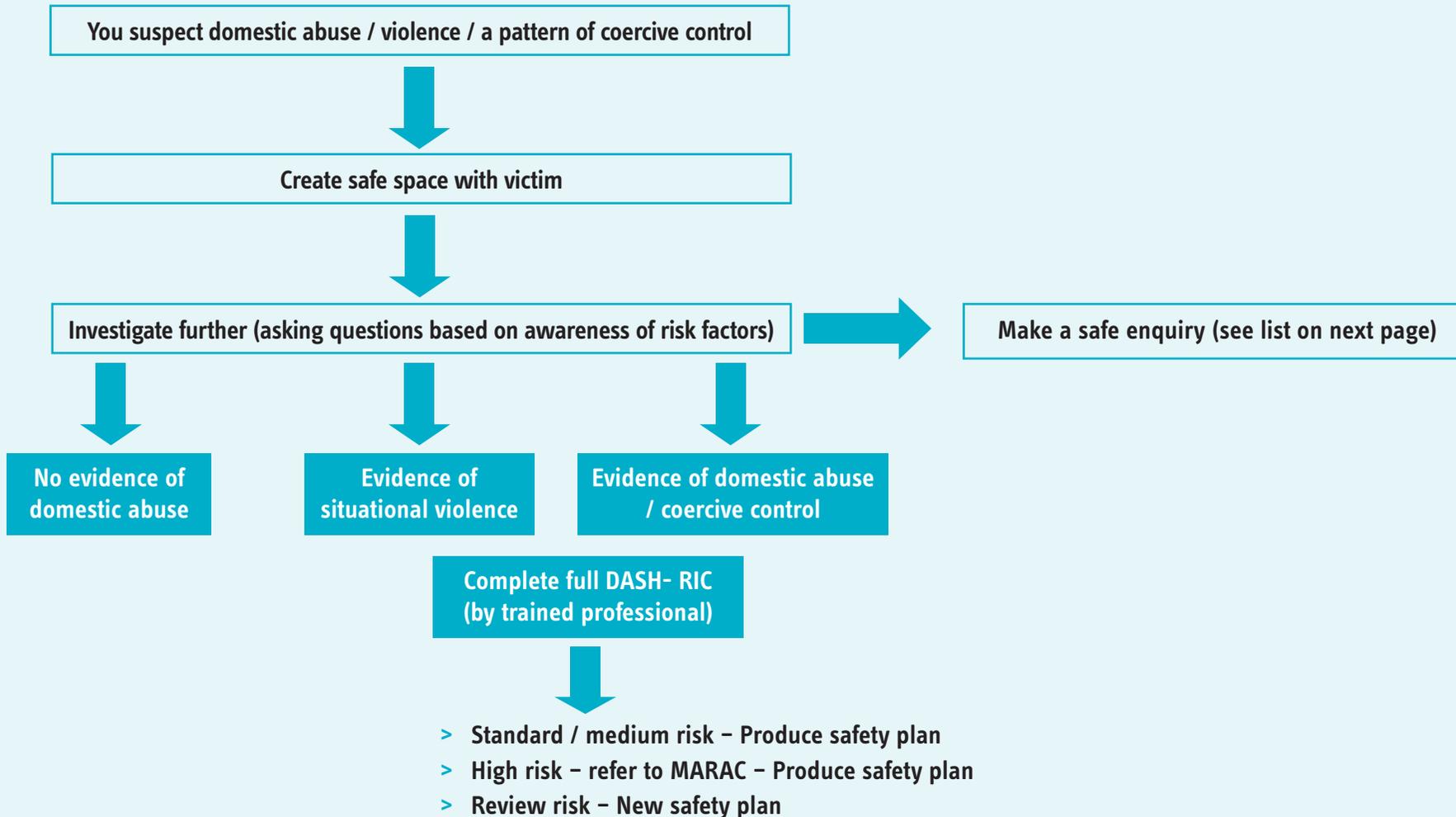


What to do if you suspect domestic abuse or a pattern of coercive control





Making a safe enquiry

Ensure confidentiality and safety by making sure you:

- > are alone with the person
- > can't be interrupted and have sufficient time
- > only use professional interpreters
- > don't pursue the conversation if the person lacks capacity or consent to an interview unless you've already arranged an advocate
- > record the person's response (but not anywhere that the perpetrator may have access to)

Give opportunities to disclose by explaining your reasons for enquiring into domestic abuse, for example:

- > explaining it is common and lots of people experience it, so it's normal for you to be asking
- > explaining it's not just about physical violence, and is underpinned by controlling and coercive behaviour.

Explain the limits of your confidentiality

Ask direct questions, for example:

- > Has anyone close to you made you feel frightened?
- > Does anyone close to you bull you, control you or force you to do things?
- > Has anyone close to you ever hurt you physically (hit, pushed, choked you?)
- > Has anyone prevented you from getting food, clothes, medication, glasses, hearing aids or medical care?
- > Has anyone prevented you from being with people you want to be with?
- > Has anyone forced you to sign papers against your will?
- > Has anyone talked to you in a way that made you feel ashamed or threatened?
- > Has anyone taken money belonging to you?

Tips for safe enquiry from LGA and ADASS (2015) Safeguarding adults and domestic abuse: a guide to support practitioners and managers. London, Local Government Association.