



## 7-minute summary Anna

Anna is in her late 30's with one child. She and her daughter had an assessment with a Specialist paediatric physiotherapist last year and was having her 6-month review with the same therapist.

At the initial assessment, the therapist had used Routine Enquiry for domestic abuse, asking Anna whether she felt safe in her home. The therapist also explained that it was Trust policy to ask every parent this, saying that part of the reason for that was that people, on average, need to be asked 30 times before they feel able to discuss and take action about an abusive home environment, which also affects children. Anna had said she was safe and didn't comment further.

However, at her follow up appointment, Anna said that the statistic really stuck with her and after being asked the question 6 months ago, she realised that she didn't want to have to be asked 29 more times before she did something about her situation.

Anna called the Police that day, has since filed for divorce and she and her daughter are no longer living with her husband. She thanked our therapist, saying she knew she had done the right thing for herself and her daughter.

## Challenges

- It can feel awkward asking this question repeatedly at first, especially as most patients don't disclose abuse, but this is what helps the most!
- There were no indicators of domestic abuse on this family record so without Routine Enquiry, this question would not have been asked.

## Learning

1. Routine Enquiry is for EVERY patient over 16 for every contact
2. Every intervention may be a 'reachable moment'
3. The pandemic has increased the prevalence of 'hidden harms'
4. Routine enquiry for domestic abuse is important
5. Many HRCH staff have been asking this question routinely for over a year with ZERO complaints from patients to the Trust
6. Evidence shows that adults at risk approve of and welcome this question
7. By NOT asking, this reinforces the abusive message that DVA is a taboo
8. HRCH staff made a difference to this family

## Outcomes

**Our therapist said...** *"It felt really wonderful to have been able to make such a difference in this mum and child's life with the simple safeguarding question and explanation. I just wanted you to know how your training session has led to this mum's decision. I felt that this was a truly magical moment, and it has really inspired me to continue to ask the question and consistently add in the reasoning to the safeguarding question in my future assessments."*