



## Domestic abuse scenario - 16+ settings

### DSL Information Sheet

#### Questions for the DSL to facilitate a discussion:

- Is there reasonable cause to suspect abuse or neglect? In what way?
- How might the setting deal with the issue of consent?
- Who needs to be involved in exploring these concerns?

#### Analysis

- There is reasonable cause to suspect Hasan is at risk of witnessing or hearing domestic abuse.
- The information as it stands suggests that Iqbal has perpetrated domestic abuse previously and there is no information to suggest this risk has reduced. However, there has not been a definite identification that this is Zayne Alam.
- Iqbal appears integrated into the family, describing himself as Hasan's father. He is a significant person in Hasan's life.
- At this stage there is no evidence of impact on Hasan or Sufia, but often the severity of domestic abuse builds up over a period of time and Hasan has the right to be protected.
- It is not clear what Sufia knows about Iqbal's history. His change of name may be a means of concealing identity, or he may have introduced himself differently for cultural reasons (he may simply have two names).
- A further unknown is how much involvement Iqbal has in Hasan's life. Does Hasan live in the home address, and is it a close "family" unit, or does he spend a large proportion of time elsewhere? Do we know if there are any younger siblings?

#### Action

- This is likely to require a referral to children's social care (particularly if there are younger siblings in the home), although at this stage consent has not been sought nor has there been an opportunity to check the information shared by the tutor.
- The setting should assess the risk towards the tutor – it might be sensible



not to share the information on who has identified Iqbal at this stage until more is known about the risk he poses. If any action is taken advice should be sought on this.

- It would be sensible to try to speak to Hassan to obtain details on Iqbal (for example date of birth, any other names and any other children) for the setting records and to make definite identification easier. This could be undertaken by a senior member of staff rather than the tutor.
- Consideration should be given about whether to talk directly to Sufia about domestic abuse, making information available about local groups, support and compassion. Recognise the potential for Iqbal to be present or listening in to telephone calls. There will be a need to understand Sufia's perspective on the relationship and consider what barriers there may be.
- Sufia has parental responsibility as legally, Hasan is still a child. Therefore Sufia would need to be informed of any referral to Children's Social Care. Hasan is however of an age where, so long as he is considered to have capacity, he should be involved in discussions about what risk he believes there is and what should happen next. This does not negate the responsibility of the setting should there be concern that he is at risk.
- Record the concern with the background and your analysis.
- You will need to consider whether the information that you have available to you warrants a referral being made to children's social care because of likely impact of significant harm – this would particularly be the case if you know that there are younger siblings present. If the details match and identify Iqbal and Zayne as being one and the same, or are not available a strategy discussion must be held.
- The strategy discussion should ensure information is sought from the other authority and children's social care should gather information from Iqbal's previous children's setting. Ensure any plan involves addressing the concern directly with Iqbal (often plans centre on actions required of the victim, which ends up with them carrying 'blame'). The strategy discussion should support the setting in undertaking a risk assessment on Iqbal's potential behaviour towards staff.
- The focus of the strategy discussion should be on Hasan and consider whether he is safe. Given the severity of the incident there should also be a strand of actions geared towards assessing the risk to Sufia using the [Safelives risk checklist](#) and considering whether a referral to MARAC is warranted. The strategy discussion should consider the level of information



Sufia has a 'right to know' under the [Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme](#) (sometimes known as Claire's Law – links correct November 2020) and there should be a decision about who is best placed to talk to Sufia.

- Have increased awareness of Hasan; provide natural opportunities to talk if he needs to. If he does talk remember: do not interrogate, ask open questions.
- Review risk in light of any on-going investigation.
- What is happening more widely in the setting to raise the profile of domestic abuse? Is there information around the setting, is it covered in curriculum, etc.