

RESPONSIBILITY 4: INTERMEDIATE RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk Management With Persons Using Family Violence

After completion of risk assessment, professionals have a responsibility to engage in risk management if there is family violence present. Risk management is a whole range of interventions – not just direct contact with the person using violence – that overall aim to reduce the risk the person presents and enhance the safety of adult and child victim survivors.

In any risk management, the core purpose is:

- To promote the safety of victim survivors
- Stabilise and address presenting needs of the person using violence
- Promote readiness and motivation for behaviour change

The MARAM Framework and Information Sharing Schemes aim to enhance the ability of services to work collectively with a shared plan, and importantly to also better include victim survivors in these processes.

Practice Requirements

- **Considering risk management** – It is crucial that professionals aim to remove the burden on victim survivors for solely monitoring behaviours and risk and focus on opportunities to put that responsibility on the person using the violence and on the service system to hold that accountability.
- **Safety and needs of victim survivors** – Victim survivor safety is paramount in the risk management that professionals undertake with people using violence. Adult victim survivors are the best judges of the risks they face, and it's likely they will have already taken steps to manage the risk both to them and their children. Professionals must also consider how they keep the children's lived experience as a victim survivor of family violence central to their risk management planning and decision-making process.
- **Safety planning with the person using violence** – Safety planning with people using violence is a strategy used to encourage the accountability and responsibility-taking of people using violence. It's a form of risk management that's completed directly with the person using violence.
- **Professional-facing risk management** – Professionals will also need to engage in strategies in collaboration with other professionals in order to monitor and manage risk.

Ongoing Risk Management and Safety Planning

In some circumstances, it is appropriate to seek secondary consultation or referral to a specialist family violence service for comprehensive risk management, particularly where leadership for coordination is required. Secondary consultation or referral:

- Must occur if the assessed level of risk is 'serious risk' or 'requires immediate protection/ intervention'
- May occur if the assessed level of risk is 'elevated risk'

Professionals may also still have a role in a Comprehensive Risk Management Plan and Safety Plan is developed by a specialist service. This may include implementing actions, monitoring risk and safety and information sharing.

Please Note: Services can monitor and manage risk through:

- **Information Sharing** – As authorised for prescribed Information Sharing Entities and risk relevant information.
- **Secondary Consultations and Referrals** – Address presenting needs, if there is the motivation for change and safety for specialist referral.

Practice Considerations

- Depending on the professional's role and client, elements of risk management can include:
 - Responding to immediate risk
 - Information sharing for coordinating risk management
 - Addressing presenting needs of person using violence
 - Keeping the person in-view of the service system
 - Developing a Safety Plan with the person using violence
 - Contributing to a Risk Management Plan
- When talking about safety planning with a person using violence, it's important to be:
 - **Invitational** – Inviting the person to choose what alternatives and different choices they can make, to shift the focus on them to find solutions and ways forward that will minimise their risk to others and themselves.
 - **Conversational** – Having a dialogue about what might have worked in the past.
 - **Practical, Clear and Realistic** – Brainstorming and offering strategies to a person about their safety plan. Highlighting that it needs to be an achievable plan that they will follow. If it's not realistic, if the actions aren't clear or easy to implement, then there's a risk the safety plan won't be followed when it needs to be and the risk to victim survivors is potentially increased.
- If a victim survivor has made a safety plan, it's important to prioritise this and try to ensure your risk management strategies don't jeopardise any measures in place.
- Where possible, appropriate and safe to do so, professionals can engage directly with the adult victim survivor, or else other professionals or services, or the specialist family violence services working with them (if known), to identify and understand existing risk management plans and strategies.

Using the Intermediate Safety Plan

Who should use the tool?

Professionals who interact with service users to assess or manage a presenting need and/or engage with people in crisis situations or cohorts who are at risk of experiencing or using family violence.

When should the tool be used?

This tool should be used where family violence is identified through a self-disclosure or identified through a risk assessment.

How should the tool be used?

- The Safety Plan template should be used in conjunction with the Intermediate Safety Planning Conversation Model.
- Safety Plan actions should be practical, clear, and easy to implement.

Using the Intermediate Risk Management Plan

Who should use the tool?

Professionals who interact with service users to assess or manage a presenting need and/or engage with people in crisis situations or cohorts who are at risk of experiencing or using family violence.

When should the tool be used?

This tool should be used where family violence is identified through a self-disclosure or identified through a risk assessment.

How should the tool be used?

- If safe to do so, professionals can work directly with the adult using violence to develop a Safety Plan, which can also inform the Intermediate Risk Management Plan.
- It is never safe or appropriate to discuss any aspect of the Risk Management Plan with the adult using violence if the victim survivor is present.

Please Note: This tool should be completed by professionals in collaboration with other services to determine and coordinate actions to reduce risk from the adult using violence to adult and child victim survivors.