

IDENTIFICATION & REFERRAL TO IMPROVE SAFETY (IRIS)

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WHAT IS IRIS?

- *IRIS is a general practice based domestic violence and abuse training, support and referral programme for primary care staff.*
- *A targeted intervention for female patients aged 16 and above experiencing current or former domestic violence and abuse from a partner, ex-partner or adult family member.*
- *IRIS provides care pathways for all patients living with abuse as well as information and signposting for perpetrators.*
- *IRIS is centred in partnership work between primary care and specialist third sector agencies to deliver essential services and close the historical gap between the two sectors.*

THE ROLE OF THE DOMESTIC ABUSE ADVOCATE EDUCATOR

- *Provide training to practice teams and provide ongoing support to the practice.*
- *Clinician training focuses on identification of DVA through clinical enquiry and appropriate response, referral and recording. This includes assessing immediate risk and safety planning. Training for reception and administration teams focuses on understanding DVA, data handling, confidentiality and safety*
- *Act as ongoing consultant as well as the person to whom referrals are made to for initial management and expert advocacy.*
- *To work in partnership with local clinical lead to deliver the IRIS model. A local clinician is identified to be the IRIS champion. They are responsible for co-delivering training and act as peer support for clinical colleagues in each practice.*
- *Provide patients with moral and practical support and carry out risk assessments.*
- *Empowering clients to make informed choices*

HOW DOES IRIS WORK?

- *Electronic prompt in the patient medical record in the form of a pop-up template called HARKS. HARKS is a mnemonic for Humiliate, Afraid, Rape, Kick and Safety and is triggered by Read-coded symptoms and conditions associated with DVA. HARKS is a reminder to ask about DVA and is a safe way to record data about DVA.*
- *Posters about DVA are put up in practices and cards are provided for patients. Practices receive referral forms and care pathways for female survivors, male survivors and perpetrators.*
- *Patients who are experiencing or have experienced any type of domestic violence and abuse, current or historic, can be referred to advocate educator.*
- *Practice staff can refer via phone, fax, or email.*
- *Referring clinicians receive regular updates from advocate educator including information about the support their patient is receiving and any other services they have been referred to.*
- *Advocate educator encourages updates from referring clinician as appropriate as sharing of information enables monitoring of risk and safety planning.*

IMPORTANCE OF HEALTHCARE SECTOR

- *Many victims of domestic violence interact with healthcare providers when seeking routine or emergency care.*
- *Consultations with healthcare professionals may be one of the few occasions where the victim is unsupervised.*
- *The NHS spends more time dealing with the impact of violence against women and children than almost any other agency and is often the first point of contact for women who have experienced violence.*
- *General practice can play an essential role in responding to and preventing domestic violence and abuse by early intervention, referring patients, and providing treatment.*
- *Out of 37 GP practices in borough of Tower Hamlets, 32 practices have been trained and are participating in the IRIS referral programme.*

PATIENT QUOTES

WHAT PATIENTS SAY ABOUT IRIS HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS

"When my GP asked, I felt that I was believed, that what was happening was affecting my health."

"He said well I think I could help you... I know someone who can help you. He gave me the number."

WHAT PATIENTS SAY ABOUT THE IRIS SERVICE

"I have finally got my freedom back and am so happy to be making my own decisions, planning my own way in life. This is not just for me, it's for my children and women like me out there."

"Encouraging myself that I can do this... I feel empowered... I feel proud of me... thank you for believing in me."

"She really understood. But the main thing is, she listened to me."

""Thank you for believing in me, you have given me back my life and I am so happy for that."