

Module 3 Fact Sheet: Professional Boundaries

Module 3

Scope of practice

In working with women with disability experiencing DFV it is important to maintain professional boundaries. This fact sheet provides some tips to do so and where you can find further information to guide your work.

You most likely bring a high level of knowledge and skills to your work with people with disability. It is important however to be aware that as a non-specialist DFV worker there may be limitations to what you can do to support women experiencing DFV.

Some examples of what may limit your capacity to assist:

- Your job role and scope of responsibilities.
- Your own skills and knowledge about DFV.
- Your own experience of trauma or other experiences.
- Your existing workload.
- Your perceived or actual conflicts of interest.

Specialist skills and knowledge are required to undertake DFV risk assessments and safety planning with women experiencing DFV. It is important to refer to a DFV service or contact [1800RESPECT](#) for information and support. Organisations need to manage conflicts of interest such as in cases where they provide services to the person experiencing DFV and to the perpetrator of violence.

Organisational policies and procedures

Good organisational codes of conduct, policies and procedures will provide you with guidance about what to do if you recognise that women you are working with are experiencing DFV. Professional associations may also provide guidance to practitioners. These should provide clear steps for you to follow, and clarity and consistency for safeguarding the person you are supporting as well as maintaining your own safety.

For example, notifying your supervisor and completing an incident report if you suspect or witness domestic or family violence occurring. Providing this information to your supervisor will enable them to activate appropriate procedures about what to do and how to keep the victim and yourself safe in this instance.

Tips for maintaining professional boundaries

- Be clear about the scope of your role – you're not a specialist DFV worker but you can refer to a DFV specialist service.
- Discuss and report concerns about DFV with your supervisor or equivalent.
- Manage conflicts of interest.
- Be aware of your own safety as well as that of the person experiencing DFV.
- Be mindful of personal stress and impacts of the work.
- Ask for support if you need it.

[1800 Respect website](#) can provide support and debriefing

