

Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs) including Suspected Victim Suicides

1. DHRs – why they are important

When a person aged 16+ dies owing to violence, abuse or neglect by a partner, ex-partner or family/household member the Police make a referral for consideration of a DHR. This allows agencies to work together to learn lessons and make plans to improve support in the future. This includes suspected victim suicides following domestic abuse. Please see [the DHR Guidance](#).

It is vital that we work to prevent domestic abuse – please read on

7. Children as victims and [Clare's Law](#)

The impact of domestic abuse [on children is considerable](#). [Operation Encompass](#)

promotes speedy responses, and training is available [here](#).

Perpetrators may use techniques to manipulate and blame the victim through "[gaslighting](#)". Many perpetrators will have a history of abuse in previous relationships, so the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (Clare's Law) is an important tool to help recognise risk and patterns of abuse

6. Things to think about

When experiencing DA asking for help can be hard, not speaking up may be a logical way to prevent harm to self or others. Be curious, persistent & person centred. Be alert to subtle signs of suicidality, such as 'I can't do this anymore' or 'People would be better off without me.' Exploring sensitively, can save lives. Use flags on your systems so risks are understood and explain what support is available from specialist services in [Telford](#) and [Shropshire](#)

2. Domestic Abuse homicide and suicide

vital [research into every domestic abuse death](#) has revealed important data to better understand risk. Over 4 years 332 people have died owing to (ex)partner violence, 169 have been killed by a family member and **354 people are victims of suicide following domestic abuse**. For family member homicides the majority were over 65. Overall, 73% of victims were women.



5. Help and Support

If someone is experiencing DA consider all the risk factors, have a conversation with the person in a safe space and consider the various services that are available and when you might need to refer to MARAC.

marac.telford@westmercia.pnn.police.uk

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Use [the Shropshire DA Pathway](#) which explains how to respond to domestic abuse, where to get help and how to refer to MARAC. Telford information is [here](#) and [here](#). Please see [help for men who wish to address their abuse](#)

3. Risk Factors associated with suicide

following DA. 73% were female. The main risks associated with suicide following domestic abuse:

- (1) Perpetrator already known to Police for DA.
- (2) [coercive and controlling behaviours](#) (58%)
- (3) Perpetrator has problems with alcohol
- (4) Non-fatal strangulation has been used in past
- (5) Perpetrator misuses drugs
- (6) Perpetrator has mental health problems
- (7) Relationship ending increases risk
- (8) Perpetrator has experienced depression/anxiety

(9) Perpetrator has previously been suicidal
(10) Perpetrator has also experienced DA.

55% of suicides cases had been to [MARAC](#)
People can be at risk to suicide when these indicators are not present. Risk is complex

4. [coercive and controlling behaviours](#)

are ways of harming, punishing or frightening someone to force compliance. Threats, humiliation or intimidation to gain control can be less recognisable to the person whereas some may perceive compliance as less costly than resistance. "The dynamic can create profound feelings of entrapment and hopelessness, which significantly increase the risk of suicidality."

Support is vital. It is an offence under S76 of Serious Crime Act. It includes checking phone/spending/bank account; controlling access to friends/family; preventing access to see GP or professionals; threatening to expose them or harm them or family/ children or themselves; denying access to interpreter. People sometimes only realise the impact retrospectively.