

Appendix 11 SPECCS + domestic abuse risk factors

	Risk Factors	Questions to ask
S	<p>Separation or child contact dispute</p> <p>- victims trying to leave relationships are frequently murdered and many incidents happen as a result of disputes over child custody.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Is the victim separated from or planning to separate from the suspect?</i> • <i>Is there any conflict with the suspect over child contact?</i> • <i>Are there any court orders relating to the suspect that have been breached?</i>
P	<p>Pregnancy or recent birth</p> <p>- pregnancy is often the time when abuse begins or intensifies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Is the victim pregnant or has the victim recently given birth?</i> • <i>Has the suspect ever been violent while the victim was pregnant?</i>
E	<p>Escalation and severity of violence</p> <p>- previous domestic violence is the most effective indicator that further violence will occur. Violence tends to escalate as it is repeated. Perpetrators who have been violent in past or current relationships are likely to repeat this behaviour.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Does the suspect have previous convictions – are they for violent offences?</i> • <i>Is the abuse becoming worse and/or more frequent?</i> • <i>Has the suspect caused injuries to the victim now or in the past?</i> • <i>Has the suspect used weapons?</i> • <i>Has the suspect ever tried to choke, smother or strangle the victim?</i>
C	<p>Cultural Issues/ Isolation</p> <p>- there is a need to be culturally aware in relation to domestic abuse which may take on a different dimension in different communities for example issues of shame and honour and rigid gender roles may raise unique risks and barriers. Any victim can be isolated due to other social and physical issues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Does the victim face particular barriers in seeking help? (e.g. limited English/isolation)</i> • <i>Does the victim live in a physically isolated community (e.g. rural area) or are they prevented from seeing family and friends?</i> • <i>Does the victim have a disability?</i> • <i>Does the victim have an insecure immigration status?</i>
S	<p>Stalking/ jealousy/ harassment/ controlling behaviour</p> <p>- stalking and obsessive behaviours are closely linked, they are both high risk factors closely associated with use of severe violence, murder and attempt murder.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Does the suspect behave in a jealous, possessive or controlling way?</i> • <i>Does the suspect harass the victim with stalking type behaviour for example constant calling, texting, sending of letters, following etc.</i>
S	<p>Sexual Assault</p> <p>- research shows that those who are sexually assaulted tend to suffer serious injury and those who report sexual assault are likely to have been previously assaulted.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Has the suspect said or done things of a sexual nature which hurt the victim or made them feel bad?</i> • <i>Has the suspect ever threatened to commit or committed a sexual offence against the victim or anyone else?</i>
S	<p>Suicide</p> <p>- there is a link between dangerousness to self and dangerousness to others; that is the two factors co-exist more often than expected on the basis of chance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Has the perpetrator ever threatened to kill themselves?</i> • <i>Has the perpetrator ever attempted to kill themselves?</i>

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+ Additional factors	
Threats or harm or death	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Has the perpetrator ever threatened to kill anybody? (incl. themselves, woman, children, others)</i>
Recent substance misuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Does the perpetrator have/had any problems with alcohol/mental health/drugs/finances</i> • <i>Does the woman have/had problems with alcohol/mental health/drugs/finances?</i>
The woman's perception of risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Does the woman feel she is in danger/frightened?</i>
Risk to children and child abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Does the woman think the perpetrator will harm the children?</i> • <i>Are there any other indicators of risk to children?</i> • <i>Has the perpetrator any non-resident children at risk?</i>
Animal abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Are there any signs of risk to animals?</i>
Level of psychological control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Are there signs that the perpetrator is/ attempts to control the woman?</i>
Past physical assault of intimate partner/other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Has the perpetrator a history of assault upon ex-partners/family/strangers?</i>
Use of weapons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Has the perpetrator used/threatened to use weapons in harming the woman or children?</i>
Breaking contact/non-contact orders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Has the perpetrator failed to comply with contact/non-contact orders, or any other type of police or court order?</i>
Your perception of risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Are there any other indicators of risk not mentioned above you have observed?</i> • <i>Do you perceive the risk to the woman and their children (if applicable) to be standard/medium or high?</i>