



Legal Notice
Social Regulatory Standards

**DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES**

SCSA | SOCIAL
CARE
STANDARDS
AUTHORITY

**SOCIAL CARE STANDARDS AUTHORITY ACT
(CAP. 582)**

Social Regulatory Standards for Domestic Violence Community-Based Services, 2020

IN EXERCISE of the powers conferred by article 30(5) of the Social Care Standards Authority Act, the Minister for the Family, Children’s Rights and Social Solidarity, has made the following regulations: -

Citation.

1. The title of these regulations is the Social Regulatory Standards for Domestic Violence Community-Based Services, 2020.

Scope.

2. These regulations by means of the Schedule, elevate the Social Regulatory Standards for Domestic Violence Community-Based Services, to the status of subsidiary legislation under the Social Care Standards Authority Act (Cap. 582).

Interpretation.

3. In these regulations, unless the context otherwise requires:

“Authority” means the Social Care Standards Authority, as established by virtue of article 5 of the Social Care Standards Authority Act (Cap. 582);

“children” means persons under eighteen (18) years of age;

“community-based centre’ means a facility from where community-based services and support related to domestic violence shall be offered. Support shall be given from a number of staff members and volunteers who are competent and supervised to carry out their duties in a professional manner. They work collaboratively so that individuals make full use of available resources and opportunities to enhance their wellbeing, security and quality of life;

“community-based services” means a range of support services provided to individuals and families in the community who might be facing challenging situations of domestic violence and who might also be in crisis or risking a situation of crisis. These individuals may require generic and, or specialised support interventions from social care service providers;

“competent person” means a person who has the appropriate theoretical and, or practical knowledge and, or experience which render him capable and, or authorised to undertake specific activities, in line with national legislation, standards or directives issued by the applicable authorities;

“crisis intervention” means an immediate responsive action to a state of distress presented by an individual. Individuals get the support they need to revert back to their proper functioning by being

sensitively approached by a competent person who would identify a crisis, assess impacts of such crisis situation on the individuals involved and intervene using safe, effective and tested measures;

“dependant person” means a person who relies on any other person/s for support of any kind in case this person cannot carry out some things on his own. Dependant persons may be children, persons with disability, persons with mental health problems and elderly amongst others;

“domestic violence” shall have the same meaning assigned to it by article 2 of the Gender-Based Violence and Domestic Violence Act (Cap.581);

“helpline” means a free-of-charge support service delivered 24/7 through a telephone line that individuals can use to receive immediate assistance and advice for their requests pertaining to domestic violence. A chat-line is an alternative method of receiving support which involves sending an SMS or engage in an online chat which shall also be available 24/7;

“holistic assessment” means the process by which the staff identifies the needs and aspirations of individuals in relation to their health, personal, emotional, spiritual and psychological care, protection and social networking, family support and which services should be delivered to satisfy these needs and aspirations;

“independent representative” means a person who is independent from any aspect of the service and from any agency involved in the provision of service, working in the name of the person availing himself of the service or in his interest. The representative shall carry out such work after having been formally appointed to do so by the individual in whose name the said representative is acting or, as stipulated by law, such as in the case of guardianship;

“interdisciplinary team” means a team made up of a number of professionals from a range of disciplines working collaboratively to deliver comprehensive care that addresses the needs of individuals availing themselves of the service. The team works for a common purpose, shares common goals and responsibilities and mobilises resources to fulfil its role;

“key worker” means a worker responsible for co-ordinating the individuals’ action plan;

“management” means a person or persons who act on behalf of the service provider to provide leadership to the staff and to oversee and control the proper functioning of the services offered to the individuals;

“outreach services” means services which are developed with the aim of reaching out to citizens in a community to encourage them to identify their needs, potential and any limitations. Resources are provided for individuals to access services and available support networks. Outreach services are fundamental especially amongst marginalised groups, families and individuals in the community. Ultimately, the most appropriate support interventions are delivered through a number of generic and specialised services;

“performance indicator” means an active descriptor of what service providers need to do to ensure service outputs that support the quality indicators;

“personal support plan” means a document that is based on a holistic assessment of the individuals that specifies how the individuals’ needs and aspirations are going to be met. It also includes the resources required to fulfil such plan. If services are required by a family as a unit, in

case children are accompanying the individuals, the support plan will be compiled to reflect the situation and the exigencies of all individuals within the family;

“persons who experience domestic violence” means persons who have experienced or who are still experiencing domestic violence and who may potentially avail or who actually avail of community-based services to receive support and assistance to deal with issues related to domestic violence. These persons would either be still living with their perpetrators or else may have fled from their perpetrators and made contact with community services themselves or have been referred by respective agencies working in the field of domestic violence. Efforts shall be made so that persons who experience domestic violence are reached through accessible means whilst also ensuring that any information on services and support is made available in places where such persons are most likely to attend;

“policies and procedures” means documents released by management that regulate how the service shall operate;

“quality indicator” means a statement that sets out the requirements to achieve compliance with a standard;

“risk assessment” means the identification of potential or actual hazards that may cause harm to individuals and that may therefore interfere with their safety, security and overall wellbeing. The service provider shall examine the probability of the identified risks to occur, who would most likely be affected if such risks manifest themselves and what measures shall be taken to reduce the likelihood that the identified risks develop or if they actually develop what shall be done to reduce adverse impacts;

“service provider” means a person or an organisation that provides support through a range of services offered to individuals;

“specialised support services” means services that are usually required by individuals or groups who present complex needs and who might be at risk themselves or may be of risk to others. Specialised services are usually recommended when generic services or mainstream interventions prove insufficient to cater for the identified needs;

“staff” means a person engaged by the service provider wherein one of the person’s responsibilities is to provide individual and group support and care. Staff members may also assume administrative duties simultaneously with their caring roles. Staff members working in the administration of an organisation or a centre oversee the planning and implementation of organisational plans and actions and the enforcement of rules and procedures;

“volunteers” means persons who offer their help in a range of activities to support other people without getting remunerated financially for their work. Mutual benefits shall exist in the relationship between the volunteers and the organisation in which they are volunteering.

SCHEDULE (Regulation 2)

Standard 1: Effective and respectful intervention procedures

Standard Statement:

This standard promotes rights that ensure that service delivery shall be fair, transparent, accessible and comprehensive to be able to respond to evolving needs.

Quality Indicators:

1. The service provider shall safeguard the right of persons who experience domestic violence to access quality services in an easy and fair manner.
2. A helpline or chat-line service, if available shall be offered on a 24/7 basis, shall be free of charge and shall be delivered by competent staff.
3. The service provider shall ensure that service provision shall be delicately planned and implemented for the safety of the persons who experience domestic violence.

Standard 2: Individualized and Holistic Service Planning

Standard Statement:

This standard promotes rights that ensure that service provision shall be guaranteed by an agreement established between the persons who experience domestic violence and the service provider. The service provider shall also ensure that a person-centred support plan is devised upon a holistic assessment carried out for every individual requesting the service.

Quality Indicators:

1. The service provider and the persons who experience domestic violence who wish to avail of the service shall enter into a written agreement, which sets out the terms and conditions for receiving the service.
2. The persons who experience domestic violence shall be given support to identify and discuss aspects of their life they feel they need to be assisted in and staff shall provide the necessary support as part of a thorough planning process.

Standard 3: Rights, Self-Empowerment and Wellbeing

Standard Statement:

This standard promotes rights that ensure that the persons who experience domestic violence shall be guaranteed a holistic, respectful and dignified approach to care with the aim of safeguarding social justice and fundamental human rights whilst promoting wellbeing, autonomy and zero tolerance to violence of any kind.

Quality Indicators:

1. The service provider shall safeguard the right of the persons who experience domestic violence to lead the social, cultural and religious lifestyle they endorse in conformity with the rules of the service.
2. The service provider shall ensure that any information is delivered in a timely, complete, and suitable manner for the persons who experience domestic violence to understand without the need for them to feel obliged to give something in return for acquiring any information.
3. The persons who experience domestic violence shall be provided with the necessary support to exercise their right to lead a safe life without fear of aggression and behaviour that threatens their wellbeing whilst fulfilling their responsibilities to maintain a safe environment for themselves and those around them.
4. The service provider shall promote active participation of the persons who experience domestic violence and shall encourage them to exercise personal choices and to realise their full potential.
5. The service provider shall ensure that if services are offered to children these are consulted to ensure that the best support is delivered through services which are suitable and age-appropriate for them.

Standard 4: Safeguarding Safety and Security

Standard Statement:

This standard promotes rights that ensure that the service provider shall promote systems that guarantee the safety and security of the persons who experience domestic violence and the staff working with them, with the ultimate aim to enhance their experience and overall wellbeing.

Quality Indicators:

1. The environment from where services shall be delivered shall be welcoming, safe, accessible, and free from avoidable risks.

2. The service provider shall deal effectively and in a timely manner whenever the persons who experience domestic violence, or their representatives, express concern or submit a complaint.

Standard 5: Handling and Safekeeping of Data and Information Dissemination

Standard Statement:

This standard promotes rights that ensure that the service provider shall comply with data protection measures when it comes to using, processing, retaining, and disseminating confidential information pertaining to the persons who experience domestic violence.

Quality Indicators:

1. The service provider shall keep a record of important documentation and other relevant information relating to the persons who experience domestic violence in line with respective laws and regulations.
2. The service provider shall ensure appropriate safe keeping and sharing of information pertaining to the persons who experience domestic violence in line with respective laws and regulations.

Standard 6: Interagency Collaboration and External Relations

Standard Statement:

This standard promotes rights that ensure that the service provider shall identify and sustain relationships that are significant to the persons who experience domestic violence and that do not expose them to unnecessary risks. The service provider shall ensure collaboration with external entities so as to establish effective and cohesive partnerships to preserve the individuals' right of engagement to an integrated service system.

Quality Indicators:

1. The service provider shall communicate with significant persons close to the persons who experience domestic violence and retains such contact if this does not harm the same individuals.

2. The service provider shall develop and sustain relationships with external entities, professionals and other people so as to provide the most appropriate care using gender-sensitive means.

Standard 7: Service Quality Management

Standard Statement:

This standard promotes rights that ensure that the management and the staff shall be accountable to deliver quality support and care in the most respectful and transparent manner whilst themselves maintaining their wellbeing and enhancing their personal and professional development through support and guidance.

Quality Indicators:

1. The service provider shall ensure professional and ethical practice that is safe and appropriate to the emerging needs of the persons who experience domestic violence.
 2. The service provider shall implement transparent recruitment and selection strategies.
 3. The service provider shall plan for staff supervision, continuous training and development as well as improvement in service provision.
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