**LET’S TALK – DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE AGAINST PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY**

**TRANSCRIPT**

Karin - Domestic and family violence typically means that there is violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation amongst people that live in the same home, which means domestic or in the same family. So usually between partners, ex-partners or family members, and it's really about power and control.

Sam - It could be financial, social, emotional, mental, physical.

Kaitlin - I think domestic violence is a bit of a hidden epidemic. There is so many people that experience domestic violence, but that's even more so for people who have a disability. So there's a really high percentage of people with a disability who will experience abuse over their lifetime.

Sam - People with disabilities can often get in relationships that are abusive but they think that that's just normal because they're being loved as well.

Karin - People with disabilities are more likely to be abused and experience violence compared to people without disability, and that's often due to the nature of the disability itself.

Kaitlin - So things like specifically removing someone's aids, so if they use hearing aids, taking them away. It could be not charging their wheelchair. It could be damaging it or breaking it. It can also be things like harming assistance animals or threatening to harm assistance animals. As far as emotional abuse, it could be putting that person down because of their disability or telling someone they won't be believed because of their disability. So things like that can be other forms of abuse that people without disability wouldn't experience.

Karin - And also, too, it's fair to say that there's still many people with disabilities who don't actually recognise what violence is. They think it's normal.

Kristy - I pretty much thought it was normal, like being hurt all the time because they think because we got disability, they think they can put it over us or we deserve it. And I realised myself it wasn't normal to be treated like that.

Sam - I have been in an emotionally abusive relationship where my partner was saying things to me that made me feel like I was less of a person.

Jill **-** Well I had a domestic violence situation quite a while ago now. I was an adult though, but only in my twenties, so I didn't know any different either because I hadn't been in a relationship before.

Karin - Domestic and family violence is a very real issue. It doesn't discriminate. It impacts all levels of our society, whether you're rich, whether you're working class, whether you're poor, whether you're disabled, it doesn't matter. It has the capacity to affect us all. And we all need people in our lives that can help us. We all need adequate pathways to safety, and we all need support.