

Domestic Abuse Workplace Policy

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1. Introduction

Blackburn with Darwen and East Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Groups are committed to supporting employees who are experiencing domestic abuse and providing guidance for employees and managers to address the occurrence of domestic abuse and its effects on the workplace.

The CCGs acknowledge that domestic abuse is a significant problem which has a devastating impact on victims and their families. This policy represents a commitment to take all reasonable steps possible to combat the reality and impact of domestic abuse on those being abused and to challenge the behaviours of perpetrators.

Domestic abuse can be a significant safeguarding issue for adults and children. There can be added vulnerabilities for adults with care and support needs. The Care Act 2014 identifies domestic abuse as a form of recognised abuse for adults with care and support needs.

The Children Act 2004 identifies hearing or witnessing domestic abuse as potential significant harm to children and young people. 30% of domestic abuse starts during pregnancy which may put the unborn child at risk. The CCG recognises its duty of care to respond to child safeguarding issues if it becomes apparent that a child of an employee who is a victim of domestic abuse may be at risk of harm.

Blackburn with Darwen and East Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Groups recognise that domestic abuse can affect an individual's work performance and that as an employer we have a responsibility for the health, safety and welfare of staff at work and seek to provide support to those affected. For some staff, the workplace is a safe haven and the only place that offers routes to safety.

Where a member of staff is a convicted perpetrator of domestic violence and abuse we will address this through the appropriate Regulatory Code of Conduct and Human Resources policies.

2. Purpose

This policy ensures that both victims and perpetrators of domestic abuse are aware of the support that is available within the organisation. It also provides guidance to line managers when supporting staff who are affected by domestic abuse.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all staff whilst performing duties on behalf of Blackburn with Darwen and East Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Groups. All staff should be aware of this policy and act accordingly, through the management structure to report suspicions or actual domestic abuse within the parameters of this policy, related policies and legal requirements and their own professional regulators guidance. If there are concerns that a member of staff who is not employed by the CCG is a victim or perpetrator of domestic abuse the CCG Safeguarding Team should be contacted for advice.

4. Legislation and Guidance

The policy has been written taking account of the legal requirements of the following regulations:

- Code of Conduct (or appropriate Codes) for NMC/GMC/GDC/HCPC
- Racial Harassment and Hate Crimes Policy & Procedure
- The Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act amended 2012
- The Family law Act 1996
- The Care Act 2014
- The Children Act 2004
- The Serious Crime Act 2015
- The Sexual Offences Act 2003
- Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003
- Government Strategy to tackle Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG)
- Home Office 'Domestic Violence & Abuse'
(<https://www.gov.uk/domesticviolence-and-abuse>)
- Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007
- Pan Lancs Procedures
<http://panlancashirescb.proceduresonline.com/index.htm>
- Pan Lancs Procedures
<http://plcsab.proceduresonline.com/chapters/contents.html>

5. Duties and Responsibilities

Chief Officer	The Chief Officers have overall responsibility for ensuring that the CCGs have appropriate strategies, structures, policies and procedures in place to ensure that that the organisations comply with all relevant national legislation and discharges its duties effectively
Chief Nurse	The Chief Nurses are responsible for overseeing the implementation and impact of this policy and for making recommendations for change (through the management structure).
Line Managers	All line managers are responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Compliance with relevant applicable documents. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action being taken.• Identifying the need for a change in policy or procedure as a result of becoming aware of changes in practice, changes to statutory requirements, revised professional or clinical standards and local/national directives.
All Staff	All staff, including temporary and agency staff, are responsible for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Compliance with relevant applicable documents. Failure to comply may result in disciplinary action being taken.• Co-operating with the development and implementation of policies as part of their normal duties and responsibilities.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying the need for a change in policy or procedure as a result of becoming aware of changes in practice, changes to statutory requirements, revised professional or clinical standards and local/national directives, and advising their line manager accordingly. • Identifying training needs in respect of policies and bringing them to the attention of their line manager. • Attending training / awareness sessions when provided.
Human Resource Management	The organisation is dedicated to the health and wellbeing of staff and will work with HR to ensure that the appropriate advice and support is available to both staff and managers whenever required. HR will be responsible for the provision of advice and/or support and will assist in the signposting and referrals to relevant safeguarding agencies and support mechanisms available. These may include Occupational Health, access to confidential counselling and other wellbeing services

6. Definitions

6.1 Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse is defined by the Home Office (2013) as ***“Any incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (sexual, psychological, physical, financial or emotional) between adults, aged 16 and over, who are or have been intimate partners or are family members, regardless of gender and sexuality.”***

Abuse may be actual or threatened and includes psychological, physical, sexual, financial, and emotional abuse with the imposition of social isolation or deprivation. The impact of domestic abuse can range from loss of esteem to loss of life and includes so called ‘honour’ based violence, Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage.

A new offence of coercive and controlling behaviour in intimate and familial relationships was introduced into the Serious Crime Act 2015. The offence will impose a maximum 5 years imprisonment, a fine or both.

The offence closes a gap in the law around patterns of coercive and controlling behaviour during a relationship between intimate partners, former partners who still live together, or family members, sending a clear message that it is wrong to violate the trust of those closest to you, providing better protection to victims experiencing continuous abuse and allowing for earlier identification, intervention and prevention.

Whilst the majority of abuse is perpetrated by men against women, domestic violence and abuse may also be carried out by women against men and within same sex relationships.

Domestic abuse happens in all communities, regardless of gender, age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership and pregnancy. When dealing with domestic abuse it is important to recognise differences between all protected characteristics (Equality and Diversity Act 2010).

For more information on the different types of abuse see [Appendix 1](#)

6.2 Honour-Based Abuse Order of 6.2 and 6.3 swapped

Honour based abuse is a crime or incident which may have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family or community. These are crimes which are committed in the name of Honour but in which there is no justification. This may include forced marriage, and domestic violence and abuse or female genital mutilation.

6.3 Forced Marriage

A forced marriage is where one or both people do not (or in cases of people with learning disabilities, cannot) consent to the marriage and pressure or abuse is used. Forced marriage is recognised in the UK as a form of violence and domestic abuse against women and men. Domestic abuse is a breach of human rights and is recognised as a significant safeguarding risk to children.

From June 2014, Forced Marriage has become a criminal act in the UK. The Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 made it a criminal offence to force someone to marry. This includes: taking someone overseas to force them to marry (whether or not the marriage takes place), marrying someone who lacks mental capacity or breaching a Forced Marriage Protection Order.

The pressure put on people to marry against their will can be physical (including threats, actual physical violence and sexual violence) or emotional and psychological (for example, when someone is made to feel like they're bringing shame on their family). Financial abuse (taking your wages or not giving you any money) can also be a factor.

6.4 Female Genital Mutilation

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a procedure where the female genital organs are injured or changed, but there is no medical reason for this. It can seriously harm women and girls' health in the long term. In children it is a serious form of child abuse. FGM is against the law in the UK and has been a criminal offence since 1985.

The Female Genital Mutilation Act was amended in 2003 and it is now also illegal to practice FGM in this country and to take a female abroad for FGM. From June 2015 it is an offence to fail to protect a person from FGM and any concerns that a young person under 18 years of age or a vulnerable adult is at risk of FGM should be referred to Children/Adult Social Care. It is also a mandatory requirement for statutory agencies that all cases of actual FGM in a young person under 18 years or a vulnerable Adult must be reported to the Police.

For more information on FGM please see:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/multi-agency-statutory-guidance-on-female-genital-mutilation>

6.5 Stalking

Stalking is a pattern of repeated and persistent unwanted behaviour that is intrusive and engenders fear, it is when one person becomes fixated or obsessed with another and the attention is unwanted. Threats may not be made but victims may still feel scared. Importantly threats are not required for the criminal offence of stalking to be prosecuted. Stalking within an abusive relationship is very common and often the perpetrator may use the workplace to

support stalking behaviour. For example the perpetrator may follow the victim to work, watch or spy on the victim or try to monitor the victim via electronic devices or try to contact the victim via email, texting or telephone. The perpetrator may attempt to enter the victim's workplace or try to gain information from the victim's colleagues. According to Paladin – National Stalking Advisory Service 2018, 75% of domestic abuse stalkers will turn up at the victim's workplace, 1:2 Domestic Abuse Stalkers do act on threats made and 40% of victims of domestic homicide had been stalked. Stalking could also occur within the workplace when a victim and perpetrator are both employed by the same organisation. This may take the form of watching/spying on the victim and monitoring whereabouts and making contacts via telephone or electronic devices. Stalking is a crime and any concern related to stalking which is highlighted in the workplace should be taken seriously. The victim should be advised to report stalking to the Police. Any disclosure of stalking with threats of harm should be reported to the Police even if the victim does not consent.

In all cases of Domestic Abuse, Honour Based Abuse, Forced Marriage, Female Genital Mutilation or Stalking the Pennine Lancashire CCG Safeguarding Team should be contacted for advice. Tel 01282 644987

7. Domestic Abuse and the Workplace

It is important to promote the understanding that everyone has the right to a life free from abuse of any form. Blackburn with Darwen and East Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Groups strive to create a working environment that promotes the view that violence against people is unacceptable and that such violence will not be condoned.

Employees are expected at all times to conduct themselves in a way that will not adversely reflect on the business and its reputation. Employees who are alleged perpetrators must also be aware that conduct outside of work could lead to disciplinary action being taken.

Perpetrating domestic abuse whilst in the workplace may breach any Code of Conduct. If a colleague is found to be assisting an abuser in perpetrating the abuse by giving them access to facilities such as telephones or email then they will be seen as committing a disciplinary offence.

8. Possible Signs of Domestic Abuse

The effects of domestic abuse are often invisible and therefore not obvious to managers and colleagues and victims are often reluctant to discuss their situation with their employer or work colleagues. Some signs which might indicate that they are experiencing such problems are;

- Changes in behaviour including uncharacteristic depression, anxiety, distraction or displaying problems with concentration
- Changes in the quality of work for no apparent reason
- Arriving late or leaving early
- Increase in hours worked for no apparent reason.
- Poor attendance or high absenteeism without an explanation
- Needing regular time off for appointments
- Inappropriate or excessive clothing (designed to hide bruising or scars)
- Receiving upsetting telephone calls, text messages, emails etc; or being the victim of vandalism or threats.
- Obsession with time

It is important to remember that not all victims behave in the same way, and the signs listed may not be applicable in all cases. Similarly, it is important to note that staff who demonstrate some of the characteristics noted will not always be victims of domestic abuse.

Special attention may be warranted when for example behaviour changes significantly or if uncharacteristic behaviour is demonstrated for a sustained period.

Domestic abuse also affects people close to the victim and this can include work colleagues. Some effects may include:

- being followed to or from work
- being subject to questioning about the victim's contact details or locations
- covering for other workers during absence from work
- trying to deal with the abuse and fear for their own safety
- being unaware of the abuse or not knowing how to help.

See [Appendix 2](#) for further information on forms of abuse and potential indicators of abuse.

9. Confidentiality

If a member of staff discloses that they are a victim of domestic abuse, they can be assured that the information they provide will be confidential and will not be shared with other colleagues without their permission.

There are however, some circumstances in which confidentiality cannot be assured. This may occur when there are concerns regarding children, vulnerable adults or where the organisation is required to protect the safety of their staff. In these circumstances, the member of staff will be informed as to the reasons why confidentiality cannot be maintained.

As far as possible, information will only be shared on a need to know basis.

Confidentiality cannot be assured to CCG staff who may disclose that they are a perpetrator of domestic abuse.

All records concerning domestic abuse will be kept strictly confidential. Improper disclosure of information i.e. breaches of confidentiality by any member of staff will be taken seriously and maybe subject to disciplinary action.

10. Right to Privacy

Blackburn with Darwen and East Lancashire CCG's respect an employee's right to privacy in the event a victim does not wish to inform their organisation or department that they have been or are a victim or perpetrator of domestic abuse. Staff can choose to discuss with their Line Manager, Human Resources or the Safeguarding Team and can be directed to Domestic Abuse services for support and confidential advice

11. Anti-Discrimination

Blackburn with Darwen and East Lancashire CCG's will not discriminate against anyone who has been or who is a victim of domestic abuse, in terms of his or her existing employment or career development.

The CCG is aware that domestic abuse victims may have performance problems such as chronic absenteeism or lower productivity as a result of domestic abuse.

When addressing performance and safety issues, the CCGs will make reasonable efforts to consider all aspects of the employee's situation and / or safety problems.

12. Support for staff

12.1 Support for Line Managers regarding Victims

Remember: domestic abuse is unlikely to be disclosed easily by victims or perpetrators.

Blackburn with Darwen and East Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Groups will make support available to employees involved in domestic abuse. The CCG's will provide support through line managers, Human Resources, Occupational Health, Employee Assistance Programme and referral to external agencies if appropriate (see [Appendix 3](#)).

There are a number of ways in which staff experiencing domestic abuse can be supported by the organisation such as;

- Be available and approachable to employees experiencing domestic abuse
- Listen, reassure and support individuals
- Keep information confidential (subject to the requirements of child and adult protection)
- Respond in a sensitive and non-judgemental manner
- Discuss the specific steps that can be taken to help this person stay safe in the workplace
- Ensure the employee is aware of the options available to them
- Sign post employee to seek the advice of other relevant agencies
- Be aware that safety is paramount and victims may need a specialist assessment of risk/referral to police – CCG staff must take advice from the Safeguarding Team in any case that raises concern regarding safety
- If there are children in the abusive relationship Children's Social Care may need to be informed – CCG staff must take advice from the Safeguarding Team
- CCG staff becoming aware of any concerns regarding risk of or actual FGM must take advice from the Safeguarding Team
- CCG staff becoming aware of any concerns regarding Honour Based Abuse or Forced Marriage must seek advice from the Safeguarding team as specialist safety measures may need to be put in place.

Within Blackburn with Darwen and East Lancashire CCGs confidential advice and support is available from:

The CCG Pennine Safeguarding Team: Tel 01282 644987

Or Human Resources: Tel 01772 214043

If an employee is suspected of experiencing domestic abuse a conversation should be facilitated to discuss this. If confirmed, appropriate support can then be implemented as agreed with the employee. Avoiding the subject can perpetuate fear of stigma and increase anxiety.

See [appendix 4](#) for further guidance on potential questions that can be used where domestic abuse is suspected.

If line managers require further advice or assistance before speaking to a member of staff, further support is available from Human Resources (HR) Advisers/ managers or the Safeguarding Team.

12.2 Providing Support for Employees

Line managers may consider offering a broad range of support to staff experiencing domestic abuse including;

- Annual leave, flexi-time or lieu time for relevant appointments, including with support agencies, solicitors, to rearrange housing or childcare or for court appointments.
- Special leave provisions (e.g. compassionate leave or unpaid leave) where the officer or member of staff's annual leave entitlement has been exhausted.
- Temporary or permanent changes to working times and patterns using existing procedures i.e. flexible working.
- Changes to specific duties, for example to avoid potential contact with the perpetrator in a customer facing role.
- Measures to ensure a safe working environment, for example blocking emails /screening telephone calls; alerting reception / security if the perpetrator is known to come to the workplace; and ensuring arrangements are in place for safely travelling to and from work and within work.
- Redeployment or relocation
- With the member of staff's consent:
 - i. advise colleagues on a need-to-know basis and agree a response if the perpetrator contacts the workplace.
 - ii. provide a photograph of the perpetrator to line management, security staff and reception.
- Review the security of personal information held, such as temporary or new address and bank details.

The right of staff to make their own decision about the course of action at every stage will be respected. It is recognised that a member of staff may need some time to decide what to do and may try different options during this process.

If any member of staff discloses that they have received threats made to kill (either the victim or any person known to the victim) this should be reported to their Line Manager immediately and reported to the Police tel 101 or of immediate threat tel 999

12.3 Support for Line Managers regarding Perpetrators

Blackburn with Darwen and East Lancashire CCGs recognise that perpetrators of domestic abuse may wish to seek help and support voluntarily. They will have access, when appropriate, to help and support in accordance with that laid out in this policy

Domestic abuse perpetrated by staff will not be condoned under any circumstance nor will it be treated as a purely private matter. Staff should be aware that domestic abuse is a serious matter which can lead to criminal convictions. Conduct outside of work may lead to disciplinary action being taken against a member of staff; as such conduct may undermine the confidence and trust the organisation has in them. However, Blackburn with Darwen and East Lancashire CCGs recognise that it has a role in encouraging and supporting perpetrators to address violent and abusive behaviour of all kinds.

If a member of staff discloses perpetrating domestic abuse the HR Adviser/ Manager should be informed so that the disciplinary or other internal procedures can be considered, this may include informing the police. However, the member of staff will be provided with information about the services and support available to them.

This procedure can be applicable in cases where a member of staff has;

- Behaved in a way that has harmed or threatened their partner
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against their partner
- Had an allegation of domestic abuse made against them
- Presented concerns about their behaviour within an intimate relationship.

Blackburn with Darwen and East Lancashire CCG's will ensure;

- Allegations will be dealt with fairly and in way that provides support for the person who is the subject of the allegation or disclosure
- All staff will receive guidance and support
- Investigations will be sufficiently independent.

The accused member of staff will be:

- Treated fairly and honestly
- Helped to understand the concerns expressed and processes involved
- Kept informed of the progress and outcome of any investigation and the implications for any disciplinary process

If any member of staff who is thought to be a perpetrator of domestic abuse discloses threats to kill their victim this should be reported to their Line Manager immediately and reported to the Police tel 101 or of immediate threat tel 999

12.4 Victims and perpetrators both working for Blackburn with Darwen and East Lancashire CCGs

In cases where both the victim and perpetrator of domestic abuse work for Blackburn with Darwen or East Lancashire CCGs, appropriate action will be taken. In addition to considering disciplinary action against the perpetrator, action may need to be taken to ensure that the victim and perpetrator do not come into contact in the workplace.

Action may also need to be taken to minimise the potential for the perpetrator to use their position or work resources to find out details about the whereabouts of the victim. This may

include a change of duties or withdrawing the perpetrators access to certain computer programs. Further advice can be sought from the HR Advisers/ Manager.

13. Implementation

This policy will be available to all staff for use in the circumstances described on the title page.

All managers are responsible for ensuring that relevant staff within the CCG's have read and understood this document and are competent to carry out their duties in accordance with the procedures described.

14. Training implications

It has been determined that there are no added specific training requirements associated with the implementation of this policy. Domestic Abuse is already included in Level 1 and Level 2 Safeguarding Training for CCG staff. It is recommended that awareness of this workplace policy is included in the Health and Safety CCG Induction e learning module. The Safeguarding Team are already trained to give expert advice regarding Domestic Abuse concerns and related Safeguarding issues.

Types of Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse can be a single incident or a series of incidents and can include :

Verbal: Shouting at the victim, using derogatory comments towards the victim, name calling, blaming, criticising.

Psychological;

Intimidation, threats to harm, threats to kidnap children, blackmail, destruction of pets, property, mind games and stalking.

Physical;

Inflicting or attempting to injure, grabbing, pinching, biting, kicking, stabbing, weapons, withholding medications, food, funds.

Sexual;

Marital rape, acquaintance rape, forced sex after physical beating, fondling, forced prostitution.

Financial;

Maintaining control of earned income, withholding money and running up debt in the victim's name.

Emotional;

Undermining or attempting to undermine the victims' sense of worth, constant criticism, name, breaking promises, harming or making threats to harm pets.

Controlling behaviour is: a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is: an act or a pattern of acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim.

(Home Office 2013).

Forms of abuse and potential indicators

<p>Physical Punching Shoving Hitting Drowning Biting Beating Pushing Choking Stabbing Rape Burning Scalding Denying sleep</p>	<p>Threats To kill her/him To kill or hurt her/his children To abuse children To withhold care if ill or disabled To find her/him if she/he leaves To have her/him locked up – she/he is mad/unfit Blame her/him for breaking up family Turn children against her/him Abuse her/him in front of children Smash or burn everything</p>
<p>Emotional Jealousy Telling her/him she/he’s worthless Boasting about abuse to friends Forcing to do things at exact times, in exact ways Undermining Telling her/him she/he’s a bad mother/father Telling her/him she/he couldn’t manage on her/his own Repeated criticism</p>	<p>Sexual Rape Anal rape Forcing sex when ill or tired Forcing sex with others Forcing to mimic pornography Using objects during sex Forcing sex with friends Forced prostitution Forcing to be photographed</p>
<p>Isolation No visitors, friends, family Locking in house/room Not allowed to work/attend college/evening class Accompanying her to and from work Not allowed out on own walking When out not allowing to talk to anyone</p>	<p>Financial/Economic Making her/him beg for money Threatening to kick her/him out of house Withholding information re welfare benefits by isolating her/him Running up debts in her/his name Withholding money for basic necessities</p>
<p>Potential indicators Suspicious injury or attempts to disguise an injury through clothing and make-up; Partner / family member always present and answering for the person; Depression; alcohol and drug abuse; Self-harm; Anxiety and self-neglect; Regular non-attendance for appointments; Restrictions on access to money; Restrictions in relation to work, education and social life; Children having issues such as behavioural difficulties, being withdrawn or sleep problems.</p>	

Local and National Help lines and Resources:

East Lancashire - Lancashire Victim Services Tel: 0300 323 0085

Email: info@lancashirevictimservices.org or vcu.lancashire@victimsupport.cjsm.net

Website: www.lancashirevictimservices.org

Blackburn with Darwen – Both services support female and male victims:

Changing Lives Domestic Abuse Service – 01254 311181

WISH Centre – Domestic Abuse Service – 01254 260465 (WISH Centre also provide support for perpetrators)

National Domestic Violence helpline:

They run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge. A national service for women experiencing Domestic Abuse. Their family, friends, colleagues and others can call on their behalf.

- Phone 0808 2000 247 (freephone 24 hours)
- Translation facilities are available for callers whose first language is not English and there is also a service for callers who are deaf or hard of hearing
- www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk

Refuge:

A network of safe houses provided emergency accommodation for women and children when they are most in need.

- Phone 0808 2000 247 (freephone 24 hours) who will provide local advice for contact
- www.refuge.org.uk

Men's Advice Line:

Men's advice line provides and support for men experiencing domestic abuse.

- www.mensadvice.org.uk
- info@mensadvice.org.uk
- Phone 0808 801 0327
- ManKind www.new.mankind.org.uk tel: 01823 334244

Respect:

Respect is the UK association for domestic violence perpetrator programmes and associated support services. The Respect Phoneline will specialise in providing services to male perpetrators, but will also be available for female perpetrators and those in same sex relationships.

- The Respect phoneline – Freephone Tel: 0808 802 4040 respectphoneline.org.uk
- The mens Advice phoneline – Freephone Tel: 0808 801 0327
- www.respect.org.uk

GALOP (formerly Broken rainbow)

LGBT Domestic Violence organisation

- Phone 0800 999 5428 help@galop.org.uk
- E mail <http://www.galop.org.uk/domesticabuse/>

Emergency Services

If you are concerned for your own or someone else's immediate safety ring the police on **999** otherwise **101**

Further guidance on potential questions that can be used where domestic abuse is disclosed or suspected:

If a manager suspects that an employee is experiencing Domestic Abuse, they should facilitate a conversation to be able to discuss this and identify and implement appropriate support.

Shying away from the subject can perpetuate fear of stigma and increased feeling of anxiety. Often employees will not feel confident in speaking up, so a manager making the first move to begin a conversation can be key.

Managers should ask the employee supportive questions, to establish a relationship with the employee and develop empathy. Below are some examples of questions that could be asked;

- How are you doing at the moment? Are there any issues you would like to discuss with me?
- I have noticed recently that you are not yourself. Is anything the matter?
- Are there any problems or reasons that may be contributing to your frequent sickness absence / o under performance at work?
- Is everything alright at home?
- What support do you think might help? What would you like to happen? How?

Avoid victim blaming. It is important that managers are able to provide a non- judgemental and **supportive** environment. Respecting the employee's boundaries and privacy is essential.

Even if managers disagree with the decisions being made regarding a member of staff's relationship, it is important to understand that a victim of domestic abuse may make a number of attempts to leave their partner before they are finally able to do.

The role of the manager is not to deal with the abuse itself, but make it clear that members of staff will be supported and to outline help that is available.

(CIPD 'A Guide for Employers March 2013')