Domestic abuse

Information for patients or carers who may be experiencing physical violence, emotional abuse, sexual attacks, financial control, harassment, stalking, controlling or coercive behaviour from someone close to them.

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Making a safety plan

Your safety is the most important thing. Listed below are tips to help keep you safe.

- Keep with you any important and emergency telephone numbers.
- Teach your children to call 999 in an emergency and what they would need to say.
- Are there family/friends/neighbours you could trust, and could go to in an emergency? Tell them about the abuse.
- Pack an emergency bag for yourself and your children, and keep it somewhere safe.
- Think about safer places in your home where there are exits and no weapons. If you feel abuse is going to happen try to get your abuser to one of these safer places.

This information can be offered in other formats on request, including a language other than English and Braille.

RD&E main switchboard: 01392 411611
For RD&E services log on to: www.rdehospital.nhs.uk

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The Trust cannot accept any responsibility for the accuracy of the information given if the leaflet is not used by RD&E staff undertaking procedures at the RD&E hospitals.

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National Women’s Aid – 08082000247 for women experiencing domestic violence

Men’s Advice Line – 0808 801 0327 for men experiencing domestic violence and abuse

Childline – 0800 1111 for children/young people in distress

abuser stay away from you. You can get free help from the National Centre for Domestic Violence, call 08448044999 or visit www.ncdv.org.uk.

If you would like to talk to someone, call the Devon Domestic Abuse Helpline on 0345 155 1074. The Devon Domestic Abuse Support Service offers support for men, women and children to improve safety and recovery. They also run programmes for perpetrators.

Teach your children to call 999 in an emergency and what they would need to say.

Are there family/friends/neighbours you could trust, and could go to in an emergency? Tell them about the abuse.

Pack an emergency bag for yourself and your children, and keep it somewhere safe.

Think about safer places in your home where there are exits and no weapons. If you feel abuse is going to happen try to get your abuser to one of these safer places.
What is domestic abuse?

Domestic abuse is any incident of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those who are or have been intimate partners or family members.

Domestic abuse is rarely a one-off incident. ‘Honour violence’, forced marriage and female genital mutilation are also considered acts of domestic abuse.

It’s abuse if your partner or a family member;

■ threatens you
■ shoves or pushes you
■ puts you down, or attempts to undermine your self-esteem
■ controls you, for example by stopping you seeing your friends and family
■ is jealous and possessive
■ frightens you

Who experiences domestic abuse?

If it is happening to you, you are not alone. 1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men experience domestic abuse in their lifetime, regardless of age, gender, race, sexuality, disability, religion, class, or lifestyle and income.

Children are always affected by living with domestic abuse although their response to it will vary and may show as emotional disturbance, poor school achievement, withdrawal or aggressive behaviour.

Children need to be protected from this abuse and agencies are there to help.

What can I do about it?

Recognise that you are in an abusive relationship – you have the right to live safely and without being abused. It is not your fault.

How can I get help?

The RD&E is committed to safeguarding all adults and children. This means that RD&E staff may ask you whether you feel frightened at home or have experienced any threatening, controlling or harmful behaviours. They may complete, with you a risk identification check list. This will identify the level of risk you may be experiencing and to which support service you should be referred to.

RD&E staff can support you in making contact with the different agencies that can help you. For high risk victims of domestic abuse, they may discuss with you a referral to MARAC (multi-agency risk assessment conference). This is a meeting where information is shared between representatives of local police, health, children’s services, housing and Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs) and a co-ordinated action plan is devised. The primary focus of the MARAC is to safeguard the victim.

If you are in immediate danger you should always call 999.

The Police will always respond no matter how many times you call and they have a duty to investigate any complaint you make because your partner is threatening you or your children.

Legal Advice. You may be entitled to legal aid and you may be able to get a protection order that could make the