

SAFETY PLAN AND DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS

NOTE: Discuss with patient, but do not give this to them to take home if it is unsafe to do so.

Step 1: Safety during a violent incident. I can use some or all of the following strategies:

- A. If I have/decide to leave my home, I will go _____.
- B. I can tell (neighbors) about the violence and request they call the police if they hear suspicious noises coming from my house.
- C. I can teach my children how to use the telephone to contact the police.
- D. I will use _____ as my code word so someone can call for help.
- E. I can keep my purse/car keys ready at (place), in order to leave quickly.
- F. I will use my judgment and intuition. If the situation is very serious, I can give my partner what he/she wants to calm him/her down. I have to protect myself until I/we are out of danger.

Step 2: Safety when preparing to leave. I can use some or all of the following safety strategies:

- A. I will keep copies of important documents, keys, clothes and money at _____.
- B. I will open a savings account by _____ (date), to increase my independence.
- C. Other things I can do to increase my independence include:
 - a. I can keep change for my phone calls on me at all times. I understand that if I use my telephone credit card, the telephone bill will show my partner those numbers that I called after I left.
 - b. I will check with _____ to see who would be able to let me stay with them or lend me some money.
 - c. If I plan to leave, I won't tell my abuser in advance face-to-face, but I will leave a note or call from a safe place.

Step 3: Safety in my own residence. Safety measures I can use include:

- A. I can change the locks on my doors and windows as soon as possible.
- B. I can replace wooden doors with steel/metal doors.
- C. I can install additional locks, window bars, poles to wedge against doors and electronic systems etc.
- D. I can install motion sensor lights outside.
- E. I will teach my children how to make a collect call to _____ if my partner takes the children.
- F. I will tell people who take care of my children that my partner is not permitted to pick up my children.
- G. I can inform _____ (neighbor) that my partner no longer resides with me and they should call the police if they are observed near my residence.

Step 4: Safety with a protection order. The following are steps that help the enforcement of my protection order:

- A. I can always carry a certified copy with me and keep a photocopy.

- B. I will give my protection order to police departments in the community where I work and live.
- C. I can get my protection order to specify and describe all guns my partner may own and authorize a search for their removal.

DISCHARGE INSTRUCTIONS

If you are currently being abused...

- Are you here as a result of someone hitting or threatening you—a spouse, a partner, relative or someone you know? Have you been sexually abused by someone you know? As you read this, you may be feeling confused, frightened, sad, angry or ashamed. **You are not alone!**
- Unfortunately, what happened to you is very common. Domestic violence does not go away on its own. It tends to get worse and more frequent with time. There are people who can help you.
- If you want to begin talking about the problem, need a safe place to stay or want legal advice—call one of the resources given to you today.

While still at the clinic/hospital...

- Think about whether it is safe to return home. If not, call one of the resources given to you today or stay with a friend or relative.
- Abuse is a crime and you have the right to legal intervention. You should consider calling the police for assistance. You may also obtain a court order prohibiting your partner from contacting you in any way (including in person or by phone). Contact a local domestic violence program or an attorney for more information.
- Ask the doctor or nurse to take photos of your injuries to become part of your medical record.

When you get home...

- Develop an “exit plan” in advance for you and your children. Know exactly where you could go even in the middle of the night—and how to get there.
- Pack an “overnight bag” in case you have to leave home in a hurry. Either hide it yourself or give it to a friend to keep for you.
- Pack toilet articles, medications, an extra set of keys to the house and car, an extra set of clothing for you and your children and a toy for each child. Keep in a safe place.
- Have extra cash, loose change for phone calls, checkbook or savings account information hidden or with a friend.
- Pack important papers and financial records (the originals or copies), such as social security cards, birth certificates, green cards, passports, work authorization and any other immigration documents, voter registration cards, medical cards and records, driver’s license, rent receipts, title to the car and proof of insurance, etc. Keep in a safe place.

REFERENCES:

Adapted from: Identifying and Responding to Domestic Violence Consensus Recommendations for Child and Adolescent Health. Futures Without Violence. September 2002.