



Safeguarding Newsletter: Domestic Violence

UNDERSTANDING THE CURRENT SITUATION

During the COVID-19 lockdown an increase in domestic abuse has been highlighted by the number of police attendances at people's homes. It has become a serious cause for concern widely reported in the media. Domestic violence affects whole families and impacts on both children and adults.

Experts in the field have warned that abusers and their partners self-isolating together may lead to an increase in abusive behaviour and violence due to the 'pressure cooker effect' of being trapped indoors for prolonged periods.

The Guardian recently stated that the UK's largest domestic abuse charity, Refuge, has reported a 700% increase in calls to its helpline in a single day. A separate helpline for perpetrators of domestic abuse seeking help to change their behaviour received 25% more calls after the start of the COVID-19 lockdown.

(St Johns Ambulance: Safeguarding & Covid 19; Briefing 7–4th May 2020)

GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE

The government acknowledges that the order to stay at home can cause anxiety for those who are experiencing or feel at risk of domestic abuse. There is never an excuse for domestic abuse, no matter what the circumstances are.

For anyone who feels they are at risk of abuse, it is important to remember that there is help and support available to you, including police response, online support, helplines, refuges and other services. You are not alone.



Friends, family, neighbours and community members can be a vital lifeline to those living with domestic abuse. If you are worried that someone you know may be a victim of domestic abuse, reassure them that the police and support services are still there to help and direct them to sources of support.

Where to get help

If you believe you are being abused, or worried you may commit domestic abuse, please use the services on this page.

If you suspect that your neighbours or those in your community are victims of domestic abuse, we encourage you to report it to the police.

Call 999

If you are in immediate danger, call 999 and ask for the police - the police will continue to respond to emergency calls.

If you are in danger and unable to talk on the phone, dial 999, listen to the questions from the operator and respond by coughing or tapping the handset if you can. Then follow the instructions depending on whether you are calling from a mobile or a landline.

The current situation is changing daily as lockdown rules are relaxed and new guidance is published.

The information in this newsletter was correct on the date it was written 10.6.2020

Make Yourself Heard

In danger, need the police, but can't speak?

- 1 Dial 999
- 2 Listen to the questions from the 999 operator
- 3 Respond by coughing or tapping the handset if you can
- 4 If prompted, press **55**
This lets the 999 call operator know it's a genuine emergency and you'll be put through to the police.

See our guide for more information.

#MakeYourselfHeard
#SilentSolution
www.policeconduct.gov.uk



used by **OPC** (Operation Protection) and supported by **women's aid** (and men's & children's aid) and **NPCC**

Help and Advice

SAFE SPACES

What is a Safe Space?

During COVID-19, if you are experiencing domestic abuse, we understand that home is not safe.

UK SAYS NO MORE is working with Boots UK, Superdrug pharmacies, Morrisons pharmacies and independent pharmacies that have signed up to the Safe Spaces scheme, to facilitate their pharmacy consultancy rooms as a Safe Space for victims of domestic abuse during COVID-19.

Their consultancy rooms are open, ready for you to use and will display information on how to access specialist domestic abuse services.

How to access a Safe Space?

Walk into any Boots UK store, Superdrug Pharmacy, Morrisons Pharmacy, or one of the independent pharmacies involved in the scheme, go to the healthcare counter and ask to use their consultancy room.

The pharmacist will show you to the Safe Space. Once you are inside, all the specialist domestic abuse support information will be available for you to access, and you can make that call safely.

National Abuse Helplines

- The **Hourglass** confidential helpline provides information and support to anyone concerned about harassment, abuse or exploitation of an older person—0808 808 8141
- The **Woman's Aid Domestic Violence Helpline** is a free 24-hour national helpline run by Woman's Aid and Refuge—telephone 0808 2000 247
- **Men's Advice Line** is a confidential helpline for male victims of DV—0808 801 0327
- The **National LGBT Domestic Abuse Helpline** offers emotional and practical support for LGBT+ people 0800 999 5428
- **Victim Support** offers free and confidential help to victims of crime, witnesses, their family and friends 0808 168 9111

Please contact Alison Hill, District Safeguarding Officer for more help and guidance by calling 07483 362 735 or via email at safeguarding@sheffieldmethodist.org

Sheffield Domestic Abuse Co-ordination Team

Telephone 0808 808 2241

You can ring for help and support, and to get in touch with other services.



The Elm Foundation Chesterfield

Telephone 08000 198 668

The Elm Foundation represents a safe, welcoming, supportive place for any man, woman or child affected by Domestic Violence

