
Overview

This standard is about providing access to information and support for individuals affected by domestic abuse or sexual violence. It includes your ability to help individuals to identify their information needs and helping them to obtain the information and support required.

Performance criteria

You must be able to:

1. establish information needs of individuals in line with organisational requirements
2. explore the information and options available with individuals including their advantages and disadvantages
3. identify and access sources of information that meets the needs of individuals in line with organisational policies and procedures
4. identify other agencies where individuals can be referred to for information and support in line with your organisation's policies and procedures
5. provide information and contact details to individuals for other agencies where relevant, who can provide them with information and support
6. make referrals to other agencies who provide support and services for individuals in line with organisational policies and procedures
7. agree with individuals how any ongoing support will be provided, in line with organisational policies and procedures
8. maintain confidentiality of individuals where required in line with legislative and organisational policies and procedures
9. support individuals to transition between different support and services in line with organisational policies and procedures
10. use different styles and forms of communication and adapt them to meet the needs of the individual
11. work with individuals in ways which support understanding, and:
 - encourages open and honest communication
 - is sympathetic to the individual's situation
 - takes account of the diverse nature of those you work with
 - treats them with dignity and respect
12. provide information and advice to individuals in appropriate and safe environments for everyone in line with organisational policies and procedures
13. work within legal and organisational requirements and protocols when sharing advice and information with others.
14. work within your own levels of responsibility and authority and refer to relevant others where appropriate
15. evaluate the impact of information and support you provide to individuals in line with organisational policies and procedures
16. use evaluation findings to inform and improve the information and support you

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provide in line with your role and responsibilities

17. update records and information with ongoing communications and new information in line with your organisation's 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. who to inform when you are unable to support individuals within your role and limits of your authority
5. who to seek advice from when you need support in your role
6. the limits of your authority, responsibility and professional competence
7. what constitutes domestic abuse and sexual violence, and its prevalence in the community
8. signs of abuse and the methods used by abusers to maintain power and control.
9. the impact upon all those affected by domestic abuse or sexual violence including individuals, children, and dependents.
10. common information and support needs for individuals of domestic abuse or sexual abuse and how to meet these
11. types and sources of information and support sought by individuals
12. how to be sensitive and flexible in your approach, using various techniques appropriate to the behaviour and attitude of individuals
13. the role and impact of intersectionality in relation to domestic abuse and sexual violence
14. how to create an environment that puts individuals at ease
15. different trauma responses and their impact
16. how to apply trauma informed practice in your area of practice
17. how to apply a needs led, strength based approach specific to meet the needs of the individual
18. how to provide information and support which facilitates informed decision-making and action planning by individuals
19. principal agencies, organisations and services in your area where requests by individuals for information and support might be referred and how to refer
20. the importance of maintaining the individual's right to make their own decisions, and techniques for allowing this
21. actions required where disclosure of domestic abuse or sexual violence is identified

22. resources available to enable individuals to access the information required, including:

- different formats available to assist those with physical, mental, communication and other difficulties

23. criteria for access to other services and support

24. the importance of and methods for building trust and empathy with individuals

25. different styles and forms of communication and how to adapt them to meet the needs of the individual

26. the importance of non-verbal communication and how different cultures use and interpret body language in different ways

27. common barriers to communication and ways to overcome them

28. the importance of being aware of your own values and beliefs and how these might influence how you provide information and support to others

29. how to challenge discriminatory or potentially damaging attitudes and behaviour and the importance of doing so

30. circumstances where it is necessary to go against individuals expressed wishes and the importance of ensuring that they understand why their wishes may not be met

31. limits of confidentiality applying to your role

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.

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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