

# Victim Blaming Temperature Check Tool

## Extreme victim prejudice and contempt

- Victims are frequently overtly blamed for being subjected to abuse and violence
- Widely accepted belief that victims are liars, mentally ill, attention seeking, or manipulative
- Mocking, ignoring, minimising or discrediting victims when they disclose abuse
- A belief that victims are motivated by revenge, money, status or personal gain
- Deliberate sabotage of victims' evidence, disclosures, and reports, especially to protect perpetrators or cover up organisational, systemic, or professional failures
- Professionals encourage victims to self-blame or accept that they caused the abuse or violence committed against them

## Significant victim blaming with perpetrator excusing

- Leadership deny victim blaming exists (in the organisation, or in society)
- Professionals suggest that the appearance, bodies, lifestyles, sex lives, characteristics and clothing of victims caused the abuse or violence
- Professionals believe that perpetrators only harmed the victim because the victim led them on, provoked them, or caused the perpetrator to attack them
- There is a belief that the victim and perpetrator are 'both as bad as each other'
- Perpetrators are excused, or positioned as good people who deserve benefit of doubt
- Victims are positioned as needy, pathetic, vulnerable and cyclical

## Lack of empathy for victims

- Victims are seen as a hindrance, a nuisance, or as wasting professionals' time
- Professionals encourage victims to take responsibility for what someone did to them
- Professionals teach victims that they could have avoided victimisation by changing something about themselves, their life, character, or their behaviour
- Professionals believe that repeat victimisation is due to victims not protecting themselves adequately
- Frequent discussion/description of victims as having made 'poor choices'

## Acceptance and employment of victim blaming and rape myths

- Frequent use of rape and abuse myths, victim blaming excuses, and narratives
- Professionals blame victims for not escaping or reporting abuse fast enough
- Frequent use of misinformation and rape myths in decision making and assessments
- Interventions and support of victims is built on myths and victim blaming narratives
- Professionals do not challenge victim blaming when they hear it, or cannot recognise it

## Lack of understanding and general ignorance

- Professionals tend to use inappropriate comments, phrases and explanations for abuse, trauma and violence, but do not directly victim blame
- Professionals believe common rape myths, but are comfortable with being corrected
- Training about abuse, trauma and violence lacks information about victim blaming
- Professionals believe there are specific groups of people who become victims of abuse and violence, and others who are not susceptible
- Professionals do not demonstrate a good understanding of abuse, violence, & trauma