

Domestic Violence

A resource for lesbian & bisexual women



GOVERNMENT OFFICE
FOR LONDON





‘They love me, they love me not...’

Lesbian and bisexual¹ women experience domestic abuse regardless of age, carer responsibility, class, disability, gender origin, immigration status, race and religion. Domestic abuse is a pattern of behavior characterised by the exercise of control by one person over another within the context of an intimate or family relationship.

Domestic abuse can be difficult to identify, especially for the person experiencing it. People sometimes misunderstand domestic abuse and think it is only physical violence when actually it can be emotional, financial and/or sexual abuse as well.

When domestic abuse is happening in a lesbian or bisexual woman’s relationships, it may be even harder to name these behaviors as abusive. Talking about domestic abuse in either intimate or family relationship is never easy.

Sometimes this is because people don’t talk about violence and abuse between women so the idea of a current or former female partner being the ‘abuser’ can be difficult to accept.

¹ *In this leaflet we refer to lesbian and bisexual women, although we recognise that women will identify themselves in many ways including (but not limited to) gay, queer and as women who have sex with women.*

Women can also be abused by former heterosexual partner or by other family members; perhaps after they have come out and go into their first same-sex relationship. In some cases, abusers will use the process of “coming out” as an additional form of control. This can be particularly difficult where children are involved.

Regardless of the relationship, an abuser will often manipulate their victim so that they feel they are to blame for the abuse. An abusive partner may say, “This is how it is in a lesbian or bisexual woman’s relationship”.

Other times, they may say that abuse only happens in heterosexual relationships and can’t happen between two women.

If an abuser is a former heterosexual partner or family member, they may say the abuse is deserved because someone started a relationship with another woman or came out as a lesbian.

Abusers often promise to change their behavior. Hoping for that positive change can keep a victim from identifying the pattern of abuse in the relationship. Abusers may also try to make their victim think they are responsible for any abusive behavior (see ‘What to expect’ later in this leaflet).

For example, someone could be showing you this information to try and prove to you that you are an abuser.

There is no checklist that can determine whether someone is an abuser; one needs to consider the entire relationship and individual incidents in context.

If you are unsure, talk it over with someone objective – or contact a domestic abuse helpline or service (there are contacts suggested at the end of this leaflet).

If you are in immediate danger, call 999.

Trans Women

While this leaflet may be useful for trans women who are also part of the lesbian and bisexual communities, we acknowledge that the trans community may have specific needs and experiences that have not been addressed within the pages of this leaflet.

For more information on trans issues contact the Gender Trust (www.gendertrust.org.uk/), a UK organisation that supports anyone affected by gender identity issues. Alternatively, the Survivor Project is a American non-profit organization dedicated to addressing the needs of intersex and trans survivors of domestic and sexual violence: <http://www.survivorproject.org/>

Am I being **abused**?

How can you determine whether you're being abused?

Every relationship is different and many relationships have rough patches with arguments and other turmoil. But, a relationship becomes abusive when there is a pattern of behaviour that means one person is exerting power and control over another.

Abuse in an intimate relationship (regardless of the gender of the abuser or whether they are a current or former relationship) or from a family member takes many forms, including physical, emotional, financial and sexual abuse.

While everyone's experience is unique, examples of abusive behaviour can include being in a former or current relationship with or related to someone who:

- Keeps you from spending time with friends or family members;
- Makes you account for your time when apart from them;
- Is excessively jealous and possessive;
- Makes unreasonable demands for your attention;

- Blames you for all the arguments or problems in the relationship;
- Wants to make all the decisions;
- Invades your privacy – opening and reading mail, e-mail or going through personal belongings;
- Gets angry for no apparent reason;
- Seems like two different people – one is charming or loving, the other is mean and hurtful;
- Lies in order to confuse you;
- Criticises, ridicules, humiliates or belittles you;
- Controls your finances or feels entitled to your financial support;
- Damages your property;
- Harasses you at work or school;
- Threatens to out you at work, to your family or to others;

- Criticises your body and appearance;
- Prevents you from practicing safer sex;
- Forces or coerces you to have sex or hurts you during sex;
- Becomes angry if you don't go along with their sexual demands;
- Blames their behaviour on alcohol, drugs or her own history of abuse;
- Pressures you to use alcohol or other drugs;
- Threatens you with physical harm or makes you feel afraid;
- Pushes, shoves, grabs, punches, hits or strikes you with hands or fists;
- Threatens or assaults you with weapons, such as household objects or knives;

- Manipulates you with the constant threat of mood changes and impending rage;
- Has you “walking on egg shells” or living with constant stress, anxiety or fear; and

For heterosexual women, domestic abuse can often start or become worse when they become pregnant. This may also be relevant to lesbian and bisexual women.

If you are experiencing abuse from a former heterosexual partner or family member, the types of abusive behaviour may include those listed above but the context will change.

For example, you are less likely to be spending as much time with a former heterosexual partner. But the intention remains the same - to exert power and control.

Abusive behaviour in this situation may be particularly focused around stalking and harassment; attempts to make you behave in a certain way; to stop you accessing lesbian or gay spaces or efforts to stop you seeing a current partner.

Threats or actual sexual violence may also be something that a former heterosexual partner uses, with these potentially directed towards you and any current partner.



Using someone's sexuality to abuse

While much of the abuse described above is similar to that experienced by heterosexual women, lesbian and bisexual women can also experience unique forms of abuse based on their sexuality.

An abuser can use the fact that their victim is a lesbian or bisexual women. These can include:

- Threats to 'out' i.e. to disclose someone's sexual orientation or gender identify without their consent, for example to their employer, family or community;
- Criticise someone for not being a 'real lesbian or bisexual woman', for example if they have only recently come out or had a previous heterosexual relationship;
- Play on fears that no-one will help because someone 'deserves' the abuse; or
- Play on the belief that agencies (like the Police) are either homo or biphobic.

There are also a number of myths about domestic abuse that can prevent people getting help. Sometimes an abuser will use these myths to try and stop someone reporting their experiences (e.g. to the Police):

- Abuse between people of the same-sex is 'mutual', so both are equally responsible for any abuse;
- If abuse occurs, the person experiencing domestic abuse and the perpetrator will 'play-out' heterosexual gender roles (for example, the abuser will be butch while the non-abusive partner will more feminine);
- Abuse is a 'normal' part of relationships between lesbian and bisexual women That no one will help someone who is experiencing domestic abuse because they are lesbian or bisexual;
- That a lesbian or bisexual women is more able to leave an abusive relationship, perhaps because there are no children or where there are children because they are not the 'real' or biological parent;
- That domestic abuse does not happen to trans people.

All these myths are based on misconceptions. Where someone is experiencing domestic abuse it is because one person (their former or current partner, or a family member) is attempting to exert power and control over them. It is important to remember that nobody should have to live with violence or the fear of abuse.

Lesbian & bisexual women and children

Lesbian and bisexual women have children. Some women may have children from a previous relationship with a man, some may have children with a female partner, or some may have adopted children.

Sometimes former or current partners or extended families can be abusive towards a lesbian or bisexual women and her children.

It is also worth noting that for heterosexual women, domestic abuse can start or become worse during pregnancy. This may be relevant for lesbian and bisexual women too.

At the best of times, lesbian and bisexual mothers/carers experience judgmental attitudes about their parental choices and abilities.

This knowledge can be used against lesbian and bisexual mothers/carers as part of the abusive pattern of behaviour from former or current partners and/or extended families.

Parents who experience domestic abuse can experience:

- Threats of isolating children from extended family or community;
- Encouraging children to continue verbally/physically abusing their mother/carers in their absence;
- Falsely accusing parent/carers of child neglect/ abuse;
- Fear of stopping contact with children using the court process;
- Fear of having children taken away by local authorities;
- Physical, emotional, psychological, sexual harm to their children;
- Threats of child abduction; and
- Threats of physical harm to new partners who share parental responsibility.

All these activities may be used as methods of controlling women to remain in contact with abusers. The police and civil and criminal courts have wide ranging powers to protect children from abuse.

Children living in households where domestic violence is happening are now identified as “at risk” under the Adoption and Children Act 2002.

From 31 January 2005, Section 120 of this Act extended the legal definition of harming children to include harm suffered by seeing or hearing ill treatment of others. This would include witnessing domestic abuse.

There are many ways of protecting your children from witnessing and experiencing abuse. In all instances where children are involved, speak to a solicitor who specialises in family law and who is lesbian or bisexual friendly.

A good first stop is Rights of Women or Women’s Aid who both publish information about parenting and domestic abuse. For more information go to:
<http://www.rightsofwomen.org.uk> or www.womensaid.org.uk



What to **expect**?

An abuser has two goals: one, to hold someone in a relationship and two, to control someone's behaviour so they meet the abuser's needs. Abusers can be very devious in creating tactics to meet these goals, but there are some common manoeuvres:

It's more than physical

Most people think of abuse as physical but there are other types of abuse including emotional, financial and sexual abuse. Even if s/he's not hitting you, s/he could be abusing you.

For example, verbal or emotional abuse is almost always used in abusive lesbian and bisexual relationships, even if physical abuse is not. Abusers can be extremely creative in the types of abuse that they use.

It's normal

Abusers will try to convince their partners that their abusive behavior is "normal" or "normal for a lesbian or bisexual relationship". This tactic is especially effective with people who have not been in a same-sex relationship before. Abuse is not normal in any relationship and has no part in a healthy relationship.

You're the abuser, I'm the victim

Partners may defend themselves against abuse, such as physical abuse. An abuser may assert that this self-defense is abuse and that the partner is the abuser. Or the abuser may claim that the partner is “mutually abusive”.

A common characteristic of abusers is the lack of responsibility they take for their own behavior. They may accuse their partners of being the “abuser” and, sometimes, genuinely believe that they are the “abused” party. They may use this claim to manipulate friends, service providers and law enforcement.

An abuser, for example, may seek a restraining order against her/his partner, claiming the partner is the abuser.

You're to blame

Another ploy is to blame the partner for “making” the abuser abuse. The abuser will claim that s/he would not abuse if only the partner did X or if the partner didn't do Y. Again, the abuser is trying to shift the responsibility from her/himself to their partner.

They may also try and make their partner feel responsible for the relationship as a whole. The reality is that the partner cannot stop the abuser from abusing.

If the abuser is a former heterosexual partner or family member, they may well use these manoeuvres or others to try and control their partner. They may say that their partner is not really lesbian or bisexual, or that any relationships they have are wrong or immoral because they are with another women.

Sometimes abusive former heterosexual partners will threaten someone with sexual violence, saying that they ‘need a man’. As with any abusive behaviour, these are only ways to try to justify their abusive behaviour.

It's the stress, the drugs...

Abusers sometimes claim that some circumstance forces them to abuse and if only the circumstance were to change, they would stop. They blame their abusive behaviour on factors such as stress, lack of a job or the use of drugs or alcohol.

They may also blame their abusive behaviour on their partner's substance use. These are only excuses. There always will be some circumstance that in their minds justifies their abusive behavior.

Promises, promises

Abusers commonly promise to change – to stop abusing, to stop using drugs or alcohol, to stop whatever. These promises often follow an abusive incident. The motivation behind these promises is to win back the partner and to hold her in the relationship.

Abusers may believe their own promises but their goal is to keep their partner, not to reform their behaviour. Once the partner indicates that she is staying in the relationship, the promise is forgotten. Try to focus on what s/he does rather than what s/he says.

No legal protection

Abusers may attempt to convince their partners that no one will help them and that they are not entitled to legal protection from abuse, either from a female partner or from a former heterosexual partner or family members. This is not true. The UK government defines domestic abuse as:

‘Any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality’.

Both civil and criminal legal options are available.

No help for lesbian and bisexual women

There is help available. Not only does the definition of domestic abuse recognise the needs of lesbian and bisexual women but there are specific services such as **Broken Rainbow** to support lesbian and gay women who are in abusive relationships.

There are also services in every borough for women who experience domestic abuse in London. Go to: www.gldvp.org.uk and follow the ‘services by borough’ link using the navigation page on the left hand-side ².

Information about women’s refuges and the housing options for lesbian and bisexual women in abusive relationships is also available. Go to www.gldvp.org.uk and follow the ‘LGBT Domestic Abuse’ link using the navigation page on the left hand-side ³.

² The complete link for services for women in London is: http://www.gldvp.org.uk/C2B/document_tree/ViewACategory.asp?CategoryID=14 or a shorter version: <http://tinyurl.com/2or36y>

³ The complete link for housing options for lesbian and gay women is: http://www.gldvp.org.uk/C2B/document_tree/ViewACategory.asp?CategoryID=147



Chronic illnesses, disability and domestic abuse

Chronic illnesses (e.g. Alzheimer's, Cancer, HIV/AIDS, Multiple Sclerosis, etc) can cause tension, stress and a range of other problems within a relationship but they do not cause domestic abuse.

Current or former intimate partners (or ex-heterosexual partners or family members) choose the weapons of abuse and control they use, and their or their partners' health can be used as one of these weapons.

In some abusive relationships the domestic violence began at or around the time that an illness or disability was diagnosed. In some cases of domestic abuse the abuser is the one with the illness or disability while in others it is the person without the illness that is abusive.

Within an abusive relationship where either or both of the partners (or family member) has a chronic illness many of the forms of abusive or controlling behaviour discussed earlier (pages 4-5) may exist.

However there are a number of forms of domestic abuse that are specific to relationships where either or both partners have a chronic illness.

If the abusive partner does not have a chronic illness they may:

- Threaten to, or actually, disclose their partner's health status to friends, family or colleagues;
- Withhold medication, treatments or access to other medical services;
- Threaten to cut off support or to leave;
- Verbally abuse their partner by saying they are 'diseased, sick, unclean: or other inappropriate comments about their illness: or otherwise undermine their partner's confidence.

If the abusive partner does have a chronic illness (e.g. has Multiple Sclerosis) they may:

- Use guilt or other psychological abuse to manipulate their partner;
- Refuse to take medication or seek medical services;

- Use their illness to manipulate services, e.g. saying 'I'm weak and sick, how could I control her/him?' or
- Where an abuser partner has an illness that is transmittable, e.g. a sexually transmissible infections they may threaten to, or actually, infect their partner to prevent them leaving.

As well as the domestic abuse services listed in this resource, there is information on a number of organisations in the contacts section at the end of this leaflet.

Ending the **abuse**

Experience has shown that once abuse begins it is very likely to continue and become more frequent and more severe over time. Research suggests that abusers are also very unlikely to end the relationship.

Where violence and abuse is coming from a former heterosexual partner or from family members, this is also likely to become worse over time.

If you are experiencing domestic abuse, making a decision about the relationship (particularly whether to stay or leave)

can be really difficult, involving both emotional and practical considerations. If a former heterosexual partner or family members is the abuser, you may also fear losing family or friends if you leave.

Often, leaving a violent partner only signifies the end of the relationship - not the end of the violence or abuse.

A non-abusive partner is trying to make this decision within the context of an abuser who begs them to stay and promises to change. Abusers rarely end the relationship



because in most cases they psychologically need the partner more than the partner needs them.

They can be quite successful at hiding their dependency on the partner and their fear of losing her, and they often work to convince the partner that s/he would be lost without the abuser. Whether a partner stays or leaves, it is wise to have a safety or crisis plan to maximise their safety. If you are experiencing any form of domestic abuse you might consider making a crisis plan.

A crisis plan can set out what you could do under certain circumstances to help reduce the risk of emotional or physical injury to yourself (and your children).

Your crisis plan can include strategies for reducing risk to yourself from your abuser, or it may outline how you could get away. You can make a crisis plan on your own or speak with a trusted friend or a domestic abuse worker (contact details are available at the end of this leaflet).

What **you can do**

Reach out for help! Support is available.

If your abuser has assaulted you or you are afraid for your own or for others' safety you can call the police.

The police have the power to provide you with immediate protection at any time of the day or night. Call 999. The Police have guidelines that instruct them to respond to domestic violence in a particular way. The Police should:

- Respond promptly;
- Ensure your safety;
- Stop the violence;
- Thoroughly investigate what has happened;
- Speak to you and your partner separately;
- Get a statement from you and any witnesses;
- Collect evidence – take photos of any injuries and the scene;
- Arrest the violent person if they have committed a criminal offence; and,
- Carry out a risk assessment.

Lesbian and bisexual women often do not reach out for help because they believe there is no help out there for them. Services specifically for lesbian and bisexual women are limited but they do exist.

Alternatively, lesbian and gay women may well know that there are services available for women experiencing domestic violence but be fearful that these will either be homo or biphobic, or will not understand any specific needs they may have.

Generic domestic violence services should offer support to lesbian and gay women regardless of the gender of their abuser. There are also lesbian and gay-friendly services of all types such as mental and physical health care providers, counsellors, social service agencies and support groups.

In February, the Equality Act (2006) was passed by Parliament. The Act gives the government powers to introduce regulations outlawing discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation in regards to access to goods, facilities and services.

This means that service providers from hotels to GPs, shops to local authorities cannot refuse to serve LGB people or offer them a service of lesser quality than that provided to heterosexuals.

For more information go to:
<http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/> or
<http://www.stonewall.org.uk/>

The contact details for a range of organisations are included at the end of this leaflet.

Computer safety **warning**

For your own safety – when you search for information or communicate about partner abuse - do not use any computer to which your abuser has access.

Your Internet, e-mail and document use activities leave traces on your computer that can be found by your abuser.

Ideally, use a computer to which he/she does not have access, such as at work, in a library, or a friend's or family member's computer.

If you do use your own computer, there are some basic steps that can provide some measure of protection and to remove most traces of your computer activities. Guidance on how to clear your computer of information can regularly change.

For advice on how to clear computer of cookies, temporary website files, browser and search engine history go to the Women's Aid website at www.womensaid.org.uk and click on the 'cover your tracks online' tab in the top right-hand corner.

About **abusers**

The most frequently reported reason why partners stay in abusive relationships is “hope for change”. Partners believe the abuser's promises to get help or to change.

For someone experiencing abuse from a former heterosexual partner, they may feel an obligation not to report their experiences because of children, for fear of people finding out about their new relationship or because they still have feelings for a former partner.

They may also fear that they will not be believed or will be blamed for the abuse. This may be particularly important if an abuser, particularly a former heterosexual partner, blames their abusive behaviour on their partner's new same-sex relationship or identity as a lesbian or bisexual women.

Whatever an abuser says, experience shows that once a person begins to abuse, the problem is likely to get worse.

Review the examples of abusive tactics to get a perspective on your own experience in the section of 'types of abuse'.

Abusers may feel guilty and apologetic after an abusive incident and promise themselves and their partner that they will change. Unfortunately, even with the best intentions, most abusers do not stop being abusive without support.

Respect is a national organisation working with men who are using violence in their relationships. The Respect phone line, however, offers information and advice to both male and female domestic violence perpetrators, their partners, friends and family and to frontline workers who come into contact with perpetrators in their work.

Respect Phonenumber

0845 122 8609

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Friday

10am – 1pm & 2pm – 5pm

Useful contacts

DOMESTIC ABUSE AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE SERVICES

Broken Rainbow

08452 60 44 60 or <http://www.broken-rainbow.org.uk/>

Support for LGBT people experiencing domestic violence.

The National 24 Domestic Violence Helpline

0808 2000 247

24 hour freephone national domestic violence helpline operated in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge.

Bede House

020 7232 1107/020 7237 9162 or www.bedehouse.org

Provides practical and emotional support and advocacy for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual or Trans people who have experienced or are experiencing domestic abuse. Working with people who live, work, study or socialise in Southwark.

Galop

0207 704 2030 (Shoutline) or www.galop.org.uk

Provides information, advice and practical support to LGBT Londoners who have experienced homophobic or transphobic abuse, sexual abuse, problems with the police, or domestic violence.

Galop can help people report homophobic or transphobic crime to the police through our anonymous 3rd party reporting scheme.

The Havens

<http://www.thehavens.co.uk/>

Anyone in London who has been raped or sexually assaulted can come to a Haven. Women, men and children can all attend.

Respect

0845 122 8609 or <http://www.respect.uk.net/>

For people who are abusive to their partners and want to stop.

DRUGS & ALCOHOL

Antidote

Turning Point Hungerford Drug Project
32a Wardour Street, Soho

020 7437 3523 or <http://www.thehungerford.org/antidote.asp>

Offers information and support exclusively to lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered (LGBT) people around drugs and alcohol. Whether you want to cut down, stop using or drinking, or want information about keeping safe Antidote can help.

Dazz-Elle

www.dazz-elle.org.uk

A drugs and alcohol information service for young lesbian and bisexual women run by Drug Alcohol Services London.

Lesbian and Gay Youth Service – Drug & Alcohol Services London

020 7702 0002 or wreckedagain@dasl.org.uk or www.dasl.org.uk

Offers one to one support via email and telephone. Also run the Gay Man's Peer education project and info and advice for professionals.

HOUSING

Albert Kennedy Trust

020 7831 6562 (London) or <http://www.akt.org.uk>

Provide housing support and advice to young LGBT people up to the age of 25 years old

Rainer Housing

020 8693 3311 or <http://www.raineronline.org>

Provides supporting housing to LGBT young people, aged 16-21 years old in South London

Shelter

0808 800 4444 or <http://www.shelter.org.uk/>

A free, national telephone advice line staffed by trained housing advisers. We have helped thousands of people, from finding them a place to sleep to suggesting how to handle mortgage arrears.

Stonewall Housing

020 7359 5767 or <http://www.stonewallhousing.org/>

Provides supported housing, advice and advocacy for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities in London.

HEALTH & WELLBEING

PACE

0808 1807 223 (helpline) or <http://www.pacehealth.org.uk/>

London's leading charity promoting the mental health and emotional wellbeing of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community.

GLAMS

0208 438 0959 or http://www.mssociety.org.uk/support_and_services/support_groups/gay_and_lesbian.html

GLAMS is a national self-help support group for lesbians, gay men, bisexual and trans (LGBT) people affected by MS.

Regard – LGBT (Disability Group)

020 7688 4111 / 020 7688 0709 (Minicom)

For the contact details of other generic and LGBT organisations consult 'Stonewall' below or <http://www.stonewall.org.uk/information%5Fbank/disability/>

BLACK, ASIAN & MINORITY ETHNIC COMMUNITIES

Somalian Gay Community

Email: info@somaligaycommunity.org

Website: www.somaligaycommunity.org

An online space and medium for Somalian gay and lesbians to access information, share experiences and develop support networks.

Southall Black Sisters

020 8571 9595 or <http://www.southallblacksisters.org.uk/>

Manage a resource centre in West London that provides a comprehensive service to black (Asian and African-Caribbean) women experiencing violence and abuse.

Naz Project London

020 8741 1879 or <http://www.naz.org.uk/>

Provides sexual health and HIV prevention and support services to targeted Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities in London.

OLDER PEOPLE

Age Concern

0800 00 99 66 (helpline) or http://www.ageconcern.org.uk/AgeConcern/lesbian_gay_links.asp#Older

The UK's largest charity working with and for older people.

Polari

<http://www.casweb.org/polari/>

An independent lesbian and gay organisation that works for better services for older lesbians, gay men bisexuals and transgender people.

TRANS PEOPLE

Gender Trust National Helpline

0845 231 0505 (national helpline) or <http://www.gendertrust.org.uk>

A charity working to help adults throughout the United Kingdom who are Transsexual, Gender Dysphoric, Transgender (i.e. those who seek to adjust their lives to live as women or men, or come to terms with their situation despite their genetic background), or those who's lives are affected by gender identity issues.

OTHER LGBT ORGANISATIONS

London Lesbian and Gay Switchboard

020 7837 7324 or <http://www.llgs.org.uk/>

London Lesbian & Gay Switchboard (LLGS) provides an information, support and referral service for lesbians, gay men, bisexual people and anyone who needs to consider issues around their sexuality.

Stonewall

08000 50 20 20 (Info Line) or http://www.stonewall.org.uk/information_bank/

Stonewall works to achieve equality and justice for lesbians, gay men and bisexual people. Stonewall's Information Service provides details about a number of different topics and local support groups, activities and services for lesbian gay and bisexual people.

FOR PRACTITIONERS

Coordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse (CAADA)

www.caada.org.uk

A charity established to encourage the use of independent advocacy as a way to increase the safety of survivors.

CAADA has an extensive library of resources, including information relating to LGBT people, available at:

http://www.caada.org.uk/library_resources.html#11

For guidance relating to LGBT and MARACs (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences) go to:

<http://www.caada.org.uk/toolkits.html>

Greater London Domestic Violence Project (GLDVP)

www.gldvp.org.uk

GLDVP is a second tier service for the London domestic violence sector, which was set up in 1997. It works to strengthen the sector by identifying common goals, promoting joint planning and minimum standards between agencies, ensuring that good practice in domestic violence work is transferred across London.

LGBT Domestic Abuse Forum

<http://www.gldvp.org.uk/>

The LGBT Domestic Abuse Forum is a network of practitioners, activists and researchers working around the issue of LGBT domestic abuse. It exists to provide a forum in which to meet, network and exchange good practice. For more information contact the Co-Chairs on:

lgbtforum@gldvp.org.uk

Acknowledgements

This resource has been written to begin explicitly addressing the needs of lesbian and bisexual women who experience domestic abuse. We hope it will be the first of a range of resources about domestic abuse as it affects lesbian, gay bisexual and trans people in London.

While this is a new resource, we are indebted to the work of Barking and Dagenham PCT who originally developed a leaflet for gay and bisexual men upon which we have drawn. This resource has been written and produced by two organisations:

The Greater London Domestic Violence Project (www.gldvp.org.uk) is a pan London charity which works to end domestic violence by inspiring and influencing direct service providers and through promoting partnerships and innovation.

As part of our work, we provide technical support to the LGBT Domestic Abuse Forum with whom we have collaborated over the production of this leaflet. The Forum is a network of practitioners, activists and researchers working around the issue of LGBT domestic abuse.

Thanks also to Maria Sookias and Robin Newman for their contributions. We hope it will be a useful resource for both lesbian and bisexual women as well as service providers.

The production of this leaflet was made possible with financial assistance from the Government Office for London and Barking and Dagenham Primary Care Trust.

Barking and Dagenham Primary Care Trust is an outer north east London trust commissioning health and social care services for over 170,000 local residents.

In 2007 Barking and Dagenham PCT was asked to be a demonstration site for NHS London to look at ways the NHS could better engage with issues relating to domestic violence. This resource is part of a range of resources being developed as part of the demonstration year.

There is more information available at www.bdpct.nhs.uk

