

DOMESTIC HOMICIDE REVIEW – ANONYMISED SUMMARY

1. REVIEW

The Community Safety Partnership commissioned a Domestic Homicide Review following the homicide of an adult woman by her intimate partner. The Review examined the circumstances preceding her death and agency involvement across three community safety partnerships, including local authority and health-service areas. Particular consideration was given to opportunities to recognise vulnerability and domestic abuse, barriers to disclosure, the use of interpreters and the importance of professional curiosity.

2. CASE SUMMARY

The victim had moved to the UK from overseas and spoke limited English. Following concerns at her home, information was not immediately reported to police. Subsequent information from someone known to her led to a missing-person investigation, which became a homicide investigation. The victim was later found deceased and her partner was identified as responsible for her death.

3. KEY FACTS

The victim experienced a number of circumstances that increased dependency and reduced access to independent support. The couple had children and had lived in several areas. Agency contact was limited and predominantly through health, maternity and family-health services.

Before her death, the relationship had deteriorated and the victim had indicated that she wished to separate. Her informal support was limited. The subsequent homicide investigation identified evidence of serious previous violence and threats which had not been known to statutory agencies.

4. LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Language & Interpreters: Professional interpreters should be used where possible. Reliance on partners or relatives can restrict safe disclosure.

Recognition & Professional Curiosity: Practitioners should consider wider social circumstances, dependency, isolation and intrusive third parties. Indicators should prompt safe, targeted enquiry.

Routine/Targeted Enquiry: Services should create safe opportunities to ask about domestic abuse, supported by training, policy, supervision and clear referral pathways.

Policies & Procedures: Domestic abuse procedures should support recognition, enquiry, response, interpreting, safeguarding and access to specialist support. Standards varied between agencies.

Cultural Responsiveness: Practitioners should understand cultural, family and community factors without making assumptions, including potential honour-based abuse or coercion.

Intersectionality & Barriers: Limited English, migration-related issues, financial dependency and isolation can combine to create significant barriers to disclosure and help-seeking.

Risk & Vulnerability: Vulnerability should be considered cumulatively. Dependency, isolation, emotional manipulation and separation may interact to increase risk.

Publication of DHRs/DARDRs: Publication decisions should consider whether details could lead to the victim, family members or others being identified, and whether family, cultural or community factors could increase the risk of harm. Public learning should be balanced with the need to protect people from further harm.

5. GOOD PRACTICE

The Review identified positive practice including:

- safeguarding awareness within interpreting arrangements
- systems for highlighting safeguarding concerns in primary care
- multi-agency information-sharing arrangements
- comprehensive domestic abuse policies
- established routine/targeted enquiry processes
- specialist support for people facing language or migration-related barriers
- appropriate use of professional interpreters
- domestic abuse specialists within health services
- accessible services and information in different languages

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- R1.** Strengthen interpreters' professional awareness and competence when supporting patients who may be vulnerable to domestic abuse or other safeguarding concerns.
- R2.** Introduce or strengthen a local domestic abuse policy in primary care covering recognition and response to indicators of abuse, targeted/selective enquiry and safe use of interpreters.
- R3.** Ensure clear public-facing information about domestic abuse and available support.
- R4.** Ensure websites and public information include effective translation arrangements so diverse communities can access domestic abuse information.
- R5.** Update safeguarding adults procedures to include clearer detail on domestic abuse under the Domestic Abuse Act, with links to guidance on recognising and responding to abuse.
- R6.** Improve clinicians' ability to recognise and respond to signs of domestic abuse through stronger local policies and greater professional curiosity.
- R7.** Share the learning from this review across the three Community Safety Partnership areas so professionals better understand barriers to disclosure, risks and vulnerabilities, and respond with appropriate professional curiosity.

The Home Office have agreed for this to be the only information published relating to the review owing to safeguarding concerns.