

Message

From: Katona Krisztina [/O=PHU/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=KATONA KRISZTINA114]
Sent: 15/04/2020 13:54:15
To: Miller Charlotte [charlotte.miller8@homeoffice.gov.uk]; [REDACTED]@homeoffice.gov.uk
CC: [REDACTED]@homeoffice.gov.uk; [REDACTED]@homeoffice.gov.uk; Abolhasani Azita [azita.abolhasani@homeoffice.gov.uk]; [REDACTED] (CPG); [REDACTED]@homeoffice.gov.uk; [REDACTED]@homeoffice.gov.uk
Subject: update from NPCC for No 10 conversation.
Attachments: Preventing Domestic Homicide in Pandemics_ L.W. Sherman April 2020 2.0 (Autosaved).pdf
Importance: High

Hi Charlotte, as promised an update from the NPCC lead below. We'll share the research with the DA commissioner to ask her views.

Please let us know if there are any actions that come out of the No 10 meeting. NPCC are being pretty proactive and are up for doing more.

Best wishes

Krisz

From: Louisa Rolfe <l.rolfe@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk>
Sent: 15 April 2020 13:16
To: Katona Krisztina <Krisztina.Katona@homeoffice.gov.uk>
Cc: Angela Whitaker <a.whitaker@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk>; Sterling Stuart (UKVI) <Stuart.Sterling@homeoffice.gov.uk>
Subject: FW: Urgent - NPCC operational plan and guidance on domestic homicide - your thoughts before 3pm today.
Importance: High

Hi Krisztina

I've replied directly as I'm conscious this is urgent for you.

Whilst I appreciate the desire for an Operational Plan, operational plans are owned by the individual forces and governed by Police & Crime Commissioners. My role as NPCC lead is to share best practice & encourage improvement. During our response to COVID19, there will also be Strategic Coordinating Group operational plans. From the outset I have encouraged, via NPCC, for the SCG chairs to include Domestic Abuse within their multi-agency operational plans & I've had a lot of assurance this is happening. All force leads similarly reassure me that DA is a force priority & many PCCs are involved in coordinating support of local victim support services.

In terms of guidance we have shared a number of things with forces from the outset (mid March):

- We already have established Authorised Professional Practice for Domestic Abuse which is not affected by lockdown & we have produced additional guidance for handling DA over the telephone should pressures upon police resources become even greater.
- We have also shared guidance produced by other NPCC leads & endorsed by MOJ & CPS relevant to prosecution, bail & out of court disposals.
- We have shared guidance & best practice on managing DA during lockdown from the charity sector.

- We are collecting data on DA incidents in NPCC & we have a dedicated intelligence lead within the team collecting & analysing trends & information.
- We have also encouraged forces to look at how they manage highest risk DA perpetrators during lockdown. This is very similar to Prof Sherman's proposal. Forces already identify high risk perpetrators & many are managed through their Integrated Offender Management Teams.

In terms of the proposal from Professor Sherman, this is interesting. Larry is quite a controversial figure for the DA sector (you may recall he was very vocal when Everyone's Business was published by HMICFRS in 2014 as he had led a US study which suggested arrest led to worse outcomes for victims). Whilst he is well regarded in the academic world, the Cambridge work is heavily based upon randomised control trials which do not lend themselves well to the complexity of human relationships. I agree that self-harm is an indicator of risk (because it is often an attempt at coercion & control).

In terms of the practicalities of implementing his proposal, there are a few challenges:

- Police data on self-harm is incomplete & not reliable & health are unlikely to have the capacity to share right now (& are difficult to engage on this in normal circumstances)
- The sector would want to know what the 2 attending officers will 'do' & be reassured this doesn't actually increase risk – many will say unless it is done incredibly carefully it could make things worse. There is a wealth of academic research which suggests victims are the best at managing the risk & external interference can be a bad thing.
- Capacity across policing when most of us have 10% of our workforce self-isolating & the additional pressure of leading the multi-agency response.

I think we could do something with this but I would want The College of Policing to review it and also seek the views of trusted sector partners (Nicole Jacobs plus Chief Execs of Refuge, Safe Lives & Women's Aid). The mode & means of reaching out to victims might be better done guided by MARACs & with options of using other agencies &/or charities to initiate contact rather than two police officers knocking on the door.

As regards an operational plan, we could pull together a one-page overview of guidance/steer shared with forces if that will help but it won't be ready by 3pm.

Kind Regards

Louisa

From: Katona Krisztina [<mailto:Krisztina.Katona@homeoffice.gov.uk>]

Sent: 15 April 2020 12:01

To: Angela Whitaker <a.whitaker@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk>

Subject: [External]: NPCC operational plan and guidance on domestic homicide - your thoughts before 3pm today.

Importance: High

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Hi Angie,

Many thanks for your thoughts yesterday they were much appreciated. SpAds are meeting No 10 at 3pm today and had an additional question on operational plan and guidance below. Your thoughts on this would be very helpful ideally by around 2.30 so we can send onto them? Looking at the attached document I think NPCC are already doing some of this.

Happy to discuss.

Best wishes

Krisz

From: Miller Charlotte <Charlotte.Miller8@homeoffice.gov.uk>

Sent: 15 April 2020 11:50

To: Katona Krisztina <Krisztina.Katona@homeoffice.gov.uk>

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Subject: RE: domestic homicides

Thank you Krisz. I think No.10 want to be assured that there is an operational plan and guidance on domestic abuse and domestic homicides for the duration outbreak from NPCC – based on international evidence. Have we had sight of any of their operational planning / guidance around this, could we ask to see?

No.10 have shared the attached so I'm guessing they want us to be much more directional

From: Katona Krisztina <Krisztina.Katona@homeoffice.gov.uk>

Sent: 14 April 2020 17:49

To: Miller Charlotte <Charlotte.Miller8@homeoffice.gov.uk>

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Subject: domestic homicides

Hi Charlotte, as promised and with thanks to the team a brief note below on domestic homicide.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Best wishes

Krisz

Domestic Homicide brief note.

Statistics:

- HO and police figures do not show any increase in domestic homicides or domestic abuse during COVID-19. In the same period last year – the equivalent of lock down to now – there were 8 domestic homicides and HO analysts estimate that the figure is the same since lock down this year. There may be some more data from the Easter weekend as the police are still analysing this.
- There is certainly increased press coverage – particularly from the Daily Mail, but there is not yet an apparent increase in cases. Some of the homicides blamed on isolation – eg the recent family murder/suicide were not cases of domestic abuse where decades of abuse erupts into violence. In that case the trigger seemed to have been debt, there was no previous history of domestic abuse.

- Police and HO analysts say that short term shifts of homicide data tend to be meaningless due to the very small numbers. However, police are going to be looking at each domestic homicide during COVID to see if COVID and lockdown are contributory factors. Some forces are also asking for quick time reviews to learn lessons quickly.
- Approximately 20% of all homicides are domestic homicides. This number is slowly declining.
- Police say that there has been an increase in no crime calls – eg neighbours phoning up but when police visit everyone says things are ok. This could be because of our/police increased comms or because victims are too frightened to speak to police. Or just that more people are at home and having loud rows.

Risk factors for domestic homicides (at any time not just during COVID):

The HO runs an assurance process for domestic homicide reviews – all local areas have to do a review for every domestic homicide. Common factors are:

- Previous domestic abuse offending (although often not reported to the police), strangulation is a particular risk.
- Partner becoming pregnant / having a child
- Partner leaving the offender
- 'toxic trio' (alcohol/substance misuse, poor mental health)
- Poverty and chaotic lifestyles.
- Social drivers and attitudes which are harder to tackle eg gender inequality.

Academic research suggests that to reduce domestic homicides government needs:

- Early identification of high risk coercive and controlling behaviour and a joined up response to this from both prosecuting and support agencies.
- Information sharing between agencies, particularly Health (so maintaining Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences are key – police say some local authorities are stopping these and we have asked MHCLG to issue clear guidance that they should continue)
- Family focused support to victims (i.e. not threatening to remove children if victims remain in an abusive relationship)
- Accessible and safe emergency accommodation
- Perpetrator programmes that address the multiple needs of perpetrators and families (drug and alcohol addiction, mental health, financial pressures etc...)

What are police doing during COVID:

- The police and particularly the NPCC have been proactive about domestic abuse during COVID.
- They have done significant publicity to ensure victims know that they will respond to calls and are working closely with DA charities.
- Keeping an eye on known perpetrators with neighbourhood policing
- Pushing the silent 999 solution through comms.
- The recent drop in 999 calls has given them extra capacity to respond to calls from vulnerable victims eg domestic abuse victims. And also to push forward current cases.
- Continuing to work with CPS, HO and MOJ about how they best progress prosecutions and protective measures like Domestic Violence Protection Orders.

What more could they do:

- There are still concerns from both police and the public about allowing the police into homes because of the risk of catching COVID.

Police say other useful factors would be:

- Fast track access to mental health treatment/support with addiction and financial support services for DA victims and perpetrators / publicising this and encouraging perpetrators and families to seek help. (We are doing this with the Respect helpline and are planning to do more with eg Drive programme.)
- Maintaining emergency accommodation and addressing this for victims with no recourse to public funds. (HMT fund should help with this short term, BICS are looking at the no recourse to public funds piece.)
- Support to Local Authorities to maintain MARAC meetings and intrusive follow up of higher risk cases. (MHCLG have sent out guidance on this but Victoria Atkins will also press Luke Hall on this in their tri-lat tomorrow.)

Longer term actions:

- Ensure that all police forces have done the Domestic Abuse Matters training – only around half have done this but obviously difficult to do during COVID.
- As part of the CJS Cabinet committee work on reducing homicides, HO is working with MOJ to understand the links between previous offending and domestic homicide risk better. For example, is there a link between convictions for threats of violence and homicide.
- In the domestic abuse bill we are:
 - Piloting new Domestic Abuse Protection Orders which will give police greater powers to enforce positive provisions eg treatment/perpetrator programmes. We aim to start piloting this in April 2021.
 - Placing the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme which allows people to ask police if their partner has a history of domestic abuse on a statutory footing and publicise it more.

Krisztina Katona
Head of Public Protection Unit
Home Office

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