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**How to….. support a member of staff experiencing domestic violence**

**Please be aware that there are members of the HR team who are trained in supporting staff experiencing domestic violence. Please contact your local HR Partner who can connect you to specifically trained individual if you require additional help and support.**

Domestic violence is defined as any incident of violence, abusive of threatening behaviour between adults who are, or have been, partners of family members. It includes psychological, emotional, physical and financial abuse. Domestic violence reduces an employee’s ability to work and has an economic and attendance impact on many survivors.

Managers have a crucial role to play in enabling staff to seek help, as well as maintain their role at the University. Where a manager becomes aware that a member of staff is experiencing domestic violence, they should:

* Provide support, whilst recognising the limitations of their role and the need for specialist advice and agencies. Signpost sources including the University counseling service.
* Protect confidentiality in all circumstances. If there is a potential risk that incidents could occur in the workplace, discuss what, if anything, colleagues may need to be told with the member of staff.
* Consider whether the member of staff requires any special leave under relevant policies – see for example the Special Leave policy.
* Enable the member of staff to remain at work and productive where the individual feels able to do so. Flexibility may be required, eg in relation to working hours or where work is carried out.
* Discuss with the member of staff if they have any special requirements in relation to their safety at work. Consider phone calls, visitors or office locations. A risk assessment may be required.
* Recognise that the member of staff may need flexibility of time off to attend appointments or even sickness absence.
* Record any incidents that happen in the workplace.
* Make it clear to the member of staff that the University will support them through this difficult time.

A safety plan may be required to support individuals during the workplace. Contact HR for more advice.

Some individuals may not wish to disclose that they are experiencing domestic violence. Be alert to possible signs and don’t be afraid to ask someone if they need any help. **Remember** – domestic violence can happen to anyone.