

Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) Learning Brief: Case of murder and suicide

DOMESTIC HOMICIDE REVIEW

The Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act (2004) defines a Domestic Homicide Review as a review of the circumstances in which the death of a person aged 16 or over has, or appears to have, resulted from violence, abuse, or neglect. This multi-agency process seeks to identify lessons to be learnt from the death and prevent harm from happening in similar circumstances in the future.

More information on the DHR process can be found on the [KBSP website](#).

5. New legislation: Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and non-fatal strangulation

Since this DHR was completed, the new Domestic Abuse Act 2021 has come into force*. This Act states agencies should ensure that victims are able to access frontline support that meets the complexity of their needs.

The Act also names the new definition of domestic abuse which includes controlling and coercive behaviour, emotional abuse, and economic abuse. Additionally, the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 now recognises children who see, hear, or experience domestic abuse as victims in their own right.

[Section 70 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#)

Strangulation and suffocation offences came into force in June 2022, prior to this they tended not to be charged at all or charged as a generic offence such as common assault. It recognises the severity of strangulation and the deep impact on the victim/survivor.

*[Domestic Abuse Act 2021: overarching factsheet - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

1. Background information

The victim was found with several injuries on their body and sadly died a few days later in hospital. The perpetrator died shortly after being found at the scene with injuries which were later concluded to be self-inflicted.

The victim was at the point of separating from the perpetrator – a time when it is known that there is a higher risk of abuse including increased risk to physical safety*.

*[Risk factors of Domestic Abuse](#)

2. Audit on routine enquiry within GP practices

In response to this DHR, an audit of routine enquiry was carried out in General Practices. Information from this review was also disseminated to practice staff via a newsletter to enable implementation of the learning.

The IRIS service is in place in GP Practices across Bristol. IRIS provides specialist domestic violence and abuse training for practice staff as well as support and advocacy for patients. To find out more, click the following link: [How to get in touch with your local IRIS service - IRISi](#)

4. Are You Ok? campaign

In response to this review and wider concerns around the increase in domestic abuse during the Covid-19 pandemic, the KBSP promoted the 'Are You Ok?' campaign to raise awareness about domestic abuse across all communities and to highlight how and where to get help. Resources were added onto the KBSP website which is accessible in 133 languages via the embedded Google translate tool. The campaign was promoted across the city in public spaces, including buses, libraries, and GP practices. Click on the following link for more information: [Are You Ok campaign. \(bristolsafeguarding.org\)](#)



3. Wider issues: employment

Within the review, it was found that the victim and perpetrator had the same employer.

The workplace toolkit commissioned by Public Health England* and Business in the Community is designed to help employers spot the signs of domestic abuse. The toolkit follows the four 'Rs': (1) Recognise, (2) Respond, (3) Refer, and (4) Record.

Please click the link to find out more: [Domestic Abuse: a toolkit for employers](#)

*Public Health England is now known as the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID).

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