

Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Training

Queensway Orthodontics

April 2024



Definitions

Sexual Violence/Abuse (SV) – CPS/Sexual Offences Act 2003

Sexual violence crimes include:

- Domestic abuse
- Rape
- Sexual offences
- Stalking
- Harassment
- So-called 'honour-based' violence including forced marriage
- Female genital mutilation
- Child abuse
- Human trafficking focusing on sexual exploitation
- Sex work
- Revenge pornography
- Obscenity



Definitions

Domestic Violence/Abuse (DA) – Domestic Abuse Act 2021

Domestic abuse comprises of broad categories of behaviour including:

- physical or sexual abuse
- violent or threatening behaviour
- controlling or coercive behaviour
- economic abuse
- psychological, emotional, or other abuse

It can be prosecuted under a range of offences and it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.

Domestic abuse is rarely a one-off incident, and it is the cumulative and interlinked types of abuse that have a particularly damaging effect on the victim.

The 'domestic' nature of the offending behaviour is an aggravating factor because of the abuse of trust involved.



Definitions

Sexual Harassment – (Equality Act 2010)

Sexual harassment is when a person is engaged in unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature, whether verbal, non-verbal or physical, that creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive working environment.

Examples of harassment can include:

- Intrusive questioning or suggestions about your sex life or a colleague's sex life, and discussing their own sex life
- Comments of a sexual nature about your or a colleague's sexual orientation/gender identity
- Unwelcome sexual advances, propositions and demands for sexual favours
- Unwanted or derogatory comments or nicknames about clothing or appearance
- Leering and suggestive gestures and remarks or jokes
- Sexual posts or contact on social media
- Spreading sexual rumours about a person
- Sending sexually explicit emails or text messages



Definitions

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Examples of harassment can include:

- Displaying offensive material, such as pornographic pictures or calendars, including those in electronic forms such as computer screen savers or by circulating such material in emails or via social media
- ‘Upskirting’ (someone taking a picture under another person’s clothing without their knowledge)
- Predatory behaviour
- Coercion
- Physical contact such as the invasion of personal space and unnecessary touching, hugging or kissing through to sexual assault, indecent exposure, stalking and rape (although rape is defined as a separate criminal offence)



BY LAURA CURRER

There is **no current specific legislation dictating obligations for employers**, but this is expected to change in coming years

"Domestic abuse is a devastating crime which shatters lives. It is incredibly important that everyone works together to tackle this horrific crime, and that includes employers- whether that is supporting staff in the workplace, ensuring staff know how to spot signs of abuse, or assisting victims in seeking help they need."

- Safeguarding Minister Victoria Atkins, 2021

Jan 2021 Government report urges employers to "look at what more your organisation can do to help survivors of domestic abuse", imploring employers to implement domestic abuse and sexual violence strategies and dedicated training, informed by specialist agencies.

**How can we
spot the signs
someone is
experiencing
abuse?**



Spotting the Signs Potential Victims

The 3 Ps

Be aware of changes in the following:

1

Presence

2

Performance

3

Physical

Spotting the Signs Potential Victims

The 3 Ps

1

Presence

- Arriving at work late.
- Wanting to change working hours for no particular reason, needing to leave work early.
- Frequent unexplained absence from work.
- Increase in sick leave.
- Spending an unusual number of hours at work for no particular reason
- Changes in behaviour – becoming quiet, anxious, frightened, aggressive, distracted or depressed.
- Becoming isolated from colleagues – not joining colleagues for coffee or lunch breaks, not joining in work social events.
- Secrecy about home life and relationships.
- Fear about leaving children at home and not leaving work on time.

Spotting the Signs Potential Victims

The 3 Ps

2

Performance

- The quality of work has deteriorated – performance targets and deadlines are missed, and mistakes are made.
- Work quality is affected by frequent text messages, emails, phone calls and/or visits to work by the employee's partner.
- There is an avoidance of phone calls, and signs of distress or anxiety when a text or phone message is received.

Spotting the Signs Potential Victims

The 3 Ps

3

Physical

- Visible bruising or injuries with unlikely explanations.
- Changes in clothing, such as wearing long sleeves to hide injuries.
- Changes in appearance, for example, in the use and pattern of make-up
- Tiredness and irritability.
- Substance use/misuse

Spotting the Signs Potential Victims

Other Indicators:

- Partner or ex-partner is stalking an employee in or around the workplace or on social media.
- Partner or ex-partner is exerting unusual amount of control or demands over work schedule.
- Isolation from family and friends.

What do you think the risk factors are that can increase the prevalence of DASV?



Risk Factors

The risk of experiencing domestic abuse is increased* if a person is:

- Female
- Age – aged 16–24 years (women) or 16–19 years (men)
- Sexual orientation and gender identity – about 80% of 'trans people' (including cross-dressers, transgender and transsexual people, and other gender-variant people) experience emotional, physical, or sexual abuse from a partner or ex-partner, and 38.4% of bisexual, gay, and lesbian people class themselves as having experienced domestic abuse.
- Affected by long-term illness, disability, or mental health problems
- Separated or in the process of separating from a partner
- Pregnant or has recently given birth
- Socio-economically disadvantaged

Immediate Signs of Risk Include:

- Escalating violence (including frequency and intensity)
- Substance misuse (including drugs and alcohol)
- Mental health problems of the perpetrator and/or the victim.
- A history of stalking.
- Credible threats to kill.
- Assault or threatening with a weapon.
- Controlling or excessive jealous behaviour.
- Assault during pregnancy.
- Strangulation.



Risk Factors

Factors that exacerbate sexual violence in the workplace include:

- Power imbalances,
- The presence of alcohol,
- Job insecurity,
- Isolation (i.e. pandemic)
- A lack of diversity (including male dominated industries),
- Periods of transition– this includes personally, for example in an individual's personal life, and organisationally, for example where there is uncertainty/job insecurity, i.e. restructures (an increase in power differentials, stress)

Other contexts that can see increased rates of abuse, harassment or sexual violence include:

- Transition/gender-affirming surgery
- Pregnancy
- Menopause



**What stops
someone
from
disclosing?**



What stops someone from disclosing?

- Feel nothing will be done
- Feeling that they wouldn't be believed
- They'd be deemed oversensitive or dismissed
- Fear of retaliation/consequence

"Does it count?"

- Scared it would harm their careers
- Abuse has become normalised, so they no longer see the signs, think its okay, or don't realise its happening

"It's not that bad"

ACT

BY LAURA CURRER

What should we do if we recognise these signs that a colleague may be experiencing Domestic Abuse?



"What do I need to do?"

The 4 Rs

1

Recognise

2

Respond

3

Refer

4

Record



The 4 Rs

1

Recognise

"When things were really bad, I wish someone had asked me if things were okay"

If you notice any of the signs we've discussed and are worried about a colleague's safety, ask them about it directly

BUT HOW?

First, make sure you're:

- Open
- Non-judgemental
- Non-blaming

"I wanted help but I didn't know how to bring it up"



The 4 Rs

1

Recognise

BUT HOW?

If there is tangible evidence, be specific:

"I'm concerned about your safety because..."

"How are things at home? How are you?"

If there is no evidence, but you have concerns due to noticing the signs, ask more broadly:

ACT

BY LAURA CURRER

The 4 Rs

1

Recognise

BUT HOW?

If you have concerns but the individual is reluctant to disclose, never push, but create a clear access point for support:

Use your judgement on who the best person would be.

For some, it might be a line manager, for others it may be a neutral person or someone more removed

"If you would like to discuss anything that might be affecting you in the future, X (designated contact) is available to provide support"

ACT

BY LAURA CURRER

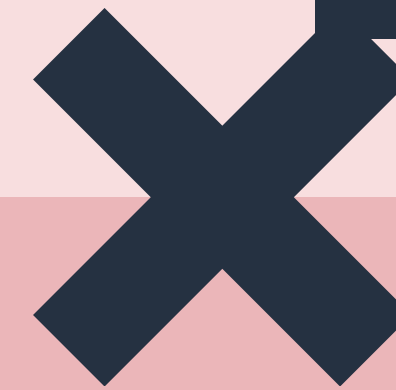
2

How to respond to a disclosure in a way that does no harm

The 4 Rs

Respond

- **Listen** and **believe** the person – create a safe space and foster **trust**
- Be **open** and **honest**, clarity is key
- Show **compassion** and **kindness**
- Be mindful of your **language**
- Be **sensitive** but **direct** – ask clear questions & **outline options** where appropriate
- Give them a **choice**. Let them know they have options & **empower them** to make decision right for them



- Avoid fostering feelings of **shame** or **doubt**
- Don't say things that are **untrue** or make **promises you can't keep**
- Don't use language that is **traumatising, shaming** or **victim-blaming**
- Never apply pressure or assume you know what's best
- NOTE: While reporting to police is an option, it is not a pre-requisite to receiving support, and should **never be forced**



2

Respond

The 4 Rs

At all points, **ENABLE CHOICE:**

- Individuals may refuse support or change their mind
- On average it takes 7 attempts to access support and leave
- Applying pressure compounds trauma
- Leaving is most high-risk time

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BY LAURA CURRER

The 4 Rs

3

Refer

- Refer to HR and/or Employee Assistance Programme where appropriate
- Share onward referral options for specialist organisations, and where possible establish links with local services

ACT

BY LAURA CURRER

The 4 Rs

4

Record

Where necessary, keep good, comprehensive, confidential records of all discussions and agreed actions

Recording is vital to protect yourselves, the organisation, and the individual, and can be used to seek injunctions or in any court proceedings



**What should
we do if
someone
chooses to
disclose their
experience of
Sexual
Violence with
us?**



"What do I need to do?"

Sexual Violence Victims

If the individual is over 18, you have no legal obligation to do anything, however you should follow the same principles regarding Recognise, Respond, Refer, Record

1

Recognise

Let them know that they are believed- don't offer advice or express judgement

2

Respond

Provide options for onward referral, including EAP/Occ Health, and external resources

3

Refer

As standard, refer to HR

4

Record

Record a clear record of any conversation, and store this confidentially- this should only be used if needed as evidence

"What do I need to do?"

Sexual Violence Victims

There are two crucial factors to be considered for SV disclosures which differs to the standard abuse disclosure guidelines...

The 2 Fs

1

**Forensic
Timeframes**

2

**First
Disclosure**

1

Forensic Timeframes

The 2 Fs

First, ask WHEN the assault happened

Forensic timeframes:

- Spiking – ideally 12–24 hours
- Gathering forensic evidence – ideally first 72 hours, but can be up to 7–10 days
- HIV Risk Assessments/Post exposure prophylaxis (PEP) medication – 72 hours

If the abuse is non-recent, they can still access support, however there is less urgency around timeframes



2

First Disclosure

The 2 Fs

IF you're the **FIRST** person they've told...

- This makes you their "First Disclosure"
- This means if the police become involved, you will be asked to give a statement and may be asked to go to court
- If you're their first disclosure, its incredibly important to keep a clear record of the conversation, as this will be used as evidence – you should let the person know this
- Don't ask too many questions, as this could then count as their 'Achieving Best Evidence' interview



"What do I need to do?"

Sexual Violence: Victims

Sexual Assault Referral Centres

- Sexual assault referral centres (SARCs) are located across the country and available for everyone, regardless of gender, age, the type of incident, or when it happened. They are accessible 24 hours a day (often via appointment).
- SARCs offer a range of services, including crisis care, medical and forensic examinations, emergency contraception and testing for STIs. They can also arrange access to an independent sexual assault advisor (ISVA), as well as referrals to mental health support and sexual violence support services.
- If you are thinking about reporting an assault to the police, the centre can arrange for you to speak to a specially trained police officer who can explain the next steps, **HOWEVER** this is not mandatory

Resources

For victims: Bright Sky App

For perpetrators: Respect Phonenumber

For employers: The Employer's Initiative on
Domestic Abuse

Questions?



Thank You

