



# Family Violence SAFETY PLANNING - where there is Substance Use Coercion

Created by Coercive Control in MH/AOD Special Interest Group—Specialist Family Violence Advisor (SFVA) Program 2023

**Substance Use Coercion is abusive tactics targeting a person's substance use associated with power and control.**

This can include but not limited to; use of force, threats, manipulation, gaslighting in relation to forcing a person to use or withhold substances, use more than they want, undermine and discredit a person using substances, leveraging a person's substance use circumstances with police, child or health services/custody decisions, deliberately sabotaging a person's recovery and/or their access to treatment, substance use stigma association that no-one will believe them, forcing a person into withdrawal from substance use [www.turningpoint.org.au/education/webinars/substance-use-family-violence](http://www.turningpoint.org.au/education/webinars/substance-use-family-violence)

*These and other factors can be a barrier for a person reaching out for support and services, along with limited resources and education on how to keep themselves safe or accessing services whilst managing their and/or another's substance use, while experiencing family violence.*

## Things to consider in a SAFETY PLAN relating to a person using substance or partner using substance;

*\*Will vary depending on situation and risk factors, and complements the MARAM Safety Plan tool*

### 1. Do you use one or more substances?

(Ask these questions about a partner's use also)

- What substances and how much do you use per day/week?
- How do you take each substance—oral (liquid/tablet), inject, inhale (smoke, bong or bag/can)?
- Over what time period have you been taking these substances?
- How do you obtain the substance/s? How does this impact your risk & following a safety plan?

### 2. What does the situation at home look like when there is no accessible substances for yourself or partner?

### 3. Does your partner use any of the substance use coercion tactics? [What-is-Substance-Use-Coercion.pdf](http://www.gippslandfamilyviolencealliance.com.au/What-is-Substance-Use-Coercion.pdf) ([gippslandfamilyviolencealliance.com.au](http://gippslandfamilyviolencealliance.com.au))

### 4. Do you have access to a safe place/access to services for treatment and/or withdrawal?

- Are there safe times or places for calls, send bills, meet for appointments?

### 5. What has worked and not worked for you in the past when accessing support for substance use?

### 6. Are you receiving a treatment plan, appointments or other service support? How will you continue to access these?

- Can you be flexible with appointments or accessing treatment to reduce stalking behaviours?
- Do you have sufficient prescribed (psychiatric) medication? How easily can a new prescription be arranged?
- Is there a safe place to leave or receive prescribed medications (e.g. treatment/prescriptions for opioid or alcohol recovery) ?

- How will you continue treatment plan or services if partner is pressuring you to leave these supports?
  - Would you consider changing medication/treatment to support your safety? (e.g. long acting injectable medication, buprenorphine/Probuphine)
  - What can help minimise harm (e.g. learning to self-inject safely, smoking rather than injecting or managing self-harm and suicidal thoughts)
  - Do you have a relapse prevention plan? Who has a copy?
- ### 7. Are there any legal documents that allow your partner to have control over your care (e.g. power of attorney, advance directives)?
- ### 8. Are there any privacy concerns relating to your partner accessing or knowing your medical/health records?
- Can this be amended and changed with health professionals of releasing personal information to partner?
- ### 9. Are you open to a warm referral to AOD/FV services to share support of you & your substance use?
- The Orange Door [www.orangedoor.vic.gov.au](http://www.orangedoor.vic.gov.au) for family violence service
  - Directline 1800 888 236 or ACSO 1300 022 760 for AOD referral in your region.
  - PAMS (Pharmacotherapy Advocacy Mediation Support) 1800 443 844
- ### 10. Do you have children, and are they in your care?
- What supports for children in your care need to be considered so you can access treatment & support services safely?
  - Clinicians to consider completing a secondary consultation with your local Specialist Family Violence Advisor AOD to support client outcomes
- ### 11. Can we involve your other supports or agencies to work together to increase your safety?