

White Ribbon Campaign supported by the council

The council are supporting a campaign designed to target domestic abuse.

The first phase of a multi-agency campaign about domestic abuse is launching today, to coincide with [White Ribbon Day](#) and the start of [16 Days of Action](#).

The overarching [Speak Up Speak Out initiative](#) was officially launched last month by the City of Edinburgh Council, NHS Lothian and Police Scotland.

Speak up Speak Out calls on those who are affected by [all forms of harm](#) to come forward and find out about the wide range of support that is available to them.

From today, the Speak up Speak Out campaign's focus will be on domestic abuse.

While recognising that anyone, regardless of gender, can be affected by domestic abuse, the initial phase is specifically focused on the effects of domestic abuse on women and children, who are a major public protection priority.

Domestic abuse can be carried out by partners or ex-partners. It can include physical abuse, sexual abuse and mental and emotional abuse.

Councillor Cammy Day, Vice Convener of Health, Social Care and Housing, said: "There are a shocking 5,500 reported cases of domestic abuse in Edinburgh each year, but we know that the real figure is likely to be significantly higher, once you add in all the incidences which go un-reported.

"Nobody should have to suffer domestic abuse, whatever form it takes. With this campaign, we are reaching out to women and

children affected by domestic abuse, or anyone who has concerns about others who are being harmed in this way, urging them to Speak up and Speak out.

“We know that sometimes people are afraid they will end up making the situation worse by reporting it, but this is not the case. All calls will be treated sensitively and taken seriously.

“Help is at hand and speaking up could drastically improve the quality of someone’s life.”

Detective Inspector Dougie Moran from Police Scotland said: “Domestic abuse is an issue that Police Scotland takes extremely seriously, and we are committed to rigorous enforcement in order to ensure that those guilty of carrying out such crimes are brought to justice.

“In addition to year-round enforcement, a number of campaigns have been launched across Scotland, which reinforces our work with key partner agencies to share information and expertise.

“This partnership approach is central to our efforts in tackling domestic abuse and is instrumental in improving victim confidence when reporting the matter to police.

“Anyone who experiences domestic abuse should not suffer in silence, and we would encourage victims to approach the police on 101, or to call the Scottish Domestic Abuse Helpline on 0800 027 1234.”

Lesley Johnston, Public Health Practitioner and Adviser Gender Based Violence, NHS Lothian, said: “NHS Lothian remains committed to supporting those affected by abuse and also working in partnership to reduce the incidence and impact of abuse on individuals, families and the wider community.

“The physical, emotional and psychological consequences of all forms of abuse can be profound and damaging both in the short

and longer term.

“This campaign helps raise awareness and also gives a clear message that domestic abuse is never the fault of the victim and support is available from a range of agencies and services who recognise the challenges and barriers in leaving an abusive relationship.”

Speak up Speak Out is being promoted in a number of ways. Radio advertisements have been commissioned and a series of leaflets and posters are being distributed to public places, such as libraries and hospitals throughout Edinburgh to raise awareness and to encourage people to access help and advice.

Contact details:

Police Scotland: 101 (or in an emergency call 999)

Scottish Domestic Abuse Helpline: 0800 027 1234

NHS Inform: 0800 22 44 88

Edinburgh Women's Aid: 0131 315 8110