

Screening for Domestic Abuse in the Emergency Department

Who?

All females >16 presenting with any injury

All males presenting with an injury **and** a history of: drug or alcohol misuse; homelessness; disability or learning difficulty; mental health condition



Domestic abuse can include:

- Coercive control
- Physical or sexual abuse
- Financial or economic abuse
- Harassment and stalking
- Online or digital abuse

How do I respond?

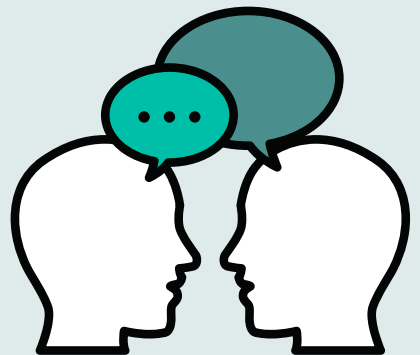
Validate their response
"I am sorry to hear this, you have a right to be safe, protected and supported"

Allow time for the patient to explain what is going on

Offer immediate support and ensure safety

Offer police contact

Offer emergency accommodation- see relevant contact numbers infographic



Why?

1 in 4 women in Scotland will experience some form of domestic abuse in their lifetime

More than 100,000 children in Scotland are currently living with domestic abuse

The Clyde sector sees patients from council areas that report some of the highest numbers of recorded incidents of domestic abuse in Scotland

Women reporting domestic abuse are more than 20x more likely to experience trauma to the head, neck and face

Women reporting domestic abuse report a higher incidence of physical and mental health problems

Evidence shows that when a health care professional enquires about domestic abuse, a victim is more likely to consider disclosure



Safety Concerns

Patients that do not have capacity

Complete API form, consider police/social work contact and senior clinician involvement

Patients with children

Complete NOC notification, consider police/social work contact and senior clinician involvement

Disclosure of sexual assault

Please see sexual assault infographic



How do I enquire?

Ensure the patient is alone

Explain:

'As violence in the home is so common, we ask all patients about it routinely'

Ask:

'Do you feel safe at home?'

'Have you ever been fearful for your safety or the safety of your children?'

'Are you currently frightened of your partner or someone you live(d) with?'



What can I offer?

Offer Navigators referral

Offer lip balms

Offer relevant contact numbers according to nature of disclosure- see contact numbers on CEM

If offering contact numbers provide in a discreet manner to ensure patient safety- offer to write down number or input into patients phonebook under alias

Accurate and thorough documentation of disclosure of abuse and steps taken following disclosure

