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Addysg a Gwella Iechyd
Cymru (AaGIC)
Health Education and
Improvement Wales (HEIW)

Health Education and Improvement Wales

Domestic Abuse Policy

Policy Owner: Director of Workforce and OD

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Content	Page
1. Introduction	3
2. Purpose	3
3. Scope	4
4. Definitions	4
• What is domestic abuse?	
• What is coercive control?	
5. Impact of domestic abuse in the workplace	5
• The impact of domestic abuse on work colleagues	
• The impact of violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence on the employer	
6. Confidentiality and privacy rights of employees versus safeguarding responsibilities	6
7. Reporting concerns	7
8. Roles, Responsibilities and support Mechanisms	7
• Support for employees	
• Support for perpetrators	
• Victims and perpetrators who are employed by HEIW	
• Support provided by managers	
9. Facilitating a conversation about violence, domestic abuse and sexual abuse	10
10. Training	10
11. Implementation, Monitoring and Review	10
12. Integrated Equality Impact Assessment	10
Appendix 1 - Tips for Managers to Address the Effects of Violence, Domestic and Sexual Abuse	12
Appendix 2 - Violence, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence External Contracts	14
Appendix 3 - SafeLives Dash risk checklist Quick start guidance	18

1. Introduction

Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) recognises that violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence are crimes which adversely affect the health of individuals, their families and communities. HEIW understands that victims and survivors of domestic abuse can be made to feel isolated and alone, here at HEIW we want staff to know that you are not alone, and we are here to support you.

HEIW understands that identifying violence and / or abuse at an early stage can be an effective measure in preventing an escalation in severity and frequency and can assist to ensure that appropriate and timely support is provided. Therefore, taking a responsive and enabling approach is fundamental in encouraging employees who are experiencing violence, threats, intimidation and other forms of abuse to disclose.

HEIW has a responsibility to provide all employees with a safe and effective working environment. For some employees, the traditional 'office based' workplace is a safe haven and the only place that offers routes to safety. HEIW recognises that as an agile workforce with home working likely to become the norm poses a real concern about the safety of those who see office-based work as a route of safety. HEIW will work with effected employees to ensure priority is given to them in terms of the availability of 'office based' working.

This policy and procedure represent a commitment to take all reasonable steps possible to support individuals and combat the reality of the impact of violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence, on those being abused and will take proactive steps to challenge the behaviour of perpetrators. The policy also aims to ensure compliance with the [Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence \(Wales\) Act 2015](#).

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that both victims, survivors and perpetrators of violence, including sexual violence and domestic abuse are aware of the support that is available within HEIW. It also provides support and guidance to line managers when supporting employees who are affected by violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

It is important to note that violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence is not condoned under any circumstance by HEIW.

All employees of HEIW have a duty of care if they:

- Witness an employee being abused; or
- Have concerns or suspicion about possible violence, including sexual violence and or abuse against an employee and/or their family;
- Suspect financial abuse and/or inappropriate use of technology to control or manipulate individuals including the use of HEIW equipment.

In such instances the employee should report and discuss the matter with their line manager and/or HEIW People Team.

3. Scope

This policy and procedure will apply equally to all employees of HEIW.

As such HEIW recognises that domestic abuse can affect anyone at any point in their lives, regardless of sex, sexual orientation, race, disability, social group/class or any lifestyle contributors. Domestic abuse can occur at any time in intimate relationships that are new or long term and within family relationships.

Violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence includes:

- Domestic abuse;
- Female genital Mutilation (FGM);
- Forced marriage;
- “Honour” based abuse;
- Sexual exploitation;
- Sexual violence (within or not within relationships);
- Stalking and harassment (within or not within a relationships).

4. Definitions

What is domestic abuse?

Domestic abuse is defined as:

‘Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexual orientation. The abuse can encompass but is not limited to psychological, physical, sexual, economic and emotional forms of abuse’

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/domestic-abuse-bill>

The impact of violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence can range from loss of esteem to loss of life.

Violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence happens in all communities, regardless of gender identity, age, disability, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership and pregnancy or maternity. When dealing with violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence it is important to recognise differences and intersectionality between all protected characteristics. It follows that different approaches and resources are needed when addressing violence and/or abuse with different groups.

Types of Violence, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence

Domestic abuse is the exercise of control by one person over another within an intimate or close family relationship; the abuse can be sexual, physical, financial, emotional or psychological. The abuse can happen in the home or elsewhere.

It is usually a pattern of behaviour, and happens regardless of sex, age, carer responsibility, class, disability, gender identity, immigration status, ethnicity, geography or religion. However, the gender of the victim and of the perpetrator influences the severity, risk, and harm caused.

There are many different forms of domestic abuse, these include but are not limited to:

- coercively controlling behaviour (a pattern of control, isolation, degradation, intimidation and the use of threats)
- emotional / psychological abuse
- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- financial abuse
- harassment and stalking

<https://www.welshwomensaid.org.uk/information-and-support/what-is-domestic-abuse/>

What is coercive control?

Coercive control is defined as:

'An act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish or frighten a person'

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/domestic-abuse-consultation-response-and-draft-bill>

Coercive control is when a person you are personally connected with repeatedly behaves in a way that makes you feel controlled, isolated or scared. This could include isolating you from friends and family, controlling your finances, monitoring what you do and where you go, putting you down and making you feel worthless or threatening to harm you, your child or your property. There is not a definitive list of behaviours, as the abuser will use various means to establish controlling or coercive behaviour.

Controlling or coercive behaviour in an intimate or family relationship is defined in Section 76 of the Serious Crime Act 2015 as controlling or coercive behaviour in an intimate or family relationship which causes someone to fear that violence will be used against them on at least two occasions; or causes them serious alarm or distress which has a substantial adverse effect on their usual day-to-day activities.

5. Impact of domestic abuse in the workplace

Domestic abuse is not always easy to see and may not have any physical signs. It is important to note that someone experiencing domestic abuse may not realise this is happening to them. The examples below highlight behaviours or changes to behaviour that colleagues and managers may notice. If you are a manager, these changes may need to be approached sensitively and discussed in catch ups with the individual concerned.

Possible signs of domestic abuse include:

- Changes in the way the employee dresses, for example excessive clothing on hot days, changes in the amount of make-up worn or perhaps not seeming to take care of themselves, like visiting the hairdresser or not having new clothes;
- Substance misuse.

Changes at work:

- Frequent absence;
- Increased need to leave work early;
- Spending more time at work unnecessarily/working later into the evenings;

- Reduced work quality or missing deadlines;
- Sudden changes to remote working pattern – significant increase/decrease.

Behaviour changes:

- Changes to character,
- An individual becoming angry, tearful, distracted easily,
- Not taking part in out of work activities any longer, reluctance to socialise or seeming to have a very small group or no friends,
- Secretive about home life

The impact of domestic abuse on work colleagues

Domestic abuse also affects people close to the victim and this can include work colleagues. Some effects may include:

- Being followed to or from work;
- Being subject to questioning about the victim's contact details or locations;
- Covering for other workers during absence from work;
- Trying to deal with the abuse and fear for their own safety;
- Being unaware of the abuse or not knowing how to help.

HEIW acknowledges that some employees may experience vicarious trauma as a result of supporting employees who are victims of abuse and/or violence. It is important that senior managers of HEIW are aware of this risk, as the organisation has a responsibility to limit the impact on the workforce. To limit the potential impact, all HEIW employees have access to advice and support via Health for Health Professionals, Silver Cloud and Samaritans.

It should be noted that not all these signs will be present in someone who is experiencing domestic abuse, that the list is not exhaustive and could indicate other issues.

The impact of violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence on the employer

Some effects may include:

- Negative impact on productivity, performance and morale;
- Increase sickness absence;
- Staff turnover, as employees may have to leave work or move away to escape the violence and/ or abuse

6. Confidentiality and privacy rights of employees versus safeguarding responsibilities

The Social Services and Well-being Act (Wales) 2014 introduced a new duty to report to the Local Authority, if someone suspects an adult and / or child to be at risk of abuse or neglect. HEIW acknowledges its safeguarding responsibilities. In all cases where violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence is identified in the workplace and it is known that there are children in the family, [Wales Safeguarding Procedures for children and adults at risk of abuse and neglect 2019](#) will be followed.

Employees who disclose that they are a victim of violence / and or abuse can be assured that the information they provide is confidential and will not be shared with other colleagues without their permission. There are, however, some circumstances in which confidentiality cannot be assured, to ensure compliance with the above Act.

This may occur when there are concerns regarding children, vulnerable adults or where HEIW is required to protect the safety of their employee. In these circumstances, the employee will be informed as to the reasons why confidentiality cannot be maintained. As far as possible, information will only be shared on a need to know basis.

Confidentiality cannot be assured for employees who disclose that they are a perpetrator of violence, domestic abuse and/or sexual violence.

7. Reporting concerns

As compassionate leaders, HEIW expects all employees to report their concerns if they suspect any NHS colleague is experiencing or perpetrating abuse. This might extend to students, trainees, clinical fellows, agency workers and secondees who may be encouraged to seek support, advice or assistance from their employer, registered body or external contacts, as signposted in *Appendix 3*.

In the first instance, employees should speak in confidence about their concerns to their manager or to a member of the People or Senior Leadership Teams.

If an employee feels that they cannot or do not wish to discuss the matter with their manager, the People Team or Senior Managers, they may use the confidential Crime Stoppers reporting line on 0800 555 111. This is a 24-hour hotline that allows any employee or private individual to report any concern they may have about a colleague or a member of the public. The hotline can be used anonymously.

Crimestoppers will be able to pass on information to the relevant police force who, with partners, may be able to intervene away from the abuser to check the potential victim is OK.

8. Roles, Responsibilities and Support Mechanisms

Support for employees

There are a number of ways in which employees experiencing violence and / or abuse can be supported by HEIW:

- Through offering practical support;
- Raising awareness generally of the issues and in particular amongst managers;
- Providing training opportunities to managers and employees;
- Signposting employees to Health for Health Professionals, Silver Cloud and Samaritans who provide 24/7 confidential support including counselling services, information, guidance and referrals on any personal or family issue;
- Taking a clear anti-abuse / violence stance against perpetrators.

It is essential that all employees feel able to disclose this personal information and are encouraged to discuss it with their manager. If an employee feels unable to raise the matter of abuse and/or violence with their manager, support can also be sought via the People Team.

Line managers have a key role in supporting employees. Managers may consider offering a broad range of support to employees experiencing violence, domestic abuse, sexual abuse, including 'Paid Special Leave'.

Where the HEIW employee is also working as a registered health or social care professional, there may be situations where, being a victim or survivor of domestic abuse or sexual violence, raises an additional set of challenges i.e. reluctance to disclose due to fear of professional impact or false reporting to the GMC by the perpetrator. The line manager should assure and work with the employee to understand what support is required from within HEIW.

Issues relating to professional practice should be dealt with by the employer responsible for the provision of those clinical services.

Paid Special Leave - employees may need time off work to access legal or financial advice, to arrange childcare or alternative accommodation and to seek medical advice. Managers should be flexible when supporting an employee who is experiencing domestic abuse and treat each instance sensitively and individually.

Employees should not be expected to provide proof of their circumstances. Generally, up to 3 days paid leave may be granted for each required leave period, with up to 10 days paid leave pro rata, in any rolling 12-month period.

Other types of leave may also be taken to extend the period of absence e.g. annual leave or time in lieu to attend relevant appointments. Managers may also consider;

- agreeing temporary or permanent changes to working times and patterns using existing procedures i.e. flexible working;
- Implementing measures to ensure a safe working environment, for example blocking emails / screening telephone calls; alerting reception if the perpetrator is known to come to the workplace; and ensuring arrangements are in place for safely travelling to and from work;
- Advising colleagues on a need to know basis and agree a response if the perpetrator contacts the workplace;
- Providing a photograph of the perpetrator to management and reception. This may also be extended to colleagues on a need to know basis;
- Reviewing the security of personal information held, such as temporary or new address and bank details.

The manager must respect the right of an employee to make their own decisions about their preferred course of action, at every stage. It is recognised that an employee may need some time to decide what to do and may try different options during this process.

External support is located within *Appendix 3 Violence, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence External Contacts*.

Support for perpetrators

Violence and/or abuse perpetrated by employees will not be condoned under any circumstance, nor will it be treated as a purely private matter. Employees should be aware that violence, including sexual violence and domestic abuse is a serious matter which can lead to a criminal conviction.

Conduct outside of work may lead to disciplinary action being taken against an employee. Such conduct may undermine the confidence and trust the organisation has in them. Such incidents will be managed in accordance with HEIW Disciplinary Policy and Procedures.

HEIW recognises that it has a role in encouraging and supporting perpetrators to address violent and abusive behaviour of all kinds. If an employee discloses perpetrating violence and or abuse, the police should be informed as well as the employee's manager (if they are not aware of the disclosure) and a senior member of the People Team, so that the disciplinary or other internal procedures can be considered. The employee will be provided with information about Health for Health Professionals, Silver Cloud and Samaritans services and other support available to them

This procedure can be applicable in cases where an employee has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed or threatened their partner, family member or an individual within or not within a relationship;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against their partner; family member or an individual within or not within a relationship;
- Had an allegation of violence, domestic abuse, sexual violence made against them;
- Presented concerns about their behaviour within an intimate relationship.

HEIW will ensure:

- The allegation(s) are dealt with fairly and in a way that is transparent and provides support for the employee, who is the subject of the allegation or disclosure;
- All employees will receive appropriate support, guidance and information;
- The investigation process will be sufficiently independent and managed in a timely manner.

The employee will be:

- Treated fairly, consistently and honestly;
- Helped to understand the concerns expressed and processes involved;
- Kept informed of the progress and outcome of any investigation and the implications for any disciplinary process.

Victims and perpetrators who are employed by HEIW

In cases where both the victim and perpetrator of violence and/or abuse work for HEIW, appropriate action will be taken. In addition to considering disciplinary action against the perpetrator, action may need to be taken to ensure that the victim and perpetrator do not come into contact in the workplace.

Action may also need to be taken to minimise the potential for the perpetrator to use their position or work resources to find out details about the whereabouts of the victim. This may include a change of duties or withdrawing the perpetrator's access to certain computer programs. Further advice can be sought from the People Team.

Support provided by managers

As highlighted in this section managers play a critical role in safeguarding and have a broad range of supportive measures at their disposal.

HEIW recognises that violence, domestic abuse or sexual violence is unlikely to be disclosed easily by victims or the perpetrators. There are a number of steps that can be taken to address the workplace effects of violence and/or abuse, including how to recognise the problem, respond and provide appropriate advice and support. In many cases it is about being aware and signposting the employee to organisations that provide specialist support.

Please refer to Appendix 1 Tips for Managers to Address the Effects of Violence, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Abuse.

9. Facilitating a conversation about violence, domestic abuse and sexual abuse

If a manager suspects that an employee is experiencing violence, domestic abuse, sexual abuse, they should facilitate a conversation to discuss this and to identify/implement appropriate support for them.

Shying away from the subject can perpetuate fear of stigma and increase feelings of anxiety. Often employees will not feel confident in speaking up, so by making the first move, to begin a conversation, can be a very important step in providing much needed support and advice.

10. Training

All employees of HEIW are required to undertake violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence mandatory training, available in ESR. The training supports and underpins the content of this policy.

Bespoke training, delivered by specialist services, will also be available for all staff, secondees into HEIW and agency staff working directly for HEIW.

11. Implementation, monitoring, review and distribution

This policy will be maintained and updated by HEIW People Team. HEIW will review the operation of the policy as necessary. At a minimum the policy will be reviewed at least every 3 years.

The policy will be available to employees via HEIW's Intranet Site. Where employees do not have access to the intranet their manager must ensure that they have access to a paper or electronic copy of this policy.

12. Integrated Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

HEIW is committed to ensuring that, as far as is reasonably practicable, the way it treats its employees reflects their individual needs and does not discriminate against individuals or groups.

HEIW has undertaken an Integrated Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) and received feedback on this policy and the way it operates. HEIW wanted to know of any possible adverse or differential impact that this policy may have on any groups in respect of: age, disability, gender identity;

marriage (including same sex) or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity issues, race, religion and or belief sexual orientation, transgender, carer, Welsh language, or other protected characteristics.

In exploring these possible adverse or differential impacts HEIW acknowledge the intersectionality of individuals. Meaning that due regard has been given to the way in which power structures based on factors such as: age, disability, gender identity, sexuality, race, religion, belief or non-belief and religion interact with each other to create barriers of overlapping discrimination and disadvantage.

The assessment found that the policy created a number of opportunities for positive impacts on individuals and groups and enabled HEIW to make plans for any necessary actions required to minimise any potential negative impacts. Ensuring as an organisation we meet our responsibilities under the equalities, Welsh language and human rights legislation and promote good practice.

Appendix 1

Tips for Managers to Address the Effects of Violence, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Abuse

There are a number of steps that managers can take to address the effects of violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence. In many cases it is about being aware and signposting to the relevant organisations that can provide specialist support.

Below are steps that can be taken by managers:

Recognise the Problem

1. Look for sudden changes in behaviour and/or changes in the quality of work performance for unexplained reasons despite a previously strong record.
2. Look for changes in the way the employee dresses, for example excessive clothing on hot days, changes in the amount of make-up worn.

Respond

3. Believe an employee if they disclose experiencing violence, domestic abuse, sexual violence. **Do Not** ask for proof.
4. Reassure the employee that HEIW understands how the violence/abuse may affect their work performance and the support that can be offered.

Provide Support

The whereabouts, new address or contact details of a victim or survivor must be protected. The employer and work colleagues should be very careful not to breach confidentiality in any way by even acknowledging a question or implying a possible location.

5. Divert phone calls and email messages and look to change a phone extension if an employee is receiving harassing calls.
6. Ensure reception staff are made aware, with the consent of the individual, to prevent perpetrators entering the building using tailgating and or other means by utilising panic alarm system.
7. Agree with the employee what to tell colleagues and how they should respond if their ex/partner or perpetrator of the violence/abuse telephones or visits the workplace.
8. Ensure the employee does not work alone or in an isolated area and check that they have arrangements for getting safely to and from work.
9. Keep a record of any incidents of abuse experienced in the workplace, including persistent telephone calls, emails or visits to the workplace.
10. Provide employees with access to supportive literature i.e. intranet comms, leaflets and posters. Ensure leaflets or posters are placed in discrete locations e.g. putting up posters on the backs of

toilet doors. Also ensure that all employees are made aware of the services and support which can be provided by the HEIW's Employee Assistance Programme.

Signpost and refer

11. Effective signposting and referral to appropriate organisations that deal with violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence is key. However, referrals must be done with employees' consent. A list of appropriate organisations can be located in Appendix 2.

12. Senior Leaders and/or line managers are encouraged to complete a MARAC risk assessment as part of referral which is located in Appendix 3 of this policy. For further support in completing the form, please contact HEIW's People Team to speak to the Inclusion Lead in confidence.

Appendix 2

Violence, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence External Contracts

If you are experiencing abuse and/or violence there are a number of external organisations in Wales that can help you by providing advice and practical guidance on abuse and/or violence, including sexual violence.

Police are a key service when in immediate danger **and you should not be afraid to call 999 in an emergency.**

Silent Solution

When you call 999, the operator (the person on the phone) will ask which emergency service is required. If you cannot say 'police' or 'ambulance', you will be transferred to the Silent Solution system. You will then hear an automated message which will ask you to press 55. If you press 55 your call will be transferred to your local police force.

Emergency Text Service

If you can't call because you are Deaf or can't verbally communicate, you can register with the police text service. Text REGISTER to 999. You will get a text which tells you what to do next. Do this when it is safe so you can text when you are in danger.

Atal y fro

Atal y fro is a registered charity which provides support for women and children within the Vale of Glamorgan who have experienced or are experiencing domestic violence.

Opening Hours: 9.00 am – 5.00 pm Monday to Friday

Telephone: 01446 744755

Email: info@atalyfro.org

Visit the <http://www.atalyfro.org> website

Bawso

Bawso is an all Wales voluntary organisation, providing specialist services to victims and BME people affected or at risk of by domestic abuse and all forms of violence including; female genital mutilation, forced marriage, honour based violence and human trafficking.

Opening Hours: 24 Hour helpline

Telephone: 029 20644 633 or **24 hour helpline** on 0800 731 8147

Email: info@bawso.org.uk

Visit the <http://www.bawso.org.uk/> website

Childline

Childline is a confidential helpline for children and young people experiencing or witnessing abuse run by the NSPCC. The helpline is open 24/7. Calls are free and will not appear on BT or cable phone bills. Calls to the helpline are free from most mobile networks (3, BT Mobile, Fresh, O2, Everything Everywhere, Virgin, Vodafone).

Opening Hours: 24 hours a day – 7 days a week

Telephone: 0800 11 11

Visit the [Childline](http://www.childline.org.uk/) website

Civil Legal Advice

The Civil Legal Advice helpline is a free legal advice service available in England and Wales. This helpline can provide free advice on housing, family and other issues if you are eligible to receive legal aid. The helpline can provide contact details of solicitors in your area who may be able to help you.

Opening Hours: Monday to Friday, 9am to 8pm / Saturday, 9am to 12:30pm

Telephone: 0345 345 4 345

Visit the [Civil Legal Advice](#) Website

Dyn Wales Helpline

Safer Wales provides confidential support and help for women and men affected by domestic abuse, to assist them to find the best available services in their local area. This includes practical and effective support and advocacy as well as information on safety planning, signposting to services across Wales, advice and emotional support.

Opening Hours: Helpline open Monday to Friday 10.00 am to 4.00 pm

Telephone: 029 2022 0033

Visit the <http://www.saferwales.com/about-us> website

Galop – National LGBT Domestic Abuse Helpline

Support for LGBT people experiencing domestic abuse.

Telephone: 0800 999 5428

Visit: help@galop.org.uk; www.galop.org.uk

Llamau

Llamau provide domestic abuse services to support women and men to understand the impact of the abuse on them and their children. They run a “Freedom Programme” to help women to understand what has happened to them and any children involved in the abuse and supports women to keep themselves safe in the future. Their “*You and Me, Mum Programme*” works with women to help them to understand the impact the domestic abuse has had on them as a parent and the impact on their children. It supports women to rebuild positive relationships with their children.

Opening Hours: 24 hours a day – 7 days a week

Telephone: 02920 239585 (24/7)

Visit the <https://www.llamau.org.uk/> website

Live Fear Free Helpline

The LiveFearFree helpline is a free, confidential helpline run by [Welsh Women’s Aid](#). It offers confidential advice, support and information to victims of domestic abuse, and can help with referrals to women’s refuges for women fleeing domestic violence. Services are available in Welsh, English and other languages.

Opening Hours: 24 hours a day – 7 days a week

Telephone: 0808 8010 800

Text: 07860077333

Email: info@livefearfreehelpline.wales

Visit the [LiveFearFree](#) website.

Men's Advice Line

The Men's Advice Line offers information and support to male victims of domestic abuse, as well as to their friends and family. The helpline is run by the charity [Respect](#) (Calls are free from landlines and from mobiles using the O2, Everything Everywhere (EE), Three (3), Virgin, and Vodafone networks). Calls will not appear on BT landline phone bills. A telephone interpreting service is available upon request.

Opening Hours: Monday to Friday 10am to 1pm and 2pm to 5pm.

Telephone: 0808 801 0327

Email: info@mensadvice.org.uk

Visit the [Men's Advice Line](#) website

Phoenix Domestic Abuse Services

Charity offering individual and family support packages.

Telephone: 24 hour helpline 0808 80 10 800

Main office phone line 01495 291202 will be answered on weekdays between 10am and 3pm.

Email info@phoenixdas.co.uk

Visit: <http://phoenixdas.co.uk/>

RESPECT

Provide support for male victims of domestic abuse, young people who use violence and abuse in close relationships and work to rehabilitate perpetrators of domestic abuse.

Opening Hours: Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm.

Telephone: 0808 8024040

Visit: <https://www.respect.uk.net/>

Rise

A partnership organisation formed by Women's Aid and Llamau to provide support and advice to women and men experiencing, violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

Opening Hours: 24 hours a day – 7 days a week

Telephone: 02920 460566

Visit the [Rise - Cardiff](#) website

Stonewall Cymru

Stonewall Cymru provides advice and support on a range of issue to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender victims and survivors of domestic abuse in wales.

Telephone: 0800 0502020 Lines are open 9:30am to 4:30pm Monday to Friday

Email: Cymru@stonewallcymru.org.uk

Visit the [Stonewall Cymru](#) website

The Deaf Health Charity Signhealth

Text or WhatsApp/Facetime [07970 350366](tel:07970350366)

Email: da@signhealth.org.uk

Telephone: [020 3947 2601](tel:02039472601)

Visit: <https://signhealth.org.uk/with-deaf-people/domestic-abuse/>

The Survivors Trust

The Survivors Trust (TST) is a UK-wide national umbrella agency for 130 specialist organisations to provide support in respect of the impact of rape, sexual violence and childhood sexual abuse. Visit the [The Survivor Trust](#) website. The contact details of the organisations in Wales are set out below:

Cardiff South Wales**Telephone:** 02920 335795**Carmarthen West Wales****Telephone:** 01267 235464**Fax:** 01267 231349**Merthyr Tydfil South Wales****Telephone:** 01685 350099**Fax:** 01685 384640**Email:** sarc@newpathways.co.uk**Visit the** www.newpathways.co.uk website**North Wales****Telephone:** 01492 805072/ 0808 156 3658**Visit the:** www.amethystnorthwales.org.uk website**Risca South Wales****Telephone:** 01495 233971/2**Fax:** 01495 233996**Email:** riscasarc@newpathways.org.uk**Visit the** www.newpathways.co.uk website**Swansea South Wales****Telephone:** 01792 206885**Email:** swanseasarc@btconnect.com**Visit the:** www.newpathways.co.uk website**Welsh Women's Aid – Cardiff**

Employ expert and professional staff to provide victims of domestic abuse with safety planning, advocacy, advice and emotional support.

Opening Hours: 9.00 am – 5.00 pm Monday to Friday**Telephone:** 02920 460566**Visit the** <https://www.cardiffwomensaid.org.uk/> website**Women's Aid – Newport**

It is an organisation run by women, serving women in the community, who are suffering from domestic abuse. They have two refuges in Newport. They also have outreach and aftercare workers that support women in the community. Additionally, they run a number of programmes which empower women in making decisions in their life.

Opening Hours: 9.00 am – 4.30 pm**Telephone:** 01633 840 258**Visit the** <http://www.nptwomensaid.org.uk/> website

Appendix 3



Ending domestic abuse

SafeLives Dash risk checklist

Quick start guidance

You may be looking at this checklist because you are working in a professional capacity with a victim of domestic abuse. These notes are to help you understand the significance of the questions on the checklist. Domestic abuse can take many forms but it is usually perpetrated by men towards women in an intimate relationship such as boyfriend/girlfriend, husband/wife. This checklist can also be used for lesbian, gay, bisexual relationships and for situations of 'honour'-based violence or family violence. Domestic abuse can include physical, emotional, mental, sexual or financial abuse as well as stalking and harassment. They might be experiencing one or all types of abuse; each situation is unique. It is the combination of behaviours that can be so intimidating. It can occur both during a relationship or after it has ended.

The purpose of the Dash risk checklist is to give a consistent and simple tool for practitioners who work with adult victims of domestic abuse in order to help them identify those who are at high risk of harm and whose cases should be referred to a Marac meeting in order to manage their risk. If you are concerned about risk to a child or children, you should make a referral to ensure that a full assessment of their safety and welfare is made.

The Dash risk checklist should be introduced to the victim within the framework of your agency's:

- Confidentiality policy
- Information sharing policy and protocols
- Marac referral policies and protocols

Before you begin to ask the questions in the Dash risk checklist:

- Establish how much time the victim has to talk to you: is it safe to talk now? What are safe contact details?
- Establish the whereabouts of the perpetrator and children
- Explain why you are asking these questions and how it relates to the Marac

While you are asking the questions in the Dash risk checklist:

- Identify early on who the victim is frightened of – ex-partner/partner/family member
- Use gender neutral terms such as partner/ex-partner. By creating a safe, accessible environment LGBT victims accessing the service will feel able to disclose both domestic abuse and their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Revealing the results of the Dash risk checklist to the victim

Telling someone that they are at high risk of serious harm or homicide may be frightening and overwhelming for them to hear. It is important that you state what your concerns are by using

the answers they gave to you and your professional judgement. It is then important that you follow your area's protocols when referring to Marac and Children's Services. Equally, identifying that someone is not currently high risk needs to be managed carefully to ensure that the person doesn't feel that their situation is being minimised and that they don't feel embarrassed about asking for help. Explain that these factors are linked to homicide and serious harm and that if s/he experiences any of them in future, that they should get back in touch with your service or with the emergency services on 999 in an immediate crisis.

Please pay particular attention to a practitioner's professional judgement in all cases. The results from a checklist are not a definitive assessment of risk. They should provide you with a structure to inform your judgement and act as prompts to further questioning, analysis and risk management whether via a Marac or in another way.

The responsibility for identifying your local referral threshold rests with your local Marac.

Resources

Be sure that you have an awareness of the safety planning measures you can offer, both within your own agency and other agencies. Be familiar with local and national resources to refer the victim to, including specialist services. The following websites and contact details may be useful to you:

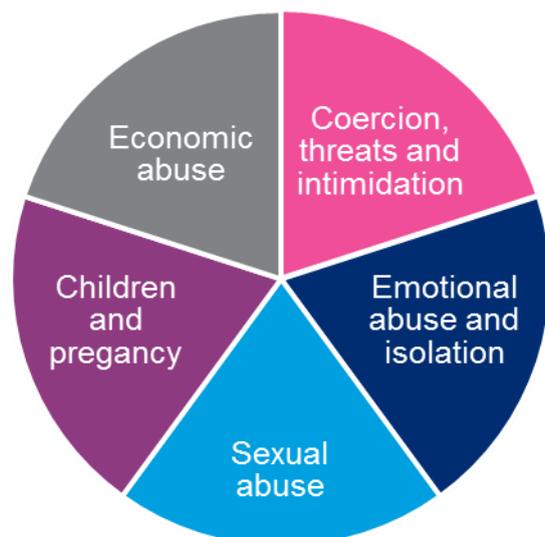
- **National Domestic Violence Helpline** (tel: 0808 2000 247) for assistance with refuge accommodation and advice.
- **'Honour' Helpline** (tel: 0800 5999247) for advice on forced marriage and 'honour' based violence.
- **Sexual Assault Referral Centres** (<http://www.rapecrisis.org.uk/Referralcentres2.php>) for details on SARCs and to locate your nearest centre.
- **Broken Rainbow** (tel: 08452 604460 / web: www.brokenrainbow.org.uk) for advice for LGBT victims) for advice and support for LGBT victims of domestic abuse.

Asking about types of abuse and risk factors

Physical abuse

We ask about physical abuse in questions 1, 10, 11, 13, 15, 18, 19 and 23.

- Physical abuse can take many forms from a push or shove to a punch, use of weapons, choking or strangulation.
- You should try and establish if the abuse is getting worse, or happening more often, or the incidents themselves are more serious. If your client is not sure, ask them to document how many incidents there have been in the last year and what took place. They should also consider keeping a diary marking when physical and other incidents take place.
- Try and get a picture of the range of physical abuse that has taken place. The incident that is currently being disclosed may not be the worst thing to have happened.
- The abuse might also be happening to other people in their household, such as their children or siblings or elderly relatives.



- Sometimes violence will be used against a family pet.
- If an incident has just occurred the victim should call 999 for assistance from the police. If the victim has injuries they should try and get them seen and documented by a health professional such as a GP or A&E nurse.

Sexual abuse

We ask about whether the victim is experiencing any form of sexual abuse in question 16.

- Sexual abuse can include the use of threats, force or intimidation to obtain sex, deliberately inflicting pain during sex, or combining sex and violence and using weapons.
- If the victim has suffered sexual abuse you should encourage them to get medical attention and to report this to the police. See above for advice on finding a Sexual Assault Referral Centre which can assist with medical and legal investigations.

Coercion, threats and intimidation

Coercion, threats and intimidation are covered in questions 2, 3, 6, 8, 14, 17, 18, 19, 23 and 24.

- It is important to understand and establish: the fears of the victim/victims in relation to what the perpetrator/s may do; who they are frightened of and who they are frightened for (e.g. children/siblings). Victims usually know the abuser's behaviour better than anyone else which is why this question is significant.
- In cases of 'honour' based violence there may be more than one abuser living in the home or belonging to the wider family and community. This could also include female relatives.
- Stalking and harassment becomes more significant when the abuser is also making threats to harm themselves, the victim or others. They might use phrases such as "If I can't have you no one else can..."
- Other examples of behaviour that can indicate future harm include obsessive phone calls, texts or emails, uninvited visits to the victim's home or workplace, loitering and destroying/vandalising property.
- Advise the victim to keep a diary of these threats, when and where they happen, if anyone else was with them and if the threats made them feel frightened.
- Separation is a dangerous time: establish if the victim has tried to separate from the abuser or has been threatened about the consequences of leaving. Being pursued after separation can be particularly dangerous.
- Victims of domestic abuse sometimes tell us that the perpetrators harm pets, damage furniture and this alone makes them frightened without the perpetrator needing to physically hurt them. This kind of intimidation is common and often used as a way to control and frighten.
- Some perpetrators of domestic abuse do not follow court orders or contact arrangements with children. Previous violations may be associated with an increase in risk of future violence.
- Some victims feel frightened and intimidated by the criminal history of their partner/ex-partner. It is important to remember that offenders with a history of violence are at increased risk of harming their partner, even if the past violence was not directed towards intimate partners or family members, except for 'honour'-based violence, where the perpetrator(s) will commonly have no other recorded criminal history.

Emotional abuse and isolation

We ask about emotional abuse and isolation in questions 4, 5 and 12. This can be experienced at the same time as the other types of abuse. It may be present on its own or it may have started long before any physical violence began. The result of this abuse is that victims can blame themselves and, in order to live with what is happening, minimise and deny how serious it is. As a professional you can assist the victim in beginning to consider the risks the victim and any children may be facing.

- The victim may be being prevented from seeing family or friends, from creating any support networks or prevented from having access to any money.
- Victims of 'honour' based violence talk about extreme levels of isolation and being 'policed' in the home. This is a significant indicator of future harm and should be taken seriously.
- Due to the abuse and isolation being suffered victims feel like they have no choice but to continue living with the abuser and fear what may happen if they try and leave. This can often have an impact on the victim's mental health and they might feel depressed or even suicidal.
- Equally the risk to the victim is greater if their partner/ex-partner has mental health problems such as depression and if they abuse drugs or alcohol. This can increase the level of isolation as victims can feel like agencies won't understand and will judge them. They may feel frightened that revealing this information will get them and their partner into trouble and, if they have children, they may worry that they will be removed. These risks are addressed in questions 21 & 22.

Children and pregnancy

Questions 7, 9 and 18 refer to being pregnant and children and whether there is conflict over child contact.

- The presence of children including stepchildren can increase the risk of domestic abuse for the mother. They too can get caught up in the violence and suffer directly.
- Physical violence can occur for the first time or get worse during pregnancy or for the first few years of the child's life. There are usually lots of professionals involved during this time, such as health visitors or midwives, who need to be aware of the risks to the victim and children, including an unborn child.
- The perpetrator may use the children to have access to the victim, abusive incidents may occur during child contact visits or there may be a lot of fear and anxiety that the children may be harmed.
- Please follow your local Child Protection Procedures and Guidelines for identifying and making referrals to Children's Services.

Economic abuse

Economic abuse is covered in question 20.

- Victims of domestic abuse often tell us that they are financially controlled by their partners/ex-partners. Consider how the financial control impacts on the safety options available to them. For example, they may rely on their partner/ex-partner for an income or do not have access to benefits in their own right. The victim might feel like the situation has become worse since their partner/ex-partner lost their job.
- The Citizens Advice Bureau or the local specialist domestic abuse support service will be able to outline to the victim the options relating to their current financial situation and how they might be able to access funds in their own right.

We also have a library of resources and information about training for frontline practitioners at

<http://safelives.org.uk/practice-support/resources-frontline-domestic-abuse-workers-and-idvas>

Other Marac toolkits and resources

If you or someone from your agency attends the Marac meeting, you can download a

Marac Representative's Toolkit here:
http://safelives.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/Representatives%20toolkit_0.pdf.

This essential document troubleshoots practical issues around the whole Marac process.

Other **frontline Practitioner Toolkits** are also available from

<http://safelives.org.uk/practice-support/resources-marac-meetings/resources-people-referring>. These offer a practical introduction to Marac within the context of a professional role. Please signpost colleagues and other agency staff to these toolkits where relevant:

A&E	LGBT Services Marac
Ambulance Service	Chair
BAMER Services	Marac Coordinator
Children and Young People's Services	Mental Health Services for Adults
Drug and Alcohol Education	Police Officer
Fire and Rescue Services	Probation
Family Intervention Projects	Social Care Services for Adults
Health Visitors, School Nurses &	Sexual Violence Services
Community Midwives	Specialist Domestic Violence Services
Housing	Victim Support
Independent Domestic Violence Advisors	Women's Safety Officer

For additional information and materials on Multi-agency risk assessment conferences (Maracs), please see the

[http://safelives.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/The%20principles%20of%20an%20effective%20OMAR AC%20%28principles%20only%29%20FINAL.pdf](http://safelives.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/The%20principles%20of%20an%20effective%20OMAR%20AC%20%28principles%20only%29%20FINAL.pdf).

This provides guidance on the Marac process and forms the basis of the Marac quality assurance process and national standards for Marac.



SafeLives Dash risk checklist

Aim of the form

- To help front line practitioners identify high risk cases of domestic abuse, stalking and 'honour'- based violence.
- To decide which cases should be referred to Marac and what other support might be required. A completed form becomes an active record that can be referred to in future for case management.
- To offer a common tool to agencies that are part of the Marac¹ process and provide a shared understanding of risk in relation to domestic abuse, stalking and 'honour'- based violence.
- To enable agencies to make defensible decisions based on the evidence from extensive research of cases, including domestic homicides and 'near misses', which underpins most recognised models of risk assessment.

How to use the form

Before completing the form for the first time we recommend that you read the full practice guidance and FAQs. These can be downloaded from:

[http://safelives.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/FAQs%20 about%20Dash%20FINAL.pdf](http://safelives.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/FAQs%20about%20Dash%20FINAL.pdf).

Risk is dynamic and can change very quickly. It is good practice to review the checklist after a new incident.

Recommended referral criteria to Marac

1. **Professional judgement:** if a professional has serious concerns about a victim's situation, they should refer the case to Marac. There will be occasions where the particular context of a case gives rise to serious concerns even if the victim has been unable to disclose the information that might highlight their risk more clearly. ***This could reflect extreme levels of fear, cultural barriers to disclosure, immigration issues or language barriers particularly in cases of 'honour'-based violence.*** This judgement would be based on the professional's experience and/or the victim's perception of their risk even if they do not meet criteria 2 and/or 3 below.
2. **'Visible High Risk':** the number of 'ticks' on this checklist. If you have ticked 14 or more 'yes' boxes the case would normally meet the Marac referral criteria.
3. **Potential Escalation:** the number of police callouts to the victim as a result of domestic violence in the past 12 months. This criterion can be used to identify cases where there is not a positive identification of a majority of the risk factors on the list, but where abuse appears to be escalating and where it is appropriate to assess the situation more fully by sharing information at Marac. It is common practice to start with 3 or more police callouts in a 12 month period but **this will need to be reviewed** depending on your local volume and your level of police reporting.

Please pay particular attention to a practitioner's professional judgement in all cases. The results from a checklist are not a definitive assessment of risk. They should provide you with a structure to inform your judgement and act as prompts to further questioning, analysis and risk management whether via a Marac or in another way. **The responsibility for identifying your local referral threshold rests with your local Marac.**

What this form is not

This form will provide valuable information about the risks that children are living with but it is not a full risk assessment for children. The presence of children increases the wider risks of domestic violence and step children are particularly at risk. If risk towards children is highlighted you should consider what referral you need to make to obtain a full assessment of the children's situation.

¹ For further information about Marac please refer to the 10 principles of an effective Marac: http://www.safelives.org.uk/marac/10_Principles_Oct_2011_full.doc

SafeLives Dash risk checklist for use by Idvas and other non-police agencies² for identification of risks when domestic abuse, 'honour'-based violence and/or stalking are disclosed

Please explain that the purpose of asking these questions is for the safety and protection of the individual concerned. Tick the box if the factor is present. Please use the comment box at the end of the form to expand on any answer. It is assumed that your main source of information is the victim. If this is <u>not the case</u> , please indicate in the right hand column	YES	NO	DON' T KNOW	State source of info if not the victim (eg police officer)
1. Has the current incident resulted in injury? Please state what and whether this is the first injury.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. Are you very frightened? Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. What are you afraid of? Is it further injury or violence? Please give an indication of what you think [name of abuser(s)] might do and to whom, including children. Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. Do you feel isolated from family/friends? ie, does [name of abuser(s)] try to stop you from seeing friends/family/doctor or others? Comment:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. Are you feeling depressed or having suicidal thoughts?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
6. Have you separated or tried to separate from [name of abuser(s)] within the past year?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
7. Is there conflict over child contact?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
8. Does [name of abuser(s)] constantly text, call, contact, follow, stalk or harass you? Please expand to identify what and whether you believe that this is done deliberately to intimidate you? Consider the context and behaviour of what is being done.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
9. Are you pregnant or have you recently had a baby (within the last 18 months)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
10. Is the abuse happening more often?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
11. Is the abuse getting worse?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
12. Does [name of abuser(s)] try to control everything you do and/or are they excessively jealous? For example: in terms of relationships; who you see; being 'policed' at home; telling you what to wear. Consider 'honour'-based violence (HBV) and specify behaviour.				
13. Has [name of abuser(s)] ever used weapons or objects to hurt you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
14. Has [name of abuser(s)] ever threatened to kill you or someone else and you believed them? If yes, tick who: You <input type="checkbox"/> Children <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

² Note: This checklist is consistent with the ACPO endorsed risk assessment model DASH 2009 for the police service.

Name of victim:

Date:

Restricted when complete

Tick the box if the factor is present. Please use the comment box at the end of the form to expand on any answer.	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	State source of info
15. Has [name of abuser(s)] ever attempted to strangle / choke / suffocate / drown you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
16. Does [name of abuser(s)] do or say things of a sexual nature that make you feel bad or that physically hurt you or someone else? If someone else, specify who.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
17. Is there any other person who has threatened you or who you are afraid of? If yes, please specify whom and why. Consider extended family if HBV.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
18. Do you know if [name of abuser(s)] has hurt anyone else? Consider HBV. Please specify whom, including the children, siblings or elderly relatives: Children <input type="checkbox"/> Another family member <input type="checkbox"/> Someone from a previous relationship <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
19. Has [name of abuser(s)] ever mistreated an animal or the family pet?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
20. Are there any financial issues? For example, are you dependent on [name of abuser(s)] for money/have they recently lost their job/other financial issues?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
21. Has [name of abuser(s)] had problems in the past year with drugs (prescription or other), alcohol or mental health leading to problems in leading a normal life? If yes, please specify which and give relevant details if known. Drugs <input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol <input type="checkbox"/> Mental health <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
22. Has [name of abuser(s)] ever threatened or attempted suicide?				
23. Has [name of abuser(s)] ever broken bail/an injunction and/or formal agreement for when they can see you and/or the children? You may wish to consider this in relation to an ex-partner of the perpetrator if relevant. Bail conditions <input type="checkbox"/> Non Molestation/Occupation Order <input type="checkbox"/> Child contact arrangements <input type="checkbox"/> Forced Marriage Protection Order <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>				
24. Do you know if [name of abuser(s)] has ever been in trouble with the police or has a criminal history? If yes, please specify: Domestic abuse <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual violence <input type="checkbox"/> Other violence <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Total 'yes' responses				

For consideration by professional

<p>Is there any other relevant information (from victim or professional) which may increase risk levels? Consider victim's situation in relation to disability, substance misuse, mental health issues, cultural / language barriers, 'honour'- based systems, geographic isolation and minimisation. Are they willing to engage with your service? Describe.</p>	
<p>Consider abuser's occupation / interests. Could this give them unique access to weapons? Describe.</p>	
<p>What are the victim's greatest priorities to address their safety?</p>	

<p>Do you believe that there are reasonable grounds for referring this case to Marac?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>If yes, have you made a referral?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Signed</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>
<p>Date</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>
<p>Do you believe that there are risks facing the children in the family?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>If yes, please confirm if you have made a referral to safeguard the children?</p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Date referral made</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>
<p>Signed</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>
<p>Date</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>
<p>Name</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div>

This document reflects work undertaken by SafeLives in partnership with Laura Richards, Consultant Violence Adviser to ACPO. We would like to thank Advance, Blackburn with Darwen Women's Aid and Berkshire East Family Safety Unit and all the partners of the Blackpool Marac for their contribution in piloting the revised checklist without which we could not have amended the original SafeLives risk identification checklist. We are very grateful to Elizabeth Hall of CAF/CASS and Neil Blacklock of Respect for their advice and encouragement and for the expert input we received from Jan Pickles, Dr Amanda Robinson and Jasvinder Sanghera.