



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Violence Against Women, Domestic
Abuse and Sexual Violence
(VAWDASV)

Good Practice Guidance for Non-specialist Welsh Public Services on Working with Adult Perpetrators

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is also available in Welsh.

Deputy Minister & Chief Whip, Jane Hutt's foreword:

I am delighted to support the publication of this 'Good Practice Guidance for Non-specialist Welsh Public Services on Working with Adult Perpetrators of Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence'.

Recognising the devastating impact of Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) on victims, families and communities, implementing the ground-breaking VAWDASV (Wales) 2015 Act is a priority of the Welsh Government. The VAWDASV National Strategy sets out the Welsh Government's commitment to ensuring that victims and survivors of VAWDASV in Wales are prioritised, whilst recognising that without supporting safe and effective work with perpetrators of VAWDASV, we will fail to prevent their abusive behaviours and consequently to improve outcomes for victims and survivors, their children and families.

To fulfil the objectives of the VAWDASV National Strategy and protect victims and survivors, in December 2018 the Welsh Government published the VAWDASV Perpetrator Service Standards (2018) supporting the delivery of consistent, safe and effective services for all VAWDASV perpetrators in Wales. Now, in recognition of the crucial role of our wider public services, the publication of this 'Good Practice Guidance for Non-specialist Welsh Public Services on Working with Adult Perpetrators of Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence' extends our support to our public servants, by providing guidance for those who come into contact with perpetrators of VAWDASV.

We know our Public Services regularly encounter all forms of VAWDASV, through their contact with the public, their colleagues, as well as from within their family and friendship groups. This guidance is aimed at those without specialist knowhow to help them spot VAWDASV and learn about practical, safe ways for working with people who are abusive and/or violent in their personal relationships.

Welsh Public Services should be engaging with perpetrators in safe and effective ways. By using the practical, accessible activities, information and advice in this guidance, Public Services can signpost perpetrators, victims

and survivors to the appropriate specialist services and help us tackle VAWDASV. Ultimately, this guidance will contribute to the Welsh Government's commitment to ensuring that all perpetrators of VAWDASV in Wales, are able to get the help they need and that their victims, survivors, children and families are protected, improving the lives of people in Wales.

Yours sincerely,
Jane

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This guidance is aimed at supporting services that do *not* have expertise in the area of addressing VAWDASV perpetration, and **all** Welsh Public Services in managing staff who have perpetrated such abuse.
- 1.2 This guidance fulfils one of the requirements of the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015. In addition, it contributes to the multi-agency objectives of the VAWDASV work stream of the 'Framework to support positive change for those at risk of offending in Wales 2018-2023'. This guidance was commissioned by the Welsh Government and drafted by Forensic Psychological Services, Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS) in Wales. The Welsh Government published the guidance for comment and conducted a survey to gather feedback. The feedback was reviewed and the guidance updated.
- 1.3 The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 makes it clear that well-being includes being free from abuse and having control over one's own day to day life and uses the indicator of whether people feel safe in their own homes. The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 requires that relevant partners co-operate to support and safeguard adults and children with support and care needs, and carers.
- 1.4 We recognise that public servants may come into contact with all forms of VAWDASV through their contact with the public, their client group, their colleagues or within their own homes. Although specialist services are required to do formal intervention work with perpetrators, there are many ways that Public Services can contribute to the VAWDASV agenda and make a real difference to the lives of people in Wales.
- 1.5 Increasing awareness of VAWDASV and decreasing stigma around disclosure, for both victims and perpetrators, can allow perpetrators to

get the help they need and victims to be protected. By encouraging Welsh Public Services to engage with perpetrators more effectively, both as clients and colleagues, it is hoped that this guidance will support the Welsh Government's agenda of addressing VAWDASV.

2. The language used within the guidance

Domestic abuse

- 2.1 The Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 ("the Act") acknowledges a variety of forms of gender-based violence and abuse which evidence shows is disproportionately experienced by women.
- 2.2 Whilst the focus of the Act is broad, this good practice guidance relates primarily to domestic abuse. This guidance does consider the VAWDASV agenda more broadly and many of the practices and strategy points contained within this document are relevant to all forms of VAWDASV.
- 2.3 The document focuses on domestic abuse in more detail for a number of reasons:
 - Interventions with those who perpetrate some forms of sexual abuse and other forms of violence against women, such as female genital mutilation, honour-based violence and forced marriage (or other victims) require different and, in most cases, very specialist forms of intervention.
 - Domestic abuse is a significant problem across Wales and is an area that requires a cultural shift across the population as it is more readily tolerated than other forms of VAWDASV. It is hoped that tackling this within Public Services across both staff and client groups will help begin this culture shift.

- 2.4 Any references in this guidance to “violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence” includes all forms of gender-based violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence as defined in section 24 of the Act. The guidance acknowledges the disproportionate impact of domestic abuse on women but is inclusive of all potential victims.

References to gender

- 2.5 Whilst the Welsh Government recognises that women and girls are disproportionately affected by domestic abuse, it also recognises that abuse can occur within the LGBTQ+ community and by female perpetrators against male victims. In order to ensure that Public Services are aware of and able to support all genders of perpetrator, this guidance is intended to be gender-neutral.
- 2.6 Currently almost all interventions aimed at perpetrators of domestic abuse are for male perpetrators who have female partners. The Welsh Government understands that interventions aimed at women who perpetrate domestic abuse are still in the early stages of development in the UK. When further information becomes available, it will be reflected in this guidance.

References to victims

- 2.7 The term survivor is generally used to refer to an individual who is no longer within the abusive relationship and this guidance generally refers to active abusive situations. As a result, throughout this document, people who have been subject to domestic abuse are referred to as victims rather than survivors.

3. Aims

- 3.1 This document aims to provide Public Services in Wales with the necessary knowledge to enable them to support the VAWDASV agenda's work with perpetrators.
- 3.2 This guidance recognises that early intervention and prevention are key in tackling all forms of VAWDASV. Public servants across sectors have the opportunity to make a difference when they encounter inappropriate behaviour or warning signs in the public, their client group, their colleagues or themselves. This guidance aims to support public servants in making this difference by raising awareness of the following:
- What domestic abuse is and who does it
 - Why work with perpetrators is necessary
 - Potential issues relating to working with perpetrators
 - Referral options across Wales
 - The importance of information sharing between agencies
 - The importance of considering domestic abuse within the staffing group
 - The importance of fostering a culture, both within workplaces and across Wales, where VAWDASV is actively challenged and healthy alternatives are supported

4. Executive Summary

- 4.1 Great strides have been made over the past decades to improve the way we work with those affected by violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence. Multi agency working is commonplace, a strong, professionalised specialist third sector exists and the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 places a strategic focus on the issues which will embed good

practice. In 2016 the Welsh Government produced a national strategy on VAWDASV¹. Objective three of the strategy requires Welsh Ministers to achieve “increased focus on holding perpetrators to account and provide opportunities to change their behaviour based around victim safety”. This guidance contributes to this objective.

- 4.2 Much of this progress has focussed on changing practice and creating services to protect the safety and wellbeing of victims of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence, for example, standardising the quality of refuge provision and creating specialist victim workers. In addition, a National Training Framework has been established and Ask and Act training is being rolled out to help professionals recognise signs of VAWDASV and signpost support. The safety of victims of such violence and abuse is central to a successful co-ordinated community response and all interventions must place the victim, their views and their safety at the centre of the process.
- 4.3 A focus on victims and victim services alone can only go so far. It is the perpetrator of abuse rather than the victim who poses the danger and therefore a sole focus on victims does not effectively tackle the problem. Early intervention and preventative measures can avoid harm being caused, preventing re-victimisation or the creation of new victims.
- 4.4 The guidance should be read and used by those with strategic and operational responsibility for policy and services which address VAWDASV within their organisations, and those with responsibility for delivering and managing front line services that may come into contact with perpetrators as service users or employees (see section 12).
- 4.5 The guidance references useful methods of working and good practice for those working with adults who use violence and abuse towards partners, ex-partners or family members. It emphasises the importance

¹ Welsh Government (2016) *National Strategy on Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence – 2016-2021*. Crown Copyright.

of leadership, reinforced through strong management and resulting in effective practice. It is important to note that although this guidance considers domestic abuse perpetrated by adults generally, the majority of the evidence base in this area focusses on abuse between intimate partners.

4.6 This document provides practical guidance, tailored to agencies within the Welsh public sector on the activities that can be undertaken within each organisation to more effectively address those who use abusive behaviour towards partners, ex-partners and family members. These are identified as 'practice points' and 'strategy points'.

4.7 This guidance is lengthy due to the complexity of the issues discussed. For ease of reference, a summary of the practice and strategy points recommended has been provided in Appendix 1. This may be used as an aide memoire or gap analysis for agencies when planning their approach to perpetrators.

4.8 A summary briefing has also been provided in Appendix 2, which may be used as an introductory document for staff. Appendix 3 provides a flow chart summarising what to do if you have concerns about the risk a perpetrator poses. The full guidance should be made available to staff, and all staff should be encouraged to read the document in its entirety.

5. What is domestic abuse?

5.1 The Act defines domestic abuse as abuse between people who have an association. Domestic abuse may therefore occur between intimate partners or ex-partners, parents and children (in either direction), siblings or other family members. The Act defines abuse as physical, sexual, emotional or financial abuse.

- 5.2 Domestic abuse can have both primary and secondary victims, in addition to primary and proxy perpetrators. Primary victims and perpetrators are the two people who have the association, for example, partners, parent and child or siblings.
- 5.3 Secondary victims are people who are on the receiving end of abuse as a result of the abusive relationship. This may be a person the perpetrator believes to be interested in or having an affair with the victim; a family member or friend the perpetrator believes to be interfering in the relationship; a bystander who intervenes in an argument; a co-worker who prevents the perpetrator accessing the victim; children who are used to access the victim; or children who are abused to punish the partner. Children can be further victimised by witnessing abuse.
- 5.4 Proxy perpetrators are others whom the perpetrator has used to continue the abuse; for example, friends of the perpetrator who threaten the victim or their family.
- 5.5 Domestic abuse can take many forms, both subtle and obvious. **Physical** and **sexual** abuse are the types most easily recognised as abuse. More subtle forms of abuse can be just as damaging to a victim and include (but are not limited to):
- **Emotional** abuse such as calling the victim names, making victims think they are to blame, threatening to kill themselves
 - using **intimidation and threats**
 - **financial** abuse such as preventing the victim from working, or restricting access to money
 - **coercive control** (a continuing pattern of abuse that is used to harm, punish or frighten the victim)
 - **stalking and harassment**
 - **isolating** victims from family and friends; controlling victims' day to day actions (for example, keeping tabs on their whereabouts, checking receipts, insisting they are home to answer a landline)

- **use of children** (for example, via contact visits; getting children to report back about the victim; manipulating children's view of the victim; direct abuse to the children; threatening to take the children away)

- 5.6 Domestic abuse can be supported by friends and family either explicitly (for example, by blaming the victim for the abuse, participating in the abuse or encouraging abusive behaviour) or implicitly (for example, by 'turning a blind eye', encouraging family problems to be kept within the family, or covering up for the perpetrator).
- 5.7 On a broader, cultural scale, domestic abuse can be supported by a belief that family problems should not be discussed outside the family, that there are rigid rules for relationships that should not be breached, normalising abusive behaviour (for example, checking phones, reacting angrily to a partner talking to another man) and general misogynistic attitudes, i.e. those that consider men to be superior to women, support strict adherence to traditional gender roles or believe men should be dominant over women.

Other forms of VAWDASV

- 5.8 Other gender-based violence as defined by the Act includes sexual offending against children; female genital mutilation; violence, threats or harassment due to values, beliefs or customs relating to gender or sexual orientation (including so-called 'honour based' violence); and forced marriage. These are specific subsections of violence against women which require specialist consideration and are outside of the scope of this guidance.
- 5.9 The Welsh Government Live Fear Free website is a useful resource for the public and professionals and contains further information on all forms of VAWDASV. The website can be found at:
<https://livefearfree.gov.wales/?lang=en>.

6. Who are perpetrators of domestic abuse?

- 6.1 Research tells us that motivations for and causes of domestic abuse are varied. It can occur in any family or relationship and is not limited to any particular socio-economic status or ethnicity. The prevalence of domestic abuse means there are likely to be people reading this guidance who have been abusive in their own relationships.
- 6.2 Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), such as growing up in a household where domestic abuse is present, have been found to be related to being a perpetrator as an adult². This can be due to heightened stress throughout developmental periods causing problems in brain development in terms of emotional management and problem processing, development of attitudes that support abuse within relationships, lack of awareness of healthy relationships, increased substance misuse and mental health problems, insecure attachment styles and difficulties coping with their experience of trauma³. Public Health Wales and Bangor University recently published a study on the prevalence of ACEs in Welsh prisoners⁴.
- 6.3 It is important to note that the majority of people who have experienced ACEs do not become perpetrators of domestic abuse, and not all perpetrators have experienced ACEs, although the number who have is relatively high. Although some ACEs are more prevalent in lower socio-economic groups, they can occur across all groups and domestic abuse does not discriminate.

² e.g. Roberts AL, McLaughlin KA, Conron KJ, Koenen KC. (2011) Adulthood stressors, history of childhood adversity, and risk of perpetration of intimate partner violence. *American journal of preventive medicine*. 40(2):128–38.

³ Bancroft, L., Silverman, J.G. & Ritchie, D. (2012). The batterer as a parent: Addressing the impact of domestic violence on family dynamics. Sage Publications Inc. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781452240480>

⁴ Ford, K., Barton, E.R., Newbury, A., Hughes, K., Bezecsky, Z., Roderick, J. & Bellis, M.A. (2019). *Understanding the prevalence of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) in a male offender population in Wales: The Prisoner Ace Survey*. Public Health Wales NHS Trust & Bangor University.

- 6.4 Domestic abuse can also be linked to the misuse of power and control⁵ by one person over another, a result of personality disorder⁶, sexual jealousy⁷, difficulties communicating effectively⁸ and a response to trauma (e.g. ex-armed forces personnel⁹).
- 6.5 The separation between perpetrators and victims of domestic abuse is not always clear cut, for example, a victim may use violence as a form of self-defence, or both partners may use abusive behaviours (mutual abuse)¹⁰.
- 6.6 No age limit is applied to the Act definition of abuse and it therefore relates to adults and children. Where children are developing abusive behaviours, it is important that we remember they are children and that we do not label them as perpetrators or abusers. The Welsh Government recommends adopting a holistic approach to the treatment of children who are developing abusive behaviours and labelling them as perpetrators or abusers can detract from professionals considering the broader issues involved.

Adolescent to parent abuse

- 6.7 Adolescent to parent abuse describes violence and abuse from an adolescent towards a parent. The abuse often involves a pattern of aggressive, abusive and violent acts across a prolonged period of time. This pattern of behaviour creates an environment where parents live in fear of their child and often curtail their own behaviour in order to avoid conflict, contain or minimise violence.¹¹ The Welsh Government

⁵ e.g. Dutton, D.G. (1995). *The Domestic Assault of Women*. Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.

⁶ e.g. Sijtsema, J. J., Baan, L., & Bogaerts, S. (2014). Associations between dysfunctional personality traits and intimate partner violence in perpetrators and victims. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 29(13), 2418-2438. DOI 10.1177/0886260513520228

⁷ e.g. Gilchrist, E.A., Johnson, R., Takriti, R., Weston, S., Kebbell, M., & Beech, A.R. (2003). Domestic violence offenders: Characteristics and offending related needs. *Home Office Research Findings 217*. London: Home Office.

⁸ e.g. Feldman, C.M., & Ridley, C.A. (2000). Role of conflict-based communication responses and outcomes in male domestic violence towards female partners. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 17, 552 – 563.

⁹ e.g. Finley, E.P., Baker, M., Pugh, M.J. & Peterson, A. (2010) Patterns and Perceptions of Intimate Partner Violence Committed by Returning Veterans with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. *Journal of Family Violence*, 25, 737- 743. DOI 10.1007/s10896-010-9331-7

¹⁰ Johnson, M.P. (2008). *A typology of domestic violence: Intimate terrorism, violent resistance and situational couple violence*. Northeastern University Press, Lebanon.

¹¹ Information guide: adolescent to parent violence and abuse (APVA) Home Office (2015)

contributed to the Home Office Information Guide on Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse (2015) which can be referred to for guidance.

Young people in abusive relationships

- 6.8 A substantial number of young people will experience some form of violence in their own relationships. The March 2015 British Crime Survey found that one in six young women between the ages of 16 and 19 reported some form of partner violence in the last 12 months. Those young women who are under 18 are legally defined as children and fall within the support, care and protection that are provided by local authorities under the Children Act 1989. Young people who are using abusive behaviour can also be legally defined as children. The relationships involving these young people are, however, likely to be “adult” in nature – intimate, living together and possibly involving children of their own. Moreover, research suggests the severity and escalation of the abuse will be severe.¹²
- 6.9 The options explored in this guidance relate to perpetrators who are over 18. We do not consider children (i.e. those under 18) to be perpetrators and advice should be sought from appropriate youth services to ensure necessary safeguarding is in place.
- 6.10 Practitioners may find it helpful to refer to the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act (2014) for further guidance on how to support children, young people and adults who need care and support.

¹² Safe Younger Lives: Young People and Domestic Abuse <http://www.safelives.org.uk/knowledge-hub/spotlights/spotlight-3-young-people-and-domestic-abuse>

7. Why is work with perpetrators necessary?

- 7.1 There is growing recognition that, in tackling domestic abuse, both victims and perpetrators must be engaged and offered effective services to address the symptoms, impacts and cause of the issue.
- 7.2 Whilst still an area of developing practice, there is a well-established suite of services aimed at victims of domestic abuse and a strong evidence base related to the effectiveness of these services is developing. Such agencies and facilities are well used by Public Services and available nationwide.
- 7.3 Work in relation to engaging perpetrators of domestic abuse is less well developed. The better established models of work are discussed later in this guidance but in general, there is limited provision available across Wales and many projects are in their infancy in terms of evidence and availability. The Welsh Government has recently published a rapid evidence assessment of what the research indicates is effective with domestic abuse perpetrators¹³. In an effort to ensure practice is based on the evidence that is available, the Welsh Government has developed minimum standards for VAWDASV perpetrator services¹⁴.
- 7.4 Whilst the development of specialist interventions aimed at perpetrators of domestic abuse is an area of interest to the Welsh Government, it is also clear that Welsh Public Services have a crucial role to play in relation to engagement of perpetrators of domestic abuse, risk assessment and mitigation and referral work.
- 7.5 The role of Welsh Public Services is crucial because:
- **domestic abuse is your business:** We all have a role to play in creating a culture across Wales which does not tolerate domestic

¹³ <https://gov.wales/rapid-evidence-assessment-what-works-domestic-abuse-perpetrators-0>

¹⁴ <https://gweddi.gov.wales/docs/dsllg/publications/commsafety/181206-vawda-perpetrator-service-standards-en.pdf>

abuse. Educating perpetrators about the consequences of their actions, holding them accountable and assisting them to seek help in changing their behaviour are vitally important strategies to prevent further abuse

- **you are already working with perpetrators of domestic abuse:** most perpetrators of domestic abuse are not involved with the Criminal Justice System. Even where they have been convicted and imprisoned they are likely, at some point, to return to live in their community. They will often live with their family. In doing so they will use Public Services and, in many cases, their abusive behaviour will influence this engagement. The prevalence of domestic abuse across Wales means that Public Services' staffing groups will include both victims and perpetrators
- **domestic abuse is a child protection issue:** most perpetrators have ongoing contact with their children, even if the relationship between the parents has ended. Domestic abuse is linked to direct child abuse and poses a significant risk when considering contact arrangements.¹⁵ The link between ACEs and perpetration of future domestic abuse is clear, as is the link between ACEs and ongoing health and social needs¹⁶. Minimising ACEs for today's children should be a focus of all Public Services in order to reduce future health and social difficulties, in addition to breaking the cycle of abuse. This supports the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and the Welsh Government's Prosperity for All national strategy¹⁷. There are provisions within family court proceedings to ensure the safety of children and victims and that their evidence is heard. The safeguarding decisions made by the family courts can be supported by information provided by Public Services

¹⁵ CAADA (2014) In plain sight: Effective help for children exposed to domestic abuse.

¹⁶ Public Health Wales <http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/888/page/88504>

¹⁷ <https://gov.wales/prosperity-all-national-strategy>

- **support for perpetrators of domestic abuse is often requested by victims:** Whilst victims' expectations of perpetrator programmes can be unrealistic, it may be something they want to try before they consider taking any other action. One of the main reasons victims give for staying in an abusive relationship is that their partner has promised to change. Victims can also feel that all the onus is on them to do something about the abuse (e.g. leave) rather than the perpetrator
- **most perpetrators will move onto other relationships, potentially creating new victims:** The perpetrator of domestic abuse is always the source and cause of the abuse. They will not change their behaviour because they are in a new relationship and are likely to go on using abusive behaviour and therefore cause further impact to Welsh Public Services
- **perpetrators may be in multiple relationships:** Although Public Services may only be aware of one relationship, perpetrators may be in multiple relationships, therefore the potential scope and impact of their abusive behaviour may be more widespread than is immediately obvious
- **domestic abuse costs Public Services:** The cost of domestic abuse in Wales is estimated to be £303.5 million annually - £202.6m for service costs and £100.9m in lost economic input.¹⁸ These costs are borne by social care, health and criminal justice services
- **perpetrators may want to change:** Many perpetrators are aware their behaviour is not acceptable but do not feel they can/are able to change. Public Services that help to reduce the stigma associated with domestic abuse and supports people to change could provide a platform for someone to address their behaviour

¹⁸ Walby, Sylvia. The Cost of Domestic Violence: Update 2009

- 7.6 It is therefore important that staff in Welsh Public Services are also aware of their own role in relation to working with perpetrators of domestic abuse. Whilst detailed and intense work with perpetrators of domestic abuse is a specialist area of practice, there are a variety of things Public Services can do as part of their own roles to support this work and help facilitate change. Not all perpetrators or potential perpetrators will require or have access to specialist services, and therefore Public Services can be integral to supporting the person in making changes. This guidance explores key themes associated with such work and provides practice points aimed at Public Services staff.

8. Practice considerations to be made when working with perpetrators of domestic abuse

- 8.1 Many elements of Welsh Public Services work with families. Where domestic abuse is disclosed or suspected, the focus on the family must continue. However, those professionals working with families where domestic abuse is an issue must be aware of the risks and practice issues associated with such work and ensure action, scrutiny and practice is in place to mitigate such risk.
- 8.2 The following section outlines some of the core practice considerations to be made when working with perpetrators of domestic abuse or with families where domestic abuse is a known or suspected issue.

Capacity and separate working

- 8.3 Where a Public Services agency is working with a whole family it is important that in relation to domestic abuse, victims and perpetrators are worked with separately. This may be challenging due to resource limitations, but risk management and victim safety must be prioritised.

- 8.4 In such cases the work with both victims and perpetrators to reduce harm will need to be given sufficient priority within practitioners' caseloads. In many cases it will require the appointment of a second practitioner to work with the family to ensure the needs of both adults are recognised and the risk of collusion (see section 8.16-18) is mitigated. Both practitioners will need to liaise closely to maintain professional objectivity and safeguard any children or vulnerable adults.
- 8.5 In any interaction where both victim and perpetrator are present, staff will need to be very careful to avoid increasing the risk to the victim, for example, by disclosing information that has been shared in confidence or assuming that the partners are on an equal footing in relation to family decision-making and routine. Care must be taken not to assume the roles of victim and perpetrator are entirely separate (for example, consider unhelpful behaviours of victims or helpful behaviours of perpetrators).
- 8.6 Where the victim of the abuse also uses the organisation's services and the relationship continues, any organised contact sessions should be conducted separately.
- 8.7 Where the victim of the abuse also uses the organisation's services and the relationship has terminated, appointments should be arranged so as to minimise the risk of contact between perpetrator and victim.

Safeguarding processes and domestic abuse

- 8.8 If Child Protection Conferences, Adult Protection Conferences or other multi agency meetings are held, the Chair, in consultation with relevant professionals, should assess the risks carefully in relation to the participation of the perpetrator. It may be that separate attendance is more suitable if risks are too great.

- 8.9 Suitable safe arrangements should be made for entry to and exit from the building in which the Conference or other multi agency meetings are to be held as well as waiting areas.
- 8.10 The record of the meetings will reflect the safety considerations for participants and any potential disclosure of information via records should be thought through.
- 8.11 Managers of Public Services with safeguarding responsibility for children will need to be made aware of information pertinent to their role. They should be responsible for disseminating proportionate information to frontline staff and overseeing the implementation of any required risk management activity or contribution to Care and Support Protection plans.
- 8.12 Professionals who work with children and have limited contact with adults, should be made aware when there is a risk that a perpetrator will remove that child from the service (for example, a school) in contravention of either a Care and Support Protection Plan, court order or Criminal Justice related restrictions.
- 8.13 Professionals should be mindful of the potential of increasing risk when they are working with perpetrators. Indicators of risk are detailed in section 11. Where risk is felt to be increasing, appropriate safeguarding actions should be taken and/or referral to social services when there are suspicions a child or adult is at risk in accordance with the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. A record should be made of the action taken.

Professional safety

- 8.14 Perpetrators of domestic abuse can pose a risk to those outside of their family and this can include the professionals they work with. Care must be taken to assess any potential risks to professionals who are involved in providing services to a family where domestic abuse is an

issue. This includes support services offered to a victim or child. Information sharing protocols should be created to ensure that all agencies involved are aware of potential risk to staff. Employers should ensure that support is available to staff who may be at risk to ensure their wellbeing and reduce the risk of collusion.

Home visits

- 8.15 Thorough risk assessment should be completed and documented prior to a home visit where domestic abuse is an issue. Where a risk assessment does raise concerns, it should generally be the case that home visits are not completed by a lone professional and that, where necessary, the assistance of the police or other partners is sourced. Professionals should speak with their manager and refer to their own agency's guidance for staff safety. Staff safety should be a priority and where lone working is considered to be high risk, resources should be made available to ensure it is not necessary.
- 8.16 Information sharing protocols (ISPs) should be created to ensure that information relating to potential risk to staff is shared with agencies that engage in home visits. ISPs should adhere to General Data Protection Regulations¹⁹ and/or any applicable data protection regulations following withdrawal from the European Union. The Wales Accord on the Sharing of Personal Information (WASPI)²⁰ provides useful guidance on how appropriate ISPs can be developed and offers templates.
- 8.17 Agency records should clearly indicate where a perpetrator poses a potential risk to staff so that any employee picking up the case is aware. Staff support should be available to support the wellbeing of staff who may be at risk.

¹⁹ https://ec.europa.eu/commission/priorities/justice-and-fundamental-rights/data-protection/2018-reform-eu-data-protection-rules_en

²⁰ <http://www.waspi.org/home>

- 8.18 Home visits can be extremely useful in terms of gaining information to support risk management and safeguarding plans. This information can be fed into the appropriate fora to ensure safety plans are updated. Section 10 provides further information on where information may be sent.

Case study

Whilst on a home visit, Peter's social worker notices that his wife flinched when Peter got frustrated and raised his voice. The social worker discusses it with her line manager when she gets back and decides to inform the local police domestic violence contact to let them know about her concerns. They discuss potential strategies for raising the issues with Peter in a safe way.

Collusion

- 8.19 Many perpetrators of domestic abuse have the capacity to be manipulative. When working with perpetrators, practitioners will need to be careful to avoid using language that colludes with the perpetrator's abuse or to buy in to their version of events without clarifying details with partner agencies.
- 8.20 Practitioners will need to be able to make a clear distinction between perpetrators' co-operation and engagement with the service provided and their capacity for causing harm. Domestic abuse perpetrators are often capable and compliant individuals who would not ordinarily give an agency a cause for concern, for example, through not engaging with appointments or services or expressing inappropriate thoughts or attitudes. Discussing cases in peer or clinical supervision sessions can be useful for ensuring that an accurate picture of progress is drawn.
- 8.21 It is also important that practitioners are mindful of the importance of working with victim complexity. Victims of domestic abuse are not

always easy to engage, compliant or passive. Practitioners should not infer a reduction in risk on this basis²¹.

- 8.22 Where both partners have a propensity to violence the risk to both adults and to children is increased and therefore such cases should be managed with care.

Case study

Ashley has been working with the Jones family as their GP for several years. She is aware that Mr Jones has previously been cautioned for an assault against his wife. Mr Jones is always very pleasant in his appointments and says that everything is fine now as he and his wife have agreed not to shout at each other. Mrs Jones is reluctant to talk about how things are at home and can get very defensive. She has also missed appointments that Ashley set up for her with the mental health team. Ashley begins to think things can't be that bad and that it was probably a normal argument that got out of hand. Through discussing the case with a colleague, Ashley recognised that her frustration with Mrs Jones was causing her to subconsciously give Mr Jones' account credence and she is able to consider the reasons for Mrs Jones' presentation more objectively.

²¹ Donovan, C. & Hester, M. (2010). "I Hate the Word "Victim"": An Exploration of Recognition of Domestic Violence in Same Sex Relationships 1. *Social Policy and Society*, 9(2), .279-289

Case study

In her role with the job centre, Laura has regular appointments with Connor. Connor has very strong views about women and often makes nasty remarks about his partner. Laura has raised her concerns through the appropriate channels, but still finds herself worrying about Connor's partner when she is at home.

Laura talks to her line manager who reassures her she has done everything she can. Laura discloses that she is finding working with Connor difficult as he reminds her of her dad.

Laura's manager provides her with information about the staff support system and helps her refer herself for counselling. They discuss whether or not it is the right thing for Connor to stay on

Laura's case load.

Marginalised communities

- 8.23 Public Services should be aware of the increased vulnerability of marginalised groups such as LGBT+, disabled people, black and minority ethnic communities, gypsy, Roma and travellers and those with other protected characteristics. As these groups are often already subject to discrimination and disadvantage, it can be more difficult for them to seek help and/or find services that appropriately cater to their needs²². An independent translator (for example, where English is not their first language or the person uses British Sign Language) may be useful to facilitate discussions.
- 8.24 It is important that professionals are aware of the impact of the protected characteristic(s) on the perpetrator, the victim and the abusive behaviour so that these can be taken into account. For example, some groups may feel it is not acceptable to speak about their relationships outside of the family setting; a painful impairment may cause frustration and anger that contributes to abusive behaviour;

²² Chaviz, A.Z. & Hill, M.S. (2009). Integrating Multiple Intersecting Identities: A Multicultural Conceptualization of the Power and Control Wheel. *Women & Therapy*, 32:1–29

mental health problems may exacerbate abusive behaviour while the correct medication minimises it; past experiences of Public Services may leave an individual feeling they cannot trust professionals. In addition to speaking to individuals, services may find it useful to gather information from local community/charity groups to ensure they are aware of the issues facing different marginalised groups in their areas.

Recording of information

8.25 Clear and comprehensive logs should be kept of all interactions with cases where domestic abuse is a concern. Decision logs should be maintained by each agency to evidence thought processes, for example, why referrals were or were not made. Defensible decision making, i.e. one that will withstand 'hindsight scrutiny', is essential. Good record keeping facilitates information sharing and case management, allowing professionals to review what has already been done and determine if further action is required. Issues with record keeping and the resulting inability for information to be shared effectively has been identified as the most common theme within intimate partner homicides²³.

Information sharing

8.26 Working with perpetrators of domestic abuse may lead to the disclosure of information which indicates a risk to another adult or child. In such cases it is important that this information is treated and shared in a manner that is appropriate and lawful in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and/or any applicable data protection regulations following withdrawal from the European Union. Staff should consult their organisational information sharing protocol and their safeguarding procedures in such cases. WASPI provides a register of existing ISPs.

8.27 Protection of personal data should not be seen as a barrier to sharing information relating to risk. Lack of information sharing is often present

²³ Home Office (2016). *Domestic Homicide Reviews: Key findings from Domestic Homicide Reviews*. Home Office

in domestic homicides²⁴ and prevents the full picture of risk from being seen and managed. Standard information sharing protocols can be established between organisations meaning that sharing can happen automatically when the agreed threshold is met.

- 8.28 In all cases, information linked to risk of harm posed by perpetrators should be shared with the relevant Public Protection Unit for the police force area or region (for example, police Domestic Abuse Unit, Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference).
- 8.29 It is good practice for organisation records relating to victims and perpetrators to be updated as a matter of priority and always within 24 hours.
- 8.30 Where possible, staff working with the perpetrator and those working with the victim should be part of a 'virtual team'. The virtual team should actively share relevant information to ensure the safety of the victim and any children where it is appropriate and lawful.
- 8.31 When sharing information, it is essential that it is clearly identified as relating to domestic abuse. Domestic homicide reviews have identified that if concerns are not flagged as relating to domestic abuse, they may not be appropriately prioritised²⁵.

Case study

Hannah reviews her agency's information sharing protocols and realises that they do not have one with the police. As a senior manager she recognises it is her responsibility to ensure that her staff are able to make disclosures and share information as quickly and easily as possible. She contacts the local police force and sets up a meeting to develop a protocol.

²⁴ Home Office (2016). *Domestic Homicide Reviews: Key findings from Domestic Homicide Reviews*. Home Office

²⁵ Home Office (2016). *Domestic Homicide Reviews: Key findings from Domestic Homicide Reviews*. Home Office

Line management

- 8.32 Where staff are working with families involving domestic abuse or perpetrators of domestic abuse, line management supervision should clearly include conversations around this work to review risk, consider the ongoing objectivity of the staff member and acknowledge the challenges of this work. Support services should be available to staff to support wellbeing

Managing dual or counter allegations

- 8.33 It is common for perpetrators of domestic abuse to make counter allegations of violence or abuse against the victim. Such allegations can make it difficult for Public Services to allocate appropriate services, understand risk and meet the needs of all family members.
- 8.34 It is important that all allegations of domestic abuse are taken seriously and an effective response offered. In such cases it is useful to engage services both for the alleged perpetrator and the victim. In most cases the specialist services involved will do initial work with both parties separately to understand their needs. In the case of counter allegations this may include some assessment of underlying controlling behaviour to help indicate who the primary victim or perpetrator is. This is a specialist piece of work and should only be undertaken by a specialist organisation.
- 8.35 It is important to note that making false allegations is a form of abuse and where this is found to be the case, this may be evidence of ongoing abuse. Making false allegations may, in some circumstances, meet the threshold of a criminal offence, so advice should be sought from police colleagues.

Practice points

- Information sharing protocols should be developed between agencies to ensure information can be shared quickly and easily when risks are identified

- Perpetrators and victims should be worked with separately wherever possible to minimise risk to victims and encourage open disclosure
- Risk assessments should be conducted for any situation that requires the presence of both victims and perpetrators
- Information regarding risk to staff should be recorded clearly on files and shared with all staff involved in the case
- Risk assessments should be conducted for all home visits where domestic abuse is considered a concern. Where risk to staff is deemed to be high, lone working should be avoided
- Staff working with domestic abuse cases should be provided with support. Peer or clinical supervision can provide a useful forum for discussing cases and guarding against collusion or manipulation. External support should be made available where possible for staff affected by this work
- Agencies should develop contacts with local marginalised communities and groups to ensure they are aware of the issues affecting them
- Clear records should be kept by each agency. Where domestic abuse concerns are present it should be clearly labelled. Records should include decision logs and defensible decision making is essential

Strategy Points

- Senior Leaders should ensure interagency working and information sharing is part of their organisational remit
- Leaders should encourage a culture of appropriate information sharing and an understanding that sharing information can save lives

9. Welsh Public Services as referring agencies

9.1 Through their contact with the public, Public Services will often find themselves in a position where they need to refer victims or perpetrators on to other services. Provision for perpetrators varies across Wales by region and is provided by Her Majesty's Prison and Probation Service and the third sector. The following section outlines potential referral options for perpetrators, both those who are and are not involved in the criminal justice system.

9.a Community based perpetrator programmes

9.2 A small but well-developed approach to intervention with perpetrators within the community (outside of the criminal justice system) is in place, offering Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programmes (DVPPs) to those who seek help to address their own behaviour.

9.3 These programmes offer a potential referral pathway for Public Services to offer support and address the behaviour of clients who are using abuse and violence.

9.4 Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programmes (DVPPs) are community-based group work programmes that work directly with perpetrators of domestic abuse with the aim of changing their behaviour and stopping further abuse and violence. They can vary in duration, number of clients, model of work and organisational setting.

9.5 DVPPs will often also offer safety and support services to partners and, in some cases, children. Many take an advisory role to the family courts, children services, CAFCASS (Children and Family Court Advice and Support Services) and child protection conferences.

9.6 Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programmes do not aim to keep families together, or to split families up. They aim to work effectively with perpetrators in order to keep their partners and children safe. The

best outcome of perpetrators' attendance at a DVPP is that all violence and abuse stops and there is no longer a risk to their partner, ex-partner, future partners or children.²⁶

- 9.7 In 2015, the London Metropolitan University and Durham University published their final report from an independent five year research project "Mirabal"³. This examined the outcome of men's participation in DVPPs accredited by Respect.
- 9.8 The research indicated that well run programmes decreased physical and sexual violence and weapon use, increased women's feelings of safety and reduced the amount violence seen or heard by children. Criticism of the Mirabal report, however, suggests the limitations of the study mean its findings cannot be said to provide support for Respect accredited DVPPs²⁷.
- 9.9 The Welsh Government has recently published a rapid evidence assessment of what the research indicates is effective with domestic abuse perpetrators²⁸. This review of the available evidence did not find support for any one particular approach to domestic abuse perpetrators over others. It identified the importance of addressing substance misuse problems where appropriate and the promising nature of interventions that included a motivational element and adopted a family focussed approach. In addition, it highlighted the value in a whole systems approach to addressing domestic abuse.
- 9.10 Within HMPPS, DVPPs are accredited by the Correctional Services Accreditation and Advisory Panel (CSAAP), which ensures that interventions are clearly drawn from the current evidence base. HMPPS services running interventions are subject to stringent audit

²⁶ Kelly L, Westmarland N (2015) *Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programmes: Steps Towards Change. Project Mirabal Final Report*. London and Durham: London Metropolitan University and Durham University <http://respect.uk.net/highlights-mirabal-research-findings-respect-accredited-domestic-violence-perpetrator-programmes-work/>

²⁷ Bates, E. A., Graham-Kevan, N., Bolam, L. T., & Thornton, A. J. V. (2017). A Review of Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programs in the United Kingdom. *Partner Abuse*, 8(1).

²⁸ <https://gov.wales/rapid-evidence-assessment-what-works-domestic-abuse-perpetrators-0>

criteria that ensure treatment integrity is maintained and that the quality of the intervention is to a good level, which are reviewed biannually.

- 9.11 Respect offers an accreditation service which has minimum, evidence-based standards for organisations that work with perpetrators (The Respect Standard²⁹), which was updated in 2017. Respect also has an accreditation process that organisations can go through to demonstrate they meet The Standard. If an organisation is accredited by Respect based on the latest standard, the DVPPs it runs are also considered to be accredited. Stringent audit criteria are in place and are used to assure that the standards are being adhered to, thus assuring quality of provision. Accreditation must be renewed every three years.
- 9.12 The Welsh Government has developed guidelines for minimum standards for VAWDASV perpetrator services, including non-accredited DVPPs. Services providing DVPPs on a group or individual basis are encouraged to gather evidence to demonstrate how they meet these standards. Commissioning services are advised to ensure that services they fund are Respect or CSAAP accredited, or meet the Welsh Government's minimum standards.
- 9.13 DVPPs can take many forms; however, regardless of the format, it is important that any interventions with perpetrators are based on sound evidence. Ineffective or inappropriately targeted interventions can cause harm and increase risk to victims.

Establishing and managing expectations for DVPPs.

- 9.14 Whilst all relevant staff of Welsh Public Services should give due consideration to the role community-based DVPPs can play as part of wider service provision it is important that, in doing so, they use the programmes appropriately and understand the impact and realistic outcomes associated with them.

²⁹ <http://respect.uk.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Respect-Standard-15.11.17.pdf>

- 9.15 Perpetrator attendance on DVPPs may offer hope to victims that their violent partner will change. This hope can be shared by organisations. Whilst DVPPs can be effective, they will not work with all perpetrators of domestic abuse and may not change all elements of abusive behaviour. For example, sexual violence may end but other controlling behaviour could remain. It is important that victims are supported to have realistic expectations and that professionals maintain a healthy scepticism about the impacts of these programmes to ensure they remain focussed on the risks involved for a family.
- 9.16 Some survivor-led organisations raise concerns that attendance at a perpetrator programme can provide perpetrators with additional opportunities to manipulate and control their partners. These forms of manipulation can include lying about attendance, using the material of the programme to criticise and control the victim's behaviour, using jargon and concepts learnt on the programme to manipulate the victim and using attendance on the programme as a way to influence other professionals' decisions such as social workers, CAFCASS officers, and courts.³⁰

9.b Criminal Justice options

- 9.17 HMPPS is able to make sentencing recommendations for perpetrators who are being prosecuted. Although it will not be possible for other Public Services to recommend or refer to any particular sentencing option, they may be able to provide useful information to help inform HMPPS recommendations.
- 9.18 A number of criminal justice initiatives now exist which offer opportunity for involvement by other Public Services and, as such, it is useful for Public Services staff to have an awareness of these.

³⁰ Women's Aid briefing - perpetrator work in the UK, July 2007 <http://www.womensaid.org.uk/domestic-violence-articles.asp?section=00010001002200180001&itemid=1080>

WISDOM (*Wales Integrated Serious and Dangerous Offender Management*)

9.19 The aim of WISDOM is to reduce re-offending and the risk of serious harm via a multi-agency team comprising police, probation, forensic psychological services and other local partners working together³¹. WISDOM works with offenders who are subject to community supervision, license supervision and those who are not on statutory supervision to reduce risk. One of the primary roles of WISDOM is to manage perpetrators effectively. The process acknowledges that victims are often still in a relationship with perpetrators and therefore all processes are focussed on the safety of everyone involved.

Domestic Violence Protection Orders

9.20 Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPOs) were introduced across England and Wales in March 2014. They are instigated and led by police forces; therefore, Public Services would not be able to initiate them directly. If sufficient concerns are raised, it may be appropriate for services to make contact with the police and request they explore a DVPO.

9.21 DVPOs enable the police and magistrates to take immediate action in the aftermath of an incident of domestic abuse. They are applicable even where there is not enough evidence to charge immediately and bail conditions are not an option. DVPOs should provide a far more efficient option than a civil law injunction.

9.22 A DVPO prevents, with immediate effect, a perpetrator from returning to a residence and from having contact with the victim for up to 28 days, allowing victims time to consider their options and get the support they need.

9.23 The process;

- Following an incident of domestic abuse, the police may issue a Domestic Violence Protection Notice (DVPN) to the alleged

³¹ WISDOM Operating Model, v6

offender. This will place certain conditions on them, such as stopping them from entering and being within a certain distance of the victim's home

- Within 48 hours the police will apply for a DVPO through the Magistrates' Court. At court, evidence will be heard and the alleged perpetrator will be allowed the opportunity to provide evidence. The Court will decide on this evidence whether to make a DVPO. If an order is made it will last for a minimum of 14 days and a maximum of 28 days
- Magistrates may make a DVPO even if the victim of abuse does not agree to it. In addition, they will take into account the welfare of anyone under 18 who the police consider will be affected by the DVPO

Case study

Aled comes to his employment support group in a clearly angry mood. He shares with the group that he had a blazing row with his partner last night and there is now a hole in his door where he punched it. The support worker contacts the local police domestic violence contact to let them know about his concerns for the safety of Aled's partner

The Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme ('Clare's Law')

- 9.24 The Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS) (also known as 'Clare's Law') also commenced in England and Wales in March 2014.
- 9.25 The DVDS gives members of the public a formal mechanism to make enquires about an individual who they are in a relationship with, or who is in a relationship with someone they know, where there is a concern that the individual may be violent towards their partner. Although this

service is victim focussed, if concerns are raised due to contact with a perpetrator, the DVDS may be an appropriate course of action.

- 9.26 **Right to ask:** Members of the public can make an application for a disclosure, known as the 'right to ask', by contacting the police and requesting a 'domestic abuse disclosure'. Anybody can make an enquiry, but information will only be given to someone at risk or a professional in a position to safeguard the victim (this could well include sections of Welsh Public Services). The scheme is for anyone in an intimate relationship regardless of gender. Partner agencies can also request disclosure is made of an offender's past history where it is believed someone is at risk of harm.
- 9.27 **Right to know:** If a potentially violent individual is identified as having convictions for violent offences, or information is held about their behaviour which reasonably leads the police and other agencies to believe they pose a risk of harm to their partner, the police will consider disclosing the information. A disclosure can be made if it is legal, proportionate and necessary to do so.

Case study

In a meeting with her employment officer, Michelle discloses that she has a new partner. The officer is aware that Michelle has previously been convicted of a serious assault against a partner, but is no longer being supervised. The officer contacts the local police domestic violence contact and asks for the new partner to be informed of Michelle's history via 'right to ask' and 'right to know'

Practice points

- You should identify contacts within your local police force who can be contacted if you have concerns about imminent risk
- You should have information sharing protocols with local Criminal Justice service providers to ensure there are no unnecessary delays when concerns need to be raised
- Briefings should be provided to staff to inform them of when and how to refer a case to local Criminal Justice agencies

9.c Statutory Perpetrator Programmes

- 9.28 HMPPS deliver specific domestic abuse focussed programmes to perpetrators who are convicted of relevant offences via Community Rehabilitation Companies.
- 9.29 The primary programme delivered across probation services in Wales is Building Better Relationships (BBR), a CSAAP accredited programme. This programme aims to reduce re-offending and promote the safety of current and future partners and children whilst working collaboratively with other agencies to manage risk.
- 9.30 For those offenders not suitable for BBR, a 10 session, Rehabilitation Activity Requirement entitled Respectful Relationships is also delivered by probation staff in Wales. Whereas BBR is an accredited programme (i.e. it has received significant scrutiny in terms of the theoretical basis and evaluation), Respectful Relationships was developed locally and is a collection of resources available for use by probation staff, which has been assessed as meeting the requirements of the Welsh non-accredited interventions panel.

9.d Services which may not be appropriate referral options.

Couples work/mediation

- 9.31 As domestic abuse often involves the misuse of power and control from one partner to another it is often not possible for both parties in an abusive relationship to represent themselves appropriately in joint sessions. Couples work can increase the risk posed to a victim if they are required to discuss the abuse whilst the perpetrator is present.
- 9.32 For any counselling to be successful the parties taking part need to be open and honest about their situation. In domestic abuse cases many victims will not feel safe to disclose the abuse as they will fear repercussions. Disclosures of abuse may occur through couples work or mediation, in which case careful consideration should be given to whether or not it is appropriate and safe for the couples work to continue. Professionals should seek peer support and supervision in making decisions on how to proceed.

Restorative Justice

- 9.33 Whilst restorative justice has been found to be helpful in less serious offending and general violence³², it is not recommended for use in VAWDASV cases by police³³ or government³⁴. Restorative justice in itself can be used as an abusive tactic, may make the victim more vulnerable by exposing them to contact with the perpetrator, may be traumatic for the victim and in incidences where it is used as an alternative to a formal disposal, can undermine the seriousness of abusive behaviour³⁵. The Welsh Government Rapid Evidence Assessment found limited evidence relating to the use of restorative justice with domestic abuse and recommended that further robust

³² Sherman, L.W., Strang, H., Mayo-Wilson, E., Woods, D.J. & Ariel, B. (2015). Are Restorative Justice Conferences Effective in Reducing Repeat Offending? Findings from a Campbell Systematic Review. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, 31(1), 1-24

³³ Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary. (2014). *Everyone's Business: Improving the Police response to Domestic Abuse*. HMIC, available online at <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmic/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/improving-the-police-response-to-domestic-abuse.pdf>

³⁴ Travis, A. (2016). 'Police Treatment of Domestic Abuse victims to be Investigated'. *The Guardian*, 17th May 2016. Available online at <http://www.theguardian.com/society/2016/may/17/police-treatment-of-domestic-abuse-victims-to-be-investigated>

³⁵ Westmarland, N., Johnson, K. & McGlynn, C. (2018). Under the radar: The widespread use of 'out of court resolutions' in policing domestic violence in the United Kingdom. *British Journal of Criminology*, 58, 1-16. Doi:10.1093/bjc/azx004

evidence would be required before its use in this context could be supported.

Parenting Programmes

- 9.34 Whilst perpetrators of domestic abuse may need support with their parenting skills, such courses should not be considered an alternative to DVPPs as they do not address the abusive behaviour itself or the underlying issues driving abusive behaviour.

A note on Anger Management interventions

- 9.35 Research indicates that difficulties regulating anger and hostility can contribute to domestic abuse³⁶. A pre-disposition for anger is thought to be related to a higher propensity to use violence³⁷. Difficulties managing anger may be the primary cause of domestic abuse in some individuals, however, for many the drivers of their behaviour are more complex. For some individuals, anger management is not an issue at all and their use of violence is instrumental in nature. Anger management work may therefore be useful for helping some individuals to deal with their emotions more effectively, which in turn may reduce abusive behaviour. It is important to note, however, that anger management programmes generally do not have the same focus on victim safety which is present in DVPPs. Additionally, if anger management is not the main driver of someone's abusive behaviour, an anger management intervention is unlikely to be sufficient.

Case study

In a mental health support session Craig discloses that he has been abusive in his relationship and is currently on probation. His mental health worker contacts Craig's Offender Manager who tells her that Craig is currently doing BBR. The mental health worker is put in contact with the facilitators running BBR who are able to give her some tips on how to engage Craig effectively.

³⁶ e.g. Norlander, B & Eckhardt, C (2005) Anger, hostility, and male perpetrators of intimate partner violence: A Meta-analytic review. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 25, 119 – 152.

³⁷ Anderson, C.A., & Bushman, B.J. (2002). Human aggression. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 53, 27 – 51.

Case study

At a session with his substance misuse worker Mohammed says that he is having problems in his relationship. He discloses that he has been hitting his partner and that they are thinking of going to couple's counselling. The worker recommends that Mohammed looks into DVPPs before going to couples counselling so that his partner feels safe. The worker contacts local police domestic violence contact to make them aware of the risk to Mohammed's partner

Practice points

- You should find out if you have a local DVPP and check that referral protocols are established between the programme and the Public Services organisation
- You should seek advice from statutory agencies such as the police and HMPPS. The individual may already be known to services, have existing monitoring and supervision arrangements or be eligible to be referred into such services. Services working with the individual may be able to provide guidance on how to support their work in addition to providing tips for managing the individual within your own remit
- You should seek advice from Respect; a UK association for domestic violence perpetrator programmes and associated women's services behaviour which can offer expert advice to professionals working with perpetrators - *respect.uk.net*
- You should avoid initiatives that are not evidence-based or safe for victims of domestic abuse. You should seek advice from your local specialist service if you are unsure

Strategy point

- You should consider and assess local need in relation to service provision for perpetrators. Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programmes have shown a return on investment and the inclusion of a DVPP within local service provision may satisfy an un-met service need which is cost effective

10. The role of Welsh Public Services in multi-agency partnerships related to domestic abuse

10.1 Several multi agency fora exist in relation to domestic abuse. Whilst the focus of such partnerships varies, each has a role to play in addressing perpetrator behaviour. Engaging effectively in such fora will be important if Welsh Public Services are to play their full part in addressing perpetrator behaviour. Public Services are in an excellent position to provide useful information about the perpetrator and from the perpetrator's perspective, which can be invaluable to safety planning.

Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)

10.2 Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) are designed to protect the public, including previous victims of crime, from serious harm by sexual and violent offenders. They require the local criminal justice agencies and other bodies dealing with offenders to work together in partnership in dealing with these offenders.

10.3 MAPPA was established under the Criminal Justice Act 2003 ("the 2003 Act"). MAPPA is not a statutory body in itself but is a mechanism through which agencies can better discharge their statutory responsibilities and protect the public in a co-ordinated manner.

10.4 The MAPPA is made up of several component groups; the Responsible Authority (as defined in the 2003 Act) is the primary agency for MAPPA

and includes the police, prison and probation service. The Responsible Authority has a duty to ensure that the risks posed by specified sexual and violent offenders are assessed and managed appropriately.

- 10.5 Other bodies have a “duty to co-operate” with the Responsible Authority in this task. These “duty to co-operate” agencies are required to work with the Responsible Authority on particular aspects of an offender’s life (e.g. education, employment, housing, social care).
- 10.6 MAPPA offenders are managed at one of three levels according to the extent of agency involvement needed and the number of different agencies involved. The great majority are managed at level 1 (ordinary agency management). This involves the sharing of information but does not require multi-agency meetings. The others are managed at level 2 if an active multi-agency approach is required (MAPPA meetings), and at level 3 if senior representatives of the relevant agencies with the authority to commit resources are also needed. Once offenders have been identified as MAPPA offenders, the risk they pose is assessed. This risk includes the risk of reconviction, the risk of reoffending, or the risk of serious harm.
- 10.7 Having assessed the risk that each offender poses, the MAPPA agencies will prepare a detailed and robust Risk Management Plan. The vast majority of MAPPA offenders will be managed through the ordinary management of one agency, although this will usually involve the sharing of information with other relevant agencies. The structural basis for the discussion of MAPPA offenders who need active inter-agency management, including their risk assessment and risk management, is the MAPPA meeting. Agencies that have a duty to co-operate are invited to attend for any offender in respect of whom they can provide additional support and management. The frequency of meetings depends on the level of management deemed appropriate for each offender.

- 10.8 The supervision of the work of the MAPPA is carried out by the Strategic Management Board (“SMB”) in each area. It has a range of governance-related functions, including monitoring performance, ensuring anti-discriminatory practice, measuring compliance with the MAPPA Key Performance Indicators (“KPIs”), and producing the annual MAPPA report.
- 10.9 The Criminal Justice Act 2003 also provides for an independent perspective on the work of these groups by means of lay advisers, who are members of the public. The Secretary of State has a statutory duty to appoint two lay advisers to each Responsible Authority area.
- 10.10 MAPPA meetings should be attended by the police, National Probation Service and where appropriate a representative from HM Prison Service. Where the offender is a young person, a representative of the Youth Offending Team and Children’s Services must attend. Where the referral has come from another agency, the case manager from that agency must attend with any other colleagues who are required to assist in the risk assessment and management of the offender. Neither offenders nor their representatives are permitted to attend MAPPA meetings. Public Services will be able to feed information into MAPPA meetings, potentially attending where appropriate.

Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)

- 10.11 MARACs are regular local multi agency meetings which discuss victims at high risk of murder or serious harm due to domestic abuse.
- 10.12 MARACs are not statutory but there is at least one in every local authority in Wales. The meeting is generally attended by domestic abuse specialists, police, probation, children’s social services, health and other relevant agencies which share relevant information held by their organisation and use this to understand the risks posed to victims and their children. Together, MARAC attendees develop an action plan

for each victim, designed to offer them appropriate support and mitigate the risks involved.

- 10.13 The central focus of the MARAC is the safety of the adult victim and children; however, it is widely acknowledged that such safety can only be achieved if the behaviour of the alleged perpetrator is addressed effectively. It is therefore essential that the MARAC considers information about the alleged perpetrator, and that actions are agreed within the safety plan that directly addresses the abusive behaviour. Public Services are in an excellent position to inform MARAC meetings in this way.

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

- 10.14 A MASH approach has been adopted in some parts of Wales to support information sharing in safeguarding for children and vulnerable people. The common purpose is to improve intelligence and facilitate an effective, timely safeguarding response through collaborative decision-making.
- 10.15 The MASH aims to provide an integrated approach where a number of agencies work together in one place, sharing information and making collaborative safeguarding decisions. The MASH model undertaken locally varies but in many cases domestic abuse forms part of the caseload.
- 10.16 The MASH team (which may include social services, police, Offender Managers, Education and Housing) receive safeguarding referrals. Following receipt of these, each agency gathers and shares relevant information to enable risk assessment, decision-making and allocation to the most suitable agency.

Case study

Adam is Sue's housing officer. Through his contact with Sue he knows that she currently has no fixed abode as she has separated from her partner. Adam is also aware that Sue has previously been convicted of domestic violence and is under MAPPA. He speaks to the local MAPPA co-ordinator and attends the next meeting about Sue so he can update them with his information

Practice points

- Ensure your organisation is appropriately represented at all relevant multi-agency fora. These fora only work when all relevant agencies are represented and can offer innovative and creative (but still evidenced-based, safe and effective) ways of action planning for families affected by domestic abuse. It may be useful to have a designated member of staff and a deputy to attend these meetings to ensure consistency
- Local DVPPs and those working with perpetrators should be appropriately represented within multi-agency fora. When they are not present, the lack of information from and about the perpetrator is often significant; information about increasing risk may be missed and safeguarding plans may be compromised
- Anyone who has received an indeterminate sentence is subject to a lengthy licence, which can be reactivated if their behaviour deteriorates. Raising concerns to the appropriate criminal justice service may help them have the evidence they need to put support and monitoring procedures back in place

Strategy point

- Leaders should ensure their workforce is aware of the role it can play in statutory services. There should be a clear message that the agency co-ordinates with statutory services and that doing so saves lives

11. The role of Welsh Public Services in relation to risk identification, assessment and mitigation

- 11.1 Research has identified risk factors that are linked to increased risk of harm to victims of VAWDASV. Risk identification and assessment is a common activity related to work with victims and often involves working with victims to understand the risk posed to them by the person who is abusing them. As there is overlap between risk factors for domestic abuse and sexual violence, both are considered within this section.
- 11.2 Clearly, given that it is perpetrators who pose the risk, it is important that work is completed to understand the dynamics of their behaviour in order to mitigate or remove this risk. Assessing risk of this kind is a specialist piece of work and should be undertaken either by specialist support agencies, HMPPS in Wales or in partnership with either of these agencies. In most cases these organisations use specialist tools in order to facilitate this work.
- 11.3 Specialist training should be undertaken before assessing the risk posed by perpetrators of VAWDASV or providing interventions to address their behaviour. Practitioners without these skills should focus their interventions on the safety of adult victims and children, seek advice from specialist services, colleagues or HMPPS in Wales and (wherever possible) signpost perpetrators to specialist services.
- 11.4 It is important, nevertheless, for all organisations working with families affected by violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence to ensure that any work they do with those who use violence and abuse against their partners or family members does not increase the risk of further abuse to victims or their children. **The safety of victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence must always be the primary concern of all organisations.**

11.5 In order to ensure this focus on victim safety, it is important that Welsh Public Services have a basic understanding of risk linked to perpetrator behaviour and can use this within their work to enhance and improve the safety of victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence. Increasing awareness of indicators of increased risk will allow Public Services to inform statutory and safeguarding agencies when they observe concerning behaviour, thus improving victim safety.

11.6 The following list is not intended for use as a risk identification or assessment checklist for use with perpetrators as it is not yet possible to provide such a tool due to the complex nature of the problem and the need for specialist input in risk assessment. However, the following factors have been linked to increased risk of harm towards adult victims, children and other vulnerable parties, serial abuse, repeat abuse and high risk abuse. The presence of them may also place organisations' staff in danger.³⁸

A history of previous victims suggests that an individual's risk factors may be quite entrenched	Suicidal thoughts or threats is linked to use of lethal violence as the person may feel that he/she has nothing to lose
Escalation of abusive behaviour is associated with the increased risk of serious harm due to increased frequency, variety or severity of abusive behaviours	Distorted thinking about domestic abuse includes denying and minimising abuse and holding attitudes that support abusive behaviour and sexual jealousy
A history of trauma is linked to risk of VAWDASV as it can interfere with a perpetrator's emotional development. Abuse can occur in the context of PTSD and perpetrators may fear	Employment or financial difficulties can lead to frustrations being taken out on the victim. Unemployment also increases the amount of time a perpetrator is with a victim and

³⁸ Amended from guidance for MARACs on addressing the behaviour of alleged perpetrators.
<http://www.safelives.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/Perpetrator%20guidance%20for%20MARACs%20FINAL.pdf>

further victimisation and use violence to protect themselves	therefore their opportunities to be abusive
Substance misuse , particularly alcohol, is associated with increased risk of domestic abuse. Substances can work as a dis-inhibitor for VAWDASV, potentially leading to explosive or uncontrolled outbursts	Major mental illness , particularly depression and anxiety, can make people more prone to making impulsive and irrational decisions to use violence
Anti-social behaviour may indicate a lack of appropriate boundaries for behaviour and a tendency for impulsive and aggressive reactions	Personality disorder , particularly anti-social, borderline and narcissistic, are associated with increased risk of domestic abuse
Impulsivity can lead to the consequences of abusive behaviour not being considered and risky/impulsive behaviour leading to situations where abuse is more likely	Distorted thoughts about sexual violence can include believing men have a right to sex, that women can't be trusted and that sex with children is not harmful
Homelessness can increase risk as the perpetrator may have nowhere else to go than the victim's residence. It also increased instability and increased substance misuse	Stalking or harassment can indicate an ongoing obsession with the victim and is also linked with increased severity of violence where there has previously been violence in the relationship
Problems with intimate relationships can lead to VAWDASV when abuse is used to maintain or control the relationship or sexual violence is used in an attempt to achieve intimacy	Sexual preoccupation may present as having lots of casual sex, high levels of masturbation, sexualising non-sexual situations or thinking about sex a lot
Problems managing extreme emotions is when someone is unable to control their urges, for example, a 'red mist' or strong urges to expose themselves	Poor problem solving can result in domestic abuse or sexual violence being used as a way to solve a problem or the build-up of unresolved problems leading to abusive outbursts

Sexual interest in offending includes being aroused by the use of violence, having sex with children, voyeurism and exposing oneself	MAPPA/MARAC/WISDOM involvement in a case indicates that the perpetrator has been identified as presenting a higher level of risk
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Risk to self

- 11.7 Those working in Public Services should be alert to the potential risk a perpetrator poses to themselves. Perpetrators may be struggling to deal with their own traumatic experiences. They may have mental health problems that they find difficult to manage. They may be ashamed of their abusive behaviour or believe that they have ruined their lives through their behaviour or because others have found out. They may be distraught by the impact of their behaviour on their access to their children. Risk to self is a significant concern for domestic abuse perpetrators and should be taken seriously. In addition to the concern about the risk to the perpetrator themselves, feeling suicidal is a significant risk factor for the use of lethal violence in a domestic situation and is linked to family annihilation offences.
- 11.8 If professionals have concerns that perpetrators may pose a risk to themselves, they should ensure they share this information with others involved in the care of the individual in addition to relevant safeguarding agencies.

Case study

Jerome's housing officer becomes aware that he will soon be have no fixed abode. The officer knows that Jerome is being monitored by the MAPPA process, so speaks to the local contact to pass on the information

Case study

Llinos' children are subject to child protection measures due to her violence towards her previous partner. Her substance misuse worker is aware that Llinos' substance misuse has got worse. The worker informs the child protection team to let them know that the risk Llinos poses may have increased

Case study

Amar seemed very depressed in his recent jobseekers review with Steven. He talked about not seeing any point in trying to get work anymore because nothing was ever going to work out for him. He said his whole life was a mess and he can't see any way out. Steven gathered more information about how long Amar had been feeling like this and if he had any plans to hurt himself or others. Although Amar said no, Steven encouraged him to speak to his support network, particularly his Offender Manager and his GP about how he was feeling. After the meeting, Steven contacted Amar's Offender Manager to let him know that his risk might have increased.

11.a The Priority Perpetrator Identification Tool³⁹

- 11.9 In 2013 the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) Cymru partnership commissioned research on how 'serial domestic abuse' is understood, defined and recorded by police forces, probation providers and third sector partners across Wales. This led to the development of the Priority Perpetrator Identification Tool (PPIT), incorporating serial, repeat and high-risk offending into a single tool with input and agreement across relevant agencies (e.g., police, Criminal Justice and Third Sector).

³⁹ Robinson, A. L. and Clancy, A. (2015). *Development of the Priority Perpetrator Identification Tool (PPIT) for Domestic Abuse*. Cardiff: Cardiff University. Available at: <http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/people/view/38078-robinson-amanda>

11.10 The PPIT was intended to complement and draw upon other existing tools (e.g., the Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour Based Violence assessment for victims - DASH, Offender Assessment System – OASys and Spousal Abuse Risk Assessment⁴⁰ for perpetrators - SARA) so that agencies can reliably identify those individuals whose offending behaviour requires priority action. The PPIT was envisioned as an instrument to be used to trigger an intervention, rather than an intervention itself.⁴¹

11.11 In 2016, a review of the PPIT was completed⁴², examining how it was used by practitioners and their views of the tool. The study found that there were significant differences between those identified as priority and those not considered to be priority cases. However, concerns were raised by users that the PPIT appeared to be a repetition of existing work (e.g. the DASH and the SARA) and were unclear about its purpose. A 2017 publication identified that the PPIT was proving useful in terms of increasing the attention given to domestic abuse cases (in that all cases within an area were subject to the assessment), and in directing resources for those cases considered to be priority. Due to the stage of the current pilot, it has not yet been possible to assess the impact of the PPIT on recidivism or whether it improves victim and child safety⁴³.

Practice points

- You should monitor and gather the following information (where available) within your own case files and share the information with relevant agencies if it is appropriate and lawful:
 - Accurate, up to date personal details, including any aliases

⁴⁰ Kropp, P. R., & Hart, S. D. (2015). SARA-V3 User Manual for Version 3 of the Spousal Assault Risk Assessment Guide. ProActive ReSolutions Inc: U.S.

⁴¹ Robinson, A. L. and Clancy, A. (2015). *Development of the Priority Perpetrator Identification Tool (PPIT) for Domestic Abuse*. Cardiff: Cardiff University. Available at: <http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/people/view/38078-robinson-amanda>

⁴² Robinson, A. & Clancy, A. (2016). *All-Wales Implementation Testing of the Priority Perpetrator Identification Tool (PPIT) for Domestic Abuse*. Cardiff: Cardiff University. Available at <http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/people/view/38078-robinson-amanda>

⁴³ Robinson, A & Clancy, A. (2017). *New initiatives to tackle domestic violence using the Priority Perpetrator Identification Tool (PPIT)*. Cardiff: Cardiff University. <http://orca.cf.ac.uk/107138/1/Robinson%20%26%20Clancy%20%282017%29%20New%20PPIT%20Initiatives%20for%20Tackling%20Domestic%20Abuse.pdf>

- Whether the person has been abusive in the past
 - Any child protection concerns
 - All intimate relationships and children they have contact with
 - Offending behaviour, police markers and intelligence relevant to domestic abuse including arson, threats to kill, sexual violence, extreme levels of control, or stalking
 - Any employment, interests or activities which involve physical ability, weapons, or access to specialist detective or IT skills
 - Any vehicles, premises and IT systems the perpetrator has access to
 - Drug or alcohol misuse and/or mental ill health issues
 - Any known risks to professionals such as aggressive behaviour or drug paraphernalia in the home
 - Health or wellbeing issues which affect their likelihood of further perpetrating violence and abuse
 - Other relevant information, e.g. financial difficulties, pet abuse, cultural practices, any history of fire setting
- Ensure staff are aware of indicators of increased risk for VAWDASV and how they can pass this information on to statutory and safeguarding agencies

Strategy point

- Agencies should ensure they have a policy for managing service users who pose a risk to themselves

12. Internal considerations for Public Services

- 12.1 The widespread nature of domestic abuse means that in all workplaces there will be staff members who have been affected by domestic abuse, either as a victim, a perpetrator or a witness. In addition, workplaces can be a high risk location for victims of domestic abuse as the perpetrator knows where they are and is often familiar with the

victim's colleagues⁴⁴. Public sector workplaces must therefore take responsibility for protecting their staff and supporting employees who may be concerned about their own behaviour.

12.a Workplace culture

- 12.2 Victims report experiencing significant difficulty in being open about their experiences of abuse or sharing concerns about their safety. While this is due to myriad factors, one contributory aspect is the culture of their social and employment circles. Cultural attitudes are often implicitly supportive of abuse, for example, by supporting traditional roles, normalising jealousy or reinforcing the idea that what happens 'behind closed doors' is no-one else's business. In addition, where a perpetrator knows the victim's colleagues, the victim may fear reprisals for speaking up or not being believed.
- 12.3 Perpetrators may seek support from their colleagues by minimising their abusive behaviour, encouraging others to view the victim as irrational or unreasonable, or seeking out others who support their abuse supportive attitudes.
- 12.4 Public Services should ensure they develop a workplace culture where healthy relationships are understood, inappropriate attitudes towards relationships, women and abuse are challenged and both victims and perpetrators feel able to be open about their concerns. This can be achieved through education, training and information giving, and workplace policy.
- 12.5 It is important that staff who are concerned about their own behaviour are supported. Public Services are encouraged to support colleagues who make such disclosures by adopting a non-judgemental approach, providing time to attend appointments designed to address the problem (e.g. medical appointments or domestic violence perpetrator

⁴⁴ e.g. Kropp, P. R., Hart, S. D., & Lyon, D. (2008). *Guidelines for Stalking Assessment and Management (SAM)*. Vancouver, British Columbia: ProActive ReSolutions, Inc.

programmes) and ensuring the individual is not subject to judgement by others within the organisation. Confidentiality is vital in ensuring that individuals feel safe to make disclosures and use available support.

12.b Education, training and information giving

- 12.6 Ask and Act training is being provided as part of the national training framework on a phased basis to relevant authorities (with a focus on public facing staff) to support them to recognise the signs of domestic abuse and approaching victims with their concerns. Where possible this knowledge should be cascaded to other staff. There is little focus on perpetrators within this training, and therefore supplementary information, such as that provided within this guidance, is likely to be required.
- 12.7 Information regarding the different forms abuse can take should be provided to all staff to raise awareness of what is and is not healthy behaviour in relationships.
- 12.8 All public-facing staff and line managers should ensure they are aware of indicators of increased risk in terms of domestic violence, as abuse can quickly escalate to life threatening levels.
- 12.9 All staff should be directed towards ACEs resources to increase awareness of the impact of ACEs and the importance of breaking the cycle. The following brief video is an excellent introduction to the topic: <http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/888/page/91667>
- 12.10 All staff should be provided with information on how to raise concerns about clients, colleagues and themselves.
- 12.11 Information should be easily available providing details of support services for victims and perpetrators concerned about their own behaviour. This information should be available in communal areas

such as staff rooms alongside other staff support information so that it can be easily, but not obviously, accessed.

12.c Policy

- 12.12 All Public Services employers should have a workplace policy regarding VAWDASV and give consideration to a specific policy relating to domestic abuse. Policies should provide guidance on procedures for line managers and colleagues when concerns about domestic abuse have been raised, in addition to official expectations relating to abusive behaviour.
- 12.13 The Equalities and Human Rights Commission offers guidance for employers on how to support staff and develop policy⁴⁵. The HMPPS workplace policy on domestic abuse⁴⁶ may serve as a useful example of good practice.

Case study

Geraint has recently been arrested for assault against his wife. He has informed his line manager and is very ashamed of his behaviour. He is keen to get whatever help he can. Geraint's manager thanks him for being open about what has happened and relays how positive it is that he wants help. She also informs him that there may be consequences for his employment if he is convicted, but that this is something that can be looked at later. She gives Geraint contact details for staff support services and signposts support agencies that may be able to help him. Geraint's HR file is updated with details of the conversation and actions taken

⁴⁵ <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/domestic-abuse-workplace-policies-and-managing-and-supporting-employees>

⁴⁶ <https://intranet.justice.gov.uk/documents/2015/04/domestic-violence-policy-guidance.pdf>

Case study

Staff have reported that Ffion has been overheard several times shouting and swearing at her girlfriend over the phone. When she gets off the phone, Ffion talks disparagingly about her girlfriend and makes jokes about her being useless. Ffion's colleagues are uncomfortable with this behaviour, but are wary of challenging her in case she reacts badly. Ffion's manager chats with her about how things are going at home and feeds back that she has been overheard being quite aggressive over the phone. The manager listens to Ffion's concerns and offers her appropriate support. She is reminded of the domestic violence policy and encouraged to see how her behaviour when she's on the phone and the comments she makes about her girlfriend are inconsistent with this policy. Her manager informs her that aggressive behaviour will not be tolerated within the office environment regardless of who she is talking to. The manager provides Ffion with information about staff support services and signposts support agencies that may be able to help her. The manager contacts the local domestic violence contact and logs a potential concern regarding Ffion's girlfriend. As Ffion does not work directly with services users, there are no safeguarding concerns relating the service users. All of this is logged in Ffion's HR file.

Practice points

- You should increase awareness of domestic abuse across your service through training and communication
- Helpline information for both victims and perpetrators should be displayed within workplaces
- You should develop a domestic violence policy for your service

- The domestic violence policy should be linked to other workplace policies so that perpetration is linked to performance management and conduct
- Caution should be used when discussing potential perpetration with staff. Perpetrators may become embarrassed, aggressive or defensive and staff safety should be considered. Challenging a perpetrator directly may inadvertently increase risk to the victim and therefore should be done with caution
- Records of discussions with perpetrators should be kept
- Where concerns are raised about a third party, the local domestic violence contact should be contacted for advice
- Employers should be aware of potential safeguarding issues if a perpetrator works with service users
- Sources of support should be identified and in place before policies or training are introduced to ensure anyone who discloses or is distressed by memories of previous abuse can be supported
- Employers should be aware that line managers who have disclosures made to them may require support

Strategy points

- Senior managers should lead on developing a workplace culture that promotes healthy relationships. The culture should recognise that abuse can occur to anyone, not just service users
- Agencies should ensure that employees who disclose are supported in seeking help and that the local culture makes it easy for them to do so

Appendices

Appendix 1: Practice Points

Section 8: Practice Considerations

Practice points

- Information sharing protocols should be developed between agencies to ensure information can be shared quickly and easily when risks are identified
- Perpetrators and victims should be worked with separately wherever possible to minimise risk to victims and encourage open disclosure
- Risk assessments should be conducted for any situation that requires the presence of both victims and perpetrators
- Information regarding risk to staff should be recorded clearly on files and shared with all staff involved in the case
- Risk assessments should be conducted for all home visits where domestic abuse is considered a concern. Where risk to staff is deemed to be high, lone working should be avoided
- Staff working with domestic abuse cases should be provided with support. Peer or clinical supervision can provide a useful forum for discussing cases and guarding against collusion or manipulation. External support should be made available where possible for staff affected by this work
- Agencies should develop contacts with local marginalised communities and groups to ensure they are aware of the issues affecting them
- Clear records should be kept by each agency. Where domestic abuse concerns are present it should be clearly labelled. Records should include decision logs and defensible decision making is essential

Strategy Points

- Senior Leaders should ensure interagency working and information sharing is part of their organisational remit
- Leaders should encourage a culture of appropriate information sharing and an understanding that sharing information can save lives

Section 9: Welsh Public Services as referring agencies

Practice points

- You should identify contacts within your local police force who can be contacted if you have concerns about imminent risk
- You should have information sharing protocols with local Criminal Justice service providers to ensure there are no unnecessary delays when concerns need to be raised
- Briefings should be provided to staff to inform them of when and how to refer a case to local Criminal Justice agencies
- You should find out if you have a local DVPP and check that referral protocols are established between the programme and the Public Services organisation
- You should seek advice from statutory agencies such as the police and HMPPS. The individual may already be known to services, have existing monitoring and supervision arrangements or be eligible to be referred into such services. Services working with the individual may be able to provide guidance on how to support their work in addition to providing tips for managing the individual within your own remit
- You should seek advice from Respect; a UK association for domestic violence perpetrator programmes and associated women's services

behaviour which can offer expert advice to professionals working with perpetrators - *respect.uk.net*

- You should avoid initiatives which are not evidence-based or safe for victims of domestic abuse. You should seek advice from your local specialist service if you are unsure

Strategy point

- You should consider and assess local need in relation to service provision for perpetrators. Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programmes have shown a return on investment and the inclusion of a DVPP within local service provision may satisfy an un-met service need which is cost effective

Section 10: Multi-Agency partnerships

Practice points

- Ensure your organisation is appropriately represented at all relevant multi-agency fora. These fora only work when all relevant agencies are represented and can offer innovative and creative (but still evidence-based, safe and effective) ways of action planning for families affected by domestic abuse. It may be useful to have a designated member of staff and a deputy to attend these meetings to ensure consistency
- Local DVPPs and those working with perpetrators should be appropriately represented within multi-agency fora. When they are not present, the lack of information from and about the perpetrator is often significant; information about increasing risk may be missed and safeguarding plans may be compromised
- Anyone who has received an indeterminate sentence is subject to a lengthy licence, which can be reactivated if their behaviour deteriorates. Raising concerns to the appropriate criminal justice service may help them have the evidence they need to put support and monitoring procedures back in place

Strategy point

- Leaders should ensure their workplace is aware of the role they can play in statutory services. There should be a clear message that the agency co-ordinates with statutory services and that doing so saves lives

Section 11: risk identification, assessment and mitigation

Practice points

- You should monitor and gather the following information (where available) within your own case files and share the information with relevant agencies if it is appropriate and lawful:
 - Accurate, up to date personal details, including any aliases
 - Whether the person has been abusive in the past
 - Any child protection concerns
 - All intimate relationships and children they have contact with
 - Offending behaviour, police markers and intelligence relevant to domestic abuse including arson, threats to kill, sexual violence, extreme levels of control, or stalking
 - Any employment, interests or activities which involve physical ability, weapons, or access to specialist detective or IT skills
 - Any vehicles, premises and IT systems the perpetrator has access to.
 - Drug or alcohol misuse and/or mental ill health issues
 - Any known risks to professionals such as aggressive behaviour or drug paraphernalia in the home
 - Health or wellbeing issues which affect their likelihood of further perpetrating violence and abuse
 - Other relevant information, e.g. financial difficulties, pet abuse, cultural practices, any history of fire setting
- Ensure staff are aware of indicators of increased risk for VAWDASV and how they can pass this information on to statutory and safeguarding agencies

Strategy point

- Agencies should ensure they have a policy for managing service users who pose a risk to themselves

Section 12: Internal considerations**Practice points**

- You should increase awareness of domestic abuse across your service through training and communication
- Helpline information for both victims and perpetrators should be displayed within workplaces
- You should develop a domestic violence policy for your service
- The domestic violence policy should be linked to other workplace policies so that perpetration is linked to performance management and conduct
- Caution should be used when discussing potential perpetration with staff. Perpetrators may become embarrassed, aggressive or defensive and staff safety should be considered. Challenging a perpetrator directly may inadvertently increase risk to the victim and therefore should be done with caution
- Records of discussions with perpetrators should be kept
- Where concerns are raised about a third party, the local domestic violence contact should be contacted for advice
- Employers should be aware of potential safeguarding issues if a perpetrator works with service users

- Sources of support should be identified and in place before policies or training are introduced to ensure anyone who discloses or is distressed by memories of previous abuse can be supported
- Employers should be aware that line managers who have disclosures made to them may require support

Strategy point

- Senior managers should lead on developing a workplace culture that promotes healthy relationships. The culture should recognise that abuse can occur to anyone, not just service users
- Agencies should ensure that employees who disclose are supported in seeking help and that the local culture makes it easy for them to do so

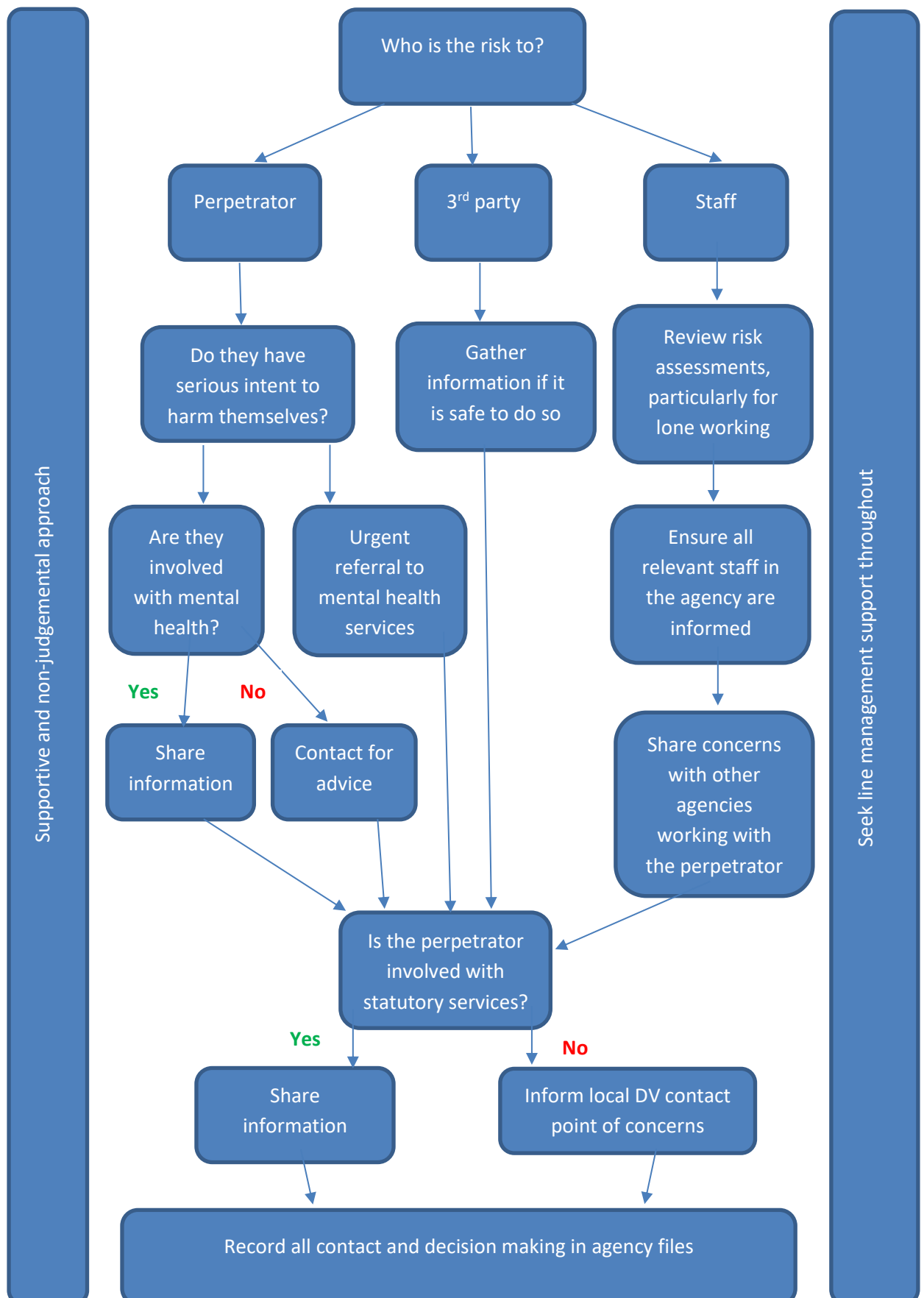
Appendix 2: Summary briefing

Summary Briefing: Good practice guidance for the non-specialist Welsh Public Services on working with adult perpetrators of Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence

NB: All public servants are advised to read the guidance in its entirety.

- Domestic abuse is everyone's responsibility
- It is widespread and affects people from all walks of life
- Perpetrators can be our service users, our colleagues or ourselves
- It is important that we all have a better understanding of what domestic abuse is and what indicators of increased risk look like. We must also understand what makes a healthy relationship
- Only by working with perpetrators can we hope to break the cycle of abuse and prevent future victims
- The reasons people are abusive can be very complex. Perpetrators often have a history of adverse childhood experiences that have an impact on how they are in relationships
- Perpetrators can pose a risk to themselves as well as others. When perpetrators are suicidal or have lost all hope, it can be very risky for victims
- Public Services are in a prime position to identify people who are at risk of being abusive. They can then support them and inform safety plans for potential victims
- Assessment and treatment of perpetrators should only be completed by suitably trained specialists, but you can make a difference in your role by:
 - Noticing indicators of emerging risk and offering people support
 - Supporting perpetrators when they make disclosures
 - Signposting perpetrators to suitable services
 - Sharing information about potential risk to victims with statutory agencies
 - Supporting your staff in dealing with challenging behaviour by perpetrators
 - Challenging inappropriate attitudes or culture in the workplace
 - Increasing your knowledge of healthy relationships and reinforcing that in your own life and social circle
- **The safety of victims should be the priority of Public Services**
- **Sharing information saves lives**

Appendix 3: What to do if you're concerned about risk flow chart



Appendix 4: Definitions

Abuse (as defined by the Act): Physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial abuse

ACEs: Adverse childhood experiences. Traumatic events that children can be exposed to while growing up, that continue to affect them into adulthood. These can include neglect and physical, verbal and sexual abuse, in addition to factors within their home environments, such as exposure to domestic violence, family breakdown, and living in a home affected by substance abuse, mental illness or criminal behaviour. ACEs can affect neurological development resulting in difficulties with emotional control. Children who experience ACEs are more likely to adopt health-harming and anti-social behaviours as an adult, with an increasing number of ACEs resulting in an increased harmful behaviours⁴⁷

Building Better Relationships (BBR): A programme for male perpetrators of violence and abuse within (heterosexual) intimate relationships. BBR is run within prison and community delivery sites and aims to increase understanding of motivating factors in domestic violence, reduce individual risk factors linked to violence and develop pro-social relationship skills

Client: a person experiencing violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence. This encompasses the terms “victim”, “survivor”, “service user” and “patient”. Different partners use different words to define their relationship to the person at risk and so the guidance reflects this

In practice, those experiencing violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence select the term they prefer, where a term is required. It should generally be possible to use a client’s name rather than other descriptive terms

⁴⁷ Public Health Wales <http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/888/page/88504>

Coercive Control: as defined by The Serious Crime Act 2015 is a purposeful pattern of behaviour which takes place over time in order for one individual to exert power, control or coercion over another⁴⁸

Collaboration: a co-ordinated interagency response via a formal structure, or forum where the primary focus is to safeguard the victim, reduce secondary victimisation and hold perpetrators to account. The forum, should:

- (a) adopt consistent, joint policies and procedures, including an agreed risk assessment and risk management and safety plan, which co-ordinates and standardises the professional interventions for all those at risk and which reduces the risk of harm;
- (b) share information to increase the safety, health and well-being of adult victims/survivors and their children;
- (c) work to reduce repeat victimisation;
- (d) improve agency accountability;
- (e) improve support, including training, for all staff involved in domestic abuse cases; and
- (f) determine whether the alleged perpetrator poses a significant risk to any particular individual or to the general community

Domestic abuse: Abuse where the victim is or has been associated with the abuser

A person is associated with another person for the purpose of the definition of “domestic abuse” if they fall within the definition in section 24 of the VAWDASV (Wales) Act 2015

Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programmes (DVPPs): group work programmes which work directly with perpetrators with the aim of changing their behaviour and stopping further abuse and violence

⁴⁸ Home Office (2016) *Controlling or Coercive Behaviour in an Intimate or Family Relationship Statutory Guidance Framework*. Home Office

Gender-based Violence: as defined by the VAWDASV (Wales) Act 2015: (a) violence, threats of violence or harassment arising directly or indirectly from values, beliefs or customs relating to gender or sexual orientation; (b) female genital mutilation; (c) forcing a person (whether by physical force or coercion by threats or other psychological means) to enter into a religious or civil ceremony of marriage (whether or not legally binding)

Harassment: as defined by the VAWDASV (Wales) Act 2015: A course of conduct by a person which he or she knows or ought to know amounts to harassment of the other; and for the purpose of this definition:

- (a) a person ought to know that his or her conduct amounts to or involves harassment if a reasonable person in possession of the same information would think the course of conduct amounted to or involved harassment of another person; and
- (b) “conduct” includes speech

HMPPS: Her Majesty’s Prison and Probation Service, which manages the risk presented by perpetrators of VAWDASV in addition to providing interventions in both custodial and community settings

Independent Domestic Violence Adviser (IDVA): Trained specialist worker who provides short to medium-term casework support for high risk victims of domestic abuse

Local Authority: A county or county borough council

MARAC: Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference

MASH: Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub

MAPPA: Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements

Prosperity for All strategy: The Welsh Government’s strategy for taking forward its programme for Government that aims to deliver prosperity for all

by focussing on the following themes: prosperous and secure; healthy and active; ambitious and learning and united and connected

Perpetrator: either convicted or non-convicted individuals who use violence and abuse towards partners, ex partners or family members

Primary Perpetrator: the person who has the relationship with the victim

Proxy perpetrators: third parties who engage in abusive behaviour towards the victim on behalf of the primary perpetrator

Public Services: services provided by the government or official body delivered for the benefit of the public. This can include services delivered through the third sector, through social enterprise or through services that are contracted out

Relevant authorities: county councils, county borough councils, Local Health Boards, Fire and Rescue Authorities and NHS trusts

Secondary victims: individuals who are harmed due to the abusive relationship, for example, children, family members, bystanders, new partners

Sexual exploitation (as defined by the Act): something that is done to or in respect of a person which

- (a) involves the commission of an offence under Part 1 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (c. 42), as it has an effect in England and Wales, or
- (b) would involve the commission of such an offence if it were done in England and Wales;

Sexual Violence (as defined by the Act): sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, or threats of violence of a sexual nature

The Act: The Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015

Victim: an individual who is subject to abusive behaviour by another individual

Violence against women: The experience of gender-based violence (as defined in the Act) by women

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015: This Act aims to improve the social, educational, cultural and economic well-being of Wales. It requires public bodies to give greater consideration to the long term, work together in a more joined up way and work effectively with the public

Welsh public sector: All relevant authorities as defined by section 14 of the Act