All Wales Pathway

Antenatal Routine Enquiry into Domestic Abuse

Minimum Standards
## STANDARD ONE - CONFIDENTIALITY

<table>
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| Professionals need to be aware of the need for confidentiality – and its limitations | • All health professionals recognise the duty to respect the woman’s confidentiality but must be aware of its limitations in the wider public interest.  
• The law recognises significant exceptions to the duty of confidentiality.  
If the woman withholds consent, or if consent cannot be obtained, disclosures may be made where:  
• They can be justified in the public interest  
• They are required by law or by order of a court  
• Where there are potential child protection issues – there is a need to act in accordance with national and local policies.  
• The professional is justified and has a duty to share information with social services, police or other agencies, where there is an increased risk of abuse / child protection concerns  

*Extreme care should be taken to protect the safety of victims of abuse. Information should not be disclosed to any third party who may breach their safety.* | • NMC (2002) Code of Professional Conduct  
• ACPC (2002) All Wales Child Protection Procedures  
• Data Protection Act 1998  
• Human Rights Act 1998  
• Robinson A (2004) [www.cf.ac.uk/socsi/whoswho/robinson.html](http://www.cf.ac.uk/socsi/whoswho/robinson.html)  
• WAG (2000) Working Together to Safeguard Children  
• A safe, quiet environment  
• Support and supervision for staff.  
• Staff Educational Training |
### STANDARD TWO – ROUTINE ENQUIRY

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| All women will be routinely asked about domestic abuse in the antenatal period | - Women should be alone when asked about domestic abuse  
- Information cards to be given to women when beginning Routine Enquiry  
- Ensure lone contact with the woman at least once in pregnancy  
- If unable to see the woman alone, highlight this as a priority for follow up and seek advice accordingly  
- Routine enquiry should not be a one off event. It should be at opportunistic intervals throughout the pregnancy  
- Ensure the provision of a safe, supportive environment  
- RCOG Press, London, England  
- (NICE 2003) Antenatal care – Clinical Guideline 6  
- Mann C (2003) Domestic Violence Good Practice Guidelines -Mansfield District and Ashfield Primary Care Trust | - All Wales information cards  
- Education & Training  
- Safe and private environment  
- Time  
- Access to appropriate interpreters |
**STANDARD THREE : DISCLOSURE**

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| Women who disclose will be given appropriate support and information. They will be offered referral to appropriate agencies | • Provide time for the woman  
• Validate that what she is disclosing is wrong and reinforce that the abuse is not her fault  
• All staff to complete the All Wales Pathway in order to highlight the severity of risk and make appropriate referrals to support agencies  
• Respect her need for confidentiality, but staff **must** adhere to ACPC Procedures  
• Give accurate up to date information of relevant agencies.  
• Ask the woman for her consent for referral to other agencies.  
• If you are concerned about the welfare of a child / children then refer to Child Protection nurse / Midwife in accordance with All Wales Child Protection Procedures / Local Guidelines  

*Consent is not essential where there are potential child protection concerns / imminent threats to her safety*  
• Provide an interpreter **N.B. This must not be a family member** | • Trusts guidelines/policies consent  
• Trust policies on confidentiality  
• Data Protection Act (1998)  
• ACPC (2002) All Wales Child Protection Procedures  
• NMC (2002) Code of Professional Conduct | • Interpreters  
• Provision of a quiet environment  
• Time  
• All Wales Pathway  
• Appropriate contact numbers for support agencies |
### STANDARD FOUR - DOCUMENTATION

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| All information disclosed will be recorded clearly stating: * Date * Time * Persons present . | • LHBs / Trusts will ensure their staff are clear regarding the documentation process  
• Record events using the woman's own words  
• Document whether children were present at the time of the abuse  
• Liaise with A&E Staff / Police as the following may be required:  
  - Provide a diagram of the body with a written description of any injuries  
  - Clothing may be saved for the police investigation  
  - Polaroid photographs may be taken and regarded as evidence  
  - Arrange interpreter:-  
    - Same gender  
    - Language  
    - Sign  
• Local Trust policies - consent and confidentiality  
• NMC (2002) Code of Conduct  
• WHO (1997) Violence against women information pack  
• NMC (2004) Guidelines for Records and Record Keeping  
• Time  
• Clinical supervision  
• Camera equipment  
• Suitable room for examination and investigation  
• Interpreter  
• Data collection – Consider use of All Wales Pathway for Routine Enquiry
### STANDARD FIVE - RISK ASSESSMENT

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| Undertake a risk assessment for the woman, unborn baby, or any other children in the household. A risk assessment to ensure staff safety should also be completed. | ● The practitioner should be familiar with the Domestic Abuse Resource Manual for Health Care Professionals in Wales  
● Assess level of risk using the All Wales Pathway for Routine Enquiry.  
(This system is intended as a guide only and reflects a particular moment in time. Please remember that the situation may change quickly.)  
Consider not only the high risk situation but also any strange or unusual behaviour reported by the woman.  
N.B. Scores 7 or above must be referred to the MARAC system (or its equivalent) as this indicates a VERY HIGH Risk situation | ● LHB / Local Trust Lone Worker Policy  
● Robinson A (2004) [www.cf.ac.uk/socsi/whoswh0/robinson.html](http://www.cf.ac.uk/socsi/whoswh0/robinson.html)  
● South Wales Police Public Protection Unit – FSU 9  
● Trust Health and Safety Policy  
● Trust Violence and Aggression Policy  
● Training  
● Privacy/Safe environment  
● All Wales Pathway for Routine Enquiry |

MARAC = Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference
### STANDARD SIX – CHILD PROTECTION

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| Where actual or the likelihood of significant harm is identified, a referral under the Child Protection Procedures must be made. | • Establish whether children are present within the home when abuse is taking place.  
• Assess level of danger  
• Consider other situations which may impact on the health and wellbeing of the child and take appropriate action  
• Named Nurse or Midwife for Child Protection must be informed of any concerns for the welfare of a child  
• Involve Multi Agency Partnerships  
• Seek guidance and support from Education / Education Welfare Officers where the 'child' herself may be pregnant.  
Ask the woman for her (verbal) consent for referral to other agencies  
• If you are concerned about the welfare of a child / children then seek guidance from / refer to Child Protection Nurse / Midwife / Specialist in accordance with All Wales Child Protection Procedures / Local Guidelines / Framework for Assessment of Children in Need and Their Families  
Consent is not essential where there are potential child protection concerns / imminent threats to her safety | All Wales Child Protection Procedures (2002).  
• Hughes H (1992) Impact of Spouse Abuse on Children of Battered Women Abuse Update  
• Not In Front Of The Children One Plus One, London England  
• Trust Child Protection Procedures, Named Nurse / Midwife  
• Clinical Supervision  
• Education and Training  
• Links with advocacy services for children  
• Links with Education / Education Welfare Officers |

The welfare of any child is paramount including the unborn child. Consider also the implications for the pregnant teenager <18 yrs.
### STANDARD SEVEN - SAFETY PLANNING FOR STAFF AND VICTIM

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| To ensure women are equipped with accurate and appropriate advice to stay safe | Process of safety planning. Support the woman:-  
- Build a trusting, non judgemental relationship  
- Encourage the woman to assess her safety needs  
- Review current risk – to her own life and to her children  
- Offer appropriate, accurate information regarding support agencies  
- Be an advocate for the woman with other agencies (with consent)  
- Undertake a risk assessment of your environment e.g. when visiting a woman in her home - Consider:- geographical location, can you get out safely,  
<em>N.B. Ensure that you do not place yourself or your colleague at risk in a potentially violent situation when supporting someone else</em> | • Welsh Assembly Government (2001) Domestic Violence resource manual for health care professionals  
• LHB/Trust Lone Worker Policy  
• All Wales Information Card | • Time  
• Suitable room  
• Counselling service  
• Training and education  
• Access to appropriate agencies  
• All Wales Pathway for Routine Enquiry  
• Trust Policy for staff experiencing Domestic Abuse  
• Safety policies as per Trust:-  
  o Mobile phones  
  o Rape alarms  
  o Room alarms  
  o Lone Worker Policies  
  o Violence and Aggression Training |
| To ensure health professionals are not placed in situations of threat or danger | | | |

All Wales Midwifery & Health Visitors Domestic Abuse Networking Group  
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## STANDARD EIGHT - PROVISION OF INFORMATION & REFERRAL

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| Provide woman with accurate information i.e. Resources, help and agencies available. Ensure multi-agency working. | • Adopt a calm, open approach  
• Give All Wales Information Card  
• Give information that is non judgemental and accurate. Be courteous and empathetic to her needs  
• Provide written information should the woman want it  
• Display information within the Trust  
• Ensure information (especially telephone numbers) are current, if not this could endanger the woman | • Protection from Harassment Act (1997)  
• Criminal Justice Act (1998)  
• Offences against the Person Act (1861) (ABH, GBH)  
• Police and Criminal Evidence Act (1984)  
• Public Order Act (1986)  
• Criminal Justice and Public Order (1994) | • Time  
• Training  
• Display boards  
• Literature - Information and description of other agencies roles  
• Information in a range of different languages  
• Information as to where to seek help for the perpetrator as well as the victim  
• Access to Women’s Aid / DAUs, Family Support Units etc  
• Posters - Contact information may include telephone numbers of local agencies e.g.  
• Legal Services – consider those who specialize in Domestic Abuse  
• Hot lines / Helpline numbers |
## STANDARD NINE – SUPPORT & SUPERVISION OF STAFF

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| To provide adequate support to staff who are dealing with domestic abuse issues | • Safety and disclosure of information should be discussed with line manager/ named nurse for child protection  
• Access to clinical supervision / midwifery supervision to be provided in order to allow staff to debrief, seek further advice from line manager or other relevant personnel  
• Explore own issues which may influence practice and seek advice accordingly  
• Adherence to minimum standards and principles  
• Develop skills and identify training needs  
• Consider advice and support from local domestic abuse units | • Mann C (2003) Domestic Violence Good Practice Guidelines – Mansfield District and Ashfield Primary Care Trust  
• Local Domestic Abuse Guidelines for Staff  
• NMC (2004) Midwives Rules and Standards | • Human Resource Policies in place for staff  
• Education and training  
• Staff Counselling Service via Local Occupational Health Departments |
# STANDARD TEN – EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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| Staff will be confident and competent to deal with issues involving domestic abuse | • Awareness of physical and general indicators  
• Midwives and Health Visitors to use routine enquiry as part of antenatal care  
• All Trusts / LHBs to adopt the All Wales Pathway for Domestic Abuse as Good Practice  
• Domestic abuse to be placed on Trust and Local Health Board agenda | • Mann C (2003) Domestic Violence Good Practice Guidelines -Mansfield District and Ashfield Primary Care Trust  
• (NICE 2003) Antenatal care – Clinical Guideline 6  
• Mandatory in-service training days for all health professionals  
• Study leave for staff in order to attend training sessions  
• Inclusion of Domestic Abuse on pre and post registration education curriculum |

Staff should be aware of basic legislation to help and reassure the woman.

All Trusts / LHBs to adopt the All Wales Pathway for Domestic Abuse as Good Practice