

Blackpool Teaching Hospitals

NHS Foundation Trust

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Author/Originator and title: Eleanor Palmer, Human Resources Business Partner Lynne Bentham, Staff Side Chair Angela Foster, Named Nurse/Midwife for Safeguarding Children's, Young People and Adults Specialist Midwife for Domestic Abuse Alison Taylor, Safeguarding Children's Practitioner Dee Inott, Safeguarding Adult Practitioner		Responsibility: Human Resources
Replaces: Blackpool Teaching Hospital Version 2 Supporting Staff Who Are Victims Of Domestic Abuse CORP/POL/241 North Lancs TPCT Domestic Violence Policy Version 26 January 2011	Description of amendments: Combined Guideline – replacing previous policy Amendments throughout	
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		Financial Implications Not Applicable
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Does this document meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 in relation to Race, Religion and Belief, Age, Disability, Gender, Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity, Pregnancy & Maternity, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Carers, Human Rights and Social Economic Deprivation discrimination? Initial Assessment		

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1 PURPOSE

Blackpool, Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (the Trust) is committed to supporting employees who are experiencing domestic abuse and providing guidance for employees and management to address the occurrence of domestic abuse and its effects on the workplace.

1.1 BACKGROUND

Everyone has the right to a life free from abuse in any form. Domestic violence is wholly unacceptable and inexcusable behaviour, and responsibility for domestic violence lies with the perpetrator. The Trust strives to create a working environment that promotes the view that violence against people is unacceptable and that such violence will not be condoned.

It also recognises that individuals can be exposed to domestic abuse without being abused themselves e.g. the child of a parent who abuses the other parent and this can have traumatic effects.

Domestic Abuse can be carried out by a partner or ex-partner (married, co-habiting or single sex relationship), by a family member, or by another person living in the same household. This includes issues such as honour based violence and forced marriage.

Family members are defined as mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister and grandparents, whether directly or indirectly related, in-laws or stepfamily.

Domestic abuse can be a single incident or a series of incidents and can include :

- **Psychological** - Intimidation, threats to harm, threats to kidnap children, Blackmail, destruction of pets, property, mind games and stalking
- **Physical** - Inflicting or attempting to injure, grabbing, pinching, biting, kicking, stabbing, weapons, withholding medications, food, funds.
- **Sexual** - Marital rape, acquaintance rape, forced sex after physical beating, fondling, forced prostitution.
- **Financial** - Maintaining control of earned income, withholding money and running up debt in the victim's name.
- **Emotional** - Undermining or attempting to undermine the victims' sense of worth, constant criticism, name calling, insults, put downs, silent treatment, repeatedly making and breaking promises, harming or making threats to harm pets.
- **Controlling behaviour is:** a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.
- **Coercive behaviour is:** an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

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(Home Office 2013).

2 SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff employed by Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

3 POLICY

3.1 Domestic Violence / Abuse and the Workplace

It is important to promote the understanding that everyone has the right to a life free from abuse in any form. Domestic violence is wholly unacceptable and inexcusable behaviour, and responsibility for domestic violence lies with the perpetrator. The Trust strives to create a working environment that promotes the view that violence against people is unacceptable and that such violence will not be condoned. Employees who are alleged perpetrators must also be aware that conduct outside of work could lead to disciplinary action being taken because of its impact on the employment relationship.

3.2 Possible Signs of Domestic Abuse

- Victims of domestic abuse are often reluctant to discuss their situation with their employer or work colleagues. However, there are some signs which might indicate that they are experiencing such problems. It is important to remember that not all victims behave in the same way, and the following will not be applicable in all cases. Similarly, it is important to note that staff who demonstrate some of the characteristics noted will not always be victims of domestic abuse.
- Special attention may be warranted when for example behaviour changes significantly or if uncharacteristic behaviour is demonstrated for a sustained period.

3.2.1 Workplace performance

- Absenteeism without proper explanation.
- Frequent arriving at work late or needing to leave early.
- Uncharacteristic displays of anxiety, depression, distraction or problems with concentration.
- Change in the quality of work with no apparent explanation.
- Receiving upsetting telephone calls, text messages, e mails etc or being the victim of vandalism or threats.
- Obsession with time.
- Significant changes in an employee's dress sense.
- Increase in hours worked for no apparent reason.

3.2.2 Physical

- Repeated burns, bruises or other injuries (often with attempts to hide these).
- Injuries in areas of the body consistent with falls, walking into doors or other explanations given.
- Injuries to the chest, breast and abdomen (women are more likely to be injured in these areas and are common injuries in pregnancy).
- Injuries to the face, head or neck.
- Evidence of sexual abuse, or frequent gynaecological problems in women.

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- Frequent unexplained visits to the Doctor or explained with vague symptoms.
- Frequent use of pain medication.
- Significant weight loss or gain.

3.2.3 Emotional

- Panic attacks, anxiety and / or depression.
- Exhibiting severe stress reactions.
- Emotional exhaustion, lack of emotional control.
- Impaired thinking.
- Decreased concentration / attention span.
- Eruptions of aggressiveness, anger out of control.
- Alcohol or drug misuse.
- Frequent use of minor tranquilisers.
- Preoccupied with or distracted by the welfare of their children.

3.2.4 Behavioural

- Displays of fright.
- Elevated startled response.
- Withdrawal or personal isolation.
- Low self esteem.

3.2.5 Other

- Secretive about home life.
- Partner may attempt to limit their work or social contacts.
- Partner may ridicule them in public.
- Partner exerts unusual amount of control over their life.

Whilst the above characteristics can be common in those that experience domestic abuse, it is also possible that victims may demonstrate minimal or occasionally no disruption to their usual behaviour. Where a member of staff suspects that domestic abuse may be affecting a colleague, the provision in this policy should be followed.

3.3 Confidentiality

The Trust respects an employee's right to confidentiality. The Trust recognises that employees that have been or are a victim of domestic abuse normally have the right to complete confidentiality. However, in circumstances of child protection or the protection of vulnerable adults from abuse, the child protection and adult protection services may need to be involved. Complete confidentiality cannot be guaranteed in these situations.

3.4 Right to Privacy

The Trust respects an employee's right to privacy in the event a victim does not wish to inform their organisation or department that they have been or are a victim of domestic abuse.

3.5 Anti-Discrimination

The Trust will not discriminate against anyone who has been or are a victim of domestic abuse, in terms of his or her existing employment or career development.

The Trust is aware that domestic abuse victims may have performance problems such as

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chronic absenteeism or lower productivity as a result of domestic abuse.

When addressing performance and safety issues, the Trust will make reasonable efforts to consider all aspects of the employee's situation and / or safety problems.

3.6 Absence Options for Employees Experiencing Domestic Violence

The Trust will make every effort to assist an employee experiencing domestic violence. If an employee needs to be absent from work due to domestic violence, the length of the absence will be determined by the individual's situation through collaboration with the employee, line manager, Human Resources, and Occupational Health where appropriate. The employee can choose to be accompanied at all discussions by either a work colleague or a member of a recognised trade if required.

Employees, managers, and supervisors are encouraged to first explore paid leave options that can be arranged to help the employee cope with the situation without having to take a formal unpaid leave of absence. Depending on circumstances, these options may include:

- arranging flexible work hours so the employee can seek protection, go to court, look for new housing, enter counselling, arrange child care, etc
- considering use of sick time, job sharing, compensatory time, paid leave, informal unpaid leave, etc., particularly if requests are for relatively short periods.

3.7 Safety at Work

The Trust has a duty to ensure the safety of its employees. The Trust will actively provide support to employees to minimise the risk to their safety while at work, if they make it known to the trust that they are experiencing domestic abuse.

This support may include:

- work schedule adjustments
- workplace relocation (if available)
- safe access to / from car parks or public transport
- referral to Occupational Health for support
- referral to credit union if suffering financial hardship
- referral to a senior manager in the Employment Services Centre to consider alternative methods of salary payment if the abusing partner has access to bank accounts.

Managers should consider the following guidance when dealing with staff members who have experienced domestic abuse.

- Ensure that discussions take place in privacy, and as far as possible are confidential.
- Take the employee's concerns very seriously, taking time to listen to them, understanding what they tell you, and ensuring a non judgemental approach.
- Understanding that an employee may wish to involve a 3rd party, such as a colleague, trade union representative, or friend, rather than or in addition to speaking to their line manager.
- Be aware that there may be additional issues facing the employee because of their age, gender, sexuality, ethnic background, religion, race or disability.

(See Appendix 1).

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3.8 Providing Support for Employees

The Trust will make support available to employees involved in domestic violence. The Trust will provide support through our line managers, Human Resources, Occupational Health, Employee Assistance Program and referral to external agencies if appropriate (see appendix 3)

Their role is to:

- be available and approachable to employees experiencing domestic violence
- listen, reassure and support individuals
- keep information confidential (subject to the requirements of child and adult protection)
- respond in a sensitive and non-judgemental manner
- discuss the specific steps that can be taken to help this person stay safe in the workplace
- ensure the employee is aware of the options available to them
- sign post employee to seek the advice of other relevant agencies

The Trust recognises that perpetrators of domestic violence may wish to seek help and support voluntarily. They will have access, when appropriate, to help and support in accordance with that laid out in this policy.

4 ATTACHMENTS	
Appendix Number	Title
1	Victim of Domestic Abuse Algorithm
2	National & Local helpline and resources
3	Potential questions that can be used where an employee is suspected of experiencing domestic abuse.(CIPD 'A Guide for Employers March 2013')
4	Equality Impact Assessment Form

5 ELECTRONIC AND MANUAL RECORDING OF INFORMATION
Electronic Database for Procedural Documents
Held by Policy Co-ordinators/Archive Office

6 LOCATIONS THIS DOCUMENT ISSUED TO		
Copy No	Location	Date Issued
1	Intranet	16/12/2015
2	Wards, Departments and Service	16/12/2015

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7 OTHER RELEVANT/ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS	
Unique Identifier	Title and web links from the document library
CORP/GUID/438	Guidelines to assist in the management of victims or perpetrators of Domestic Abuse http://fcsharepoint/trustdocuments/Documents/CORP-GUID-438.docx
CORP/PROC/073	Domestic Violence and Abuse Procedure http://fcsharepoint/trustdocuments/Documents/CORP-PROC-073.docx

8 SUPPORTING REFERENCES/EVIDENCE BASED DOCUMENTS
Home Office. (26/03/2013). <i>Domestic violence and abuse Guidance</i> . Available: https://www.gov.uk/domestic-violence-and-abuse . Last accessed 31/10/2014.

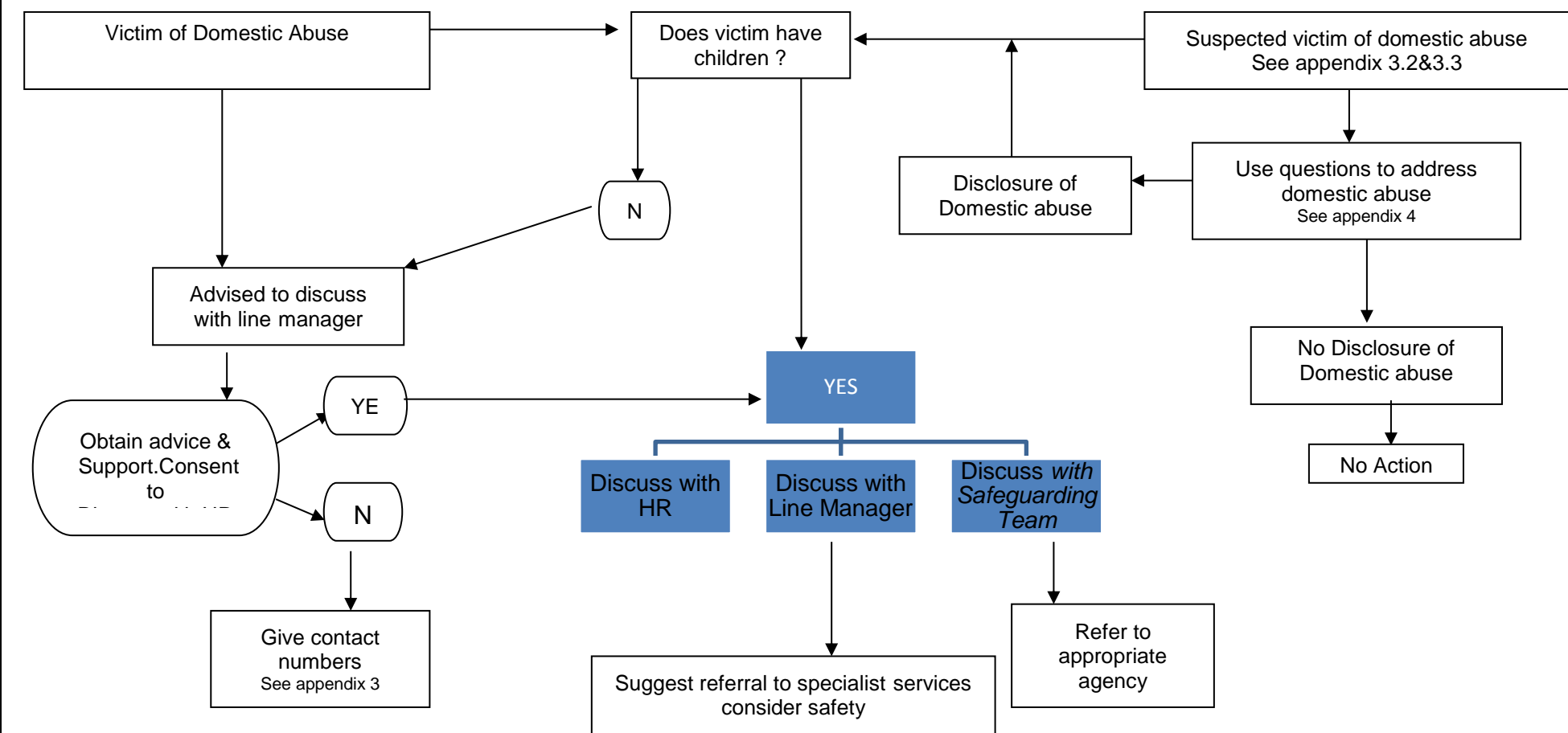
9 CONSULTATION WITH STAFF AND PATIENTS	
Name	Designation
Hazel Gregory	Head of Safeguarding
Janette Abbotts	Named Nursed for Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults (North Lancashire)
Rebecca Calvert	Named Nursed for Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults (North Lancashire)
Terri Crossland	Named Nursed for Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults (Blackpool)

10 DEFINITIONS/GLOSSARY OF TERMS

11 AUTHOR/DIVISIONAL/DIRECTORATE MANAGER APPROVAL			
Issued By	Eleanor Palmer-Rigby	Checked By	Paula Roles
Job Title	HR Business Partner	Job Title	Deputy Director of Workforce and OD
Date	October 2014	Date	October 2014

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Appendix 1: Victim of Domestic Abuse Algorithm



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Appendix 2: National & Local helpline and resources

National and Local Help lines and Resources

There are numerous local and national resources available to those with concerns about Domestic Abuse. The details of the organizations below are correct at the time of policy ratification.

Empowerment

offering support and advice for

- adult victims of domestic abuse
- Children of victims of domestic abuse
Help line number 0300 323 2100
Blackpool 01253 477959
Lancaster 01524 389637

Fylde Coast Women's Aid (FCWA)

Blackpool 01253 752014

National Domestic Violence helpline

They run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge. A national service for women experiencing Domestic Abuse. Their family, friends, colleagues and others can call on their behalf.

- Phone 0808 2000 247 (freephone 24 hours)
- Translation facilities are available for callers whose first language is not English and there is also a service for callers who are deaf or hard of hearing
- www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk

Refuge

A network of safe houses provided emergency accommodation for women and children when they are most in need.

- Phone 0808 2000 247 (freephone 24 hours) who will provide local advice for contact
- www.refuge.org.uk

Rights of Women (ROW)

Rights of Women is an organisation committed to informing, educating and empowering women on the law and their legal rights.

- Family law advice line 0207 251 6577 (Tuesday – Thursday 7pm – 9pm
Friday 12 – 2pm)
- www.rightsofwomen.org.uk

Men's Advice Line

Men's advice line provides and support for men experiencing domestic abuse.

- www.mensadvice.org.uk
- info@mensadvice.org.uk
- Phone 0808 801 0327

Appendix 2: National & Local helpline and resources

The Men's Advice Line is managed by Respect.

Respect

Respect is the UK association for domestic violence perpetrator programmes and associated support services. Domestic violence is most often perpetrated by men against women, but does also occur in same sex relationships and in a small number of cases from women to men. Because of this, the Respect Phoneline will specialise in providing services to male perpetrators, but will also be available for female perpetrators and those in same sex relationships.

- Tel: 0845 122 8609
- www.respect.uk.net

DV men

Provide advice and guidance to men who are victims of Domestic abuse including details of men's refuge accommodation

- www.DVmen.co.uk
- admin@DVmen.co.uk

Broken Rainbow

LGBT Domestic Violence organisation

- Phone 0300 999 5428
- E mail help@brokenrainbow.org.uk
- www.brokenrainbow.org.uk

Stonewall

A charity providing advice and guidance on all issues to lesbian, gay and bi – sexuals.

- Phone 08000 502020 (Monday – Friday 9.30am – 5.30pm)
- www.stonewall.org.uk

Samaritans

Provide confidential , non judgemental, emotional support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair.

- Phone 08457 909090 (24 hours)
- Email jo@samaritans.org
- Post Chris. PO Box 9090 Stirling. FK8 2SA
- There are local branches including Blackpool, Lancaster, Preston and Barrow.
- www.samaritans.org

Emergency Services

If you are concerned for your own or someone else's immediate safety ring the police on 999

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Appendix 3: Potential Questions that can be used where an employee is suspected of experiencing Domestic Abuse.

(CIPD 'A Guide for Employers March 2013')

If a manager suspects that an employee is experiencing Domestic Abuse, they should facilitate a conversation to be able to discuss this and identify and implement appropriate support.

Shying away from the subject can perpetuate fear of stigma and increased feeling of anxiety. Often employees will not feel confident in speaking up, so a manager making the first move to begin a conversation can be key.

Managers should ask the employee supportive questions, to establish a relationship with the employee and develop empathy. Below are some examples of questions that could be asked:

- How are you doing at the moment? Are there any issues you would like to discuss with me?
- I have noticed recently that you are not yourself. Is anything the matter?
- Are there any problems or reasons that may be contributing to your frequent sickness absence / or under performance at work?
- Is everything alright at home?
- What support do you think might help? What would you like to happen? How?

Avoid victim blaming. It is important that managers are able to provide a non judgemental and supportive environment. Respecting the employee's boundaries and privacy is essential.

Even if managers disagree with the decisions being made regarding an employee's relationship, it is important to understand that a victim of domestic abuse may make a number of attempts to leave their partner before they are finally able to do.

The role of the manager is not to deal with the abuse itself, but make it clear through our 'Domestic Abuse / Support for staff Policy' that employees will be supported and to outline help that is available.

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Appendix 4: Equality Impact Assessment Form					
Department	Safeguarding	Service or Policy	Domestic abuse Supporting Staff	Date Completed:	December 2013
GROUPS TO BE CONSIDERED Deprived communities, homeless, substance misuses, people who have a disability, learning disability, older people, children and families, young people, Lesbian Gay Bi-sexual or Transgender, minority ethnic communities, Gypsy/Roma/Travellers, women/men, parents, carers, staff, wider community, offenders.					
EQUALITY PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS TO BE CONSIDERED Age, gender, disability, race, sexual orientation, gender identity (or reassignment), religion and belief, carers, Human Rights and social economic / deprivation.					
QUESTION	RESPONSE		IMPACT		
	Issue	Action	Positive	Negative	
What is the service, leaflet or policy development? What are its aims, who are the target audience?	Those suffering from Domestic abuse				
Does the service, leaflet or policy/ development impact on community safety • Crime • Community cohesion	Yes	Policy reacts appropriately to those suffering from Domestic Abuse, often outside of the workplace	Yes		
Is there any evidence that groups who should benefit do not? i.e. equal opportunity monitoring of service users and/or staff. If none/insufficient local or national data available consider what information you need.	No				
Does the service, leaflet or development/ policy have a negative impact on any geographical or sub group of the population?	No				
How does the service, leaflet or policy/ development promote equality and diversity?	By ensuring that all those suffering from Domestic Abuse are equally provided with support				
Does the service, leaflet or policy/ development explicitly include a commitment to equality and diversity and meeting needs? How does it demonstrate its impact?	n/a				
Does the Organisation or service workforce reflect the local population? Do we employ people from disadvantaged groups	n/a				
Will the service, leaflet or policy/ development i. Improve economic social conditions in deprived areas ii. Use brown field sites iii. Improve public spaces including creation of green spaces?	no				
Does the service, leaflet or policy/ development promote equity of lifelong learning?	No				
Does the service, leaflet or policy/ development encourage healthy lifestyles and reduce risks to health?	n/a				
Does the service, leaflet or policy/ development impact on transport? What are the implications of this?	No				
Does the service, leaflet or policy/ development impact on housing, housing needs, homelessness, or a person's ability to remain at home?	Yes – those suffering from domestic abuse may require support for re-homing including time off		Yes		
Are there any groups for whom this policy/ service/leaflet would have an impact? Is it an adverse/negative impact? Does it or could it (or is the perception that it could exclude disadvantaged or marginalised groups?	No				
Does the policy/development promote access to services and facilities for any group in particular?	No				

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Appendix 4: Equality Impact Assessment Form				
Does the service, leaflet or policy/development impact on the environment	No			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During development At implementation? 				
ACTION:				
Please identify if you are now required to carry out a Full Equality Analysis			No	(Please delete as appropriate)
Name of Author:	Angela Foster	Date Signed:		
Signature of Author:				
Name of Lead Person:	Angela Foster	Date Signed:		
Signature of Lead Person:				
Name of Manager:	Hazel Gregory	Date Signed:		
Signature of Manager				

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