

Domestic Abuse Policy

Document Reference Information

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| Version: | V3 |
| Status: | Live |
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| Ratified by: | Clinical Commissioning Executive Committee |
| Date ratified: | November 2020 |
| Date effective: | November 2020 |
| Date of next formal review: | April 2022 |
| Target audience: | All staff |

Version Control Record

| Version | Description of change(s) | Reason for change | Author | Date |
|---------|--------------------------|---|---------------|------------|
| V2.6 | Accuracy and Amendments | Revised due to statutory guidance and for factual accuracy. | Sarah Dempsey | April 2020 |

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The terms 'domestic violence' (DV) and 'domestic abuse' (DA) are often used interchangeably. In this policy 'domestic abuse (DA)' is used as it is felt to be a more inclusive way to describe a range of behaviours, which include violence, controlling and coercive behaviours as well as all other forms of abuse.

Many people think that domestic abuse is about intimate partners, but other family members are included. Family members are defined as mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister and grandparents in-laws and stepfamilies.

The cross-government definition of domestic abuse is not a legal definition and includes so called 'honour' based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage, and is clear that victims are not confined to one gender or ethnic group.

Domestic abuse is a crime. It does not respect race, social background, or other similar factors. It affects one in four women and one in six men in their lifetimes, with women suffering higher rates of repeat victimization and serious injury; it accounts for 14% of violent crime, covering offences ranging from common assault to rape and murder; and it has a massive impact on victims, their children and the wider community.

Alongside the significant effect domestic abuse has on individuals, to families and to communities, consideration must also be given to the cost to public services. In March 2017, domestic abuse was estimated to have cost over £66 billion in England and Wales, with costs to health services in dealing with physical injuries or the effects on mental health estimated to be £2.3 billion (Oliver et al 2019)

Everyone has the right to live life free from abuse and violence in any form and the responsibility for such acts lies with the perpetrators. There are also serious and adverse impacts on children who live in an abusive household, and the long-term damage to their physical and mental health. Within this context, Herefordshire and Worcestershire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) recognises its responsibilities to safeguard and protect children and adults at risk of abuse (Children's Act 1989 and 2004 and the Care Act 2014).

This Policy sets out the approach that Herefordshire & Worcestershire Clinical Commissioning Group (the CCG) will apply to employees experiencing domestic violence or abuse. The CCG has a duty of care and a legal obligation to assess any risk and support the health and safety of its employees.

The CCG is committed to ensuring support is available to employees who are experiencing or surviving domestic violence or abuse and recognise that anyone can experience or be a survivor of domestic violence or abuse regardless of their gender identity or sexual orientation.

The CCG recognises the scope of domestic violence and abuse and that it has a responsibility for the wellbeing of staff; understanding that domestic violence and abuse can have a major impact on individuals, who may hide the circumstances of their situation from others including their children, colleagues and family members.

2.0 POLICY STATEMENT

The CCG is committed to responding sensitively and effectively to those employees needing help and support should they experience domestic violence or abuse, promoting the view that violence against people is unacceptable and will not be condoned.

This policy is underpinned by a commitment to the principles of safeguarding children, a duty of care to the CCG's employees, equality and diversity and the protection of vulnerable adults. All those experiencing or affected by domestic violence or abuse will be treated according to their needs.

It is recognised that domestic abuse can affect anyone regardless of age, disability, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, occupation, religion, or social status, including our NHS staff. NHS organisations should recognise the serious adverse effects that domestic abuse or violence can have both on the home and working lives of staff.

3.0 PURPOSE AND AIM

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure all CCG staff understand how to identify and report domestic abuse,
- Ensure all staff have access to support and effective guidance or intervention if experiencing domestic abuse
- Ensures confidentiality wherever possible and sympathetic handling of situations at work arising from domestic abuse
- Support identification of any safeguarding issues for children and adults (with care and support needs).
- Ensure that processes are in place for action plans developed following a Domestic Homicide Review (DHR), safeguarding reviews or internal management reviews.
- Ensure that the lessons learned from DHR's, safeguarding reviews both child and adult and internal management reviews are shared across the CCG's, Primary Care colleagues and commissioned health providers.

This policy aims to;

- Positively assist and support employees who are experiencing and coping with domestic violence and abuse.
- Assist managers in supporting staff when incidents of domestic violence and abuse are reported to them.
- Remove fears of stigmatisation at work of members of staff experiencing domestic violence and abuse.
- Demonstrate the CCG's commitment to challenging the social issue of domestic violence and abuse.

4.0 SCOPE OF THE POLICY

This policy applies to all members of staff that are directly employed by the CCG and for whom the CCG has legal responsibility.

For those staff covered by a letter of authority / honorary contract or work experience this policy is also applicable whilst undertaking duties on behalf of the CCG or working on CCG premises and forms part of their arrangements with the CCG.

As part of good employment practice, agency workers are also required to abide by the CCG policies and procedures, as appropriate, to ensure their health, safety and welfare whilst undertaking work for the CCG.

5.0 DEFINITIONS

The Home Office, 2013 (updated 2018 to include 16- and 17-year old's), defines domestic abuse as:

'Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or 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 sexuality. This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse':

- Psychological/emotional
- Physical
- Sexual
- Financial/economic
- Violent or threatening behavior
- Controlling and Coercive behavior

Controlling behaviour: a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape by regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour: an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

The Serious Crime Act (2015) created a new offence of controlling or coercive behaviour in intimate or familial relationships. The new offence closes a gap in the law around patterns of controlling or coercive behaviour Control in an on-going relationship between intimate partners or family members.

The Government definition, which is not a legal definition, includes so called 'honour' based violence, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage, and is clear that victims are not confined to one gender or ethnic group.

Domestic violence and abuse involves the misuse of power and exercise of control by one adult over another adult; usually within the context of an intimate relationship or within a family. It is rarely a one-off incident. Evidence suggests it is a pattern of abuse and intimidation that becomes more severe over time.

Domestic violence and abuse occur in all groups and sections of society and may be experienced differently, due to, and compounded by, race, sexuality, gender re-assignment, disability, age, religion, culture, class, mental health, or caring responsibilities.

Some members of staff may be at greater risk of suffering domestic abuse or violence due to home working or household self-isolation. Disabled women are twice as likely to suffer domestic abuse than non-disabled women. Honour – based abuse and forced marriage is also a particular consequence during periods of home working and lockdown.

It should be noted that domestic abuse or violence happens to both men and women. Research shows women are more likely to suffer more serious injury and ongoing assaults than men. However, it should be acknowledged that men can experience domestic abuse from their female partner and that domestic abuse also occurs in same-sex relationships.

Examples of domestic violence/abuse:

- Physical assault or threats of physical assault (such as slapping, pushing, kicking, punching, stabbing or destruction of personal property).
- Sexual assault or threats of sexual assault.
- Emotional or psychological abuse (such as intimidation, verbal abuse, humiliation, not allowing friends or relatives to visit).
- Denial of rights or restriction of personal freedom (such as with-holding money or medical help.)
- Financial abuse.
- The imposition of social isolation or movement deprivation.
- Forced marriage.

In this policy where the term ‘adult’ or ‘young person’ is used this includes people who are 16 and 17 years old, as well as people aged 18 and over, in line with the above definition. (See also [SafeLives](#))

Herefordshire and Worcestershire’s response to Forced marriage, FGM and honour-based violence is coordinated under the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Domestic Abuse Strategy 2017-2020 by the Community Safety Partnership (CSP).

6.0 CONTEXT

Incidents of Domestic Violence/Abuse: Nationally Context.

- Each year around 2 m people suffer some form of domestic abuse - 7.9% of women and 4.2% of men. Women aged 20-24 years were significantly more likely to be victims of any domestic abuse than women in any other age group. (ONS, 2018)
- Each year more than 100,000 people in the UK are at high and imminent risk of being murdered or seriously injured as a result of domestic abuse (Safe Lives, 2015a)
- Women are much more likely than men to be the victims of high risk or severe domestic abuse: 95% of those going to MARAC or accessing an IIDVA service are women (Safe Lives, 2015b)

- In 2017-2018, the police recorded a total of 1,198, 094 domestic abuse-related incidents in England and Wales. Of these 598,545 (50%) were not subsequently recorded as a crime (ONS, 2018)
- On average, 2 women are killed, per week, by a current or former partner in England and Wales (ONS, 2018)
- 130,000 children live in homes where there is high-risk domestic abuse and 62% of children living with domestic abuse are directly harmed by the perpetrator of the abuse, in addition to the harm caused by witnessing the abuse of others (CAADA, 2014)
- On average high-risk victims live with domestic abuse for 2.6 years before getting help (Safe Lives, 2015b)
- 85% of victims sought help five times on average from professionals in the year before they got effective help to stop the abuse (Safe Lives, 2015)
- By the time they reach 18, almost a quarter of children will have been exposed to domestic violence (NSPCC, 2016)

7.0 PRIORITIES

There are four priorities under the shared vision of Herefordshire and Worcestershire's Community Safety Partnership (CSP) (2019-2022)

- **Prevention** - The aim is that individuals and communities understand domestic abuse and the harm it causes and have the skills to build, and a culture that supports healthy relationships.
- **Provision of services** - The aim is that when domestic abuse is disclosed, identified, or reported, those affected by domestic abuse can access timely and effective information, advice, and support.
- **Partnership** - The aim is to work together across organisations in an efficient and effective way to prevent, and protect those experiencing, domestic abuse, ensuring that organisational barriers do not have impact on those affected by domestic abuse.
- **Pursuing perpetrators and Criminal Justice** - The aim is that the tools available are used effectively and consistently and those experiencing domestic abuse see the police and criminal and civil legal systems as working to protect them and their children.

NHS organisations will inevitably employ individuals who are affected by domestic violence and abuse or may even be perpetrators. The organisation will need to ensure they make all reasonable efforts to provide staff with the support needed.

The NICE guidance 'Domestic violence and abuse: how health services, social care and the organisations they work with can respond effectively' was updated in July 2018. The guidance aims to help identify, prevent, and reduce domestic violence.

The CCGs recognise their responsibilities and are committed to preventing domestic abuse wherever possible and ensuring that victims of domestic abuse and violence receive a high standard of care irrespective of age, race, culture, sexuality, religion or ability and equality underpins all our service provision and commissioning.

This policy aims to provide a framework for the CCG's as commissioners of health care and as an employer to deliver a consistent and effective response in tackling domestic abuse; and supporting those experiencing it.

8.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Chief Executive has responsibility for ensuring the provision of high quality, safe and effective services being delivered by the CCG. The Chief Executive has overall responsibility and is accountable for ensuring the CCG effectively contributes to the multi-agency partner response to support people living with domestic abuse.

The Head of Safeguarding/Designated Nurse and the CCG Safeguarding Team provide specialist support and advice to staff in relation to aspects of safeguarding children and adults who are experiencing domestic abuse.

The Head of Safeguarding/Designated Nurse will monitor and provide health oversight of action plans from Domestic Homicide Reviews as appropriate and seek assurance that member practices and commissioned providers implement any recommendations.

The Head of Safeguarding/Designated Nurse will ensure lessons learned from Domestic Homicide reviews are shared across the CCGs and member practices and inform safeguarding training.

All managers should:

- Ensure that this policy is known to all staff and that staff are aware of their responsibilities
- Seek adequate and appropriate training for staff within their teams in relation to domestic abuse commensurate to their roles and responsibilities.
- Support staff within their team who are experiencing Domestic Abuse
- Ensure this policy is applied fairly to all with sensitivity towards age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation.
- Maintain the confidentiality of any information relayed to them concerning cases of domestic violence and abuse. The CCG will only involve other agencies; or divulge information with the consent of the person concerned, unless required to do so by law. For example, where there is disclosure of violence and abuse towards a child or vulnerable adult.

All staff should:

- Be aware of the policy and know how and where to report any concerns in relation to domestic abuse.
- Have access to occupational health support and/or counselling if experiencing domestic violence/abuse.

The Human Resources Team are responsible for;

- Supporting managers and employees with queries relating to supporting employees who are experiencing domestic violence.

- Ensuring all cases of domestic violence and abuse are treated sensitively and in confidence as far as practicable.
- Sourcing of relevant awareness training in relation to domestic violence and abuse.
- Facilitating access to the relevant support systems available such as occupational health, counselling, and the Employee Assistance Programme.
- Ensuring the policy and procedure is reviewed and updated as required.

Staff Experiencing Domestic Abuse:

- With the prevalence of domestic abuse in our society, there is a potential that some members of CCG staff will suffer abuse at the hands of someone close to them. The CCG is committed to creating a working environment that supports staff experiencing domestic abuse.
- CCG employees have the right to work in a supportive and confidential environment that does not discriminate against or stigmatise people who are experiencing domestic abuse.
- Staff are not obliged to tell anyone at work about their domestic situation, however there are many support mechanisms available such as line manager, HR representative and Occupational Health
- It is therefore recommended that staff talk to someone at work if they feel their personal situation is affecting work – specific details are not necessary but a joint approach to problem solving to resolve and work issues is essential.

9.0 IMPACT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND ABUSE ON THE WORKPLACE

Employees experiencing domestic violence and abuse may receive harassing or repeated phone calls, texts or e-mails, unwelcome notes left on their cars or unplanned and unannounced visits at work. Colleagues may be followed to or from work, or subject to questioning about the employee's contact details or location. Sadly, there are instances where tragically staff have been stalked, physically assaulted, or murdered when travelling to or from work.

Perpetrators may be using workplace resources such as time, phones, e-mail, or other means to threaten, harass or abuse their current or former partner.

Domestic violence and abuse can greatly impact on an employee's working life. Many of the abused suffer physical injuries, sleep deprivation, low morale, low self-esteem, and heightened anxiety levels, all of which contribute to lateness, absenteeism, and poor performance. These symptoms can also be indicators that colleagues are experiencing domestic abuse.

Employees experiencing domestic violence and abuse are especially vulnerable while they are at work because if they attempt to leave an abusive partner the workplace can become the only place where they can be located and harmed. If an employee becomes concerned that an abusive partner or previous partner could potentially attempt to contact them or approach them at the workplace, it is advised that they make a member of the Human Resources Team and the Head of Quality and Safeguarding – Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Adults and Children aware to allow for a safety plan to protect the employee as much as possible to be put in place. An individual Safety Plan will be developed with the employee which will incorporate such matters as anonymisation, protection from unsolicited calls and overall safety whilst at work.

10.0 INDIVIDUAL SUPPORT – HOW CAN THE CCG HELP?

All employees have the right to work in a supportive and confidential environment that does not discriminate against or stigmatise them if they are experiencing domestic violence and abuse.

Supporting staff - How we can help

As an employee you do not have to tell anyone at work about your domestic situation but there are a whole range of people within the CCG that you may find it helpful to talk to, including; your line manager, Human Resources Team, Occupational Health or our Employee Assistance Programme, Care First (details of which can be found in Section 11.

Any member of staff will respond sympathetically, confidentially, and effectively to a member of staff who discloses they are experiencing domestic violence and abuse.

Where domestic violence/abuse has been reported line managers will treat unplanned absences and temporary poor timekeeping sympathetically.

Any confidante will respect the right of staff to make their own decision on the course of action at every stage. See section 11 below regarding our commitment to confidentiality.

Other existing provisions will be signposted to staff as a means of help.

The CCGs' internet and intranet pages both identify and contain links to specialist domestic abuse services in the Herefordshire and Worcestershire area.

- Herefordshire and Worcestershire 24-hour free phone helpline 0800 980 3331
- Herefordshire and Worcestershire rape and sexual abuse support center 01905 724514 www.WRSASC.org.uk
- Wellbeing Information and Signposting Herefordshire (WISH) 01432 344777
- NSPCC ChildLine 0800 11 11
- Men's advice line 0808 801 0327 - www.mensadviceline.org.uk
- Mankind 01823334244 www.mankind.org.uk/
- GALOP- Support for LGBT experiencing domestic abuse- 0300 999 5428
<http://www.galop.org.uk/domesticabuse/>
- Freephone national domestic abuse helpline run by Refuge 0808 2000 247
<https://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/>
- Karma Nirvana 0800 5999247 (forced marriage and honour crimes)
<https://karmanirvana.org.uk>
- Forced Marriage Unit 020 7008 0151 <https://www.gov.uk/stop-forced-marriage>
- IN AN EMERGENCY DIAL 999
- If you are worried that someone may see you visiting a helpline, the Women's Aid Website tells you how to cover your tracks online
<https://www.womensaid.org.uk/cover-your-tracks-online/>

11.0 MANAGER SUPPORT – HOW CAN THE CCG HELP?

Possible Indicators of Domestic Violence/Abuse

Supporting staff with this issue is sensitive and complex in the workplace. It is even harder for managers when staff are isolating and working from home.

It is important that line managers are regularly checking in with their staff and pick up on any cues such as:

- a change in behaviour
- not dialling into meetings (telephone or virtual) when expected to do so
- not using the visual aids when in the meeting
- seeming withdrawn
- acting irritably.

Any employee or manager that is concerned about a colleague suffering physical (sexual), financial, or psychological abuse, is encouraged to approach the employees' line manager or the managers' manager.

Managers may be the first to become aware that an employee is experiencing domestic violence and abuse perhaps as a result of monitoring and investigating sickness, attendance, and work performance. Some additional indicators to consider are:

- Uncharacteristically late or high absenteeism rate without explanation.
- Not dialling into meetings when expected to do so.
- Not using the visual aids when in a meeting.
- Inappropriate or excessive clothing.
- Repeated injuries or unexplained bruising or explanations that do not fit with the injuries.
- Changes in the quality of work performance for no apparent reason.
- Receiving repeated upsetting calls/texts/e-mails or being the victim of vandalism/threats.
- Member of staff becoming withdrawn or showing changes in personality.
- Acting irritably.
- Lack of money.
- Obsession with time or avoiding lunch breaks or socialising outside of work.
- Needing time off for appointments.

The effects of domestic violence and abuse will vary, and the examples given are only potential indicators and should not be used alone to identify whether or not someone is a victim of domestic violence or abuse.

If you are concerned about a colleague suffering either physical (sexual), financial, or psychological abuse, we encourage you to approach either your or their line manager.

Strategies for Dealing with Disclosed Information and Details

Managers who become concerned that a member of staff may be experiencing domestic violence or abuse should:

- Make use of this policy and access HR advice
- Be supportive, available, and approachable.
- Take time to listen, take the employee seriously, use empathy and ensure a non-judgmental approach.
- Ask any direct questions with care and sensitivity, reinforcing that as far as possible confidentiality will be respected.

- Hold discussions in a private place.
- Encourage the employee to seek the advice of other relevant agencies.
- Make available a list of resources for victims of domestic violence and abuse.
- Agree a communication plan with the individual when time off is needed.
- Understand that they are not counsellors and are not expected to carry out this function. Counselling is to be left to trained professionals to apply.

More detailed guidance for managers is shown at Appendix 4.

Maintaining Confidentiality

Any information provided by an employee will be treated in the strictest confidence.

The CCG will only involve other agencies; or divulge information with the consent of the person concerned, unless required to do so by law. For example, where there is disclosure of violence and abuse towards a child or vulnerable adult.

Managers have a duty to maintain a secure environment for all employees and this may be made easier if colleagues are aware of potential risks. In situations where others may be put at risk, and at the express wish of the member of staff in question, managers can agree with the individual what information can be disclosed. In these circumstances, colleagues provided with this information must be reminded that the information is confidential and that there are risks to the member of staff if it is disclosed.

Staff should be reminded of the importance of not divulging an individual's personal details; such as addresses, telephone numbers and shift patterns; to other employees or unknown people requesting the information.

Anyone that breaches these standards of confidentiality may be subject to further action in accordance with the relevant HR policy.

Providing Support to Staff

Managers should treat sympathetically distracted behaviour, poor time-keeping and unplanned absences where there is the suggestion that it may be the result of domestic violence and abuse.

Line managers may offer employees experiencing domestic violence/abuse a broad range of support. This may include but is not limited to:

- Leave for relevant appointments, including with support agencies, solicitors, to rearrange housing or childcare, and for court appointments.
- Temporary or permanent changes to working times and patterns.
- Changes to specific duties, for example to avoid potential contact with an abuser in a customer facing role or if they are a fellow employee.
- Redeployment or relocation if requested and deemed appropriate and reasonable.
- Using other existing policies including flexible working options.
- Access to occupational health interventions, e.g. counselling.

Keeping Employees Safe at work

The CCG undertakes to ensure the safety of all its employees. The CCG will actively provide support to employees to try and minimise the risk to their safety while at work, if they make it known to us that they are experiencing or surviving domestic violence and abuse.

Managers will take *reasonable* measures to ensure both the member of staff *and others* immediate safety and security at work, considerations could include:

- Improving security, changing keypad numbers, or reminding staff of any restricted access arrangements which may apply.
- Changing duty arrangements such as reception or answering the phone.
- Changing the layout of the room so that the individual cannot be seen through reception/entrances or through a window.
- Changing specific duties, for example to avoid potential contact with an abuser in a customer facing role or if they are a fellow employee.
- Agreeing with the person experiencing domestic violence/abuse what to tell colleagues and how they should respond to contact from the abuser. Providing colleagues with a photograph and other relevant details e.g. car make and registration.
- Making sure that the systems for recording staff whereabouts are adequate and if work requires going out of the office or working alone consider how to minimise risks.
- Considering special arrangements for when a member of staff has to leave work at the end of the day.
- Ensuring any incidents are recorded using incident report forms. These reports may be used in court or civil proceedings. Details of all witnesses should be recorded.
- Seeking redeployment for a member of staff if they request a change of work site or considering a change of working hours or other temporary measures as an option.
- Avoiding requests to work overtime without reasonable notice.
- Establishing how to contact the member of staff outside of work; contacting them at home may not be appropriate.

Where appropriate managers should signpost to available support including: -

- If someone is in immediate danger, they should always call 999 in an emergency. If they are unable to speak while on the phone, they should use the 'silent solution' system by pressing 55 where the operator will transfer the call to the relevant police force.
- For information, help and support, call the free 24-hour National Domestic Abuse Helpline run by Refuge 0808 2000 247 or visit www.nationalhelpline.org.uk if it is not safe to phone.
- COVID-19 Safety Advice for Survivors from [Women's Aid](#), including their [survivor's forum](#), [live chat](#) and email services.
- [Rape Crisis](#) resources for survivors of sexual violence.
- [Men's advice line](#) on 0808 801 0327 for those males suffering domestic abuse or violence.
- National LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Helpline on 0800 999 5428.
- [Save Lives](#) for supporting disabled people at risk of domestic abuse.

- [Karma Nirvana](#) for supporting victims of honour-based abuse and forced marriage. The Honour Abuse Research Matrix (HARM) at University of Lancashire has developed [guidance for employers on supporting staff at risk of honour abuse](#) or other forms of domestic violence during COVID-19.
- [Crown Prosecution Service](#) for crime information and guidance on domestic abuse.
- Respect helpline on 0808 802 0321 for anyone worried about their own behaviour.
- [Bright Sky](#) free mobile app providing support and information for anyone who may be in an abusive relationship or those concerned about someone they know.
- Care First, the CCG's Employee Assistance Programme who can be contacted 24/7 via telephone or online at 0800 174 319 or via www.carefirst-lifestyle.co.uk using the username: worcestershire and the password: employee.
- For further support, please see the additional sources of support for staff on NHS employers website <https://www.nhsemployers.org/retention-and-staff-experience/health-and-wellbeing/taking-a-targeted-approach/taking-a-targeted-approach/domestic-violence>

Managers will offer support for those who are at risk or worried about domestic violence or signpost to refuge support services providing temporary accommodation for those fleeing abuse.

Assessments of safety, risk and management control measures should include all foreseeable risks. A risk of domestic violence and abuse in the workplace is reasonably foreseeable once an employee has raised such an issue with the line manager.

Where the perpetrator and the victim both work for the CCG reasonable steps will be taken to manage the working arrangements. In all cases reasonable steps should be taken to ensure the victim and his or her colleagues are not at risk from the perpetrator entering the workplace.

Absence

If an employee needs to be absent from work due to domestic violence and abuse issues, the length of absence will be considered on each individual circumstance through collaboration with the employee, the line manager and Human Resources.

Employee, managers, and supervisors are encouraged to explore paid leave options that can be arranged to help the employee cope with the situation without having to take a formal unpaid leave of absence. Depending on circumstances these options may include granting leave or arranging temporary flexible working hours so the employee can attend relevant appointments with, for example, support agencies, solicitors, or counsellors, to rearrange housing or childcare, attend court etc.

None of the above excludes employees from adhering wherever possible to the CCG's absence reporting procedure.

Support for Managers

Managers should seek to support staff by discussing individual circumstances so appropriate support and action can be taken accordingly. It is important to remember the staff member knows their personal circumstances better than anyone, so it is important to respect their wishes and do what you can to support them.

If you are unsure as a manager how to approach domestic violence and abuse related issues take further confidential advice from the Human Resources Team and/or the CCG Safeguarding Team.

If someone reports that they (or their children) are being abused, it is important to believe them. Do not question them, take immediate (but appropriate) action.

Recording Information

In agreement with the staff member Managers will record a summary of any discussion together with agreed outcomes. The manager should keep this confidentially on their own files and remove this once the incident has been dealt with. It would not form part of the routine management/personnel record.

12.0 DEALING WITH PERPETRATORS WHO ARE EMPLOYEES

Abusive behaviour is the responsibility of the perpetrator. Domestic violence/abuse is a serious matter that can lead to a criminal conviction. If you are hurting somebody and want help, please contact the Respect National Helpline (details at end of this document).

Harassment and intimidation by a CCG employee whether of a partner or ex-partner who is employed by the CCG or not, will be considered misconduct and may lead to disciplinary action being taken.

Acts of verbal or physical abuse by CCG employees on or off duty are unacceptable and impact not only on the CCG's employment relationship with those employees but also damage the reputation and good standing of the CCG.

Employees will be made aware that conduct outside of work may breach the CCG's acceptable standards of behaviour and bring the CCG into disrepute. The facts will be investigated as far as possible and may warrant initiation of the disciplinary procedure. In some instances, this may be regarded as gross misconduct.

Employees who are perpetrators of domestic violence and abuse may wish to seek help and support voluntarily. Employees who seek help will be offered assistance in finding local sources of help.

Information will be made available about perpetrator re-education programmes that are available locally/regionally.

If a member of staff is convicted of domestic violence or abuse offence and this clearly conflicts with their role at the CCG appropriate action should be taken. Advice should be sought from the Human Resources Team. Factors to consider will be:

- The nature of the conduct and the role of the perpetrator at work.
- The extent to which it involves contact with employees/service users/public.

Arrangements for where others may be put at risk

Managers have a duty to maintain a secure environment for all employees and this may be made easier if colleagues are aware of potential risks. With the express wish and consent of the employee in question colleagues may need to be informed of the situation.

Managers should ensure that all team members are aware that under no circumstances should the workplace or personal details of individuals be divulged unless the individual concerned gives consent.

If you are worried you are abusive you can contact the free RESPECT helpline 0808 802 4040 <http://respectphoneline.org.uk>

13.0 ADULTS (has needs for care and support) AND DOMESTIC ABUSE

The Mental Capacity Act (2005)

The MCA 2005 provides a statutory framework to empower and protect people who may lack capacity to make decisions for themselves and establishes a framework for making decisions on their behalf. This applies whether the decisions are life changing events or everyday matters. All decisions taken in the adult safeguarding process must comply with the Act.

The Mental Capacity Act (MCA) states that if a person lacks mental capacity to make a decision then whoever is making that decision or taking any action on that person's behalf must do this in the person's best interests. One of the key principles of the Act is that a person must always be assumed to have capacity unless it is established otherwise. A person cannot be treated as lacking capacity because a decision may be unwise or foolish.

When a person who appears to have mental capacity also appears to be choosing to stay in a high- risk abusive relationship then careful consideration must be given to whether they are making that choice free from the undue influence of the person who is causing them harm or others. The impact of controlling and coercive behaviours', and application of undue influence, is a factor that needs active consideration for those with or without capacity. Early consultation with legal advisors is recommended in high-risk situations where this is indicated.

If an adult with capacity decides to remain in an abusive relationship and does not consent to a referral to services, then there remains a responsibility to support the individual wherever possible. This may include, steering them to partner agencies and appropriate services/counselling. If there is evidence that Domestic Abuse is escalating, where there is medium to high risk, then referral to MARAC (Multi- Agency Risk Assessment Conference) should be considered with or without consent. (See also [SafeLives](#))

Victims of on-going domestic abuse may be reluctant or unable to leave an abusive relationship and:

- Deny or protect an abusive partner if questioned or challenged
- Be financially or emotionally dependent on the abuser
- Blame themselves for the abuse inflicted
- Be frightened of the consequences of leaving
- Be denied access to children if they leave

Safeguarding Adults with care and support needs

A referral may need to be made to Worcestershire Local Authority Safeguarding Adults Team or Herefordshire Adult referral Team for adults with needs for care and support. (Refer to Adult Safeguarding: Multi-agency policy & procedures for the protection of adults with needs for care and support in the West Midlands)

<https://www.safeguardingworcestershire.org.uk/>

Safeguarding@herefordshire.gov.uk

14.0 CHILDREN AND DOMESTIC ABUSE

Domestic violence/abuse is a significant safeguarding and child protection issue. Both the Government and key children's services and agencies now recognise the issue of children living with domestic violence / abuse as a matter of concern. Nearly three quarters of children with a child protection plan nationally, live in households where domestic abuse occurs.

The impact of domestic abuse on an individual child will vary according to the child's resilience and the strengths and weaknesses of their circumstances, as well as a range of factors in respect of the abuse. Three key imperatives of any intervention with children living with domestic abuse are

- To protect the child/children.
- To empower the non-abusive parent to protect herself/himself and her/his child/children.
- To hold an abusive partner accountable for their violence and provide them with the opportunities to change.

Where it is known that a child/child is living with domestic abuse, it is important to assess the risk of harm to the victim and her/his child/children. This risk assessment (DASH – Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour Based Violence Risk Identification, Assessment and Management Model), tool can be found at the following link: www.safelives.org.uk

If the risk assessment score is 14 or more, a referral to the Multiagency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) must be made. This should be done with consent where safe to do so but can also be referred without consent if required.

Other forms of Domestic Violence/Abuse

- Online grooming
- Digital stalking
- Naming of rape victims online
- Social location systems whereby perpetrators can keep track of where victims are
- Unrequested Sexting – the exchange of sexual messages or images and creating, sharing, and forwarding sexually suggestive nude or nearly nude images through mobile phones and the internet

Where perpetrators of domestic abuse are under 18 years of age the Courts advise that Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) are involved with support programs. There are tools and resources available to assist staff who work with young adults who use abuse within domestic relations available from link <https://www.wwmrc.co.uk/>

15.0 INTERGENERATIONAL ABUSE

Domestic violence/abuse approaches historically have had an emphasis on partner violence in heterosexual or lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT) relationships. More focus needs to be given to family and inter-generational abuse, and how this differs from partner violence for example if the perpetrator is the sibling, child, or grandchild. Abuse of an adult by a child may be used to exercise control over that adult.

Like other forms of domestic violence/ abuse, it is very likely to be under-reported and there are few services working, specifically on this issue. The lack of recognition of this form of abuse means that many families may not recognise that they need support and there is a need for more guidance for practitioners that does not just include a criminal justice response. Many families may be facing multiple issues such as substance misuse, mental health problems as well as domestic violence/abuse.

16.0 INDICATORS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE

This list is not exhaustive, and most are applicable to adults and children: -

- Physical complaints (marks, injuries or bruising, headaches, stomach aches)
- Changes in the way people dress (clothing that covers up, long sleeves on hot days)
- Constant worry about possible danger and/or the safety of loved ones
- Depression and/or withdrawal from others and activities
- Low self-esteem and lack of confidence, especially for trying new things (including academic tasks)
- Suicidal thoughts and actions
- Difficulty paying attention at work/in class, concentrating on work, or learning new information
- Outbursts of anger directed toward others, peers, or self • bullying and/or aggression directed toward others
- School truancy or leaving home
- High risk behavior including criminal activities and substance abuse • stereotyped beliefs about males as aggressors and females as victims
- Dating violence

17.0 REPORTING CONCERNS

If you have concerns that a child or adult (with needs for care and support) are at risk or are being abused then you, as an employee of the NHS, must report your concerns. Lessons from Serious Case Reviews, Domestic Homicide Reviews and Safeguarding Adult Reviews have taught us that it is never acceptable to do nothing.

To report concerns please contact: Children – Worcestershire Children First -01905 822666

Herefordshire Multi-Agency safeguarding Hub (MASH)-01432 260800

Adults - Adult Safeguarding Team Worcester 01905 768053 Adult Referrals Herefordshire 01432 260715

For advice and guidance please speak to the CCG's Safeguarding Team (Appendix 1)

If you feel a life is in danger call 999

18.0 DOMESTIC HOMICIDE REVIEWS (DHR's)

The Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act (2004) states: 'Domestic Homicide Review' means a review of the circumstances in which the death of a person aged 16 or over has, or appears to have, resulted from violence, abuse or neglect by-

"A person to who (s) he was related or with whom (s) he was or had been in an intimate personal relationship, or a member of the same household as her/himself"

These are held with a view to identifying lessons to be learnt from the death. See also

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/revised-statutory-guidance-for-the-conduct-of-domestic-homicide-reviews>

The Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act, section 9, stipulates the multi-agency statutory requirement to conduct a domestic homicide review. A Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) should be carried out to:

- Establish what lessons are to be learned from the domestic homicide regarding the way in which local professionals and organisation work individually and together to safeguard victims.
- Identify clearly what those lessons are both within and between agencies, how and with what timescales they will be acted on, and what is expected to change as a result.
 - apply these lessons to service responses including changes to policies and procedures as appropriate.
- Prevent domestic violence homicide and improve service responses for all domestic violence victims and their children through improved intra-agency working.

The CCG's comply with this duty and actively engages in DHR's in Worcestershire. The Designated Nurse and Deputy Designated Nurses for adults, children's and Primary Care safeguarding attend and contribute to these reviews.

Staff or member GP practices may be asked to support the DHR process with the provision of or information to support Independent Management Reviews (IMRs) or access to healthcare records as required.

19.0 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIQ)

In applying this policy, the CCG will have due regard for the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, promote equality of opportunity, and provide for good relations between people of diverse groups, in particular on the grounds of the following characteristics protected by the Equality Act (2010); age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, and sexual orientation, in addition to offending background, trade union membership, or any other personal characteristic. The CCGs aim to design and implement services, policies and measures that meet the diverse needs of our service, population, and workforce, ensuring that none are placed at a disadvantage over others.

In carrying out its functions, Herefordshire and Worcestershire CCG must have due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). This applies to all the activities for which Herefordshire and Worcestershire CCG are responsible, including policy development, review, and implementation.

The Equality Impact Assessment screening was used to determine the potential impact this policy might have in respect to the individual protected characteristics.

20.0 PROVIDER ASSURANCE

The CCG's as a commissioner of healthcare will seek assurance that commissioned provider organisations are also engaged in the work to respond to domestic violence/abuse. This includes having an internal process in place within the Provider organisations (Domestic abuse policy) to respond to allegations of abuse, deliver domestic abuse training as part of Safeguarding training, and to engage where appropriate in Domestic Homicide Review processes. Required Safeguarding Standards for NHS providers are detailed within the NHS Standard Contract (2019/2020).

21.0 TRAINING

Domestic violence abuse is included within safeguarding adults and children's level 3 training.

Further domestic abuse training can be accessed via the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children's Partnership and Worcestershire Safeguarding Adults Board (WSCP/WSAB) at the following link: <https://www.safeguardingworcestershire.org.uk/> or via the CCG Training Hub.

22.0 MONITORING COMPLIANCE WITH THE DOCUMENT

The Policy will be monitored through existing CCG Safeguarding structures. Where gaps and omissions are identified within the CCG's domestic violence/abuse arrangements, recommendations and required actions will be added to safeguarding work-plans for action. Where gaps or omissions are identified within NHS commissioned provider services, the Designated Nurse or their Deputy's will either:

Inform the provider and request immediate action to bridge the gap/omission and/or
Inform and discuss with the CCG Executive lead for Safeguarding (Chief Nursing Officer).

23.0 ARRANGEMENTS FOR REVIEW

This policy will be formally reviewed and amended every 2 years by the CCG's safeguarding team unless new national or local guidance identifies/recommends changes in practice occurs.

24.0 DISSEMINATION

The final version of this policy will be uploaded to the CCG's intranets and all staff within the CCG will be advised by internal communications.

25.0 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTATION

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Herefordshire and Worcestershire CCG Safeguarding Adults Policy
- Herefordshire and Worcestershire CCG Safeguarding Children Policy
- MCA/DOLS policies and procedures for Herefordshire and Worcestershire CCG

Legislation and guidance - the following legislation and guidance has been taken into consideration in the development of this policy:

- Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims (Amendment) Act 2012
- Government Strategy to tackle Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG)
- 'Responding to Domestic Abuse. A resource for health professionals'.(2017) Home Office
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/597435/DomesticAbuseGuidance.pdf
- Domestic Abuse Bill (2019) Home Office
- Domestic Violence and Abuse (Quality Standards) NICE 2018
- The Care Act 2014
- Children Act 1989, 2004
- Domestic Violence and Abuse (NICE)2018

26.0 REFERENCES

- Abrahams, C. (1994) Hidden victims: Children and domestic violence (London: NCH Action for children).
- CAADA (2014), In Plain Sight: Effective help for children exposed to domestic abuse. Bristol: CAADA.
- Directors of Adult Social Services (2015) 2nd edition Adult safeguarding and domestic abuse, a guide to support practitioners and managers.

- Domestic Violence, Crimes and Victims Act (2004): <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/28/contents>
- Care Act 2014: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/contents/enacted>
- Home Office (2015) Controlling or Coercive Behavior in an Intimate of Family Relationship – Statutory Guidance Framework (London: Home Office)
- Calderdale CCG Domestic abuse policy v1.0 18
- https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/482528/Controlling_or_coercive_behaviour_-_statutory_guidance.pdf
- Home Office (1999) Criminal statistics (London: Home Office)
- Home Office (2013) Guidance: Domestic Violence and Abuse. <http://www.gov.uk/domestic-violence-and-abuse>
- NSPCC, 2016, How safe are our children?
- ONS (2015), Crime Survey, England, and Wales 2013-14. London: Office for National Statistics.
- SafeLives (2014), MARAC National Dataset 2014. Bristol: SafeLives.
- SafeLives (2015a), Getting it right first time: policy report. Bristol: SafeLives.
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- Oliver R, Alexander B, Roe S, Wlasny M (2019) The Economic and Social Costs of Domestic Abuse: Research Report 107, January 2019 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/772180/horr107.pdf
- <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/getting-help-for-domestic-violence>

| APPENDIX 1 | |
|---|---|
| Herefordshire and Worcestershire CCGs' Safeguarding Team Generic email address: | RBCCG.WCCGSafeGuarding@nhs.net |
| Ellen Footman Head of Safeguarding/Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Adults and Children | 07885 265970 OR 01527 482920 Ellen.footman@nhs.net |
| Jeremy Newell Deputy Designated Nurse (Safeguarding Adults/Prevent Lead) | 07730 029810 OR 01527 482920 jeremynewell@nhs.net |
| Heather Manning Deputy Designated Nurse (Safeguarding Children & LAC Lead) | 07854 415449 OR 01432 260768 h.manning@nhs.net |
| Sarah Dempsey Deputy Designated Nurse (Primary Care Lead) | 07834 172270 OR 01527 482920 sarah.dempsey3@nhs.net |
| Rebecca Haywood-Tibbetts Named Professional (Primary Care) | 07976 481413 OR 01432 383692 rebecca.haywood-tibbetts@nhs.net |
| DESIGNATED DOCTORS FOR SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN | |
| Herefordshire | |
| Dr Sally Stucke (Designated Doctor Safeguarding Children) | 07812 094674 OR 01432 356438 sally.stucke@nhs.net |
| Worcestershire | |
| Dr David Lewis (Designated Doctor for Safeguarding Children) | 07718 118312 OR 01905 681071 (internal extension 51071) david.lewis5@nhs.net |

| Herefordshire Children & Young People's Directorate (Social Services) | |
|---|------------------|
| Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) | 01432 260800 |
| Out of Hours Children's Duty Team | 01905 768020 |
| Worcestershire Family Front Door | |
| Family Front Door: | 01905 822666 |
| West Mercia Police | |
| During office hours ask for the Family Protection Unit, if no reply or outside office hours, ask for the Duty Inspector | 0300 3333000/101 |

Please refer to Safeguarding Procedures for Herefordshire and Worcestershire

<http://westmidlands.procedures.org.uk/>

| In the Event of Adult Protection Concerns Please Contact: | |
|--|--|
| Herefordshire Adult Safeguarding Team | |
| Monday – Friday 9am – 5pm | 01432 260715 OR 0330 123 9309 |
| After 5pm, Weekends, Bank Holidays Email address for concerns: | safeguarding@herefordshire.gcsx.gov.uk |

| | |
|---|---|
| Worcestershire Adult Safeguarding Team | |
| To Report a Safeguarding concern | 01905 768053 |
| If you would like safeguarding advice, please phone the Adult Safeguarding Team on 01905 843189 (note this number does not accept referrals) | http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/safeguardingadults |
| http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20363/safeguarding_adults/1106/safeguarding_adults_policies_and_procedures | |
| West Mercia Police | |
| During office hours ask for the Protecting Vulnerable People Team, if no reply or outside office hours, ask for the Duty Inspector | 0300 3333000/101 |

West Midlands Adult Safeguarding Policies and Procedures

<https://herefordshiresafeguardingboards.org.uk/herefordshire-safeguarding-adults-board/for-professionals/policies-and-procedures>

http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20363/safeguarding_adults/1106/safeguarding_adults_policies_and_procedures

APPENDIX 2

[Worcestershire Domestic Abuse Referral Pathway](#)

APPENDIX 3

[Herefordshire Domestic Abuse Referral Pathway](#)

APPENDIX 4

Supporting someone experiencing Domestic Violence and Abuse

If a member of staff comes to you and is alleging domestic violence or abuse, they should be believed unless there is clear evidence to the contrary.

You should:

- Find a safe place to talk
- Check if they are happy to talk to you or would prefer to speak to someone else; support is also available from Occupational Health and/or Care First, Employee Assistance Programme.
- Listen carefully and provide space to talk. Assure them of your confidentiality unless there are child protection issues which must be reported.
- Be sensitive and discuss their fears.
- Accept that what is being said is the truth.
- Keep your personal opinions to yourself, do not be judgmental.
- Remember their options may be limited by a lack of access to resources.
- Ask the member of staff what they want you to do, if anything, and respect their decision.
- Ask the member of staff if they want to report it to the police and/or need to see a GP/Occupational Health for medical attention – again this is their choice. If the person is injured, they should be encouraged to do this and have any injuries assessed and documented with their consent
- Give information [not advice].
- Be prepared to offer the same standard of support on all occasions no matter how many times the same member of staff comes forward. Because of the persistent nature of domestic violence and abuse victims often find it very difficult to leave abusive relationships.
- Assist them in contacting agencies that may be able to help

You Should Not:

- Expect too much – they may not want you to do anything other than listen.
- Mislead the individual into thinking you can do more than you can realistically do as their manager.
- Give a new address or phone number to anyone, including payroll or put their new details on any documents other people may have access to.
- Set pre-conditions for supporting them; rush them to make a decision to force them to take action.
- Act as a go-between.

Remember:

- Offering basic information about services is helpful whether they are used immediately or not. Victims need a link to the larger community and may be unaware that they need or deserve these services as they probably minimize the abuse.
- Pressuring the victim to leave the abuser is not helpful. Violence usually escalates after an attempt to leave. Leaving the situation is a step that should be carefully planned after support and must be taken at the victim's pace.

Admitting the abuse is happening is the first step to stopping it.