

Collaborating with Mental Health Resources



Creating partnerships with local mental health resources is an important step in increasing accessibility and responsiveness for domestic violence (DV) survivors within advocacy programs. These community partnerships can also support the incorporation of best practices for responding to mental health needs into DV services. At the same time, mental health services for DV survivors should never be pressured or forced and instead should be based on self-defined needs, goals, and preferences.

There are many different ways to engage community partners. The spectrum of collaboration can range from programs that are DV-informed, to those that actively collaborate, to fully integrated programs.

Informed Programs

- Are aware of the relationship between DV and mental health, and weave this understanding throughout their programming
- Routinely engage in cross-training and have established referral partnerships
- May also have interdisciplinary teams that include both advocates and mental health practitioners

Collaborative Programs

- In addition to being mutually informed, collaborative programs also share or trade services
- Examples include co-facilitating groups at both organizations, having a staff member from one organization on-site part of the time with the partner organization, and co-located services

Integrated Programs

- Integrated programs use a truly “no wrong door” approach where a menu of services is offered within a program and provided based on a survivor’s self-defined needs by an interdisciplinary team

NCDVTMH offers several resources to support cross-training and collaboration:

- [Coercion Related to Mental Health and Substance Use in the Context of Intimate Partner Violence](#) (toolkit)
- [Mental Health Coercion Palm Card](#)
- [Key Survey Findings: Domestic Violence Programs and Survivors with Mental Health Challenges](#)
- [Survey of State Mental Health Administrators: Summary of Results](#)
- [Prevalence of Intimate Partner Violence and Other Lifetime Trauma Among Women Seen in Mental Health Settings](#) (report)
- SAMHSA, ACF, and NCDVTMH joint [Information Memorandum](#) and [Partner Guide](#)

Additional NCDVTMH resources for substance use disorder, recovery, and mental health providers can be found [here](#).