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**Overview**

This standard is about planning, preparing and facilitating group support for victims and survivors of domestic violence and abuse.

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 work with victims and survivors to prioritise their objectives for group support which can meet their needs
  - P2 make plans for group support sessions which make the best use of time and resources, including planning time and location of sessions
  - P3 establish criteria and format for groups of victims and survivors, including:
    - P3.1 open or closed groups
    - P3.2 criteria for membership
    - P3.3 potential participants
    - P3.4 group support objectives identified
    - P3.5 impact for ongoing legal proceedings affecting potential participants
  - P4 determine the need for external clinical supervision which assesses group support and group dynamics for victims and survivors
  - P5 take forward any actions identified through external clinical supervision which contribute to
    - P5.1 group dynamics for victims and survivors
    - P5.2 support of victims and survivors in groups
  - P6 discuss and agree group aims with victims and survivors involved in the group
  - P7 ensure that victims and survivors understand and consent to agreed rules of confidentiality
  - P8 discuss and agree aspects of group support with victims and survivors involved, including:
    - P8.1 any concerns and barriers to achieving group aims
    - P8.2 how concerns and barriers should be addressed
    - P8.3 ground rules for group sessions
    - P8.4 success criteria against which the group will be monitored and evaluated
  - P9 facilitate group work sessions using a range of methods, activities and resources to meet identified group aims and objectives
  - P10 facilitate group work activities in ways which:
    - P10.1 encourage full involvement of all participants
    - P10.2 ensure the safety and wellbeing of participants

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- P11 work with victims and survivors in group sessions, in ways which;
    - P11.1 demonstrate respect and integrity
    - P11.2 show fairness and consistency
    - P11.3 encourage and support contributions
    - P11.4 acknowledge participants' insights and input
  - P12 take appropriate action to support and respond to victims and survivors concerns, including those expressed:
    - P12.1 within the group
    - P12.2 by individual participants
  - P13 respond to disclosures with the group in line with disclosure policies, procedures and legislation
  - P14 address any judgemental, challenging and other unacceptable behaviour in groups fairly in line with available guidance
  - P15 involve participants in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the group work

## Knowledge and understanding

### Legislative, regulatory and organisational requirements

#### You need to know and understand:

- K1 legal and organisational requirements and guidance for group support to victims and survivors and their impact for your area of operations
- K2 relevant legislation applicable 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 policies and procedures for:
  - K4.1 registration of cases
  - K4.2 case management
  - K4.3 ensuring confidentiality of information
  - K4.4 disclosure of information to third parties
  - K4.5 circumstances under which disclosure may be made
- K5 your organisation's role, objectives, remit and services for addressing domestic violence and abuse, including the provision of information and support to victims and survivors
- K6 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:

- K7 what constitutes domestic violence and abuse, and its prevalence in your local community
- K8 signs of abuse and methods used by abusers to gain power and control
- K9 the impact upon all of those affected by domestic violence and abuse, including victims, survivors, children and dependants
- K10 how children and dependants may be used by abusers as part of their abuse
- K11 the types of information and support sought by those affected by domestic and sexual violence and abuse

- K12 sources of information and support available to those affected by domestic and sexual violence and abuse
- K13 the range and role of external support agencies in providing support and interventions for victims and survivors in your area
- K14 multi-agency arrangements for providing support and interventions for victims and survivors in your area

### **Requirements particular to providing group support**

#### **You need to know and understand:**

- K15 what is meant by group work
- K16 the importance of group dynamics when managing group activities
- K17 the importance and benefits of group work to victims and survivors, including building the confidence of participants
- K18 the importance of agreeing clear and specified aims for group work
- K19 resources required for group activities and how to access these within budget and time requirements
- K20 the importance of effective planning for group support sessions
- K21 factors to consider when planning group support sessions including potential barriers to effective group work and how to address these
- K22 methods, techniques and approaches for facilitating and managing group work, including:
  - K22.1 group work theories
  - K22.2 best practice models
  - K22.3 delivery methods suitable for groups
  - K22.4 activities suitable for groups
  - K22.5 techniques for managing group dynamics
- K23 how to select activities that can meet individual and group objectives
- K24 ways of encouraging individuals to participate and ask questions
- K25 the importance of monitoring groups for conflict
- K26 how to address conflict, challenging and inappropriate behaviour
- K27 how to monitor and evaluate group work activities
- K28 how to involve participants in monitoring and evaluating group activities
- K29 how to recognise achievement and provide constructive feedback to participants

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**Requirements relating to communicating with victims and survivors****You need to know  
and understand:**

- K30 the importance of, and methods for, building trust and empathy with victims and survivors
- K31 appropriate styles and forms of communication including body language
- K32 how different cultures use and interpret body language in different ways
- K33 the importance of non-verbal communication
- K34 barriers to communication including:
  - K34.1 causes
  - K34.2 feelings and reactions victims and survivors may have
  - K34.3 ways to overcome them
- K35 the importance of being aware of your values and beliefs
- K36 the impact your values and beliefs may have when working with victims
- K37 how to challenge discriminatory or potentially damaging attitudes and behaviour and the importance of doing so
- K38 circumstances where it is necessary to go against victims and survivors expressed wishes
- K39 the importance of ensuring that victims and survivors understand why their expressed wishes may not be met
- K40 limits of confidentiality applying to your role

<b>Developed by</b>	Skills for Justice
<b>Version number</b>	2
<b>Date approved</b>	December 2013
<b>Indicative review date</b>	December 2018
<b>Validity</b>	Current
<b>Status</b>	Original
<b>Originating organisation</b>	Skills for Justice
<b>Original URN</b>	SFJ GK106
<b>Relevant occupations</b>	Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA); Crisis Worker; Refuge Worker
<b>Suite</b>	Preventing and addressing domestic violence and abuse
<b>Key words</b>	sexual; provision; facilitation; deliver; objectives; participants; individuals