
Overview

This standard is about providing access to information for victims and survivors of domestic and sexual violence and abuse. It includes helping victims and survivors to identify their information needs and assisting them to obtain the information and support required.

When providing support, this is done within the boundaries of your responsibilities and is not intended to cover the more formal process of counselling.

This standard is for practitioners who support those experiencing domestic abuse, which may include instances of sexual violence and abuse in a domestic violence context.

It is recognised that abuse can occur without physical violence, yet can be equally damaging to those affected. Throughout this standard, where the term 'abuse' is used it is taken to include instances also involving physical violence.

Domestic abuse is frequently perceived as a gendered crime perpetrated by men against women; however this standard is intended for practitioners who support those experiencing domestic violence within any intimate or family relationship, regardless of their social background, age, gender, religion, sexuality or ethnicity.

In some organisations, the terms 'victim' and 'survivor' may be used individually or interchangeably.

**Performance
criteria**

- You must be able to:
- P1 establish information needs of victims and survivors in line with organisational requirements
 - P2 access information which meets the needs of victims and survivors including identifying other agencies who can provide information and support
 - P3 provide contact details to victims and survivors for other agencies who can provide them with information and support as appropriate
 - P4 share information with victims and survivors which meets their needs
 - P5 explore with victims and survivors the information options available to them
 - P6 maintain victims and survivors' confidentiality in line with organisational procedures
 - P7 agree with victims and survivors how ongoing information and support will be provided including frequency and type of information
 - P8 communicate with victims and survivors in a manner and at a pace which meets their needs and abilities, and:
 - P8.1 encourages questions
 - P8.2 confirms their understanding
 - P8.3 promotes victims and survivors' informed decision making
 - P9 ensure that advice and information is provided in appropriate and safe environments for victims, survivors and yourself
 - P10 work within legal and organisational requirements and protocols when sharing advice and information with others
 - P11 work within your levels of responsibility and authority and refer to relevant others where required
 - P12 evaluate the nature and effectiveness of information and support provided to victims and survivors
 - P13 use evaluation findings to improve the effectiveness of information and support provide

Knowledge and understanding

Legislative, regulatory and organisational requirements

You need to know and understand:

- K1 legal and organisational requirements for the provision of information to victims and survivors of domestic violence and abuse, and their impact for your area of operations
- K2 legislation, policies and procedures relevant to your area of work
- K3 relevant others you may need to work with including:
 - K3.1 agencies and organisations
 - K3.2 colleagues
 - K3.3 community representatives
 - K3.4 service users
 - K3.5 stakeholders
 - K3.6 victims and survivors
- K4 your organisation's role, objectives, remit and services for addressing domestic violence and abuse
- K5 the limits of your authority and responsibility and actions to take if exceeded

Key, general requirements for addressing domestic violence and abuse

You need to know and understand:

- K6 what constitutes domestic violence and abuse and its prevalence in the community
- K7 signs of abuse and the methods used by abusers to maintain power and control
- K8 the impact upon all those affected by domestic violence and abuse including victims, survivors, children and dependants
- K9 how children and dependants may be used by abusers as part of their abuse
- K10 information and support sought by victims and survivors
- K11 sources of information available to meet victims and survivors' support and information needs

Requirements particular to providing access to information

You need to know

- K12 how to provide information to victims and survivors

and understand:

- K13 how to facilitate effective decision-making and action planning by victims and survivors
- K14 principal agencies to which requests by victims and survivors for information and support might be referred
- K15 how to make referrals to other agencies
- K16 the importance of maintaining victims and survivors' right to make their own decisions, and techniques for allowing this
- K17 the actions available to you where disclosure of abuse is identified
- K18 available resources and where to source these, including:
 - K18.1 resources which enable victims and survivors to access information they require
 - K18.2 resources for assisting those with physical or mental difficulties

Requirements relating to communicating with victims and survivors

You need to know and understand:

- K19 the importance of building trust and empathy with victims and survivors and methods for achieving this
- K20 appropriate styles and forms of communication
- K21 the importance of non-verbal communication including body language
- K22 how different cultures use and interpret body language in different ways
- K23 barriers to communication including;
 - K23.1 their causes
 - K23.2 feelings and reactions victims and survivors may have
 - K23.3 ways to overcome them
- K24 the importance of being aware of your values and beliefs
- K25 the impact your values and beliefs may have when working with victims and survivors
- K26 how to challenge discriminatory or potentially damaging attitudes and behaviour and the importance of doing so
- K27 the limits of confidentiality applying to your role
- K28 circumstances where it is necessary to go against victims and survivors expressed wishes
- K29 the importance of ensuring that victims and survivors understand why their expressed wishes may not be met

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