



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

eLearning on violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence

Guidance for line managers



Live Fear Free Helpline Llinell Gymorth
Byw Heb Ofn

0808 80 10 800

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is also available in Welsh.

Contents

Section	Title	Page number
1	The Welsh Government eLearning on violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence	1
2	What does the eLearning cover?	2
3	Introducing the eLearning to your staff	3
4	Addressing any concerns or worries resulting from the eLearning	6
5	Recognising the indicators of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence	7
6	Broaching the subject	8
7	Managing a member of staff who is experiencing violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence	9
8	What help is available?	13

1. The Welsh Government eLearning on violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

The Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 received Royal Assent on 29 April 2015. In March 2016, we published statutory guidance on the National Training Framework, ensuring that high quality and consistent training is available to those across the public and specialist sector.

The statutory guidance requires all relevant authorities to provide training which meets the learning outcomes for group 1 of the National Training Framework (as set out in the main NTF guidance) to all staff.

<http://gov.wales/docs/dsijlg/publications/commsafety/160317-national-training-framework-guidance-en.pdf>

Relevant authorities are also required to incorporate training which meets the learning outcomes for group 1 of the National Training Framework into induction training to ensure newly appointed staff have access to the training.

Relevant authorities are required to monitor quarterly completion rates of this training and undertake activity to ensure all staff complete the training.

Relevant authorities are required to provide refresher training which meets the learning outcomes for group 1 of the National Training Framework every three years.

The Welsh Government has developed an eLearning package which can be used by the relevant authorities¹ to satisfy the learning outcomes of group 1 of the National Training Framework . The eLearning is free to access and available at [Learning@Waleshttps://learning.wales.nhs.uk/](https://learning.wales.nhs.uk/)

This guide is provided for line managers to:

- ✓ assist you to introduce the eLearning to your staff
- ✓ address any concerns or worries you or your staff have about the content and the impact of the eLearning.
- ✓ Offer assistance and support to colleagues experiencing violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

¹ The relevant Authorities include Local Authorities, Local Health Boards, Fire and Rescue Authorities and NHS Trusts.

2. What does the eLearning cover?

The e-learning on violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence answers three fundamental questions that all professionals working within the Welsh Public Service should be able to answer;

- ✓ What is violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence?
- ✓ What does it look like; and
- ✓ What can be done to help someone experiencing these types of abuse?

The aim of the eLearning is to raise awareness of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

The eLearning addresses the following learning outcomes:

Following completion of this training participants will:

- **Understand what violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence is.**

The learner can describe forms of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence

- **Recognise the signs of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence**

The learner can recognise the types of behaviours linked to violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence

- **Understand their role in tackling violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence**

The learner is aware of the helpline number and Live Fear Free website as a professional resource (in addition to a service user resource).

3. Introducing the eLearning to your staff

Some staff within the relevant authorities may question why they have to complete the eLearning on violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

They may not immediately see the relevance to their role, they may not see it as an important issue or may feel that they already hold sufficient knowledge and should not be required to access further training on this subject.

These FAQs will assist you, as a line manager, to address these types of queries.



This isn't just about business need.

Whilst some employees of the relevant authorities may be in roles which feel more relevant to this eLearning than others, the need to raise general awareness of these issues goes beyond this.

Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence is not just an issue for your client group; it will also be an issue for your staff and their families.

To limit completion of the eLearning only to those whose job it is to work with these subjects, does not acknowledge that these issues can happen to anyone and that as friends, as family and as colleagues we can do something about that.

“Why is this eLearning important?”

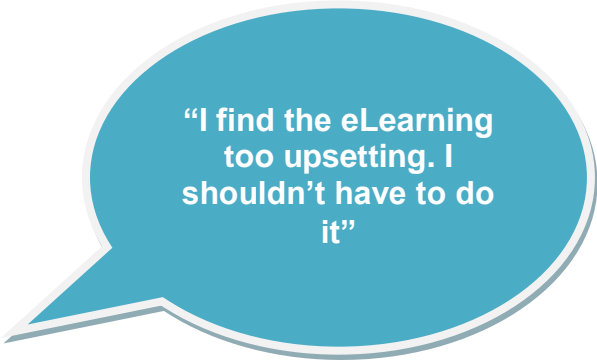
Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence are more common than you may think. They affect many people and impact adults and children in many ways – physically, emotionally and mentally. They can have a severe, long term impact on someone’s health and wellbeing. In the most extreme cases they can result in death.

One of the reasons these issues are so damaging is because they often happen in secret – behind closed doors. This is because often victims of these issues are scared, ashamed or don’t know who to ask for help. Raising awareness of these issues is the only way to help victims to have the confidence to share their experiences and get the help they need as soon as possible.

“I’ve already been trained in domestic abuse”

As long as the training you’ve done was less than two years ago and covered the learning outcomes which are addressed by this eLearning you don’t need to repeat the training. However, if the training you completed only covered domestic abuse then it is important you do complete the eLearning. It covers forms of violence and abuse and considers domestic abuse as a form of violence against women.

Completion of the eLearning does not require a significant time commitment. It will take about 45 minutes to complete and you can start it and come back to it if need be.



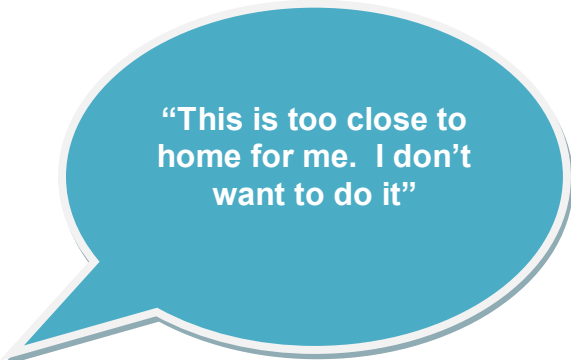
“I find the eLearning too upsetting. I shouldn’t have to do it”

It is not the intention of the eLearning to upset people.

Obviously violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence are serious subjects and talking about them can be upsetting.

Care has been taken in the development of the eLearning to ensure it is not gratuitous, detailed or overly emotive. However, in order to cover the subjects properly and demonstrate just how serious they can be, some content in the package will be upsetting for some people.

You can stop the eLearning at any point and there are signposts throughout to the Live Fear Free helpline and website where you can seek further information or talk to someone if you need to.



“This is too close to home for me. I don’t want to do it”

These issues can affect anybody and we know that means they will affect those working in the Public Service.

You don’t have to do anything which will cause you distress or upset. As your line manager your wellbeing is most important to me. Is there anything I can do to help?

Refer to the rest of this guidance for further information on how to assist a staff member who is experiencing any form of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

4. Addressing any concerns or worries resulting from the eLearning.

Your concerns

As a line manager, completion of the eLearning could impact you in both personal and professional ways.

You may have completed the eLearning and now feel concerns or worries relating to your own relationships or about something that has happened to you in the past.

As you will have learned during the eLearning, violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence can affect anyone and can impact people in different ways. If you are concerned there are lots of people who can discuss these with you and offer you support, if you would like it. Details on who to approach for help are outlined at the end of this document.

The concerns of your staff

As a line manager there are a number of ways in which you may be required to offer a professional response to staff who have completed the eLearning:

- Employees who are experiencing violence and abuse may approach you following completion of the eLearning to ask for help.
- Following completion of the eLearning you may become concerned for the safety or wellbeing of one of your staff.

In order to assist your team in the most effective way possible, it is important you take staff concerns and your own suspicions seriously. In order to offer the most effective response, it is useful if you prepare yourself for disclosure or to ask appropriate questions.

Remember: As a line manager you are not expected to offer specialist help or be an expert. You will have done a good job if you are **empathic and kind and are able to provide signposting to the help of the experts.**

Practice point

Considering the answers to the following questions will help you offer the most effective response you can:

- Are you familiar with your organisation's violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence policy and procedure?
- Do you feel confident to signpost the employee to either a local specialist agency or to the Live Fear Free helpline?

5. Recognising the signs of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence

As part of normal day to day management, managers should be alert to changes in behaviour that may signal that an employee may be experiencing difficulties at home or at work. There is no simple way to know whether or not an employee is experiencing violence and abuse but there are signs that you can look out for.

They may be small at first but over time they may become more obvious. Such signs include:

- ✓ apparent uncharacteristic or reduced self confidence and self esteem
- ✓ apparent uncharacteristic or reduced concentration, anxiety or low mood
- ✓ apparent social withdrawal or change of routine
- ✓ obsession with time or avoiding lunch breaks or socialising outside work
- ✓ unwillingness or refusal to do business trips
- ✓ needing regular time off for appointments
- ✓ frequent or sudden medical problems
- ✓ sleeping or eating disorder
- ✓ reluctance to turn off mobile whilst at work
- ✓ repeated injuries, ill health or unexplained bruising or bruising with dubious explanations
- ✓ inappropriate or excessive clothing
- ✓ changes in hairstyle
- ✓ changes in the quality of work performance for no apparent reason
- ✓ the receipt of apparently upsetting phone calls/texts/emails/faxes
- ✓ being secretive about home life
- ✓ presenteeism – a preference to be at work and work long hours and a reluctance to take holidays
- ✓ early or late arrivals or departures without a clear explanation
- ✓ high absence rate

6. Broaching the subject

If you recognise the indicators of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence, it is important that you are able to start a conversation with the employee in question to offer help and let your colleague know that the workplace can offer some support.

The information below will help you to do this:

- Select a completely confidential and private space in which to have the conversation.
- Adopt a considerate, sensitive and questioning approach. Do not be self-conscious or apologetic. You are asking the question for the right reasons.
- Explain that this is a confidential conversation but that you have observed some things which have worried you and which you'd like to explore.
- Explain why you are concerned and that you would like to help if you can.
- Believe an employee if they disclose that they are experiencing violence and abuse.
- Reassure the employee that the organisation has an understanding of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence and how this may affect people at work and the support that can be offered.
- Ask them if they have thought about what they would like to happen as a result of the disclosure and explore support options with them, if this is something they feel able to do.
- Raise the issue in other private 1:1s to ensure your colleague knows you are comfortable to talk about their situation at any point.

7. Managing a member of staff who is experiencing violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

As a result of the eLearning, it may become clear that you are managing a person experiencing violence and abuse and that experience forms part of your ongoing management relationship. Many cases of violence and abuse are complex and not easily or speedily resolved. Often the employee may continue living with the perpetrator or come into contact with him/her through access to children or other situations. Even if there is no contact with the perpetrator, it may take a period of time before the employee's health and well-being returns to normal levels.

Again, it is not your role to support the person through their experience, however, in order to ensure that as an employer your organisation is doing all it can to address staff member's needs appropriately it is useful to consider the following.

Confidentiality

All disclosures of any form of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence should be treated as strictly confidential.

In some cases it might be necessary to inform others (such as your own senior manager, your security team or HR department) about your colleague's experience. Always be as honest and transparent with your staff member as you can, follow your Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence policy and only take action with the full knowledge and consent of the victim.

Seek advice and support

If you have concerns about the risk to any employee, you can confidentially seek advice from the Live Fear Free helpline (without naming the employee experiencing domestic abuse).

Advice can also be obtained from senior management, Occupational Health and Human Resources.

Signpost and Refer

Ask the employee how you can best support them but manage their expectations by explaining that the organisation may not be able to assist with all their needs.

The recommended option for anyone experiencing any form of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence is to be referred to expert practitioners, trained to provide specialist support to victims.

Offer a referral to the Live Fear Free helpline, the Live Fear Free website or a local specialist service. If you have an Occupational Health team, Trade Union representative or Employee Assistance Programme, these may also be able to assist.

Remember that things that have been turned down in the past might be more attractive at a later date. Don't be afraid to re-offer services over time.

Support in the workplace

Health and Safety laws ensure workers have the right to work in a safe environment where risks to health and well-being are considered and dealt with effectively. There are a number of steps that could be taken that will seek to ensure that an employee who has disclosed that they may be at risk of harm is able to work in a safe and supportive workplace. Such measures could include:

- Identifying a work contact for support and an emergency contact should the organisation be unable to contact the employee
- Using existing policies to allow the individual to change work patterns or workload and allow flexible or more flexible working or special leave to facilitate any practical arrangements
- Reviewing communications and IT safety
- Checking that the employee has arrangements for getting safely to and from home
- Reviewing content of personal information, such as temporary or new addresses, bank or health care details
- Reviewing the employee's next of kin information – the ex-partner may still be listed or the abuser may still be the partner of the victim
- Where practical, consider offering a temporary or permanent change of workplace, working times/patterns or a period of special leave
- Improving the safety of the employee whilst they are at work through relocation, additional security, car parking, new phone numbers, etc.
- Where practical, offering changes in specific duties, such as not expecting the employee to answer telephones or sit in public view
- Ensuring that the employee does not work alone or in an isolated area
- Agreeing with the employee what to tell colleagues and how they should respond if the abuser telephones or visits the workplace
- Keeping a record of any incidents of abuse on the workplace, including persistent telephone calls, emails or visits to the employee by their partner/ex-partner/abuser.

Believe, validate and support

Any disclosure of violence and abuse should not impact on the employee's work or performance management record.

Listen to your colleague, reassure them and take what they say seriously. Victims of violence and abuse often fear not being believed or minimise their experiences. Respond in a sensitive, non-judgmental and supportive manner and never ask for proof of abuse or violence.

Do not make contact with the perpetrator

Line managers must never attempt to mediate between an employee and a perpetrator of violence and abuse or suggest that they access professional mediation services. If the perpetrator becomes aware that someone knows about the abuse and/or violence, this could compromise the employee's safety or make a difficult situation even worse.

Consider risk

Risk is dynamic and can change very quickly. In a small number of cases, employees who disclose abuse may be in such serious danger that you cannot keep what they have said to your self.

Such cases may include where you believe the employee and /or colleagues are at risk of serious injury or death or where there is a substantial risk of harm to any children involved in the case.

If this is the case, seek advice from a senior manager and consult your Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence policy. You may need to involve the police or social services.

Take account of different needs and experiences

Experiences of violence and abuse may be very different. Each case should be dealt with individually but it is useful to be aware of the following:

- Disabled women are twice as likely to experience domestic abuse as non-disabled women.
- Older colleagues may be less likely to report their experiences.
- Men often reach crisis point before they show any signs that they are experiencing abuse or violence and will only seek help at this point. They may not know that there are services available to them.
- Black and Minority Ethnic colleagues may be reluctant to discuss family abuse or violence for fear of bringing shame on their family and ostracism from their community.

- Individuals who are lesbian, gay or bisexual women may be fearful of being “outed” them to colleagues, employers and family members, they may have limited social networks away from their relationships, limiting the support they can access.
- Transgender colleagues may have their gender identity used as part of the abuse they experience and may feel that there are fewer services available to them.

Keep a record

Line managers must keep a record of any incidents of abuse or violence at the workplace. These records will form part of the evidence needed to support any action against the perpetrator and ensure that the appropriate help is given to the employee. The record must be clear, accurate and include dates, times, locations, and any witnesses.

Records must be factual and not opinion based. Records must be held securely and in accordance with the Data Protection Act. These records may need to be held outside of official employee records.

Any decision to share information without the consent of the staff member, only where a colleague is at serious risk, must be well documented.

Practice point

Understand it can be difficult for employees to make a disclosure of violence and abuse and your support is important:

- DO be empathic and sensitive
- DO prioritise safety over performance
- DO offer referrals to specialist services
- DO NOT seek proof of abuse
- DO NOT contact the abuser
- DO NOT compel a victim to accept support
- If the employee or any colleagues are in immediate danger, call 999

8. What help is available?

The Live Fear Free Helpline – 0808 80 10 800

The Helpline is the primary source of specialist support and guidance for anyone who needs help in dealing with a case of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

As a manager and if you are concerned for your own safety, you are strongly encouraged to contact the Helpline to obtain expert advice and guidance on dealing with your particular situation. It is a 24 hour, 365 days a year service.

- Calls to the Helpline will not show up on landline phone bills.
- Callers will not be judged or blamed and the skilled helpline staff offer a professional service and will understand what callers are experiencing.
- The Helpline provides information on:
 - - ✓ Emergency Accommodation
 - ✓ Counselling
 - ✓ Welfare and Benefits Rights
 - ✓ Housing Issues
 - ✓ Legal Issues
 - ✓ Child Welfare
 - ✓ Perpetrator Programmes

Human Resources or an Employee Assistance Programme

If the employee is uncomfortable discussing the situation with you, consider offering an appropriate point of contact, possibly of the same gender, to advise the employee directly and on a confidential basis. This might be a colleague from Human Resources or an Employee Assistance Programme. The contact could also advise you on how to manage sensitive disclosures and proceed safely.

The Live Fear Free website - www.livefearfree.org.uk

For further guidance and advice, more detail on different forms of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence and links to further training use the Live Fear Free website:

Practice point

The Live Fear Free helpline is available to anyone; those who are experiencing violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence, their friends and family and professionals who need advice.