



## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HEALTH PROJECT

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# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HEALTH PROJECT

## INTRODUCTION

The Domestic Violence Health Project started in October 2000 as part of the Home Office Crime Reduction programme. Two protocols were developed and agreed with management at Hammersmith & Fulham PCT and at Hammersmith Hospital Trust and implemented at three health sites (see below). The protocols set out each site's responsibility in routinely questioning women over the age of 16 about domestic violence and their role in referring to ADVANCE, the local advocacy service.

Standing Together has provided training to nursing staff on domestic violence awareness and has trained key staff as trainers in protocol training at the three sites. Since core funding for the project finished in October 2004, the two-walk in centres have continued to train staff in-house on the protocols. Staff at all three sites have continued to refer patients in need of specialist help to ADVANCE. Standing Together convenes Health Steering Group meetings with senior staff at the three sites, who can also bring issues to the overall Standing Together Partnership Steering Committee as representatives of their organisations.

Standing Together continues to support all three sites through maintaining resources, arranging, co-facilitating and delivering training, coordinating the Health Steering Group and collating monitoring information.

## FUNDING

Funding has reduced significantly over the years. From October 2000 to March 2004 the project was funded by the Home Office Crime Reduction Programme. Since then some funding has been provided by local charities – The Hammersmith Hospital Trust Amenities Committee Charitable Fund, the Dr Edwards and Bishop King's Fulham Charity and the Henry Smith Charity. The Amenities Committee gave £3,250 in 2006/7. There is currently no funding for 2007/8

## DETAILS OF THE PROJECT

### ***Location***

The health project is based at three health sites within Hammersmith and Fulham.

- Charing Cross Accident and Emergency Department (Charing Cross A&E)
- Charing Cross Emergency Primary Care Access Service (EPCAS)
- Parsons Green Walk In Centre (WIC).

Charing Cross Hospital forms part of the Hammersmith Hospitals Trust and is a large teaching hospital. EPCAS and the Parsons Green WIC are part of Hammersmith and Fulham Primary Care Trust and are Nurse Practitioner led services, providing treatment for minor injuries and illnesses. EPCAS operates out of Charing Cross A&E Department.

### ***Aims and objectives of the Domestic Violence Health Project***

The aim of the health project was to create institutional change with regard to the health service's response to domestic violence.

The essential elements of the project in 2003/4 were:

- To implement protocols on domestic violence that includes routine enquiry, documentation and referral.

- To train staff on domestic violence as an important health issue, routine enquiry and the health protocols.
- To implement necessary monitoring and evaluation procedures, so that an outside evaluator can measure the change in practice and its outcomes
- To increase the profile of domestic violence as an important health issue within the medical facility.

The final phase of the project (July 2003 – October 2004) focused on exploring further the opportunities of mainstreaming domestic violence interventions within both the Hospital Trust and the Hammersmith and Fulham Primary Care Trust. These gains have continued to be supported through monitoring, ad hoc awareness training sessions and part-time development work by Standing Together since core funding finished in October 2004.

### ***The domestic violence routine enquiry protocols***

The two detailed protocols were written by Standing Together following extensive consultation with staff at the hospital and the Parsons Green Walk in Centre. The protocols have been endorsed by the management of each health site. The protocols outline how to ask the screening question, how staff are to “manage” a disclosure of domestic violence, how to refer to ADVANCE and how to document domestic violence related injuries. In addition the protocols contain domestic violence awareness information for staff to refer to.

The protocols set out the requirement for staff to routinely question all female patients over the age of 16 regardless of their presenting medical condition, and any male patient who has indicators of abuse. When patients disclose DV, the practitioner should offer a referral to the ADVANCE Advocacy Project. ADVANCE operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. ADVANCE offers a highly skilled support and advocacy service to women from the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham presenting to A&E, EPCAS, Parsons Green WIC, police and LBHF Housing Department.

The protocols were updated in October 2003 to address monitoring difficulties, in August 2004 to reflect the agreed exit strategy and in 2006 as the language of screening changed to enquiry and questioning. The helpline numbers were updated in July 2006 and a flowchart outlining child protection procedures at the sites will be added as an appendix.

Due to the differences in how patients are seen at the Charing Cross A&E and the Parsons Green Walk In Centre, two protocols were implemented. Walk in Centre staff rotated between Parsons Green and EPCAS so Nurse Practitioners needed to be aware of both protocols. The protocols are essentially the same, except to accommodate the fact that EPCAS nurses have access to doctors at Charing Cross (unlike at Parsons Green), patients are assessed through a different system at Charing Cross and there are different administration systems.

### ***Management of the Project***

The Health Steering Group met on a monthly basis when core funding was available and now meets on an ad hoc basis (at least once a year) to address specific issues and developments. Its role includes:

- Monitoring and evaluating how the project is operating in relation to its objectives.
- Identifying problems and solving them if possible, (or at least identifying issues and blockages in enough detail to provide information for agencies to take decisions about changes to policy/practice).

- Devising and implementing ideas for change to systems and procedures based on operational knowledge, as appropriate.
- Providing a framework to guide the work of Standing Together's Development Worker/Project Officer.
- Reporting to Standing Together's Steering Committee and to any other appropriate bodies.

The membership of the Health Steering Group is drawn from a wide range of health care professionals, including managerial and operational staff from the health sites.

### **Project resources**

The three health sites are stocked with a range of domestic violence help and advice leaflets. Posters are also displayed in the waiting areas, as well as the treatment/clinic rooms. Domestic Violence Resource folders have been produced and they are a ready and accessible resource for practitioners to refer to when dealing with a disclosure of DV. The packs contain protocol resources, referral information, leaflets and good practice information.

Staff are also given a laminated protocol "prompt" card when they attend the protocol training, in their training packs. The prompt card has been designed by Standing Together for staff to retain and refer to if they are dealing with a DV disclosure. It shows the protocol in five clear steps.

### **Monitoring information**

The figures below are the key combined monitoring figures from three health sites.

### **Training delivered from July 2003 – April 2007**

Training Performance Measures	Number of Staff Trained
Total number of staff trained on domestic violence awareness	<b>81</b> <i>Includes A&amp;E Senior House Officers, Registrars, Consultants and Walk in Centre Nurses only.</i>
Total number of staff trained on domestic violence protocol	<b>66</b> <i>Includes A&amp;E Senior House Officers, Registrars, Consultants, Walk in Centre and A&amp;E Nurses (including students). This figure also includes one member of staff from London Ambulance Service.</i>
Total number of health staff trained to be "in-house" protocol trainers	<b>8</b> <i>Includes three WIC nurses and five A&amp;E nurses.</i>

## Questioning rates from December 2003 – Feb 2007

Questioning Performance Measures	Questioning Rates
Total number of patients questioned for domestic violence	4,976
Total number of patients questioned who disclosed domestic violence	215 (includes disclosures of DV in past relationships)

**Data source:** Screening Recording Books were located in the Clinical Rooms at Parsons Green, and in the Triage Rooms, and Major and Minors areas at Charing Cross A&E.  
Screening and disclosure rates are only monitored for PGWIC and EPCAS.

- Anecdotal evidence suggests that that the screening rate may be higher than the monitoring data indicates, due to the low recorded screening rate within the Charing Cross A&E Department but the high rate of referrals being made to ADVANCE.

## Referrals and Information monitoring figures from July 2003 – Feb 2007

Other Performance Measures	Figures
Total number of referrals made to ADVANCE from the health sites.	93* (From the information available to us, all but 2 were direct referrals) Figure includes one referral from Hammersmith Hospital and one referral from Queen Charlottes Hospital
Total number of Domestic Violence leaflets taken.	993#

\* This figure is the number of referrals made to ADVANCE by health. A direct referral is when the practitioner makes a referral on behalf of the patient. A self-referral is when the patient takes away information and later contacts ADVANCE. This figure is obtained directly from ADVANCE at the end of month.

# This figure includes Women's Aid, and DVIP Women's Service leaflets taken from the public waiting areas, Triage and Clinical rooms. We are unable to track who takes the leaflets and what happens as a result e.g. contact to Women's Aid national advice line. From early July 2004 only the Home Office DV leaflets and Hammersmith and Fulham DV Forum leaflets were provided at the sites for people to take. From October 2004 we have been unable to record exact numbers of leaflets taken because there is no full-time Development Worker at Standing Together.

### Other information on Standing Together Health Project: -

#### Standing Together Against Domestic Violence publications on the health project:

- **Health and DV: What can be done? A report on the implementation of a DV protocol at three health sites in West London.** (£5 per copy). Report contains a copy of the original screening protocol.
- A Crime Reduction Programme briefing paper on the health projects which details the work carried out in the second phase of the project from April 2002 – March 2003 (£5 for the set of briefing papers, which includes other topics).
- **Health and Domestic Violence: Improving safety through screening. A report on what has been achieved at three health sites in West London.** (£6 per copy). Contains copies of materials used.

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