**Welfare Questions about Domestic Abuse and Honour Based Violence**

Home should be a place of safety, but lockdown measures to prevent the spread of Covid-19 mean that victims of domestic abuse may be trapped at home with abusive partners.

Children are the silent victims of domestic abuse, with no schools open, they are also locked into situations with few opportunities to gain support.

Local agencies are receiving less self-referrals and nationally domestic homicides have increased. **It is everyone’s responsibility to safeguard families; during lockdown YOU may be a victim’s only link to help and support**.

It is therefore especially important for us ALL to ask all clients questions about life at home so we can reassure victims that support is available and will continue to be available for them and their children if they need it.

**When disclosures are made, you are not expected to offer specialist DA support**, there is a list of phone numbers at the end of this document that you can refer families to; or that you can ring if you feel somebody may be subjected to abuse.

**Starting a conversation about welfare:** We know that lockdown is stressful and difficult and are asking all clients if they need any support, is everything ok for you (and the children) at home?

**Questions you could ask, depending on the family, your role and your instincts:**

Do you feel safe in your home? Can you talk safely?

Would you like support?

If yes – do you want me to ring police?

If they say no to police- advise that support agencies still working by telephone or online

Ask, if it is safe to jot down a number?

Ask, if they are able to check up numbers on the internet? (if they say yes, ask them to remember to delete internet searches)

Is it safe for us to send you information about services/support by email? (general services on directories e.g. Early Help include DA Service information)

**Probing questions may include:**

Are you able to speak freely, can you move to another room? Maybe suggest they say you can’t hear them so they need to move somewhere else in the house

How are you finding being isolated, are you able to take some time out for yourself?

Are you staying in contact with friends and extended family?

Are you able to get to the shops/take exercise? Is this on your own or always with a family member?

What does a typical day look like for you?

Are you getting help at home?

**N.B.**

Never tell or advise someone to leave a situation immediately (unless there is imminent danger). Planning to leave safely is essential to enable chances of escaping abuse, especially when children are involved.

If working with a victim of DA, professionals should consider CODE Words with clients, to enable clients to identify danger and ask for help if required.

Professional should always consider honour based abuse and harmful practices when working with families/communities where these can be a risks for the individuals. Abuse may come from one or several members of the family.

If somebody does not speak English, always use language line as some family members may think that as they are home, they can interpret for others.

Professionals may also be impacted by DA while working from home, experiencing abuse for the first time or living with ongoing abuse which may escalate whilst in lockdown. It is useful to revisit HR policies for DA.

If you have, concerns ring a DA Agency for advice or 999 in an emergency.

**For Support**

In an emergency always, ring 999. Using a silent 999 call followed by 55 (or tapping/coughing into the phone) will enable police to respond.

National Domestic Abuse 24 hour Support Helpline: 0808 2000 247

RESPECT National Helpline, perpetrators (9am to 5pm) 0808 802 4040

**Support directories:**

<https://ehd.liverpool.gov.uk/kb5/liverpool/fsd/results.page?qt=domestic+abuse&term=&sorttype=relevance&sr=20>

<https://www.victimcaremerseyside.org/home/who-can-help.aspx>

<http://respect.uk.net/contact-us/>

**Or ring:**

Liverpool Domestic Abuse Services 0151 263 7474

Merseyside Domestic Violence Service 0780 272 2703

South Liverpool Domestic Abuse Services 0151 494 2222

Ruby Project 0771 428 9180

Savera UK (honour based abuse & harmful practice specialist) 0800 107 0726

Worst Kept Secret Helpline (Merseyside) 0800 028 3398

**Support for children:**

Young Persons Advisory Service (YPAS) 0151 707 1025

NSPCC

**Support for men:**

Men’s Advice Line (Freephone) 0808 801 0327