

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

WHAT TO DO WHEN SOMEONE DISCLOSES?

Creating awareness of domestic violence and domestic abuse can be quite daunting. There is a great deal to think about when crafting your corporate message on domestic violence and how your company is going to approach it during the 16 Days. However, you also need to think about how to address employees who disclose to you.

Below are guidelines on how to aid an employee who discloses to you:

1. THIS IS NOT ABOUT YOU

The most important thing to remember in dealing with disclosures is that no matter how difficult it is to listen to a disclosure, the person enduring is terrified about the conversation.

2. YOU MUST ESTABLISH TRUST

People who endure violence are often convinced that they are the only ones enduring violence and it is their fault, which results in their belief in trust being destroyed as a result of their perpetrator. The fact they have gone to an employer shows tremendous courage and presents an opportunity for the employer to build trust, which is the first step to ensuring they are safe.

3. YOU MUST STAY IN CONTROL OF YOURSELF

Sometimes it is very difficult to hear what people have to say and what they say can touch

our hearts. It is important to stay neutral and actively listen. What you will hear will help you to clarify the domestic violence direct service referrals that will need to be made.

4. CONFIDENTIALITY IS KEY

This means both to the person disclosing, but also to the company. The employer must establish trust with their employee. However, there are limits to confidentiality. The safety of all your employees is paramount, which may mean involving security. That does not mean you have to alert the whole company to the problem- it simply means you must take the necessary precautions to protect the safety of your staff. The person who has self-disclosed should be kept abreast about who has been told.

5. ENSURE THAT IT IS THE PERSON DISCLOSING WHO MAKES THE DECISIONS

It is their life and they are in charge of it. This may be the first time they have said anything to you, or anything about this in general. Do not insist your employee has to do anything. Recommendations are fine, and this is where links to direct service providers are critical. If however during the discussions talk of weapons being used, if the person is being contacted at work incessantly or if the perpetrator shows up at work, the employers have a duty of care to protect their staff and ensure all dynamic risk is mitigated.

6. TIME OFF MAY BE INTEGRAL

You are not alone in this. The Corporate Alliance are experts in the best practice and in businesses responding to employees who endure, witness, or perpetrate domestic violence. There are numerous domestic violence direct response organisations that you can consult. Here is the resource list we have provided:

- AVA

AVA is a second tier charity, which means they deal primarily with professionals to aid them in understanding domestic violence and educating themselves on how to aid those around them in dealing with domestic violence.

As AVA is not a first response charity they do not offer a helpline.

<http://www.avaproject.org.uk/>

- Broken Rainbow Alliance

The Broken Rainbow Alliance delivers help to those who are both part of the LGBT community and enduring domestic violence. They aim to offer services to the LGBT community, which has historically been underrepresented.

0300 999 5428/0800 999 5428

<http://www.brokenrainbow.org.uk/>

- Depression Alliance

Depression Alliance brings people together with the aim of ending the loneliness and isolation of depression. They offer 'Friends in Need' communities both on the web and off; self help groups in your local areas and online resources. The Depression Alliance do not have a helpline, yet their website has a list of useful contacts, including phone numbers.

<http://www.depressionalliance.org/>

- Eaves

Eaves aims to address and eliminate violence

against women and girls in the UK. They specialize in trafficking, exiting prostitution, and sexual violence. In addition to aid they provide housing and employment services, and aid those who have been in contact with the criminal justice system.

0207 735 2062

<http://www.eavesforwomen.org.uk/>

- IKWRO

IKWRO provides advice and support to Middle Eastern and Afghan women and girls living in the UK who are facing Forced Marriage, Child Marriage, "Honour" Based Violence, Female Genital Mutilation and Domestic Violence. They offer support in multiple languages through both advice services and counselling.

0207 920 6460 (Monday-Friday 9:30-5:30)

<http://ikwro.org.uk/>

- Imkaan

Imkaan works to act as a voice for black and minority ethnic women enduring domestic violence. Their works includes; strategic advocacy, development/support, research/newsletters/publications, accredited training, peer education and consultancy. They do not provide first response aid to those enduring violence and therefore do not have a helpline.

<http://imkaan.org.uk/>

- National Stalking HelpLine

A small team of highly trained staff and professionals respond to nearly 3,000 calls regarding stalking annually and help victims by giving them information on the laws surrounding stalking, directions on how to report it, how to gather evidence and staying safe.

0808 802 0300

<http://www.stalkinghelpline.org/>

- NSPCC

NSPCC are the leading children's charity

fighting to end child abuse. They help children who have been abused, protect those at risk and find the best way to prevent it from ever happening. NSPCC provides support for children and parents and work to address gaps in the law.

0808 800 5000 to report a concern about a child's safety

0800 1111 to contact the ChildLine if you are 18 or under

<http://www.nspcc.org.uk/>

- Paladin

Paladin is the National Stalking Advocacy Service, which aims to provide advice and support to high-risk victims of stalking. They campaign on behalf of victims, create a network of support for victims and address the laws surrounding stalking in the UK.

0207 840 8960

<http://paladinservice.co.uk/>

- Refuge

Refuge is a pioneer in ending domestic violence, having opened the first shelter for women and children escaping violence in 1971. Today, they offer a full range of services for those enduring; independent domestic violence advocacy, child support workers, outreach services and culturally specific services to name a few.

<http://www.refuge.org.uk/>

- Respect

Respect is the UK membership organisation for work with domestic violence perpetrators, male victims and young adults who perpetrate domestic violence.

Phoneline: Confidential helpline offering advice, information and support to help you stop being violent and abusive to your partner.

Call freephone 0808 802 4040

Monday-Friday 9am-5pm.

<http://respectphoneline.org.uk/>

- Men's Advice Line:

Confidential helpline for men experiencing domestic violence from a partner or ex-partner (or from other family members).

Call freephone 0808 801 0327 Monday-Friday 9am-5pm.

<http://mensadviceline.org.uk/>

Resources for employers:

<http://respect.uk.net/work/employers/>

- Southall Black Sisters

Southall Black Sisters provide aid to those enduring domestic violence, and specialize in black and minority ethnic women.

0208 571 0800

<http://www.southallblacksisters.org.uk/>

- Women's Aid

Women's Aid is the key national charity working to eliminate violence against women and children. They do this through protection, prevention and provision; working to improve domestic violence laws, raising awareness on the issue and providing services to women enduring violence.

<http://www.womensaid.org.uk/>

Women's Aid also aids employers with occupational health training and employer training on dealing with DV in the workplace.

For information regarding this, please see:

<http://www.nationaltrainingcentre.org.uk/>

- Women's Trust

Women's Trust is a support and mental health service for women affected by domestic violence. They provide one-to-one counseling, support groups and workshops. The counseling staff is all female.

<http://www.womanstrust.org.uk/>