**Enabling disclosure**

- Create a supportive environment where domestic violence posters and information is prominently displayed
- Be aware of local support information and how to access it
- Prepare specific information on where domestic violence is appropriate to their professional role i.e. basic, enhanced, advanced
- Be aware of signs that could indicate domestic violence is taking place
- Ensure professional interpreters are employed to translate, not family members, children or friends
- Only ask about domestic violence to women when they are safely on their own, and in a private place

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**Separation does not ensure safety; it often increases the risk, always consult DV agencies for safety planning advice if a victim wishes to separate.**

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**Initial disclosure and assessment**

Never assume that somebody else will take care of the domestic violence issues, you may be the victim's first and only contact

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**Child (16 and under)**

1. Depending on the level of detail disclosed, you may need to ask the child for clarification (limit to one or two non leading questions): 
   - Ask the child if they have told anybody else about this, who? Have they summons help from the police? (this indicates high risk) – if yes record details on C&F referral.
   - Do not press the child for answers: Listen and believe what they say. Explain the limits of confidentiality & safeguarding responsibilities
   - Establish if there are any children in the household? How many? Are the children under 7, any with special needs? Make an assessment of their needs; CAF or Safeguarding intervention?
   - Assess and attend to immediate safety issues of the children, mother, and practitioner. What are their immediate fears & your concerns, where is the abuser? Seek assistance if needed.
   - Establish if there are other children in the household. How many? Are there children under 7 or special needs?

**Perpetrator**

1. Depending on the level of detail disclosed, you may need to ask him for clarification: “I need anger management”, “I’ve got a problem with drink”, “My wife and I are fighting a lot”, “I’m not handing stress at work”.
   - If the man presents with a problem such as drinking, stress or depression, but does not refer to his abusive behaviour, these are useful questions to ask: When you feel like that, how do you behave? How is this drinking/stress at work/depression affecting how you are with your family? Is everything ok at home? How would you describe your relationship with your partner?
   - Ask direct questions – if the man has stated that domestic abuse is an issue
   - Explain the limits of confidentiality & safeguarding responsibilities
   - What happens when you get angry with your partner or your family? Do you ever shout at her? Have you ever frightened your partner and your children?
   - Have you ever hit her or pushed her around? What specific violence have you used? When did you first lay a hand on her in anger? What’s the worst thing you’ve done in anger? What has been the most recent violence?
   - Have the police ever been called to the house because of your behaviour?
   - How are the children affected? Have you abused/assaulted your partner in front of the children?
   - What worries you most about your behaviour? How do you think alcohol or drugs affect your behaviour?
   - Be clear that abuse is always unacceptable & abusive behaviour is a choice. Tell the man, that children are always affected by living with domestic abuse, whether or not they witness it directly. Be respectful, affirm any accountability shown by the man but do not collude.

**Address immediate safety issues of women, children and practitioner**

Is their partner there with them, where are the children? What are their immediate fears & your concerns; do they have somewhere safe to go? Seek assistance if needed.

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**Adult Victim**

1. Ask domestic violence framing question: “Name” the question so that the subject is suddenly and awkwardly introduced. “As domestic violence is so common we now ask everyone who comes into our service if they experience this. This is because it affects people’s safety, health and well-being, and our service wants to support and keep people as safe as possible.” Explain the limits of confidentiality and safeguarding responsibilities

2. Ask directly: Have you been in a relationship with somebody who hurts you or threatens you? Is this with a current partner, family member? If the client hesitates, you might say: I am asking because I am concerned about your safety and need to find out if you need information or support. I will not tell your partner or family about what you say.
   - Tell me how your partner/family member hurts you? When was the last time he hurt you, was this the worst time? (Hit/pushed/punched/kicked, repeatedly puts you down)
   - Does your partner get jealous, how do he behave when he is jealous? (Is he possessive and controlling about who you talk to, how you dress? Have they ever hurt him when he is hurting you? Have they ever got hurt when he is hunting you?)
   - Are you afraid for your children when he is behaving like this, does his behaviour frighten them? How does he behave at this time? Do you need any support with any of these issues?
   - Do you feel isolated? Who supports you and your children? (Cultural isolation)
   - Validate and support women who do disclose: Offer DV information about relevant support agencies, whether a woman discloses abuse or not, and keep the door open for future discussion. “If things ever change, I am here for you and am willing to listen”

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**Third party reports**

1. Agency which third party has reported incident to, makes direct referral to C&F - Safeguarding intervention
2. Refer case to MARAC (especially if no children involved) Share information responsibly with relevant multi-agency professionals.
3. Document decision to share and rationale for doing so.
4. Record Make detailed and accurate notes and inform line manager re C&F DV referral
5. Partnership working - be aware of your professional role and consult C&F, DV agencies & relevant professionals.

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**Police response**

If a child calls the Police (summons for help) this is an immediate notification to Children & Families

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**Perpetrator**

1. Depending on the level of detail disclosed, you may need to ask him for clarification: “I need anger management”, “I’ve got a problem with drink”, “My wife and I are fighting a lot”, “I’m not handing stress at work”.
   - If the man presents with a problem such as drinking, stress or depression, but does not refer to his abusive behaviour, these are useful questions to ask: When you feel like that, how do you behave? How is this drinking/stress at work/depression affecting how you are with your family? Is everything ok at home? How would you describe your relationship with your partner?
   - Ask direct questions - if the man has stated that domestic abuse is an issue
   - Explain the limits of confidentiality & safeguarding responsibilities
   - What happens when you get angry with your partner or your family? Do you ever shout at her? Have you ever frightened your partner and your children?
   - Have you ever hit her or pushed her around? What specific violence have you used? When did you first lay a hand on her in anger? What’s the worst thing you’ve done in anger? What has been the most recent violence?
   - Have the police ever been called to the house because of your behaviour?
   - How are the children affected? Have you abused/assaulted your partner in front of the children?
   - What worries you most about your behaviour? How do you think alcohol or drugs affect your behaviour?
   - Be clear that abuse is always unacceptable & abusive behaviour is a choice. Tell the man, that children are always affected by living with domestic abuse, whether or not they witness it directly. Be respectful, affirm any accountability shown by the man but do not collude.

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**Address immediate safety issues of women, children and practitioner**

Is their partner there with them, where are the children? What are their immediate fears & your concerns; do they have somewhere safe to go? Seek assistance if needed.

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**Always consult the Threshold scales with the information available to you**

1. Establish if there are any children in the household? How many? Are the children under 7, any with special needs? Make an assessment of their needs; CAF or Safeguarding intervention
2. Establish if victim is a vulnerable adult? If so refer to POVA procedures
3. If there are no children in the household refer victim to DV agency & consider MARAC process if Threshold scale 3 and definitely for Threshold scale 4

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**This guidance refers to survivors of domestic violence as female and perpetrators as male. This is to reflect the overwhelming majority of DV incidents.**

- Domestic violence also occurs in the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities.
- Heterosexual men can also be abused by heterosexual females

This guidance is applicable for all victims, for specific LGBT risk indicators and information for male victims please consult the multi-agency guidance.
Barnardos Multi Agency Domestic Violence Risk Identification Threshold Scales © Maddie Bell, Barnardos, 2007

Practitioners be aware of the abuser’s use of retaliation.
Practitioners be aware of the abuser's use of retaliation.
Women may not disclose due to fear of not being believed, the gender of the worker, a perceived lack of control issues and minimisation in making their decision on how to proceed.

If refusal to complete CAF, consult line manager, notification to C&F, inform victim.

Share information with consent of victim.

Record- detailed & accurate notes, inform line manager re DV

Follow up, keep asking the DV question; check situation has not escalated, and offer continued support to refer to appropriate support services.

**Assessment -Threshold Scale 1**

- Signpost -Provide information about DV support agencies and basic safety planning advice
- Children under 7 and special needs or Victim BMER? This can raise the threshold scale 3
- CAF – consider completing for each child in the household unless your agency and the non-abusive parent can meet the needs of the children (be aware of control issues and minimisation in making your decision on how to proceed).
- If refusal to complete CAF; consult line manager, notification to C&F, inform victim.

In the absence of a disclosure If you are concerned about a child or young person at risk because of DV

- Find safe and confidential ways of asking what is really wrong
- If domestic abuse is disclosed follow the above Child Protection procedures

Children exposed to DV are at risk of significant harm both from direct abuse from the violent parent, intervening, and hearing or witnessing harm to the non-violent parent. The aftermath of the incident can significantly emotionally traumatising children. Record any observations of child in days following disclosure.

Document the child's description or Section 17

**Assessment -Threshold Scale 2**

- Refer victim to DV support agencies
- Children under 7 or with special needs, Victim BMER? - can raise the threshold to scale 3
- CAF - completed for each child in the household; Lead professional appointed, multi-agency working/integrated support.
- Referral to complete CAF; consult line manager as this could raise threshold. Contact & discuss with duty social work consultation line whether to make a C&F notification or a referral. Inform victim.

Children exposed to DV are at risk of significant harm both from direct abuse from the violent parent, intervening, and hearing or witnessing harm to the non-violent parent. The aftermath of the incident can significantly emotionally traumatising children. Record any observations of child in days following disclosure.

Document the child's description or Section 17

**Assessment -Threshold Scale 3 -Safeguarding**

- Refer to C & F (C&F will consider MARAC process)
- Victim BMER? - can raise the threshold to scale 4
- Refer victim to DV support services (who will consider MARAC process). If victim has no children and does not want to be referred to a DV agency make referral to MARAC

Share information responsibly with relevant multi-agency professionals, seek consent however information can be shared without consent; consult line manager. Document decision to share & rationale for doing so.

- Record- detailed & accurate notes, inform line manager re DV
- Follow up- check victim is engaging with support services referred to; check situation has not escalated into scale 3 or 4 especially if not engaging with support services. Ensure partnership working- consult DV agencies and relevant professionals.

**Assessment -Threshold Scale 4 -Initiate Child Protection procedures**

- Referral (telephone & written) to C & F (C&F will refer to MARAC)
- Refer victim to DV advocacy services, if victim has no children & does not want to be referred to a DV agency make a referral to MARAC

Share information with relevant multi-agency professionals (without consent.) Document decision to share and rationale for doing so.

- Record-make detailed and accurate notes. Inform line manager re DV Section 47

Follow your agency's Child Protection procedures and:

- Refer to C & F under Section 17 or Section 47
- Record-Make detailed and accurate notes. Inform line manager re C&F DV referral
- Document decision to share and rationale for doing so
- Follow up- C&F referral if NFA, must now complete a CAF to identify appropriate support services for children

Be aware of denial & minimisation

Most male perpetrators will do everything they can to avoid taking responsibility for their abusive behaviour towards their female partners. Couples work, anger management, mediation & restorative justice are not appropriate responses to men's abusive behaviour to women.

Only refer perpetrators to programmes accredited by Respect, UK membership association for domestic violence perpetrator programmes, www.respect.uk.net

Perpetrator programmes should always be integrated with specialist, associated women's services.

**Assessment -Threshold Scale 1**

- Refer -to Respect accredited perpetrators programmes (PP) and provide information about Respect perpetrator help line
- Children under 7 & special needs, Victim BMER? can raise the threshold scale 3
- CAF - Due to risk of minimisation of abuse complete for each child in the household. If refusal to complete CAF; consult line manager, and make a notification to C&F -inform perpetrator.

Children exposed to DV are at risk of significant harm both from direct abuse from the violent parent, intervening, and hearing or witnessing harm to the non-violent parent. The aftermath of the incident can significantly emotionally traumatising children. Record any observations of child in days following disclosure.

Document the child's description or Section 17

**Assessment -Threshold Scale 2**

- Refer to C & F (C&F will consider MARAC process)
- Victim BMER? - can raise the threshold to scale 4
- Follow up - Make detailed and accurate notes, inform line manager, re DV
- Follow up - check victim is engaging with support services referred to; check situation has not escalated into scale 3 or 4 especially if not engaging with support services. Ensure partnership working- consult DV agencies and relevant professionals.

Refer to MARAC

**Assessment -Threshold Scale 3 -Safeguarding**

- Refer to C & F (C&F will consider MARAC process)
- Victim BMER? - can raise the threshold to scale 4
- If no children involved, refer to MARAC & inform police of potential/risk of harm
- Share information responsibly with relevant multi-agency professionals, information can be shared without consent, consult line manager. Document decision to share & rationale for doing so.
- Record-Make detailed and accurate notes. Inform line manager re C&F/MARAC referral

Domestic Violence Support Service
0208 733 5156 (Accept referrals for Threshold scales 3 & 4)
Elevate Floating Support Service
0845-607 6595 01992756932 (Accept referrals for Threshold scales 2 & 3)
Barnet Asian Women’s Association
020 8446 9897
Sangam Asian Women’s Advice Centre
020 8952 7062
Barnet Asian Women’s Association
020 8446 9897
Jewish Women’s Aid
020 8445 8060
Support & refuge
Victim Support
020 8343 4345

Be aware of denial & minimisation

Most male perpetrators will do everything they can to avoid taking responsibility for their abusive behaviour towards their female partners. Couples work, anger management, mediation & restorative justice are not appropriate responses to men's abusive behaviour to women.

Only refer perpetrators to programmes accredited by Respect, UK membership association for domestic violence perpetrator programmes, www.respect.uk.net

Perpetrator programmes should always be integrated with specialist, associated women's services.

**Assessment -Threshold Scale 1**

- Refer -to Respect accredited perpetrators programmes (PP) and provide information about Respect perpetrator help line
- Children under 7 & special needs, Victim BMER? can raise the threshold scale 3
- CAF - Due to risk of minimisation of abuse complete for each child in the household. If refusal to complete CAF; consult line manager, and make a notification to C&F -inform perpetrator.

Children exposed to DV are at risk of significant harm both from direct abuse from the violent parent, intervening, and hearing or witnessing harm to the non-violent parent. The aftermath of the incident can significantly emotionally traumatising children. Record any observations of child in days following disclosure.

Document the child's description or Section 17

**Assessment -Threshold Scale 2**

- Refer to C & F (C&F will consider MARAC process)
- Victim BMER? - can raise the threshold to scale 4
- Follow up - Make detailed and accurate notes, inform line manager, re DV
- Follow up - check victim is engaging with support services referred to; check situation has not escalated into scale 3 or 4 especially if not engaging with support services. Ensure partnership working- consult DV agencies and relevant professionals.

Refer to MARAC

**Assessment -Threshold Scale 3 -Safeguarding**

- Refer to C & F (C&F will consider MARAC process)
- Victim BMER? - can raise the threshold to scale 4
- If no children involved, refer to MARAC & inform police of potential/ risk of harm
- Share information responsibly with relevant multi-agency professionals, information can be shared without consent, consult line manager. Document decision to share & rationale for doing so.
- Record-Make detailed and accurate notes. Inform line manager re C&F/MARAC referral

Domestic Violence Support Service
0208 733 5156 (Accept referrals for Threshold scales 3 & 4)
Elevate Floating Support Service
0845-607 6595 01992756932 (Accept referrals for Threshold scales 2 & 3)
Barnet Asian Women’s Association
020 8446 9897
Sangam Asian Women’s Advice Centre
020 8952 7062
Barnet Asian Women’s Association
020 8446 9897
Jewish Women’s Aid
020 8445 8060
Support & refuge
Victim Support
020 8343 4345

Assessment -Threshold Scale 3 -Safeguarding

- Refer to C & F (C&F will consider MARAC process)
- Victim BMER? - can raise the threshold to scale 4
- Follow up - Make detailed and accurate notes, inform line manager, re DV
- Follow up - check victim is engaging with support services referred to; check situation has not escalated into scale 3 or 4 especially if not engaging with support services. Ensure partnership working- consult DV agencies and relevant professionals.

Refer to MARAC

**Assessment -Threshold Scale 4 -Initiate Child Protection procedures**

- Referral (telephone & written) to C & F (C&F will refer to MARAC)
- Refer victim to DV advocacy services, if victim has no children & does not want to be referred to a DV agency make a referral to MARAC

Share information with relevant multi-agency professionals (without consent.) Document decision to share and rationale for doing so.

- Record-make detailed and accurate notes. Inform line manager re DV Section 47

Assessment -Threshold Scale 4 -Initiate Child Protection procedures

- Referral (telephone & written) to C & F (C&F will refer to MARAC)
- Immediately inform police & refer to MARAC if no children involved
- Share information with relevant multi-agency professionals without consent Document decision to share and rationale for doing so.

Assessment -Threshold Scale 4 -Initiate Child Protection procedures

- Referral (telephone & written) to C & F (C&F will refer to MARAC)
- Immediately inform police & refer to MARAC if no children involved
- Share information with relevant multi-agency professionals without consent Document decision to share and rationale for doing so.

Assessment -Threshold Scale 4 -Initiate Child Protection procedures

- Referral (telephone & written) to C & F (C&F will refer to MARAC)
- Immediately inform police & refer to MARAC if no children involved
- Share information with relevant multi-agency professionals without consent Document decision to share and rationale for doing so.

Assessment -Threshold Scale 4 -Initiate Child Protection procedures

- Referral (telephone & written) to C & F (C&F will refer to MARAC)
- Immediately inform police & refer to MARAC if no children involved
- Share information with relevant multi-agency professionals without consent Document decision to share and rationale for doing so.

Men's Advice Line for men experiencing domestic abuse 0800 801 0327

Respect phone line - for DV perpetrators & professionals seeking advice 0845 122 8609

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