

# All Health Professionals are responders

The perpetration of domestic, family and sexualised violence (DFSV) can have long-lasting impacts on victim survivors' emotional, psychological, spiritual, financial, physical, sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing (1), including but not limited to chronic muscular and skeletal pain, headaches, memory loss, difficulty sleeping, mental distress, diabetes, asthma, use of alcohol and other drugs and digestive disease (2).

Strangulation by an intimate partner can have serious health impacts and increases the homicide risk for victim-survivors by 7.5 times (3).

**All health professionals** are well placed to listen to and follow the lead of victims-survivors who may reach out for advice or support in the privacy of an appointment with a health professional. It may be the first, only or last time the victim-survivor seeks support, so being ready to respond matters.

**Any health professional** may be seeing signs and symptoms of strangulation. The quality of responses to strangulation relies on building a foundational understanding about violence and abuse and the dangers of strangulation.

1. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. *Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia: continuing the national story*. Cat. no. FDV 3. Canberra: AIHW, 2019. DOI 10.25816/5ebcc837fa7ea
2. Coker, AL, Davis, KE, Arias, I, Desai, S, Sanderson, M, Brandt, HM, Smith, PH. Physical and mental health effects of intimate partner violence for men and women. *American Journal of Preventative Medicine*, 2002; 23(4):260–8
3. Glass, N, Laughton, K, Campbell, J, Block, CR, Hanson, G, Sharps, P & Taliaferro, E. 3Non-fatal strangulation is an important risk factor for homicide of women, *The Journal of Emergency medicine*, 2008, Vol. 35(3): 329-335.
4. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. *Family, domestic and sexual violence* [Internet]. Canberra: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2022 [cited 2023 Feb. 2]. Available from: <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/domestic-violence/family-domestic-and-sexual-violence>



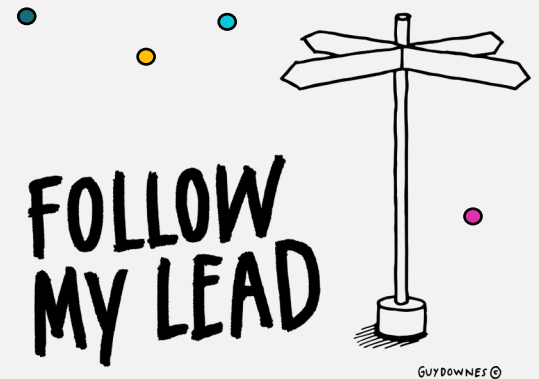
**For women aged 15 to 44 years, intimate partner violence was ranked as the fourth leading risk factor for total disease burden.**

**Health practitioners have a key role in supporting victim-survivors of all forms of violence and abuse (4).**

## INSIGHT EXCHANGE


[Insight Exchange](#) is a not-for-profit initiative that centers on the expertise of people with lived experience of domestic, family and sexualised violence and gives voice to these experiences. It is designed to inform and strengthen social, service and systemic responses across the ecosystem.

[www.insightexchange.net](http://www.insightexchange.net)



**Follow My Lead is an awareness raising resource about domestic and family violence for responders.**

“ How you respond to me when I share with you, and in the time that follows, matters significantly to me. ”

 [Follow My Lead](#) animation (4mins)

© 2023 Insight Exchange