LGBTQ+ HISTORY MONTH 2025

Continuing the fight against gender-based violence

Building on 16 days of activism

February 2025

CordisBright

Cordis Bright's observance of LGBTQ+ History Month 2025

In November and December 2024, we highlighted 16 key messages from our work on domestic abuse and violence against women and girls.

As part of LGBTQ+ History Month we're reflecting on these messages, thinking specifically about gender-based violence within LGBTQ+ communities.

Cordis Bright's observance of LGBTQ+ History Month 2025

This month, we'll be sharing four key messages to improve outcomes for LGBTQ+ victims-survivors of domestic abuse.

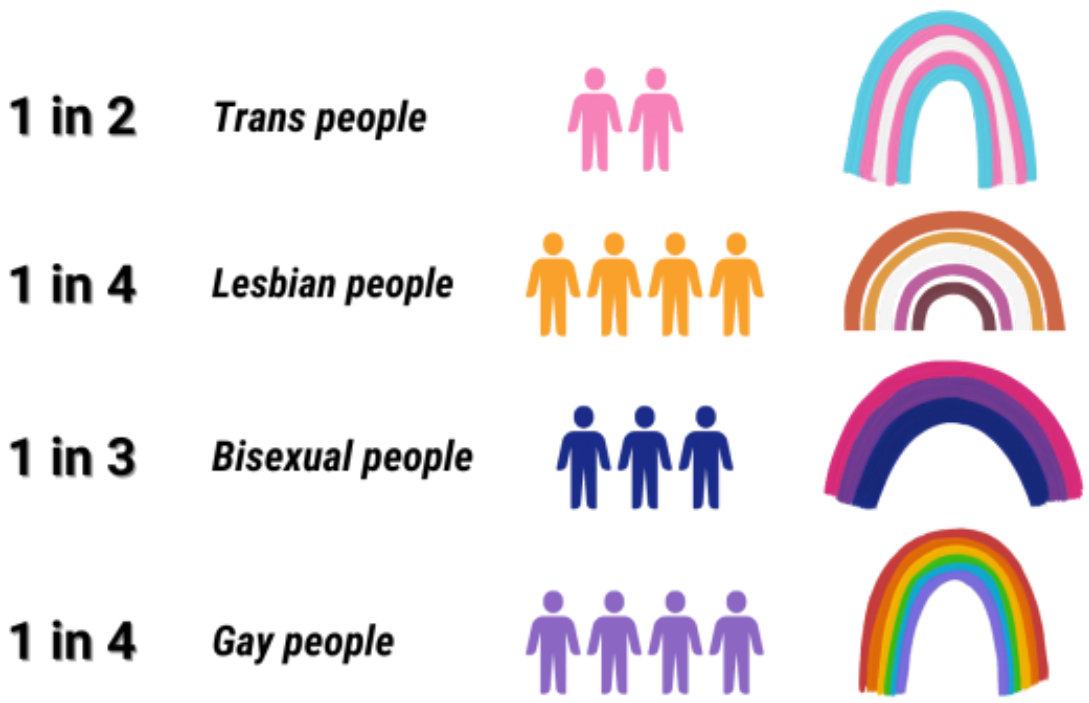
These build on the messages from our 16 Days of Activism and focus on four critical areas:

MESSAGE 1

Recognition: acknowledging the challenge

Responses must recognise diverse needs among victims-survivors, including LGBTQ+ people

Domestic abuse is a worryingly prevalent issue. Women, disabled people and young people are more likely to experience it. Likewise, **LGBTQ+ people may experience or be more at risk of specific forms of abuse**.



Stonewall, 2018; Scottish Transgender Alliance, 2013

National research in 2018 showed that **11% of LGBTQ+ people** had faced domestic abuse from a partner in the last year. This increased to **17% among LGBTQ+ people of colour**.

MESSAGE 1

Recognition: acknowledging the challenge

Responses must recognise diverse needs among victims-survivors, including LGBTQ+ people

LGBT+ victims/survivors may experience a range of violence and abuse that sit within the framework of gender-based violence.

Services must recognise that **LGBT+ individuals are not a homogenous group**.

The experiences of non-binary, gay, bisexual and trans male victims/ survivors may be different from those of heterosexual/ cisgender men

Equally, the experiences of lesbian, bisexual, and trans women will be different from those of heterosexual/ cisgender women

MESSAGE 1

Recognition: acknowledging the challenge

Responses must recognise diverse needs among victims-survivors, including LGBTQ+ people

Essential steps towards reducing harm and promoting safety include:

- Services should acknowledge and recognise diverse needs among victims-survivors, including LGBTQ+ people, and develop awareness and sensitivity around these
- Domestic abuse strategies should explicitly consider actions to reduce inequalities affecting LGBTQ+ communities
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment should explicitly consider the needs of the local LGBTQ+ community

MESSAGE 2

Engagement: preventing abuse escalating

Effective risk assessment and early identification are crucial in identifying and preventing patterns of abuse

Cordis Bright's research highlights **several critical gaps** in risk assessment for domestic abuse. One aspect of this is that they may not be serving LGBTQ+ people.

Early identification approaches that work for straight, cis-gender people to prevent abuse escalating **may not always work for LGBTQ+ people**.

For example, LGBTQ+ people may have **concerns about reporting to mainstream DA services**. They are statistically less likely to report instances of domestic violence.

MESSAGE 2

Engagement: preventing abuse escalating

Effective risk assessment and early identification are crucial in identifying and preventing patterns of abuse

A coordinated, multi-agency approach to risk assessment is crucial. Essential steps towards reducing harm and promoting safety include:

- Commissioning processes should require services to monitor levels of engagement with LGBTQ+ populations.

- Services should ensure that LGBTQ+ communities are specifically included in services communication and engagement strategies.

MESSAGE 3

Service provision: specialist training

Improving knowledge and confidence to respond to abuse, including among LGBTQ+ people

Practitioners across Children's Social Care, Early Help, Family Courts and Contact Centres, Housing, and Mental Health services play a key role in identifying and supporting those affected by domestic abuse.

Our work consistently highlights the need for **specialist domestic abuse training** that gives practitioners the skills, knowledge and confidence to best **identify and respond to risk**. This includes being aware and competent to work with intersecting factors affecting LGBTQ+ people.

MESSAGE 3

Service provision: specialist training

Improving knowledge and confidence to respond to abuse, including among LGBTQ+ people

LGBTQ+ victims/survivors may report multiple vulnerabilities and intersection of risk, which may relate to sexual orientation, gender identity, or other factors. Challenges could include:

- **“Outing” as a form of control** – threatening to disclose a person's sexual orientation or gender identity to family, employers, or communities
- **Misgendering and identity-based abuse** – refusal to use the correct name or pronouns, or invalidate a partner’s gender identity
- **Limited support networks** – LGBTQ+ people may be estranged from their families due to discrimination, leaving fewer options for support
- **Abuse within the LGBTQ+ community** – A small, interconnected community can make it harder for survivors to leave an abusive partner or seek help

MESSAGE 3

Service provision: specialist training

Improving knowledge and confidence to respond to abuse, including among LGBTQ+ people

Specialist domestic abuse training for practitioners would:

- Enable **early intervention** to prevent risk escalating
- Facilitate **appropriate referrals** to **support**
- Support **trusting relationships** between practitioners and victim-survivors
- **Develop knowledge** around how intersecting factors such as sexuality, gender-identity may influence a victim/survivor's perception and response to abuse.
- **Improve service competency** to support LGBTQ+ victims/survivors

MESSAGE 4

Monitoring

Building evidence for change

One consequence of the underreporting of domestic abuse is that violence and abuse in the LGBTQ+ community is absent from domestic abuse datasets

It still remains rare for JSNAs to comment on LGBT+ inequalities despite the significant body of evidence of health inequalities

It is therefore **invisible** to service providers and policy makers

This **limits the ability to highlight the extent and nature** of abuse, and **hinders the development of appropriate prevention and response**

MESSAGE 4

Monitoring

Building evidence for change

Our work for 16 Days of Activism highlighted **16 recommendations for researchers, evaluators and commissioners** to consider in **design, delivery and dissemination of domestic abuse evaluations** across:

Evaluation design and set-up

Data collection

Analysis, reporting and dissemination

These are available on our website. One addition here is:

Sexuality and gender identity monitoring should be included in routine data collection on demographic data and needs. Where available, this enables understanding of what works for who and in what context, including whether intervention effectiveness varies by gender and sexuality.

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References

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The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Trans Public Health Outcomes Framework Companion Document (2013)
https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/LGBT%20Public%20Health%20Outcomes%20Framework%20Companion%20Doc.pdf

16 DAYS OF ACTIVISM AGAINST GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE 2024

Cordis Bright research and evaluation resources

Want to learn more?

Toolkit for conducting needs assessment for domestic abuse perpetrator programme provision
(www.cordisbright.co.uk/admin/resources/dapp-commissioning-toolkit.pdf)

Research on criminal histories of domestic abuse perpetrators
(www.cordisbright.co.uk/news/research-on-criminal-histories-of-domestic-abuse-perpetrators-and-approaches-to-dapp-impact-evaluation)

What works with domestic abuse perpetrator programmes
(www.cordisbright.co.uk/news/domestic-abuse-perpetrator-programmes-what-works)

Insights on service availability for victim-survivors
(www.cordisbright.co.uk/news/key-lessons-on-what-works-with-domestic-abuse-perpetrators)

Northumbria OCC Domestic Abuse: A Whole System Approach: Overall programme evaluation
(www.cordisbright.co.uk/admin/resources/dawsa-evaluation-overall-programme-reportfinal.pdf)

What works in providing whole system approaches to domestic abuse: evidence review
(www.cordisbright.co.uk/admin/resources/12-evidence-reviews-whole-systems-approach-to-da.pdf)

Home Office: Approaches to domestic abuse perpetrator programmes impact evaluation
(www.cordisbright.co.uk/news/research-on-criminal-histories-of-domestic-abuse-perpetrators-and-approaches-to-dapp-impact-evaluation)

Ministry of Justice: Research into safeguarding processes in child contact centres
(www.cordisbright.co.uk/news/research-into-safeguarding-processes-in-child-contact-centres)

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Cordis Bright research and evaluation resources

Want to learn more?

Restart feasibility study protocol
(https://www.cordisbright.co.uk/news/feasibility-study-of-the-drive-partnerships-restart-programme-study-protocol)

DfE six key messages on whole-family approaches to domestic abuse
(www.cordisbright.co.uk/news/whole-family-domestic-abuse-programmes)

Feasibility study protocol for Emotion Coaching
(www.cordisbright.co.uk/news/feasibility-study-protocol-for-the-emotion-coaching-programme)

Evidence on 'what works' with DA perpetrators
(www.cordisbright.co.uk/news/evidence-on-what-works-with-domestic-abuse-perpetrators)

DAPPs webinar
(www.cordisbright.co.uk/news/domestic-abuse-perpetrator-programmes-webinar)

Approaches to DAPP impact evaluation
(www.cordisbright.co.uk/news/research-on-criminal-histories-of-domestic-abuse-perpetrators-and-approaches-to-dapp-impact-evaluation)

DAPP impact evaluation toolkit
(www.cordisbright.co.uk/news/research-on-criminal-histories-of-domestic-abuse-perpetrators-and-approaches-to-dapp-impact-evaluation)

EDI in project work toolkit
(www.cordisbright.co.uk/news/equality-diversity-and-inclusion-in-projects)

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