

1 Background

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 states;

Behaviour of a person (“A”) towards another person (“B”) is “domestic abuse” if:

- A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, AND the behaviour is abusive.

Behaviour is “abusive” if it consists of any of the following;

- (a) physical or sexual abuse; (b) violent or threatening behaviour; (c) controlling or coercive behaviour; (d) economic abuse; (e) psychological, emotional or other abuse;

and it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct.

2 Why Does It Matter?

Each year nearly **2 million people** in the UK suffer some form of domestic abuse - 1.3 million female victims (8.2% of population) & 600,000 male victims (4% of the population).

7 women a month are killed by a current or former partner in England & Wales and **130,000 children live in homes where there is high-risk domestic abuse.**

All agencies must ensure their staff, carers and volunteers are fully aware of the impact DA can have on victims and their children and how to safeguard them.

7 Where to get help in Halton?

If anyone is in **immediate danger** call on **999**.

Halton Domestic Abuse Service – call the 24 hour local domestic abuse support number 0300 11 11 247 (24 hours a day)

Children’s Social Care - 0151 907 8305 (Mon-Thurs 9 am – 5 pm, Fri 9 am – 4.30 pm)
0345 050 0148 (out of office hours)

Adult Social Care - 0845 0500 148 or 0345 0500 148

Further Resources and information
[Home - Open the Door Cheshire](#)



3 Information

Domestic abuse can **affect anybody**, regardless of their gender or sexual orientation, and it occurs across all of society, regardless of age, race, religion, wealth or geography.

In an average week Cheshire Police will respond to 55 domestic related crimes originating from Halton.

Domestic abuse affects communities within Halton disproportionately.

Per 10,000 adult female population (16+), **Halton** had the highest rate of repeat cases discussed at MARAC **7.06** [9.29 in Q3 20/21] compared to **Cheshire 2.58** [3.40 in Q3 20/21].

Halton has the highest number of domestic related crimes per 10,000 population of **50.38** compared to 36.15 in other areas of Cheshire.

4 Barriers

There are many reasons why people may not leave abusive relationships. Additional barriers present for people from ethnic minority groups, older people & people with disabilities.

Consider the needs relating to people's independence, self-esteem, previous experience of services and parenting.

Take time to build trust. It is important to accept that they may not be able to describe or disclose all aspects of their situation initially and that the issues make take time to explore fully.

6 What else should I consider?

People experiencing DA may also be experiencing other issues such as mental health problems and substance misuse.

The ‘multiplicative’ impact of combinations of factors have been found to increase the risk of harm to children and other vulnerable persons within the household.

Professionals need to be mindful of how these issues interlink and assess the impact of the issues both together and separately to ensure the interventions put in place are as effective as possible in promoting the safety and wellbeing of all members of a household.

5 What are some of the indicators an adult is experiencing DA?

- frequent or reoccurring injuries with unlikely explanations
- appearing frightened, ashamed and evasive
- stress or anxiety disorders; isolation from friends, family or colleagues; depression, panic attacks or other symptoms; alcohol and/or drug abuse; suicide attempts.

What are some of the indicators that a child is living in a home where DA is happening?

- frequent or reoccurring injuries with unlikely or no explanations
- low self-esteem, depression, anxiety, self-harm
- behavioural issues, antisocial or criminal behaviour, drug and alcohol misuse, absenteeism, or a reluctance to go home

Please note these lists are not exhaustive