

Guide “Help Impossible to Ignore”

Recommendations for use
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The Guide is for:

- specialists of state and non-governmental organizations in planning and providing comprehensive services for women who use drugs in a situation of gender-based violence or survivors of gender-based violence.
- organizations working in the area of harm reduction, prevention, treatment, care and support for HIV, as well as in the area of combating and responding to gender-based violence among women.
- planning activities and services in national and international programs aimed at reducing the level of gender-based violence against women, taking into account the characteristics of each group.

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While developing the Guide attention was paid to:

- Experience of specialists from EECA countries who work in the field of providing services to women who use drugs;
- International documents describing principles and recommendations for provision of services to women who found themselves in situations of gender-based violence;
- Problems and needs of women who use drugs.

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Main recommendations for organizing comprehensive services

1. Woman's safety, meeting her specific needs, and the well-being of her children and herself are paramount when delivering services for women who use drugs who experience violence. paramount when delivering services for women who use drugs who experience violence.
2. Any woman facing domestic or gender-based violence, regardless of whether she has a history of drug use or not, is entitled to adequate help and support.
3. Support to women who use drugs who experience violence includes a range of services, from ensuring her safety to medical, legal help and resocialisation.

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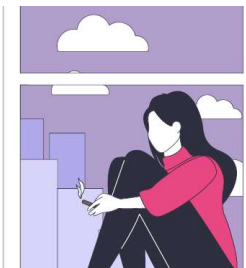
Main recommendations for organizing comprehensive services:

- Partnerships between the state and non-governmental services, including harm reduction organisations and services for women experiencing violence, help to provide comprehensive, high-quality, gender-sensitive services centred on the women who use drugs, their safety and special needs.
- Three key steps in addressing gender-based violence against women using drugs are: (1) Prevention of gender-based violence; (2) Provision of adequate support and protection for women; and, (3) Advocacy for legislative changes and/or practical approaches for its implementation.

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Key principles of comprehensive quality care for women who use drugs in situations of gender-based violence


- **A rights-based approach** - declares that GBV is a fundamental violation of the rights of women and girls.
- **Advancing gender equality and women's empowerment** - declares that services must ensure that violence against women and girls will not be condoned, tolerated or perpetuated.
- **Cultural and age appropriate and sensitive** - declares that the services must respond to the individual circumstances and life experiences of women and girls and take into account their age, identity, culture, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity and language preferences.
- **Survivor-centred approach** - declares that the rights and needs of women and girls are placed at the centre of service delivery and that the services are tailored to the unique requirements of each individual woman and girl.
- **Safety is paramount** - declares that the safety of women and girls is top priority when delivering quality services. Essential services must prioritise the safety and security of service users and avoid causing them further harm.
- **Perpetrator accountability** - declares that the burden of seeking justice is placed on the state and not the survivor of violence.



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Key quality standards in organizing comprehensive services for women who use drugs in case of violence

- Availability
- Accessibility
- Adaptivity
- Appropriateness
- Prioritize safety
- Informed consent and confidentiality
- Effective communication and participation by stakeholders in design, implementation and assessments of services
- Data collection and information management
- Linking with other sectors and agencies through coordination



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Partnerships between harm reduction programmes, crisis centres, shelters, legal, psychosocial and mental health service providers and how they can fulfil the needs of women who use drugs

Partners or services	Key prevention and/or assistance functions in situations of gender-based violence	Specific conditions	Service provision capabilities	Changes necessary to enhance provision of integrated services
Partners involved in harm reduction programmes (may either be from a harm reduction organisation or from another organisation gathering evidence of violations of the rights of women who use drugs and/or advocating for their rights)				
Harm reduction programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of harm reduction services, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needle/syringe exchange, OTC, etc. • Condoms • Testing, STI prevention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low threshold for access Women-only hours Staff able to overcome peer counselling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary screening for gender-based violence Screening about service providers Screening about emergency medical management about cases of gender-based violence Conduct self-help groups Primary documentation of cases of gender-based violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender-sensitive and gender-transformative services Change who spaces for women, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women-only or women-led • Women-led Need to engage in peer education Provide a place and time for women to meet with friendly professionals Screening, counselling, medication, legal services, health workers and other health services
Outreach workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of peer counselling on all outreach visits Identification of new female clients Active counselling for gender-based violence Screening about available harm reduction services Database information materials and harm reduction kits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scheduled servicing of established outreach visits Ability to address and counsel women who use drugs who do not attend self-help groups and do not use harm reduction programmes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary screening for gender-based violence Screening about service providers Screening about emergency medical management about cases of gender-based violence Primary documentation of cases of gender-based violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set a procedure for outreach workers to follow when documenting a woman in a database or peer-led outreach Create an information kit to distribute among women subject to gender-based violence
Case managers (employees: they should be appropriately trained to assess someone's exposure to gender-based violence)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage cases of female clients who experience gender-based violence Develop strategies to address the problems of women who use drugs, including service referrals to address the problems Monitor and/or engage with the police Help first responders to address the women's specific problems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assigned to organisations that provide harm reduction services Can manage related issues of cases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primary screening for gender-based violence Screening about service providers Screening about emergency medical management about cases of gender-based violence Primary documentation of cases of gender-based violence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set a procedure for responding to cases of gender-based violence Coordinate with other services, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal services • Health services • Police • Shelter services • Other public representatives and mental health services

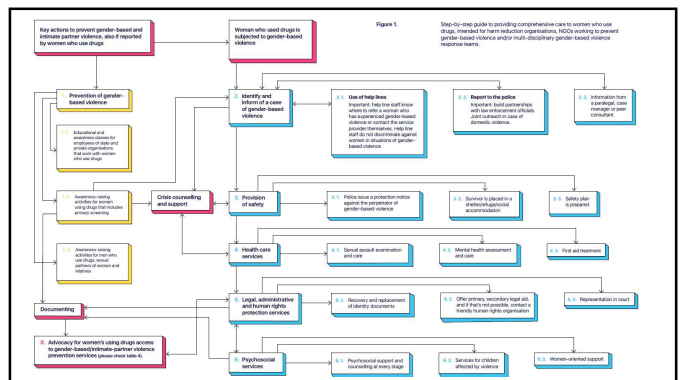
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Recommendations for organisations and service providers working in the area of gender-based violence

- Prevention of gender-based violence;
- Provision of comprehensive support to women experiencing gender-based violence;
- Advocacy for a system of response to gender-based violence that is non-discriminating by nature.



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Recommendations for comprehensive assistance for women who use drugs in situations of gender-based violence

STRATEGY 1: Setting up a Help Centre offering comprehensive services on the premises of a harm reduction organisation:

Upside: ability to deliver comprehensive services, from establishing a case of gender-based violence (e.g. during screening) to aftercare and support services. Women who use drugs do not have to hide their status, continuity of care (OST and ART) is ensured and there is access to friendly professionals.

Downside: setting up such a centre requires large investments, the premises must meet certain requirements and the centre needs to be fully staffed with professionals.

STRATEGY 2: Build up a network of friendly professionals and establish proper referral and/or follow-up procedures for women who use drugs at all stages of service delivery:

Upside: there is no substantial additional cost for the harm reduction organisation. This strategy helps build trust between partners while addressing the issue of stigma and discrimination against women who use drugs in society.

Downside: partners who deliver services may have stigmatising and/or discriminatory approaches. A case manager or paralegal should accompany the woman during her visits to all competent authorities.

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Safety and burnout prevention among employees handling female survivors of gender-based violence

Strategy to prevent female staff burnout include:

- Realistic work goals;
- Fixed hours;
- Sufficient financial remuneration;
- Sufficient leave;
- Professional development plan, attending conferences, forums, professional development programmes;
- Career opportunities.

Support strategies to prevent female staff burnout include:

- More experienced female staff mentor junior employees;
- Regular team meetings to check on female staff and respond quickly to possible signs of burnout;
- A feedback mechanism for female staff that would allow them to openly and honestly voice their concerns and needs;
- A help line mechanism for female employees that would give them an opportunity to seek advice or receive psychological support;
- Employee access to the full range of services available to female clients.

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Briefly about Appendixes

Appendix 1

The principles for Essential Services for women and girls subject to violence; gaps in the essential services system in relation to women who use drugs

Appendix 2

Comparative table of common characteristics and guidelines for essential quality services for women experiencing violence as applied to women who use drugs.

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Спасибо!

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