

Home Secretary announces support for domestic abuse victims

The Home Secretary launched a new public awareness raising campaign highlighting that if anyone is at risk of, or experiencing domestic abuse, help is still available.

The campaign, under the hashtag #YouAreNotAlone, will aim to reassure those affected by domestic abuse that support services remain available during this difficult time.

It will encourage members of the general public to show their solidarity and support for those who may be suffering, by sharing government digital content or a photo of a heart on their palm, and asking others to do the same, to show victims that they are not alone and to convey to perpetrators that domestic abuse is unacceptable in any circumstances.

The campaign will be publicising support available including the freephone, 24 hour National Domestic Abuse Helpline number – 0808 2000 247 – run by Refuge, and www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk.

From next week, adverts raising awareness of where people can seek help will run across social media and materials will be made available to a wide range of partners including charities and supermarkets.

Additionally, the Home Secretary announced that the Home Office is working with charities and the Domestic Abuse Commissioner to provide an additional £2 million to immediately bolster domestic abuse helplines and online support.

Charities have reported a surge in activity since the social distancing guidelines came into force, so the funding will help to ensure that all victims can access vital support safely and securely. Tools such as online support services, including a messaging service with domestic abuse experts, will help those most at risk of abuse seek support and help and guidance during periods when it might be difficult for them to talk on the phone.

This follows Chancellor Rishi Sunak's £750m boost to the charity sector, which will benefit domestic abuse charities, to support the most vulnerable in our society. This £750m funding will support charities providing key services and supporting vulnerable people during the Covid-19 crisis. Domestic abuse charities are being urged to bid when the new scheme is up and running in the coming weeks.

[Speaking at the Government's daily coronavirus press conference on Saturday](#), Home Secretary Priti Patel said:

Coronavirus has opened Britain's enormous heart and shown our love and compassion for one another as we come together to help those

most in need.

And I am now asking this nation to use that amazing compassion and community spirit to embrace those trapped in the horrific cycle of abuse.

And to help us all look out for those who need help, we have created a new campaign and we have created symbol of hope – a handprint with a heart on – so that people can easily show that we will not tolerate abuse as a society, and that we stand in solidarity with victims of domestic abuse.

I ask you and I would urge everyone to share it on social media or in the windows of your home, alongside a link to the support available, to demonstrate just how much this country cares.

And to show victims of domestic abuse, that they are not on their own.

Sandra Horley, CBE, chief executive of national domestic abuse charity Refuge said:

Refuge is grateful for the Government's support at this critical time. We have worked around the clock to ensure our national helpline and frontline specialist services remain open and accessible to women experiencing domestic abuse.

What is needed now, more than ever, is to ensure every woman experiencing domestic abuse is aware of the confidential support available.

We hope the Government's campaign will reach the tens of thousands of people experiencing domestic abuse, helping send the message – you are not alone.