



Ten Steps to Create a Comprehensive Domestic/Sexual Violence Health Care Response

1. Set Up a Collaborative Work Group

Recruit key people within the clinical setting plus representatives from local domestic/sexual violence (DSV) advocacy programs. Involve multidisciplinary staff: physicians, nurses, QI/QA staff, behavioral & mental health staff, public health nurses, receptionist, coders, translators, and others.

2. Develop Collaborative Relationships with Community Domestic/Sexual Violence Experts

Develop a close, working relationship with your local domestic violence shelter or advocacy program.

3. Develop a Protocol

Develop and institutionalize a protocol. Visit www.futureswithoutviolence.org/health to review and adapt model domestic violence protocols.

4. Develop Universal Education, Assessment and Response

Incorporate a brochure-based assessment and response; conduct universal education on healthy relationships and DSV and the health impact of abuse. Determine which staff will assess patients, how often, local referrals, and community-specific resources. Invite a local advocate to help you with a training for health staff and begin by discussing vicarious trauma and self-care. Next educate staff on the dynamics of DSV, the health impact of abuse on victims and their children, how to assess and conduct universal education, documentation in the clinic setting, referral to local DSV programs, and culturally relevant resources and referrals. Add IPV content to new employee orientation. www.workplacesrespond.org.

6. Order/Adapt Resource Materials for Clinicians and Patients

Model materials may be easily obtained from the National Health Resource Center on Domestic Violence (www.futureswithoutviolence.org/health).

7. Increase Awareness

Participate in health fairs, radio, television and print news segments and other community events where you can distribute materials, or send prevention and intervention messages. Paint a mural in the hospital, or hang a banner on the building with healthy families/prevention messages. Create a social media campaign.

8. Integrate Domestic Violence Prevention into Wellness Programs

Integrate domestic violence prevention messages into wellness activities as part of wellness fairs, family activities, and other pre-existing wellness efforts.

9. Establish Quality Assurance Mechanisms to Monitor Response

Evaluate the IPV assessment rates, percentage of patients who were offered safety cards and or referral and system changes that support providers. Some sites elect to conduct chart reviews to analyze prevalence of abuse, how often assessment is taking place, and whether intervention, referral and follow-up were conducted.

10. Engage Youth, Boys and Men

Encourage men to mentor boys about relationship violence and how to respect women by hanging posters from the Futures Without Violence “Coaching Boys into Men” campaign. Visit: www.futureswithoutviolence.org/CBIM for more information.