



## Information Sheet: Domestic Abuse and Violence

### What is domestic abuse?

Domestic abuse is any form of abusive behaviour towards a person by an individual with whom they are in an intimate relationship. This may include physical, verbal, financial or sexual abuse. Domestic abuse affects one in four women during their lifetime. Two women a week in the UK are killed by their partners or ex-partners. Men as well as women can be affected by domestic abuse regardless of sexuality, social class or income level.

People experiencing domestic abuse may as a consequence:

- suffer from depression, low self-esteem, self-blame, confusion, shame or guilt
- be at greater risk of suicide or self harm
- have difficulties in relationships such as lack of trust, isolation, withdrawal, or dependency
- be vulnerable to further abuse whether physical, sexual or emotional
- experience anxiety, phobias, obsessive cleaning, sleep problems, flashbacks or panic attacks
- suffer from sex addiction
- suffer from Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- develop eating disorders, alcoholism, or drug abuse
- experience dissociation, hallucinations, or psychosomatic problems
- where there has been sexual abuse, they may suffer from sexually transmitted diseases, pelvic pain, unwanted pregnancies or gynaecological problems

Some people experiencing abuse want help to leave their relationship, whilst others want

support while they stay in the relationship. Many people still love the person who is abusing them: they do not want to lose the person they love, they just want the violence to stop.

People experiencing domestic abuse can feel very alone and isolated. Sometimes their partner tries to control the contact they have with people outside the relationship. At other times, it is because the person who is being abused feels ashamed of what is happening and does not wish to admit what their partner is doing. However it is important to remember that the only person responsible for the abuse is the abuser themselves.

### **How CCL can help:**

We offer free long-term counselling for people who are experiencing or have experienced domestic abuse. Whether the domestic abuse is in the past or whether you are experiencing abuse now, counselling can help. You can be referred by your GP or another NHS worker or you can self-refer to this service.

### **Other help for people experiencing domestic abuse:**

Domestic Abuse Services work across Scarborough, Ryedale and Whitby and can help with emergency accommodation, information about your rights, legal remedies, benefits and housing, and emotional support. Contact 01723 365609 or [www.foundationuk.org](http://www.foundationuk.org)

National Domestic Abuse helpline 0808 2000 247