

Dear Colleagues

COVID19 and Domestic Abuse

It is estimated that [1.6 million women in England and Wales](#) experienced domestic abuse last year, and it is overwhelmingly women who endure repeated attacks. The risk is that under self-isolation, controlling perpetrators will further restrict their partner's freedoms and threaten their safety.

Early evidence, suggests that the lockdown conditions created by the pandemic, particularly the isolation of families, could lead to the doubling of the number of victims of domestic abuse.

Primary Care is a setting where you may see an increased amount of people presenting with indicators of DA e.g:

- Symptoms of anxiety and depression
- Suicidal tendencies or self-harming
- Alcohol or substance misuse
- Unexplained gynaecological symptoms
- Traumatic injury with vague or implausible explanations
- Intrusive other person in consultations, including, partner, spouse or adult child (in the case of older person domestic abuse)

Routine screening for Domestic Abuse is encouraged in all consultations but in particular in situations as indicated above.

RCGP has links and guidance for Primary Care staff relating to Domestic Abuse, including a very good concise guidance relating to COVID-19:

<https://www.rcgp.org.uk/clinical-and-research/safeguarding/domestic-abuse.aspx>

https://elearning.rcgp.org.uk/pluginfile.php/149180/mod_resource/content/2/COVID-19%20and%20Safeguarding%20%286%29.pdf

Safe lives has updated guidance on Staying Safe at Home:

<http://www.safelives.org.uk/sites/default/files/resources/Safety%20planning%20guide%2C%20victims%20and%20survivors%2C%20COVID-19.pdf>

Please find a list of contact details for dissemination within your practices

Local Support Mechanisms

In an emergency please call 999

East Sussex & Brighton and Hove

The Portal <http://theportal.org.uk/> provides services to victims of domestic abuse and guidance to professionals across the East Sussex and Brighton & Hove geographical area.

West Sussex

In West Sussex WORTH are the DA provider:

<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/fire-emergencies-and-crime/domestic-abuse/local-support-for-people-being-abused/>

Please remember that children living in families with domestic abuse are at significant risk and referrals must be made to children's services following your local pathways.

East Sussex

Children's Services Referral

<https://www.sussexpartnership.nhs.uk/east-sussex-spoa>

Adult Safeguarding Referral

<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/socialcare/worried/report/>

Brighton & Hove

Children's Services Referral

<https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/children-and-education/child-protection>

Adult Safeguarding Referral

<https://new.brighton-hove.gov.uk/adult-social-care/keep-people-safe/help-adult-risk-abuse-or-neglect>

West Sussex

Children's Services Referral

<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/education-children-and-families/keeping-children-safe/raise-a-concern-about-a-child/>

Adult Safeguarding Referral

<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/social-care-support/adults/raise-a-concern-about-an-adult/>

National Resources

National Domestic Violence Helpline 0808 2000 247

Men's Advice Line 0808 801 0327

National LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Helpline 0800 999 5428

NHS Safeguarding App <https://www.england.nhs.uk/safeguarding/nhs-england-safeguarding-app/>

The CCG Safeguarding Team are available for advice and signposting via the contacts below:

Safeguarding inbox: sxccg.safeguarding@nhs.net

Gill Field, Designated Nurse Safeguarding Adults: 077692 82857

Fiona Crimmins, Designated Nurse Safeguarding Adults: 07787 763947

Trish Obermayer, Assistant Head of Safeguarding Adults/Designated Nurse: 07920 245215

Louise Jackson, Designated Nurse Safeguarding Children: 07788 364165

Michael Brown, Designated Nurse Safeguarding Children: 07901 757673

Jo Tomlinson, Assistant Head of Safeguarding Children/Designated Nurse: 07770 381421

The Named GPs can be contacted via the safeguarding inbox

(sxccg.safeguarding@nhs.net) or via:

Dr Mary Flynn – mary.flynn@nhs.net

Dr Judith Sakala – jsakala@nhs.net

Dr Sarah Redvers – sredvers@nhs.net

* please note the Named GPs are part time so please use the safeguarding inbox or contacts above if urgent.