

Domestic Abuse Policy for ICB Employees

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CONSULTATION SCHEDULE		
Name and Title of Individual	Groups consulted	Date Consulted
Stephanie Nightingale/Kim Gunn	Adult and Safeguarding Group	21 May 2019

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VERSION CONTROL			
Version	Version/Description of amendments	Date	Author/amended by
V 2.0	To comply with the requirements and compliance with statutory guidance and legislative duties to safeguard adults and children against Domestic Abuse. This involves Working Together (2018) guidance, the Children Act (1989) and The Rights of Children.	May 2019	Stephanie Nightingale & Kim Gunn
V 3.0	Adapted for ICB	July 2022	Jane Chapman

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS – available on request			
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Quality Impact Assessment			Not applicable
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Domestic Abuse Policy

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1.0 Introduction/Background

This policy applies to all employees of NHS Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Integrated Care Board (hereafter referred to as the ICBs). All NHS organisations should be working towards the recommendations of the Ending Violence towards Women and Girls Strategy (Home Office, 2016) and therefore this policy reflects these recommendations.

The ICB supports the view that all NHS organisations should be helping to identify violence and abuse earlier and supporting victims to get their lives back sooner, as defined in the Government's Mandate to NHS England for 2018-19. As such the ICB recognises that domestic abuse is a criminal act which adversely affects the health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities. Whatever form it takes, it rarely occurs as a one off incident. More usually it is a pattern of abusive and controlling behaviour where the abuser seeks power over the victim. It occurs across society, regardless of age, gender, race, sexuality, wealth and geography.

The ICB also recognises that there are a range of equality issues to be considered around domestic abuse including:

- Whilst anyone can experience domestic abuse, there is evidence that women are the most likely victims and men are the most likely perpetrators.
- It should be noted that children may be victims and also perpetrators of domestic abuse between themselves (child on child) and also within older groups (child on adult).
- Because of the gendered cultural differences surrounding domestic abuse, it can be difficult for men to disclose that they are victims of domestic abuse.
- Some people in same sex relationships may experience concerns relating to the dual disclosure of sexual orientation and domestic abuse. This includes Lesbian, Homosexual, Bi Sexual, Transgender and Non-Binary groups. Domestic abuse may be carried out by a family member or former heterosexual partner because of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

The ICB is committed to ensuring that, as far as is reasonably practicable, the way we treat staff who raise a concern about domestic abuse, or perpetrate domestic abuse, does not discriminate against individuals or groups on the grounds of any protected characteristic. The aim of this policy is to ensure that victims of domestic abuse receive a high standard of care irrespective of age, race, culture, sexuality, religion or ability and equality underpins all its service provision.

The ICB endorses the government's view that domestic abuse is a fundamental breach of trust and human rights, and contravenes an individual's right to feel safe, both within their home and within a personal relationship.

Domestic abuse also has a serious adverse impact on children who live in a violent and abusive household, and this contributes to both short and long term damage to their physical and emotional wellbeing. Therefore part of the ICB's responsibility, addressed by this policy, is to safeguard and protect children.

2.0 Policy Synopsis

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Inform ICB staff of best practice when responding to domestic abuse.

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- Improve safety and improve health by recognising domestic abuse is a serious issue which has an adverse impact upon the health of individuals, families and communities.
- Increase awareness and understanding of domestic abuse across the ICB and its impact upon those experiencing it.
- Ensure that all Directorates are clear within their roles in tackling and responding to issues surrounding domestic abuse.
- Provide support for our staff who are experiencing domestic violence and abuse.
- Support government policy for the NHS in terms of domestic abuse and to ensure implementation of a safe, consistent and quality approach to domestic abuse across the ICB.
- To support local strategic partnership delivery plans for domestic abuse.
- To ensure that processes are in place to support action plans developed following a domestic homicide review.

3.0 Definition of Domestic Abuse

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 friend or family members regardless of sex, class, race, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or age.

Domestic abuse is the abuse of power and control over one person by another. It can take many different forms, including physical, sexual, emotional, verbal and financial abuse. Domestic violence includes, but is not limited to:

- Physical abuse: slapping, pushing, kicking, stabbing, damage to property or items of sentimental value, female genital mutilation, attempted murder or murder.
- Sexual: any non-consensual sexual activity, including rape, sexual assault, coercive sexual activity, or refusing safer sex.
- Restricting freedom: controlling whom you see or where you go, what you wear or what you do, stalking, imprisonment, forced marriage.
- Emotional/psychological abuse: intimidation, social isolation, verbal abuse, humiliation, constant criticism, enforced trivial routines.
- Economic abuse: stealing, depriving or taking control of money, running up debts, withholding benefit books or bank cards.

(Department of Health and Social Care, 2017).

Each year nearly 2 million people in the UK suffer some form of domestic abuse - 1.3 million female victims (8.2% of the population) and 600,000 male victims (4%), (ONS 2016).

75% of domestic abuse victims are targeted at work by telephone calls and emails.

On average victims at high risk of serious harm or murder live with domestic abuse for 2-3 years before getting help (Safe Lives, 2015).

Approximately 130,000 children live in homes where there is high-risk domestic abuse (Safe Lives, 2015.)

4.0 Procedure for Raising Concerns about Domestic Abuse

It is not the responsibility of the ICB manager or staff member receiving a disclosure to give advice on what direct action should be taken by the victim of abuse. Poorly informed advice such as to leave an abusive relationship can be positively dangerous and are at increased risk of assault.

Disclosure - Upon receipt of the initial disclosure of domestic abuse a staff member

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should ensure that the conversation is continued as part of a private discussion and in an environment in which the person feels safe. This may help them to talk about any domestic violence or abuse, to know that they are not alone, to feel that they will be believed and that their experiences are not unusual.

The staff member should advise the person that it may be necessary for the involvement by a third party agency in order to offer the most appropriate support and minimise the risk of further abuse. From the outset the staff member will seek the consent of the person to disclose this information to a third party agency, ***this consent may not be a necessity where there are safeguarding concerns relating either to children or an adult at risk.*** If the staff member is unclear as to whether the disclosure meets the threshold for either a child or adult safeguarding referral advice should be sought from the ICB's Safeguarding Team. It should be explained to the individual that this information will only be shared where absolutely necessary (see appendix 1 for guidance on handling a disclosure or concern of domestic abuse).

Non-Disclosure – Decide if you are the appropriate person to inquire further. If not, then report your concern to the individual's line manager. Where indicated use the appropriate procedures for safeguarding children as above. If you have reason to believe the staff member is at risk of or experiencing domestic abuse, it is best practice to be honest about your concerns and ask direct questions regarding their experiences (see appendix 2). Asking direct questions is less likely to compromise the safety of the victim experiencing abuse.

Providing contact details for local domestic abuse services and signposting victims to the appropriate support is essential in all cases of disclosure or non-disclosure. Detailed records should be completed and filed confidentially.

5.0 Safeguarding Children Involved in Domestic Abuse

Witnessing domestic abuse is a form of child abuse. It has a significant emotional impact on children and is a safeguarding concern. Due to the damaging impact that witnessing domestic abuse has on children, if an individual who discloses domestic abuse has children, ***a referral will always need to be made to Children's and Families Social Care.*** A referral to Children's and Families Social Care is needed in all domestic abuse situations where there are children involved or live in the household. This is regardless of whether the child was physically hurt during the incident, or directly witnessed the incident (such as they were in another room, or asleep when the incident happened).

A referral is needed so that further enquiries can be made; assessments conducted and appropriate safeguarding action taken. ***A referral should be made if the victim is pregnant.*** A referral to Children's and Families Social Care can create anxiety and stress for victims. It is important to reassure the individual that Children's and Families Social Care will work with them so that they and their children can be protected and safe. A child protection referral needs to be made in accordance with Local Children's Safeguarding Board (LSCB) Policies and Procedures.

6.0 Supporting Staff Experiencing Domestic Abuse

The ICB aims to respond sympathetically, effectively and confidentially to any member of staff who discloses that they are suffering from domestic abuse and are committed to supporting our staff. The ICB will work with the member of staff, and where agreed other agencies, to identify what actions can be taken to increase their personal safety as well as address any risks there may be to colleagues. The ICB will not discriminate against anyone who has been subjected to domestic violence in terms of their existing employment or career development.

Members of staff who experience domestic abuse may choose to disclose, report to or seek support from a staff side representative, a manager, or colleague.

The ICB also has staff members who are identified as Mental Health First Aiders.

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Members of staff who receive information from staff about domestic abuse will not counsel victims, but can offer a listening ear, information, workplace support, and signpost other organisations that may provide help and support.

Both the Named GPs and the Designated Nurses for Safeguarding are also available to provide support for members of staff. They can also provide guidance for managers and staff side representatives who have concerns about domestic abuse.

Employee's right to confidentiality and discretion around personal details of employees will be respected (addresses, telephone numbers, work locations). However, cases where there are believed to be safeguarding concerns either relating to children or adults with care and support needs at risk of abuse there is a statutory obligation upon the ICB to share this information and confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

7.0 Perpetrators as Employees

Domestic abuse perpetrated by employees will not be condoned under any circumstances nor will it be treated as a purely private matter. The ICB recognises that they have a role in encouraging and supporting employees to address violent and abusive behaviour of all kinds. If an employee approaches the ICB about their abusive behaviour, the ICB will provide information about the services and support available to them and will encourage the perpetrator to seek support and help from an appropriate source. However, cases where there are believed to be safeguarding concerns either relating to children or adults at risk of abuse there is a statutory obligation upon the ICB to share this information and confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

The ICB will treat any allegation, disclosure or conviction of a domestic abuse related offence on a case-by-case basis with the aim of reducing risk and supporting change. There are four potential strands in the consideration of an allegation:

- a police investigation of a possible criminal offence;
- disciplinary action by the employer;
- signposting to specialist counselling;
- Identifying risk.

An individual cautioned or convicted of a criminal offence may be subject to the organisation's code of conduct policy and procedure.

8.0 Duties and Responsibilities

The Chief Executive and Executive Directors

It is the responsibility of the Chief Executive Officer and Executive Directors to ensure that this policy is enforced.

Senior Managers

It is the responsibility of senior members of staff to ensure that the policy is implemented.

All Members of Staff

All members of staff have a duty to safeguard and protect adults at risk and children whether they are members of staff or members of the public and raise concerns in accordance with multi-agency policies and procedures. As part of this duty all staff should ensure they recognise indicators of possible domestic abuse and respond appropriately.

All members of staff are to uphold the principles of anti-oppressive and anti-discriminative practice and award equity in case discussions.

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Appendix 1: The Procedure of Handling a Disclosure or Concern of Domestic Violence

1. Use this document to aid your conversation with the person.
2. Take the person to a confidential place/office and ensure you advise a colleague.
3. Obtain safe contact details.
4. Establish (if over the phone) whether they are injured. Do they need the police?
5. Once in a confidential area it is important to try and put the individual at ease. Giving clear and simple messages such as:
 - They are not to blame or responsible for what has happened.
 - Violence and abuse in relationships is very common.
 - Help is available; you can put them in touch with specialist support services if they want this.
 - You are concerned about their wellbeing and safety.
 - Telling someone about what is happening is an important step in helping them (and any children) to get support and be safe.
6. Explain that you are able to sign post them to a specialist domestic violence service.
7. Consider contacting the safeguarding team to advise them of the disclosure and the action you have taken.
8. Record the incident.
9. Keep the individual's information secure.

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Appendix 2: Examples of Direct Inquiry Questions and Statements:

- Are you in a relationship with someone who hurts or threatens you? Did someone cause these injuries to you?
- Do you feel frightened or controlled by your partner, or other people at home?
- Has your partner ever destroyed things that you cared about? Threatened or abused you or your children?
- Your partner seems very concerned and anxious about you. Sometimes people react like that when they feel guilty. Was he / she responsible for your injuries?
- One in four women and one in six men face abuse in their home during their lifetime. This is more common than you think and as an organisation we can support you and your family to be safe.

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Appendix 3: Domestic abuse support Services Contact Details

New Era is the new holistic Domestic Abuse (DA) service operating across Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent from 1 October 2018, offering help to all those affected by domestic abuse in Staffordshire or Stoke-on-Trent, New Era provides free and confidential support for victims, perpetrators and their families.

Support for victims:

24-hours a day, 7-days a week, specialised help is available for all victims. The service also provides a web chat facility.

New Era aims to end relationship abuse through a wide range of individual and group support for adults, children and young people for as long as they need it. This is provided by Victim Support based here in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.

Victim Referral Process:

Telephone: 0300 303 3778

Email: new-era@victimsupport.cjsm.net

Support for perpetrators:

Anyone that's displaying unhealthy or abusive behaviour within their relationship and wants to change this can access help from New Era. New Era Perpetrator services can also help children under 16 years of age who need help with relationship based behaviour or are in need of one to one guidance around healthy relationships.

Perpetrator Referral Process:

Telephone: 01785 601690

Email: new-era@rrp.gse.gov.uk

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Area / Agency	Contact Details	Description of Service
Cannock		
Staffordshire Women's Aid	0870 2700 123 (24 hrs) Enquiries@staffordshirewomensaid.org	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist domestic abuse outreach support for men, women and children in the community • Refuge accommodation for women and children • Independent Domestic Violence Adviser (IDVA) • Independent Sexual Violence Adviser (ISVA) • Accepts agency and self-referrals • Website: http://www.staffordshirewomensaid.org
East Staffordshire (Burton & Uttoxeter)		
East Staffordshire Domestic Abuse Services	0845 155 2318 Staffordshirereferrals@homegroup.org.uk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist domestic abuse outreach support for men and women in the community • Refuge accommodation for women and children • Independent Domestic Violence Adviser (IDVA) • Accepts agency and self-referrals • Website: www.homegroup.org.uk
Lichfield		
Pathway	01543 676800 (24 hrs) talktoeve.pathway@virgin.net	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist domestic abuse outreach support for men, women and children in the community • Refuge accommodation for women and children • Independent Domestic Violence Adviser (IDVA) • Independent Sexual Violence Adviser (ISVA) • Accepts agency and self-referrals • Website: http://www.pathway-project.co.uk
Newcastle		
Arch (North Staffs) Helpline	01782 205500 Mon – Fri 10.00am - 3.00pm (Answer phone out of hours) dv.services@archnorthstaffs.org.uk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist domestic abuse outreach support for men, women and children in the community • Refuge accommodation for women and children • Independent Domestic Violence Adviser (IDVA) • Accepts agency and self-referrals. • Website: http://www.archnorthstaffs.org.uk
South Staffordshire		
Staffordshire Women's Aid	08702 700123 (24 hrs) Enquiries@staffordshirewomensaid.org	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist domestic abuse outreach support for men, women and children in the community • Refuge accommodation for women and children • Independent Domestic Violence Adviser (IDVA) • Independent Sexual Violence Adviser (ISVA) • Accepts agency and self-referrals • Website: http://www.staffordshirewomensaid.org

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Area / Agency	Contact Details	Description of Service
Stafford		
Staffordshire Women's Aid	08702 700123 (24 hrs) Enquiries@staffordshirewomensaid.org	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist domestic abuse outreach support for men, women and children in the community • Refuge accommodation for women and children • Independent Domestic Violence Adviser (IDVA) • Independent Sexual Violence Adviser (ISVA) • Accepts agency and self-referrals • Website: http://www.staffordshirewomensaid.org
Staffordshire Moorlands		
Arch (North Staffs) Helpline	01782 205500 Mon – Fri 10.00am - 3.00pm (Answer phone out of hours) dv.services@archnorthstaffs.org.uk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist domestic abuse outreach support for men, women and children in the community • Refuge accommodation for women and children • Independent Domestic Violence Adviser (IDVA) • Accepts agency and self-referrals. • Website: http://www.archnorthstaffs.org.uk
Stoke-on-Trent		
Arch (North Staffs) Helpline	01782 205500 Mon – Fri 10.00am - 3.00pm (Answer phone out of hours) dv.services@archnorthstaffs.org.uk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist domestic abuse outreach support for men, women and children in the community • Refuge accommodation for women and children • Independent Domestic Violence Adviser (IDVA) • Accepts agency and self-referrals. • Website: http://www.archnorthstaffs.org.uk/domestic-violence-services
Staffordshire-wide		
Savana	01782 221000 (24 hr message line – staff will return call within 2 days)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialist sexual abuse counselling for men, women and children • Independent Sexual Violence Adviser (ISVA) • Accepts agency and self-referrals • Website: http://www.savana.org.uk
Victim Support	0300 303 1977 Mon-Fri 8.00am-8.00pm	<p>Trained volunteers offer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • someone to talk to in confidence • information on police and court procedures • information about compensation and insurance • Website: http://www.victimsupport.org

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Area / Agency	Contact Details	Description of Service
Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)	0300 7900 166 (Agency referrals – 24 hour Self-referrals 9.00am – 5.00pm)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides access to a comprehensive forensic medical examination for men, women and children who have been sexually assaulted within the last seven days. • The service is available whether or not the client chooses to report the assault to the Police. • Accepts agency referrals (24 hour) and self-referrals (9.00am – 5.00pm)
Wolverhampton		
The Haven	08000 194 400 (24 hrs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helpline which supports women and dependent children who are vulnerable to domestic violence, homelessness and abuse. • Website: www.havenrefuge.org.uk
Staffordshire-wide		
Male Perpetrator or Programme	01782 222421 07889 535943 dvpp@archnorthstaffs.org.uk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Male Perpetrator Programme • Website: http://www.archnorthstaffs.org.uk/domestic-violence-services
National Helplines		
Respect Phonenumber	0808 8024040 Mon – Fri 10.00am – 1.00pm 2.00pm – 5.00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confidential helpline for people who are abusive and/or violent towards their partners • Practitioners can access advice and guidance • Website: http://www.respectphonenumber.org.uk/phonenumber

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National Helplines		
Forced Marriage Unit	0207 008 0151 (24hrs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">The Foreign and Commonwealth Office Forced Marriage Unit is dedicated both to preventing British nationals being forced into marriage overseas and to assisting anyone in the UK faced with the prospect of being forced into a marriage Website: http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/when-things-go-wrong/forced-marriage/information-for-victims
Forward	0208 960 4000	<ul style="list-style-type: none">An African Diaspora led UK-registered campaign and support charity dedicated to advancing and safeguarding the health and rights of African girls and women, in particular female genital mutilation and forced and child marriageWebsite: http://www.forwarduk.org.uk/
Karma Nirvana	0800 5999 247	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Supporting all victims of honour based abuse and forced marriageWebsite: http://www.karmanirvana.org.uk/