

Vulnerable Women: what makes them vulnerable? who are they?



Promoting • Supporting • Influencing

Women with Complex Social Factors

Pregnant Women who misuse Drugs and Alcohol

Pregnant Who are recent migrants or have difficulty in reading or speaking English

Victims of Trafficking/Modern Slavery

Teenage Mothers – (under 20)

Perinatal mental health problems

Learning Disability

Pregnant women who experience Domestic Abuse

Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (e.g. psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional) between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality

There are also more subtle forms of abuse such as '*coercive control*', where a perpetrator may use a range of tactics to hurt, humiliate, intimidate, exploit, isolate, and dominate their victims

Controlling behaviour' may also be apparent, where the perpetrator uses a range of tactics to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by regulating their everyday behaviour, exploiting and isolating them from both support and independence.

'intimate partner violence' has also been used to describe such emotional abuse and controlling behaviours.

1 in 4 women & 1 in 6 men in England & Wales experience some form of domestic abuse every year

58,810 incidents of domestic abuse in Scotland between 2016-17

30,595 incidents in Northern Ireland 2017.

Of the 1.1. million DA Incidents reported to the Police in England & Wales 46% were recorded as DA related crimes against specific statutes / laws

Make up 32% of all violent crimes

Globally, 30% of women who have been in a relationship report that they have experienced some form of physical and/or sexual violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime

38% of murders of women are committed by a male intimate partner

These women are not hidden, we see them in our practice

We are part of these statistics

Adverse birth outcomes - Physical assault to the abdomen or sexual trauma experienced during pregnancy may increase the risk of spontaneous abortion, pre-term/low birth weight or neonatal death

Delayed antenatal care, history of premature labours or stillbirths

Vaginal bleeding, recurring STI/ UTI

Cost UK economy around £15 billion each year in health costs, social services, housing, policing & justice system

Emotional/ psychological symptoms

Depression, fear, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), sleep disorders

Self-harming or suicidal tendencies

Alcohol or drug misuse

Negative maternal behaviours, increased stress levels

Child Victims – abnormal behaviours

Lack of money

Homelessness

Office of National Statistics. Domestic abuse statistics. Report no. FOI request.

[https://www.psni.police.uk/globalassets/inside-the-psni/our-statistics/domestic-abuse-statistics/2018-19/q1/domestic-abuse-bulletin-jun_-18.pdf] &

[<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/bulletins/domesticabuseinenglandandwales/yearendingmarch2017>]

Jewkes R. Emotional abuse: a neglected dimension of partner violence. 2010

<https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg110>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/domestic-violence-and-abuse#domestic-violence-and-abuse-new-definition>]

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/crimeandjustice/compendium/focusonviolentcrimeandsexualoffences/yearendingmarch2015/chapter4intimatepersonalviolenceandpartnerabuse>]

Jewkes R. (2010) Emotional abuse: a neglected dimension of partner violence 2010

Donovan, B, M. et al, BJOG, Intimate partner violence during pregnancy and the risk for adverse infant outcomes: a systematic review and meta-analysis, DOI: 10.1111/1471-0528.13928, March 2016)

Intrusive 'other person' in consultations

Partner or spouse, parent, grandparent (or, for elder abuse, a partner or family member) always attends appointments unnecessarily

Submissive or afraid to speak in front of the partner or relative, escort or spouse.

The escort/partner is aggressive, dominant or over attentive, speaking for the patient or refusing to leave the room

Frequent hospital/GP visits for vague symptoms

Missed appointments, non-compliance with treatment or early discharge from hospital

Physical symptoms

Injuries inconsistent with explanation of cause or the woman tries to hide or minimise the extent of injuries

Multiple injuries at different stages of healing or repeated injury, all with vague or implausible explanations (particularly injuries to the breasts or abdomen)

Headaches, cognitive problems, hearing loss

Unexplained long-term pain

Pelvic pain and sexual dysfunction