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## Overview

This standard is about supporting individuals and their dependents to access safe and appropriate accommodation. It includes your provision of support to individuals and your contribution to the security of the accommodation.

This involves working with colleagues in your own and other organisations to support individuals to find accommodation. Safe accommodation can include refuges, hostels, private rented accommodation, re-housing, sanctuary, or supported housing

This standard is for those who work within safe accommodation and for practitioners who support those experiencing domestic abuse, which may include instances of sexual violence.

## Performance criteria

### *You must be able to:*

1. gather and assess information to establish the immediate risks to individuals including:
  - personal details
  - current accommodation situation
  - any dependents involved
  - associated risk to safety, health and wellbeing
  - factors affecting their vulnerability
  - time constraints for meeting accommodation needs
2. explain to individuals your role, responsibilities and your organisation's services in line with organisational policies and procedures
3. explore with individuals their needs and agree support to be provided
4. explain to individuals the processes for emergency accommodation, if required, including:
  - any restrictions
  - length of stay
  - associated charges
  - assistance and further support available
  - any perceived obstacles
5. discuss with individuals their options for accommodation, which explores:
  - the advantages and disadvantages of different options
  - obstacles to accessing accommodation and support
  - how to address obstacles identified
6. agree with individuals the terms, conditions, rent and services for their stay in safe or emergency accommodation
7. provide advice and support to individuals to enable access to funding for accommodation in line with organisational policies and procedures
8. make arrangements for individuals to access safe accommodation in line with organisational policies and procedures
9. explain to individuals their responsibilities and obligations associated with accommodation provided in line with accommodation agreements
10. provide support to individuals when moving into accommodation in line with agreed plans, your responsibilities and those of your organisation
11. monitor individuals' progress in accommodation in line with organisational policies

and procedures

12. obtain feedback from relevant others about individuals' progress in line with your role and responsibilities

13. address any issues arising with individuals' accommodation in line with your responsibilities and those of your organisation

14. communicate with individuals in ways that meets their needs and abilities

15. arrange specialist services and support for individuals to meet their needs

16. prepare and agree plans with individuals to monitor and evaluate their ongoing requirement for safe accommodation

17. agree exit strategies with individuals in safe accommodation, which takes into account their needs and identified risks

18. maintain services and facilities provided within accommodation in line with your role and your organisation's remit for services

19. explore with individuals their requirements for personal safety and security within accommodation including:

- reasons for requirement
- consequences of requirements not being fulfilled

20. identify and address any breaches of personal safety and agreed terms and conditions in line with organisational policies and procedures

21. identify individuals at risk in relation to their safety and wellbeing in line with organisational policies and procedures

22. manage the safety and welfare of individuals in line with your role and responsibilities

23. maintain procedures and equipment which ensure safety and security of accommodation

24. confirm providers of services understand your role and responsibilities with regard to individuals' accommodation needs

25. maintain appropriate contact with providers and address any issues that occur in line with partnership arrangements

26. maintain up to date records in line with organisation policies and procedures

## Knowledge and understanding

### *You need to know and understand:*

1. legal, organisational and policy requirements relevant to your role, the role of others in your organisation and the activities being carried out
2. the relevant national and local guidelines, policies, and procedures available and how and when they should be accessed
3. range of agencies and services you may work with
4. your organisations remit and services for addressing domestic abuse or sexual violence, including the provision of accommodation and support to individuals.
5. the limits of your authority, responsibility and professional competence
6. what constitutes domestic abuse and sexual violence and its prevalence in your local community
7. signs of abuse and methods used by abusers to gain power and control
8. the impact upon all those affected by domestic abuse or sexual violence
9. how dependents may be used by abusers as part of their abuse
10. the types and sources of information and support sought by those affected by domestic abuse or sexual violence.
11. the role of external support agencies in providing support and interventions for individuals in your area
12. multi-agency arrangements for providing support and interventions for individuals in your area.
13. the types and providers of safe accommodation
14. the benefits and drawbacks of different types of accommodation for individuals with different needs and issues
15. factors to consider when arranging safe or emergency accommodation for individuals, including any dependents
16. your organisation's terms and conditions for those staying in safe or emergency accommodation
17. the importance of agreeing with individuals the terms and conditions for those staying in safe accommodation
18. actions to take when individuals breach agreed terms and conditions
19. individuals' rights in relation to where they may be housed and accommodated
20. the duties of local authorities to house and support different groups of individuals
21. benefits available to certain groups of individuals including funding initiatives and accommodation support, and how to access these

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22. practical and emotional skills that individuals need to be able to live independently
  23. factors impacting upon the vulnerability of individuals of domestic abuse or sexual violence
  24. reasons why some individuals may feel loyalty to their abusers
  25. safety and security requirements for the safe accommodation within which you work
  26. emergency procedures if individuals are threatened with harm within accommodation
  27. your organisation's maintenance and repair procedures relating to the facilities within the accommodation
  28. arrangements required by individuals considered to be at risk
  29. the importance of, and methods for, building trust and empathy with individuals
  30. range of communication styles and techniques available and when and how to alter them
  31. how different cultures use and interpret body language in different ways
  32. common barriers to communication and ways to overcome them
  33. how intersectionality impacts on how an individual experiences services
  34. the importance of being aware of your values and beliefs and the impact they may have when working with individuals
  35. how to challenge discriminatory or potentially damaging attitudes and behaviour and the importance of doing

## Glossary

### **Domestic Abuse**

A pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass but is not limited to, a combination of psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional abuse.

This definition also includes so-called 'honour' based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage. Children also experience domestic abuse when witnessing domestic abuse.

### **Intersectionality**

The interconnected nature of social categorisations such as race, class, and gender, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage

### **Needs led approach**

A form of advocacy that places the survivor at the centre of interventions and support work. This means listening to their story, concerns and struggles and identifying strengths. It results in the collaborative production of support packages that are specific to survivors' individual needs. A needs-led approach is an empowering endeavour that pays attention to survivors' intersectional circumstances, avoiding the traps of institutional bias or ineffective responses

### **Strength based approach**

Recognising that individuals have strengths. These strengths are recognised and built on as part of aiding recovery.

### **People at risk**

An individual who is defined as in need of special care, support, or protection because of age, disability, risk of abuse or neglect

### **Sexual Violence (see also definitions below that may be used covering sexual abuse or sexual assault)**

Similar in nature to sexual abuse, but this term is more often used to describe brief or single incidences, such as if sexually assaulted by a stranger

### **Sexual Abuse**

Undesired sexual behaviour by one person to another. This is often carried out by force or by taking advantage of the other person. This term is generally used when the sexual behaviour is regular or over a prolonged period of time.

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### **Sexual Assault**

Any unwanted sexual behaviour that a person has not consented to. This can range from rape to voyeurism or exhibitionism, to unwanted touching above or under clothes.

### **Trauma Informed Practice**

An approach to health and care interventions which is grounded in the understanding that trauma exposure can impact on a person. Practitioners will work in ways so as to not inadvertently retraumatise impacted people and with an emphasis on client safety, choice, collaboration and empowerment.

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Provide safe accommodation and support for individuals affected by domestic abuse or sexual violence



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