehension.<sup>9</sup> The impact of stalking on victims was examined by Hall (1998) who found that the majority of victims had experienced a number of different types of harassment including telephone calls, watching and following and entering the victims' homes. There were also reports of property damage, physical and sexual assaults and threats to harm someone else. The life changing effect that this had on the day to day lives of victims ranged from victims moving home, changing jobs, changing their names or altering their physical appearance with 80% of victims reporting that their personality had changed as a result of the stalking.<sup>10</sup> Pathe and Mullen's (1997) study of the impact of stalking focused on the psychological, social and occupational effects on 100 victims who had experienced multiple forms of stalking. They found that almost all victims reported that the stalking had had a harmful effect on how they functioned; this included a need to make lifestyle changes and curtail social activities which could lead to loss of friendships. Over half of the victims reported a decrease or stopping of work or school attendance. Virtually all of the victims described a negative impact on their physical and mental health. Notably, it was found that the harm done to physical and mental health was not necessarily linked to stalking combined with violence.<sup>11</sup> In 2000 The British Crime Survey found that stalking had had a deleterious effect on the majority of victims; over 90% reported annoyance and 75% found it disturbing and worrying with over 70% having to change their lifestyle. The psychological and social effects were greater where there was sexual assault, threats of violence and obscene telephone calls.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Mullen et al (2009) p 55

<sup>9</sup> Mullen et al (2009) p. 54

<sup>10</sup> Hall, D. M. (1998) The victims of stalking. In J.R. Meloy (ed.) *The Psychology of stalking: Clinical and Forensic Perspectives*. San Diego, CA: Academic Press, pp.113-37 as cited in Mullen et al (2009)

<sup>11</sup> Pathe, M and Mullen, P.E. (1997) The impact of stalkers on their victims. *British Journal of Psychiatry*, 170, 12-17 as cited in Mullen et al (2009)

<sup>12</sup> Budd, T. & Mattinson, J. (2000) *Stalking: Findings from the 1998 British Crime Survey*. Research findings no. 129, Home Office Research Development and Statistics directorate. as cited in Mullen et al (2009)

Victims of stalking can be classified in the following way: victims, most commonly women, who have had a previous relationship with the stalker. These previous relationships can be estranged family and friends; casual acquaintances; professional contacts, predominately health care professionals, lawyers and teachers or workplace contacts. Victims may also be stalked by strangers, their stalker may be unknown to them or the victim may be a public figure. Secondary victims of stalking are most commonly children of the stalking victim.<sup>13</sup> The small sample of clients that were interviewed for this evaluation were representative of several of these categories: women who had previous violent relationships with their stalkers, one who had had a casual acquaintance with their stalker, two people who had professional contact with their stalkers, one of whom was a health care professional. During the course of some interviews reference was made to the children of the victims. Children are seen as secondary victims of stalkers and as one Finnish study demonstrated, professionals involved with primary victims who have children should ensure that children are treated as victims too and offer support to them.<sup>14</sup>

As Paladin seeks to improve safety and to help clients manage risk, understanding and assessing the level of risk posed to victims is an important part of their intervention. One study revealed that where a victim was stalked by an ex-partner who had been violent they would experience a more serious post relationship stalking campaign.<sup>15</sup> In cases of domestic stalkers, where a threat is made 1 in 2 stalkers will act upon it. Where there has been no prior relationship 1 in 10 stalkers will act upon a threat made.<sup>16</sup> In 2003, the Metropolitan Police Service found that 40% of the victims of domestic homicides had also been stalked<sup>17</sup>

To enable service providers to meet the needs of victims of stalking, Spence-Diehl and Potocky-Tripodi (2001) propose that there should be: greater community awareness of stalking; training for practitioners; greater understanding by the police; more direct victim services and victim advocacy; stalking specific

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<sup>13</sup> Mullen et al (2009) pp 46-53

<sup>14</sup> Nikupeteri, A. and Laitinen, M. (2015) 'Children's Everyday Lives Shadowed by Stalking: Post separation Stalking Narratives of Finnish Children and Women', *Violence and Victims*, 30: 830-845.

<sup>15</sup> Ferreira, C. and Matos, M (2013) Post-Relationship Stalking: The Experience of Victims With and Without History of Partner Abuse *Journal of Family Violence* 28, 393–402

<sup>16</sup> MacKenzie, R.D., McEwan, T.E., Pathé, M.T., James, D.V., Ogloff, J.R.P., & Mullen, P.E. (2009). The Stalking Risk Profile. Guidelines for assessing and managing stalkers. StalkInc. & the Centre for Forensic Behavioural Science, Monash University.

<sup>17</sup> The Metropolitan Police (2003) Findings from the Multi-agency Domestic Violence Murder Reviews in London: Prepared for the ACPO Homicide Working Group available at: <http://www.dashriskchecklist.co.uk/uploads/Findings%20from%20the%20Domestic%20Homicide%20Reviews.pdf> accessed 19.02.16



support groups; safety planning; more criminal justice services and better police identification and tracking of stalking cases; increased prosecution of stalkers and prompt response to any violation of protective orders.<sup>18</sup> Noffsinger (2015) proposes that victims of stalking would benefit from multi-disciplinary consultation. He cites Spence-Diehl and Potocky-Tripodi's 2001 study in describing what the key priorities for practitioners are when working with victims: the development of a personal safety plan; the formulation of strategies to deal with stalking; giving reassurance to the victim that they are not to blame; requesting a protective order; developing a care plan to address any psychological and somatic symptoms and carrying out a risk assessment into violence and suicide with an appropriate care plan.<sup>19</sup>

Cupac and Spitzberg (2004) have proposed 5 different tactics that victims use to manage stalking: "moving with" which is interaction with the stalker; "moving away" where the victim avoids the stalker and changes every day routines; "moving inward" where the victim denies, reconceptualises or ignores the stalkers behaviour; "moving outward" where the victim seeks help from third parties to stop or avoid the stalker and lastly "moving against" where the victim seeks to defend themselves from the stalker causing them harm through physical violence or by taking legal action.<sup>20</sup> It would appear that Paladin promotes the use of "moving outward" to seek support, "moving against" (by taking legal action and by advocacy within the criminal justice system) and to some extent "moving away".

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<sup>18</sup> Spence-Diehl E, Potocky-Tripodi M. (2001) Victims of stalking: a study of service needs as perceived by victim services practitioners. *J Interpers Violence*. 16(1), 86-94. As cited in Noffsinger, S. (2015) What stalking victims need to restore their mental and somatic health. *Current Psychiatry*, 14 (6), 43- 46

<sup>19</sup> Noffsinger, S. (2015) What stalking victims need to restore their mental and somatic health. *Current Psychiatry*, 14 (6), 43- 46

<sup>20</sup> Podana, Z and Imriskova, R (2016) Victims' Responses to Stalking: An Examination of Fear Levels and Coping Strategies. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 31(5) 792– 809

### 3. How Do Victims Access Paladin's Services? Victims' and Referring Agencies' Perspectives

Paladin seeks to provide a service for victims of stalking who are assessed as being at high risk of serious harm and/or homicide. Victims may self-refer or be referred by another agency. Details about how to refer to Paladin are provided on the Paladin website with guidance available for all professionals and specific guidance for the police. Both victims and professionals referring to the service are asked to complete a referral form and a DASH risk assessment. Paladin's most recently published statistics<sup>21</sup> state that 47% of all referrals in the year 2014-5 were from the victims themselves. From Paladin's point of view, this uptake of services directly from service users themselves resulted from "the significant media focus on Paladin and stalking"<sup>22</sup>.

#### 3.1 Clients' perspectives

The nine clients interviewed had found out about Paladin's services through of routes, shown in the box below. These results may be illustrative of the different ways clients find out about the service.

##### How clients found out about Paladin's services

- Word of mouth from a family member who had had contact with CAADA/Safer Lives
- Word of mouth from Victim Support
- Word of mouth from a local MP
- Web research which resulted in referral from another stalking campaign site
- Late referral from the police
- Hearing Laura Richards speak at a Unison conference
- Referral from Women's Aid
- Via Twitter
- Via clients own research on Google

<sup>21</sup> <http://paladinservice.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Paladin-Annual-Report-2015.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> <http://paladinservice.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Paladin-Annual-Report-2015.pdf> p 3



The methods reported were within the context of clients' experiences of other services that they had accessed as a result of being stalked. Clients reported delays and lack of contact from the police, their feelings of not being believed or taken seriously by the police or their reports of the stalking not being prioritised by the police. Additionally it was reported that other agencies had not been able to help clients deal with the stalking that they were subjected to.

The interviews with the Paladin case workers confirmed the methods of referral that the clients reported but also, in some cases indicated that there had been more than one method of referral. The Paladin case workers indicated that it was important to legitimise the contact they had with the clients referred to them and their screening assessment of whether or not the case was deemed to be high risk. This could be seen by the weight placed on referrals from other agencies and the priority given to cases that were deemed to be high risk cases. In the one case that was reported as medium risk, intervention was deemed to be justified by Paladin as a result of the client dealing with a case in the Family Proceedings Court that concerned the client and her ex-partner's (her stalker's) child:

"I mean she was actually a medium risk case but because of the, the case was actually exacerbated by the fact that he, it was family, it was going to Family court and at that point the risk always elevates and we find that obviously they use, the perpetrators use the Family courts as a legitimate way of stalking."<sup>23</sup>

### **3.3 Perspectives from agencies from whom Paladin receives referrals**

Paladin receives referrals from police, probation, Victim Support, third sector specialist support services as well as self-referrals. The ten respondents to the electronic survey (including police services, Victim Support and women's advocacy services) indicated some of Paladin's strengths leading to them referring clients to the service. These included finding Paladin staff to be knowledgeable, helpful, highly professional and competent. Further strengths are shown in the table below. Respondents noted that Paladin had reasonable expectations of their agency's ability to provide services. They valued the information and literature provided by Paladin and also Paladin's approach to information sharing.

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<sup>23</sup> Paladin case worker talking about Client 3

### Agencies' perspectives of the strengths of Paladin

- ✓ Independence, Resilience and Professionalism. Truly victim focussed.
- ✓ Specialist knowledge and understanding of stalking
- ✓ Fantastic support and advice for victims by experienced professionals
- ✓ Very good dissemination of information to agencies
- ✓ Training and the provision of workshops and seminars
- ✓ Robust campaigners
- ✓ Web page valued as a source of information
- ✓ Very good information sharing protocols
- ✓ Paladin complements the advice given by the National Stalking Helpline by providing case-workers to support victims and to liaise with criminal justice agencies to expedite investigations.
- ✓ Paladin staff specialise in stalking cases and have a very good understanding of the issues in respect of victims of stalking and effective tools such as stalking safety plans

## 3.4 Providing assistance to referring agencies

Referring agencies respondents also noted a variety of ways that Paladin has been of assistance to them:

### a) Supporting professional development in the understanding and management of stalking

Referring agencies respondents commented on the educative aspect of Paladin's service provision

'They have given me a better understanding of Stalking and Harassment and how the police response should match the severity'

'The leaflets supplied by Paladin and the 2-day training in stalking risk assessment have been very useful.'

'The website offers valuable information to assist in the investigation of stalking along with the great co-operation of the staff and their varied experience.'

### b) Individual Case Support

Respondents commented that Paladin had assisted both, in the investigation of stalking cases (Police), risk management and case work support for victims

### c) Assisting agencies in policy development in relation to stalking

Respondents noted that Paladin had offered assistance in this area.

### 3.5 Referring agencies' suggestions for future development of Paladin's services

Respondents to the survey offered some suggestions about how Paladin might further develop its services. Key responses are shown in the following table. The responses are such as might be expected at an early stage of organisational development. Referrers are seeking more information and more access to information and guidance about referrals.

How Paladin might develop its services – views of referring agencies	
<p><b>Increasing awareness of Paladin's services by</b></p> <p>Bringing a road show to agencies</p> <p>Providing more materials to agencies</p> <p>Additional marketing of Paladin's service nationally as a number of agencies are unaware of its services</p> <p>Informing more victims' services about the work they do</p> <p>Providing '<i>free in-house training for relevant departments within the police.</i>'</p>	<p><b>Developing web presence by</b></p> <p>Providing information on internet and cyber safety including social networking sites</p> <p>Providing more information on law and policy</p> <p>Providing further information on wider current issues</p> <p>Developing an app for smart phones</p>
<p><b>Providing further information to agencies about how and when to refer to Paladin</b></p> <p>Agencies need guidance about how and when to refer to Paladin</p> <p>Self-referral or agency referral or both?</p>	<p><b>Providing feedback information to agencies</b></p> <p>Dissemination of data on number of cases by region</p>
<p><b>Increasing Paladin's capacity</b></p> <p>Respondents recognised that Paladin was a small scale operation and agencies would like it to scale up its operation.</p>	<p><b>Professionalisation of stalking advocacy work</b></p> <p>National accreditation of Paladin case workers rolled out on a larger scale</p>



### 3.6 Discussion and recommendations

The interviews with clients highlight the importance of the clients' own self agency to make self-referrals and find out about Paladin through their own contacts and research. In addition the importance of family support in trying to help clients is signalled. In respect of clients' reported difficulties in their contact with other agencies, it is clear that Paladin's approach when receiving a direct referral from a client is seen as beneficial when workers legitimise and validate the client's fears and concerns.

For Paladin it is clear that an online presence is valuable to enable both clients and other agencies to access their services. This includes the use of social media.

"Paladin tweeted me I think, I followed them, they followed me and sent me a direct message, and then had a, I think had a couple of tweets you know, direct message tweets with somebody from Paladin which led to me contacting them, having a conversation with Laura Richards..."  
(Client 7)

In addition, the importance of other agencies knowing about Paladin and referring clients is important as is Laura Richard's personal reputation and public speaking to promote the service. Upon referral, Paladin's specialist knowledge in assessing risk, screening and prioritising clients is important to ensure that the highest risk clients receive a service.

For the above reasons it is recommended that Paladin continues to maintain a prominent online presence and also aim to make face to face contact with referring agencies and the general public to advertise their services. Paladin's role in offering training to other agencies should be developed to reach as many potential referrers as possible in order that agencies understand the nature of stalking and learn how to deal appropriately with the victims of stalking. The provision of an advertised advice line for professionals might be considered.

## 4. Clients' expectations at the point of contacting Paladin

What did clients expect when contacting Paladin? Contacting an unknown service at a point of extreme distress is likely to be challenging for victims of stalking. This is likely to be exacerbated if their previous help-seeking to deal with being stalked has been unproductive, or if their account of the experience of being stalked has been minimised by a service provider (such as the police), or if they themselves have been pathologised or blamed for being victimised. Client interviews revealed some common themes in clients' initial expectations of Paladin's services and their experiences of Paladin's initial response to them.

### 4.1 Low initial expectations

Client interviews revealed that generally they had low expectations about what Paladin could offer based on their experiences of services before their contact with Paladin:

"I'm going to be honest with you, initially I thought they'd be the same as Women's Aid and all the others that let us down, um, because obviously due to the experiences that I had, that's exactly how I felt but to be honest..... initially I rang them for sort of a little bit of advice really because at that specific point I'd had two non-molestation orders and a restraining order against my ex-partner and he continued to breach them on a daily occurrence to the point where sort of, he tried to pour petrol through the letterbox, you know, an absolutely bizarre individual"<sup>24</sup>

Reasons for contacting the service included the hope that Paladin could help them stop their stalkers making contact with them<sup>25</sup>, threatening them<sup>26</sup> and give them advice on how to deal with the stalking they were experiencing. <sup>27</sup> Others were referred or "passed on" to Paladin from other services, such as solicitors, Victims' Support and Women's Services organisations with the brief that Paladin might be better able to assist, particularly in working with the Police."<sup>28</sup> Another client described how Paladin needed to gain their trust:

"I was fed up with services and providers that actually did nothing, as far as I was concerned Victim Support did nothing, Police did nothing, they were all useless as far as I was concerned so poor old Paladin... was starting with somebody that was feeling pretty anti .... They're just going to want my story, it's going to take for hours to go through and I'm going to be exhausted"<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Client 8

<sup>25</sup> Client 9

<sup>26</sup> Client 8

<sup>27</sup> Client 3

<sup>28</sup> Client 7

<sup>29</sup> Client 2

The clients interviewed for this study had sustained their contact with Paladin. This is a testament to how quickly Paladin was able to gain their trust. How this trust would appear to have been earned is revealed below. The key finding here is that Paladin appears to anticipate the reservations service users have in contacting the service and is able to act in a way which enables serves users to feel that their contact with Paladin is helpful to them.

## 4.2 Engaging with Paladin’s services

Paladin’s response to initial contact by victims of stalking appeared to be critical in their choice to engage with the service. From clients’ perspectives, the following attributes of Paladin case workers were critical:

<b>Initial Responses To Contact: What Clients Value</b>		
✓	Non-judgemental listening	<p>Paladin responded “quickly” and took “action promptly”<sup>30</sup></p> <p>“I rang and sort of got into more conversation with them they were actually able to listen”</p> <p>“She was fantastic. Paladin superseded my expectations. They have been completely unlike any other agency I have worked with. I was most impressed.”<sup>31</sup></p>
✓	Reassurance	
✓	Being taken seriously	
✓	Validation of their concerns and experience	
✓	Learning about Paladin’s expertise in working with the Police	
✓	Relevant advice	
✓	Prompt response and follow-up	
✓	Being connected with relevant professionals and services	

Clients described how Paladin was able to understand and validate their experience and offer them emotional support:

“She was very understanding, basically gave us advice on, you know, sort of what

<sup>30</sup> Client 1

<sup>31</sup> Client 2

to do, basically the first person that actually listened to us .... regarding the whole situation. The police were very, very much lapsed and basically as soon as he was arrested we didn't hear from them.”<sup>32</sup>

“I feel sometimes like I'm being ridiculous because this person is sending me flowers and leaving things on my doorstep and things and people are saying what's bad about that, and then he was standing in my back garden,” and I sort of told her the story and she reassured me that this is okay, I'm not being stupid and, you know, I have a right to privacy, I have a right not to receive these things, and I thought, she sort of made me feel stronger.”<sup>33</sup>

### 4.3 Paladin case workers' expectations

Paladin's expectations about what they could offer appeared to have a different focus. Workers stressed their initial concern with the assessment of risk in a case and whether their intervention is justified. Though this did not appear to be evident to the clients interviewed, case workers focus at the initial contact point appeared to be primarily concerned with screening cases as to whether the case was deemed to be a high risk case or in some cases a medium risk case which may develop quickly into a high risk one as the following two excerpts from interviews reveal.

“So we were initially quite concerned and it seemed to be escalating again quite quickly, knowing the previous history as well, it was quite a concern so we decided to intervene there.”<sup>34</sup>

“This was a medium, this was a medium yeah and we normally work with high risk, they have to present as a current high risk, but some mediums we understand that it just takes up one final point and it will become a high, so we can use discretion, but saying that we understand that risk is dynamic, I mean today it could be standard and tomorrow it could be a high and it takes a situation, a minute for something to change.”<sup>35</sup>

The importance of assessing risk is also linked to the work that Paladin undertake with the Police in advocating for their clients to ensure that clients' experiences of stalking are understood and taken seriously in the light of the risk involved:

“Although it may come under a DV service when there's an obsession and a fixation then it moves over into stalking, but it can be two things at the same time as well, I think this confuses victims and professionals and the Police.”<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Client 4

<sup>33</sup> Client 5

<sup>34</sup> Paladin service talking about Client 1

<sup>35</sup> Paladin service talking about Client 4

<sup>36</sup> Paladin service talking about Client 4



“In these cases we remind the Police that that, that they are the stats and that you are looking at the one in two DV stalkers who will kill, so in our advocacy we remind Police Officers that that actually is a stat”<sup>37</sup>

“A lot of it was done on Twitter and social media, so her case was one that was a bit harder to handle because the Police don’t take them quite so seriously, so she needed support with regards to that and multi-agency working, so working, us working with the Police to try and ensure that there was an arrest made and an investigation actually following through.”<sup>38</sup>

As all the victims interviewed for this study had been screened to meet Paladin’s referral criteria, it was not possible to evaluate how victims who contact Paladin for support who are not screened as high risk or medium risk which may escalate to high risk experience Paladin’s services. This may be something Paladin may wish to keep under review.

Paladin case workers also emphasised the importance of the validation of clients’ experiences and giving clear explanations about what is happening in the criminal justice system:

“She was talking through the actual behaviours and saying, “This is stalking, this is stalking.” ....“Look, we understand what’s going on and this should never have happened to you.” ...explaining things clearly rather than trying to sort of bamboozle with legislation .... once she began to trust what we were doing and how we were going to assist her through the Court process, and clearly outlining what we thought went wrong and what should have happened and saying what the legislation states, you know, in a clear way seemed to help.”<sup>39</sup>

## 4.5 Discussion and recommendations

In summary it can be seen that clients’ and Paladin’s expectations differ. Clients’ knowledge of service varies. For some there are low expectations based on their experience of other agencies. Others have been referred by specialist services. Paladin is seen as a specialist agency with influence with the police. The interviews with the Paladin case worker demonstrate that Paladin filters and assesses risk. If Paladin assesses that the risk will escalate they elect to intervene. Paladin emphasises that their role and expertise

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<sup>37</sup> Paladin service talking about Client 7

<sup>38</sup> Paladin service talking about Client 8

<sup>39</sup> Paladin service talking about Client 2



lies in advocating for clients with the police to achieve effective intervention. For clients having their concerns validated and taken seriously is helpful in promoting engagement with the service.

Paladin may wish to keep under review those to whom they do not offer a service.

## 5. Clients' and case workers' evaluation of services provided - did Paladin help?

What were clients' experiences of the service they received from Paladin? How did they perceive that Paladin had assisted them? Clients' responses to these open-ended questions revealed a number of distinct and clear themes which are discussed below. The perspectives of the Paladin case workers also revealed the intentionality in their approach. The interviews with case workers drew attention in particular to the strategies they had found to be most effective in practice. These strategies are born out of practice experience and signal growing practice wisdom in the provision of advocacy and support services within Paladin. This section also considers the provision of a Victims' Network, based on observation of an initial network meeting.

"I didn't need to sit down and have a cup of tea and be told there-there and pour out your troubles, I needed proactive action that was going to help end the stalking, help me through the trial, help me not be a victim." (Client 7)

### 5.1 Advocating with the Police and other Criminal Justice Agencies

Paladin's specific expertise in advocating for its service users primarily with the police and also with other criminal justice agencies was highlighted by all clients interviewed. Clients valued specifically certain features of the advocacy service.

#### Clients valued

- ✓ Paladin's prompt and proactive approach to advocating for them with the police
- ✓ Paladin's knowledge of the legislation in relation to stalking and their ability to advise the police
- ✓ Paladin's ability to call the police to account and ask questions about any delays in charging perpetrators
- ✓ Paladin's ability to help the police realise the seriousness of the client's situation and the risk faced.
- ✓ Paladin's support around the court process and liaison with agencies such as Victim Care



Clients considered that Paladin were extremely influential in ensuring that they received justice. They reported a tardy response from the police before Paladin took on their case which shifted significantly with Paladin's involvement as the following excerpt from an interview illustrates:

"Paladin really did give the Police the kick up the backside that they really did need and once the Police knew that Paladin were on board and quite frankly I wasn't going to sit back and allow this man to take control of my life any more, they really did start to get their act together .....and that's taken me nearly five years to get that"<sup>40</sup>

This respondent considered that Paladin's advocacy and intervention had led directly to the charging, conviction and sentencing of the perpetrator.

One client described how Paladin's proactive approach had helped her deal with attending court as a witness.

"She had get up and go with her.... .... she'd got strategies, she helped me plan, you know, I'd got the trial coming up and she helped talk me through about a bit like what it would be and she said, you know, you can go and look round the court room, we get in touch with Witness Care and they'll show you round and you can ask your questions and helped me prepare deal and navigate all through that."<sup>41</sup>

Paladin case workers also considered that that contact with the police is an area where they have expertise and can make a significant difference to how the police will approach a case. In reviewing their work with a number of cases, key themes emerged about practices which they felt were particularly efficacious.

"I'm very, very grateful for their support and their knowledge and them keeping on top of both training the Police and on top of law training and trying to change laws."  
(Client 7)

"I think the most helpful thing was their contact with the Police. The Police don't necessarily know all the details of legislation and they are incredibly over worked. I think they probably would have said "This is to be put on the back burner" had Paladin not actually given them some guidance and some help."  
(Client 1)

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<sup>40</sup> Client 8

<sup>41</sup> Client 2

### Practices that Paladin case workers have found to be effective

- ✓ Providing police with the full background in order to assist with the arrest of the perpetrator
- ✓ Training and providing events for SPOC (single point of contact in police services for stalking) meaning that they have a named person in a service who “knows Paladin” and whose help they can recruit
- ✓ Providing information to police about legislation for charging, including advocating for the charging with the specific offence of stalking rather than the offences of harassment or public order offences
- ✓ Advocating for restraining orders to be asked for at court, and for police action on breach of restraining orders on the grounds that this is stalking, as one case worker commented:  
“This is stalking and first and foremost it’s stalking and we’re looking at the 4A charge, but then we’re also looking at the breach of Restraining Order as well.”<sup>42</sup>
- ✓ Supporting clients in the complaints about the service provided to them by the police, including facilitating meetings between clients and the police

Paladin’s skill in advocating for clients and how they work with the police would appear to be a particular strength. This combined with the training and networking they undertake makes for effective working relationships which can lead to important interventions with significant impact on clients’ safety and lives.

## 5.2 Multi-agency working and co-ordination of services

Paladin case workers highlighted the importance of working effectively in a multi-agency environment to support victims of stalking. The impact on clients of having to deal with a variety of services and

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<sup>42</sup> Paladin service talking about working with the Police



professionals in addition to the experience of being stalked is very difficult. One Paladin case worker described the role that Paladin could play in this:

“She’d speak to someone and naturally you’re traumatised, you’re not going to remember who you spoke to, what was agreed with who, loads of professionals get involved when the client gets a bit lost, so what Paladin did is almost sort of coordinated all the professionals like this person’s doing that, this person’s doing that, the health visitor’s helping you with that, so Paladin was sort of the middle person, the centre and trying to sort of keep a hold on it for the victim as well.”<sup>43</sup>

For one client,<sup>44</sup> Paladin was working with the Police, the Courts, the Probation Officer, the Housing Department and the Dating Website where the client had first come into contact with the stalker:

“I think what was most effective was probably liaising with all the professionals locally and ensuring that the victim remained in the loop of what was happening, I don’t know how aware she was of the local support services but I felt with Paladin’s involvement she was a lot more aware.”<sup>45</sup>

Paladin case workers also outlined the role that they played in child safeguarding when they were concerned about the level of upset and distress that a client was experiencing. For one client who was suicidal the Paladin case worker was in daily contact for a period of time.

“I’d sort of try and phone her every day or every other day, so that I could at least have that contact, or if she didn’t answer I’d leave a message and ensured that a Health Visitor went round, I said it would be good for her to, ‘cos at least if I knew that there was someone else going round, also to check on [her child] because if, you know, I didn’t think that she was a bad mum, I thought she was a great mum ‘cos I knew that she was trying to protect [her child], but at the same time a mum who is that upset and distressed.”<sup>46</sup>

For another client who was concerned about her child’s safety Paladin worked with the client to ensure that the child’s school was aware of the risks involved to the child if they had contact with their father. She stated:

“I was paranoid about the safety of my child, and they were going on about, telling me about the contact orders and everything, and safety for my child, make sure that the school is aware, which I reiterated and the head teacher is fully aware of the situation.”<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Paladin service talking about Client 4

<sup>44</sup> Client 6

<sup>45</sup> Paladin service talking about Client 4

<sup>46</sup> Paladin service talking about Client 3

<sup>47</sup> Client 9



In summary, it would appear for the clients interviewed for this study, Paladin played a key role in co-ordinating services and holding these networks together for their clients. This also included addressing safeguarding concerns where there are children involved.

### 5.3 Support offered to clients – what Paladin case workers have found to be effective strategies

‘The client knew it was stalking but it was for the Paladin case worker to validate that and to say, “Look, we understand what’s going on and this should never have happened to you.” and also advising and understanding.’ (Paladin service talking about Client 2)

In addition to Paladin’s advocacy and the co-ordination of the multi-agency response, interviews with clients and Paladin case workers revealed a number of different strands of support offered by Paladin to their clients. These strands include safety planning and support strategies, emotional support and advice and advocacy when dealing with the media.

#### a) Safety planning and support

Part of the package that Paladin offers, is safety planning and advice. This is confirmed in writing to the client so that they have this information to hand. The Golden Rules (shown below) are a standard safeguarding tool which involves a series of steps that Paladin asks clients to take in order to help safeguard themselves. Here one Paladin case worker describes the type of advice that they would have given to a client:

“They are about reporting, telling your friends, making sure that everybody who is safe to tell knows about it.....we know that up to twenty one people around the victim will be approached statistically, that’s been shown, so it’s really important that clients tell their family, their friends and people close to them there, the people they’re working with, so that they can help protect the victim, so we would have given those golden rules because that’s a standard safeguarding tool and keeping your evidence, making sure the evidence goes to the Police and keeping a diary which is essential because you always need that chronology and she did, she kept a very good diary and yeah, I mean I have, she wrote an awful lot about the impact of the harassment, the financial loss, the emotional side of it, so



because we had said, you know, keep a diary, make sure it's all logged she'd actually done that in an extremely efficient way."<sup>48</sup>

For another client, knowing that Paladin was on the other end of the phone helped her to deal with being followed by her stalker.

"Whenever he followed me, I knew and I could pick the phone up and ring Paladin straightaway and explain and they would obviously then tell me how to deal with it."<sup>49</sup>

The support offered by safety planning would appear to be intended to enable clients to use their own agency to keep themselves safe and to exercise more control of the situation that they are dealing with. This approach may prevent over-dependency and eventually enable the client to exit successfully from using Paladin's services.

#### SIX GOLDEN RULES IF BEING STALKED: REPORT

- 1. R EPORT IT AND TELL OTHERS** - report it to the police and ensure other people know about what is happening including your family, friends, neighbours, workplace.
- 2. E NSURE YOU GET GOOD PRACTICAL ADVICE** - contact the National Stalking Helpline 0808 802 0300 [www.stalkinghelpline.org](http://www.stalkinghelpline.org) or Paladin National Stalking Advocacy Service 0207 8408960 [www.paladinservice.co.uk](http://www.paladinservice.co.uk)
- 3. P ROACTIVE EVIDENCE COLLECTION** - ensure you keep all messages/gifts preserving all the evidence. You can also film or video the stalker to collect evidence and if followed in a car drive to an area with lots of CCTV for example.
- 4. O - KEEP A DIARY** - log what is happening including time, date and details of what happened.
- 5. R ISK CHECKLIST - COMPLETE S-DASH, 11 QUESTION CHECKLIST** If you think you are at risk complete stalking screening checklist <http://www.dashriskchecklist.co.uk/index.php?page=vs->
- 6. T RUST YOUR INSTINCT AND NEVER MAKE CONTACT WITH YOUR STALKER**- always trust your instinct and if you are frightened or worried call the police or go to safe place. Ensure you do not contact or respond to the stalker in any other way.

[If you are in immediate danger call 999.](#)

Paladin National Stalking Advocacy Service

<sup>48</sup> Paladin service talking about Client 7

<sup>49</sup> Client 3



## b) Emotional support

The importance of naming stalking and validating clients' experiences was reported by clients as something that they particularly valued. What also emerged from the interviews was the availability of Paladin to support clients on a regular, sometimes daily basis. The impact of this support is described by Client 3 below:

"They supported me because it was affecting me really, really badly and it's really hard to describe, they were like just angels, it was like everything I said they got it, they understood completely what I was talking about whereas in the past when I'd talked to a Domestic Violence Team local to us they didn't seem to get it as much as Paladin because I think with the Domestic Violence Team I think, if you haven't got a black eye or you're not getting beaten up it's a different matter and because I wasn't getting beaten up, etc., I was being followed and harassed and what have you they seemed to deal, Paladin dealt with that much better in the way they spoke to me and everything."<sup>50</sup>

For this client Paladin saw the offer of emotional support as the main focus of their work because the client was expressing suicidal ideation and it was important that Paladin was available for this client.

"But I'd say that the majority of my work was actually done on emotional support to try and get her through the Court Case and she was suicidal....I ensured that she had a counsellor there who she was working with, and an IDVA so she had that local support, but I know that also that IDVA service had had its resources cut so it wasn't, it didn't, they didn't always have people available to, for a face-to-face meeting, so, and I did a lot of phone work with her."<sup>51</sup>

Another client described how traumatised she was by having to deal with the Police and how Paladin were able to support her by validating her experience and putting pressure on the Police.

'I was in absolute trauma and overwhelmed, she told me that she had to scale me on a scale of 1 to 10 as to whether I'd be ready for Court to face this horrible beast of a man, and she said, "unfortunately I don't think you've scored very well", and I said, "no, I know because I keep crying every time I talk about it because I'm so traumatised"....so Paladin have told me what all of these people should have done, and this time Paladin were able to support me, I think it was the sixth time of trying to work with the Police, and they were able to support me and help me know what they could do when I didn't know what the Police could do, and were able to sometimes put pressure on when the Police were really quite vile to me and dismissive and unpleasant.'<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Client 3

<sup>51</sup> Paladin service talking about Client 2

<sup>52</sup> Client 7



Clients reported overwhelmingly that their experience of Paladin had a positive impact on their situation. The emotional support that was offered by Paladin made a considerable difference in terms of reducing the stress that they were experiencing as a result of being stalked:

“It’s in and out of my mind, you know, I was not sleeping, it felt like I was fighting a battle every day, but with Paladin coming in, and giving me that support, they took some of that away from me, so that I didn’t have to... I work full time, so I didn’t have to worry about that on top of everything else that I was worrying about.”<sup>53</sup>

For Paladin, giving emotional support and validation is important because it helps them to support and encourage clients to work with the police in bringing their stalker to justice.

“She felt that she’d previously not been listened to and she stopped reporting... and we understand why they’re not reporting because we understand that they might have had a bad experience .... then we can say ‘well we’d still like you to report and we understand that you feel frustrated with the Police, but we in the background will do as much as we can to also highlight it to the SPOC, the Single Point of Contact, and to be advocating for your case’, so we’ll do as much as we can so that she feels that OK, it’s not just her reporting and then nothing’s happening, or the Police are saying something inappropriate.”<sup>54</sup>

Such support was valued by clients. For example, one client described the support she was offered by Paladin after a difficult and emotional meeting:

“And she was so aware of that, she was so good and after the meeting, you know, she just [said], let’s go and sit down, calm down and [she] just took me through so much sort of, you know and stuff and just, I mean just brilliant.”<sup>55</sup>

The emotional support offered by Paladin is an important part of the service that they give clients. By validating clients’ experiences they are able to establish rapport, trust and develop a good working relationship. This enables clients to continue to engage with the criminal justice system which can then lead to punishment for stalking perpetrators and an improvement in clients’ safety.

### **c) Advice and advocacy when dealing with the media**

In some high profile cases clients have had to negotiate dealing with the media. In these kinds of cases Paladin see their role as both advice giver and advocate. One Paladin case worker described the tensions

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<sup>53</sup> Client 9

<sup>54</sup> Client 8

<sup>55</sup> Client 2



that can exist for clients when they want to use the media to raise awareness but also need to be concerned about their own wellbeing:

“So there’s one thing about raising awareness and there’s another thing about safeguarding yourself and looking after yourself and your emotional wellbeing, so we try to make sure that everything’s clear. If there are opportunities, to try and gauge that appropriately and not to say, “You have to do this” because we don’t force anybody to do it and going into the media is a big thing, it’s quite exposing....I think she started to feel quite pressured to do press even though she didn’t have to do press.”<sup>56</sup>

Paladin described how they intervened to stop further media intrusion in another client’s life. They were able to use their specialist knowledge to explain why this would be particularly traumatic for someone who had just been stalked.

“We ended up calling a journalist who was on her way to her house, and we managed to say that she should not go there.... we explained that what she was doing is very traumatic for the victim because she had just been stalked by somebody else and showing up at her house is inappropriate, so they did turn away and they didn’t go in the end.”<sup>57</sup>

This support was valued by the client who commented:

And after the Court case the papers and the magazines, they were trying to get into my work and everything, and banging on my door, leaving things, she’d contacted them and stopped all that.<sup>58</sup>

Paladin use the media to raise awareness and about the dangers of stalking and to gain publicity and support for their campaigning to change the law in relation to stalking. However, they also recognise that there is a risk for clients who may talk to the media to raise awareness because this may impact their emotional wellbeing as a result of further media intrusion. They also have some influence and skill in managing media intrusion and can use this to advocate for clients to promote their safety and wellbeing.

#### **5.4 Facilitating a Victims’ Support Network**

As part of the evaluation, one of the researchers had the opportunity to observe an initial meeting convened by Paladin to set up a Victims’ Support Network. The attendance of number of clients had been facilitated by Paladin, with some clients travelling considerable distances to attend. Clients were provided with an information pack including diaries to use in supporting their adherence to the “Golden Rules”. Though it

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<sup>56</sup> Paladin Services

<sup>57</sup> Paladin Services talking about Client 5

<sup>58</sup> Client 5



was evident that the workers were well intentioned, the purpose and vision of a support network was not entirely clear. Such networks may provide victims with a chance to share experiences, support each other, realise they are not alone in their experience and feel more empowered. They would need to be provided as regular events if they involve people meeting together. It appeared that Paladin recognised that the logistics of offering to convene meetings where clients may come from any part of England may not be feasible as no further meetings were convened as far as the researchers are aware. It may be possible for Paladin to consider developing a safe virtual support on-line meeting space for its service users.

## **5. 5 Discussion and recommendations**

In summary it was found that Paladin has developed a set of key approaches to use in working with clients. Their expert advocacy to the police is seen by clients to be particularly valuable. Paladin has designed strategies, such as training police and single points of contact within the police which enhance their reputation and possibly lead to their being seen as credible experts by the police. This in turn leads their advocacy to be more effective from the perspective of clients. Their emerging reputation may also be of assistance when they take on the role of coordinating services for some clients. For clients the direct emotional support and safety planning provided is of particular value. Paladin's experience in working with the media on their national campaigns can also be harnessed to support clients subject to media attention. For the cases we reviewed, Paladin appeared able to manage the tension between providing confidential services to victims and the potential of using the clients' experiences as media stories with the possible benefit of increasing public knowledge about stalking and campaigning for justice. This may be an area to keep under review in the future.

## 6. Did Paladin help clients feel safer and help them manage the risk that their stalker presented to them?

An important part of Paladin’s work is assessing risk and working with clients to help them to feel safer and manage the risk that their stalker poses to them. During interviews with clients they reported different ways that contact with Paladin had made them feel safer and manage risk. This included both physical and emotional safety and was related to different forms of intervention from Paladin.

### 6.1 Clients’ perceptions of their emotional safety

The role that Paladin plays in validating clients’ experiences can play a large part in clients feeling safer about what is happening to them. The quotes below show how the emotional support given to clients by Paladin impacted on feelings of safety:

“I think she did make me feel safer because I had someone who listened to me, because to be honest with you, Police Officers don’t think stalking like that, well they don’t class that as stalking generally but they don’t think that that is really serious, ‘cos when the Police Officer first came to see me he said ‘oh normally we just phone the person and tell them, and warn them off’, and she was really like angry with him and you know, she proper put her foot down.”<sup>59</sup>

“Well because they calmed me down as well emotionally that’s obviously made me feel a bit stronger as well, when you start feeling a bit stronger you’re sort of feeling a bit safer.”<sup>60</sup>

“It’s gone a long way towards it, I don’t think it has but that’s just because the place to try and reach to feel safe is so massive, that’s nothing in disrespect to Paladin, I think they couldn’t have done more and they’ve gone a long way. I feel better than what I would have definitely than I would have been without them.”<sup>61</sup>

“Safe and stronger definitely, yeah....Mentally, *physically*, emotionally, in fact it’s made me feel passionate now about domestic abuse in respect of the support I’ve had from Paladin to the point, at the end of this month I’m actually applying to do an open law degree to become a Barrister.” (Client 8)

### 6.2 Paladin case workers’ perceptions of clients’ emotional safety

<sup>59</sup> Client 6

<sup>60</sup> Client 3

<sup>61</sup> Client 2



Paladin case workers consider an important part of their work to be the validation of clients' experiences about being stalked and advocacy to ensure that clients' feel safe. They demonstrated a sensitive appreciation of the connection between both emotional and physical safety for clients.

"I think she does feel safer and she feels more empowered and stronger, but there's always that she has to see him, but what we did was we ensured that when the contact happened it happens at a Police Station so actually when she takes her child to see him that happens at the Police Station."<sup>62</sup>

Paladin's perception of this client's experience sensitively acknowledges the difficulties that remain for her:

"I think generally she didn't feel very safe about the whole process. I think in terms of physical safety, she felt safer in that he was no longer out but I think the aftermath of what had happened still had a massive impact on her feeling safe generally ..... So I'd say in physical safety, she appears to have felt safer in that she wasn't feeling threatened by him but there were still safety issues around her own sort of mental health state."<sup>63</sup>

### **6.3 Clients' and Paladin case workers' perceptions of their physical safety**

When it comes to physical safety, Paladin has a range of advice strategies that they offer clients. These include the 'Golden Rules' referred to earlier, advice on 'targeting hardening' which involves making clients physical environments less vulnerable to attack and offering relevant safety advice to clients. Clients reported positively on the effect that these had on their feelings of safety.

"I do feel safer because sometimes I mean I didn't know how to get the things I needed and when Paladin spoke to the police that time .... So I got the lights in the back, got locks on my door, got a letterbox outside..... she said, "Well before you get out of your car, before you unlock it just look, be aware of your area," and I said, "I never even thought of it," 'cos I'd just jump out and sort of just run in, but she was saying, "Before you jump out just be aware of where you are and your situation," and I don't... and 'cos I was walking, just going for walks, but the walk that I did was up quite a... no houses on the road for quite a while, she said, "Don't go that way go another way, if you have to walk go another way."<sup>64</sup>

Paladin workers are able to advise clients directly about steps that they should take to keep themselves safe and work directly with local criminal justice professionals to effect changes to clients' homes.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Paladin Services talking about Client 3

<sup>63</sup> Paladin Services talking about Client 2

<sup>64</sup> Client 5

<sup>65</sup> Paladin Services talking about Client 5



Paladin also described how they offered safety advice about online dating and advocate for clients when there were cyber stalking concerns:

“I think our safety advice was quite important, particularly around the online dating, and cyber stalking, and I think liaising with the dating website and ensuring that her voice was heard and ensuring they implement the terms and conditions.”<sup>66</sup>

## 6.4 How does Paladin help clients manage risk?

Paladin sees one of its key roles as reducing risk for clients and working with clients until that risk has been reduced to an acceptable level. It is evident from interviews with both clients and Paladin case workers that this is well established ethos within the service. Three different strategies to reduce the risk to clients were revealed during the evaluation.

### (a) Paladin as part of a multi- agency environment

Paladin’s networks and direct work with the Criminal Justice system has an impact on improving safety and so reducing risk for their clients. The relationships with the SPOCS are seen as an important aspect of Paladin’s ability to influence outcomes for clients.<sup>67</sup> Working in a, sometimes, complex multi-agency environment is a skill that Paladin has developed to help to manage risk for clients:

“We did everything that we could do in that we understood what the clients fears were, what her risk level was, we spoke and liaised with the relevant services, we took information from them, we advised them, we updated the client at every point, we kept reassessing which we do with all cases, reassess the risk level.... our involvement ensured that concern was taken as a report which previously wasn’t, so her previous report wasn’t taken but it was when we became involved, multi-agency work with the Police, PPD, the MAPPA, ..... So it seems that our interaction with the client got the Police to do their job which they weren’t doing previously.”<sup>68</sup>

“We’re not just going to sort of tell you everything’s pink and fluffy and sort of skim over the top and say look, just because we’ve passed you onto a support service you’re done, we’ll sort of be with you for as long as we can, as long as our remit is and more so until we’ve reduced that risk and that’s what had happened in that case.”  
(Paladin services talking about client 4)

<sup>66</sup> Paladin Services talking about Client 6

<sup>67</sup> Paladin services

<sup>68</sup> Paladin Services talking about Client 3



### **(b) Advocating for the use of appropriate criminal sanctions**

Paladin also describes how they aim to influence the types of sanctions that are used against stalkers to reduce the risks for clients:

“The Restraining Order has varied as well, so that would have helped her feel safer because if a Restraining Order doesn’t actually act in a stringent way and that it means that they can breach by going around, I mean doing something that isn’t on the Restraining Order, then that’s not safeguarding the person, so I think the fact that we would have helped vary that Restraining Order that should have had a benefit as well.”<sup>69</sup>

### **(c) Giving safety advice to clients**

The advice that Paladin gives clients on safety means that clients are empowered to take positive steps to reduce risk and so their risk is better managed:

“I think that she’s very good at recording and diarising and reporting....she will take her phone out with her and put it on record if she feels at all wary, so she’s trying to, ensure that she’s safeguarded when she’s out as well and carries a personal alarm and she’s very aware of her safety having, you know, worked with her for a while about, around her safety and about not being alone, ..... You know, having the personal alarm and the phone on record and that sort of thing to, something there that you can phone 999 if you need to.”<sup>70</sup>

Risk is more difficult to manage if a client makes contact with the perpetrator of the stalking. One Paladin case worker described how one client “did end up contacting the perpetrator and then that negates quite a lot of the work you have done...it means we can’t really work with them effectively.”<sup>71</sup>

## **6.5 Discussion and recommendations**

Paladin has developed a strong ethos when it comes to empowering and helping clients to be safer and to manage the risk that their stalker presents to them. They use a range of different strategies to enable this to happen. Clients report overwhelmingly that they feel safer and that their risk is better managed; they particularly appreciate the emotional support that Paladin offers in validating their experiences. When it comes to risk it appears that Paladin’s multi-strand approach to working with clients has a significant impact on improving their safety and managing their risk. Paladin’s developing expertise in working with the police

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<sup>69</sup> Paladin Services talking about Client 8

<sup>70</sup> Paladin Services talking about Client 3

<sup>71</sup> Paladin services



and knowledge that they has about the multi-agency environment and is one that should be consolidated and built upon to ensure that clients are supported as much as possible.

## 7. What clients and Paladin case workers would like Paladin to do more of, or do differently?

Both clients and Paladin case workers were asked to comment on what they would like Paladin to do more of or do differently. The findings of this question showed that both groups held Paladin's services in very high esteem.

“I’d hate to see an organisation like Paladin lost, they’re an absolute asset for people that are going through this stuff.”  
(Client 8)

### 7.1 Clients’ perspectives

When clients were asked what they would have liked Paladin to do more of to assist them the majority of clients either could not think of anything more that Paladin or the individual Paladin case workers could do but wished that they had heard about them sooner as the following quotations from interviews testify:

“I think they were excellent you know ...it was really, really helpful, I can’t think of anything that could have been done differently.”<sup>72</sup>

“I just wish I’d known about them sooner.”<sup>73</sup>

“Apart from her moving in with me and telling me every second of the day that I were fine, no, they couldn’t have done anything more.”<sup>74</sup>

One client who offered suggestions for development thought that Paladin should grow and have bases across the UK.<sup>75</sup> For another client, they would like to see Paladin offer more training to the Police because they are respected and listened to by the police.<sup>76</sup> Clients reported that they really valued knowing that Paladin would still be there for them if something else happened:

“I think they’ve been incredibly supporting and helpful and I think even now I know that I can you know, if something happened again and I know that they could speak on my behalf if I needed that.”<sup>77</sup>

<sup>72</sup> Client 1

<sup>73</sup> Client 2

<sup>74</sup> Client 3

<sup>75</sup> Client 5

<sup>76</sup> Client 7

<sup>77</sup> Client 7



“I know if I ever get a problem and if you know, if for any reason he ever starts to give me aggro again I know I could pick up that phone and I’d have that support over and over again so Paladin’s efforts and how they’ve worked and procedures and whatnot, have been absolutely second to none.”<sup>78</sup>

In exploring these responses further with clients, clients were asked to comment on whether they would have preferred more face-to-face meetings with Paladin case workers as opposed to a mainly telephone and email based service. The overall view was that the current model of service delivery was preferable, with the main reason given being that case workers would remain accessible when needed (the view being expressed that more face to face appointments might limit their availability). Further, clients felt that the way that Paladin provided services met their needs.

## 7.2 Paladin case workers’ perspectives

Paladin case workers were asked what they would like to have been able to do more of or what they would like to see improved for victims of stalking. They described wanting to have more specific counselling services for victims. They also wished that they had been able to be available for more face to face work with clients and the police. Another area that they would wish to develop is relationships with social media networks in order to influence them to be more proactive as the following excerpt shows:

“It would be, it would be great to be able to have more face-to-face meetings, have that face-to-face contact, it would be great to have the resources to do that with her and to meet the Police with her as well, so that we can advocate to them with her, it would be good to have the backup of media networks, the social media networks taking things like this more seriously.”<sup>79</sup>

In one case a case worker expressed frustration with the Family Court system enabling the stalking of women and children by perpetrators who apply to court for orders concerning their children:

“I would like to ensure that the Family Court stop putting women and children in this position because it’s continually, it happens in all the cases where you’ve got children, is really concerning how many children and mums are put at risk as a result of this legitimate way of stalking. So they’re sort of my ideal world, yeah, and also I’d like to be able to give free CCTV to people and to be able to provide them with a safer environment so.”<sup>80</sup>

Paladin caseworkers also expressed frustration about the decisions that were made in relation to the types of offence that perpetrators of stalking were charged with. They said that they always advocate that the

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<sup>78</sup> Client 8

<sup>79</sup> Paladin services talking about Client 7

<sup>80</sup> Paladin services talking about Client 3



Police and Crown Prosecution Service use the newer stalking legislation.<sup>81</sup> For example in the case of one client the case worker described how:

“Harassment doesn’t really cover what happened to her, it doesn’t take into that fixated obsessive nature of what’s happening, and it, he got monetary fines which when you balance that out with what’s happened to her it doesn’t seem fair...”<sup>82</sup>

There also remains, for the Paladin case workers, concern that the Police do not respond quickly enough to initial reports.

### 7.3 Discussion and recommendations

For clients, the service that Paladin offers is hugely valued and has significant impact on their lives during times of great fear and distress. Even if they no longer have contact with Paladin, they see it as a service that will respond quickly and effectively to their request for support. Of note is Paladin’s ability to network, train and work effectively with the police and criminal justice system.

Paladin would like to have even more influence with the police, particularly in relation to earlier intervention and advocating for the offence of stalking to be used when perpetrators are charged. It is interesting that the Paladin case workers would value more face to face contact with clients because the clients themselves do not request this type of contact; arguably, the phone contact provided enables the Paladin case workers to be more available and this would be likely to reduce significantly were they to offer face to face contact. Paladin may wish to keep this point under review. This is a very small scale study, but it is suggested that the development of the telephone helpline, in conjunction with Paladin’s linked national advocacy and training in line with current practice may be more effective than diversifying into face to face support.

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<sup>81</sup> s.2A(1) PHA 1997; s.4A (1) PHA 1997 **which can be committed two ways** namely: - Stalking involving fear of violence (s.4A(1)(b)(i) PHA 1997) **OR** - Stalking involving serious alarm or distress (s.4A(1)(b)(ii) PHA 1997)

<sup>82</sup> Paladin services talking about Client 6

## 8. Conclusions and Recommendations

The evaluation sought to answer two questions about Paladin's case work services:

1. Does Paladin enable victims to feel safer and manage the risk posed by their stalkers?
2. Does Paladin enable access to services and support those victims and referrers perceive as relevant?

The answer to the first question is an unequivocal yes. Paladin's multi-strand approach to working with clients has a significant impact on improving their safety and managing their risk. The second question can also be answered in the affirmative with the caveat that this applies only to the services that we know about. Our evaluation has found that the services offered by Paladin are relevant and important and that this organisation has shown great promise during its first year of operation.

### 8.1 Some key issues and recommendations

#### 8.1.1 Accessing Paladin's Services

Paladin should continue to maintain a prominent online presence and also aim to make face to face contact with referring agencies and the general public to advertise their services. Paladin's role in offering training to other agencies should be developed to reach as many potential referrers as possible in order that agencies understand the nature of stalking and learn how to deal appropriately with the victims of stalking. The provision of an advertised advice line for professionals might be considered. Paladin filters and assesses risk. A service will be offered where there is high risk or medium risk that is likely to escalate. For clients having their concerns validated and taken seriously is helpful in promoting engagement with the service. Paladin may wish to keep under review those to whom they do not offer a service.

#### 8.1.2 Services offered by Paladin

Their expert advocacy to the police is seen by clients to be particularly valuable. Paladin has deigned strategies, such as training police and single points of contact within the police which enhance their reputation and possibly lead to their being seen as credible experts by the police. For clients the direct emotional support and safety planning provided is of particular value. Paladin's experience in working with the media on their national campaigns can also be harnessed to support clients subject to media attention. This may be an area to keep under review in the future.



### **8.1.3 Management of safety and risk**

Paladin's multi-strand approach to working with clients has a significant impact on improving their safety and managing their risk. Paladin's developing expertise in working with the police and knowledge that they has about the multi-agency environment and is one that should be consolidated and built upon to ensure that clients are supported as much as possible.

### **8.1.4 Paladin's future development**

Paladin is seen by clients as a service that will respond quickly and effectively to their request for support. Of note is Paladin's ability to network, train and work effectively with the police and criminal justice system and this is an area that should be built upon particularly in relation to earlier intervention and advocating for the offence of stalking to be used when perpetrators are charged. The phone contact that Paladin provides enables Paladin case workers to be more available and this would be likely to reduce significantly were they to offer face to face contact. Paladin may wish to keep this point under review. It is recommended that the development of the telephone helpline, in conjunction with Paladin's linked national advocacy and training in line with current practice may be more effective than diversifying into face to face support.

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