

BELFAST AREA DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PARTNERSHIP

Domestic Violence – A Workplace Issue?

Seminar- 24th Nov. 2010

Carol Diffin, Chair



Belfast Area
Domestic Violence Partnership

N. Ireland Policy Context

- Tackling Violence at Home Strategy 2005 and Action Plan 2010 -2012(D of J and DHSSPS)
- Priority for Action 2009/2010 and 2010/2011
- Children Order N.I. 1995
- ACPC Regional Policy and Procedures 2005
- N.I. Policing Plan 2009-2012
- Homelessness Strategy 2005
- Human Rights Act 1998



Belfast Area

Domestic Violence Partnership

Policy Developments in other jurisdictions

- ROI:** National Strategy on Domestic, Sexual and Gender based violence 2010-2014 (March 10)
- Scotland:** Safer lives: Changed lives (June 09)
- Wales:** The Right to be Safe – Welsh Assembly Strategy, (March 10)
- England:** Responding to Violence against Women and Children - The role of the NHS (March 10)
Call to end Violence against Women and Girls
Home Office Nov 2010

The Belfast Area D V Partnership re established 2008.....

***“To develop and maintain local partnerships
for shared understanding and work to tackle
Domestic Violence in the Belfast Area”***

(Mission Statement)



Partnerships Aims

- Working together effectively
- Identify resources
- Hold perpetrators accountable
- Strategic fit

Membership

- Age N.I.
- Barnardo's
- Citizens Advice
- Community Safety Partnership
- Court Service / Solicitor
- District Policing Partnership
- Education
- Health and Social Services
- Housing Executive
- NSPCC
- PBNI
- PSNI
- Social Security Agency
- Trade Unions
- Victim Support
- Voluntary/Community Groups
- Women's Aid
- Women's Information Group



Belfast Area

Domestic Violence Partnership

Key Themes and Working Groups

- Prevention
- Protection and Justice
- Support
- Training and Development

Prevention Working Group

*“Regional approach to implementation of workplace policies across public, private and voluntary sectors”
(DHSSPS and DOJ Action Plan 2010-2012))*

Belfast Area Domestic Violence Partnership

- Model Policy template developed.
- Focus group with service users.
- Seminar hosted by Clanmil Housing , facilitated by Business in The Community Feb 2010.
- Seminar hosted by NIPSA May 2010
- Seminar hosted by George Best Belfast City Airport, supported by BITC



Belfast Area
Domestic Violence Partnership

Finally

Thank you for your
attendance today.



Belfast Area
Domestic Violence Partnership

Patricia Lyness

**Belfast and Lisburn
Women's Aid**

Working to End Domestic Violence

women's aid

Belfast and Lisburn

Domestic Violence is....

“The intentional and persistent physical or emotional abuse of a women, or of a woman and her children in a way that causes pain, distress or injury.”

Women's Aid

women's aid

Belfast and Lisburn

Domestic Violence is....

“Threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, verbal, sexual, financial or emotional) inflicted on one person by another where they are or have been intimate partners or family members, irrespective of gender or sexual orientation.”

Inter-Departmental
Tackling Violence at
Home Strategy 2005

women's aid

Belfast and Lisburn

Facts and Figures

- Domestic Violence is a violation of Article 5 of the UN Declaration of Human Rights – that “no one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.”
- Over 30% of all domestic violence starts during pregnancy
- Estimated 32,000 children in NI are living with domestic violence (UNICEF)
- 24 Hour Domestic Violence Help Line managed 32,349 calls in 2009/2010 an increase of 17% on 2008/09.

women's aid

Belfast and Lisburn

Domestic Violence – A Crime

- PSNI Statistics for 2009/10 show 24,482 Domestic Incidents
- This means they respond to a Domestic Incident every **21 minutes of every day of the year in Northern Ireland**
- Total of 9,903 crimes with a domestic motivation
- **Represents on average 1 domestic related crime every 53 minutes in Northern Ireland**
- 18 recorded murders – **7 classed as having a domestic motivation** = 38.9% of all murders
- Where the gender of the victim was known 75% of adult victims were female

women's aid

Belfast and Lisburn

Facts and Figures...

More Domestic related crimes than the following crimes combined

- Sexual offences (1944)
- Robbery (600) Armed robbery (557)
- Hijacking (119)
- Theft or unauthorised taking of a motor vehicle (2975)
- Theft , one person from another (591)
- Arson (1980)
- Dangerous driving (865)
- Handling stolen goods (226)
- Offences under anti-terrorism legislation (7).

women's aid

Belfast and Lisburn

Women's Aid - Safety Protection & Support

- 3 refuges with over 100 bed spaces staffed 24 hours providing crisis intervention, needs and risk assessment and safety and support planning
- Outreach service supporting women and children to remain at home if safe to do so
- Work with children and young people in refuges, outreach and through education and prevention programmes in schools
- Inter-Agency Partnerships
- Information and training on Domestic Violence to a range of agencies/organisations
- Volunteering opportunities
- Influencing change.



Belfast Health & Social Care Trust Domestic Abuse Support Service

**Orla Barron
Health and Social Inequalities Manager
24th November 2010**



Belfast Health and
Social Care Trust

Domestic Abuse
Confidential Support for all Trust Staff

Background

- Belfast HSC Trust – 22,000 staff
- Tasked with delivery of best health and social care services to Belfast population of some 340,000 people + regional services
- Purpose of new organisation was to improve health and well-being and reduce health and social inequalities



Belfast Health and
Social Care Trust

Domestic Abuse
Confidential Support for all Trust Staff

Why a workplace policy on domestic abuse?

- Duty of care
- Moral /Ethical reasons
- Human Right – fundamental right to be free from abuse
- Business case – it is a workplace issue – impact on performance, health and social well-being, motivation, concentration, absenteeism etc



How common is domestic violence in the workplace?

- Not uncommon for abuser to seek out abuse partner at work –risk for victim & colleagues
- Approx. 18,700 violent workplace events committed by partner
- 74% employed battered women are harassed by their partners at work, either in person or over the phone



Journey so far

- February 08 – workplace policy and plan of action with Trade Union side
- Based on original good practice example of SEBT Legacy Trust and Unison
- Working in partnership with Trade Union side
- Executive Team + TJNF ratified approach in April 08



Belfast Health and
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Domestic Abuse
Confidential Support for all Trust Staff

Support Worker

- Trawled for expressions of interest for voluntary role of support worker
- Recognised importance of diversity of officer –gender, age, location, professional background, level
- 30 support workers shortlisted with managerial approval
- 2 day intensive training –Women's Aid, MAP, Rainbow Project, PSNI, DVU at DHSSPSNI, Staffcare and Social Work



Role

- Not to “rescue”
- To listen, to inform of options, to signpost, to offer practical and emotional support
- Practical examples – time off for appointments, court dates, salary advance, act as intermediary, change location, contact number, hours of work



Awareness

- Raise awareness of domestic abuse, impact on workplace, support service for staff
- Official launch in December 08 – attended by Chief Executive and Chair
- Newspaper articles, information on intranet, payslips, posters
- Lunchtime awareness sessions
- Targeted training – Occupational Health, Managers, Staff

Domestic Abuse
Confidential Support for all Trust Staff



Belfast Health and
Social Care Trust

Continuous Journey

- Pilot for 18 months
- Regular review meetings with DASOs
- Regular co-ordination groups
- Met women who experienced domestic abuse -“Domestic Violence happens to “ **regular**” people”
- An evolving and challenging piece of work, but worthwhile



Belfast Health and
Social Care Trust

Domestic Abuse
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A vertical strip on the left side of the slide contains four images: a young girl resting her head on her hand, a woman in profile, a baby wrapped in a blanket, and a young girl looking down.

nipsa

**Campaigning on behalf
of all victims of
Domestic Violence
at work or at home**



Domestic Violence

- **Why it is a workplace issue**
- **How you, as employers/HR practitioners can identify and support employees**



Impact on the Workplace

- **A deterioration in an employee's performance;**
- **Increased and unexplained absenteeism;**
- **Poor time-keeping;**
- **Threat to job security and prospects**



Domestic Violence

Did you know...

In Northern Ireland the direct cost of domestic violence to services and lost economic output is estimated to amount to £180m each year

Campaigning on behalf of all victims of Domestic Violence



Key Reasons for Developing a Workplace Policy

- Recruitment and retention
- Staff morale and productivity
- Disciplinary action
- Public image and reputation



What should a Workplace Policy cover?

- A policy statement that has clear aims and states the organisation's commitment to treat domestic violence seriously;
- A clear definition of domestic violence;
- An acknowledgement that the majority of victims are women but that men are also affected as are women and men in same-sex relationships;
- A clear statement that the organisation is committed to the principle that domestic violence and abuse is unacceptable behaviour and that everyone has a right to live free from fear and abuse;



What should a Workplace Policy cover?

- A statement that, where domestic violence occurs or has the potential to occur in the workplace, the paramount consideration of the employer is to ensure the health and well-being of employees and to ensure that, where appropriate, perpetrators of abuse are challenged and held to account to reduce the potential for re-offending;
- Details of the first point of contact for employees who need to discuss issues around domestic violence;
- A commitment to early intervention by identifying ways of creating a supportive environment and to creating confidential mechanisms for employees experiencing domestic violence to seek help and information in order to empower them to make their own decisions;



What should a Workplace Policy cover?

- A commitment to offering ongoing support to employees experiencing domestic violence including time off, for example, for counselling, visits to a solicitor or support agencies, for re-housing or re-organising childcare;
- The possibility of relocation or redeployment where this would be appropriate and supportive of the employee;
- A commitment to training and educating on domestic violence issues. This might involve some basic awareness training for all staff and more detailed training for certain staff eg personnel or welfare staff;



What should a Workplace Policy cover?

- Provision of resources within the workplace, such as posters, leaflets etc to raise awareness about the domestic violence helpline and other support services; and
- Mechanisms for monitoring and reviewing the policy's effectiveness and for regularly updating information on help available and how to contact support services.



Ways to Help

- **Allowing flexible or more flexible working or special leave to facilitate practical arrangements that are required such as: seeking legal advice, attending counselling, attending support group meetings, arranging re-housing, attending court, or to alter childcare arrangements;**
- **Offer financial support by way of an advance in pay;**
- **Provide access to appropriate, confidential, independent professional counselling;**
- **Allow the individual to change work patterns or workload;**



Ways to Help

- **Facilitating a transfer to another post or relocation for safety reasons;**
- **Awareness training for all staff so that they understand why there is a need for a workplace policy and know how to behave and help in the situation;**
- **Diverting telephone calls;**
- **Diverting emails to a separate folder;**
- **With consent advising colleagues of the situation on a need-to-know basis and agreeing what the response should be if the abuser/alleged abuser contacts the office.**

Contact details

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