

Empowering Healthcare Support Workers: Training for Gender-Based Violence

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Introduction

Healthcare Support Workers (HCSWs) spend a significant portion of time with patients. While not required to perform routine enquiry into experience of Gender Based Violence (GBV), HCSWs receive voluntary disclosures of GBV.

To ensure that this workforce are equipped to respond appropriately to such voluntary disclosures, a programme of training was put in place which ran from September 2023 to March 2024.



Aim

Skilled Workforce, Patient needs recognised and met

The police recorded 61,934 incidents of domestic abuse in 2022-23, a decrease of 4% compared to the previous year. There were 114 incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police in Scotland per 10,000 population in 2022-23, however Glasgow City (141) and West Dunbartonshire (140) recorded levels above the national average.

Our HCSW workforce will be in contact with patients experiencing Domestic Abuse on a daily basis and need to be able to confidently and appropriately respond.

Method

ASC training course

Utilising a blended learning model, all participants were requested to first complete the NES Gender Based Violence e-Module on TURAS Learn. Subsequently, participants accessed in-person training provided by Medics Against Violence. The "Ask, Support, Care" (ASC) training course was created in 2015 in conjunction with the Scottish Violence Reduction Unit (SVRU). This package is not designed to create specialists but rather give a wide range of people the skills to signpost people towards expert help.

Training for Trainers

Additionally, a smaller cohort of educators and HCSWs completed the ASC Training for Trainers course to ensure sustainability of learning for the HCSW workforce.

This cohort of educators and HCSWs will be supported by Medics Against Violence in 2024 – 2025 with opportunities to shadow and co-deliver ASC training to gain confidence before delivering the training themselves to their colleagues.

Peer support sessions will also be scheduled to maintain a network of training staff and to maintain the quality of the training delivered.

Resources

Some of the innovative and discrete supports that patients can be signposted to include the mobile phone applications Hollie Guard and Bright Sky.



Results

At the time of writing, sixty six participants have attended training across nine training dates, with a mix of staff from Acute and Community settings, including General Practice and the NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde Care Home Collaborative. The training has evaluated overwhelmingly positively, with comments including:

"I'll feel comfortable supporting anyone who comes forward about experiencing domestic abuse"

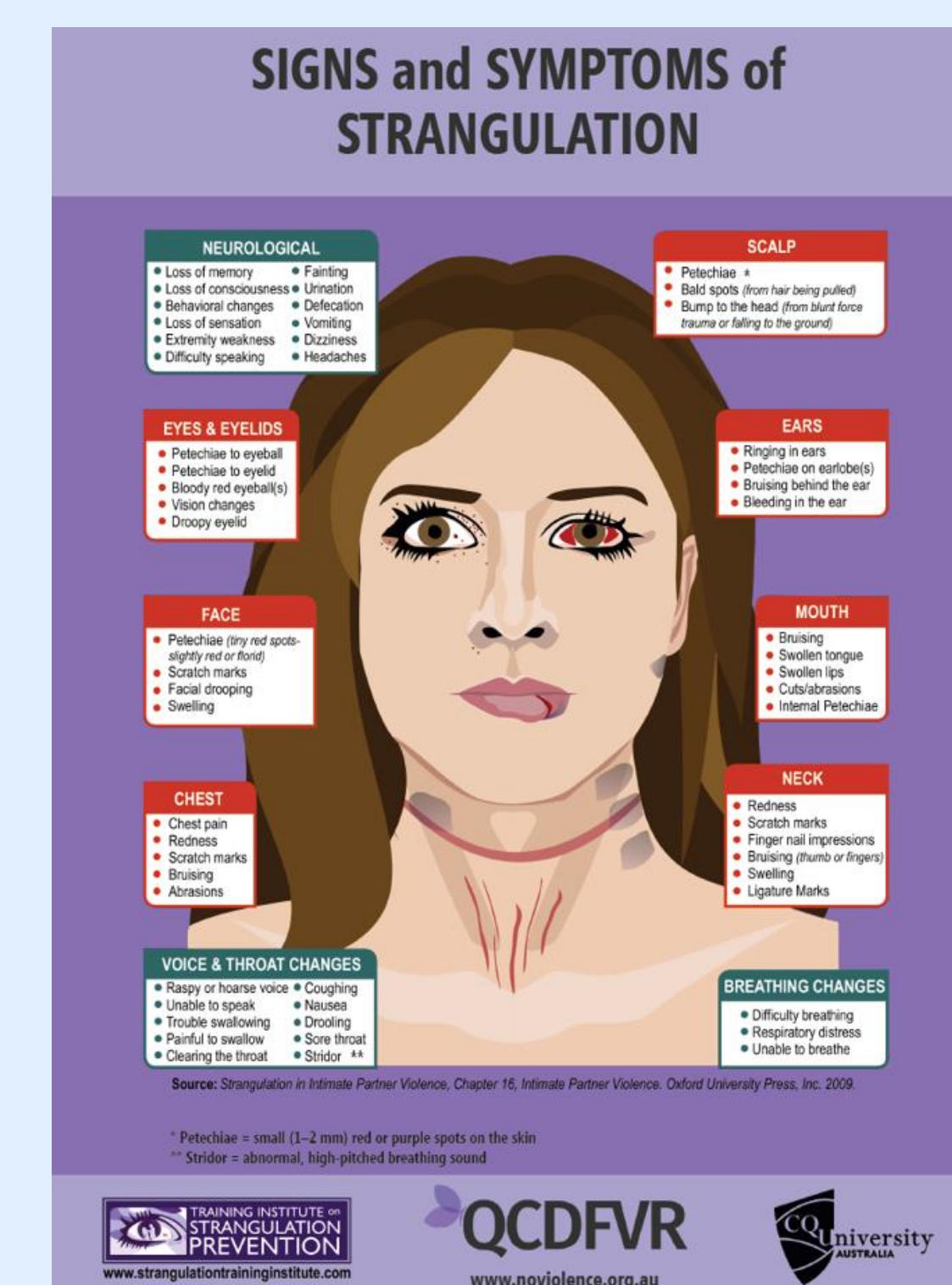
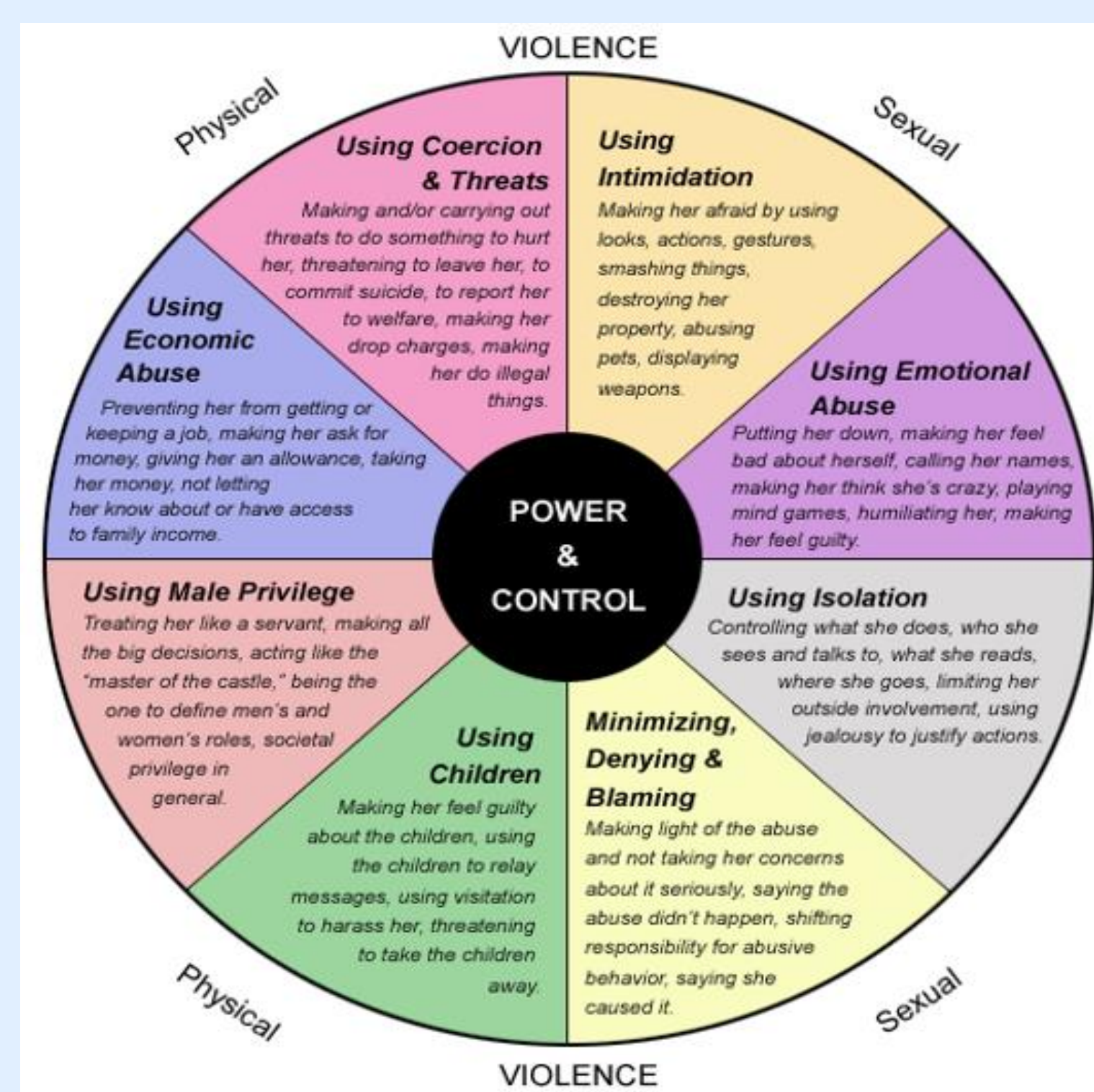
"I now know how to support individuals appropriately when they have disclosed information"

"More awareness of how to respond to a disclosure and awareness of what gender based violence is and the 'types.'"

A further six participants progressed to participate in the ASC Training for Trainers course to enable them to cascade the learning to their colleagues.

Progress and evaluation are reported to NHSGGC's HCSW Education & Development Group.

The training programme directly contributes to a more compassionate, skilled and sustainable workforce and results in better care for our patients.



Conclusion

This novel training opportunity has succeeded in providing topic-specific training to the HCSW workforce, raising awareness of the issue, building confidence in the workforce's ability to validate and appropriately signpost patients to sources of support, and ensure that the NHS responds to patient care and need to the highest standard.

Acknowledgements

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