

Dear EMT Community,

COVID-19 is presenting unprecedented challenges and changing the ways that we must meet the needs of our patients and clients. For victims and survivors of domestic violence, this period of social distancing may compound the feeling of isolation already present in so many abusive relationships. CT Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CCADV) is actively seeking ways that we can communicate the availability of Safe Connect, CT’s domestic violence resource hub. We are hoping that you can help us spread the word to your patients, clients, and people in your community!

Safe Connect, a project of CCADV, provides victims with extensive information, safety planning, and counseling, as well as referrals to one of CCADV’s 18 member organizations for ongoing support and services locally. While our advocates are now working remotely during COVID-19, they are available via call, chat and email 24/7. Whether someone needs one-on-one counseling, services for children who have witnessed domestic violence, legal advocacy related to a restraining order or the arrest of their abuser or just someone to listen, Safe Connect advocates are on standby. The Safe Connect team is a highly compassionate, bilingual, multicultural group of advocates whose cultural backgrounds span over ten different countries and four continents. Advocates are 80% bilingual in English and Spanish with several other languages spoken. Plus, our chat and email features can respond to nearly 200 languages.

CCADV has developed a short IPV script specifically for EMT’s because of the crucial role that you play. This is especially important during the isolation of the COVID-19 pandemic. Currently in the state of Connecticut, most police departments are not responding to medical 911 calls that are not identified as DV calls. During isolation it is even harder for someone to disclose that an injury or health issue might be a result of IPV. Without police response individuals are not getting the Lethality Assessment (LAP) screen which gives essential IPV resources to everyone. CCADV is urging EMT staff to deliver the short IPV script or display the IPV information within your ambulances. Our goal is to inform every patient and client that Safe Connect is a safe resources that is still available 24/7 throughout the COVID-19 outbreak. This simple education could save the life of someone who might not be able to ask for help during these incredibly stressful and isolating times.

We know that these are extremely busy and difficult times, and we thank you for all of the hard work that you are doing on a daily basis. Thank you for helping us reach as many potential victims and survivors as possible. Please don’t hesitate to reach out to CCADV Director of Health Professional Outreach, Ashley Starr Frechette ([astarrfrechette@ctcadv.org](mailto:astarrfrechette@ctcadv.org)) with any questions or resource needs.

Sincerely,

The CCADV and Safe Connect Team