



Supporting your team in relation to domestic violence

Isolation and lockdown measures to tackle COVID-19 means that many survivors of abuse and their children will be indoors with perpetrators and this potentially increases the dangers of abuse as well as the intensity or frequency of the abuse.

Domestic violence does not discriminate. Anyone of any race, age, sexual orientation, religion or gender can be a victim – or perpetrator – of domestic violence. It can happen to people who are married, living together or who are dating. It affects people of all socioeconomic backgrounds and education levels.

Domestic violence includes behaviours that physically harm, arouse fear, prevent a partner from doing what they wish or force them to behave in ways they do not want. It includes the use of physical and sexual violence, threats and intimidation, emotional abuse and economic deprivation.

As a manager, during this uncertain time and with the increased risk you might want to actively take steps to ensure that all members of your team are aware of the support that you, your company and the ICAS Employee Health and Wellness Programme can offer them.

Some steps you can take:

- Take some time to visit the Library on the ICAS On-the-Go App for guidance on identifying a vulnerable employee and supporting them;
- Send out a communication or have a discussion with your whole team about how the media is reporting an increased level of risk in relation to domestic violence and that you want them to know if they are in a situation like this that you are available to assist them;
- Suggest a code work like Project Mask for those who want to ask for help but have no privacy to do so;
- Educate yourself proactively about the resources that are still operating in your town or city. This might mean calling a few of the commonly listed resources to check the service details or admission criteria for shelters;

- If you are unsure where to start in relation to locating resources, contact your EHWP toll-free, line for some guidance;
- You can also discuss with your HR team if your company has in place any programmes or additional support for employees who are leaving abusive circumstances.

Remember that often survivors of abuse might not want to leave for a multitude of reasons and your role in supporting them is to provide information and be ready to assist but not to persuade or judge.

It's important that as a manager you are ready to provide resources but leave the intervention to the professionals.

If you or your loved one needs support during this time, reach out to your ICAS EHWP via your toll-free number or the ICAS On-the-Go App to seek counselling support.

Call your Toll-free Line (from land and mobile phones).
Or request a call back: ***134*905#**
Download the **ICAS On-the-Go APP**.
Applicable to you and those who live under your roof.

