

Domestic Abuse

Policy: **HR**

Policy Summary Statement

To provide guidance and support to all employees of Devon Partnership NHS Trust who are experiencing domestic abuse in their personal life, as a survivor/victim or perpetrator, to make positive domestic or behaviour changes and provide a safe working environment

Do you need this document in a different format?

Contact PALS – 0800 0730741 or email pals@devonptrns.nhs.uk

Document Control

Policy Ref No.	
Version: Policy:	1
Replaces / dated:	New
Author(s) Name / Job Title responsible / e mail:	Jess Hobbs HR Advisor Stevie Rice HR Business Partner
EIA Date completed:	
Ratifying committee:	
Date ratified:	23 rd July 2009
Director / Sponsor	
Target audience / Staff Groups:	All Staff
Implementation date:	
Review date:	July 2011
Date Archived:	
NHSLA Standards met:	
S4BH Standards met:	
Other Relevant Standards met:	

Contents

Section		Page
1	Introduction	4
2	Purpose	4
3	Duties within the Organisation	4
4	Definitions	5
5	Standards	5
6	Communication	6
7	Equality	6
8	Related Documentation & Contacts	6-7
9	Workforce Planning & Development Considerations	
10	Monitoring	
11	References	
12	Acknowledgements	
Appendices		
Appendix A	Managers Guidance	
Appendix B	Flowchart, Victims of Domestic Abuse	
Appendix C	Flowchart, Potential Victims of Domestic Abuse	
Appendix D	Flowchart, Perpetrators of Domestic Abuse	

1. Introduction

Devon Partnership Trust acknowledges that domestic abuse is a significant issue in today's society; statistics indicate that 1 in 4 women will experience domestic abuse at some point in their lives and the approximately 20% of reported incidents to the police are from male survivors/victims

Domestic abuse is a social and moral issue that constitutes a violation of individual's human rights.

Devon Partnership Trust recognises that its employees will be amongst those impacted by domestic abuse and a clear workplace policy and guidelines are required.

2. Purpose

2.1. At least 10% of all employees are potential victims/survivors or perpetrators of domestic abuse. This policy is directed to all employees to highlight the levels of support available, increase awareness of the scale of the issue and common symptoms of domestic abuse.

2.1. Those with line management responsibility should take a proactive stance in increasing awareness as indicated above.

3. Duties within the Organisation

3.1. To provide guidance and support to all employees of Devon Partnership Trust who are experiencing domestic abuse in their personal life, as a survivor/victim or perpetrator, to make positive domestic or behavioural changes and provide a safe working environment.

3.2. To provide all staff, in particular managers and HR staff with an increased awareness of the main issues involved in domestic abuse, to recognise potential victims/perpetrators and to provide a supportive structure in which to deal effectively with cases.

3.3. Devon Partnership Trust has adopted a zero tolerance attitude to abuse within the organisation.

Background

Devon's Against Domestic Violence and Abuse multi agency partnership (ADVA) aims to increase the safety of victims of domestic abuse in the county. It funds support services in all districts for victims, perpetrators and children, as well as training and awareness raising activities. In 2006-7 there were 8,600 reported incidents of domestic abuse to the police in Devon. Domestic violence and abuse is hugely under reported; the more realistic number of victims in Devon exceeds 30,000. In addition to the human suffering in families, the annual cost to services in Devon is estimated to be £18m. The impact of domestic abuse experienced in the home has a direct impact on victims and perpetrators, and their work colleagues, in the workplace.

The effects of domestic abuse are associated with many direct and indirect costs including:

- Decreased productivity
- Absenteeism
- Errors
- Increased employee turnover

In many cases the abuse can spill out of the home and into the workplace.

- 56% of abused women arrive late for work at least five times a month

- 28% leave early at least five days a month
- 53% miss at least three days of work a month
- Once a person leaves an abusive partner they are especially vulnerable at work, as it may be the only place they can be located or harmed.
- 75% of domestic abuse victims are targeted at work – from harassing phone calls and abusive partners arriving at the office unannounced, to physical assaults.

4. Definitions

4.1. The definition adopted by the Devon ADVA Partnership is:

“Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults, aged 18 or over, who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender and sexuality. Family members are defined as mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister and grandparents, whether directly or indirectly related, in-laws or step-family.”

4.2. Some forms of domestic abuse are very subtle, leaving no physical marks or scars, but can be equally as damaging to the victim.

4.3. Domestic abuse normally takes place as a pattern of behaviour that develops over a period of time. Devon Partnership Trust will ensure that appropriate guidance and support is available to survivors/victims of domestic violence and abuse in whatever form it takes.

4.4. Although most attacks are by men upon women, domestic abuse occurs in every type of home, regardless of the individual’s gender, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, age, religion, belief or ethnicity.

5. Standards

5.1. Employees who have identified that they are experiencing domestic abuse will be provided with every reasonable consideration, both personally and professionally. They will not be judged or ridiculed by any employee, but will be provided with a sympathetic, supportive response.

5.2. Devon Partnership Trust will support employees in making positive changes and in providing a safe and positive working environment.

5.3. Any formal action as a result of poor punctuality, attendance, work performance and productivity can be avoided through promotion of this policy and the supporting guidance notes for managers.

5.4. Discussions between a manager and an employee who is experiencing domestic abuse will be treated in confidence. In some circumstances this confidence may need to be broken in order to protect children or vulnerable adults.

5.5. Devon Partnership Trust will provide a secure and safe working for its employees under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. Where appropriate, reasonable additional measures will be taken by managers to protect the safety of those experiencing domestic abuse while travelling between work and home, whilst at work or when carrying out Trust duties.

5.6. Managers will ensure that reasonable additional measures are taken to protect personal information regarding those who are known to be victims/survivors of domestic abuse. For further information please see management guidance.

5.7. An employee who is cautioned or convicted of a criminal offence may be subject to the Devon Partnership Trust Conduct Procedure. Devon Partnership Trust reserves the right to consider use of the Conduct Procedure should an employee's activities outside of work have an impact on their ability to perform the role for which they are employed, or be considered to bring the organisation into disrepute.

5.8. This policy supports the Devon ADVA Partnership, which is working for the community of Devon in raising awareness of the issues involved and the extent of the problem and offering support and guidance to those who are victims/survivors and perpetrators.

6. Communication

6.1. Leaflets will be made available to all staff, to be advertised on notice boards and the intranet.

6.2. An annual programme of training will be available to inform and support managers and employees in dealing with the issues surrounding domestic abuse and providing informal and guidance on how to support those involved.

7. Equality

7.1. Devon Partnership Trust is committed to equality in its domestic abuse policy.

7.2. No employee will be unlawfully disadvantaged on the grounds of age, race or ethnicity, disability, gender and marital status, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion or belief under the operation of this policy.

8. Related Documentation

The following list of information will also provide support and guidance to managers and employees.

- Devon Adva Partnership website: www.adva.org.uk
- Devon Adva Strategy 2007-2009
- "Domestic Violence; a guide for the workplace" published by the Trade Union Congress.

8.1. Devon Partnership Trust offers a number of support mechanisms for employees and line managers

8.2. In the first instance line managers or work colleagues may be able to offer advice and support, in addition the HR Helpdesk 01392 663915 is available as are HR Business Partners.

8.3. If an individual wishes to disclose a caution or conviction, they should contact the HR Helpdesk or their relevant HR Business Partner.

8.4. The Adva Manager can be contacted through Adva on (01392) 383223

8.5. Contact details for other support services are detailed below

- National Domestic Violence Helpline (24/7) – **0808 2000 247**
- Police **999**
- Refuges: - The national women's refuge helpline is – 0808 2000 247
- There are five women's refuges in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay

East Devon – **01404 44772**

Exeter – **01392 667144** (+24 hour crisis line)

North Devon – **01271 321946**

Plymouth – **01752 56228**

South Devon – **01803 524594**

Outreach support for women: There are services in each district:

Exeter 24 Hour Helpline – **0800 328 3070** (free local calls)

East Devon – **01392 435560**

Exeter- **01392 426483**

Mid Devon – **01392 426521**

North Devon and Torridge – **01271 370079**

South Hams and Teignbridge – **01364 644088**

West – **01837 55228**

Safe Project (For girls and young women aged 14-25 in Exeter Safe Project **01392 667147**
East and Mid Devon **01392 490583**)

Outreach support for men: There is a telephone and website service for male victims/survivors:

Male – 0808 801 0327 www.mensadviceline.org.uk or email on info@mensadviceline.org.uk

Victim Support for Men- 0800 3283623 (Monday – Friday 10am-4pm)

Broken Rainbow- 08452 60 44 60 (Monday and Thursday 2-8pm, Wednesday 10-1pm)

More information on ADVA can be found at http://www.devon.gov.uk/domestic_violence.htm

9. Workforce Planning & Development Considerations

10. Monitoring

10.1. Devon Partnership will monitor the numbers of survivor/victims and perpetrators of domestic violence and abuse anonymously as part of the annual staff survey.

10.2. Devon Partnership Trust will monitor the take-up of managers training once a year.

10.3. Devon Partnership Trust will keep a list identifying what domestic violence and abuse training has been received by managers and staff (course dates and attendance)

11. References

ADVA website www.adva.org.uk

NHS Employers www.nhsemployers.org

12. Acknowledgements

ADVA

Devon County Council

The committee/group responsible for the development of this policy will work with staff from the Workforce Planning and Development service to support the development/maintenance of the competences required by staff in various roles throughout the organisation/service to ensure that the policy can be implemented safely and effectively to enable high quality delivery of services.

To enable this happens, the committee/group responsible (or their nominee) will work with member(s) of the Workforce Planning and Development service to ensure that the processes identified and fully described in the Learning and Development Policy (reference HR50) section 15 are undertaken. These will include:

- **Identification of the competences required by the various types of staff affected by this policy**
- **Development of a competence framework for the levels of knowledge and skills required to ensure effective implementation of the policy**
- **Training needs analysis to identify the numbers of staff who will require the different levels of competence**
- **Identification of the ways in which these levels of competence may be acquired by staff (including a range of learning methods)**
- **Development of a business case, where required, to identify options for delivery of learning and the associated costs**
- **Development of action plan(s) for the implementation of training**
- **Systems to review the efficacy of the training**
- **Systems to monitor that staff have undertaken the training**

The Flowcharts in the Appendices advise a manager of actions in the following incidents:

- If he/she has concerns about a member of staff who he/she suspects might be experiencing problems at home
- If he/she is informed by a member of staff that he/she is a survivor/victim or a perpetrator of domestic abuse

1. Confidentiality and Security

1.1 Those experiencing domestic abuse may feel concerned about seeking the help of their manager or other colleagues. Individuals should feel assured that they can talk freely to a non-judgemental, sympathetic and understanding listener.

1.2 Discussions will be in confidence between the individual and their manager or colleague, although in some circumstances this confidence may need to be broken in order to protect the safety of an individual. E.g. If a risk assessment identifies the survivor/victim to be at very high risk, the individual's details will need to be referred to the Trusts MARAC (Multi-agency risk assessment conference) process. An individual may wish to be accompanied by a trade union representative or other friend or colleague during discussions.

1.3 It is clearly important to safeguard the whereabouts, phone numbers, email and home addresses of known survivors/victims by ensuring that these are not given out to anyone without the explicit consent of the survivor/victim.

1.4 Support members of staff and their families with safety at home, travelling to or from work, at work or when carrying out their duties as stalking and harassment are common features of domestic abuse. This is especially in the event of a victim / survivor attempting to leave an abusive relationship. It is imperative to note that a survivor/victim is at greatest risk of harm when leaving their abusive partner.

1.5 A perpetrator may make threats to a victim / survivor in the workplace, sending threatening emails, making abusive telephone calls, attempting to enter the office where they work or making regular and repeat contact to check up on the survivor/victim.

1.6 When made aware that such behaviour is possible, the manager should document the nature of the threats or behaviour of the perpetrator and undertake a risk assessment with the survivor/victim, ensuring that the potential risk to both the survivor/victim and work colleagues is minimised.

1.7 It may be appropriate for the manager to inform others within the organisation of the potential threat, with the victim / survivors agreement, to take measures to minimise the risk or increase security. This may take the form of notifying reception and security or changing an individual's role or location temporarily if this makes them particularly vulnerable.

1.8 Any incidents of domestic abuse which occur on workplace premises, or whilst a victim / survivor is carrying out their work duties, should be reported using the agreed procedure for incidents of violent or threatening behaviour in the workplace.

2. Support

2.1 All senior managers and HR professionals to attend domestic abuse training to understand what it is, its prevalence, its impacts in terms of absenteeism and performance, adverse effect on colleagues, potential dangers to survivors/victims and legislative implications for the employer.

2.2 Managers to ensure that domestic abuse information is displayed and that materials and contact details are made readily available and discreetly to all employees.

2.3 Managers to take responsibility to enquire where concerned about personal home life.

2.4 Give space for individuals to feel able to come forward now or at a later date and allow time and a degree of openness to enable people to come forward.

2.5 Listen, reassure and support individuals and respond in a sensitive and non-judgemental manner.

2.6 Take the opportunity to provide awareness to employees and explain that this is a common situation and that there is help and support available within DPT, for example:

- Ensure that telephone numbers / contact details of the survivor/victim are not advertised or inadvertently passed on by others
- Offer flexible working hours or temporary change in role
- Advise of the opportunity to access emergency funds to assist with solicitor injunctions or re-housing
- Other policies including managing absence, health and safety
- Domestic violence and abuse contacts – colleagues that have attended the training

2.7 On receipt of a disclosure, managers or other contacts to use the attached flowcharts (Appendices A & B) and discuss with the survivor / victim / perpetrator. Document discussions and agree with the individual how to move forward and what additional support or considerations they may require.

3. Counselling

3.1 Advise individuals of the services available through the Devon Partnership Trust Counselling Service

<http://rdeweb/userdata/documents/1044/DPT%20Occupational%20Health%20Counselling%20Leaflet%20August%202005.pdf>

3.2 Encourage the employee to seek the advice of other relevant agencies.

4. Special Arrangements

4.1 To facilitate attendance at meetings e.g. with a solicitor, GP, police, housing agency or to arrange childcare, individuals should use annual leave and flexi time where available. Special leave can be considered by the manager where annual leave entitlement has been exhausted. All requests whilst not guaranteed will be treated sympathetically. For further information please contact the HR Helpdesk or your HR Business Partner.

4.2 Where finances are causing concern for individuals, alternative salary payment methods may be considered in exceptional circumstances.

4.3 Any special arrangements which are agreed with an individual, either temporary or permanent, should be recorded and the details of the arrangement maintained confidentially.

5. Performance Issues

5.1 Managers should have an awareness of indicators that an individual may be experiencing domestic violence and abuse. The following can all be indicators of difficult domestic circumstances.

- Poor work performance
- Irregular attendance
- Lack of concentration
- Poor timekeeping
- Unexplained absence

5.2 Some individuals may find it difficult to disclose issues of domestic abuse to their manager. Should they inform a third party, they should be encouraged to inform their manager to ensure that their circumstances are understood and appropriate help and support can be provided. This may prevent further formal action taking place.

6. Perpetrators

6.1 Individuals who are the perpetrators of domestic abuse are encouraged to seek support and help from an appropriate source.

6.2 The Devon Adva Partnership provides volunteer perpetrator courses in Exeter, North and South Devon to help perpetrators change their behaviour patterns, support their partners or ex-partners and children.

6.3 An individual convicted of a criminal offence may bring the organisation in to disrepute and may subsequently be subject to the DPT Conduct Procedure.

6.4 In some circumstances it may be deemed inappropriate for the individual to continue in their current role, due to a caution or conviction. In these circumstances the possibility of redeployment in to an alternative role should be considered.

6.5 Advice on the above points should be discussed with the HR Helpdesk or your HR Business Partner.

6.6 If a survivor/victim of domestic abuse and their alleged abuser are both employed by Devon Partnership Trust and there are incidents at work, these will be dealt with by HR28 Acceptable Behaviour Policy

http://www.devonpartnership.nhs.uk/index.php?id=24&no_cache=1&task=show&uid=1102&target=1&category=7&cHash=3dac4f021.

If necessary, and in consultation with both parties independently, work may be rearranged to ensure the safety of the person suffering abuse.

7. Protection of Children, Vulnerable Adults and Very High Risk Victims

7.1 Should you have any concerns around domestic abuse or any other type of abuse which involve clients of DPT please refer to the Safeguarding Policies available on the intranet

7.2 Should a victim / survivor of domestic abuse be a child or vulnerable adult, or should there be concerns that either is within an environment surrounded by domestic violence and abuse,

the manager should refer the issue to multi-agency procedures and obtain advice from the Child Protection team or the Adult Protection team. Contact details can be found below.

7.3 Should a manager undertake a risk-assessment (after receiving advanced training 'Tackling Risk Assessment in Domestic Violence and Abuse') and identify the survivor/victim to be at very high risk then the manager will fax the completed form to the relevant MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference) administrator to ensure a MARAC meeting to develop safety and action plans to safeguard the survivor/victim. It should be noted that this referral may result in Police intervention with the survivor/victim and the alleged perpetrator.

- **Rose Edgington - Exeter, East and Mid Devon:**
Tel: 01392 262218 Fax: 01392 262235

- **Sue Speed – North Devon and Torridge**
Tel: 01271 335214 Fax: 01271 335215

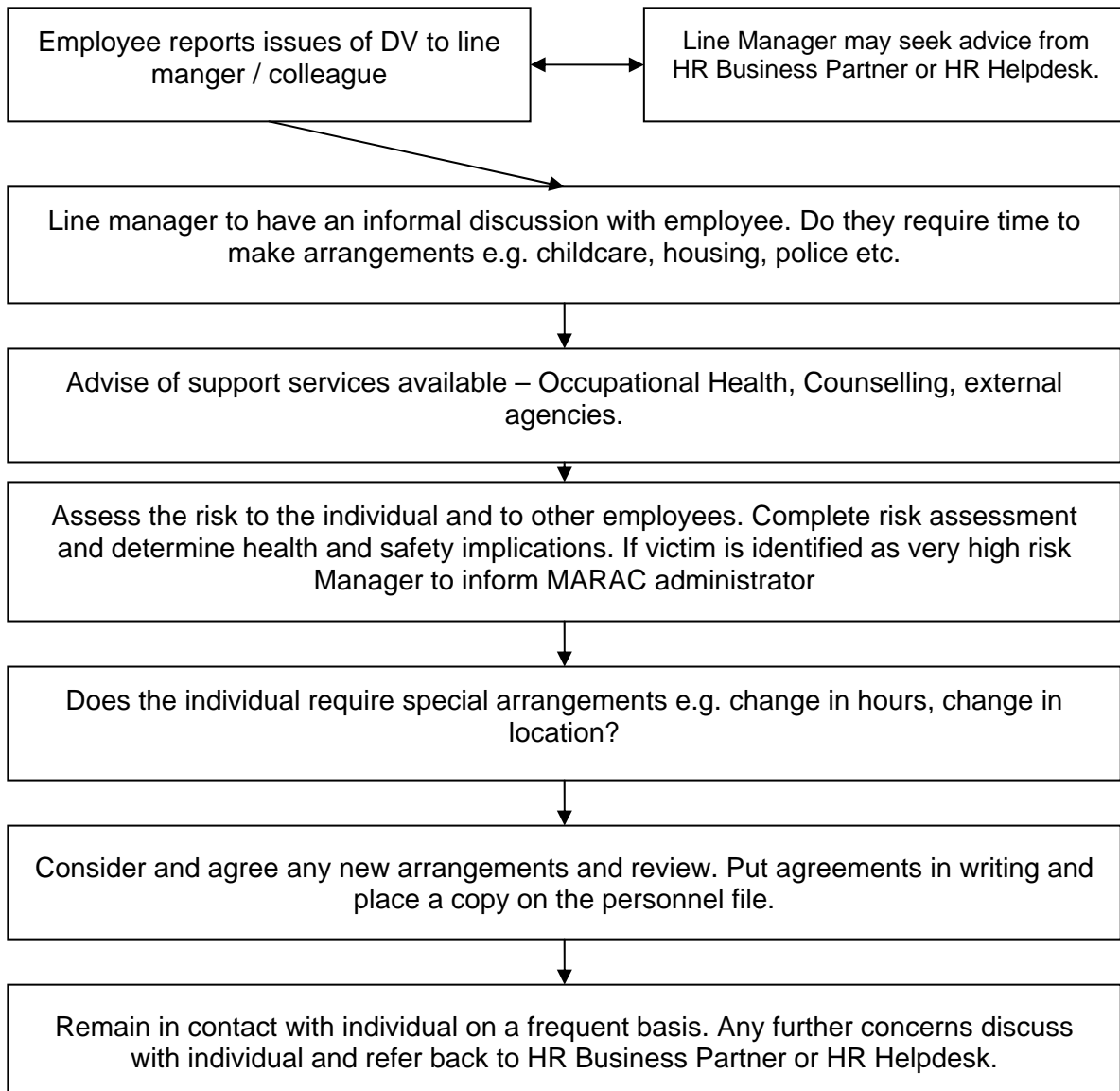
- **Julia Stanbury – West Devon, Teignbridge and South Hams**
Tel: 01626 336552 Fax: 01626 362395

- **Siobhan O'Sullivan – Plymouth**
Tel: 01752 284509

- **Sharon Payne – Torbay**
Tel: 01803 841469

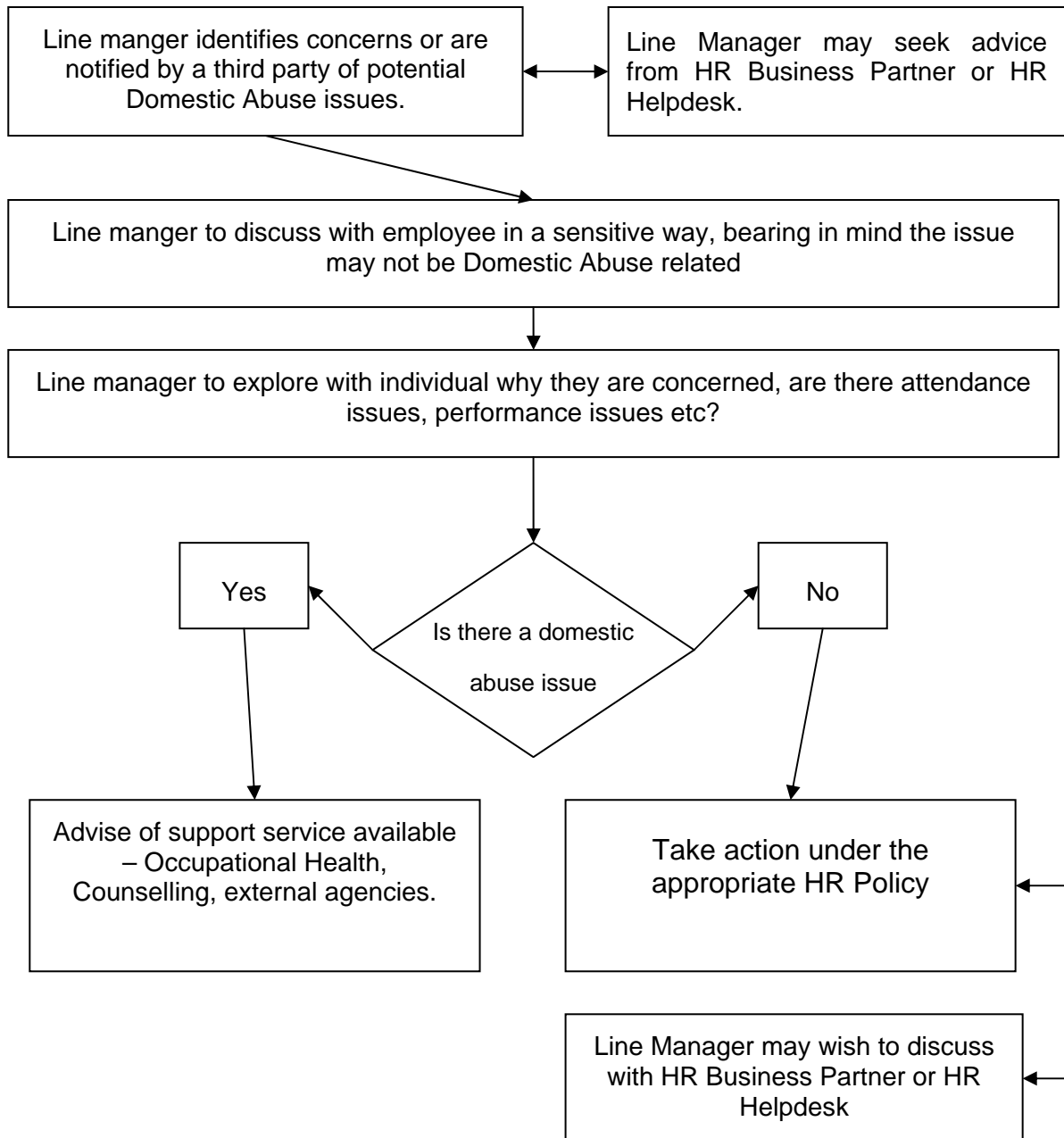
Appendix B

Guidance for Managers Victims of Domestic Abuse



Appendix C

Guidance for Managers- Potential victims of Domestic Abuse



Appendix D

Guidance for Managers Perpetrators of Domestic Abuse

