

Assessing risk for women living with abuse



If you are working with a woman who is unsure if she is being abused you may wish to use the following check list from the South Wales Police and Women's Safety Unit in Cardiff. This list should be used as a means of starting a conversation with your client.

Domestic violence warning signs

Answer Yes/No/Don't Know/Significant Concern

1. Does partner /ex-partner have a criminal record for violence or drugs?
If 'yes', is the record related to domestic abuse?
2. Has the latest incident resulted in injuries?
If 'yes', does this cause significant concern?
3. Has the incident involved weapons?
if 'yes', does this cause significant concern?
4. Has your partner/ex-partner ever threatened to kill anybody?
If 'yes', does this cause significant concern?
5. Has the partner/ex-partner expressed/ behaved in a jealous way or displayed controlling behaviour or obsessive tendencies?
If 'yes', does this cause significant concern?
6. Has there been/going to be a relationship separation between you and your partner/ex-partner?
7. Is the abuse becoming worse and/or happening more often?
8. Are you very frightened?
9. Is your partner/ex-partner experiencing/recently experienced financial problems?
10. Does your partner/ex-partner have/had problems with: alcohol; mental health; drugs?
11. Are you pregnant?
12. Is there conflict with partner/ex-partner over child contact?

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13. Has partner/ex-partner attempted to strangle/choke you or past partner?
14. Have you or your partner/ex-partner ever threatened/attempted to commit suicide?
15. Has your partner/ex-partner said or done things of a sexual nature that makes you feel bad or that physically hurt you?
16. Are you afraid of further injury or violence?
17. Are you afraid that your partner/ex-partner will kill you?
18. Are you afraid that your partner/ex-partner will harm her/his children?
19. Do you suspect that you are being stalked?
20. Do you feel isolated from family/friends?

Very high risk = 10 ticks in the yes box; or 4 significant concerns; or if there are three police callouts in 12 months.

High risk = 6 to 9 ticks in the yes box; or three significant concerns; or two police callouts in 12 months.

Medium risk = Up to 6 ticks in the yes box; or 1 or 2 significant concerns.

(The questions are taken from a risk assessment checklist used by the South Wales Police and the Women's Safety Unit in Cardiff)

Linda Clements works as a trainer as part of the HMA team. For more information about how HMA can help you with your training needs contact info@hma.co.nz

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