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**ANNOUNCEMENT**

**CARE POWER: Strengthening the National Health System is imperative  
for the early detection and management of violence against women**

Thessaloniki, 4/5/2026

A clear and strong conclusion emerged within the framework of the CARE POWER project through networking activities among support organizations for survivors of domestic and intimate partner violence against women. This conclusion is also supported by international literature. According to the project contributors, **the health system in Greece responds to incidents of violence in a fragmented way, without institutionalized and clearly defined care pathways, instead of preventing and managing them in a holistic manner.**

At the networking workshops implemented under the project “CARE POWER – Empowering Health Professionals to Identify and Support Victims and Survivors of Gender-Based Violence,” held in March 2026 in Larisa, Thessaloniki, and Athens, representatives from the Ministry of Health, regional health authorities, primary healthcare services and hospitals, structures of the General Secretariat for Equality and Human Rights network for combating violence against women, local government, civil society, and the academic community actively participated, including representatives of medical students.

**Critical barriers and weaknesses in managing domestic and intimate partner violence cases**

According to the project contributors, frontline professionals highlighted significant shortcomings and structural gaps that undermine the effective detection and management of domestic and intimate partner violence against women:

- **The absence of unified protocols and guidelines** for the prevention, detection, and proper management of violence cases.

- **Insufficient coordination and collaboration within and between services**, with no standardized referral pathways connecting healthcare services, the police, and other competent support and intervention services.
- **Systemic constraints and weaknesses in the National Health System**, including understaffing of health services and the lack of appropriate private spaces in emergency departments.
- **The lack of institutionalized training** at both undergraduate level and in continuing professional development.
- **Legal ambiguity** regarding the obligation to report cases (especially when there is no survivor consent) and fear of retaliation from perpetrators (particularly in small and close-knit communities).
- **Barriers to supporting women without legal documentation** and challenges in managing cases involving perpetrators who are members of security forces.

### **From fragmented management to a holistic approach**

According to the project contributors, transitioning from fragmented management of domestic and intimate partner violence cases against women to a structured and coordinated protection system—one that places the survivor and her safety at the center and primarily contributes to prevention and early detection—requires institutional organization and safeguarding. **This includes establishing clinical protocols for detection and management, as well as protocols for referrals and inter-service collaboration. It also requires strengthening the National Health System and primary healthcare structures, along with implementing mandatory and continuous education and training for frontline professionals.**

The CARE POWER project is implemented by the Primary Health Care Research and Education and Clinical Skills Company, based at the Laboratory of Primary Health Care, General Practice and Health Services Research of the Medical School of the Aristotle University. CARE POWER is implemented within the PREVENT – Preventing gender-based violence and violence against children programme, co-funded by the European Union (CERV), the Bodossaki Foundation, and the NGO Support Centre, with a total budget of €2.3 million.

**The Scientific Coordinator of the project** is Professor of Primary Health Care and Medical Education at the Medical School of the Aristotle University, Emmanouil Smyrnakis.

More information: <https://arecs.org.gr/index.php/education/actions/care-power>

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