



ADVANCE

**ADVOCACY AND NON-VIOLENCE
COMMUNITY EDUCATION**

**DOMESTIC ABUSE
AWARENESS IN
SAFEGUARDING
VULNERBALE
ADULTS**

**YASMIN
BRENTCORE IDVA
ADVANCE**

ADVANCE IS...

- **A specialist Domestic Abuse Charity providing support for males and females experiencing domestic abuse including forced marriage and so called “honour based violence”**
- **Based in Hammersmith & Fulham, Westminster, Kensington & Chelsea and Brent**
- **Medium and High risk crisis intervention service**
- **Survivor-led organisation providing survivors with their options and supporting them with the choices they make**
- **Specialist in providing advice and support around civil and criminal remedies**
- **Independent charity providing non judgemental support and advice**

DEFINING DOMESTIC ABUSE

The Home Office definition;

- Domestic abuse any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behavior, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. This can encompass but is not limited to the following types of abuse:
 - psychological
 - physical
 - sexual
 - financial
 - Emotional
- This includes issues of concern to black and minority ethnic (BME) communities such as so called 'honour based violence' (HBV), female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage (FM).

PREVALENCE OF DOMESTIC ABUSE

It is **indiscriminate**

Around **30%** of women and **17%** of men have experienced DA at some point in their lives

On average female victims experience **37 incidents** of domestic abuse before getting effective help

An average of **2** women each week are killed by a current or former partner

In around **75-90%** of incidents of domestic abuse, children are in the same or next room

In **50%** of DA cases, children are directly abused. At least a **fifth (18%)** of children in domestic abuse households are injured as a result of the abuse

SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE ADULTS

Many victims of domestic abuse may be 'Vulnerable' due to their personal circumstances, however, not all victims are necessarily 'vulnerable adults' within the meaning of adult protection procedures.

A vulnerable adult has been defined as ' A person who is 18 years of age or over and is, or may be, in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and who is, or may be, unable to take care of him/herself to protect him/ herself against significant harm or serious exploitation.'

Whilst commonly; vulnerable adults are victims of neglect and abuse, it should not be overlooked that there are also cases where they are the perpetrators



ELDER ABUSE - BARRIERS

- **Secondary victimisation.** Agencies can misjudge who the primary perpetrator is and misunderstand how an older person can be a threat. Also can make a client feel foolish for remaining in that situation for years. If agencies are ignorant to how an older perpetrator can put another individual at high risk of significant or further harm, they may inaccurately assess client's risk.
- An example of this is when police do not remand perpetrators because of their physical or mental vulnerabilities. This action overrides the fact they have committed a crime and there is also a vulnerable victim they are sending this perpetrator back home to.
- An elderly woman may have mobility issues that limited refuges cater to, therefore making the referral process more difficult than a client who can climb stairs for example. They may not want to be around lots of young children
- There may be an age barrier in the victim's view, if their IDVA is considerably younger than they are. They may believe they are too young to understand the problems in relationships and the difficulties that can develop after being married for surplus decades. On the other hand, they could feel the need to protect the young IDVA's 'innocence' from the vulgarity of domestic abuse
- There are few services that overlap between care of the elderly and domestic violence. Clients can be left without support on both sides.

MENTAL CAPACITY- IF A PERSON IS JUDGED TO BE WITHOUT CAPACITY, DECISIONS CAN BE MADE ON THEIR BEHALF WHICH INCREASES THEIR RISK OF ABUSE

- 'The mental Capacity Act (MCA) provides a framework to empower and protect people who may lack capacity to make some decisions for themselves as a result of a 'disorder or disability of the mind 'Department for Constitutional Affairs 2007
 - The aim of the MCA is to permit, those whom lack capacity to make as many decisions for themselves as possible
1. Assumption of capacity should be enforced until an individual shows lack of it
 2. Individuals should be given help to understand the decisions they have made even if this means finding alternate communication methods
 3. 'Unwise decisions' cannot be used as evidence for lack of capacity
 4. If someone is proven to lack the capacity to make a decision, then it also needs to be proven; that the decision made on their behalf is in their best interest
 5. Lastly any decision made on the behalf of someone else needs to be the least restrictive possible

CLIENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Those with disabilities may require more support meeting their basic needs. Hence, this makes a client with a disability vulnerable to the carer who supports them meeting these needs

If the client's disabilities are severe, it could mean they have limited engagement with people outside their home, resulting in the abuse continuously occurring unchallenged for quite some time

If a client does try and access support, again they could be faced with barriers such as the abuser attending meetings with them because they are also the carer, so the client cannot disclose to the professional about the abuse. Agencies may also overlook the signs of abuse

With some client's, the disability itself may prohibit them from being able to communicate clearly the abuse they are experiencing

Again, refuges may not have availability in the type of room required to meet the client needs.

There is also the risk, that a client can be so vulnerable, they do not even know, what it is happening to them is deemed as abuse.



Abuse Type	Sample Indicators
<p>Physical abuse: Includes misuse of medication, undie restraint or inappropriate sanctions</p>	<p>Frequently changing GP's or care agencies</p>
<p>Sexual Abuse: includes sexual acts the vulnerable adult has not, or could not consent and/or was pressurised into consenting</p>	<p>Changes in behaviour; like spending time alone, tendency to withdraw, deliberate self harm</p>
<p>Neglect and/or acts of omission: includes failure to access medical care or services, negligence, withholding prescribed medication, lack of heating, poor nutrition</p>	<p>Poor hygiene and cleanliness of an individual who needs assistance with their personal care Dehydration/ weight loss/ malnutrition Unkempt or unsuitable clothing for the weather conditions</p>
<p>Financial Abuse: pressure around wills, property or inheritance, misuse of benefits,</p>	<p>Next of kin refusing to follow advice on property Securing lasting power of attorney Insisting on informal arrangements not stipulated by court of protection</p>
<p>Psychological Abuse: threats of abandonment, isolation or withdrawal from services/ supportive networks,</p>	<p>Sharp changes in behaviour in the presence of certain people</p>

IMPACTS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE

- Physical impacts such as injuries and longer term health conditions
- Domestic abuse has significant psychological consequences for victims, including anxiety, depression, suicidal behaviour, low self-esteem, inability to trust others, flashbacks, sleep disturbances and emotional detachment
- 40% of high-risk victims report having mental health issues
- 16% of victims report that they have considered or attempted suicide as a result of the abuse, and 13% report self-harming
- Domestic abuse victims are at risk of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) – as many as two-thirds of victims of abuse (64%) developed PTSD in one study
- 50-60% of patients using mental health services are affected by domestic abuse

THE COMPLEXITIES OF LEAVING



BARRIERS TO LEAVING

Fear and high risk

Accommodation

Finances/debt / benefits

Substance misuse

Children / pregnancy

Mental & Physical health

Immigration

Access to services

Stability for Children

Family community pressure

Safety

Isolation

Physical injuries

Criminal Justice System

More than one perpetrator

Negative experiences or perception of agencies

Language, age & culture

Lack of recognition & denial

Unaware of rights

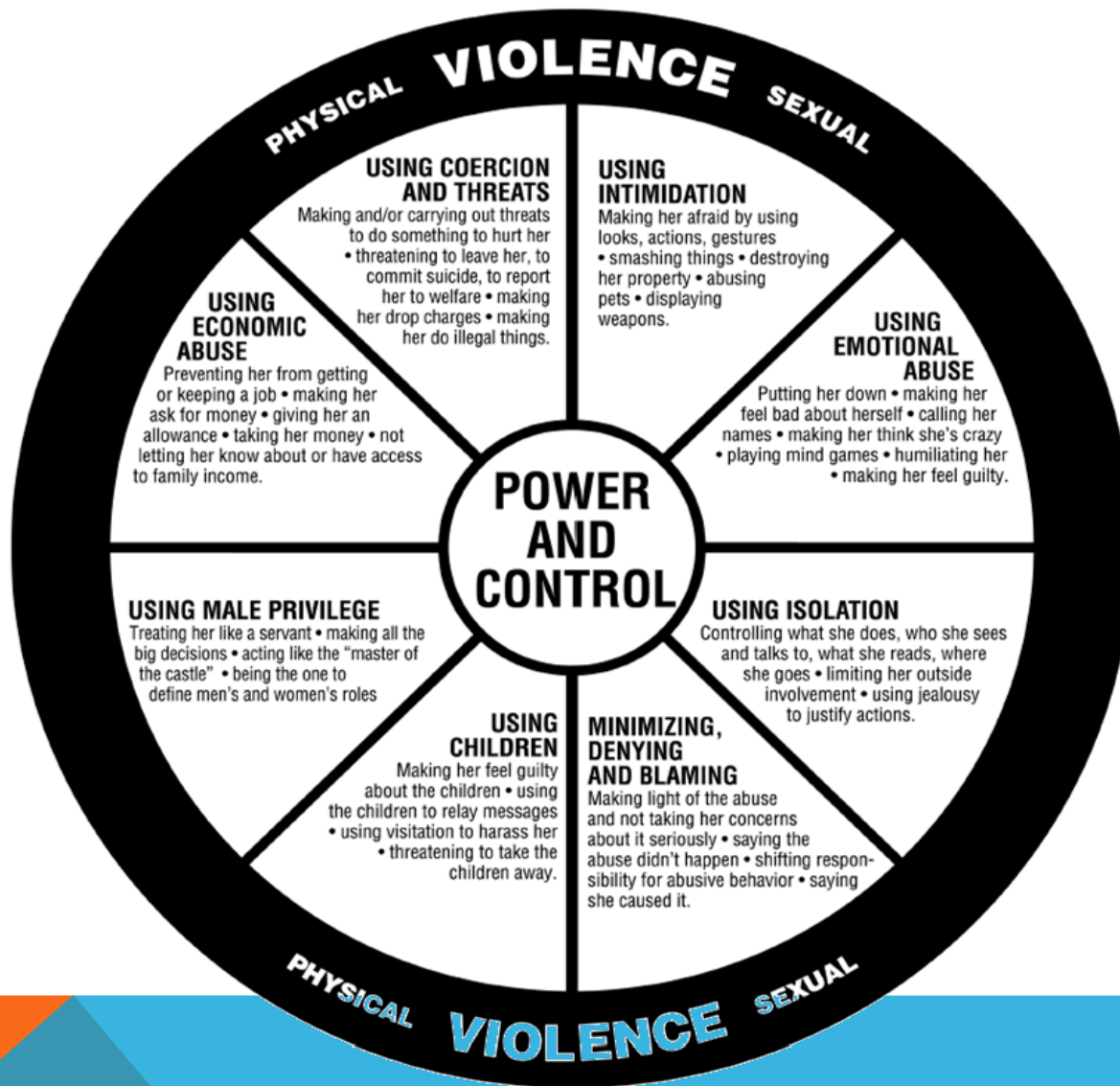
Love/Hope

Social Status

BEST PRACTICE

- If you work with this client group on a regular basis it is recommended that you access appropriate Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults training
- If you have concerns about a vulnerable adult, you can seek advice from health, social care or the police
- Consider joint visits with another professional. This way the victim/vulnerable adult can be spoken to alone whilst the other professional engages with the carer or abuser
- Attendance at group meetings, such as MARAC is a good way of sharing information with other agencies to gain a full picture
- Respite care organised by social care can be a good option to assess the risk to victims
- Power and control wheel is an excellent tool for working with elder victims, those with disabilities, or mental health conditions to help them acknowledge or identify the abuse

Contact local IDVA service



WHO TO CALL

Advance

- Male and Female Survivors
- Aged 16+
- Living in Brent

T: 07398454898

E: brent.admin@advancecharity.org.uk

- Crisis intervention, risk assessment and safety advice
- Housing options
- Civil options
- Immigration
- Support around criminal justice system
- Advocacy with other agencies
- Specialist roles
- Signposting/referring
 - Counselling, workshops, specialist support

NEXT TRAINING DATES... FULL DAY DA AM AND MARAC PM

11th April 2018

9:30 – 4:00

Brent Civic Centre

Book your places through the LSCB Learning Pool!

