Responding to staff experiencing family violence: Quick Reference for FVCOs.

A detailed Workplace Support procedure, including information on responding to risk, can be found at [insert link].

**Sensitive and safe conversations**

* If talking in person, ensure you are in a private space. If on the phone/video, check they are alone. Discuss how to communicate safely by phone/video/text/email.
* Explain your role and that of the hospital with regards to support for victims of family violence.
* Let them know the limits of your confidentiality, particularly with regards to children’s safety. Discuss who else will have access to their information and in what circumstances, e.g. Payroll if they take family violence leave.

**Respond respectfully**

* Remember that there are many barriers to disclosures and seeking help. Let the employee guide the process as they are the best person to advise on what they need to remain safe and be supported.

**Respond to risk**

* Complete a risk assessment [appropriate to your training and responsibilities]. Manage the risk in accordance with the [MARAM guidelines]. Remember that the response should be guided by the victim survivor and actions taken with their consent unless there is immediate threat to safety, or you are legally obliged to breach their confidentiality. (See over for a chart on Response options following family violence risk).

**Provide Workplace Support options**

* Provide information about family violence leave and how to access leave, including documentary evidence.
* Explain how payroll and Human Resources manage their data and confidentiality.
* Explain how to change rostering / leave if they do not want their manager to know about the family violence.
* Provide information about other workplace supports including EAP and other internal supports: mental health, sexual assault and other family violence services).
* Provide information about changes to working arrangements, including using family violence leave, if they can’t safety work at home and aren’t able to work on site.
* Ask who else at the hospital knows about their situation and whom they are comfortable knowing about their situation, for example, their manager.

**Workplace Safety Planning**

* Explain what a Workplace Safety Plan is and discuss whether a plan is needed for the staff member whilst they are at work.
* If they are working from home, discuss if arrangements need to be made for them to be safe during work hours, as home is considered to be their place of work.
* If required, set up a time to have a workplace safety planning meeting.

**Provide external referrals and support information**

* Provide information, and support their access to specialist family violence services, including services for staff members from Aboriginal, LGBTI, immigrant and refugee communities, as well as information regarding elder abuse and support for people with a disability (see [staff intranet page] ) (see over for services)
* Support a referral to a specialist family violence service, if the person is willing to accept a referral.

**Document**

* Open a Family Violence file for the staff member/volunteer.
* Document relevant information as per [name procedure], maintaining confidentiality and safety of the staff member.
* Note that you may not be comfortable with their decisions, but you should respect them. You also may wish to seek some support / debriefing as well, as receiving disclosures can be distressing and difficult. You can access EAP/ 1800Respect, or [internal service/ person].

**If you need any further information or support, please contact Ph. XXXX XXXX**

Response Options Following Identification of Family Violence Risk OR [Service name Staff referral pathways document to respond to risk]

**Signs and indicators of family violence are present**

Make a **sensitive enquiry**, e.g., **“I noticed you seem …. a bit distracted/ upset, etc. I wanted to check with you to see if everything is OK?”**

**“Yes, everything is OK”**

**“No, things are not OK”**

Let them know that you are there to support them. Let them know the limits of your confidentiality, particularly with regards to children’s safety. Listen to the person closely with empathy and without judging. Ask the following questions to identify whether family violence is occurring:

**1. “Has anyone in your family done something to make you or your children feel unsafe or afraid?”**

**2. “Have they controlled your day-to-day activities (e.g. who you see, where you go) or put you down?”**

**3. “Have they threatened to hurt you in any way?”**

**4. “Have they hit, slapped, kicked or otherwise physically hurt** **you?”**

If they have indicated that family violence is not occurring, respect their answer and let them know about EAP and other internal health and well-being supports for staff and where to seek external support if they ever find themselves in a family violence situation.

*If you strongly suspect and/or have serious concerns for the staff member’s safety or the safety of their children, it is suggested that you consult a senior staff member about these concerns.*

**“No, family violence is not occurring”**

**“Yes””**

Family violence is occurring, ask about immediate safety, e.g.,

“**Do you have any immediate concerns about the safety of your children or someone else in your family?”**

**“No, not in immediate danger” (adult &/or child)**

Whilst it is indicated there is no immediate threat, there may still be a serious risk.

* **If they are willing to receive assistance**, refer them to a specialist family violence service to make plans for their safety and well-being.
* Provide them with information about internal & external help & support that is available, including support to contact police and Workplace Support.
* Refer to [appropriate person] for workplace safety planning, if appropriate**.**
* **If they are not willing to receive assistance,** consider child wellbeing and safety and consult your manager to share information if needed.
* Provide them with information about internal & external help & support that is available, including emergency numbers and Workplace Support available.
* Let them know that they can get help if things change.

**“Yes, in immediate danger” (adult &/or child)**

* Ask if they require police (000) assistance and ask their views on calling the police, as it may not be safe to call the police.
* If they wish, provide them with the numbers and details of specialist family violence services to assist with safety planning and support.
* **If they are not willing to receive assistance**, and particularly if children are at risk, discuss with your manager possible notification to child protection/police (000).
* You can call a family violence service with de-identified information for advice as well. ​
* Consult with your manger, HR and/or a specialist family violence service.
* When safe to do so, advise of other internal and external services.

**Safe Steps [Local Family violence service] 1800RESPECT InTouch Djirra With Respect Mensline**

**24-hour crisis service Local family violence service 24-hour counseling Multicultural service Aboriginal service LGBTI service Counseling**

**1800 015 188 XXXXXXXX 1800 737 732 1800 755 988 1800 105 303 1800 542 847 1300 789 978**