



RISK ASSESSMENT

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LECTURE OUTLINE

- Discuss what a risk assessment is
- Why we perform a risk assessment
- How to perform a risk assessment

WHAT IS A RISK ASSESSMENT?

Evaluates people/situations to determine:

- The presence of risk indicators of family violence
- Possible consequences of this risk
- Options to maintain safety
- To be able to develop a safety plan

WHY DO A RISK ASSESSMENT?

- Duty of care to patient/client
- Increase the likelihood of patient/client seeking support
- In a professional position to be able to assist patient/client to be safe

HOW TO DO A RISK ASSESSMENT

- Organisation may have templates/resources
- Integrate questions into conversation with patient rather than tick box exercise
- Level of assessment depends on your role
- Refer to domestic violence services for more comprehensive assessment

MARAM - THE VICTORIAN EXAMPLE

- Multi-agency risk assessment and management framework
- Allows for information sharing between 'information sharing entities'
- Risk assessment for victim-survivor and children
- Keeps perpetrator 'in view'



VICTIM-SURVIVORS OWN ASSESSMENT OF SAFETY

“Do you feel safe to go home tonight?”

“What do you need to do in order to feel safe?”

EVIDENCE BASED RISK FACTORS

- Leaving or having just left
- Violence whilst pregnant
- Increased severity and frequency of violence
- Strangulation
- Obsessive/jealous behaviour
- Sexual assault
- Threats to kill, threats of suicide
- Drug and alcohol use
- Access to or use of weapons
- Unemployment

INFORMATION SHARING

- MARAM scheme in Victoria
- Can break confidentiality if you have a reasonable belief that a disclosure is necessary to lessen or prevent a serious threat to an individual's life, health, safety or welfare



RISK ASSESSMENT OF CHILDREN

- Have the children ever been threatened with harm?
- Have the children ever been harmed?
- Have the children ever witnessed family violence?
- Are there any children under the age of one?
- Do you have any immediate concerns for the safety of your children?

Older children can be directly asked:

- Have you ever phoned for emergency assistance?
- Have you ever been removed from parental care?
- Have you ever intervened in an incident of violence in the home?

RISK ASSESSMENT

- Ongoing process
- Consult with colleagues who have knowledge of family violence
- You do not have to prove that violence is occurring