



PSYCHOSOCIAL INTERVENTION TOOL

**for use with victims of domestic violence
living in a context of vulnerability**

Centre de recherche appliquée en intervention psychosociale

Centre intégré universitaire de santé et de
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Definition
DV	Domestic violence
VDV	Victim of domestic violence
VP	Violent partner or ex-partner

INTRODUCTION

Context

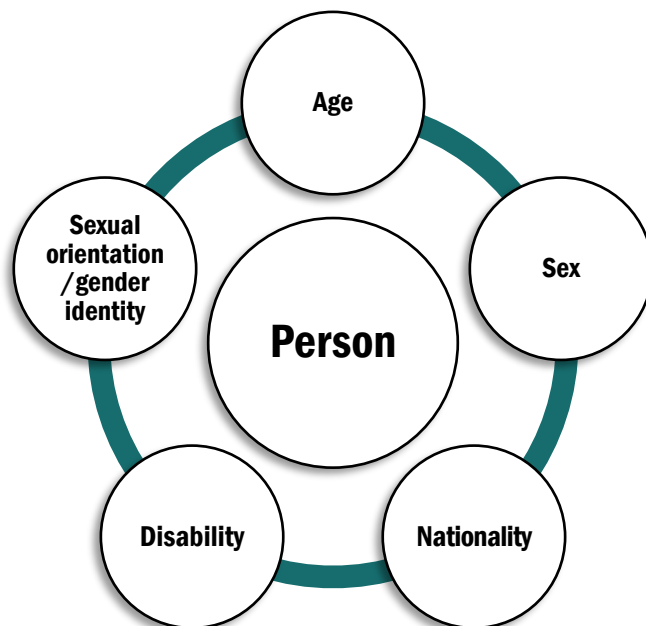
This tool aims to support psychosocial intervention in domestic violence with victims living in a context of vulnerability. According to the Government of Quebec (2012), this may include the elderly, LGBTQ people, immigrants, people with a physical limitation, and male. These people would have more difficulty accessing resources and they would be associated with specific risk factors and forms of violence (Brownridge, 2009; Institut national de santé publique du Québec [INSPQ], 2019; Sasseville, Montminy, Maurice et Hassan, 2016).

During your intervention, you will need to take into consideration the person's age, culture, sexual orientation, gender and limitations of the person, in order to adapt the service you offer, for each of the strategies presented in the tool. It should be noted that a person may identify with more than one context, which make them even more vulnerable to domestic violence (DV).

Intervention strategies

1. **Identify** people who are victims of domestic violence: Identify and document the signs that lead you to believe that the person is experiencing or is at risk of experiencing a situation of DV.
2. **Verify** the presence of domestic violence: Validate your clinical impressions with the person concerned and determine whether a child is exposed to violence being experienced by one or both parents.
3. **Analyze** the situation of violence: Explore the DV situation in order to prevent risks to the safety of the victim of violence.
4. **Inform** about rights and recourses options: Provide useful and relevant information to enable the person to make free and informed decisions.
5. **Establish** protective measures: Working with the person experiencing DV, create a plan to ensure their safety in the event that a violent situation arises.
6. **Direct and refer**: Actively direct the victim of violence to services adapted to their needs.

INTERSECTIONALITY MODEL



WHAT IS DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

DEFINITION

According to the Government of Quebec (2012), “domestic violence is characterized by **a series of repetitive acts**, which generally occur on **an escalating curve** [...] Domestic violence includes **psychological, verbal, physical and sexual abuse as well as acts of economic dominance**. It does not come about as a result of a loss of control, but rather is a means chosen to dominate the other person and assert power over them. Domestic violence can be experienced in **marital, extramarital or romantic relationships, at all ages** [free translation] (Government of Quebec, 2012, p. 1).”

FORMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

(Boudreau, Poupart, Leroux et Gaudreault, 2018; Drouin et Trépanier, 2018; INSPQ, 2020a; Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux [MSSS], 2019)

- **Psychological:** Consists of demeaning another person by undermining their self-esteem, creating doubt in the victim's mind as to whether they are responsible for the violence suffered. It is the most common form of domestic violence, the most subtle and the most difficult to detect (e.g., imposed isolation, making disparaging remarks about them, blackmail, contempt and intimidation, ignoring the other person, jealousy, threatening to harm the person, controlling the person's connections with their social environment, etc.).
- **Verbal:** Usually occurs in connection with psychological abuse and can generate a feeling of fear and insecurity in the victim (e.g. intimidation, humiliation or control through insults, degrading words, threats, etc.).
- **Physical:** An assault on the other's physical integrity, often disguised as an accident. It is the most visible, most well-known and most publicized form of violence (e.g., shoving, injuries including bites, burns and blows, up to and including homicide).
- **Sexual:** A violation of sexual integrity that may lead the victim to consent to sexual relations to maintain peace and avoid violence. It is the most taboo and hidden form (e.g., non-consensual touching, denigration of performance, control of sexual relations, sexual harassment, imposition of humiliating acts, sexual assault including rape, imposition of unwanted sexual practices, etc.).
- **Economic:** Depriving the person of or controlling their financial and material resources, resulting in financial dependence (e.g., controlling or imposing financial expenditures, leaving the person to assume financial responsibilities alone and blaming them for shortfalls).

Threats, physical violence, criminal negligence, sexual violence, criminal harassment, kidnapping, and false imprisonment are criminal acts (Government of Quebec, 2012).

What forms of domestic violence are likely to occur in different contexts of vulnerability?

(Association des CLSC et des CHSLD du Québec, 2000; Brunelle, 2019; Martin-Storey, 2015; Montminy et Drouin, 2009; Office des personnes handicapées du Québec, 2010; Sasseville et al., 2016; Savard-Payeur, 2018; Table de concertation en violence conjugale de Montréal and Secrétariat à la condition féminine, 2012a; Trépanier et Drouin, 2018)

Elderly

- Imposing or failing to provide medication.
- Limiting contact with friends and relatives.
- Obliging to cover the financial expenses of the household.
- Imposing non-consensual sexual practices.

People with a physical limitation

- Imposing or failing to provide medication.
- Failing to provide personal or medical care.
- Limiting contact with friends and relatives.
- Imposing restraints.
- Controlling basic needs (e.g., refusal to feed).

Immigrants

- Controlling religious practices.
- Denigrating beliefs.
- Threatening deportation.
- Threatening to lose custody of children or preventing contact with them.
- Confiscating identity documents (e.g. passport, visa).

LGBTQ people

- Threatening to disclose sexual orientation or gender identity to relatives.
- Threatening to disclose HIV status.
- Intentionally using the person's previous name.
- Preventing the person from taking hormone blockers.
- Imposing non-consensual sexual practices.

Male victims

- Threatening to take away custody of children or prevent contact with them.
- Threatening to commit suicide if the person who is the victim of domestic violence (VDV) leaves the relationship.
- Threatening that the man will be reported as the abuser to authorities (e.g., DYP, workplace).

1. HOW TO IDENTIFY A VICTIM OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

Identifying a victim of domestic violence, this is:

(Delem, Delisle, Paquin and Verret, 2008; Trépanier et Drouin, 2018)

Identifying and documenting the signs that have you think that the person is experiencing or is at risk of experiencing domestic violence. This allows you to:

- **Detect** the physical and psychological signs that may indicate a DV situation.
- **Recognize** factors that make the person more vulnerable to DV (e.g., age, income, previous victimization, etc.)

Keep in mind

(Delem et al., 2008; Rinfret-Raynor et Turgeon, 1999)

- **Ask yourself the question:** Is the person experiencing domestic violence from their current partner¹ or from their former partner or is at-risk of being victim of domestic violence?
- **Identify** signs and vulnerability factors that may indicate a situation of DV.
- **Document** signs and factors of DV in confidential records as a way of remaining vigilant to the situation of the VDV.

Additional tool for the intervention

Provincial web-based training on domestic violence: <https://fcp.rtss.qc.ca/ena-login/index.html>

Examples of signs that may be observed in people experiencing domestic violence

(Boudreau et al., 2018; Rinfret-Raynor et Turgeon, 1999; Trépanier et Drouin, 2018)

- Injuries (e.g., bruises, cuts, fractures); if so, do the explanations offered make sense to you?
- Physical symptoms (e.g., sleep problems, loss of appetite, headaches).
- Psychological symptoms (e.g., stress, anxiety, nervousness, confusion, panic attacks, low self-esteem, suicidal ideation or attempts, exhaustion, sad or depressed mood, feelings of shame or guilt).
- Symptoms related to post-traumatic stress disorder (e.g., hypervigilance, nightmares, fears).
- Use of drugs, medication or alcohol.
- Social difficulties (e.g., isolation, rejection, absenteeism, loss of social contacts).
- Family difficulties (e.g., repeated marital conflicts, break-up or separation, child reported to the DYP, learning or behavioural difficulties in children).
- Economic hardship (e.g., financial losses, hardship, or undue financial restrictions).
- Other behaviours or attitudes (e.g., fear of violent partner, difficulty asserting oneself or making decisions, avoidance of eye contact, difficulty managing emotions, tolerance of violence).

¹ The word “partner” should be used rather than spouse, girlfriend/boyfriend in order to encourage a more inclusive approach and avoid a presumption of heterosexuality.

1.1. What factors/contexts can make a person more vulnerable to domestic violence?

(Association des CLSC et des CHSLD du Québec, 2000; Gouvernement du Québec, 2016; Martin-Storey, 2015; MSSS, 2019; Sasseville et al., 2016; Savard-Payeur, 2018; Table de concertation en violence conjugale de Montréal et Secrétariat à la condition féminine, 2012a; Trépanier et Drouin, 2018)

Elderly

- Being female.
- Change in social roles (children leaving home, retirement, becoming a caregiver for a partner).
- Constant presence of a retired partner.
- Physical health issue requiring the partner to care for the VDV, functional limitation, cognitive decline, or the presence of a mental health disorder.
- Values or beliefs that normalize gender power differentials or subordination, or that trivialize DV.
- Geographic isolation (rural area) and social isolation.
- History of childhood victimization, abuse or violence.

People with a functional limitation

- Being female.
- Dependence on the VP for care (e.g., personal care) or for the use of a technical aid (e.g., guide dog, hearing aid, adapted vehicle).
- Physical health problem.
- Precarious financial situation or unemployed.
- Values or beliefs that normalize gender power differentials or subordination, or that trivialize DV.
- Social isolation.
- History of childhood victimization, abuse or violence.

Immigrants

- Being female.
- Lack of knowledge of the language and rights of the country of residence.
- Precarious immigration status (refugee, sponsored immigrant, non-status, asylum seeker).
- Physical health problems.
- Mental health problems.
- Presence of racial discrimination in the living environment, recent immigration.
- Precarious financial situation or unemployed.
- Social isolation.
- Values or beliefs that normalize gender power differentials or subordination, or that trivialize DV.
- History of childhood victimization, abuse or violence.
- Social pressure to preserve the family unit.

LGBTQ people

- Seropositivity or having an STI/blood-borne infection.
- Social isolation.
- History of childhood victimization, abuse or violence.

Additional information

Learn more about sexual, gender and sexual-orientation diversity:

<https://fneeq.gc.ca/wp-content/uploads/Glossaire-AN-2018-01-18-final.pdf>

Male victims

- Addiction.
- Mental health problems.
- Attitude of over-responsibility towards the VP.
- Communication problems within the relationship.
- Recent break-up.

Additional tool for the intervention

<https://vialanse.com/en/domestic-abuse-detection-tool-2/>

2. HOW TO VERIFY WHETHER THE PERSON IS A VICTIM OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

Verifying whether a person is a victim of domestic violence, this is:

(Association des CLSC et des CHSLD du Québec, 2000; Rinfret-Raynor et Turgeon, 1999)

Validating your clinical impressions with the victim while taking into account their needs and respecting their pace, away from the VP. The purpose of this is to:

- **Determine** whether the person is experiencing DV by gradually addressing the concept of violence.
- **Allow** the person to express themselves about the relationship and allow for the expression of emotions.
- **Understand** how the person is interpreting the violence they are experiencing.
- **Establish** a relationship of trust with the VDV.

Keep in mind

(Association des CLSC et des CHSLD du Québec, 2000; Boudreau et al., 2018; Rinfret-Raynor et Turgeon, 1999)

- **Identify** your own cultural biases and perceptions so as to minimize how these may impact the intervention (see section 2.1).
- **Detect** barriers to reporting DV (e.g., fear of retaliation, threats of suicide by partner, fear of losing custody of children).
- **Question** the VDV about the presence of domestic violence.
- **Favor** the use of the term “conflict” as a way of gradually addressing the issue of violence in the relationship² and **explore** how it is managed.
- **Seek to know** whether the VDV is both experiencing violence (victim) and perpetrating violence (perpetrator) in order to understand the dynamic. However, it is important to understand the person's intention. The VDV may have used violence defensively in response to violence against them.
- **Validate** one's clinical impression with the VDV with regard to what they are living.
- **Respect** the VDV's choice to remain in the relationship while taking a stand on the **unacceptable** nature of violence.

Additional tool for the intervention

What if it was more than just an argument?

<https://maisons-femmes.qc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/fascicule-en.pdf>

Examples of interview questions

(Rinfret-Raynor et Turgeon, 1999; Sudermann et Jaffe, 1999; Trépanier et Drouin, 2018)

- Conflicts sometimes occur in every relationship. Do you ever experience conflict with your partner? How do you deal with conflict in your relationship?
- Do you ever feel depressed or ashamed after a conflict with your partner?
- Do you ever feel afraid of your partner's reaction (words, actions)? Do you feel like you have to “walk on eggshells”?
- Have you lost contact with relatives because of your partner's reactions and judgments?

² For men, it is advisable to address the issue directly (Trépanier et Drouin, 2018).

If the VDV answered “yes” to any of the above questions, has your partner ever:

- Injured you?
- Stopped you from going anywhere or meeting people?
- Put you down or called you names?
- Threatened to leave you or have an affair?
- Threatened to commit suicide if you left them?
- Threatened to take away your children?
- Forced you to undergo or perform a sexual act when you didn't want to?
- Called you constantly or monitored your communications (calls, social media)?
- Controlled your income and spending?
- Kept your identification papers in their possession?

Additional tool for the intervention

Répertoire d'outils soutenant l'identification précoce de la violence conjugale (Directory of tools for the early detection of domestic violence)

<https://www.inspq.qc.ca/en/node/3199>

2.1. What myths about domestic violence could influence my intervention?

(Beaulieu et Cadieux Genesse, 2018; Burczycka, 2016, 2018; Drouin et Trépanier, 2018; INSPQ, 2020b; INSPQ, 2019; Ministère de la Sécurité publique, 2017; Montminy et Drouin, 2009; Perreault, 2009)

Myths and prejudices about elderly, immigrants, people with a functional limitation, LGBTQ people and male victims can be an obstacle to recognizing the problem, to disclosing violence and to seeking help. It is important to be aware of these so as not to carry them over into your intervention.

Elderly

- *“Domestic violence doesn't happen to the elderly.”*

False: Domestic violence occurs at all stages of life.

- *“Elderly don't experience sexual abuse because they no longer have any sexuality.”*

False: Although little research has been done on this form of abuse, elderly also experience sexual abuse. Stereotypes about the sexual and emotional needs of older adults may hinder recognition of situations of DV, particularly those involving sexual abuse.

People with a functional limitation

- *“People with functional limitations have little or no sex life and are usually single.”*

False: Many of these people live with an intimate partner. A large proportion of women with disabilities report having experienced domestic violence.

Immigrants

- *“Violence is part of the culture of immigrant people.”*

False: Culture is one factor among others that can explain violence in a relationship. In addition, statistics do not show whether immigrants are more likely to experience domestic violence than non-immigrants.

LGBTQ people

- *“Violence in a same-sex couple is not as concerning as that experienced in heterosexual couples since it occurs between two people of equal strength.”*

False: A violent partner is not necessarily bigger and stronger than the victim. It is important to remember that domestic violence is the result of a desire to control and dominate another person.

- *“If the victim fights back, it's not domestic violence.”*

False: Self-defense³ is a means used to stop an act of violence. However, this type of situation can be difficult to sort out, especially for police officers. This confusion can lead to the arrest of the wrong person or both partners.

- *“Same-sex romantic relationships are based on equality”.*

False: Same-sex relationships are subject to the same problems as heterosexual relationships.

- *“There is no provision in the Criminal Code to protect people who are victims in a same-sex relationship.”*

False: The law protects all victims regardless of their sexual orientation.

Male victims

- *“Men do not experience physical violence and do not fear violence from their partners.”*

False: Male gender stereotypes (e.g., strength, virility) suggest that men are able to defend themselves against violence. However, data from the Ministère de la Sécurité publique show that men are also victims of crimes of violence committed in a domestic context.

- *“Men have the means to fight back and protect themselves from aggression.”*

False: Research shows that the impact of domestic violence on men is significant and can be very serious.

Additional information

Myths and realities

<https://www.inspq.qc.ca/violence-conjugale/comprendre/mythes-et-realites>

Tips

If you are uncomfortable in one or more contexts of vulnerability or if you feel uncomfortable intervening in domestic violence, do not hesitate to ask for support:

- Fédération des maisons d'hébergement pour femmes (Quebec Federation of Women's Shelters): <http://fede.qc.ca/maisons>
- Regroupement des maisons pour femmes victimes de violence conjugale (Network of Shelters for Women Victims of Domestic Violence): <https://maisons-femmes.qc.ca/maisons-membres/>
- À cœur d'homme (Men's Help Network) : www.acoeurdhomme.com
- Info-Social: 811
- Colleagues

³ The act of defending oneself in the face of violence (e.g., retaliation, counterattack, violent reaction to an assault, etc.).

2.2. How to verify whether a person living in a vulnerable context is a victim of DV?

(Brunelle, 2019; Gouvernement du Québec, 2016; Kirkland, 2004; Kulkin, Williams, Borne, De La Bretonne et Laurendine, 2007; Lavoie et al., 2016; O'Brien, 2000; OPHQ, 2010; Rinfret-Raynor, Brodeur, Lesieux et Dugal, 2013; Sasseville et al., 2016; Savard-Payeur, 2018; Trépanier et Drouin, 2018; Tsui, 2014)

Elderly

- Has your partner ever controlled or limited your outings or your contact with others?
- Does your partner ever refuse to give you your medication or give you medication when you don't need it?
- Has your partner ever forced you to have sex when you didn't want to?
- Has your partner ever forced you to spend money or make purchases?
- Has your partner ever threatened to hurt or give away your pet?

People with a functional limitation

- Has your partner ever controlled or limited your outings or contact with others?
- Does your partner ever refuse to give you your medication or give you medication when you don't need it?
- Has your partner ever controlled your movements?
- Has your partner ever intentionally forgotten or refused to give you personal or medical care?
- Has your partner ever refused to bring you your meal or delayed eating?

Additional tool for the intervention

Accueillir et accompagner les femmes ayant des limitations fonctionnelles (Welcoming and accompanying women with functional limitations):

<https://maisons-femmes.qc.ca/nouvelle-version-du-guide-pour-accueillir-et-accompagner-les-femmes-ayant-des-limitations-fonctionnelles/>

Immigrants

- Has your partner ever threatened you with losing custody of your children or prevented you from having contact with them?
- Has your partner ever imposed religious practices on you that you did not believe in or forbidden you from practising your religion?
- Has your partner ever disparaged your beliefs?
- Has your partner ever threatened you with deportation?
- Has your partner ever taken away your ID documents (e.g. passport, visa)? Do you currently have access to them?

LGBTQ people

- Has your partner ever forced you to have sex when you didn't want to?
- Has your partner ever threatened to disclose your sexual orientation or gender identity to others?
- Has your partner ever threatened to disclose your HIV status?
- Does your partner ever intentionally use your old name to hurt you?
- Has your partner ever forbidden you to take hormone blockers?

Male victims

- Has your partner ever threatened you with losing custody of your children or prevented you from having contact with them?
- Has your partner ever threatened to commit suicide if you end the relationship?
- Has your partner ever threatened to accuse you of being the aggressor to those in a position of authority (e.g., DYP, workplace) if you report the violence?
- From 0 (not at all) to 10 (totally), what is your current ability to control yourself? What is your ability to control yourself when you are in conflict with your partner?

2.3. How to verify whether a child is exposed to domestic violence?

Verifying whether a child is exposed to DV, this is:

(Laforest et Gagné, 2018; Lapierre, Côté et Rahmatizadeh, 2019; Sudermann et Jaffe, 1999)

Validating whether the child sees and hears the DV (direct witness) or sees the effects of the DV (e.g., injuries) on their parent(s) (indirect witness).

Exposure to DV can affect a child's physical and psychological health, social functioning, and habits. It is also one of the forms of psychological abuse under the Youth Protection Act (section 38 c of the YPA).

The purpose of determining whether a child is exposed to DV is to:

- **Prevent** the harmful consequences of exposure to DV on the child's development and safety.
- **Ensure** that the parent who is a victim of domestic violence is able to meet the needs of their child.

Keep in mind

(Association des CLSC et des CHSLD du Québec, 2000; Lapierre et al., 2019; Boudreau et al., 2018)

- **Ask yourself:** Is this child exposed to DV?
- **Explore** the ability of the parent or parents to meet their child's needs (e.g. for safety, affection, nutrition).
- **Avoid** making the victimized parent feel more responsible for the violence experienced.
- **Report** to the DYP if you suspect that the child's safety or development may be compromised.
- **Verify** whether a significant adult is present for the child.
- **Remain vigilant** about how questions are asked so as to avoid negative implications for legal proceedings (suggestiveness).

Additional information

Consequences of domestic violence for child and adolescent development:

<https://www.inspq.gc.ca/rapport-quebecois-sur-la-violence-et-la-sante/la-violence-conjugale/encadre-1-enfants-exposes-la-violence-conjugale>

Additional tool for the intervention

Information Guide to Child Protection for Women Victims of Domestic Violence:

<https://maisons-femmes.gc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Guide-protection-jeunesse.pdf>

Making a report to DYP:

<https://www.quebec.ca/en/family-and-support-for-individuals/childhood/services-youth-difficulty-families/youth-protection/reporting-a-situation-to-the-director-of-youth-protection/how-to-report-a-situation>

Examples of interview questions for the child

(Delem et al., 2008; Sudermann & Jaffe, 1999)

- Have you ever seen or heard your parents fighting? What happens when this happens? How do you feel when this happens?
- What do you do when this happens? Do you tell anyone? Do you think telling someone would help?
- Do you ever feel scared at these times? Are you ever afraid that one of your parents will get hurt? Do you remember a time when they were hurt?
- What do you do when this happens? What do your brothers or sisters do?
- Have you ever been injured? Have you ever called the police?
- Have you ever been afraid of getting hurt? What do you do when this happens to you?

3. HOW TO ANALYZE THE SITUATION OF VIOLENCE WITH THE PERSON?

Analyzing the situation of violence, is:

(Boudreau et al., 2018)

Exploring the DV situation to determine risks to the safety of the VDV. The purpose of analyzing the violent situation is to:

- **Examine** the family situation and identify the elements of danger that could jeopardize the person's safety.
- **Pay** particular attention to the person's emotional state.

Keep in mind

(Association des CLSC et des CHSLD du Québec, 2000; Boudreau et al., 2018; MSSS, 2019)

- **Ensure** the VDV's free, clear, and ongoing consent to the intervention by verifying their understanding of:
 - the problem experienced;
 - the nature, purpose, advantages and disadvantages of the intervention;
 - the risks associated with choosing to stay in the relationship.
- **Analyze** the extent of the violence (forms of violence, frequency, timing and severity) and the context in which it occurs (recent break-up, separation) to determine the level of safety to be provided around the person.
- **Identify** elements that may represent a risk of occurrence of violence, such as:
 - Recent break-up, post-separation conflicts or cohabitation after separation;
 - Pregnancy or perinatal period;
 - New partner for the VDV;
 - Harassment by the VP during or after the relationship;
 - Custodial order perceived as unfavorable by the VP;
 - Drug or alcohol use by the VP;
 - Presence of weapon(s) in the home;
 - Loss of employment or financial difficulties.
- **Raise awareness** of the VDV about the consequences of violence and the fact that they are not responsible for the violence they are experiencing.
- **Reframe** attitudes of normalization, trivialization or shame on the part of the VDV about violence and raise awareness of the risks of domestic violence.
- **Explore** the steps taken by the VDV to stop the abuse.
- **Encourage** the expression of emotions and validate the experience.
- **Explore** the VDV's social network and presence of support.

Examples of questions to ask when analyzing the situation of violence

(Association des CLSC et des CHSLD du Québec, 2000; Boudreau et al., 2018; Delem et al., 2008; Trépanier et Drouin, 2018)

- How many times have you experienced violence in the past week/month?
- During these violent situations, were you injured? Have you ever been injured?
- Does the situation you are experiencing bring you to harm yourself or someone else?
- Does the situation lead you to have suicidal thoughts?
- Has your current or former partner threatened to kill you, commit suicide or harm people you love?

- Do you feel unsafe staying at home?
- Does your current or former partner have access to weapons?
- Has a weapon ever been used to threaten you?
- Does your current or former partner use alcohol or drugs?
- Has your partner ever been violent after using substances?
- Does your current or former partner have a mental health problem?
- Do your children witness or have they ever witnessed violence? Have they ever experienced it?
- Have you ever used force to defend yourself or protect yourself from your partner?
- Have you told your family and friends about your DV situation? What did they think?

3.1. What specific strategies should I use when analyzing the situation of violence?

(Almeida, 2017; Bellemare, 2012; Brunelle, 2019; Gouvernement du Québec, 2016; MSSS, 2019; Sasseville et al., 2016; Savard-Payeur, 2018; Trépanier et Drouin, 2018)

Elderly

- **Verify** the VDV's perception of the violence they have experienced and **reframe** erroneous beliefs, if applicable. The values and beliefs of the VDV may influence their perception of DV and their attitude toward disclosure of DV (e.g., bearing one's cross, doing one's marital duty, importance of the institution of marriage).
- **Explore** whether the VDV is experiencing a loss of independence or is struggling with cognitive decline or a mental health disorder.
- **Verify** whether loss of autonomy may be creating dependence on the VP or if the presence of cognitive decline may be interfering with the DV's ability to understand.
- **Explore** whether the VDV has the support of their children. The VDV may experience pressure from the children, leaving her with the impression that she is destroying the family unit.

People with a functional limitation

- **Verify** the VDV's perception of the violence they have experienced and **reframe** erroneous beliefs, if applicable. The fear of being institutionalized, losing the support of the caregiver, being rejected, not finding another partner, losing custody of the children or being left without material resources can all be reasons for maintaining the violent relationship.
- **Explore** the person's perception of their limitation (autonomy, independence, romantic relationships and sexuality) and **correct** erroneous ideas about DV.
- **Check** with the VDV whether accommodations (e.g., clearer articulation, clear instructions, quiet, well-lit area) need to be considered during the intervention to facilitate communication.
- **Communicate** directly to the person, even when an interpreter or aide is present. The nature and severity of the limitation will help determine how to adapt verbal communication.

Additional tool for the intervention:

Welcoming and accompanying women with functional limitations (Accueillir et accompagner les femmes ayant des limitations fonctionnelles)

<https://maisons-femmes.qc.ca/nouvelle-version-du-guide-pour-accueillir-et-accompagner-les-femmes-ayant-des-limitations-fonctionnelles/>

Immigrants

- **Verify** the VDV's perception of the violence experienced and **reframe** erroneous beliefs, if applicable. The migration experience (reasons for immigration, immigration status, violence experienced during the process) or culture (extended family, cultural and personal conception of violence, values conveyed) may have an influence on the way the person perceives the violence experienced and may thus accentuate their vulnerability.
- **Make sure** that you understand the cultural context in which the DV situation occurs. Gender roles can be very defined in some cultures. Fear of judgment in the face of cultural values and distrust of those in authority (e.g., police) may hinder the establishment of trust.
- **Verify** the VDV's immigration status and associated issues (e.g., access to social measures).
- **Check** with the person to determine whether they wish to use an interpreter (volunteer, private) or alternative means of communication (pictures) to overcome the language barrier.
- **Make sure** that measures to maintain confidentiality are in place if an interpreter is present during the interview. Confidentiality may be compromised if the interpreter is a family or community member.

Additional information:

Immigration status and social services:

https://educaloi.qc.ca/wp-content/uploads/guide_immigration_ang.pdf

LGBTQ people

- **Verify** the VDV's perception of the violence they have experienced and **reframe** erroneous beliefs, if applicable. A situation of dual disclosure, i.e., having to disclose both the partner's violent behaviour and one's sexual orientation, can also be a barrier to intervention because of the double discrimination that such disclosures can create. In addition, the closeness that exists within sexual diversity communities can contribute to maintaining silence.
- **Use** a non-gendered language (e.g., partner, person) and **avoid** assuming the person's sexual orientation or gender identity in order to help build a relationship of trust. The VDV may abandon the request for help out of fear of being discriminated against.

Male victims

- **Verify** the VDV's perception of the violence they have experienced and **reframe** erroneous beliefs, if applicable. The desire to protect and provide for the family, fear of losing custody of children, fear of damage to reputation, and fear of not being taken seriously or of being suspected of being the aggressor may influence the decision whether or not to disclose violence and whether or not to continue the relationship.
- **Explore**, at various points during the follow-up, the role of the man (aggressor, victim) in the situation of DV in order to understand the dynamic in which it occurs. The violence experienced may be trivialized or justified by the VDV. The VP may present themselves as the victim and conversely, the VDV may present themselves as the perpetrator of the DV.
- **Focus** on an action plan with concrete tasks. Solution-focused intervention, rather than emotion-focused intervention, is more likely to encourage men's cooperation.

Tip:

Use the scale question to explore the severity of various factors. For example: From 0 (not at all) to 10 (totally in control), how would you describe your ability to control yourself?

4. HOW TO INFORM THE PERSON ABOUT THEIR RIGHTS AND RECOURSES

Informing people about their rights and recourses, this is:

(Association des CLSC et des CHSLD du Québec, 2000; Ministère de la Sécurité publique, 2017)

Providing the VDV with information that is useful and that will help them make a free and informed decision. Information about rights and recourses will help to:

- **Identify** recourses available to the VDV.
- **Support** them in defending their rights.

Keep in mind

(Association des CLSC et des CHSLD du Québec, 2000; Boudreau et al., 2018)

- Explicitly **inform** the VDV about the forms of violence they have experienced.
- **Identify** acts of violence that are offences under the Criminal Code of Canada.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Threats• Intimidation• Confinement• Indecent or harassing phone calls• Rapt	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sexual aggression• Assault• Attempted murder• Homicide• Criminal harassment
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- **Verify** the person's marital status (common-law, civil union, married) to determine the options for recourses that are open to them (e.g., support payments, immigration status).
- **Target** the person's needs (e.g., safety, shelter, medical care, socioeconomic conditions) and expectations with regard to their domestic situation.
- **Respect** the VDV's choice to remain in the relationship while taking a position on the **unacceptable** nature of violence.
- **Explore**, with the help of relevant resources, the person's options for recourses according to their needs and **inform them** accordingly.

Examples of information about rights and recourse to check

(Ministère de la Justice, 2017; Ministère de la Sécurité publique, 2017)

- Rights and protection in case of divorce and legal separation
- Custody of children
- Youth protection
- Termination of a lease
- Civil protection orders
- Offences under the Criminal Code of Canada
- Complaint to the police⁴
- Assistance to victims of crime (Crime Victims Assistance Centers - CAVAC)
- Compensation for a criminal act by the IVAC

⁴ If you refer the VDV to the police, accompany them to ensure that they are taken seriously. Stereotypes about victims of DV may interfere with their request for help (e.g., a male victim being arrested because he is presumed to be the aggressor).

Additional information:

Éducaloi: <https://educaloi.qc.ca/en/>

INSPQ: <https://www.inspq.qc.ca/violence-conjugale/cadre-legal>

Ministère de la Justice: <https://www.quebec.ca/en/family-and-support-for-individuals/violence>

4.1. What strategies should I use when providing information about rights and recourses?

(Beauchesne Lévesque, 2019; Brunelle, 2019; Delem et al., 2008; Gouvernement du Québec, 2016; INSPQ, 2019; Rinfret-Raynor et al., 2013; Table de concertation en violence conjugale de Montréal and Secrétariat à la condition féminine, 2012b; Trépanier and Drouin, 2018; Tsui, 2014)

Elderly

- **Explore** additional needs for care (e.g., protective supervision) in relation to loss of autonomy and cognitive impairment.
- **Report** without delay when there is reasonable cause to believe that an elderly person is the victim of maltreatment, whether they are in a CHSLD or in an intermediate or family-type resource, whether they are under tutorship or a protection mandate, that her incapacity to take care of themselves or to administer their property has been ascertained by a medical assessment (without protective measures) or in any other situation of vulnerability in a private residence for the elderly and **inform** the VDV.

Additional information

Public register of representation measures: <https://www.quebec.ca/en/justice-and-civil-status/legal-protection/public-register-representation-measures>

Act to combat maltreatment of seniors and other persons of full age in vulnerable situations
www.legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca/en/tm/cs/L-6.3

People with a functional limitation

- **Check** with the resources contacted to see whether technical aids can be provided to support the person in their request for assistance, if needed. For example, documents can be adapted to the visual limitation (Braille, audio format, print), depending on the needs identified by the VDV.

Additional information

Office des personnes handicapées:

<https://www.quebec.ca/en/people-with-disabilities/family-and-support-for-individuals/information-support-services-people-with-disabilities>

Immigrants

- **Verify** the rights of the VDV based on their immigration status (e.g., access to health care, access to social assistance, regularization of immigration status, etc.).
- **Inform** the VDV of their rights, the standards and laws in Quebec and Canada, and **contextualize** them in relation to those of the country of origin to ensure understanding. For example, knowing that homosexuality can be a criminal act in some countries, the intervention must allow the VDV to understand that Canada is not on this list.

Additional information

Immigration status and social services:

https://educaloi.qc.ca/wp-content/uploads/guide_immigration_ang.pdf

RAMQ: <https://www.ramq.gouv.qc.ca/en/citizens/health-insurance/know-eligibility-conditions>

LGBTQ people

- **Accompany** the VDV who wishes to report their situation to the police to ensure that they are taken seriously. Police intervention in DV with same-sex couples may be inappropriate if police officers perceive the violence experienced as an ordinary conflict. This may make the VDV wary of seeking help.

Additional information

Glossary: <https://alix.interligne.co/en/vocabulaire-diversite/>

Tip

A person must be 18 years of age or older, a Canadian citizen and have been living in Quebec for at least one year to change the gender designation on their official documents: <https://www.etatcivil.gouv.qc.ca/en/change-sexe.html>

Male victims

- **Accompany** the VDV who wishes to report their situation to the police to ensure that they are taken seriously. Certain stereotypes held about male victims of DV may interfere with their request for help (e.g., a male victim being arrested because he is presumed to be the aggressor).

5. HOW TO ESTABLISH PROTECTIVE MEASURES WITH THE PERSON?

Establishing protective measures, this is:

(Association des CLSC et des CHSLD du Québec, 2000; Boudreau et al., 2018; MSSS, 2019)

Putting in place, with the VDV, ways of ensuring their safety when a situation of violence arises. The purpose of developing protective measures is to:

- **Target** the elements of danger that may compromise the person's safety.
- **Determine** concrete ways to ensure protection if the VDV feels unsafe and to avoid the possibility of retaliation by the VP.
- **Prevent** the risk of injury.

Keep in mind

(Association des CLSC et des CHSLD du Québec, 2000; Delem et al., 2008)

- **Ensure** that the VDV actively participate in development of protective measures.
- **Respect** the VDV's pace and normalize the emotions they may be experiencing (e.g. confusion, stress).
- **Explore** plans that may have been already prepared by the VDV and identify elements that can help ensure their safety.
- **Identify** the elements of danger in the violent situations experienced (e.g., degree, timing, frequency, vulnerability factors) and identify with the VDV the critical moment when they must withdraw to be safe.
- **Explore** with the VDV immediate or daily needs that directly affect their ability to function (e.g., medication, special care) as well as those of their children (e.g., formula).
- **Encourage** the VDV to prepare an emergency kit to keep in a safe place and identify with them places where they can go to be safe.
- **Encourage** the VDV to agree on a code word or phrase with another person to notify them of a dangerous situation.
- **Accompany** the VDV in obtaining essential items and verifying the accessibility of official documents (e.g., passport, health insurance card).
- **Revise** the protective measures as the VDV's situation changes.

Tips

To ensure that all elements of safety have been considered: SOS Violence conjugale 1-800-363-9010, shelters in the women's shelter network (<https://maisons-femmes.qc.ca/maisons-membres/>) and the federation of women's shelters (<http://fede.qc.ca/maisons>)

Good to know

Items to include in the emergency kit:

- Personal and children's identification papers (e.g. passport, visa, RAMQ card, driver's licence)
- Medication
- Extra set of keys
- Change of clothes
- Cash
- Phone numbers of friends or shelter resources

Examples of questions to ask when preparing protective measures

(Association des CLSC et des CHSLD du Québec, 2000; Delem et al., 2008)

- When do situations of violence usually occur (e.g., day, evening, night, weekend)?
- Where do they usually occur?
- What measures have you already put in place to ensure your safety and that of your children?
- What are the signs that your current or former partner is at risk of becoming violent (e.g., drinking)?
- Which of the people around you could help you if you don't feel safe?
- Where can you go quickly if you feel your safety is at risk?
- Do you have a health condition or special needs that require daily treatment or care?
- What are your child's immediate needs (e.g. diapers, formula, medication)?

5.1. What strategies should I use when developing protective measures?

(Almeida, 2017; Brunelle, 2019; Centre de solidarité lesbienne, s.d.; Delem et al., 2008; Gouvernement du Québec, 2016; Trépanier et Drouin, 2018)

Elderly

- **Verify** that the VDV has the ability to implement protective measures and **adapt it** in case of diminished autonomy or cognitive impairment in order to ensure their safety.
- **Verify** whether the VDV is geographically or socially isolated so as to take this into account when developing protective measures (e.g., access to transportation, presence of family or friends). The participation of family members (siblings, children) in the intervention (with the consent of the VDV) can help ensure their protection.
- **Establish** a list of professionals consulted and medications prescribed with the VDV to be included in the emergency kit.

People with a functional limitation

- **Verify** whether additional resources or environmental adaptations will be needed in order to implement the protection plan, depending on the limitations of the VDV (e.g., moving in a wheelchair).
- **Explore** with the VDV the nature and frequency of care received by the VP and **verify** how this may impact the implementation of the protection plan. Dependence on care and the perception of having to be grateful or obedient in return for help received by the VDV may interfere with the implementation of the plan.

Immigrants

- **Ensure** that the plan is realistic and legally based on the VDV's immigration status (e.g., access to resources).
- **Obtain** legal information to verify the VDV's access to the resources, if necessary.

LGBTQ people

- **Ensure** that the VDV has a safe place to go. Because LGBTQ communities are relatively small, the person may be easily identified and may be at risk of running into the VP.

Male victims

- **Verify** whether substance use, geographic or social isolation, or being in a state of exhaustion may impact the VDV's ability to protect themselves from violence and take these factors into account when developing protective measures.
- **Explore** with the VDV the presence of factors associated with a risk of severe aggression such as impulsivity, resentment, jealousy, control, delinquent behaviour, a context of separation (break-up), in order to prevent the risk of aggression.

6. HOW TO DIRECT AND REFER THE PERSON?

Directing and referring the person, this is:

(Association des CLSC et des CHSLD du Québec, 2000)

Take an active role in guiding the victim to services that are appropriate to their needs. The purpose of directing and referring is to:

- **Identify** local resources and verify their accessibility.
- **Accompany** the person in their efforts.
- **Ensure** a personalized transfer.

Keep in mind

(Association des CLSC et des CHSLD du Québec, 2000; Boudreau et al., 2018; INSPQ, 2010)

- **Identify** domestic violence resources adapted to the needs of the VDV and their children (e.g., intervention approach, location, physical accessibility, language) and verify, with these resources, their availability and their ability to meet the person's needs.
- **Identify** professional resources specific to the needs of the VDV (e.g., mental health, addiction, post-traumatic stress disorder) and **verify** that they are appropriate to the VDV's situation (e.g., cost, location, physical accessibility, language spoken).
- **Inform** the person about the nature and specific details of the services offered (e.g. framework of the intervention, approach, confidentiality, meeting place, etc.).
- **Transmit**, with the authorization of the VDV, the information necessary for its support to the targeted resource.
- **Follow up** with VDV to ensure that their needs are being met.

How to find resources

(INSPQ, 2020c; Ministère de la Justice, 2017; Rinfret-Raynor et al., 2013)

Assistance for victims of crime

- CAVAC: <https://cavac.qc.ca/en/>
- IVAC: <https://www.ivac.qc.ca/en/Pages/default.aspx>

Assistance for children

- ESPACE: <https://espacesansviolence.org/espace-sans-violence-roeq-home/>
- Tel-Jeunes: 1-800-263-2266 or <https://www.teljeunes.com/en>

Emergency assistance

- Centre de crise (Crisis help center): <https://www.centredecrise.ca/>
- Centre de prévention du suicide (Suicide prevention center): 1-866-APPELLE
- Police: 911⁵

⁵ If you refer the VDV to the police, accompany them to ensure that they are taken seriously. Stereotypes about victims of DV may interfere with their request for help (e.g., a male victim being arrested because he is presumed to be the aggressor).

Financial assistance

- Social assistance and solidarity assistance: <https://www.quebec.ca/en/family-and-support-for-individuals/social-assistance-social-solidarity>

Legal aid

- Aide juridique: <https://www.csj.qc.ca/commission-des-services-juridiques/nous-joindre/bureaux-d-aide-juridique/en>
- Boussole juridique: <https://boussolejuridique.ca/en/>
- Centre de justice de proximité: <https://www.justicedeproximite.qc.ca/en/>

Support line

- SOS Violence conjugale: 1 800 363-9010

Parent support line

- La ligne Parents: 1 800 361-5085

Shelters and emergency housing

- Fédération des maisons d'hébergement pour femmes: <http://fede.qc.ca/maisons>
- Emergency housing: Info-Social 811
- Regroupement des maisons pour femmes victimes de violence conjugale: <https://maisons-femmes.qc.ca/maisons-membres/>

Tips:

Information about community, public and parapublic services: 211 (in some regions) or <http://www.centraide.ca/>

6.1. What specific strategies should I use when referring or directing a person?

(Association des CLSC et des CHSLD du Québec, 2000; Brunelle, 2019; Gouvernement du Québec, 2016; Lavoie et al., 2016; Montminy, Allard, Asselin et Chartrand, 2006; Rinfret-Raynor et al., 2013; Rinfret-Raynor, Brodeur, Lesieux et Turcotte, 2010; Sasseville et al., 2016; Tsui, 2014)

Elderly

- **Focus** on access to a support network to break down isolation. Elderly may hide their homosexuality and violence experienced while living in a residence to avoid isolation and judgment.
- **Verify** that the VDV is able to access existing resources. Telephone or group intervention is a preferred method for VDV who are far from support resources.

The Mistreatment Helpline: 1-888-489-2287

People with a functional limitation

- **Verify** that the VDV can access resources and **ensure** that the resources meet their needs in light of their limitation.
- **Focus** on access to a support network to break down isolation. The person may fear being isolated or rejected by people around them or their community.

Maison des femmes sourdes de Montréal: <http://mfsm.info/>

Immigrants

- **Focus** on access to a support network to break down isolation. Resources should also help ensure the person's integration (employment, housing, food, learning French and English).
- **Verify** that resources are available to the VDV based on their immigration status and language.

Shield of Athena: <http://shieldofathena.com>

Maison pour femmes immigrantes (house for immigrant women): 418 652-9761 or WhatsApp 418 575-7883 or <https://en.maisonpourfemmesimmigrantes.com/>

LGBTQ people

- **Focus** on access to a support network to break down isolation. Because LGBTQ+ communities are relatively small, the person may fear isolation or rejection as a result of disclosing the situation of violence.
- **Verify** that the resources are appropriate and will help promote the person's integration.
- **Consider** the effect of dual disclosure (disclosure of sexual orientation and/or gender identity and disclosure of the situation of violence) on the VDV and **ask** the person's permission to disclose their sexual orientation or gender identity to another practitioner.

Centre de solidarité lesbienne: <https://www.solidaritelesbienne.qc.ca/en/homepage/>

Interligne: <https://interligne.co/en/>

Rézo: <https://www.rezosante.org/>

Male victims

- **Verify** that the VDV can access resources and **ensure** that the resources meet the person's need for support and protection. Few support resources are available for male victims of violence.

À cœur d'homme: www.aceurdhomme.com

Rézo: <https://www.rezosante.org/>

Service d'aide aux conjoints (help service for spouses):
<https://www.serviceaideconjoints.org/en/>

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