



Talking about the unspoken: Domestic Abuse

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Published: Wednesday, August 17, 2011
ISBN: 978-1-906225-25-4

Summary

The 2011, Annual Delegates Conference (ADC) passed a motion which "ensured members are aware of the issues surrounding domestic violence abuse, and to encourage SoR representatives to seek and review trust/board absenteeism policies and develop separate policies on domestic abuse". The SoR understands that the workplace can be a place of safety for the victims of domestic violence, it is also a place that colleagues, friends notice what is going on, a place where the victim may confide in their colleagues about their experiences. But more importantly it can be a place, where victims can access support they so desperately need. This document will address this motion and provide much needed guidance and support for members, SoR representatives and employers.

Introduction

The 2011 Annual Delegates Conference (ADC) passed a motion which "ensured members are aware of the issues surrounding domestic violence abuse, and encouraged SoR representatives to seek and review trust/board absenteeism policies and develop separate policies on domestic abuse/violence. Domestic abuse has always been, and continues to be, a taboo subject: not discussed, not raised or addressed but ignored. Statistics show that domestic violence has not and will not go away. Employers need strategies, information, and guidance to address the issues.

The more we learn about domestic violence, the clearer it becomes that the impact on people's lives does, and will, affect their workplace performance. Domestic violence has a devastating effect on thousands of women, men and their children. This is no longer a crime that affects women: men are also subjected to domestic violence.

The SoR understands that the workplace can be a place of safety for the victims of domestic violence; it is also a place that colleagues and friends notice what is going on; a place where the victim may confide in their colleagues about their experiences. But more importantly it can be a place, where victims can access support they so desperately need.

This document will address this motion and provide much needed guidance and support for members, SoR representatives and employers.

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Domestic violence: how common an issue is it?

Domestic violence is very common with at least 1 in 4 women experiencing it in their lifetime and between 1 in 8 to 1 in 10 women experiencing it annually. An analysis of data from the Intimate Personal Violence (IPV) module (British Crime Survey, 2001) showed that 26% of women have experienced at least one incident of non-sexual domestic abuse since they were 16. Note that these figures do not include sexual abuse (which in many cases is perpetrated by a partner, former partner or other family member). If sexual assault and stalking are included, then 45% of women have experienced at least one incident of inter-personal abuse in their lifetime (Walby and Allen, 2004).

- An analysis of 10 separate domestic violence prevalence studies found consistent findings: 1 in 4 women experience domestic violence over their lifetime and between 6-10% of women suffer domestic violence in a given year (Council of Europe, 2002).
- The British Crime Survey found that there were an estimated 12.9 million incidents of domestic violence acts that constituted non-sexual threats or force against women and 2.5 million against men in England and Wales in the year preceding interview (Walby & Allen, 2004).
- **45%** women and **26%** men had experienced at least one incident of inter-personal violence in their lifetimes. (Walby and Allen, 2004). However when there were more than 4 incidents (i.e. ongoing domestic or sexual abuse), 89% of victims were women.
- Nearly 1 in 5 counselling sessions held in Relate Centres in England on 28th September 2000 mentioned domestic violence as an issue in the marriage (Stanko, 2000).
- Every minute in the UK, the police receive a call from the public for assistance with domestic violence. This leads to police receiving an estimated 1,300 calls each day or over 570,000 each year (Stanko, 2000).
- Repeat victimisation is common. 44% of victims of domestic violence are involved in more than one incident. No other type of crime has a rate of repeat victimisation as high (Dodd et al, July 2004).
- On average, two women a week are killed by a violent partner or ex-partner. This constitutes nearly 40% of all female homicide victims (Povey, [ed.], 2005; Home Office, 1999; Department of Health, 2005).
- The self-completion module of the 2001 British Crime Survey found that women are most commonly sexually assaulted by men they know. When the researchers asked women about rape experienced since the age of 16, they found that 45% were raped by current husbands or partners, 9% by former partners and a further 29% of perpetrators were otherwise known to the victim. 17% were raped by strangers (Walby and Allen, 2004).
- Of women who had experienced domestic violence, 25% had never lived with the partner who had committed the worst act of violence against them (Walby & Allen 2004).
- In a study of 200 women's experiences of domestic violence commissioned by Women's Aid, it was found that 60% of the women had left because they feared that they or their children would be killed by the perpetrator (Humphreys and Thiara, 2002).

What is domestic violence?

The Government defines domestic violence as "*Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender Or sexuality.*"

Domestic violence is the abuse of one partner within an intimate or family relationship. It is the repeated, random and habitual use of intimidation to control a partner.

The abuse can be physical, emotional, psychological, financial or sexual. Anyone forced to alter their behaviour because they are frightened of their partner's reaction is being abused Domestic violence may, and often does, include a range of abusive behaviours, not all of which are, in themselves, inherently "violent". Domestic violence is repetitive, life threatening, and can destroy the lives of

those affected.

Domestic violence can include forced marriage and so called 'honour crimes'. It can also take place in lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender relationships and can involve other family members, including children.

What is a forced marriage?

A forced marriage is one where people are coerced into a marriage against their will and under duress. Duress includes both physical and emotional pressure. Forced marriage is an abuse of human rights and cannot be justified on any religious or cultural basis. It is, of course, very different from arranged marriage, where the consent of both parties is present. The tradition of arranged marriages has operated successfully within many communities and many countries for a very long time.

Forced marriage and men

When we think of forced marriage, most of would think that this only happens to women much like domestic violence. However, as with domestic violence, men can also be victims of forced marriage. These include heterosexual men as well as gay, bisexual and transgendered men. Some 15% of victims that are identified by the Forced Marriage Unit of the Foreign Office are men.

Domestic violence takes many different forms:

Breaking Trust

Lying, withholding information, being jealous, having other relationships or breaking promises or shared agreements.

Denial

Saying the abuse does not happen; saying the individual has caused the abusive behaviour; being publicly gentle and patient; crying and begging for forgiveness; saying it will not happen again.

Disrespect

Constantly putting someone down in front of other people; not listening or responding when they talk; interrupting telephone calls; undermining parental authority; telling the person they are mad.

Destructive Criticism and Verbal Abuse

Continually shouting, mocking, accusing, name calling; being verbally threatening.

Emotional abuse

Saying no one will want them, telling the person they are fat, ugly, stupid, lazy, sexually unappealing or a bad parent. Many women experience domestic violence without ever being physically abused. Sometimes victims may not be sure that what is happening to them is domestic violence. Victims often worry that no-one will take them seriously if they talk about it. Victims will alter their behaviour because they are frightened of how their partner will react; emotional abuse is an attack on your personality rather than your body. Emotional abuse can be as harmful as physical abuse. It often leads to physical violence over time.

Financial abuse

One of the most powerful ways a person can control their partner is by using financial abuse. There

are many different forms of financial abuse, but it might include things like your partner:

- taking your money
- stopping you from working
- placing all the bills or debts in your name or
- monitoring how you spend money on other financial resources i.e. the telephone.

If you feel that your partner is limiting your financial independence, you are experiencing financial abuse.

Harassment

Following or checking up on them; opening mail; repeatedly calling 1471 to see who has telephoned; embarrassing them in public.

Isolation

Accompanying them everywhere, e.g. shopping or going to the doctor; locking them in or allowing them out for timed periods only; allowing them out for work only; not allowing them contact with family and friends; leaving visible signs of injury to embarrass and deter them from going out; monitoring and blocking their telephone calls; checking their telephone calls and internet history.

Pressure tactics

Sulking; threatening to withhold money; disconnecting telephones; taking the car away; taking the children away; reporting the individual to welfare agencies unless they comply with the demands regarding bringing up the children; lying to friends and family; telling the individual they have no say in any decisions.

Physical abuse

Physical abuse is the most recognisable form of abuse. It can range from a slap or shove to a black eye, cut lip, or broken bone. Weapons may be used (shoes, bats, etc), punching, head butting, suffocation, hair pulling, kicking, slapping, strangulation, drowning, burning, sleep deprivation, rape and murder. It doesn't always leave visible marks or scars. Victims can have their hair pulled or an egg thrown at them; this is domestic violence. Victims will underestimate what is happening to them and over time it often gets worse.

Psychological

Mind games; constantly moving the goalposts; blaming the other person for the abuse; blaming other factors in the relationship for abuse; undermining parental authority; telling the person they are mad.

Sexual abuse

Unwanted touch; rape; use of objects; drugs; pornography; buggery; forced sex with others; bestiality. Your partner should not use force or threats to make you have sex. Nor should you be made to perform sexual acts with which you are uncomfortable. Partners should not criticise your performance either. If your partner does any of the above, then they are using sex to assert their authority and control you.

Threats

Making angry gestures; using physical size to intimidate; shouting down; destroying possessions; breaking things; punching walls and wielding a weapon; using children as a controlling factor; threatening to hurt the children and/pets if the perpetrator is not obeyed.

Who is responsible for the violence?

There is no excuse for domestic violence: the abuser is always responsible for the violence.

The abuser has a choice to use violence for which he/she is responsible and for which they should be held accountable. Abusers do not have to use violence, they can choose instead to behave non-violently and foster a relationship built on trust, honesty fairness and respect.

The victim is never responsible for the abusers behaviour although they can be made to feel that they caused the violence. The abuser will often blame the victim and will use this as an excuse for their behaviour. Blaming their behaviour on someone or something else; saying that the relationship is not working; issues from their childhood, ill health, and alcohol or drug addiction are all ways that the abuser avoids personal responsibility for their behaviour.

Reps' Checklist: Recognising abuse

(These questions could be asked either by the SoR rep or a manager in order to support and help the member).

Domestic violence is caused by the abuser's desire to control their partner. Abusers use many different tactics to control his/her partner – some physical, some emotional and some financial. This list may help you recognise whether their partner is controlling them:

- Are you afraid of your partner?
- Do you feel isolated? Are you cut off from family and friends?
- Is your partner jealous and possessive?
- Are you humiliated or insulted constantly?
- Are you verbally abused?
- Does your partner constantly say that you are useless and couldn't cope without them?
- Has your partner threatened to hurt you or people close to you?
- Does your partner constantly criticise you?
- Does your partner have sudden changes of mood which dominate the household?
- Is your partner charming one minute and abusive the next like Dr Jekyll and Mr. Hyde?
- Does your partner control your money?
- Do you feel dominated and controlled?
- Do you change your behaviour to avoid triggering an attack?
- Are you unsure of your own judgment?
- Does your partner damage your possessions?
- Does your partner smash up the furniture?
- Does your partner threaten to kill the pets?
- Does your partner threaten to kidnap or get custody of the children?
- Does your partner drive fast because he knows it scares you?

Employers and SoR representatives: working together positively

Domestic violence is a prevalent crime: many workplaces will employ someone who has experienced domestic violence either directly or indirectly. Domestic violence is now more widely understood, government campaigns have raised awareness of the issue, but more work can be done to raise awareness of the damaging effects this crime can have.

Identifying an employee who is experiencing domestic violence at an early stage, may result in

timely, appropriate support and assistance being offered, which may in turn improve the employee's health and work performance.

The Society of Radiographers can work together with trusts/hospitals to introduce workplace policies on domestic violence, effective communication and, by highlighting the issue further, can change attitudes and help SoR members who experience domestic violence to get the support they need.

There is no legal obligation on employers to take action if they are made aware that an employee or member of their workforce is experiencing domestic violence. One of the most effective things the SoR rep and the employer can do is to develop and publicise a policy covering the impact and effect that domestic violence can have within the workplace. This could be done either by having a specific domestic violence policy or by incorporating relevant points into other workplace policies (sickness absence, for example).

Employees tend to keep issues like domestic violence a secret for a number of reasons, but when an employer is made aware, it can be helpful to both parties. The employee may be relieved to be able to confide in someone at work and, for the employer, it could explain absences, visible bruises or deterioration in work performance.

Implementing a domestic violence policy in the workplace would allow employees to explain their circumstances to their employer without fear of prejudice. This would benefit both parties and help the employer to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the workforce as a whole (for example, should a violent partner come to the workplace).

The example below demonstrates points which could be covered in a domestic violence policy. These can be either contained in a separate policy or as part of an existing policy on matters such as health and safety, bullying and harassment or leave arrangements.

Domestic Violence Policy should include:

1. Statement of intent

Employers must be clear that domestic violence should be treated with the same degree of seriousness as any other form of harassment, violence or abuse and is not to be tolerated. This provides an explicit statement that offers reassurance to employees experiencing domestic violence and acts as a warning to perpetrators.

2. Implementation

The policy should contain:

- Clarity about the specific roles and responsibilities of all staff involved in implementing the policy.
- Information about counselling or support schemes, and as a minimum how to contact national and local resources offering information and support to employees experiencing domestic violence.
- A commitment to awareness raising, publicity and training for all relevant employees.
- Mechanisms for monitoring and reviewing its effectiveness and for regularly updating information on available help and how to contact national and local support services.
- Links to other Human Resources policies such as Performance Monitoring and Appraisals, Health and Safety, Confidentiality, Security, Flexible Working, Disciplinary and Grievance policies.
- A commitment to challenging perpetrators, accompanied by a statement that being convicted of a domestic violence related crime will be treated seriously and may constitute a disciplinary offence.

3. Safety and security/ensuring safety in the workplace

Priority must be given to increasing employee and workplace safety at all stages of policy

implementation, which includes safeguards to protect employees who are survivors and who may be directly or indirectly affected by the violence and abuse.

- The health and safety responsibilities of the employer, SoR representatives, employees and other people within the workplace are clearly laid out in the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. Trusts/Hospitals may also have a policy for dealing with violence at work. The Healthy Workplaces handbook, section 14, (NHS Employers Healthy Workplace Team, 2007) also has guidance on dealing with domestic violence. These would need to be considered when addressing the impact of domestic violence within the workplace.
- Account needs to be taken regarding the safety of the victims and their colleagues who are at risk from the perpetrator of the violence entering the workplace.
- If the “business” needs allow, it would be good practice to review certain aspects of the employee’s job, hours worked, whether the employee is behind a reception desk.
- If the trust/hospital has different sites, the employer may be able to offer the employee the opportunity to work at a different location, although of course this should be agreed with full consultation with the employee.

4. Confidentiality and discretion

- For many victims, admitting the reality of the situation to themselves can be difficult, so admitting to their employer, SoR representative or colleagues that they are the victim of domestic violence will also be difficult. This can be the same for a man admitting that he is the victim of domestic violence from his wife or girlfriend, or indeed anyone in a same sex partnership.
- Employers must uphold an employee’s right to confidentiality. Notification of the domestic violence to others in the organisation must only be made with the written permission of the employee concerned and on a need to know basis.
- Whilst confidentiality should be respected, there may be times when this has to be broken for example if a child is involved and social services may need to be contacted for their safety.
- A workplace policy on domestic violence should highlight the importance of keeping all staff details confidential (e.g. phone numbers, emails, addresses, shift start/finish times). These details should not be shared with people outside the workplace. (Abusive partners will often use numerous methods of tracking partners when they have left a relationship and to reveal such may put their safety at risk).

5. Access to support or providing a point of contact

- Employers must ensure that employees experiencing domestic violence receive a sympathetic, supportive and non-judgmental response which reinforces that the abusive behaviour is the responsibility of the perpetrator.
- No proof of violence is needed and a survivor’s statement alone will be sufficient for them to be given access to information on appropriate local agencies and support in accessing protection and help. The same access to information and support should be available for all staff and everyone experiencing domestic violence.
- Employers must not make assumptions about what action is appropriate because of a woman’s age, or because she is from an ethnic minority group, whether she is lesbian or whether or not she has children.
- It should also not be assumed that only a husband/male partner is a threat
- It may be practical for the trust to have one or two people who can be identified as the first point of contact for staff members who need to discuss personal/domestic violence issues. The domestic violence policy should give details of who these people are and how they can be contacted and what their role will be in circumstances. (These people should not see themselves as counsellors but should be responsible for listening to staff members and provide information, where necessary and ensure effective lines of communication between the employer and the employee are kept open).
- In some workplaces (where agreed) this could be the role of the SoR rep as well as a person from the human resources/personnel department who may have had some experience of dealing with this type of situation.

- Any person who is identified as a point of contact would need to undergo training that specifically addresses domestic violence as a workplace issue, incorporating the training into other workplace training.
- Whichever member of staff takes this position must be clear regarding the importance of discretion, confidentiality and, above all, respecting the wishes of the individual concerned.
- The member of staff identified as the point of contact, should be provided with detailed information regarding domestic violence and support from management on dealing with the issue.
- Ideally, if resources allow, joint training would raise awareness for both management and SoR representatives on the issues faced. This would also address if there is any denial from staff within the workplace that domestic violence exists amongst their colleagues.

6. Special arrangements

Emergency Leave:

- Members of staff who are the victim of domestic violence may also be parents and they may need to take time off to visit schools, or make alternative arrangements for childcare. The employee may need time off to visit a doctor, their solicitor, police, hospital or other supportive agencies. A workplace policy on domestic violence could detail what provisions there are for special leave and how an employee could seek it.
- The employer could state that requests for leave under these circumstances, whilst not guaranteed, would be treated sympathetically.

Finance:

- Finance can determine a victim's decision to leave a violent partner. Many victims are afraid that they will be homeless and penniless (often this is what the abuser has constantly told them). In some cases victims are often denied access to their own bank accounts or other funds.
- In certain circumstances it may be helpful if an employee were offered an advance on pay or could negotiate alternative payment methods.
- The workplace policy on domestic violence could set out the process for organising this.

7. Perpetrators employed in the same workplace

It is not the responsibility of the employer or the SoR representative to take action against an employee who is suspected of being violent towards a partner or ex-partner.

- There may be cases where a person who is perpetrating violence is working for the same employer as the partner they are abusing. In these circumstances, safety in the workplace is paramount; both the safety of the person being abused and the safety of other employees.
- The workplace policy on domestic violence could stipulate that under these circumstances, the employer will activate the workplace policy on bullying and harassment, the SoR rep can play an important role in ensuring that this happens.
- Confidentiality must have a bearing on safety. If the abusive partner who is working in the same workplace feels that their home circumstances have been disclosed at work, they could conceivably turn on the partner or colleagues within the workplace.

8. Language in the workplace

- The workplace policy on domestic violence may mention how important it is for employers, SoR representatives and employees to consider how they talk about issues of violence (not only against women). Workplace jokes and banter could deter a person from confronting a situation of domestic violence or seeking help and advice.
- If this is written into the workplace policy and the policy is well publicised, this may also serve as a warning to perpetrators of domestic violence that their behaviour is unacceptable.

9. Recruitment and retention

Trusts/Hospitals want to continue to recruit and retain good staff. Having a workplace policy on domestic violence can be introduced as part of a wider policy relating to family-friendly issues and equal opportunities policies. This type of policy could be seen as a good investment from the Trust/Hospital seeking to retain the skilled, trained and experienced staff it needs to function effectively. Trusts/Hospitals know that replacing staff can be a costly, time consuming process so protecting staff in whatever situation, demonstrates good business sense, whatever the business.

10. Maintaining a positive position

Trusts/Hospitals and the Society of Radiographers send a clear message to employees that they acknowledge the complexities and difficulties in their employees lives and support them through these times.

11. Ensuring strong morale

Workplace policies, including domestic violence policies, help to create a safe, positive working environment for employees. If staff feel that they are supported through issues within their lives, this will increase morale, loyalty, commitment and satisfaction while they are working.

12. Disciplinary action

The effects of domestic violence can impact on punctuality, attendance, health and safety, work performance and productivity. A policy which enables employees to confide in SoR reps or managers at an early stage can prevent unnecessary disciplinary action against an employee.

13. Signposts

No one expects the employer or the SoR representative to take on the role of counsellor - **it is very important that this does not happen**. No advice is better than bad advice.

Providing a safe and supportive work environment can be key to helping a person who is experiencing violence escape the situation. Employees spend up to eight hours a day in the workplace and it is an ideal place for the person experiencing domestic violence to get access to information about sources of help.

- Notice boards can be used to display local information on helpline numbers, police, solicitors as well as counsellors, organisations like Women's Aid and Mankind helpline numbers.
- Agencies like Women's Aid and Mankind will provide posters, leaflets or stickers advertising their confidential services.
- Trusts/Hospitals may provide contact details of specialist counselling services which may be helpful to give to an employee who is experiencing domestic violence.

Procedure: Guide for employees

Information

(Insert NHS Trust/Hospital name) will provide up to date information to all employees about domestic violence and the support available to address it for victims and perpetrators.

Safety and Support

(Insert NHS Trust/Hospital name) will actively support employees to choose an appropriate course of action and to ensure that safety and well being in the workplace are prioritised at all times.

Training

(Insert NHS Trust/Hospital name) will provide training to identify and support employees who

experience domestic violence.

Anti-discrimination

(Insert NHS Trust/Hospital name) will not discriminate against anyone who has been subjected to domestic violence, in terms of their existing employment or career development.

Guidance for Managers/ Human Resources/ Occupational Health *(include as appropriate)* for Dealing with Domestic Violence Involving Employees.

(Insert NHS Trust/Hospital name) recognises that staff experiencing domestic violence may have difficulties with their performance because of the domestic violence.

Support for employees

Manager's role is to:

- Provide a sensitive and non-judgmental approach
- Ensure that confidentiality is respected as far as possible
- Understand that the employee may not wish to approach their line manager and may prefer to involve a third party such as a colleague, human resources manager
- Recognise that the employee may need some time to decide what to do and may try many different options during this process
- Discuss measures to prioritise safety in the workplace
- Be aware of what support is available and explore these options with the employee. This may address leave and time off work, financial issues and health effects.

Training for managers to identify and provide support

This will ensure that managers can:

- Identify if an employee is experiencing difficulties
- Respond appropriately to victims and perpetrators
- Provide initial support
- Discuss safety
- Discuss options for support and refer to other agencies
- Link with *(Insert NHS Trust/Hospital name)* on Performance Monitoring and Appraisals, Health and Safety, Confidentiality, Security, Flexible Working, Disciplinary and Grievance *(add/delete as appropriate)* in a supportive way.

This policy will be reviewed six-monthly/annually *(insert timescale as required)*.

Domestic violence: myths dispelled

There are many myths surrounding domestic violence. By believing them we allow the problem to continue.

Myth: Alcohol and drugs make men violent.

Many men are violent when completely sober. Some never drink alcohol, yet regularly abuse their partner.

Blaming drink or drugs is an excuse; a way of denying responsibility. Both may be the trigger for a

particular attack, but they are not the cause.

Myth: It only happens in poor families on council estates.

Anyone can be abused, no matter where they live or how much income they have. Abused women come from all walks of life and there are no exceptions. You only have to read about celebrities in the media to realise that money cannot protect you from domestic violence.

Men who abuse women are as likely to be lawyers, accountants and judges as they are milkmen, cleaners or unemployed.

Myth: More women would leave if the abuse was that bad.

There are many reasons for staying with an abusive partner. The abused woman may fear what her partner will do if she leaves or she may believe that staying with him is better for the children.

There are also practical considerations to take into account. She may not have access to money, or have anywhere to go. She may not know where to turn for help, particularly if English is not her first language. And when she is emotionally and financially dependent on her partner, she can feel very isolated.

Women from different cultures can find it particularly difficult to leave an abusive man as this would bring shame on both themselves and their family. They may feel that they are betraying their community if they contact the police.

An abused woman's self-esteem will have been gradually worn down. She may not believe she will manage on her own, or that she has any other options. She may have been led to think that she's worthless. She may feel ashamed of what has happened and perhaps convinced it is her fault. She hopes her partner will change. She remembers the good times at the start of the relationship and hopes they will return. In emotional terms she has made a huge investment in the relationship and she wants it to work.

Myth: Abusers grow up in violent homes.

This is not true. Growing up in a violent home is a risk factor and some children who experience abuse do go on to be abusive in their relationships. On the other hand many do not. Instead they are repelled by violence as adults because they have seen the damage it causes: they would not dream of hitting their partner.

Abusers learn to be violent from the society they grow up in. Inequality between the sexes means that men have more power over women: inevitably some of them abuse or exploit that power.

People who blame violence on their childhood experiences avoid taking responsibility for their actions. Violence is a choice an abuser makes.

Myth: Some women like violence.

Women do not enjoy violence or find it a turn-on. Most live in fear and terror. This is a way of blaming the victim for what is happening.

Myth: Women ask for it. They deserve what they get.

Women are often attacked by their partner for no apparent reason. Even if a woman has behaved appallingly, she does not deserve to be beaten. Violence and intimidation are not acceptable ways to solve conflict in a relationship.

Again this is a way of justifying and making excuses for the abuser's behaviour. It allows a violent

man to avoid responsibility for his actions.

Myth: Abusive men have a mental illness.

The vast majority of men who abuse are not mentally ill. Research shows that the proportion of abusers with mental health problems is no higher than in society as a whole. If an abusive man were mentally ill, would he stop at abusing his partner or would his abuse extend to colleagues, strangers, or friends?

Myth: He only hit her because he was under stress.

Some men who abuse their partners are suffering from stress. Again, this is a factor, not a cause. Many men who are stressed are never abusive. Similarly, many men who do abuse their partner cannot claim to be under stress.

Women experience stress too, yet they rarely beat or abuse their partners to the extent that men abuse women.

Myth: He loses his temper sometimes, that's all.

People argue that an abusive man loses his temper, or is out of control. In fact he is very much in control.

Abusers can be selective about when they hit their partner e.g. when the children are asleep or they choose not to mark the face, or any part of the body which shows. This suggests that they are very aware of what they are doing.

Many men abuse their partners emotionally and psychologically, without ever using anger or physical violence. This shows the extent of their control.

Myth: Domestic violence is a private matter; you shouldn't get involved.

For too long domestic violence has been allowed to happen behind closed doors. People think that what happens in the home is private, and not their problem.

Domestic violence is a crime. It is against the law.

We are all affected by domestic violence, and we all have a responsibility to speak out against it. Only then will we end it.

(Refuge 2011)

Myth: Only men are abusers.

One in 6 men will be a victim of domestic violence. There is a perception that only women are the victims of domestic violence.

(Mankind 2010)

Appendix A: Good practice.

From Women's Aid - Case study: Julie the receptionist

Manager uses supervision to approach Julie...

Julie's line manager had suspected she was experiencing domestic violence at home. In confidential supervision he reminded Julie that the company had a domestic violence policy and would support her if she wished to seek help but that they respected this was her decision to make.

Julie turns to her employer...

Julie and her boyfriend had a four year old son, Thomas, and she was concerned that she wouldn't be able to cope with trying to organise child care on her own if she left her partner. When Julie became pregnant again the bruises appeared more regularly. It was then she turned to her employer for help.

*"When I became pregnant my partner started to hit me more and more. I left him because I was frightened that he would end up killing my unborn child and me. The company where I worked were fantastic; they gave me a **new job** in a different office that was not on reception so that I would not be on view if my ex-boyfriend came looking for me there. They **changed the way they paid me** so that the money would not go into our joint bank account anymore. I knew that they had done everything they could to **protect my identity** if my ex-boyfriend ever came looking for me at work."*

Protection put in place by company...

Julie had been in touch with her local Women's Aid and, along with her employer; they helped her to arrange her child care. Julie's ex-boyfriend did come looking for her but due to the precautions the company had put in place, he did not know that she had been transferred and thought she had left the company.

"I feel safer at work now that I know my boyfriend can't easily find me. I am worried that he will come looking for me and my child. I know my company will continue to support me if this situation arises".

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Published on Society of Radiographers (<https://www.sor.org>)

- NHS Employers Healthy Workplaces Team 2007 The Healthy Workplaces Handbook: The NHS Reference Guide to Staff Wellbeing. London:NHS
- Stanko, E. 2000 The Day to Count: A Snapshot of the Impact of Domestic Violence in the UK Criminal Justice 1:2.
- Trades Union Congress: 2002 Domestic violence: a guide for the workplace, TUC Publications
- Walby S and Allen J 2004. Domestic Violence, sexual assault and stalking: Findings from the British Crime Survey. Home Office Research Study 276. (London: Home Office Research, Development and Statistics Directorate)

WebPages:

- **Corporate Alliance against Domestic Violence (CAADV):** <http://www.caadv.org.uk/>
- **Health and Safety at Work Act 1974:** <http://www.hse.gov.uk/legislation/hswa.htm>
- **NHS Employers Domestic Abuse Policy:** www.nhsemployers.org
- **Refuge:** www.refuge.org.uk/get-help-now/what-is-domestic-violence/myths-of-domestic-violence/
- **Respect:** www.respect.uk.net
- **SAFE: domestic violence support for women:**
- **Women's Aid:** <http://www.womensaid.org.uk/>

Appendix C: Resources and available help.

Everyone has the right to live free from abuse and fear. If a member approaches you who is experiencing domestic violence, they may feel humiliated, frightened, ashamed, alone and confused.

Please let the SoR member know that they are not to blame and they are not alone.

The member can contact one of the National Domestic Violence Help lines in England, Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland, or a local refuge or other domestic abuse support services.

Contact information which includes practical and emotional support, advocacy and information.

Refuge

2-8 Maltravers Street, London, WC2R 3EE

24 hour helpline: 0870 599 5443

Accommodation and support for women who are experiencing domestic violence.

Women's Aid Federation of England

PO Box 391, Bristol, BS99 7WS

Helpline: 08457 023 468

www.womensaid.org.uk

A national charity working to end domestic violence against women and children. Offering support, advice and information on all aspects of domestic violence.

Welsh Women's Aid

38-48 Crwys Road, Cardiff CF24 4NN

24 hour helpline: 0808 80 10 800

If you live in Wales and you are experiencing domestic violence you can contact Welsh Women's Aid.

Scottish Women's Aid

Helpline: 0131 475 2372

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www.scottishwomensaid.co.uk

If you live in Scotland and you are experiencing domestic violence you can call Scottish Women's Aid.

Northern Ireland Women's Aid

129 University Street, Belfast, BT7 1HP

Helpline: (028) 90 331818

<http://www.womensaidni.org/>

Help and support for women and children suffering from domestic violence in Northern Ireland.

Rights of Women

52-54 Featherstone St, London, EC1Y 8RT

Helpline: 020 7251 6577

www.rightsofwomen.org.uk

Rights of Women works to attain justice and equality by informing, educating and empowering women on their legal rights.

London Lesbian and Gay Switchboard

Tel: 020 7837 7324

www.llgs.org.uk

24 hour information, support and referral service for lesbians and gay men from all backgrounds.

Broken Rainbow

J414, Tower Bridge Business Complex, 100 Clements Rd, London, SE16 4DG

Helpline: 0300 999 5428 (LGBT). 0300 calls are the same price to ring as 01/02 landlines and included as part of any inclusive call minutes.

<http://www.brokenrainbow.org.uk/about-us/purpose> Email: help@brokenrainbow.org.uk UK wide helpline service for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people who are experiencing domestic violence. Opening hours Mon and Thurs, 2pm-8pm, Wed 10am-1pm

ManKind

Helpline: 0870 794 4124

www.mankind.org.uk

ManKind helps and advises male victims of domestic violence.

Men's Advice Line

Helpline: 0808 801 0327 Monday - Friday 10am-1pm and 2pm-5pm

http://www.mensadvice.org.uk/mens_advice.php.html

Advice and support for men in abusive relationships.

Miscarriage Association

c/o Clayton Hospital, Northgate, Wakefield, West Yorkshire

National Helpline: 01924 200799

www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk

Miscarriage Association offers support and understanding to women who have been through a miscarriage or ectopic pregnancy.

Shelter

80 Old Street, London, EC1V 9HU

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Shelterline: 0808 80044 44

www.shelter.org.uk

A national organisation which works at local level to improve the lives of homeless and badly housed people. Victim Support Helpline: 0845 3030900 www.victimsupport.org Offers information and support to victims of crime, whether or not they have reported the crime to the police.

Samaritans

Helpline: 08457 90 90 90

www.samaritans.org.uk

24-hour confidential emotional support for anyone in a crisis.

Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme - London

Morley House, 26-30 Holborn Viaduct, London, EC1A 2JQ Tel: 020 7842 6800 www.cica.gov.uk

Victims may be able to claim compensation through the Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme. To apply, the victim must no longer be living with their partner.

Criminal Injuries Compensation Scheme - Glasgow

Tay House, 300 Bath Street, Glasgow, G2 4LN Tel: 0141 331 2726 Ecophone text: 0141 331 2726

Womankind

www.womankind.org.uk

A global campaign which aims to ensure that women's rights are recognised world-wide.

Action on Elder Abuse

Astral House, 1268 London Road, London, SW16 4ER

Tel: 020 8765 7000

www.elderabuse.org.uk

Organisation which aims to prevent abuse in old age by raising awareness, providing education and promoting research.

Hidden Hurt - Domestic Abuse Information

www.hiddenhurt.co.uk Site has been written by a survivor of domestic violence, and provides advice and information to those who are in an abusive relationship.

Break the Chain

www.homeoffice.gov.uk

General information from the Home Office on domestic violence and where to find help and support.

Ethnic minorities groups:

Forced Marriage Unit

020 7008 0151 (or 0044 20 7008 0151 if you are overseas)

Kiran - Asian Women's Aid

Tel: 020 8558 1986

Provides safe, temporary accommodation for Asian women and their children escaping domestic violence.

Jewish Women's Aid (JWA)

PO Box 2670, London, N12 9ZE

Freephone: 0800 59 12 03

JWA aims to break the silence surrounding domestic violence through education and awareness-raising programmes.

Black Association of Women Step Out (BAWSO)

195 Newport Road, Cardiff, CF24 1AJ

Tel: 029 2043 7390

Organisation which works with black women who have experienced or are experiencing domestic violence.

NSPCC Asian Child Protection Helplines

(Open 11am to 7pm, Monday to Friday)

All calls are free

Bengali - Speaking advisor 0800 096 7714

Gujarati - Speaking advisor 0800 096 7715

Hindi - Speaking advisor 0800 096 7716

Punjabi - Speaking advisor 0800 096 7717

Urdu - Speaking advisor 0800 096 7718

English - Speaking Asian advisor 0800 096 7719

Welsh helpline number: 0808 100 2524 (open 10am to 6pm, Monday to Friday).

Newham Asian Women's Project

661 Barking Road, London, E13 9EX

Advice line: 020 8552 5524

Domestic violence organisation works on behalf of Asian women living in the Newham area of London.

Southall Black Sisters

52 Norwood Road, Southall, Middlesex UB2 4DW

Tel: 020 8571 9595

Advice, emotional support and help for black and Asian women.

Women Acting in Today's Society (WAITS)

Gala House, 3 Radlan Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham B5 7RA

Helpline: 0121 440 7000

WAITS offers advice, support and advocacy for women experiencing domestic violence in the West Midlands. Survivor groups run in the area. Mainly work with women from ethnic minorities, and they have a special project for women of Chinese origin.

Children and related issues

Childline

Helpline: 0800 1111

www.childline.org.uk

24 hour free helpline for children and young people who need to talk about any problem they may

have.

Barnardo's

Tanners Lane, Barkingside, Ilford, Essex, IG6 1QG

www.barnardos.org.uk

Barnardo's helps children, young people and their families over the long term to overcome the most severe disadvantages - problems like abuse, homelessness and poverty.

National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (NSPCC)

Helpline: 0808 800 5000

Textphone: 0800 056 0566

<http://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

UK's leading charity specialising in child protection and the prevention of cruelty to children. Over 180 community based projects in England, Wales and N Ireland.

NSPCC (Wales)

Maes y ffynnon, Penrhosgarnedd, Bangor, Gwynedd, LL57 2DW

Tel: 0808 1002524 (child protection helpline)

Textphone: 0808 100 1033

www.nspcc.org.uk

The Cymru/Wales Helpline is for everyone who lives in Wales. They can take calls in either Welsh or English.

Crime

Rape Crisis Federation Wales and England

Unit 7 Provident Works, Newdigate Street, Nottingham, NG7 4FD

Tel: 0115 900 3560

0115 900 3563

www.rapecrisis.co.uk

Referral service for women who are seeking advice and/or support around the issues of rape and sexual abuse/assault.

Victim Support

Support line: 0845 303 0900

www.victimsupport.org

National charity for people affected by crime - offers free and confidential service, irrespective of whether or not a crime has been reported

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