

Partnerships between health centers and domestic and sexual violence (DSV) coalitions are crucial to support survivors in your community.

To start and grow a partnership:



**Assess the needs of your community**  
What communities does your health center serve? What kinds of support services would benefit survivors in these communities? Engage survivors to get their input.



**Identify champions in your health center and community**  
Who can research what DSV resources exist in your area? What services already exist to support survivors in your health center?



What is a Domestic and Sexual Violence (DSV) Advocate?

**DSV advocates:**

- are community based providers trained to support safety and self-determination of survivors
- offer confidential and free services
- provide 24-hour crisis intervention, emotional support, emergency services, legal info, and more.

What are the benefits for staff and patients?



Partnerships between health centers, community-based organizations, and DSV programs provide benefits for health center staff, survivors, and all patients:

- Increased access to healthcare enrollment and services
- Safety planning for survivors and connection to DSV advocates
- Addressing competing needs like food access, legal support and housing
- Relying on the expertise of your partners—you don't have to be an expert on violence!
- Support for staff wellness and healing

**Connect with community-based DSV advocates**

What organizations exist to meet the needs of survivors in your community? What are their services? Identify a point of contact. Find your local DSV programs through:



- ➔ The National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-SAFE and [thehotline.org](https://thehotline.org). 24/7 DSV advocate responders. 170+ languages.
- ➔ State Coalitions: [nnedv.org/content/state-u-s-territory-coalitions](https://nnedv.org/content/state-u-s-territory-coalitions)
- ➔ Tribal Coalitions: [www.niwr.org/tribal-coalitions](https://www.niwr.org/tribal-coalitions)



**Define the partnership**

Collectively come to an agreement on how the working relationship will be carried out. This could include: the roles of each partner, the timeline for partnership roll out, process for decision making and communication. These agreements and processes can be outlined in a memorandum of understanding.

- ➔ Key resource: [Sample Memorandum of Understanding](#)



**Promote privacy and confidentiality**

Robust partnerships between health centers and CBOs do not have to compromise survivor privacy and confidentiality to work effectively. Programs can take steps to ensure survivors' information is protected.

- ➔ Key resources: [Privacy Principles for Protecting Survivors of IPV and Human Trafficking](#)
- ➔ [FAQ: Protecting Survivor Privacy](#)



**Develop a procedure for bi-directional warm referrals between your health center and the DSV program**



How can health center staff be trained to offer a supported connection to a DSV program when a patient discloses experiences of abuse? How can survivors referred from the DSV program to the health center partner get to gain access to next day appointments for immediate medical needs?

**Track your success**

Data is important to demonstrate the impact of the partnership for program development and sustainability.



- ➔ Key resource: [Sample Quality Assessment and Improvement Tool](#)



**Identify and address challenges**

Integrating and expanding new services and partnerships will present challenges. Take time to explore barriers that come up, such as time constraints or discomfort with discussing violence. Connect to resources and capacity building opportunities. Organize cross training with your DSV program partners.

- ➔ Key resource: [Building Fruitful Partnerships](#)

What is a bi-directional warm referral?

A warm referral is a supported connection to a DSV advocate. Providers must be able to describe the DSV program's services and facilitate immediate support through phones, chat or onsite advocacy. This may also be done by sharing a safety card. Likewise DSV advocates can offer a warm referral to the health center for clients who are in need of health care. Learn more about safety cards at [ipvhealthpartners.org/adopt](https://ipvhealthpartners.org/adopt)

Partnerships help promote bi-directional warm referrals for clients/patients and increase staff engagement and support.



**DSV Program Partner**  
Supports survivor safety, self-determination, and connection

Warm referral from domestic violence agency to health center

Warm referral from health center to domestic violence agency



**Health Center Partner**  
Supports survivor health and well-being

For key resources and to learn more visit: [store.futureswithoutviolence.org](https://store.futureswithoutviolence.org)