

# Domestic Abuse Questionnaire Toolkit

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## **A. Introduction and questionnaire design**

The questionnaire was designed to assess the explicit cultural attitudes of police officers, police staff and staff of partner agencies towards domestic abuse incidents and police responses. The questionnaire can be used on a single occasion to gauge a snapshot of cultural attitudes or can be used repeatedly to assess any changes in cultural attitudes as a result of training or changes in policy and procedure. If the questionnaire is to be used as a repeated measure, participants can be given unique identifiers to use each time they complete the questionnaire so changes in individual's attitudes as well as the wider picture of cultural attitudes can be assessed whilst maintaining anonymity of participants. Participants are asked whether or not they have completed a similar questionnaire to establish if their data can be used in a longitudinal study.

The questionnaire can be amended for use with the general public or other public agencies who may not be aware of the options available to the police when attending a domestic abuse incident.

## **B. How to use the questionnaire**

Section 1 of the questionnaire:

This section gathers general demographic data from participants. Questions relating to rank and job role can be removed if not relevant to the participants. Other questions such as where the participant works could be included as required.

Section 2 of the questionnaire:

This explores attitudes to and opinions about police procedures and priorities in the context of domestic abuse, and related matters. Statements in this section, which include the acronyms DIAL and DASH, and terminology specific to police procedures may need to be explained to participants before they complete the questionnaire if they are not familiar with their meaning and the police processes involved.

Section 3 of the questionnaire:

This section provides domestic abuse scenarios and asks the participant to determine what action should be taken by the police. The various avenues of action may need to be explained to participants with little or no prior knowledge of police procedures. The scenarios given in Subsection 3A are designed such that they can be placed in order of increasing physical harm to the victim.

The contents of Section 3 of the questionnaire can be amended to suit the needs of any given study.

#### Section 4 of the questionnaire:

This section contains a domestic abuse scenario. This is followed by statements that relate to this scenario and the participants are asked to indicate how strongly they agree or disagree with each of these. The scenario and statements have been taken from a PhD thesis by Jackson (2009). This is an American study and some of the words in the scenario and statements have been changed to make them more appropriate for British participants.

The intention is that data from this section can be used to gauge the degree to which each participant attributes responsibility for the violence to the victim and blame to the perpetrator. Details of how the responses to this part of the questionnaire may be scored are available from Jackson (2009) and the original source of the statements used in this section (Dexter *et. al*, 1997).

#### Section 5 of the questionnaire:

This section relates specifically to the functions of Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASHs). If this section is to be used with the public, the MASH and its role in safeguarding may need to be explained to participants. The functions of the MASH may vary in different areas and so, when used in a study, the options given in this section may need to be amended to take such variation into account.

### **C. References**

Dexter, H. R., Penrod, S., Linz, D., & Saunders, D. (1997). Attributing responsibility to female victims after exposure to sexually violent films. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, **27**, 2149-2171.

Jackson, Z.V. (2009) Explicit and implicit attitudes and attribution of responsibility and blame of domestic violence: Do men and women differ? (Unpublished PhD dissertation, Ball State University, Indiana, USA).

### Section 1

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Gender:

- Male                       Female                       Other

Ethnicity:

- White               Mixed ethnicity               Asian / Asian British               Black / Black British               Other

Marital status:

- Married     Single     Separated     Divorced     Widowed     Living with partner

I am:

- A police officer                       Member of police staff                       Member of partner agency staff

If you are a police officer, what is your rank?

- Constable               Sergeant               Inspector               Chief Inspector or above

If you work for a partner agency, which agency do you work for? \_\_\_\_\_

Within your organisation, what is your job role? (If you are the only person within your organisation with this particular role, please do not answer this question to ensure all questionnaire responses remain anonymous). \_\_\_\_\_

Number of years employed with your current organisation: \_\_\_\_\_

## Section 2

Please tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements:	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
The police have a responsibility to improve the quality of life for individuals and wider communities.					
The priorities of the Police Service should be dictated by what our communities tell us are the most important issues for them.					
Police should invest more time and resources to deal with the core issues which have caused a domestic abuse incident if it will reduce future harm.					
The DIAL or DASH assists the police in managing risk.					
The police should arrest the accused perpetrator every time they attend a domestic abuse incident if there is sufficient evidence to do so, regardless of the accuser's wishes.					
Mandatory arrest in domestic abuse incidents will deter victims from reporting abuse.					
Custody sergeants should be able to make charging decisions for domestic abuse incidents.					
Single crew patrols can effectively manage a domestic abuse incident.					
DVPNs & DVPOs (Domestic Violence Protection Notices & Orders) are a good safeguarding tool.					
Police should employ fewer resources when dealing with a domestic abuse incident where the victim has called the police previously and retracted their complaint.					

Sometimes domestic abuse victims bring it on themselves to gain sympathy from others.					
The police treat female victims differently to male victims.					
Children who witness domestic abuse in their homes are also victims.					
Victims stay in relationships where they are subjected to domestic abuse because they accept that is just the way their life is.					
Being a police officer has become too much like being a social worker.					
Being a police officer is a great job as it gives a real opportunity to make a difference in the lives of individuals and communities.					
In the context of domestic abuse, the police should prioritise protecting the vulnerable over upholding the law.					
As a general rule, the investigation of domestic abuse should be given a higher priority than the investigation of domestic burglary.					
As a general rule, the investigation of domestic abuse should be given a higher priority than the investigation of racially motivated assault.					
As a general rule, the investigation of domestic abuse should be given a higher priority than the investigation of a road traffic incident.					

<b>As a general rule, the investigation of domestic abuse should be given a higher priority than the investigation of doorstep fraud.</b>					
<b>Female victims of domestic abuse are more vulnerable than male victims of such abuse.</b>					
<b>Female first response police officers are better equipped to deal with domestic abuse incidents than are male first response police officers.</b>					
<b>To reduce domestic abuse in the future, engagement programmes need to focus on the abuser rather than the victim.</b>					
<b>Police could deal more effectively with incidents of domestic abuse if a specific offence of domestic abuse existed.</b>					
<b>A person who repeatedly abuses their partner should receive a custodial sentence.</b>					

Additional comments:

What would support you to understand and deal with domestic abuse better?

## Section 3A

Please select the relevant box(es) to say what action you think the police should take in each of the following scenarios, all of which concern a family with one or more children living at home.

Scenario 1: The offender pulled all wires and boards out of the family computer so that the victim could not use it.

- The offender should only be charged if the victim is willing to press charges.
- The offender should be charged regardless of the victim's willingness to press charges.
- A DVPN or DVPO should be issued.
- A DASH or DIAL should be completed.
- The concern for the child(ren) is such that out-of-hours social care should be contacted without delay.
- No further action required.
- None of the above. The action the police should take is:

Scenario 2: The offender drove the victim into the woods driving like a maniac and threatened to kill them both leaving the kids with no one.

- The offender should only be charged if the victim is willing to press charges.
- The offender should be charged regardless of the victim's willingness to press charges.
- A DVPN or DVPO should be issued.
- A DASH or DIAL should be completed.
- The concern for the child(ren) is such that out-of-hours social care should be contacted without delay.
- No further action required.
- None of the above. The action the police should take is:

Scenario 3: The offender threatened to smash the victim's head in with a hammer and proceeded to bash holes in the wall around them.

- The offender should only be charged if the victim is willing to press charges.
- The offender should be charged regardless of the victim's willingness to press charges.
- A DVPN or DVPO should be issued.
- A DASH or DIAL should be completed.
- The concern for the child(ren) is such that out-of-hours social care should be contacted without delay.
- No further action required.
- None of the above. The action the police should take is:

Scenario 4: The offender raped the victim when they refused to have sex.

- The offender should only be charged if the victim is willing to press charges.
- The offender should be charged regardless of the victim's willingness to press charges.
- A DVPN or DVPO should be issued.
- A DASH or DIAL should be completed.
- The concern for the child(ren) is such that out-of-hours social care should be contacted without delay.
- No further action required.
- None of the above. The action the police should take is:

Scenario 5: The offender told the victim that they would never be free and that the offender would make it their sole life purpose to make the victim's life hell.

- The offender should only be charged if the victim is willing to press charges.
- The offender should be charged regardless of the victim's willingness to press charges.
- A DVPN or DVPO should be issued.
- A DASH or DIAL should be completed.
- The concern for the child(ren) is such that out-of-hours social care should be contacted without delay.
- No further action required.
- None of the above. The action the police should take is:

Scenario 6: The offender took the victim by the throat and bashed their head off the oven door.

- The offender should only be charged if the victim is willing to press charges.
- The offender should be charged regardless of the victim's willingness to press charges.
- A DVPN or DVPO should be issued.
- A DASH or DIAL should be completed.
- The concern for the child(ren) is such that out-of-hours social care should be contacted without delay.
- No further action required.
- None of the above. The action the police should take is:

Scenario 7: The offender punched the victim whilst she was holding a 3-month-old baby. The victim fell against the wall causing a bruise to the baby's arm.

- The offender should only be charged if the victim is willing to press charges.
- The offender should be charged regardless of the victim's willingness to press charges.
- A DVPN or DVPO should be issued.
- A DASH or DIAL should be completed.
- The concern for the child(ren) is such that out-of-hours social care should be contacted without delay.
- No further action required.
- None of the above. The action the police should take is:

Scenario 8: The offender is arguing with the victim and their 13-year-old son intervenes, physically getting in the middle of the couple. The offender tries to push the victim but accidentally hits the 13-year-old in the face.

- The offender should only be charged if the victim is willing to press charges.
- The offender should be charged regardless of the victim's willingness to press charges.
- A DVPN or DVPO should be issued.
- A DASH or DIAL should be completed.
- The concern for the child(ren) is such that out-of-hours social care should be contacted without delay.
- No further action required.
- None of the above. The action the police should take is:

Scenario 9: The offender is arguing with her 15-year-old brother as he has been stealing money. She punches him in the arm.

- The offender should only be charged if the victim is willing to press charges.
- The offender should be charged regardless of the victim's willingness to press charges.
- A DVPN or DVPO should be issued.
- A DASH or DIAL should be completed.
- The concern for the child(ren) is such that out-of-hours social care should be contacted without delay.
- No further action required.
- None of the above. The action the police should take is:

Scenario 10: The victim has been goading the offender for over 30 minutes, shouting at him as she has found out he has been cheating on her. She repeatedly shouts at him to "Hit me", "Go on hit me, if it'll make you feel better". He eventually does hit her, punching her in the face, causing her nose to bleed. Unbeknown to him she has been recording the whole incident on her mobile phone that was in the pocket of her dressing gown.

- The offender should only be charged if the victim is willing to press charges.
- The offender should be charged regardless of the victim's willingness to press charges.
- A DVPN or DVPO should be issued.
- A DASH or DIAL should be completed.
- The concern for the child(ren) is such that out-of-hours social care should be contacted without delay.
- No further action required.
- None of the above. The action the police should take is:

## Section 3B

Please select the relevant box(es) to say what action you think the police should take in each of the following scenarios, all of which concern a family with one or more children living at home.

Scenario A: The male offender undermined the female victim by use of derogatory language, and controlling her access to employment, money, transport and contact with friends and family.

- The offender should only be charged if the victim is willing to press charges.
- The offender should be charged regardless of the victim's willingness to press charges.
- A DVPN or DVPO should be issued.
- A DASH or DIAL should be completed.
- The concern for the child(ren) is such that out-of-hours social care should be contacted without delay.
- No further action required.
- None of the above. The action the police should take is:

Scenario B: The male offender punched the female victim, breaking her nose.

- The offender should only be charged if the victim is willing to press charges.
- The offender should be charged regardless of the victim's willingness to press charges.
- A DVPN or DVPO should be issued.
- A DASH or DIAL should be completed.
- The concern for the child(ren) is such that out-of-hours social care should be contacted without delay.
- No further action required.
- None of the above. The action the police should take is:

Scenario C: The male offender slapped the female victim, causing bruising to her face.

- The offender should only be charged if the victim is willing to press charges.
- The offender should be charged regardless of the victim's willingness to press charges.
- A DVPN or DVPO should be issued.
- A DASH or DIAL should be completed.
- The concern for the child(ren) is such that out-of-hours social care should be contacted without delay.
- No further action required.
- None of the above. The action the police should take is:

Scenario D: The male offender pushed the female victim causing no physical harm.

- The offender should only be charged if the victim is willing to press charges.
- The offender should be charged regardless of the victim's willingness to press charges.
- A DVPN or DVPO should be issued.
- A DASH or DIAL should be completed.
- The concern for the child(ren) is such that out-of-hours social care should be contacted without delay.
- No further action required.
- None of the above. The action the police should take is:

Scenario E: The male offender stabbed the female victim leading to life-altering brain damage.

- The offender should only be charged if the victim is willing to press charges.
- The offender should be charged regardless of the victim's willingness to press charges.
- A DVPN or DVPO should be issued.
- A DASH or DIAL should be completed.
- The concern for the child(ren) is such that out-of-hours social care should be contacted without delay.
- No further action required.
- None of the above. The action the police should take is:

Scenario F: The male offender stabbed the female victim in the arm, causing a wound that was not life threatening and which did not cause long-term physical harm.

- The offender should only be charged if the victim is willing to press charges.
- The offender should be charged regardless of the victim's willingness to press charges.
- A DVPN or DVPO should be issued.
- A DASH or DIAL should be completed.
- The concern for the child(ren) is such that out-of-hours social care should be contacted without delay.
- No further action required.
- None of the above. The action the police should take is:

## Section 4

Chris and Sarah are university students who have been married for two years. Both Chris and Sarah have been experiencing a high amount of stress recently. Sarah has been having some health problems lately and has been to several doctors' appointments in the last few days.

Chris was recently fired from his evening job. Instead of being at work at night, he now sits at home alone because Sarah is used to going out with some of her friends while Chris is at work. Chris tends to get jealous of her friends. He is particularly jealous of one of her male friends who John thinks has a crush on Sarah.

One Thursday evening, Chris decided to go out to a pub with a friend while Sarah was out at a pub with her friends. They both drank four beers that night. While out at the pub, Chris saw Sarah with her arm around another man. Chris immediately left the pub.

When Sarah returned home, Chris immediately started to question her actions. She promised him she wasn't cheating on him. Chris continued to argue with her about the incident. Sarah decided she wanted to discuss a few things with him too. Sarah started to ask Chris questions about why he was "always sitting at home and being lazy" since he lost his job. He told her to leave him alone but Sarah kept pressing him for information.

The argument quickly escalated and the couple began yelling at one another. Chris told her he was tired of being nagged and started to leave. Sarah grabbed his arm to try to keep him from leaving. Chris then drew his arm back and slapped Sarah very hard across the face. Chris left and returned several hours later to find Sarah had a large bruise on her face.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I could be in the victim's shoes.							
I can identify with the victim.							
My beliefs and values are similar to the victim.							
This crime could happen to me.							
The victim is intelligent.							
She would fit in with my friends.							
The victim behaved intelligently.							
My opinion of her is positive.							
The crime happened by chance.							
The victim is respectable.							
The victim could have fought him off.							
The victim is likable.							
The victim did her best to resist.							
The victim is a kind person.							
The victim needs psychological help.							
I feel there was psychological injury to the victim.							
The psychological injury will last long.							
I feel the crime was severe.							

	Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel public agencies could help the victim.							
I pity the victim.							
I sympathise with her.							
She should have behaved differently.							
The crime was due to her actions.							
The victim is to blame.							
The victim could have foreseen the crime.							
The crime was due to a character flaw in the victim.							
The victim is physically attractive.							
The victim is personally attractive.							
The assailant's character was flawed.							
The assailant should go to prison.							
He should be arrested.							
She should hire a solicitor.							
She can overcome psychological injury.							
The physical harm was severe.							
The victim should call the police.							

	Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The abuse was a ploy for sympathy.							
The victim gets pleasure from abuse.							
The victim deserved the abuse.							
The victim should seek revenge.							
The abuse was unjust.							
The victim is angry.							
She is upset.							
She is afraid.							
She is sad.							
She could have avoided the violence.							
She could have done something differently.							
Screaming would have helped.							
Begging would have helped.							
The assailant is to blame.							
The perpetrator should be excused for his behaviour.							
I am threatened by this crime.							
The victim exaggerated.							
The victim should be counselled.							
The victim needs a support group.							

	Strongly agree	Agree	Somewhat agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The perpetrator could have changed his behaviour.							

Additional comments:

## Section 5

Please tick all of the following which you consider to be functions of the MASH.

- To protect vulnerable adults
- To protect vulnerable children
- To investigate cases involving vulnerable people
- To facilitate information sharing between multiple agencies
- To facilitate decision making between multiple agencies
- To co-ordinate actions between multiple agencies
- To identify the potential risk of domestic abuse to an individual
- To take on some of the workload of the police
- To identify high risk cases to refer to MARAC
- To facilitate early intervention where a risk of domestic abuse has been identified
- To review the outcomes of co-ordinated actions
- To support frontline staff

Are there other functions you think the MASH should have responsibility for?

Finally:

Have you completed a similar questionnaire to this before during a Domestic Abuse training session?

- Yes       No       Don't know