

Hackney Domestic Abuse (DASH) Risk Checklist for Victims/Survivors

(based on the national 24-question [SafeLives DASH Risk Checklist](#), Hackney's commitment to addressing [Intergenerational Domestic Abuse](#) and Hackney's membership of the [Anti Racism in VAWG Charter](#))

Name of person who is the subject of risk assessment	Date of birth			
Explain to the victim/survivor that the purpose of asking these questions is for their safety and protection as they help you understand the risks. Tick the box if the factor is present based on what the victim/survivor reports or what has been evidenced through other sources. It is assumed that your main source of information is the victim themselves. If this is not the case, please indicate in the right hand column why you have answered 'yes', particularly where the victim has stated there is no concern. Please remember that, where a question in the risk assessment doesn't have specific prompts around anti-racist practice, the issues explored are no less important for Black and global majority people. Please ensure that you ask if the person you are completing this work with has any access, support or communication needs and use approved interpreters as needed. Please make sure that you are aware of the proper language and terminologies in regards to LGBTQ+ considerations, do not assume that the client is heterosexual or not part of the LGBTQ+ community even if their partner is of the opposite sex. If the victim/survivor is 16 or 17 years old please refer to the Hackney Child Wellbeing Framework and refer to MASH@hackney.gov.uk. 16 and 17 year olds; status as children is the primary context. USE THE COMMENT / DETAILS SECTIONS TO PROVIDE DETAIL IN RELATION TO ANSWERS. <i>*All sections expand so feel free to put in as much information as you need</i> <i>** Where you see [name of abuser(s)] please insert the name of the person(s) allegedly causing harm</i>	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	State source of information that is leading you to choose 'YES' if it is not information being given by the victim (e.g. police, NHS, perpetrator of abuse)
Below in purple are additional considerations from an Anti Racist Practice perspective; be mindful of your own lived experiences, your views of others and how these affect what you bring to the interaction				
Below in green are additional considerations regarding Intrafamilial / Intergenerational abuse				
Below in red are additional considerations regarding disability +/- care needs				
Below in yellow are additional considerations regarding LGBTQ+ status				
Below in grey are additional considerations regarding Extra Familial Risk/Harm e.g. exploitation +/- gangs				

1. Has the current incident resulted in injury? Have there been previous injuries? <i>Please list current injuries and any previous injuries</i> - Agencies responding to Black people who have experienced physical abuse may have failed to ask about, overlooked or dismissed signs of bruising. When exploring injuries, ask about any injuries that are not visible - Remember that abusers may explain injuries to someone with a disability as resulting not from abuse but from neglect from a carer or from an accident in the home. Also someone with a disability falling may be due to their abuser not allowing adaptations to be used or intentionally placing hazards which make the home more dangerous	Comment / Details:	☐	☐	☐	
2. Are you frightened? - Some Black and global majority people may exhibit fear differently (eg anger, frustration) as in some cultures there is stigma attached to showing fear and disclosing abuse. This does not reduce how fearful they are. Consider that you may have to exhibit more curiosity. - If a victim/survivor's child has been aggressive to them since before they were adults and this has continued for many years they may describe what is happening as 'normal'. Consider exploring specific incidents as well as home life in general to encourage them to share how they feel/felt - Consider that some disabilities may mean the victim/survivor doesn't have full capacity to understand abuse or risk - Those from LGBTQ+ community may have an increased sense of fear due to their sexuality being a private matter and/or if dealing with the domestic abuse alone because of isolation (see below) - If the abuser is linked to a gang or is exploiting the victim/survivor financially this can increase the level of fear	Comment / Details:	☐	☐	☐	
3. What are you afraid of? Is it further injury or violence? (Please give an indication of what you think [name of abuser(s)] might do and to whom, including children)	Comment / Details:	☐	☐	☐	

- Consider the impact of historical events where Black and global majority people were unfairly treated by those in authority and how this will affect perception of how the victim would be believed and their ability to disclose. - Consider that risk may be higher due to the physical barriers of a physical disability, i.e. if the victim/survivor cannot leave the property due to being in a wheelchair, cannot protect themselves physically or engage in a safety plan due to physical impairments i.e. leaving the home, calling the police etc - Those from LGBTQ+ community are at further risk of hate crime which often can result in injury. Also domestic abuse can involve threats to tell family members / partners / colleagues about their sexual orientation if it has been private - If the abuser is linked to a gang or is exploiting the victim/survivor the level of violence they face if seeking help or trying to separate may be high					
4. Do you feel isolated from family/friends? e.g. does [name of abuser(s)] try to stop you from seeing friends/family/doctor or others? - Remember that victims may be already geographically separated from friends and family. It may be that online / phone contact is the only method available, so explore that form of wider support as well as in-person contact. Consider access to non-familial support e.g. faith and community groups. - Remember people with disabilities are often already isolated and the perpetrator may further use this to abuse and control. They may rely on the abuser for getting out of the home, travelling, basic care, communicating with other people etc. - LGBTQ+ victims/survivors are at increased risk of isolation due to the discrimination from friends and family and the fear that speaking out may compromise their privacy - Sexual or criminal exploitation can occur through grooming involving threats, inducements and manipulation over a considerable period of time. A feature of this is increasingly isolating the victim/survivor from family and safe friends	Comment / Details:	☐	☐	☐	

5. Are you feeling depressed or having suicidal thoughts? • Systemic racism has negative effects on mental health. ○ Black and Global Majority people with mental health issues are less likely to have received a helpful response from mental health services. ○ Because of negative experiences and labelling by agencies there may be an increased stigma in clients defining issues as being related to mental health and there can be fear of seeking help. ○ Within some communities there is a greater stigma around classifying difficulties as pertaining to mental health ○ Some communities may have a greater stigma around admitting to considering suicide ○ South Asian women are more likely to attempt suicide ○ Consider prefacing the question with a less stigmatising one such as 'have you been feeling low'? Any loss of appetite, insomnia/sleeping problems, feeling emotionally "numb" or extreme fatigue lately? ○ Reassure them that even if they haven't been listened to or felt able to talk before, they can tell you now of any difficulties they are having and that you will try and ensure the right sort of help is given. • Remember that disabilities can be psychological in origin and related to feelings of depression. Also chronic health issues such as pain and disabilities can cause depression • Those from LGBTQ+ community experience increased risk of self harm, suicide and use of substances which can be exacerbated by domestic abuse • Remember that adolescents and young people will still be developing cognitively and emotionally so their level of resilience may be low, particularly if they have experienced trauma through Adverse Childhood Experiences (which many exploited people have done). Exploitation and grooming will have had a psychological component so their mental health may have also been adversely affected by this.	Comment / Details:	☐	☐	☐	
6. Have you separated or tried to separate from [name of abuser(s)] within the past year?	Comment / Details:	☐	☐	☐	

• Victim/survivors at risk of 'Honour' Based Violence may not have expressed a request for separation with their partners and/or family members due to fear of serious harm. Immigration status can also affect someone's willingness to attempt separation • Consider if they have asked the perpetrator to leave the family home or have tried to end contact. Remember that for parents who are being harmed by their adult children it can be extremely difficult to ask them to leave the home that they may have lived in since childhood. To do so can cause a great sense of failure and betrayal on the part of the person being harmed. • Explore whether the person may want to leave the abuser but feels they can't as the abuser is their formal/informal carer and/or they rely on them heavily for support • Remember there may be additional barriers to LGBTQ+ victims/survivors leaving the relationship out of fear of the abuser exposing their privacy. Also, if isolated, the abuser may be the only source of support regarding sexuality in the face of wider family / community discrimination • Remember that for people who are linked to a gang and/or are being exploited along with others, their peer group may be intrinsically linked to their intimate partner relationship. Separating can thus involve loss or a peer group.					
7. Is there conflict over child contact? • Families can come in many forms. Consider formal and informal family relationships including guardianship arrangements and private fostering arrangements • Consider grandchildren - formal or informal contact / special guardianship arrangements, whether the child's parent controls or impedes contact with grandparent • Consider any child's disability; is the abuser making it difficult to manage contact and ensure the child's additional needs are met? Is the abuser accusing the victim/survivor of not meeting the care needs of a disabled child? • Consider that a victim/survivor who is being exploited and/or is involved in criminality may feel inhibited from disclosing abuse because of fears it will affect their role as a parent	Comment / Details:	☐	☐	☐	

8. Does [name of abuser(s)] constantly text, call, contact, follow, stalk or harass you? Please expand to identify what and whether you believe that this is done deliberately to intimidate you? Consider the context and behaviour of what is being done. - Consider whether the perpetrator uses 3rd parties such as family, friends, religious or community organisations as means to apply pressure or monitor survivors - Do adult children turn up at the house where they used to live when younger, insist on being let in or force entry? - Remember that abusers can present as being worried for the victim/survivor and seek to use professionals to gather information on them and their welfare - LGBTQ+ victims/survivors may find themselves harassed or have untrue allegations made about them in dedicated LGBTQ+ forums e.g. dating/encounter sites - If the person abusing the victim/survivor is also exploiting them then persistent contact at different times of the day and night may link both to domestic abuse and organising their sexual / criminal exploitation	Comment / Details:	☐	☐	☐	
9. Are you pregnant or have you recently had a baby (within the last 18 months)? - Research has shown that in the UK, Black women are more likely to have experienced miscarriage. Be sure to explore this issue sensitively. Also include in your consideration of this question pregnancies that ended prematurely as well as those that were successful. If miscarriage or other issues relating to childbirth is a factor, explore sensitively whether the client would like specific help in this area and signpost / refer accordingly. Consider that some Asian women may be reluctant to disclose some information to practitioners from the same cultural background (due to fear of stigma in the community) and to males. - Consider the age of the victim and whether this is relevant to ask e.g. for older people - If there is a significant power imbalance between the victim/survivor and the abuser, consider whether any pregnancy has been fully consented to and whether the	Comment / Details:	☐	☐	☐	

victim/survivor understands and has access to family planning advice. If the victim/survivor has a mental disorder impeding choice then sexual intercourse may be a criminal offence Remember LGBTQ+ victims/survivors may be in the process of beginning a family e.g. through surrogacy, IVF or adoption					
10. Is the abuse happening more often? Describe the frequency now compared to previously	Comment / Details:	☐	☐	☐	
11. Is the abuse getting worse? Describe the behaviours the abuser is using and their impact on the victim/survivor	Comment / Details:	☐	☐	☐	
12.Does [name of abuser(s)] try to control what you do and/or are they excessively jealous? For example: in terms of relationships; who you see; being 'policed' at home; telling you what to wear. Consider 'honour'-based violence (HBV) and specify behaviour. Consider any power imbalance / potential control due to the immigration status of the victim/survivor. Is the survivor fearful that a new relationship is likely to result in harm to herself and/or any new partner? - Within some families and communities patriarchal norms can mean women may be given messages that they should not have autonomy over decision making and can experience abuse if they seek more autonomy. Also remember that women within some families may have values around gender roles that differ from your own but are nonetheless valid from her perspective. Explore what level of control / autonomy the client thinks is reasonable for themselves as an individual and share concerns if controlling behaviour is a clear risk. - Thinking about older people and people vulnerable with care needs who rely on the abuser for support. Consider if the perpetrator is - - controlling who they have contact with / where they go? - refusing to provide agreed care / support? - preventing them from accessing or controlling access to medication / support? - making the victim/survivor's medical conditions worse? - making parts of the house inaccessible to them	Comment / Details:	☐	☐	☐	

/ not making necessary adaptations? - making communication inaccessible to them? - Those from LGBTQ+ community may have an increased sense of self doubt and may feel unsure of, or ashamed about, their sexuality. Abusers may use the individual's negative sense of self to exercise control. - Those from the LGBTQ+ community may see domestic abuse as a heteronormative issue and therefore do not recognise their own experiences of domestic abuse, therefore its important to emphasise and explain what coercive control is. - Those from LGBTQ+ may be forced or threatened with things like conversion therapy, exorcism and corrective behaviours usually by family members. This is abusive and extremely harmful. - Victims/survivors who are being exploited may experience an extremely high level of control linked to the abuser profiting from their continued subjugation and compliance. This can include travelling to a range of locations as part of 'county lines' exploitation.					
13. Has [name of abuser(s)] ever used weapons or objects to hurt you? List the weapons / objects used to hurt and/or threaten If the abuser is exploiting the victim/survivor as part of a wider criminal enterprise e.g. gangs they may have access to weapons including firearms	Comment / Details:	☐	☐	☐	
14. Has [name of abuser(s)] ever threatened to kill you or someone else and you believed them? Consider also if the perpetrator has expressed concerns about what they may do to the victim or another family member. Consider if the perpetrator is having thoughts/hearing voices about killing Victims/survivors with a significant mental impairment may be easier to convince that they or someone they care about could be killed or seriously hurt by the abuser as a means of silencing them	If yes, tick who: You ☐ Child ☐ Other (please specify) ☐ Comment / Details:	☐	☐	☐	

If the abuser is exploiting the victim/survivor as part of a wider criminal enterprise e.g. gangs they may have greater means to kill them, either directly or by using others					
15. Has [name of abuser(s)] ever attempted to strangle / choke / suffocate / drown you? List the specific actions taken by the abuser Victims/survivors who are being sexually exploited by their abuser may have been forced to undergo violence integrated into sexual contact both by the abuser and with those paying the abuser e.g. being choked as a 'sex act'	Comment / Details:	☐	☐	☐	
16. Does [name of perpetrator(s)] do or say things of a sexual nature that make you feel bad or that physically hurt you or someone else? - The term sexual abuse can be a taboo for many Black and Global majority survivors to verbalise details of abuse and can be a triggering subject. Giving examples can assist: Have they been - - forced to have sex when you haven't wanted to (emphasising that this is wrong and against the law in marriage as well as outside of marriage)? - threatened with exposure of images/videos? - threatened with exposure of premarital sex or LGBTQ+ status? - Although it isn't always considered when looking at abuse between adult family members, remember that sexual abuse - including being verbally degrading or exposing someone to unwanted sexual behaviour / material - can be part of intergenerational domestic abuse - If the victim/survivor has a mental disorder impeding choice then sexual intercourse may be a criminal offence, even if the victim/survivor believes they are in a consensual relationship - members of the LGBTQ+ community may be less likely to recognise or disclose their non consensual sexual experiences as abuse or rape, particularly if they have consented to some activities but not all. Reassure that consent can be activity-specific and if the abuser has ignored their consent this is abusive.	Comment / Details:	☐	☐	☐	

• Consider asking about 'chem sex' • Remember that exploitation can encompass a range of actions and behaviours the victim/survivor is forced to endure. Explore sexual exploitation / consent alongside other 'known' forms of exploitation being perpetrated.					
17. Is there any other person who has threatened you or who you are afraid of? • Within some families and communities the pressure on people to remain in relationships is extreme and they face real danger if they seek to escape - particularly if any wider family members have a financial stake in the relationship being maintained. Risk from the partner can be compounded by the partner's and the victim's families. While it should not be assumed that 'Honour' Based Violence is a risk, actively explore risks regarding the wider family. • Consider associates of the perpetrator; are others coming to / using the home that the victim does not feel comfortable with. Sometimes older adults and/or adults with care and support needs can be vulnerable to 'cuckooing'. • Consider that those from LGBT+ may experience or be at risk of domestic abuse from family members, due to homophobia, transphobia etc. • If the victim/survivor is being exploited and/or if the abuser is linked with gangs or other types of criminality there may be a range of people, known and unknown to the victim/survivor, who could do them harm if asked to by the abuser	Comment / Details:	☐	☐	☐	
18. Do you know if [name of abuser(s)] has hurt anyone else? Describe other people harmed by the abuser and their relationship to him e.g. ex-partner/child /adult family member • Consider that the victim/survivor may be reluctant to bring scrutiny on other parts of the extended family or other members of the community due to fear of reprisals, stigma and/or negative experiences of staten agencies the victim/survivor and others may have experienced • If the abuser has harmed others through gang or other criminality this is significant as willingness to hurt people to achieve objectives outside of the home can be linked with willingness to hurt people within intimate/family relationships	Children ☐ Another family member ☐ Someone from a previous relationship ☐ Other (please specify) ☐ Comment / Details:	☐	☐	☐	

19. Has [name of abuser(s)] ever mistreated an animal or the family pet? <i>Describe specifically what the abuser did / does</i>	Comment / Details:	☐	☐	☐	
20. Are there any financial issues? <i>For example, are you dependent on [name of abuser(s)] for money / do you have access to bank accounts / have they recently lost their job/other financial issues / what is your immigration status</i> - Remember that victims who have unresolved legal status may feel legally, as well as financially, dependent on their partner. Remember also that patriarchal norms can mean a strict and gendered division of financial control / autonomy which can create more risk for the victim. Explore with the client the level of financial autonomy they feel to be fair. - Is the perpetrator taking money / staying at accommodation without contributing? - Is the victim dependent on the perpetrator for money / housing? - Is the perpetrator dependent on the victim for money / housing? - Is the perpetrator benefiting from the victim's care needs e.g. through being a designated formal carer or through exploiting the victim/survivor's limited capacity? - Intimate partners who exploit victim/survivors as part of their abuse may use long-standing indebtedness e.g. due to providing them with illicit substances as well as a high level of control over any income generated through exploitation to subjugate the victim/survivor and ensure dependence	Comment / Details:	☐	☐	☐	
21. Has [name of abuser(s)] had problems in the past with drugs (prescription or other), alcohol or mental health leading to problems in leading a normal life? <i>Consider the appearance / method of substance use e.g. is it smoked, is it green, is it power/white, is it pill form? If alcohol, what is consumed, how much and how frequently? Explore how this contributes to the perpetrators general behaviour?</i> Remember that systemic racism contributes to mental ill health and to the trauma that is often a factor in substance misuse. Black people are less likely to have received helpful	<i>If yes, please specify which and give relevant details if known.</i> Drugs ☐ Alcohol ☐ Mental health ☐ Comment / Details:	☐	☐	☐	

responses from services. Please describe any known history of service involvement and how well agencies engaged with those experiencing or causing harm so agencies can assist with support for those who need it. - Consider whether the victim/survivor is in receipt of medication to which the abuser has access and whether that creates an increase complexity e.g. the abuser taking the victim's pain medication - Abusers who criminally exploit their intimate partner may have previous and/or current substance misuse issues exacerbated/maintained by their exposure to criminal enterprise. This can contribute to / cause worsening mental health					
22. Has [name of abuser(s)] ever threatened or attempted suicide? - Remember that systemic racism contributes to mental ill health. Black people are less likely to have received helpful responses from services. Please describe any known history of service involvement and how well agencies engaged with those experiencing or causing harm so agencies can assist with support for anyone in the situation who needs it. - Victims/survivors with a significant mental impairment may be easier to convince that the abuser will harm themselves if separation occurs as a means of silencing them	Comment / Details:	☐	☐	☐	
23. Has [name of abuser(s)] ever broken bail/an injunction and/or formal agreement for when they can see you and/or the children? Consider also ex-partners of the perpetrator Consider also if the perpetrator has broken injunctions / Court Orders / agreements regarding family members.	Bail conditions ☐ Non Molestation/Occupation Order ☐ Child contact arrangements ☐ Forced Marriage Protection Order ☐ Other ☐ Comment / Details:	☐	☐	☐	
24. Do you know if [name of abuser(s)] has ever been in trouble with the police or has a criminal history?	Domestic abuse ☐ Sexual violence ☐ Other violence ☐ Other ☐ Comment / Details:	☐	☐	☐	

- Remember that due to systemic racism, Black men are more likely to be criminalised. 'Being in trouble' with the police will therefore not necessarily signify heightened risks of harming others through domestic abuse. Offences relating to violence and gender should be given weight as predictive factors of future harm. - Abusers who exploit their intimate partners will often have had contact with criminal justice agencies, potentially for offences not connected with domestic abuse. Remember that absence of evidence is not always evidence of absence; they may not be known to police because they have been highly successful at criminal enterprise						
Total 'Yes' answers including those confirmed from sources other than the victim						

Is there any other relevant information (from victim or professional) which may increase risk levels? Consider victim's situation in relation to disability, substance misuse, mental health issues, cultural / language barriers, 'honour'- based systems, geographic isolation and minimisation, engagement with professionals	
Describe here if age, access to technology and/or pressure from within the family system may make it more difficult for the victim to seek and receive help	
Describe here if there are any concerns around the victims/survivors capacity to make decisions in order to understand abuse and or to keep themselves safe? Or are there any other factors relating to the victims disability that would put them at higher risk? NB: If the victim/survivor is vulnerable and you have concerns they are lacking capacity, a referral should be made to adult safeguarding.	
Describe here how systemic racism and/or discrimination have affected the client's experience of services, their readiness to engage with services in future and any heightened risks due to the client's experiences	
Consider perpetrator's occupation / interests. Could this give them unique access to weapons? Describe.	
What are the victim's greatest priorities to address their safety?	
Where this risk assessment has led to a 'score' of 14 or more or where, based on your professional judgement, you feel the case is 'high risk', you should refer the client to Hackney's Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC). Some behaviours which are particularly dangerous (e.g. rape, strangulation, stalking, threats to kill, 'Honour'-based violence) are deemed 'high risk'. Judgement on what is 'high risk' is informed by professional	Yes ☐ No ☐

experience alongside consideration of the victim/survivor's perception of risk. Do you believe this case should be referred to MARAC? If yes please complete a MARAC Referral Form and email it along with this Risk Assessment to marac@hackney.gov.uk / marac@hackney.gov.uk.cjsm.net If you are not making a referral to MARAC but you would like to refer the subject to Hackney's Domestic Abuse Intervention Service, send this risk assessment along with a referral to dais@hackney.gov.uk / dais@hackney.gov.uk.cjsm.net All referral forms can be found at https://hackney.gov.uk/domestic-abuse-support/#professionals			
Do you believe that there are safeguarding issues about children (including 16 / 17 year old victim/survivors)?		Yes ☐ No ☐	
If yes, have you made a referral to Hackney Children and Families Service? Please see here for referral form or email mash@hackney.gov.uk or call 020 8356 5500 for advice		Yes ☐ No ☐	
Do you believe that there are safeguarding issues about vulnerable adults?		Yes ☐ No ☐	
If yes, have you made a referral to Hackney's Safeguarding Adults Team? adultprotection@hackney.gov.uk / adultprotection@hackney.gov.uk.cjsm.net 020 8356 5782. Please see here for further information.		Yes ☐ No ☐	
Name of professional completing risk assessment		Date	
Email of professional completing risk assessment		Tel	
Organisation			
Victim's signature if possible			