

EQUALLY SAFE AT
WORK



Guidance for line managers on
violence against women and work

Contents

Introduction	2
Equally Safe at Work	4
What is violence against women?	5
What does violence against women have to do with the workplace?	9
The business and economic case for addressing violence against women	11
How violence against women affects victim-survivors and the workplace	14
Recognising the signs of violence against women	30
Facilitating a conversation	33
Responding to reports and/or disclosures	35
Support and safety	40
Support for line managers	44
Managing a perpetrator	44
Glossary	46
Support services in Scotland	51

Introduction

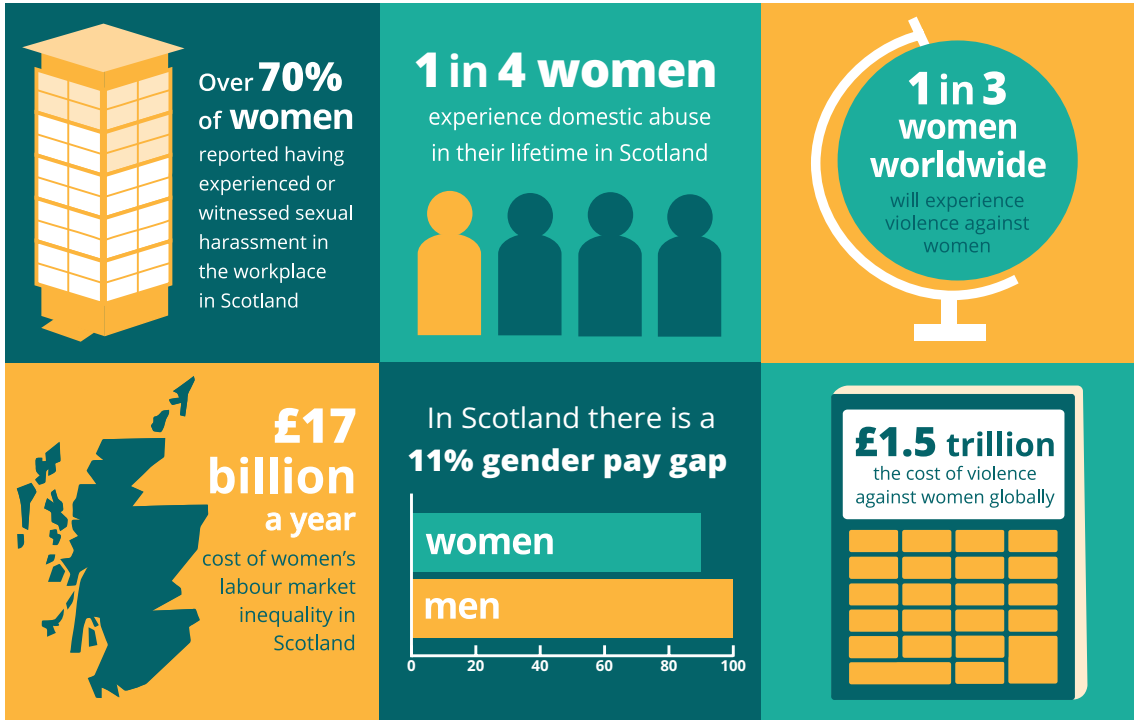
This guidance provides information for line managers on violence against women (VAW). It aims to build capacity and confidence in line managers on VAW which is a core part of meeting the standards of Equally Safe at Work. The guidance should be used alongside your organisation's policies on sexual harassment and on VAW that are also being developed as part of Equally Safe at Work. Your practice as a line manager should be guided by these policies and you should refer to them if you're unclear about any processes or procedures.

The guidance focuses on forms of VAW most likely to affect the workplace which includes domestic abuse, stalking, sexual harassment, rape and sexual assault, 'honour-based' abuse, and childhood sexual abuse. It provides information on what VAW is, how it relates to women's workplace equality, and sets out the business and economic cases for addressing VAW. It describes the impact of different forms of VAW on employees and the wider workplace; provides information on how to recognise signs of VAW; and outlines best practice for responding to, and supporting, employees disclosing or reporting VAW.

The guidance also gives examples of the simple steps you can take to ensure the safety and wellbeing of staff and minimise the impact on the workplace.

It's recognised that both men and women experience gender-based violence and there are both similarities and differences in the effects on the workplace. The focus of this guidance is women's experiences of VAW, as the vast majority of victim-survivors are women.

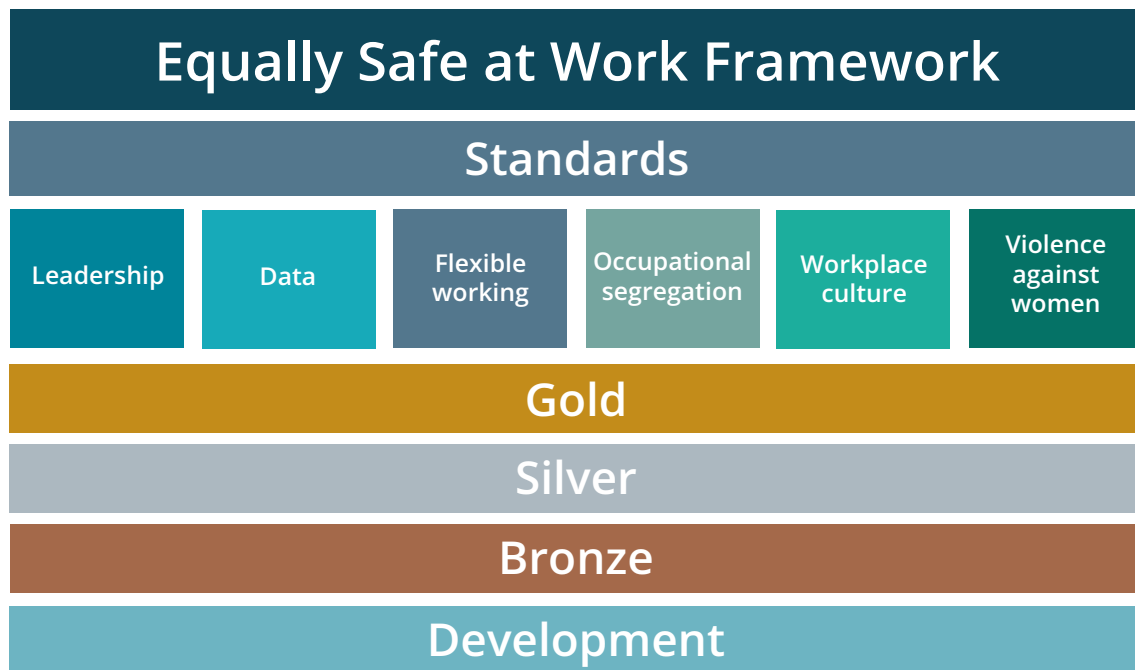
VAW and work: the numbers



Equally Safe at Work

Equally Safe at Work is an innovative and world-leading accreditation programme that supports the implementation of Equally Safe, the Scottish Government and COSLA joint strategy to prevent and eradicate violence against women and girls. Equally Safe recognises that violence against women and girls is a cause and consequence of gender inequality. Eliminating women's workplace inequality and other inequalities in society is therefore a fundamental step in preventing VAW. Equally Safe at Work uses the shortened 'violence against women' (VAW) because of its employment focus.

Equally Safe at Work supports employers to progress their work on gender equality at work and to prevent VAW both in the workplace, and in the wider community. Organisations work towards meeting criteria in six key standards: leadership, data, flexible working, workplace culture, occupational segregation, and VAW.



Activities to meet the criteria includes undertaking training, collecting and analysing data, developing initiatives, reviewing and updating policies and practices, and disseminating resources to key people.

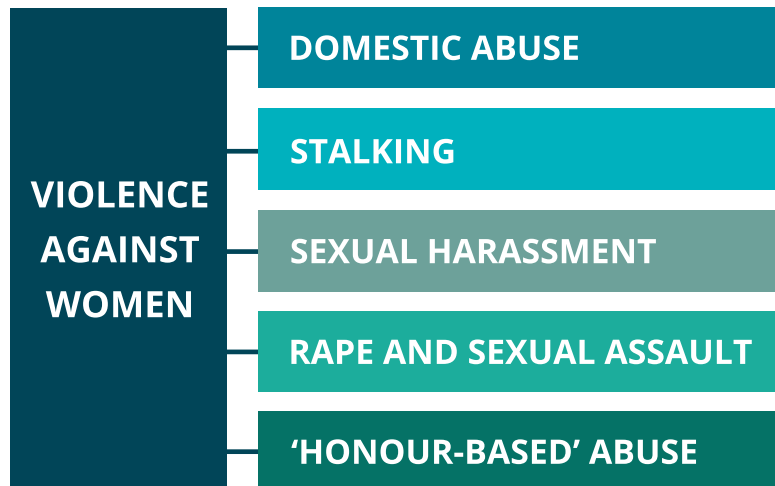
An integral part of Equally Safe at Work is building capacity in senior leaders and line managers. This is because senior leaders and line managers play a critical role in addressing negative workplace cultures, demonstrating commitment to equality, and making sure that staff have access to support. Ensuring that line managers understand the causes of VAW, and are confident responding to disclosures and reports, is essential to addressing VAW.

What is violence against women?

VAW is a violation of women's human rights and an enduring social problem that undermines workplaces and communities. The term VAW refers to violence and/or abusive behaviour that is predominantly carried out by men and directed at women because of their gender. This behaviour includes physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, and economic abuse, and stems from systemic and deep-rooted women's inequality. It's an abuse of power and privilege and can be used to control women. It affects women from all backgrounds irrespective of age, sexual orientation, race, education, culture, and socioeconomic status.

The term VAW includes, but is not limited to:

- Domestic abuse,
- Stalking,
- Sexual harassment,
- Rape and sexual assault, and
- So-called 'honour-based' abuse.



It's important to recognise that experiences of childhood sexual abuse and commercial sexual exploitation will also have long-term effects on victim-survivors. These forms of violence and abuse, along with those listed above, are grouped together by the term VAW to highlight that they are a cause and consequences of women's inequality.

Women's divergent experiences

Women's experiences of VAW vary depending on the intersecting inequalities they experience. Different groups of women may experience increased risk of violence and abuse due to the prejudice and structural barriers in society that cause inequality. Intersectionality means recognising that different forms of discrimination overlap and compound whether based on gender, race, age, disability, class, socioeconomic status, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, or ethnicity.

It's important to understand that women are not a homogenous group and do not experience inequality in the same way. Women from marginalised communities experience multiple discriminations which intersect and combine to create different and increased levels of inequality, which impact their experiences of VAW. As well, when considering terminology, many women will identify with more than one term and feel less comfortable with others. Some will feel uncomfortable with any term.

Examples of women's divergent experiences of VAW:

- Disabled women are twice as likely to experience domestic abuse and sexual violence than non-disabled women¹.

¹ SafeLives (2017) *Disabled survivors too: Disabled people and domestic abuse*.

- Women with learning disabilities may be 10 to 12 times more likely to experience sexual assault than non-disabled women².
- Racism and discrimination create significant barriers for racially-minoritised women to report their experience or access support. These can include language barriers, immigration status, institutional racism, and cultural insensitivity.
- Racially-minoritised women worry that reporting VAW to their employer could damage their relationships with colleagues, with 1 in 6 women thinking it could make the situation worse³.
- Online harassment and abuse is more likely to have younger victim-survivors and younger perpetrators.
- Disabled women aged 18-34 are even more likely to experience sexual harassment with 8 in 10 reporting being harassed at work⁴.
- Older women are less likely to report their experiences of domestic abuse⁵.
- The abuse older women face is often mistakenly labelled as 'elderly abuse' rather than domestic abuse. This means they are less likely to access the specialised support they need.
- Lesbian, gay, and bisexual women can be vulnerable to abusers who threaten to out them to colleagues or employers, and family members.
- Trans women are vulnerable to abuse that is inflected by transphobia. They may also be reluctant to access support services or contact the police for fear they may be met with further victimisation, prejudice, or that they may not be understood.

² Scottish Commission for People with Learning Disabilities (2023) *Unequal, unheard, unjust: But not hidden anymore*.

³ TUC (2020) *BME women and work*.

⁴ TUC (2021) *Sexual harassment of disabled women in the workplace*.

⁵ Equality and Human Rights Commission (2011) *Domestic abuse and equality: Older women*.

Although VAW takes many forms and impacts different groups of women in a variety of ways, there are also many commonalities in experiences. It's important to create a supportive and responsive workplace culture for women to feel safe to disclose their experiences, and where an alleged perpetrator is also an employee they are managed in line with best practice.

Key things to know about VAW and work

1. VAW is violence and/or abusive behaviour and can involve physical, emotional, psychological, financial, economic, and sexual abuse.
2. It affects women from all backgrounds irrespective of age, sexuality, race, education, culture, and socioeconomic status.
3. VAW affects women in different and sometimes similar ways depending on the multiple inequalities they experience.
4. VAW is perpetrated at epidemic levels, with three million women in the UK affected each year.
5. VAW is usually not a one-off incident. It's often repeated and continuous behaviour that can occur over many years.
6. VAW has a long term and lasting effect on victim-survivors which can impact their daily lives including their experiences at work.
7. The trauma from VAW can result in anxiety, depression, isolation, stress, and fear.
8. Most women don't report VAW out fear of not being believed, fear of being judged, or believing nothing will change.

9. Some women find it difficult to identify their experience as VAW because certain behaviour has been normalised or ignored in the workplace culture.
10. VAW affects not only victim-survivors but can also impact their colleagues, the wider workplace, and ultimately the effective running of the organisation.
11. Gender inequality in the workplace and in all areas of society perpetuates and sustains VAW.

What does violence against women have to do with the workplace?

Preventing VAW requires action to address women's inequality in all areas of society. Women's labour market inequality is caused, and sustained, by wider gender inequality. Women's labour market and economic inequality reduces their financial independence, restricts their choices in employment, and creates a conducive context for VAW. Financial dependence and poverty can make it harder for women experiencing violence or abuse to move on and maintain employment. Also, debt is linked to violence against women, and is understood as a cause and consequence of domestic abuse⁶.

The gender pay gap is the key indicator of women's labour market inequality, and represents the divergent experiences men and women have not just in the workplace but also in education, training, care, and other domestic labour. While there are commonalities experienced by all women at work, disabled women, racially-minoritised women, women of faith, lesbian, gay and bisexual women, trans women, refugee women, young women, and older women experience different, multiple barriers to participation in the labour market, and to progression within their occupation.

Socioeconomic background also has an influence on women's labour market outcomes, with women from lower socioeconomic backgrounds less likely to be represented in higher-paid jobs, and more likely to be in lower-paid, stereotypically female work such as care and cleaning. This drives the higher level of female poverty which diminishes women's options in the face of violence and abuse.

⁶ Women's Budget Group (2021) *Household debt, gender and Covid-19*.

Gender norms and stereotyping about women's capabilities and interests result in a stark segregation in the types of work that men and women do. In the public sector and third sector, this means women are more likely to work in caring and support roles, admin, nursing, and early years and childcare, while men tend to work as porters, in IT, technical roles, or trades. A lack of quality part-time and flexible jobs, coupled with women's disproportionate responsibility for caring, finds women underrepresented in management and senior roles.

The business and economic cases for addressing violence against women

VAW can affect women's ability to do their job effectively. This can be because of stress, trauma, or physical injuries that can make it difficult to do their work as normal. An increase in unexplained lateness or absences can also be a sign that something is wrong. Victim-survivors often require to take time off work to seek help from specialist support agencies, attend doctor's appointments, or access legal support. Some women also leave their job as a result of the impact of VAW and may move to a new role that doesn't effectively utilise their skills. This represents a significant loss of female talent to employers, with many organisations missing out on women's skills and experience.

Impact on the workplace

VAW also affects people who are in the victim-survivor's life on a regular basis. This can include work colleagues, and the wider organisation. It can have an adverse impact on staff morale, as well as on the organisation's reputation. The impact on colleagues can include:

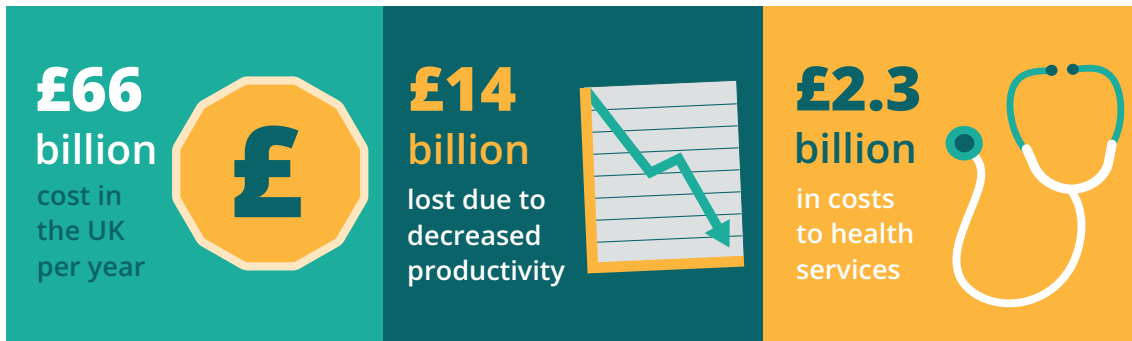
- Having to fill in for absent colleagues, or colleagues who are underperforming;
- Reduced productivity or being distracted from their own work;
- Increased stress or anxiety from being followed to or from work, or being subject to questioning by the perpetrator about the victim-survivor;
- Trying to protect the victim-survivor from attention, unwanted phone calls, or visits;
- Witnessing a form of VAW and feeling helpless and unsure about how to intervene to support a colleague;

- A negative impact on their own mental and emotional health, especially if they may also be experiencing abuse themselves; and
- Increased staff absence or turnover of key people.

The cost of violence against women

There are clear economic and business benefits in advancing gender equality and preventing VAW.

VAW in the UK is estimated to cost over £66 billion per year⁷, which includes an estimated £14 billion lost due to decreased productivity, administrative difficulties from unplanned time off, lost wages, and sick pay. It also includes £2.3 billion in costs to health services.



The cost of VAW includes a significant cost to public services, at a time when there is increasing downward pressure on public spending. Because of VAW and wider gender inequality, women are:

- More dependent on social security;
- More likely to need access to housing services in the face of violence and abuse;

⁷ Oliver, R., Alexander, B., Roe, S. & Wlasny, M. (2019) *The economic and social cost of domestic abuse: Research Report 107*.

- More likely to have a caring role for children, disabled people, sick people, or older people;
- Less likely to be financially independent; and
- More likely to be living in poverty, including in-work poverty.

Victim-survivors' dependence on public services has been exacerbated by Covid-19 and the cost of living crisis. Women, who comprise more than 90% of single parents, are increasingly reliant on food banks and resorting to higher levels of debt to buy essentials. They are also facing increased barriers in accessing vital financial services, as well as specialised support services and housing services. This combined with financial instability means that many victim-survivors are unable to leave abusive relationships.

It therefore makes good business sense for organisations to support victim-survivors in the workplace, and to take steps to address gender inequality at work and prevent VAW.

How violence against women affects victim-survivors and the workplace

VAW has a profound impact on women's capacity to work and victim-survivors are often targeted in and around the workplace. Women report experiencing trauma, stress, anxiety, and depression as a result of VAW and can struggle to find appropriate support in the workplace. VAW can also affect victim-survivors' capacity to work with men, particularly in situations where there is an existing gender or power imbalance. By understanding VAW and how it impacts employees, colleagues, and the wider workplace, you'll be better able to support your employees and ensure the organisation is not adversely affected. As a line manager, it's important that you understand the different forms of VAW and their effect on women, their colleagues, and the organisation.

Impact of trauma on victim-survivors

Evidence shows that increasing numbers of victim-survivors of VAW are living with trauma. Trauma refers to when an individual has experienced an event or series of events that was physically or emotionally harmful or life threatening. Trauma significantly affects the victim-survivor's ability to cope with or emotionally process what has happened. It can make it difficult for people to speak about their experience or seek support. Research shows that trauma causes depression, anxiety, panic attacks, and stress. Trauma can also impact a victim-survivor's relationships with other people, including their colleagues, often leaving them feeling isolated, disconnected, and untrusting.

It's important to be aware that if an employee is a victim-survivor, their trauma may make it difficult for them to be at work and do their job well. It may also make it difficult for them to feel comfortable or able to disclose what happened. It's important to make the victim-survivor feel safe and supported, as well as signposting them to specialist support organisations such as the local Women's Aid and Rape Crisis centre. By understanding how trauma impacts victim-survivors and their experience at work, you will be better able to implement effective support mechanisms.

Domestic abuse

One in four women in Scotland will experience domestic abuse in their lifetime. Domestic abuse is a pattern of controlling, coercive, threatening, degrading and/or violent behaviour, which can include sexual violence, by a partner or ex-partner. Whilst it's recognised that men experience domestic abuse, it's most commonly experienced by women, with male partners or ex-partners perpetrating the abuse. Domestic abuse also happens in same-sex relationships.

Research⁸ has highlighted that the key difference between women's and men's experience of domestic abuse in opposite-sex relationships relates to the level of fear and threat they're subjected to. For example, in some cases, male victim-survivors report that during periods of violence or abuse they weren't afraid for their lives, and they would leave their house or go to their car to wait until things calmed down. However, for women, the level of fear and threat is much higher, with many victim-survivors fearing that at any moment they may be seriously injured or even killed.

⁸ Pain, R. (2012) *Everyday Terrorism: How fear works in domestic abuse*.

Domestic abuse can impact women differently. For example, disabled women face an increased likelihood of domestic abuse and endure this for longer periods of time than non-disabled women, due to lack of availability of appropriate or accessible support⁹. Pregnancy can also be a trigger for domestic abuse and existing abuse may get worse during pregnancy or after giving birth.

Coercive control

Coercive control is a form of domestic abuse. It's a pattern of behaviour that seeks to take away the victim-survivor's freedom, and strip away their sense of self. Within coercive control, violence is often used alongside a range of other tactics including isolation, degradation, mind-games, and the micromanagement of everyday life. This may include monitoring movements, phone calls, dress, social activity, and other relationships. The perpetrator creates a world in which the victim-survivor is constantly monitored, criticised, and intimidated. Coercive control was legally recognised as a form of psychological abuse in the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018.

The majority of women experiencing domestic abuse are also targeted at work. It can prevent women coming to work, performing well, and in some cases staying in their job. Perpetrators of domestic abuse often use a number of tactics to disrupt and sabotage women's employment including:

- Sending abusive and threatening phone calls, text messages, or emails to their personal phone while at work;
- Preventing them from going to work by locking them in, or by hiding their keys or purse;

⁹ SafeLives (2017) *Disabled survivors too: Disabled people and domestic abuse*.

- Interfering with and/or preventing them from working from home;
- Preventing them from accessing equipment they may need to work from home such as a laptop or phone;
- Controlling their finances to prevent them from paying transport costs or tampering with their car to prevent them from going to work;
- Following them into their workplace or waiting outside for them;
- Isolating them from their colleagues by not allowing them to attend social events, or insisting on attending with them;
- Verbal harassment, assault, or threats of assault when women leave to go to work;
- Destroying personal documents which may prevent them from applying for jobs;
- Preventing them from attending development or training courses;
- Sabotaging their work clothes;
- Offering to provide childcare and not turning up;
- Threatening to take the children if they go to work;
- For non-English speakers, preventing them from learning English which would enable them to work;
- Discouraging them from applying for promotion or positions where they would become the primary earner in the household; and
- Securing their own employment with the same employer to more closely monitor her activities and increase access to her whilst at work.

Stalking

Stalking is a persistent and unwanted pattern of behaviour which causes, or has the intention to cause, fear and alarm. It's a form of highly personalised, targeted surveillance underpinned by the communication of that surveillance to the victim-survivor.

Stalking is a common tactic used by perpetrators of domestic abuse, but can also be perpetrated by colleagues, neighbours, friends, acquaintances, and strangers. The emotional and psychological impact of stalking can result in increased fear, stress, and anxiety, and loss of safety or trust. Victim-survivors of stalking worry that it will impact their job because of unexplained or frequent absences to avoid their stalker.

Stalking can have a significant impact on the workplace because stalkers are able to pinpoint the location of their victim when they're at work. Tactics used by stalkers to disrupt women's employment can include:

- Preventing them from attending work by tampering with their car;
- Using workplace resources such as phones and email to threaten, harass, and abuse the victim-survivors;
- Watching or spying on them, or forcing contact with them through any means, including social media;
- Following victim-survivors to and from work;
- Sending unwanted gifts or flowers to their work; and
- Targeting their colleagues.

Case study: How stalking affects women at work

Reena is a shop assistant in a charity shop. She has noticed over the last few weeks that one customer has been visiting the store more frequently. Reena is friendly to all customers, and she has served a customer, Michael, multiple times. In a recent exchange, Michael made inappropriate comments about how she looked and asked for her number. Reena felt uncomfortable in this situation, so she politely declined his offer and excused herself saying that she was needed in the back to help with stock.

Michael continues to turn up weekly in the shop and passes by daily, where he waves at Reena. He has started to bring her small gifts and stays in the store for extended periods of time, trying to talk to her. He even waits for her after work. Her colleagues have said that he comes in on her days off asking where she is. Reena tells her line manager that she feels uncomfortable and stressed about when Michael will come in. The line manager says there's nothing they can do because he's a customer. Reena asks if she can be relocated to another store, even though it will double her commute time. She's also asked her colleagues not to share any information about her with Michael.

Sexual harassment

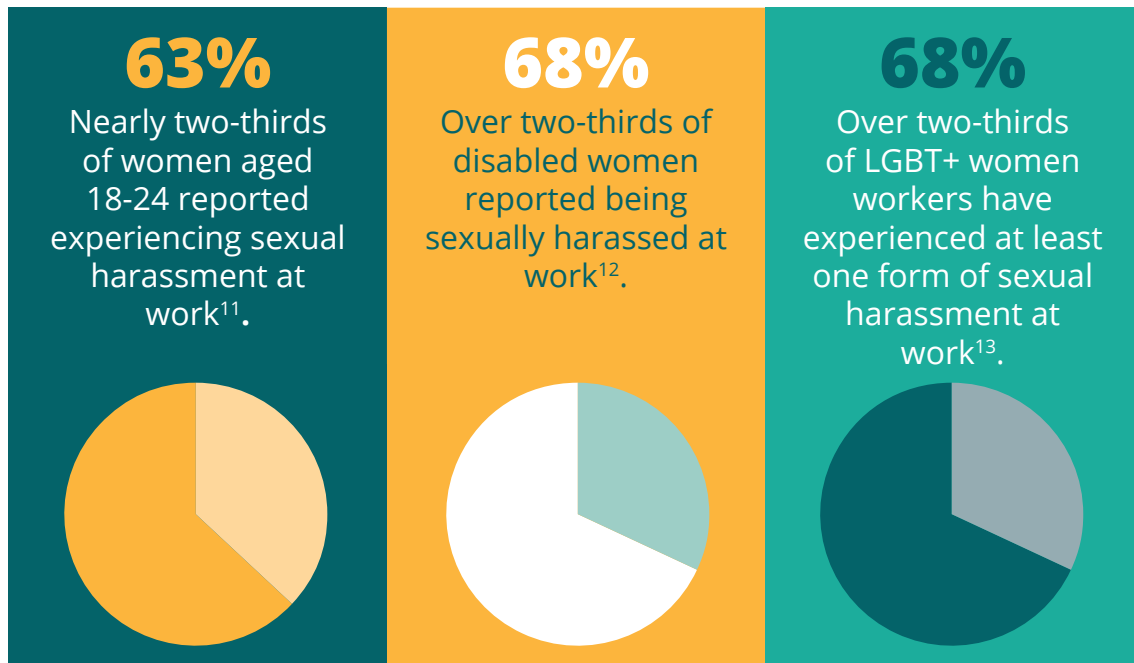
Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, which is intended to, or has the effect of, violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment. Unwanted means the same as unwelcome or uninvited. It means unwanted by the person who is being sexually harassed and should be considered from the point of view of the victim-survivor. Even if there's no intention to cause distress, it can still have the effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an offensive environment.

Examples of sexual harassment include:

- Unwelcome physical contact, such as a hand on the knee or lower back or shoulder rubs;
- Sexual comments or jokes of a sexual nature;
- Unwelcome sexual advances;
- Receiving unwanted messages with material of a sexual nature by email or social media;

- Being forced to watch or listen to sexually graphic videos or audio;
- Sexual assault which could include unwanted touching of breasts, buttocks, or genitals, or attempts to kiss you;
- Promises in return for sexual favours;
- Displaying sexually graphic pictures;
- Feeling uncomfortable when alone with a male colleague; and
- Threats or intimidation.

Sexual harassment continues to occur at increasingly high levels in workplaces. Research¹⁰ found that 70% of women in Scotland had either experienced or witnessed sexual harassment. UK research also found that:



¹⁰ Zero Tolerance (2017) *Sexism is a waste: The need to tackle violence and misogyny in Scotland's workplaces*.

¹¹ TUC (2016) *Still just a bit of banter? Sexual harassment in the workplace in 2016*.

¹² TUC (2021) *Sexual harassment of disabled women in the workplace*.

¹³ TUC (2022) *Sexual harassment of LGBT people in the workplace*.

In a survey of nursing staff, three in five (60%) respondents had experienced sexual harassment. Of those, more than half (57%) said it was perpetrated by a patient, a quarter (25%) said it was by a doctor colleague, and just under a quarter (22%) said it was by another nurse. Of those who had been sexually harassed, the vast majority (73%) didn't report¹⁴. In research published in the *British Journal of Surgery*, 89% of women had witnessed sexual harassment, while 63% had been the target of sexual harassment. A further 30% has been the target of sexual assault. Women continue to be underrepresented as surgical consultants and as indicated by the survey, the sexist workplace culture may be a deterring factor for women¹⁵.

Women who have reported sexual harassment say that it had a negative impact on their mental health, making them less confident at work, and inducing them to avoid certain work situations in order to avoid the perpetrator. In cases where women did report, they were often left dissatisfied with the response which led to distrust in the reporting system. All of these effects and responses are likely to diminish their performance at work, and their propensity to apply for and be appointed to promoted posts. Some women have reported taking time off work or leaving their job completely. Sexual harassment therefore contributes to the glass ceiling, to women's subordinate role in the workplace, and to the gender pay gap.

Sexual harassment is under-reported because of fear of being blamed or not being believed, feeling embarrassed, and a lack of confidence in the complaints procedure. Most women don't report because they feel that their line manager wouldn't support them, it would damage their progression prospects, or it would lead to victimisation.

¹⁴ Unison and Nursing Times (2021) *Survey on sexual harassment against nurses*.

¹⁵ Begeny, C. et al (2023) Sexual harassment, sexual assault and rape by colleagues in the surgical workforce, and how women and men are living different realities: observational study using NHS population-derived weights. *BJS*, 110, pg, 1518-1526.

Women report that their experiences are routinely minimised by colleagues or dismissed as 'banter'. This is because of sexist workplace cultures which enable sexual harassment to go unchallenged, and undermines women in the workplace in more or less subtle ways.

Everyday sexism is visible in formal and informal interactions, and manifests in a number of ways in the workplace, for example:

- Women's contributions being valued less, for example, their ideas being dismissed in meetings, or their contributions being initially ignored, only to be repeated by a male colleague later and received positively.
- Women being assigned to fewer higher visibility projects despite having equivalent skills and experience to their male colleagues.
- Women being expected or asked to make the tea or take minutes, irrespective of their role.
- Sexist jokes and remarks dismissed as 'banter', including a preoccupation with a woman's physical appearance, including her clothes.
- The use of language which diminishes, infantilises or sexualises women, e.g. referring to colleagues as 'the girls', or calling a colleague 'darling' or 'love', which creates an environment where women feel they are seen as less valuable or held in contempt.
- Stereotypical expectations around the type of work or the position a woman, or man, would hold, for example, assuming a woman is a lower grade when she is a senior manager, or a man being assumed to be the manager of a team by a visitor from another department.
- Suggesting a female colleague only got a promotion because the hiring manager found her attractive, or implying she had slept with him.
- Referring to a female manager as 'bossy' while male managers are seen as assertive and strong.

- The, often unspoken, assumption that women will organise collection sheets, gifts, and nights out for colleagues.

Because of the normalised and everyday nature of these occurrences, it can feel very difficult for women to challenge sexism within the workplace which in turn makes it difficult to report sexual harassment.

Third party harassment

Third party harassment describes harassment that a worker receives from someone who is not employed by their organisation, for example, a customer, client, patient, business contact, visitor, community member, or non-directly employed staff including contractors or agency workers. Third party harassment can cover a range of behaviours, including inappropriate comments or touching, sexist jokes, or online harassment.

Any worker can experience third party harassment, but those who are in public facing roles, or interact with the public as part of their role are at much greater risk of experiencing this. It's important to note that the same sectors in which third party harassment is more likely to occur are retail, care, hospitality, and health services, which are also sectors that have majority female workforces. Further to this, these sectors are also typically associated with low pay and insecure contracts. Young women are more likely to experience third party harassment than older workers due to the types of role and industries they are overrepresented in, as well as the likelihood that this will be insecure work. Young women are also more likely to experience harassment because of the societal view that they are more available and desirable.

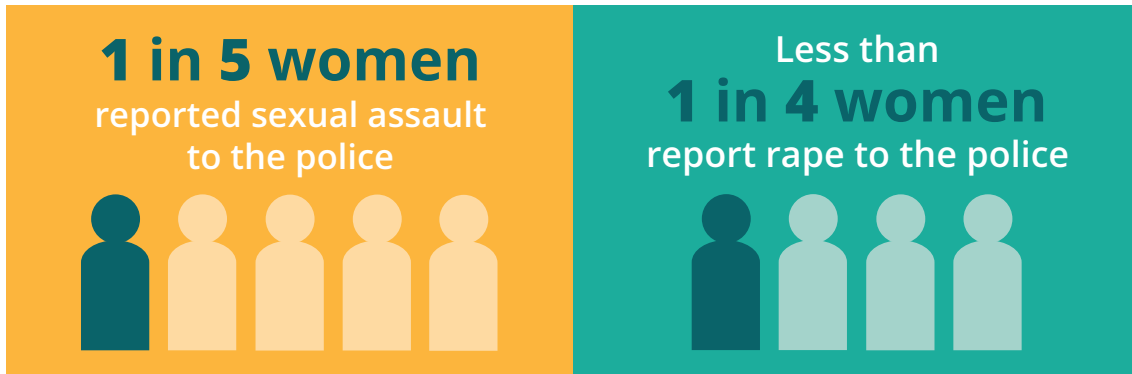
Case study: Experiences of third party sexual harassment in a homecare setting

A homecare worker reported to her line manager that one of her service users was sexually harassing her. She reported that he would make inappropriate comments about her and her body. He had also on several occasions touched her or attempted to touch her inappropriately. She informed her line manager that it made her feel uncomfortable. The line manager stated that since he was an older service user that he probably didn't know what he was doing and dismissed her disclosure. The homecare worker decided to report it to HR and was informed that their duty as an employer was to protect their employees from third party harassment. In addition, the line manager was contacted by HR and was required to attend training on sexual harassment. HR also provided guidance on best practice for responding to sexual harassment with the line manager.

Rape and sexual assault

Sexual violence, which includes rape and sexual assault, can be defined as any sexual act that takes place without consent. Research from the World Health Organisation found that one in three women worldwide have experienced rape or sexual assault in their lifetime. Rape and sexual assault are vastly underreported. In Scotland, one in five (20%) women aged over 16 reported experiences of sexual assault, but less than a quarter (22%) of all victim-survivors of rape reported it to the police¹⁶. The high numbers at which rape and sexual assault occur can be indicated by the extensive waitlists at local Rape Crisis centres around Scotland.

¹⁶ Scottish Government (2021) *Scottish Crime and Justice Survey 2019/20: Main findings*.



Experiences of rape and sexual assault can severely impact on the victim-survivor's life in various ways. Victim-survivors often take time off work to seek help from specialist support agencies, attend doctor's or counselling appointments, or access legal support. Women also report that they struggle to find appropriate support in the workplace due to a lack of understanding of their experience. This is because rape and sexual assault is not seen as a workplace issue. The following list outlines a number of ways in which women's experience of employment may be affected by rape and sexual assault including:

- Difficulties in holding down a job as a result of needing to take extended periods off because of emotional and physical impacts, or frequent shorter periods to attend other appointments;
- Low self-esteem and depression making it difficult to carry out normal duties or participate socially or professionally at work;
- Leaving a job they enjoy and value without being able to discuss what happened or why their performance dipped;
- Fear of disclosing at work and worry that people will treat them differently;
- Feeling afraid of being alone at work or having to leave work when it's dark outside;
- Difficulties working with male colleagues; and

- Trauma, anxiety, or panic attacks which can make it challenging to be in work situations which may involve groups of men or being alone with men.

So-called 'honour-based abuse'

So-called 'honour-based' abuse is a form of violence and abuse perpetrated to protect family and community honour. It stems from the belief that family and community honour is rooted in women's behaviour, appearance, and sexuality, and is to be guarded by men. It includes restricting women from doing certain things that are perceived as going against culture, family, community, and religion, and can involve physically and/or sexually harming a woman, forcing marriage and isolating them from friends and family. It can also involve controlling finances, preventing migrant women from learning English where they don't already speak it, restricting movement, and using their immigration status to threaten to send them away. In many cases of 'honour-based' abuse, victim-survivors have multiple perpetrators which can include partners, family members and members of the wider community. Women can be subject to 'honour-based' abuse for having a relationship or socialising with someone who the family and community disapprove of, becoming too 'western', refusing a forced marriage, or wearing make-up or certain clothing. Victim-survivors of 'honour-based' abuse are also policed by members of their wider community, particularly around socialising with people from different cultures.

A woman's behaviour is not only linked to the family's 'honour', but also her dowry price which can drastically decrease if it's perceived that she has not behaved in line with her family's and community's expectations. The concept of dowry is practiced in different ways by different communities and dowry-related abuse is often associated with the wider family. It occurs when a husband and his family believe the dowry to be inadequate, where the dowry has not been paid, or where the dowry has been devalued as a result of the woman's behaviour.

'Honour-based' abuse has similar effects as domestic abuse on women's experiences of the workplace. It can also affect women's experiences of work by:

- Being coerced into specific occupations;
- Being coerced into not going for a promotion because it's seen as inappropriate for a woman, or because they will be expected to interact with men;
- Shaming and judging a woman for wanting a job;
- Threatening to send a woman away or deport her unless she stops going to work; and
- Preventing women from applying for a job by restricting access to a language course.

Childhood sexual abuse

Victim-survivors of childhood sexual abuse have reported similar impacts as those who experience rape and sexual assault as an adult. In the context of the workplace, victim-survivors are employees who experienced childhood sexual abuse when they were under 16. It can have a lasting impact on victim-survivors, and may take longer for them to recognise what happened. They may not access support or feel comfortable discussing it with their line manager. Those who experienced childhood sexual abuse can suffer from long-term emotional and psychological effects as adults, that will shape their experience at work. The long-term effects include:

- Trauma,
- Lack of trust,
- An inability to develop meaningful relationships,
- Lack of self-confidence,
- Flashbacks, and
- Harmful coping strategies.

Commercial sexual exploitation

Commercial sexual exploitation (CSE) includes a wide range of sexual activities including prostitution, pornography, trafficking or sex tourism, and stripping or lap dancing. It's understood as activities whereby men typically profit from, or buy from, women, and which objectify or harm women. CSE legitimises negative attitudes towards women and is linked to gender inequality and sexual violence. In some cases, women participate in CSE as a result of coercion, a lack of alternatives, or out of necessity for survival.

In relation to the workplace, staff who have been involved in CSE may be living with trauma and may find certain scenarios triggering, such as working alone with male colleagues or in stressful situations. Victim-survivors may also find it difficult to access the support they need out of fear of judgement or shame.

Covid-19 and the impact on victim-survivors

As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, significant changes have been made to many workplaces including increased homeworking, and a greater reliance on digital platforms for communications.

Covid-19 is seen to have had a worsening effect on all forms of VAW at a national and global level. During lockdown, long periods of isolation and social distancing intensified women's experiences of VAW. In cases of domestic abuse, many women were trapped inside with their perpetrator, with limited access to support and opportunities to leave. Perpetrators also interfered with and/or prevented women from doing their job. Similarly, for those experiencing 'honour-based' abuse, women were in unsafe situations with limited access to support.

In cases of stalking, perpetrators were able to easily locate where victim-

survivors were, as movement was limited. They may have tried to force contact with them or prevented them from going into work.

In cases of sexual harassment, with an increased reliance on communicating online perpetrators had new and increased access to women that wasn't available before. For example, the ability to send private messages or pictures constantly throughout the day. Perpetrators may use the ability to 'hide behind the screen' to threaten, intimidate, or harass their colleagues. This could include dressing inappropriately and/or being in an informal setting while on a video call, for example, on a bed.

Victim-survivors of rape and sexual assault reported increased trauma due to social distancing and isolation. Victim-survivors also had less access to critical support services and informal networks.

While many of the challenges victim-survivors faced during lockdown have been addressed, the continued high numbers of staff working from home means that women may still be targeted online or prevented from accessing support. It's important to be aware of how changes in working practice can impact women's experience of violence.

Commonalities in experiences

VAW has a long-lasting effect on the lives of victim-survivors. Although VAW takes many forms, and affects different groups of women in a variety of ways, there are also many commonalities in experiences. By developing VAW-sensitive employment practice and creating a positive workplace culture, you can create a supportive and responsive workplace for women to feel safe to disclose their experience and maintain their employment, including in managing incidences where the alleged perpetrator is also an employee.

Recognising the signs of violence against women

Victim-survivors usually don't disclose their experience to anyone at work out of fear of not being believed, being judged, being treated as a 'victim', or believing that nothing will change. They may feel embarrassed or humiliated and not want to share such personal details with their colleagues or their employer. This is due to the stigmatisation of VAW in society which can significantly undermine efforts in the workplace to support victim-survivors.

In situations where VAW was not perpetrated at work, for example if someone was raped or sexually assaulted outwith the workplace, they may think it's inappropriate to discuss it at work, even if it's affecting their work.

Knowing the signs of VAW is therefore important to ensure that you know how to effectively manage an employee and support them in their situation. It's also important to ensure that the impact on colleagues is minimised and that the organisation isn't adversely affected.

Signs around an employee's work performance

- Changes in the quality of their work for unexplained reasons, despite a previously strong record;
- Minimal participation or contribution in team meetings;
- Suddenly starting to miss deadlines;
- Declining professional development or training opportunities;
- Unresponsive in online chats, or constantly offline;

- Receiving repeated upsetting calls, texts, or emails; and
- Constantly checking their mobile phone.

Signs around an employee's attendance

- Being persistently late without explanation or needing to leave work early;
- Needing to leave work while it's still light out;
- Having more frequent, sporadic absences without explanation;
- Increased hours being worked for no apparent reason i.e. very early arrival at work and/or working late;
- Needing regular time off for appointments; and
- Their partner or family exerts an unusual amount of control and demand over their work schedule, for example, they may be dropped off and picked up from work or unable to attend business trips or events.

Signs around an employee's behaviour

- Avoiding lunch breaks or socialising at the end of the working day;
- Changes in their behaviour such as becoming quiet or avoiding speaking to colleagues;
- A loss of confidence and self-esteem;
- Avoiding or acting visibly uncomfortable around male colleagues;

- Isolating themselves from friends and family;
- Feeling depressed, anxious, or distracted, or having problems with concentration;
- Exhibiting fearful behaviour, such as being easily startled;
- Reluctance to speak on the phone or on video, or their partner is always visible in the background;
- Suddenly not using the video function where previously they did, without an explanation or an explanation that doesn't quite fit; and
- Nervousness or increased anxiety on video calls when their partner or family member comes into the room whilst you are speaking to them.

Signs around an employee's physical state

- Having repeated injuries and/or an explanation for injuries that doesn't fit the injuries they have;
- Frequent, sudden and/or unexpected medical problems and/or sickness absences;
- A change in the way they dress such as excessive clothing in summer, or being unkempt or dishevelled;
- A change in the amount of make-up worn;
- Fatigue or exhaustion;
- Increased physical tension;
- Panic attacks;

- Sleeping and/or eating disorders;
- Substance use and/or dependence; and
- Depression and/or suicide attempts.

Other signs that an employee could be experiencing a form of violence against women

- Flowers or gifts sent to them by their partner for no apparent reason;
- Seeming to have less money than previously;
- Lack of access to a computer or phone to be able to effectively work from home; and
- Being a victim of vandalism or threats.

Facilitating a conversation

Ongoing stigma around VAW means that most victim-survivors don't report it. It's more likely that line managers will become aware of a situation through noticing an increase in the number of absences they have, a change in behaviour, or a dip in work performance. Victim-survivors may not discuss their experience because they're not aware that support is available for them. Women often report that they wish that someone had asked them about it.

If you suspect that one of your team is affected by VAW, you should facilitate a conversation to discuss and identify appropriate support. It's important to be supportive and non-judgemental. There may be cases where you try to facilitate a conversation and the employee chooses not to disclose. If this happens, it's important to respect their decision.

It's important to be supportive and non-judgemental. Questions you can ask to start the conversation include:

- I've noticed that you're not yourself lately, is everything okay?
- Are there any problems or reasons that may be contributing to your frequent sickness absence and why you're missing deadlines?
- Is everything alright at home?
- Is everything alright at work?
- Is there anything happening at work that is concerning?
- What support do you think might help?

For male line managers, there may be hesitation or concern about starting a conversation for fear that it may be triggering for the victim-survivor. Also, victim-survivors may not feel comfortable disclosing to their line manager if

he's a man. It's important for line managers to build trust and create a safe, confidential environment to start a conversation. It's a good idea to ask open-ended questions and highlight the support that's available in the workplace. If you think your colleague is feeling uncomfortable, don't continue the conversation. You may want to share that there are different routes for accessing support, including HR or Gender-Based Violence Support Officers.

Responding to reports and/or disclosures

It's good practice to respond to disclosures in a non-judgemental and sensitive way. Some women may disclose to you without wanting to make a formal report to HR or the police. You may also be the first person that the victim-survivor has disclosed their experience to. The way you respond can affect whether they will access support, formally report their experience, or come forward again in the future. It's important that the victim-survivor feels believed and not blamed. As well, it's important that victim-survivors don't feel pressured to report to the police or engage with other services such as social work. In research on racially-minoritised women's experience of VAW, participants with children shared that they were reluctant to report or disclose out of fear that this may result in their children being taken away.

Victim-survivors report that their line manager seemed at times uncomfortable or unsure of what to say after they disclosed or reported. Some women have also reported that after disclosing or reporting their line manager either avoided the topic, assumed the issue was resolved, or made inappropriate jokes or comments.

Simple steps that you can take to respond effectively to a report or disclosure

- Listen to the staff member and take their disclosure seriously;
- Reassure them that you understand that it may be affecting their work performance and what can be done to support them;
- Reassure them that their disclosure will be treated confidentially;

- Respect and accept the employee's thoughts and ideas;
- Reassure them that their needs are a priority;
- Provide information about specialist support services, such as the local Women's Aid group, or Rape Crisis centre;
- Offer practical support, such as a risk assessment and/or safety planning, flexible working, special leave, employee assistance programme, or mental health support, as far as possible;
- Provide ongoing support to ensure their safety and wellbeing is monitored;
- Inform them of what the next steps are, including whether there will be an investigation or if they need to make a formal report; and
- Organise a time to check in in the future.

What not to say

No matter what the circumstances are, it's important to support the victim-survivor. Well-meaning comments and opinions intended to be supportive and sympathetic can sometimes have the opposite effect. This can result in a victim-survivor feeling not believed, judged, isolated, and reluctant to share further information.

In responding to a disclosure, you should consider the following guidance:

- Don't blame her for what happened;
- Avoid making comments about her emotional response to what happened, such as "You don't seem very upset about it" or "I thought you would've been angrier";
- Don't give advice to the staff member, for example, don't pressure her into leaving or going to the police;

- Don't minimise her experience or try to make her feel better by saying things such as "It's not that bad", "It could be worse", "Other people have had it much worse" or "At least he didn't hit you";
- Don't comment on the woman's behaviour in previous relationships; and
- Don't assume that she wants you to take action, she may just want to disclose what is happening and for you to listen.

Case study: responding to a disclosure

Lara is an administrator for a health board. She's only recently joined the organisation. Her manager, Simon, has noticed a change in her behaviour over the past few months. She's become more quiet and withdrawn from colleagues. When working from home, she often doesn't participate in online meetings or chat with colleagues. Simon raises his concerns in their monthly catch-up meeting and Lara discloses that their colleague Gary has been sexually harassing her. Lara said that she feels very uncomfortable and often dreads coming to work because she doesn't want to see Gary.

Simon says Gary's behaviour is unacceptable and that there are formal actions they can take and also small adjustments they can make in the office so she could avoid Gary. Simon also offers to speak to Gary about his behaviour or suggests that he can arrange training for the team on sexual harassment and appropriate behaviour at work. He also describes the different types of support available to Lara in the workplace. Lara says she's worried about reporting to HR. Simon offers to support her through the process. He also organises regular check-ins with her to discuss how she is.

Ensuring confidentiality

When a victim-survivor has disclosed or reported, it's good practice to be clear that the information they shared will be kept confidential. Line managers are responsible for ensuring privacy is protected and that all employees are aware of their responsibility in relation to confidentiality. It's very important that the disclosure or report is not discussed openly in the office to avoid stigmatisation or re-victimisation of the victim-survivor. Confidentiality is particularly important if the police have been involved and in smaller and rural communities, where there is a greater likelihood of people in a community knowing each other. Where the employee is also a service user, it's important that you don't use their service user information to inform employment issues, for example their MARAC assessment notes or score.

Record keeping

It's good practice to keep records of any disclosure or report of VAW. It's important that the disclosure or report is well recorded and is kept confidential. The records should be neutral and shouldn't include any additional commentary. It's possible that at some point the police may become involved and the record may be used to inform their investigation.

Policies and procedures

When a colleague discloses or reports VAW, it should be taken seriously in line with the organisation's definition of zero tolerance to VAW. If the employee doesn't want you to take any actions following a disclosure, it's important to respect their decision. However, you can still outline what support is available in the organisation.

Policies to support your approach

1. VAW or gender-based violence policy. This policy will have been developed as part of Equally Safe at Work.
2. Sexual harassment policy. This policy will have been developed as part of Equally Safe at Work and provides further details on the facilitators of sexual harassment and formal reporting procedures.
3. Equality and diversity policy. The policy will provide information on the Equality Act 2010, the organisation's commitment to equality, and the importance of progressing equality and diversity in the workplace.
4. Disciplinary procedure.
5. Sickness absence policy. This can be helpful for supporting victim-survivors in the workplace.
6. Flexible working policy. This policy can support women by providing flexibility to their working hours or pattern.
7. Special leave policy.
8. Employee assistance programme.

Support and safety

In responding to a disclosure or report of VAW, you should ensure the staff member is safe in the workplace and is receiving support, if they want it.

Risk assessment and safety planning

Risk assessments and safety planning are important mechanisms for responding to VAW. A risk assessment allows you to identify the level of risk a victim-survivor may be experiencing in the workplace. It can reduce the chance of continued abuse or violence and enables you to ensure that the risk to the victim-survivor, colleagues, and the organisation is minimised. A risk assessment should be completed with the victim-survivor as they will be most aware of their own risks. Following a risk assessment, it may be useful to implement a safety plan. A safety plan is a way to ensure the safety of victim-survivors in the workplace and to prevent further VAW from being perpetrated. A safety plan can include making small changes in the workplace to support victim-survivors and prevent further victimisation.

Domestic abuse, stalking, or 'honour-based' abuse

- Creating a plan for arriving to and leaving the workplace. This could include changing start and finishing times and using different entrances or exits.
- Agreeing with the employee what to tell colleagues and how they should respond if the perpetrator telephones or visits the workplace.
- Diverting phone calls and email messages to block the perpetrator from contacting the woman.

- Agreeing in advance when and who to contact if the victim-survivor does not come into work, for example, a friend, their family, a neighbour, or the police.
- Issuing instructions to all staff not to reveal the victim-survivor's personal details to anyone. For example, if a victim-survivor moves to a new house make sure that their new address is not shared with anyone.
- Ensuring that the employee doesn't work alone in isolated areas, wherever possible.
- Providing the victim-survivor with a panic button.
- Providing them with an escort to their car.
- Moving the victim-survivor out of public view, wherever possible.
- Alerting reception and security staff if the perpetrator is on work premises without authorisation.
- Having a list of local specialist support services that is easily accessible and signposts to appropriate organisations such as local Women's Aid groups.

Rape or sexual assault

- Agreeing that the employee can work flexibly, for example, leaving early to avoid traveling home in the dark.
- Changing work patterns or workload to help manage mental health problems.

- Providing an escort or asking a colleague to walk with them to their car or bus stop.
- Having a list of local specialist support services that's easily accessible and signposts to appropriate organisations such as Rape Crisis centres.
- Ensuring that the staff member doesn't work alone in isolated areas, or alone with male colleagues, wherever possible.

Sexual harassment, domestic abuse, stalking, rape and sexual assault, and 'honour-based' abuse where the perpetrator is also an employee

- Changing desk positions or office layouts to move the perpetrator away from the victim-survivor.
- Moving the perpetrator to a new location.
- Encouraging the employee to keep records of any incident in the workplace or any continued inappropriate behaviour.
- Ensuring that any personal information that is kept on the victim-survivor is not accessible to other staff members.

Case study: safety planning

Samira works in the finance department of an organisation and disclosed to her line manager, Mariam, that she is experiencing domestic abuse. She is planning on leaving her partner. He has been unpredictable and violent in the past when she tried to leave. He had previously turned up at her workplace when she wouldn't answer his phone calls. She's worried that if she tries to leave again he might show up at her work and become violent or harass her or her colleagues. Mariam said that the organisation is able to provide support while she leaves her partner and relocates to a new house with her children. Mariam asked what kind of support she needed. They talked about creating a plan to ensure Samira's safety at work, as well as getting to and from work. They agreed to change her working hours so her partner wouldn't know when she would be there. They also agreed that if Samira didn't arrive to work that a colleague would call her sister to let her know. The organisation offered special paid leave while she moves to a new house and registers her children at a new school. They also agreed that Mariam would tell the rest of the team not to share any of Samira's personal details so her partner wouldn't find out her new address. Mariam set out a time to check in again with Samira to see if they needed to change or amend any support she was receiving.

Ongoing support

Employees affected by VAW will require different types of support depending on their situation. Having a range of practical support that you can offer means you're more likely to meet their needs, which in turn will minimise the longer-term impact on the organisation. VAW can have lasting effects on victim-

survivors which stay with them long after the abuse or violence has ended. It's important to remember that victim-survivors may need different support at different times.

It's good practice to:

- Continue to check in with the victim-survivor;
- Review whether the victim-survivor needs different support;
- Update on the progress of any reports made;
- Provide an update on any changes made in the workplace as part of the risk assessment or safety plan; and
- If the victim-survivor is on leave, communicate with them about anything happening in the workplace as a result of their disclosure or report.

Support for line managers

Supporting a team member or colleague who has experienced VAW can be challenging. Reasons for this may include the emotional impact of supporting someone through a traumatic experience, it may be triggering for line managers who have their own experience of VAW, or increased stress or anxiety about not knowing the right thing to do. It's important to recognise when this may be affecting your experience and ability to provide support. It's good practice to think about the support that would help you, including talking to your own line manager, accessing the employee assistance programme, or contacting specialist support services.

Managing a perpetrator

When the perpetrator works in the same place as the victim-survivor, it's best practice to prioritise the needs of the victim-survivor and identify how best to support her through the process. It's important to support the victim-survivor once they have reported or disclosed to ensure they are not disadvantaged or unfairly treated. It also builds trust in the reporting process.

If the perpetrator is a member of staff you should take the report or disclosure seriously. The risk assessment you conduct with the victim-survivor should also identify if the perpetrator poses a risk to other colleagues and the wide workplace. This should then inform how you manage the perpetrator in the workplace. Ensuring the safety of your employees should be a priority. It's also important to remember that you have a duty of care to both the victim-survivor and perpetrator. If you are unsure of process or procedure when managing a perpetrator, you should refer to the organisation's policy on VAW.

Tips for responding to VAW

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. If an employee is exhibiting signs that they may be affected VAW, it's good practice to start a conversation. | |
| 2. Be supportive and non-judgemental if one of your team discloses or reports an experience. | |
| 3. Work with the employee to identify their support needs and the simple changes that can be made in the workplace. | |
| 4. Identify whether other workplace policies could be used to support them. This could include identifying whether they would like to work flexibly, or adjust work hours, workload and/or work location, wherever necessary and possible. | |
| 5. Protect their confidentiality and communicate to them how you will do that. | |
| 6. Provide information on the reporting and investigation procedure and enable input if the victim-survivor wishes. | |
| 7. Organise regular meetings to check in and review their support needs. | |
| 8. Agree a safety plan with the employee which is in line with their needs. | |
| 9. Signpost staff to specialist support services such as the local Women's Aid group or Rape Crisis centre. | |
| 10. Prioritise the victim-survivor's needs when managing a perpetrator in the workplace. | |

Glossary

Coercive control

Coercive control is a pattern of behaviour that seeks to take away the victim-survivor's liberty or freedom, and strip away their sense of self. It's an act or a pattern of acts or behaviour that is used to harm, punish, or frighten their victim. It's used to maintain or regain control of a partner or ex-partner. Coercive control is recognised as a form of psychological abuse in the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018.

Diversity

The recognition and valuing of difference, in its broadest sense. It's about creating a culture and practices that recognise, respect, value, and harness difference for the benefit of service users, members of the public and employees.

Domestic abuse

Domestic abuse can be perpetrated by partners or ex partners and can include physical abuse (assault and physical attack involving a range of behaviour), sexual abuse (acts which

degrade and humiliate women and are perpetrated against their will, including rape), and mental and emotional abuse (such as threats, verbal abuse, racial abuse, withholding money, and other types of controlling behaviour such as isolation from family or friends).

Equality

Equality does not mean that women and men will become the same but that women's and men's rights, responsibilities, and opportunities will not depend on whether they are born male or female. Gender equality implies that the interests, needs, and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration - recognising the diversity of different groups of women and men.

Equal pay review

A process which looks at pay arrangements within an organisation to find, and address, gender discrimination. It involves comparing the pay of groups of workers who are doing equal work in the organisation and then investigating any gaps between men's and women's pay.

Equal value

As defined by the Equality Act 2010, an individual can claim equal pay with a comparator of the opposite sex where work is different, but which would be assessed as equal in value in terms of demands such as effort, skill, and decision-making.

Gender

Refers to roles, attitudes, values, and behaviours that men and women are encouraged to adopt by society. These characteristics can vary depending on the society around us. For example, historically, gender role stereotyping would suggest that women should look after children at home while men go to work in the formal labour market.

Gender-based violence

The 1993 United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women states: 'Gender based violence is a function of gender inequality, and an abuse of male power and privilege. It takes the form of actions that result in physical, sexual and psychological harm or suffering to women and children, or affront to

their human dignity, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life. It's men who predominantly carry out such violence, and women who are predominantly the victims of such violence. By referring to violence as 'gender based' this definition highlights the need to understand violence within the context of women's and girl's subordinate status in society. Such violence cannot be understood, therefore, in isolation from the norms, social structure and gender roles within the community, which greatly influence women's vulnerability to violence.'

Gender impact

This term describes the impact of policy and/or practice on either women or men. Many policies appear gender neutral; however, due to the reality of gender inequality, and the different shapes of women's and men's lives, they may have an unintended differential impact on women and men. The reason for examining this is to avoid developing policy which will perpetuate or

exacerbate gender inequality. The primary tool for identifying gender impact in your organisation is the equality impact assessment.

Gender mainstreaming

An approach to integrating gender considerations into all facets of work. It involves ensuring that a gender perspective and the goal of gender equality is central to all activities, whether policy development, research, advocacy, legislation, resource allocation, and planning, implementation and monitoring of programmes and projects. It integrates a gendered awareness into each aspect of work, rather than considering gender separately.

Gender sensitive

This term describes approaches, policies, and practices which have been developed considering gender and do not have an unintended negative impact on women or gender equality as a result.

'Honour-based' abuse

So-called 'honour-based' abuse is a form of violence and abuse that is committed to protect family and

community 'honour'. It's the belief that family and community honour is rooted in women's behaviour, appearance, and sexuality, and is to be guarded by men.

Intersectionality

An intersectional approach recognises that women are not a homogenous group and do not experience inequality in the same way. Different groups of women experience multiple intersecting inequalities and discriminations that overlap and combine to create different levels of inequality. For example, sexism, racism, and Islamophobia together shape racially-minoritised Muslim women's experiences of inequality and discrimination.

Occupational segregation

Refers to the clustering of men and women into different types of work (horizontal segregation) and different levels of work (vertical segregation).

Perpetrator

An individual who chooses to use abusive behaviours in order to assert power and control, usually to gain authority over their partner. Someone

who is currently, or has previously committed VAW.

Policy

An umbrella term for everything we do: legislation, strategies, services, and functions.

Rape and sexual assault

Rape and sexual assault can be defined as any behaviour of a sexual nature which is unwanted and that takes place without consent or understanding. Sexual assault covers other sexual contact and behaviour that is unwanted, ranging from touching to any other activity if it's sexual.

Sexual harassment

Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature which is intended to, or has the effect of, violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment.

Stalking

Stalking is persistent and unwanted attention that aims to curtail freedom. It's defined as two or more

incidents of behaviour directed towards a victim-survivor which cause physical or psychological harm, or fear for the safety of the victim-survivor.

Undervaluing

In economics, the undervaluation of 'women's work' means that there is evidence of lower returns to women's productive characteristics. In practical terms, this means that work which is typically done by women tends to be poorly valued and underpaid.

Violence against women

Violence against women is a violation of a women's human rights and an enduring social problem that undermines workplaces and communities. VAW encompasses (but is not limited to):

- physical, sexual, and psychological violence including domestic abuse, rape, and incest;
- sexual harassment, bullying, and intimidation in any public or private space, including work;
- commercial sexual exploitation, including prostitution, pornography, and trafficking;

- child sexual abuse, including familial sexual abuse, child sexual exploitation, and online abuse; and
- so called 'honour based' violence, including dowry related violence, female genital mutilation, forced and child marriages, and 'honour' crimes.

the terms used separately don't capture the experience of VAW or the external factors that affect women's ability to leave.

Violence against women-sensitive

This term describes approaches, policies and practices which consider the impact of VAW on women, and their experiences of employment, and have been developed with this consideration in mind. Taking this approach will enable employers to create a supportive and responsive workplace in which women to feel safe to disclose their experience and maintain their employment.

Victim-survivor

The term victim-survivor is used to capture that individuals experiencing VAW can be both victim and survivor. Victims are often portrayed as helpless, powerless, or passive in contrast to survivors who are active, heroic, and resourceful. However,

Support services in Scotland

Scottish Women's Aid

Scotland's lead domestic abuse organisation working towards preventing domestic abuse and supporting victim-survivors.

www.womensaid.scot

Domestic Abuse and Forced Marriage Helpline

Support for anyone experiencing domestic abuse or forced marriage, as well as their family members, friends, colleagues, and professionals who support them.

24hr service: 0800 027 1234

www.sdafmh.org.uk

Rape Crisis Scotland

Scotland's national rape crisis organisation providing helpline and email support for anyone affected by sexual violence.

**Helpline from 5pm-midnight:
08088 01 0302**

Text: 07537 410 027

www.rapecrisisscotland.org.uk

Scottish Women's Rights Centre

Free legal information and advice for women experiencing gender-based violence.

Freephone: 08088 010 789

www.scottishwomensrightscentre.org.uk

Shakti Women's Aid

Support and information for Black and minority ethnic women, children, and young people experiencing or who have experienced domestic abuse.

0131 475 2399

www.shaktiedinburgh.co.uk

Amina Muslim Women's Resource Centre

Culturally sensitive signposting and support service for Muslim and ethnic minority women. They also offer a service, Sahara, which provides support for women experiencing domestic or sexual abuse

Helpline from Mon-Fri 10am-4pm:

0808 801 0301

www.mwrc.org.uk

Sahara: 0141 212 8420 or

sahara@mwrc.org.uk

Hemat Gryffe Women's Aid

Support to Asian, Black and minority ethnic women, children, and young people.

Helpline (24hrs): 0141 353 0859
www.hematgryffe.org.uk

LGBT Helpline Scotland

Information and support for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people.

**Helpline on Tuesdays,
Wednesdays, Thursday
from 12-9pm and Sundays
from 1-6pm: 0800 464 7000**

Saheliya

Specialist mental health and well-being support for Black, minority ethnic, asylum seeker, refugee, and migrant women and girls in Edinburgh and Glasgow.

www.saheliya.co.uk

MeCopp

Minority Ethnic Carers of People Project that includes information on supporting minority ethnic people and on gypsy and traveller communities.

www.mecopp.org.uk

Feniks

Counselling support for adults from Polish and other Central Eastern European communities.


www.feniks.org.uk


Close the Gap works in Scotland on women's labour market participation. We work with policymakers, employers and unions to influence and enable action that will address the causes of women's inequality at work.

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Close the Gap (SCIO) (known as Close the Gap) is a Scottish charity, no SC046842.

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