

Health Professional Role in Responding to Domestic Abuse

DO 	DON'T 
<p>DO SPEAK TO A VICTIM ALONE – children may be used to relay information to the perpetrator.</p> <p>DO be aware of signs that could indicate domestic abuse is taking place.</p> <p>DO help create an environment in which victims feel comfortable talking about abuse.</p> <p>DO be supportive and reassuring.</p> <p>DO know how to ask the right questions to let a victim know they can talk to you about abuse.</p> <p>DO validate and support victims who do reveal abuse.</p> <p>DO focus on the victim's safety and that of their children, if they have any.</p> <p>DO not be judgemental.</p> <p>DO explain the limits of confidentiality.</p> <p>DO establish whether there are any children in the household and make safeguarding referrals as necessary.</p> <p>DO keep detailed, accurate records – but never in hand-held records.</p> <p>DO share information safely with other agencies if required, adhering to information sharing policy.</p> <p>DO pass on information about relevant support agencies if you suspect abuse, whether or not victim discloses.</p> <p>DO access Domestic Violence and Abuse Awareness Training</p> <p>DO look after yourself Sometimes working with the effects of domestic abuse professionally can bring to the surface personal issues. Your personal needs are as important as those of the patients you work with. You can ask your managers or your safeguarding team for confidential help. Your organisation should have a Domestic Abuse Workplace policy.</p>	<p>DO NOT use family member/friends to act as interpreters.</p> <p>DO NOT refer perpetrator for anger management support.</p> <p>DO NOT suggest relationship counselling.</p> <p>DO NOT tell the victim to leave the relationship.</p> <p>DO NOT assume that someone else will take care of domestic abuse issues – you may be the victim's first and only contact</p> <p>DO NOT act as a caseworker for the victim once you have referred them to sources of help. Remember that there are domestic violence agencies that fulfil that role. Of course, you will still need to carry out your usual health duties and provide support that is appropriate to your role.</p>