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TO: ALL BRANCHES

Dear Colleague,

Domestic Violence/Abuse

As the coronavirus pandemic forces governments to take unprecedented steps to restrict peoples' movements across the country, the CWU Equality, Education and Development Department have become increasingly aware of the rising number of victims of domestic/sexual violence and domestic/sexual abuse.

The purpose of this LTB is to help representatives to advise and support members and to signpost them as to what information is available.

Signs of Domestic Violence/Abuse in the Workplace

CWU representatives are reminded that there may be signs that a member is a victim of domestic violence/abuse and these may be indicative of other concerns. Although we recognise that representatives are not trained counsellors or specialists in dealing with domestic/sexual violence or abuse, often members will not feel confident in speaking to management and may prefer to involve a trade union official or utilise the expertise of our equality representatives.

Where reps feel confident, they should facilitate a conversation with the member and identify where appropriate support is needed. During the conversation representatives may wish to ask the member indirect and open questions, to help establish a relationship with the member. Below are some examples of questions that could be used.

- How are you doing at the moment?
- I have noticed recently that you are not yourself, is anything the matter?
- Is everything all right at home?
- What support do you think might help?
- What would you like to happen? How?

If a representative has reason to believe that a member is experiencing a form of domestic violence, domestic abuse and/or sexual violence, they should refer to their employer's domestic violence/abuse policy/guidelines in the first instance and encourage members to report it to their line manager so that they can be properly supported.

We have a very good booklet on the issue, which was produced by the Women's Advisory Committee and can be found using the following link: https://www.cwu.org/media/9684/02838-domestic-violence-booklet_2017.pdf

If you require further assistance you can contact the Equality, Education and Development Department on equality&education@cwu.org.

We understand that members may also need specialist support and attached is a comprehensive list of useful contacts that you may wish to signpost to members.

PLEASE NOTE: If members are in danger and unable to talk on the phone, call 999, and then press 55. This will transfer them to the relevant police force who will assist without them having to speak.

Yours sincerely,



Kate Hudson
Head of Equality, Education & Development