



# Psychological Violence Executive summary

# Executive summary

SafeLives has been funded by the Oak Foundation to undertake research on 'psychological violence' as part of their 'Issues Affecting Women' programme.

## **The aims of the research project are:**

- To establish a clear definition of psychological violence, providing a common language that can be used across sectors, across geographical boundaries and to support survivors in identifying domestic abuse.
- To amplify the voices of survivors who experience psychological violence.
- To understand European legislation addressing psychological violence and how this is being implemented.

## **Evidence was gathered through a mixed-methods approach involving:**

- A desk-based literature review
- Survey to survivors based in the UK who have experienced non-physical abuse
- Surveys to practitioners (who work directly with survivors) and partners (who work in the domestic violence sector but not directly with survivors) across Council of Europe Member States
- One-to one interviews and focus groups with survivors based in the UK

# Key findings

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## Defining and understanding ‘Psychological Violence’

**Across Europe, the term psychological violence is not consistently used or understood. There is a need for a universal term which incorporates a broader range of acts recognised by professionals and survivors**

The Istanbul Convention defines psychological violence as *‘seriously impairing a person’s psychological integrity through coercion or threats’* however, coercion or threats can be carried out in both physical and non-physical ways. The definition currently focuses on the psychological impact to the victim but does not clearly specify psychological violence as a distinctive form of abuse. Ambiguity in this definition, the key legislative tool in Europe for raising awareness and prosecuting acts of non-physical violence, impacts on professionals, across agencies, and survivors’ ability to recognise psychological violence when it occurs.

Uncertainty was seen in survey respondents. Many professionals associated the term ‘psychological violence’ with only psychological or emotional abuse (47% UK practitioners vs 50% non-UK European practitioners’ vs 44% European partners). However, for others the term suggested both physical and non-physical violence (33% UK practitioners vs 29% European partners vs 21% non-UK European practitioners). In the UK, the term caused confusion with both survivors and practitioners because of the connotation of the word ‘violence’ with physical incidents, considering it contradictory when used with the word ‘psychological’.

**“You didn’t feel like it was violent because the... for me, I didn’t have hands on me – I had no bruises, or whatever”**

Survivor

Comments from non-UK European practitioners who thought the term could mean, either or both non-physical and physical violence, explained this was due to feeling the two forms of violence are not mutually exclusive or, relating it to the impact on the victim.

Practitioners agreed that a universal term used and understood across professionals and the public would help identify psychological violence earlier (82% UK practitioners vs 78% non-UK European practitioners vs 76% European partners).

## **Psychological violence should not be advocated as an overarching term for non-physical violence. It should feature only cognitive and emotional elements of abuse**

Terms such as ‘psychological or emotional’ abuse have been used as overarching terms for non-physical violence and many respondents confirmed they use similar umbrella terms (56% UK practitioners vs 40% non-UK practitioners vs 41% European partners). However, more recently, research literature has illustrated the disadvantages to this showing that there is a need to understand, and give attention to, different forms of non-physical violence as distinctive aspects of abuse have different impacts on the victim, risk markers for physical violence and, long-term harm.

Professionals (44% UK practitioners vs 27% non-UK practitioners vs 38% European partners) who advocated for separate terms to be used confirmed the need to distinguish different forms of abuse, to clarify and validate the victim’s experience, and for a more complete risk assessment and support plan.

**“I think if we were to use this one term to describe all non-physical abuse it would be taking a huge step back...if someone is being subjected to sexually coercive behaviour, then that is what they are experiencing - it is not psychological violence. Why should we reduce this to one form of abuse, so that the perpetrator doesn’t look as bad? What about the victim’s voice?”**

UK Practitioner

Further, the expressions ‘psychological’ and ‘emotional’ have often been used interchangeably however there appears to be an important distinction; psychological is associated with a cognitive impact on the mind, weakening a person’s judgment and thinking whereas emotional is linked to emotions and feelings of self-worth and self-esteem.

Survivors also distinguished ‘psychological’ as playing with the mind and ‘emotional’ with feelings. Many used the word ‘mental’ or ‘mentally’ when describing their experiences. Other survivors associated the term with control, coercion, isolation, power and manipulation. In consultations, no survivors mentioned physical incidents when discussing the term. Survivors mentioned they considered this form of abuse as planned, intentional or thought through.

**“I would call it ‘psychological abuse’ but that... psychological... I wouldn’t have used that word. I used to call it ‘mental torture’...I never used the word ‘psychological’ until now. It was like ‘psychological terrorism’...it was just like someone infiltrating your brain, and I used to describe it as ‘he had my brain in his hands’, and he was like the ‘puppet master’”**

Survivor

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## Understanding the dynamics of psychological violence

Four key aspects were evidenced in what drives psychological violence. That it occurs commonly and, does not always need to involve physical violence to gain power over victims; it involves a pattern of psychological manipulation; and perpetrators employ a wide range of psychological tactics, often personalised to the victim, to maintain control.

### Psychological violence is commonplace and can occur in isolation of physical violence

91% of survivors had experienced a form of psychological violence at some point in their relationships. For nearly half (49%) this was regularly throughout. 42% of survivors had *never* been physically assaulted causing bruising or cuts and 76% had *never* been physically assaulted causing broken bones or serious injury. When survivors recorded acts of physical violence, they were more likely to be one-off incidents or used at a crisis point/ending the relationship than psychological violence.

**“When I did [Freedom Programme] there was quite a lot of us...only a few of us had ever had a hand laid on us, and that’s because some women they ground down and never had to, and then some of us were a bit sparky and he had to resort to those measures to try and get me back down again”**

Survivor

Practitioners also confirmed the regularity of psychological violence. Nearly three-quarters (71%) of practitioners said psychological violence was ‘always or often’ reported to them by victims when discussing domestic violence and over two-thirds (68%) reported ‘very often or often’ supporting victims who have only experienced psychological violence.

### Psychological violence has a pattern of abuse involving a phase of ‘grooming’ with returns to periods of affection

Psychological violence involves a pattern of psychological manipulation. This includes an initial stage often involving constant communication and compliments designed to lure the victim into the relationship (‘love bombing’) and intermittent revivals of attention, affection and hope used to keep them in the relationship (‘dosing’). This slowly desensitises the victim’s natural reaction to abusive behaviours, with the abuse becoming normal. At the beginning of their relationships, 96% of survivors said their partner was charming and affectionate, 93% said they expressed love for them very quickly and 92% wanted to spend a lot of time together.

Identification is hindered by controlling behaviours being obscured by accepted gendered ideas of protection, romance and love. Survivors reflected on a 'change of character' in the abuser including unreasonable jealousy, gendered put-downs, and restrictions of personal space often carried out under the façade of loving and caring. Many practitioners and European partners agreed (92% vs 91%) that initially, certain aspects of psychological violence can be misidentified as part of romantic love.

Following an abusive incident or trying to end the relationship survivors noted experiences of 'dosing or hoovering'. 80% of survivors said their partner promised to change, saying they recognised their issues; 85% said they loved them, missed them, couldn't live without them; 90% said their partner communicated with them as if nothing had happened. Nearly half (49%) of survivors experienced severe psychological manipulation with a partner threatening to take their own life following an abusive incident, or them trying to end the relationship. Many practitioners and European partners also agreed (90% vs 94%) that psychological violence is usually interspersed with warmth and kindness to create emotional confusion.

**“People who abuse in this way are clever in their manipulation and the drawing you back in with good and kind behaviour before striking again with threats, control and manipulation [which] leaves you on a constant cycle that seems impossible to escape”**

Survivor

## **Perpetrators use a wide range of psychological tactics to maintain control**

Perpetrators use a wide range of hidden tactics to brainwash a victim and cause psychological confusion, often resulting in victims trying harder to please. They frequently shift blame to the victim, present insults as a joke, gaslight, and present different versions of events. Nearly two-thirds of survivors (65%) said they were regularly given the silent treatment or had their feelings discounted. Over half (53%) regularly experienced control in who they could speak to, meet socially or spend time with. Nearly half (48%) regularly experienced suggestions they were mentally unstable, given mixed messages, made to doubt their own thinking or their partners denied a previous message; and 45% regularly endured verbal insults, humiliations, criticisms or putdowns.

**“He made me feel like I was crazy. I apologised for things I hadn't even done just to try and keep the peace. I always felt guilty for everything and nothing at the same time. I was emotionally exhausted; I would cry all the time”**

Survivor

Survivors highlighted how perpetrators behave differently in public to private and, 'recruit allies' sometimes by using their status or social standing. Perpetrators also take advantage of survivors' vulnerabilities. Survivors with mental health illnesses noted how they were threatened with being sectioned. BME survivors highlighted how issues of citizenship can be used against individuals and children with precarious immigration status, so they remain dependent upon their abuser. Survivors also spoke about the use of technology as a tool of abuse. Most practitioners and European partners agreed that technology is frequently used

to threaten and control victims (93% and 94%) and nearly two-thirds (62%) of survivors reported that, at some point in their relationship, their partners had used technology (e.g. social media, tracking devices) to abuse, harass or stalk them.

**“I suffered with serious mental health difficulties previously and he played on this, I honestly feel I would have made an attempt to end my own life or ended up being sectioned had I not fled”**

Survivor

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## The impact of psychological violence on survivors and their families

The clear outcome around the consequences of psychological violence was its gravity. It results in, seriously harmful and often long-term psychological and/or physical impacts affecting numerous areas of a victim’s life, including their children.

### Psychological violence is as harmful to victims as physical violence

Studies have consistently shown that psychological violence can have considerable detrimental and long-term effects on mental and physical health. Victims of psychological violence make up a disproportionate population of psychiatric patients; with links to suicide ideation and suicide attempts.

Survivors described psychological violence as “*the worst abuse*” often explaining that they would rather have been physically hit than endure the psychological cruelty they experienced. Many reported feeling their self-esteem or self-worth was low (90%); feeling confused, anxious or under pressure (88%); feeling exhausted, worn down, lack of motivation (88%); feeling emotionally withdrawn or shut down (88%) and feeling lonely and isolated (84%). 47% of survivors reported having suicidal thoughts. Survivors described additional ongoing impacts including issues with confidence, trust, relationships, finances and employment problems.

**“This is the form of abuse that still haunts me to this day, almost twenty years later. It has impacted my long-term mental health, ability to trust people and have healthy relationships. I was a teenager then and my experience of being gaslighted, manipulated, controlled and emotionally beaten down destroyed me”**

Survivor

Practitioners and European partners agreed that psychological violence can be as, or more harmful to the victim than physical violence (88% vs 97%) highlighting how victims can still be at high risk of homicide even when there are no incidents of physical violence. Practitioners described severe and devastating impacts on victims mental and emotional health including high levels of anxiety and depression, PTSD, suicidal ideation, suicide attempts including overdoses, self-harm, diminished self-esteem/self-worth, low confidence, and an eroded sense of self; explaining how these effects are long-term and impact on the person’s ability to parent, work, socialise and ability to generally function day-to-day.

## Psychological violence confuses the victim making it difficult to recognise as abuse

The dynamics of psychological violence produces extreme psychological confusion. Practitioners note that as the abuse isn't obvious and is often tied up in romance, it produces an acceptance and "*these entrenched experiences become highly normalised*". Practitioners described how survivors have difficulty letting go of the relationship due to the dependency the abuser has created. Survivors experience disbelief, doubting themselves and seek to excuse the behaviours, often grieving for the loss of their partner. Practitioners highlighted how clients don't consider what they were subjected to, as abuse, and do not identify as a victim, feeling their experiences are not as valid as those who experience physical violence.

Many survivors confirmed they did not realise what they experienced was abuse until they had left the relationship. Survivors highlighted the difficulty of identifying what was happening to them, knowing something wasn't right but constantly questioning themselves. Many described the 'frog in water' scenario due to the subtle and creeping nature of the abuse.

**"I am a strong woman...I always thought I would leave a man who treated me badly. But it creeps up on you. They are very clever and manipulative"**

Survivor

## Children are hidden victims of psychological violence. Perpetrators often use contact with children as a means to continue control

Psychological violence can impact children even before they are born. Studies show its association with pregnancy complications, low birth-weight babies and pre-term birth. There is evidence that growing up in a home with psychological violence has a longer-term impact on children's wellbeing than growing up with physical violence. Many children living with psychological violence are often used as 'tools of abuse' with the perpetrator undermining the victim's child and parent relationship.

85% of survivors said the perpetrator of abuse used the children to threaten and control them. 72% of survivors said the perpetrator attempted to turn their children against them. Many survivors feared their children would normalise and replicate the behaviour they had seen as adults. Practitioners and survivors highlighted the serious impacts of being raised in an environment where there is psychological violence, with effects being seen even at a young age.

**"So, one of my children took much longer to speak...she learnt not to rock the boat...the other child developed in a different way...a more nervous child –harder to sleep, harder to be alone...even though we are talking about very young children – so, when people say 'Oh, the child is too young, there was no damage done because they were too young' that is a lie"**

Survivor



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## How we can support people experiencing psychological violence

Key to supporting people experiencing psychological violence is raising awareness so this form of abuse is widely recognised both professionally and publicly. When victims and their families have experienced psychological violence there needs to be a specialist and comprehensive response to ensure full recovery.

### **A wide range of professionals' need training around psychological violence to avoid missing opportunities to identify and support victims**

Practitioners felt psychological violence is not considered as seriously by wider professionals as physical violence. 91% of practitioners and 100% of European partners agreed that mandatory training for police and legal professionals and training for wider agencies would help identify psychological violence earlier. Non-UK respondents stressed the lack of understanding of psychological violence, between intimate partners, in officials in their countries resulting in victim blaming and an insensitive to response to survivors.

Nearly a third (31%) of survivors did not access any service for support around psychological violence. Survivors told us the fear of not being understood, consequences, and shame stopped them from approaching services. The training of health professionals around psychological violence is also crucial. 30% of survivors accessed their GP, and others looked to health visitors or midwives for support. Some survivors visited GPs with emotional or physical complaints not realising they were manifesting due to domestic violence indicating the importance of professionals to investigate unexplained symptoms. Practitioners noted how earlier recognition from health authorities could bring cost savings due to the reduction of medications administered from a misinterpretation of symptoms.

### **There is a need for improved access to long-term, specialist therapeutic services to support victims and their children's recovery**

Practitioners highlighted a need for specialist support that is accessible to all and delivered by professionals who understand the dynamics of domestic violence and risk. Practitioners drew attention to the current waiting lists for therapeutic support and mental health services highlighting the failure of providing immediate support increases the possibility of victims returning to the relationship. They also noted support needed to be long-term and thorough for victims to make a full recovery.

Some survivors noted they accessed counselling for themselves in a private capacity and others highlighted the need, and difficulty, of accessing specialist therapeutic support for their children who were also victims of the abuse.

**“Apart from Action for Children, which is only a six-week thing, there was no... access. It took me 3 years to get into CAMHS to see a therapist for my younger son. We went in there; the therapist in there said – which is the worst thing you can say to an abused child – ‘Is it because you think you’re like your Dad?’”**

Survivor

## **The public profile of psychological violence needs to be raised to increase its recognition as a form of domestic violence**

Survivors and practitioners felt public awareness campaigns focus too much on physical violence. Many believed that psychological violence is largely un-reported as victims do not recognise it as abuse. Survivors suggested wider media and local advertising, focusing on psychological aspects of abuse, to help victims identify earlier. Some stressed the importance of publicly revealing the seriousness of psychological violence, including uncovering its link to suicides. Survivors felt messaging should not only be directed at victims, but also to abusers asking “do you do this?” to alert them to unreasonable relationship behaviours.

Practitioners agreed that better public awareness of the covert psychological tactics of an abuser (92%), the pattern of a psychologically violent relationship (92%) and the dynamics of psychological violence (91%) would help earlier identification.

**“I have seen many women with devastating effects from suffering this level of abuse, it has taken a long time for them or someone else to recognise that this is abuse. Too often I hear from women that “he doesn’t hit me” so therefore I am not being abused in any way”**

Practitioner

## **There is a need for societal change to challenge the normalisation of psychological violence**

Linked to the demand for training and awareness was the need to challenge the normalisation of psychological violence, both publicly and professionally. European partners noted in some countries a conservative gender biased culture in professionals naturalises psychologically abusive behaviour when the perpetrator is male.

Survivors highlighted the need for a change in cultural patterns of behaviour to break down gender stereotypes and accepted gender behaviours. BME survivors underlined the commonality and acceptance of this form of abuse in their communities, meaning families reinforce and prolong the mistreatment.

**“When people discuss how their partner has been behaving towards them, due to a lack of awareness, it is more likely to be brushed off as “normal” or “not a big deal” rather than realising the seriousness”**

Practitioner

Practitioners and survivors thought, to make change and prevent future abuse, the emphasis must be on educating children and young people around acceptable relationship behaviours to de-normalise controlling behaviours currently often accepted as 'loving and caring'. 93% of practitioners agreed that healthy relationships education in schools and children's services would help earlier identification of abusive behaviours and make longer term societal changes. Both also spoke of a need to focus on boys and men to challenge their negative views of relationships and females.

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## Improving legislation to protect people experiencing psychological violence

For legislation to fully protect people experiencing psychological violence across Europe, firstly, laws need to be coordinated. Further, laws must recognise domestic violence as a 'course of behaviour' that can extend over time and can include various forms of violence, not only physical, to give adequate protection to people experiencing psychological violence. However, any legislation must be combined with specialist, mandatory training of criminal justice professionals to give authorities a comprehensive understanding of this complex form of abuse and, consequently the ability to use regulations.

### Legislation around psychological violence needs to be regulated across Europe

There is a need to coordinate legal definitions across Europe. Most Member States have legislation and policy about psychological violence, but it is not necessarily gender-specific or reflective of the individual acts that make up non-physical forms of violence. Laws relating to psychological violence are often not matched with a criminal offence meaning there are few mechanisms for prosecution and fewer opportunities for victims to access legal support. Legislation also continues to prioritise physical forms of violence. There is also a lack of robust and routinely collected data around psychological violence which makes monitoring the effective implementation of law and policy across Europe problematic.

### The lack of understanding across professionals means any relevant legislation is failing to protect victims and their families

Even in countries where relevant legislation is in place, the response to victims is inconsistent due to a lack of professional understanding of psychological violence. Over half (54%) of practitioners who have related legislation in their countries did not think it made a difference in protecting victims of psychological violence. Practitioners and European partners reinforced the view that this was mainly due to a lack of training and recognition in professionals, resulting in relevant laws not being used and a lack of convictions.

**“Legislation only has a real impact if it is properly implemented. This involves many issues from training of police agents to disseminating information and offering appropriate answers to tackle the needs of victims”**

European partner, Portugal

European respondents also drew attention to the lack of education and gender biased attitudes in the police and judiciary in their countries which result in victim blaming and psychologically abusive behaviours being normalised.

**“Italy is a very traditional country, and the legislation is not followed enough”**

European partner, Italy

Survivors highlighted the negative impact of professional inexperience on themselves and their children with abuse, control and manipulation continuing throughout judicial proceedings. Nearly three-quarters (73%) of survivors said perpetrators used child contact to continue the abuse. Survivors felt professionals and services allowed abuse to continue, often being manipulated by the perpetrators themselves.

**“Despite very obvious emotional and financial abuse, the family court system did nothing to acknowledge or prevent the abusive behaviour that was right under their noses. There is no punishment for abuse, perjury or contempt and very little regard for the welfare of children”**

Survivor

## **The burden of proof is being put onto survivors to evidence psychological violence**

Many practitioners did not feel legislation was helping to protect victims as the burden on proof is being put onto them to evidence the abuse at a time when *“victims of psychological violence have such low self-esteem they do not feel they are worth social justice”*. They fear they would not be believed, and they are fearful of the perpetrator finding out. Survivors told us that, they themselves doubt, if what they are experiencing is abuse when there have been no physical incidents, and that proving the abuse is extremely difficult without physical evidence.

**“There’s no definitive line that gets crossed, no physical damage to prove to oneself or others. Even two years out of the relationship, I still sometimes doubt what happened to me, and question the severity of it, even though I became suicidal and there were death threats. Many, many times I wished he would hit me, so that I could know for sure it really was abuse, so there would be proof, so that I had a clear reason to leave the marriage, and a clear reason to justify and explain it to others. He was so charming, no-one would ever believe me otherwise”**

Survivor

## **Legislation around psychological violence is considered key to give the societal message that it is a crime**

Despite problems with relevant legislation, many practitioners and European partners stressed the need for laws aimed at psychological violence. They noted how it has raised its profile and, validates the victim’s experience, giving the message that it is a crime not to be tolerated. Many UK practitioners noted the Serious Crime Act 2015 around coercive and controlling behaviour is a step in the

right direction with some practitioners seeing an increase in prosecutions. Others noted how legislation recognising psychological violence aids in protecting the victim and enables legal orders to be obtained.

**“Without legislation, the perpetrators of psychological violence are not held responsible for their actions. Perpetrators know this! Without this legislation we uphold the common myth that ‘if there is no physical violence’ then it isn’t abuse”**

European partner, Ireland

# Recommendations

## Recommendations for the Oak Foundation

1. As the term 'psychological violence' is set in the Istanbul Convention, we recommend working with the Council of Europe to promote the use of a well-defined and standardised definition associated with the term, to assist with earlier recognition, until further investigation can be carried out across Europe. We advocate the following description, which incorporates words used and recognised by survivors in the project acknowledging, in some countries (e.g. UK), the word 'abuse' should replace 'violence' to avoid theoretical confusion:

**Psychological Violence (Abuse) involves the regular and deliberate use of:**

***“A range of words and non-physical actions used with the purpose to manipulate, hurt, weaken or frighten a person mentally and emotionally; and/or distort, confuse or influence a person’s thoughts and actions within their everyday lives, changing their sense of self and harming their wellbeing”***

2. Commission research into the understanding of the term 'psychological violence' across a wider European context.
3. Develop a toolkit around psychological violence that can be circulated to professionals across wider agencies in several key languages.
4. Create promotional materials for distribution exposing the dynamics of psychological violence – with a focus on the abuser, as well as the victim. Enlighten people to the risks – e.g. its relation to suicide and self-harm; its impact on pregnant women; its impact on children.
5. Use the Oak Foundation’s social media outlets to disseminate key statistics and information provided from the report to generate discussion and distribute knowledge.
6. Work with partners to ensure any training platforms, such as the Council of Europe’s online course for legal professionals, includes information on psychological violence.
7. Commission the development of a practice assessment tool that identifies and assesses the risk of psychological violence and provides guidance on responding to victims and perpetrators of this form of abuse.

8. Commission research into the emotional and cognitive elements of psychological violence to gain understanding of these factors on prevalence, relationship to gender, levels of risk, and impact to the victim.
9. Commission research on the profile of perpetrators who commit this form of abuse to understand, prevent and improve the response to psychological violence, breaking the cycle for future generations.
10. Commission research considering the dynamics of psychological violence within different groups and explore how intersectionality shapes people's experiences of this form of abuse and access to resources.
11. Commission follow-up research to gain a richer understanding of laws specifically around psychological violence, and to what extent they are being used across Europe.
12. Advocate for more complete and comparable data, at national and European levels, on psychological violence, to evidence the scale of the abuse and ensure policy decisions accurately reflect victims' experiences and needs.

## **Recommendations for the European Commission**

1. Ensure Member States across Europe have specific legislation to address psychological violence within intimate partner relationships and a coordinated criminal offence.
2. Ensure legislation is supported with mandatory training of police and wider criminal justice professionals on psychological violence to provide knowledge and understanding to utilise the regulation.
3. Set up a robust standardised framework across Member States for the monitoring of prosecutions and convictions for psychological violence to assess implementation and survivors' experiences of prosecution.
4. Deliver national educational programmes to children and young people on healthy intimate relationships and how to recognise psychologically abusive behaviours.

## **Recommendations for local Commissioners**

1. Sponsor public awareness raising campaigns which draw attention to the dynamics and risks of psychological violence; and challenge the normalisation of psychologically abusive behaviours with a focus on those who perpetrate the abuse e.g. instead of questioning "do you experience this?" ask "do you do this?".

2. Guarantee funding for local specialist, long-term therapeutic support for victims and children of psychological violence.
3. Allocate funding to those who work with vulnerable boys and young males (e.g. social workers, youth projects, juvenile probation) to provide a coordinated response to educate and support them to conduct healthy relationship behaviours.

## **Recommendations for domestic violence services and other specialist services**

1. Display promotional material in services on psychological violence with information on where to get advice and support.
2. Develop forums in domestic violence services for survivors to offer peer-to-peer support and use their voices to influence national action plans, and local strategies to target community-wide awareness raising around psychological violence.
3. Develop materials around how technology is used to control and manipulate, to raise awareness. Provide information on how to stay safe online and advice in how to deal with online abuse.
4. Specialist services should work together to offer mutual development opportunities such as arranging reciprocal training and awareness raising.
5. Health professionals should seek training on psychological violence in intimate relationships and practice professional curiosity, so they 'ask the question' in a respectful way with patients that have unexplained psychological or physical symptoms.
6. Specialist services working with young people should offer educational workshops to challenge the normalisation of psychologically abusive behaviours in relationships; working particularly with young people who harm at the earliest opportunity.
7. Ensure data collection gathers the different forms of non-physical violence separately so the prevalence of psychological violence can be evidenced.



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