

Title: Domestic Violence as a management challenge: how trade unions can help

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Abstract:

Domestic Violence is a key workplace gender equality issue. Although domestic violence affects everyone, it is predominantly women who are the victims and who suffer from the most severe abuse. This chapter focuses on female employees in the United Kingdom. Whilst rarely acknowledged in UK literature or practice, domestic violence can also affect women at work. It can hamper their performance, attendance and career development. Furthermore, perpetrators can continue the abuse at the workplace. Conversely the workplace can be a haven from domestic violence, offering support and resources. Yet far too often employers lack the capacity and capability to handle domestic violence, resulting in many victims losing their job. Our research explored the role played by trade unions in domestic violence cases, and found that representatives were a source of support for both victims and organisations in helping them better handle domestic violence in the workplace.

Keywords:

Domestic violence; intimate partner violence (IPV); workplace violence; people management; trade union representatives; employee wellbeing; women workers

Domestic Violence as a management challenge: how trade unions can help

Introduction

Domestic violence is a key workplace gender equality issue. Although domestic violence affects everyone, it is predominantly women who are the victims and who suffer from the most severe abuse. While rarely acknowledged in UK literature or practice, domestic violence can also affect women at work. It can hamper their performance, attendance and career development. Furthermore, perpetrators can continue the abuse at the workplace. Whilst this chapter focuses on UK female employees, it is important to note that domestic violence and its horrific impact on women, and their employment are global problems (Chappell and Di Martino, 2006).

Managing domestic violence is challenging for employers. Employers can support their staff to escape the violence, providing victims with financial independence and safe access to services and information (Faichnie, 2010). Best practice organisations also offer practical help, such as relocation and paid time off (Swanberg et al., 2006, TUC, 2014). These employers are likely to have policies that acknowledge the impact of domestic violence, and recognise their role in addressing it. Others may want to help but lack the resources to handle cases. Also employees may not disclose to managers (Swanberg and Logan, 2005). In addition, many employers see domestic violence as a private issue, and do not recognise the legal, moral and business cases for more effectively supporting victims. Unfortunately, many victims are unsupported by their employers. In some cases, employees may face disciplinary sanctions as a result of the impact of the abuse upon their work (Atterbury, 1998).

Trade unions already play an important role in the area of domestic violence and can assist managers in handling domestic violence cases. They can provide resources for employers and representatives to support victims, raise awareness, and influence policies. Trade union representatives can also assist employees directly in cases of domestic abuse impacting on their work (Parker and Elger, 2004).

However, there is limited specific knowledge of the role of trade unions in handling domestic abuse in the workplace (Atterbury, 1998; Parker and Elger, 2004; Foreman, 2006; Beecham, 2009; EHRC, 2009), which provided the impetus for the small-scale qualitative research

project reported upon in this chapter. The research was based on in-depth interviews with 18 union representatives from a range of organisations. A key objective was to establish the support that they and their unions gave to their members who are experiencing domestic violence.

The findings demonstrate that representatives can be a source of support for both victims and organisations in helping them handle domestic violence in the workplace. In particular, they are able to support individual workers: as an avenue for disclosure; signposting members to other services; or representing them in disciplinary cases. They also have a strong role to play in working in partnership with management to help victims continue safely in work, and to make changes that benefit the wider workforce. The research also highlights the challenges for managers in dealing with domestic abuse cases, and argues that employers need to develop policies and practices to support managers.

The chapter begins with a discussion on domestic violence and the workplace, drawing on international and policy sources, due to the lack of UK academic studies in this field. The chapter goes on to describe the research study and present the findings, highlighting best practice. The conclusion discusses the implications for practice.

Domestic violence in the workplace

In the UK, domestic violence is defined as:

“Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are or have been intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality. The abuse can encompass but is not limited to: psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional”
(Strickland 2013: 2).

It is a serious and widespread problem, with 30% of women and 16% of men in the UK suffering from domestic abuse during their lifetime (Bardens and Gay 2014:2). Although it affects both genders, women are at a higher risk of experiencing domestic abuse and are more

likely to suffer more severe abuse or die as a result (Hester, 2009). Refuge/Respect (2010:19) state that approximately two women are killed every week as a result of domestic violence. Data from the Office of National Statistics (ONS 2013) reveals that, contrary to popular belief, abuse affects women of all races, ages, sexualities, incomes, occupations and other personal characteristics.

There is a lack of UK academic literature on domestic violence in the workplace, however, policy and practitioner papers and literature from other regions reveals important issues. Evidence suggests that domestic violence can intrude into the workplace in a number of ways. The UK Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) suggested that on average 10% of staff in every organisation could be suffering from abuse (EHRC 2010a:5). A survey by the Trades Union Congress (TUC¹) found that 13% of the respondents who were experiencing domestic violence said it continued while they were at work (TUC 2014: 4).

This abuse can take many forms: for example, harassing the victim via phone or email; entering the workplace or stalking the surrounding premises such as staff car parks; and physically assaulting the employee (EHRC, 2010a; Refuge/Respect, 2010). This increases victims' fears for their safety (Faichnie, 2010). It is common for victims to report being prevented from going to work or having to take time off, due to threats, being locked in the house, sleep deprivation, destruction of work clothing, verbal abuse and/or being unable to use transportation (Swanberg and Logan, 2005; McFerran, 2011). Wettersten et al., (2004) report that children are often utilised to reduce victims' attendance at work, through threats or perpetrators' refusal to provide childcare.

Physical violence, and its resulting injury, have a major impact on victims' ability to work (Moe & Bell, 2004). At its most extreme there is a risk of staff being murdered during their commute or at the workplace, particularly at work sites that are accessible to the general public (Tiesman et al., 2012). In the UK it has been suggested that one-third of deaths resulting from domestic violence take place on work premises (CAADV, no date).

¹The TUC is the umbrella organisation for trade unions in the UK. They describe themselves as “the national trade union centre in the UK, representing the vast majority of organized workers” (TUC, no date)

When at work, the majority of victims felt their abuse had a negative effect on their performance (Swanberg et al., 2006). This is because of the physical and mental after-effects of the abuse, inability to concentrate, exhaustion and their on-going fear (Wettersten et al., 2004). This typically negatively affects an employee's performance, attendance and behaviour (Bell and Kober, 2008). Walby and Allen (2004:38) highlight the severity of this impact in the UK, with more than 20 per cent of women having to take time off work because of domestic abuse. The TUC survey found that 86% of those who had experienced domestic violence said it had affected their performance at work by making them feel distracted, tired or unwell (TUC, 2014: 5, Fig 5). Unfortunately, domestic violence, and its serious impact on women and their employment, is an international issue (ILO, 2013a and b).

However, the workplace can support employees to escape the violence, providing victims with financial independence (TUC, 2014). Faichnie (2010) shows how work may also be a safe place to access services and information, such as refuges and shelters and the legal system. Furthermore, Beecham (2014) suggests some employees may perceive work as a 'safe haven' away from the violence. Best practice organisations also offer practical help, such as relocation, paid time off, people to talk to (formally or informally), safety plans, flexibility around their work and working arrangements, and making it harder for perpetrators to contact victims (Swanberg et al., 2006; TUC, 2014).

Unfortunately, many victims are unsupported by their employer. Staff may face disciplinary sanctions or dismissal because of the impact of the abuse upon their work, particularly if their attendance or performance declines (Walby and Allen, 2004; Faichnie, 2010). Swanberg and Logan (2005) report that some feel pressurised to resign. The EHRC (2009:13) argues "[at the time when a person is experiencing domestic violence their employment is most under jeopardy". The increased risk of female employees losing their job, just because they are suffering from domestic violence, thus reinforces and increases gender inequalities (Brown 2008/09).

Managing domestic violence is challenging for employers. They may want to help but lack the specific knowledge, training or policies to handle cases (Parker and Elger, 2004; TUC 2014). Managers may be fearful of potential negative outcomes if the organisation tries to address a case and mishandles it (Brown (2008/09). Alternatively, Chappel and Di Martino

(2006) argue many employers see domestic violence as a private issue. This is reinforced by stereotypes and myths that blame the victim and suggest that domestic violence only happens to 'other' people (Brown, 2008/09).

Organisations may also perceive costs or workplace pressures as disincentives to addressing abuse for individuals or generally (Samuel et al., 2011). Many employers do not recognise the legal, moral and business cases (Swanberg et al., 2012) for more effectively supporting victims. Yet Walby (2009:8) demonstrates domestic violence causes British businesses to lose at least £1.9 billion annually. This figure does not take into account the costs of replacing all the former employees who have left employment as a consequence of domestic violence (ADFVC, no date).

Crucially, staff may not disclose that they are experiencing domestic violence to managers (Samuel et al., 2011). Victims are typically reluctant to discuss the abuse in any setting because of fears that their disclosure will either not remain confidential; have a negative impact upon their safety; or lead to an unsupportive response (Berry et al., 2014). In the workplace, there is the added worry that disclosure will have a negative effect on one's career or job security, or will not make any difference (Swanberg and Logan, 2005; Faichnie, 2010). Parker and Elger (2004) suggest it is more likely that the manager will become aware of the situation through associated issues such as absence monitoring or poor work performance.

Overall, in addition to the moral case, there are substantial positive outcomes if organisations are able to handle domestic violence more appropriately including: lower costs; increased performance, productivity, morale and reputation; and the ability to retain staff (ADFVC, no date; Swanberg et al., 2006). The EHRC (2010b) calculated that employers could save over £15,000 per case if they managed it supportively. Furthermore, this support may save lives, give victims an opportunity to escape abuse and continue to maintain their employment (EHRC, 2009).

The role of trade unions in handling domestic violence cases

Trade unions have had a long-standing interest in providing services and support for victims of domestic violence, and representatives are well placed to be able to discuss the scale and scope of support that is needed and to illuminate what remains a hidden problem for many victims. The limited evidence available suggests trade unions are supporting members in a variety of ways. These include:

- negotiating for domestic violence policies;
- raising awareness; providing training;
- working collaboratively with stakeholders, especially domestic violence specialists;
- working to improve legislation and services;
- providing information about resources available to victims;
- supporting individual victims, practically and emotionally; and
- encouraging employers to offer flexible working arrangements to those experiencing domestic violence (Atterbury, 1998; Parker and Elger, 2004; Foreman, 2006; Beecham, 2009; EHRC, 2009).

In the UK, UNISON² is frequently cited as demonstrating best practice in supporting members who are experiencing domestic violence, in particular through their work in developing workplace policies with employers (Elger and Parker, 2006; Foreman, 2006; Faichnie, 2010), and its campaign work (Beecham, 2009). UNISON provide a model workplace agreement on domestic violence and abuse, along with negotiating packs to assist representatives in their discussions with management (UNISON, 2014). Internationally, union action in Australia is seen as providing a useful model to adopt (TUC, 2014; ILO, 2013a and b). For example, Australian unions have negotiated for domestic violence clauses that entitle employees to paid leave and other rights, including that they will not face disciplinary action if their performance or attendance declines because of the abuse, and the right to request an array of flexible working conditions (Baird et al., 2014).

It is, however, recognised that union representatives need more training and support for these practices to become more widespread (ILO, 2013b). Furthermore, it is vital that there are good relations between unions and members so that staff feel comfortable to disclose (Parker and Elger, 2004). It is argued that all unions should be helping victims avoid disciplinary

²A large trade union that represents workers in both the private and public sector.

action, through effective individual representation and collective negotiations for better workplace support (Atterbury, 1998), and awareness raising (ILO, 2013b).

Unfortunately, there has been little research that looks specifically at the role and experiences of UK trade unions in the area of domestic violence. (Parker & Elgar, 2004; Elgar & Parker, 2006). This research therefore adds to our understanding of this issue and will provide insights into the support that union representatives offer members experiencing domestic violence. To put this in the context of the UK labour force, approximately 26% of the total workforce were union members in 2013. Furthermore, the proportion of women workers who were in a trade union was 28%, exceeding the 23% of all male workers who were union members (DfBIS, 2014: 5).

The research involved in-depth semi-structured interviews with a sample of trade union representatives to explore their experiences of and views about the support given to victims of domestic violence in the workplace. The main objective was to develop our understanding of what is effective in handling domestic violence cases and the complexity of responding to victims.

In order to access trade union representatives, the researchers approached a TUC regional women's committee, and it very kindly offered access. Based on this initial contact a cross section of unions in the region was contacted to participate in the research. 18 interviews were completed with union representatives and officers. They were drawn from a range of unions, and represent members across an array of industries, but to ensure confidentiality these will not be disclosed. All but one of the respondents was female. Most of the domestic abuse referred to by union representatives was experienced by female employees, but there were also a few cases experienced by male employees. All interviews lasted an hour on average and the interview transcripts were thematically analysed by the research team to explore key concepts and dominant issues.

The limitations of this research must be acknowledged. It was a small study, and only focussed on the views of trade union representatives. Furthermore, the participants were self-selecting, and therefore were likely to have volunteered due to their experiences of supporting members experiencing domestic violence. We would not argue that these results are

generalizable. However, due to the lack of specific literature in this area we believe it is valuable to share our findings to enable more light to be shed on this important subject. We recommend that future research be conducted with other organisational stakeholders such as line managers, HR practitioners and, where ethically appropriate, those who have experienced domestic violence.

Findings

The research suggests that domestic violence remains a 'hidden issue' in the workplace (Chappel and Di Martino, 2006). Several interviewees noted that within their workplaces there continued to be a perception that domestic violence was a 'private' matter:

You will always get employers out there that say, "Well, that's your home life, this is your work life and that's got nothing to do with me." [Employers have] ...a duty of care to an individual while they're in their workplace and if they're saying that their partner's going to come in and it's going to have an impact...[employers] need to help and support. (Representative 17)

Respondents argued that domestic violence can affect both an individual employee and the wider workplace (see also EHRC, 2010a):

It is going to have a major impact if say a member was in a situation where they are experiencing domestic violence at home because it is going to affect their demeanour, it's going to affect their confidence, it's going to affect maybe the level of time they take off work, it may have to be hidden with sick [leave], it could affect their performance because of the worries, the way they are at work. (Representative 25)

The representatives' experiences highlighted that abuse can prevent an employee from getting to work (for example, through injury suffered or by tactics such as hiding keys or money needed to access transport) or it can make an employee late for work (for example, where child care arrangements are disrupted).

The illusion that there is a clear boundary between home and work can be shattered very dramatically if the abuse continues when the employee is at work (Swanberg and Logan, 2005). Many of the interviewees had experiences of working with victims whose partners continued to abuse them even when they were at work and on work premises:

I've had people turning up and phoning, we've had to move [the member] to different workplaces. It's really a problem when they get stalked by a previous partner (Representative1)

These actions cause both stress and fear and can impact negatively on performance (Bell and Kober, 2008). This is not always understood by managers who may simply see an 'underperforming' employee, as encapsulated in the following comment:

They're serving customers, they might say "Gosh, that girl never smiles", but...you don't know what's going through their minds or what they worry [about]...or if they're...going home to everything being sold (Representative2)

At other times the actions of perpetrators could be more overt and raise more obvious concerns about security and health and safety. Interviewees reinforced findings from previous studies by noting that workplaces, especially those with open access, such as retail environments and 'public' spaces such as car parks, are areas where partners can easily access victims (Tiesman et al., 2012).

In 2013 the EHRC and the Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development (CIPD) produced a guide for employers to advise them how to support employees who were experiencing domestic violence (EHRC/ CIPD 2013). This laid out clearly the steps organisations should take when developing and implementing a policy. These include: information for employees to enable them to identify domestic violence; outlining the specific roles and responsibilities of managers and HR; details of external sources of support and advice; and a commitment to provide training for all employees and to engage in awareness raising measures within the workplace. However, within our sample, although all of the organisations had a range of equality policies, in only a few cases were the interviewees aware that there was a specific policy on domestic violence. Interviewees felt that the 'business case' needed to be presented to employers, and particularly that domestic violence policies could be a low cost but high impact initiative:

We want you to have a clear written policy on this, we're not expecting you to put loads of money into it, we're not asking you to employ a whole load of staff to deliver it, we're just saying that we want you to be visibly supportive of people who've suffered domestic violence and we want that message to be filtered through your documents. If somebody raised it in that way, I think a lot of employers, given that there isn't...a huge cost...would be persuaded to do it. (Representative7).

A significant stumbling block in the effectiveness of many organisational responses to domestic violence is that access to support is predicated on an employee coming forward to discuss his or her personal circumstances. Unfortunately, victims are often very reluctant to disclose what they are experiencing to anyone (Samuel et al., 2012). Several representatives described having been aware of people they worked with who they suspected were experiencing domestic violence but who would not speak about it.

The concerns that inhibit victims from disclosing the abuse at work are the same barriers that generally affect disclosure (Berry et al., 2014); namely, shame, embarrassment, fears about confidentiality and the belief that being a victim of violence would in some way reflect badly on them. In workplaces these barriers are reinforced through the tendency for domestic violence to be seen as a 'private' matter that should be kept at home, and worries that disclosure will alter how co-workers and managers see victims:

[Disclosure] is a really difficult question because there is a lot of things that can go on in the workplace that prevent people from bringing it to our attention...management who might not feel comfortable talking to people... might be, once they've opened up and said, "Look I'm suffering from domestic violence", is it going to be the talk for everybody now?...it is embarrassing. ...Management disclosing that they are suffering from domestic violence. So are they going to be undermined as a manager in that position? Is it going to be taken away? (Representative10).

As this comment illustrates, managers themselves can also experience domestic violence and their organisational position could make them more reluctant to disclose. The positive self image associated with managerial or professional work, combined with the enhanced workplace autonomy and access to greater financial resources, can also underpin personal coping strategies (Beecham, 2014). However, this can be a fragile and easily undermined position.

Without disclosure, representatives explained that not only are victims unable to access support, but they also risk coming into conflict with organisational rules around attendance and performance. There are a number of reasons why an employee who is experiencing domestic violence might have a pattern of increased absenteeism or low productivity. Interview findings reinforced international evidence (Wettersten, 2004; Swanberg and Logan, 2005; McFerran, 2011), with examples of: employees who had been beaten and were

physically unable to attend work; destruction of property, including work uniforms; taking away a phone so the employee cannot call in to work or conversely being called by the abuser demanding that the employee leaves work to meet them.

However, managers are rarely trained in responding to domestic violence; therefore they are unlikely to recognise that it could be a factor in erratic attendance. Managers' first response is more likely to implement absence procedures:

Weekends are sort of like when they get the battering and then on Monday they're not able to come in to work...initially [management] were looking to put my member on the procedure with a view to dismissal for attendance management because they recognised there was a pattern emerging in terms of her attendance... she didn't share that [abuse] with them; she was just saying that she felt unwell. (Representative 16).

Unfortunately respondents stated that because of the effects of the violence and employees' fears of disclosing the real reasons behind their absenteeism, managers often prescriptively follow attendance management policies, which can result in victims facing disciplinary action or even dismissal (Walby and Allen, 2004). Further challenges for organisations in handling domestic violence appropriately included: little understanding about domestic violence; limited aptitude in handling sensitive issues; unawareness that this is a 'duty of care' issue.

The research suggested that trade union representatives were able to help organisations overcome some of these challenges (Parker and Elger, 2004). They could often access resources from their union that increased their understanding of the signs, risks and impacts of domestic abuse upon the workplace. Unions may also offer training for representatives to better support members who are victims. Representatives were also able to work with employers to introduce policies and procedures to address the impact of domestic violence in the workplace. Furthermore, most unions undertook awareness raising campaigns amongst members and representatives (TUC, 2014).

Through working together, managers and representatives appeared to increase their potential to handle cases more appropriately. Sometimes, victims first disclosed to the representative:

[A] member...was just chatting when suddenly she was hysterical and said "I've got to tell you this"...And she just pulled up her jumper...oh my god she was bruised...in

between the tears that she was able to start to tell me that she'd been experiencing domestic violence (Representative16)

Representatives discussed that in some situations, with the agreement of the employee, the union had helped staff to raise their situation with management. In many cases, once they were made aware that domestic violence was affecting an employee, managers were understanding. Representatives then worked in partnership with the manager on changes in the workplace to help victims continue in work. This normally involved changes to work patterns, blocking access to a victim's work phones, and ensuring security was in place for when the victim came to and left work. Examples were also given where employees were allowed special time off, support from in-house occupational health teams, or, redeployment and financial assistance. The following quotes demonstrate the array of support good practice organisations do offer:

So we negotiated a flexible start, a safe parking area to get from her car to work and a choice of entrance to the workplace just to try and make that a little bit safer for her (Representative9)

They supplied her...with a mobile phone that her husband knew nothing about... a second uniform to keep in a friend's house confidentially, so if she was thrown out of her home then...she could go to, to collect her uniform so she could still get to work,...as well as being obviously signposted for help (Representative17)

Give him extra support so there [were] people he could go and talk to, so he could go for counselling, so his manager knew, so his targets were reduced (Representative4)

In cases where the employee's situation had resulted in them facing managerial action, representatives often talked about their ability to intervene to try to find a more appropriate course of action:

I had a ...conversation with the senior manager, without breaking any confidentiality, and said this guy needs our help. He said, "Yeah, I can see that...I'm going to do 'no further action' and leave it with you and we'll work to try and give him as much support and help as we can", which is what we did. (Representative4).

Representatives also discussed times where they had provided additional support to individual workers, signposting them to other services and support such as refuges and domestic violence services. They have also accessed additional assistance from the union, in one case enabling the employee to be re-housed.

It is important to acknowledge that a representative's ability to respond was generally reliant on that particular individual having a specific interest in domestic violence and being willing and able to take the case on. Additionally the representatives in the sample tended not to have specialised training and relied more on experiential knowledge. Furthermore, the ability of representatives to support staff is limited to those that are members of unions, and to organisations that recognise unions. However, our findings suggest that where present representatives did offer assistance to both employees and employers in handling domestic violence cases.

Conclusions

The chapter focuses on gender inequality in the workplace and offers real examples of good practice in terms of managing domestic violence at work, a still too often ignored but devastating situation confronting many millions of women workers every year, globally. A limitation is that not all organisations have unions. However, the strategies of supporting victims will still be of value to all organisations.

This is a small-scale study but there are, however, a number of points that emerge from this research that highlight the challenges for organisations in responding effectively to domestic violence. At the most basic level, this involves raising awareness within the workplace; respondents were concerned that this was a hidden issue for too many organisations and felt that this must change. Many of the representatives stated that their unions have been actively involved in such initiatives, such as developing communication and campaign materials, but should continue and increase their efforts to do so. Raising awareness also needs to include providing information on the support, both internally and externally to the organisation, that employees can access should the need arise.

Within workplaces participants highlighted that there continues to be a lack of understanding concerning domestic violence. Few organisations have a specific domestic violence policy, as recommended above by EHRC/CIPD or UNISON, and most managers are unlikely to have had any specific training in relation to domestic violence. Even where there is a policy, interviewees felt there needs to be more practical advice about what both employees and managers can do in response to domestic violence. A 'toolkit' approach guiding the individuals through the actions, support and processes; made freely available and well publicised (beyond an intranet) would be helpful in this respect. Unions often have materials that could support organisations in designing these toolkits, as outlined above.

Organisational responses tend at present to be reactive and *ad hoc* and although often positive, it requires a huge leap of faith for a victim of violence to disclose to anyone when it is unclear from the outset how this information will be received. Handling domestic violence cases, particularly their implications for absence management, should be included in managerial training.

Representatives can and do work in partnership with management to enable them to handle domestic violence in the workplace. They can access training and resources that increase their knowledge of abuse and how to respond to cases. Their role within the workplace enables representatives to offer an alternative route to disclosure; to help organisations implement workplace changes that will enable staff to remain safely at work; and to offer personalised support to victims.

This study has contributed to our understanding of the challenges of dealing with domestic abuse in British workplaces. It highlights that the problems experienced by women workers internationally (Swanberg and Logan, 2005; Chappel and Di Martino, 2006; ILO, 2013a, Baird et al., 2014) are unfortunately repeated in the UK. They suffer from abuse at home and often perpetrators also access them at work to continue the abuse, having a detrimental impact upon their well-being and employment. Furthermore, organisations can struggle to handle these cases. Managers are often unaware of the realities of domestic violence, and ill-equipped to address it. This puts victims at risk of losing their jobs and even their lives. It thus reinforces and increases gender inequalities. However, organisations can support their employees in dealing with domestic abuse, as illustrated above. The findings suggest that

support appears more likely when managers and representatives work together to handle cases.

The research offers more detail on the experiences of trade union representatives in these cases, and demonstrates that they can have a substantial role to play in supporting both victims and managers. That is not to argue that all representatives offer the same level of support, as they too require a greater level of training and resources to consistently enable them to provide the most effective service.

The challenge remains for all employers to see that there is a business case for dealing with domestic violence that does not come at a huge cost but has huge benefits, as demonstrated above by ADFVC (no date), EHRC (2010b) and Swanberg et al. (2012). Managers need the training and experience to deal with such cases. Employers need to develop fully functioning policies and practices to support managers. Trade union representatives should draw upon the resources of their unions to enable organisations to develop these policies, implement them effectively, and offer the support that victims deserve.

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