

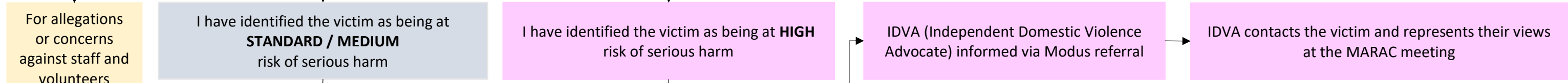
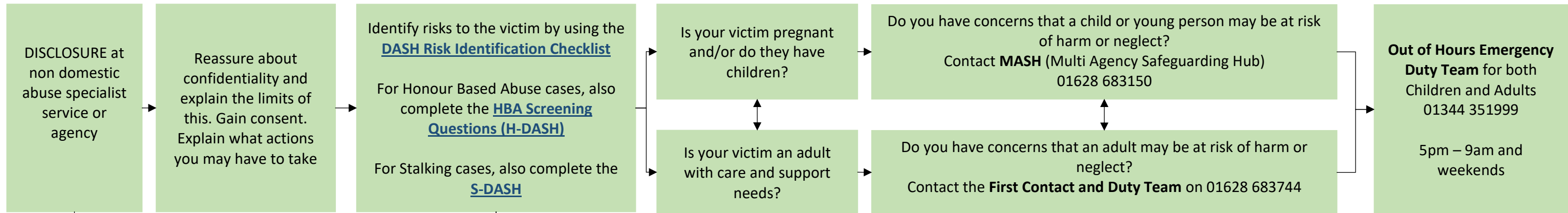
Domestic abuse is any single incident, course of conduct or pattern of abusive behaviour between individuals aged 16 or over who are personally connected to each other as a result of being, or having been, intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality. Children who see, hear or experience the effects of the abuse and are related to either of the parties are also considered victims of domestic abuse. Abuse includes physical or sexual abuse; violent or threatening behaviour; controlling or coercive behaviour; economic abuse; or psychological, emotional or other abuse.

If there is no disclosure but you suspect otherwise, periodically 'ask the question'

For So-Called Honour Based Abuse (HBA) or Forced Marriage (FM) cases, share information on a strictly needs to know basis. Take active steps to ensure records are kept secure, confidential and where possible, restricted. **Forced Marriage Multi Agency Guidance**

For Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and other harmful practice cases, refer to your local safeguarding procedures

**If there is any immediate danger call 999 immediately**



**I have identified the victim as being at STANDARD / MEDIUM risk of serious harm**

- Consider immediate and long term risks and needs
- Risk can fluctuate so regularly review risk levels and decision making
- Discuss basic safety planning with the victim
  - Ensure the victim knows where to go for help from specialist services
- Signpost / consent-based referral to The Dash (Domestic Abuse Stops Here) Charity 01753 549865 [Referrals@thedashcharity.org.uk](mailto:Referrals@thedashcharity.org.uk)
  - Signpost / referral to other services (see Cue Card / Services Map)
- For cases involving the most harmful and serial perpetrators, consider referral to MATAC (Multi Agency Tasking And Coordination) via [BerkshireEastLCUHRU@thamesvalley.police.uk](mailto:BerkshireEastLCUHRU@thamesvalley.police.uk)

**I have identified the victim as being at HIGH risk of serious harm**

Speak to your agency's Designated MARAC Officer (DMO) and complete MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) referral, with or without consent

If your agency does not have a DMO, contact the MARAC Administrator for your area via the Police non-emergency number **101**

*If there are children in the family, a referral must be made to Children's social care*

MARAC meeting takes place

Action plan agreed. Agencies flag and tag files

**IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Advocate) informed via Modus referral**

IDVA contacts the victim and represents their views at the MARAC meeting

**In all circumstances (adults and children)**

- Only ask questions about domestic abuse when the individual is on their own and in private
- Document any disclosure, or suspicion of domestic abuse, in professional records kept at your organisation (not in the victim's handheld records) and record what you are told in their own words
- Document decision making, actions taken to manage risk and rationale for sharing, or not sharing, information (with or without consent)
  - If you need to use interpreters, ensure they are professional. Never use family members, friends or children
- Consider risks associated with communication/correspondence e.g. the perpetrator finding letters/leaflets/text messages/phone call logs etc
- Consider referrals to support groups such as the Freedom Programme (through AfC or the Dash Charity)
- Consider support for children/young people e.g. SAFE!, or the Dash Charity Children & Young People Service
  - Consider referrals to perpetrator services e.g. Respect Phoneline (national)
- Consider making an application to the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (DVDS), also known as Clare's Law. Available for all genders

*For more information and resources, visit the RBWM [website](#)*