

01 Middlesbrough Domestic Homicide Review Middlesbrough Community Safety Partnership (CSP) commissioned a DHR-2 in June 2018 following the death of a female due to a domestic homicide incident.

02 The Case

The victim, was killed by her husband in May 2018. They had been married for nine years, both were Hindu and were pharmacists in a business they owned in Middlesbrough. The victim was a victim of Domestic Abuse (DA) throughout the marriage, both physical assaults and controlling and coercive behaviour which was not reported or known to agencies.

05 Lessons learnt

- The victim's family and work colleagues held pieces of information about the abuse that she suffered. Much of that information, if considered in isolation, may not have seemed significant. Some of the information indicated that the risk victim faced was increasing significantly.
- The victim presented at her GP and disclosed that she was suffering anxiety and was under pressure because she could not conceive. The GP referred her for low intensity cognitive therapy. There is no evidence that anyone in this pathway, either GP or IAPT services, asked her if she had or was experiencing DA.
- The victim told members of her family and work colleagues some instances of her husband's abusive behaviour but she did not disclose the full extent of it, she did not leave him even when she suspected he was gay.
- The victim's husband was gay and engaged in relationships with other men, because of cultural beliefs about sexuality, divorce on the grounds that he was gay could never have been a reason for him to end his marriage. Consequently, the review concluded the only way that he may have felt able to leave the marriage with honour was by killing the victim.

03 Background

- Family and work colleagues held pieces of information which, when brought together, showed a pattern abuse and coercive and controlling behaviour
- The victim's husband was a gay man and had a number of intimate relationships with men during marriage. He disguised his sexuality. He was in a relationship with man and had planned murder to start a new life with this man in another country.
- The victim was desperate to conceive and the fact she had not appears to have been a significant issue in her life. She sought both therapeutic help and attended GP and private fertility appointments.
- Both victim and her husband were not known to services. A lot of the information included within the review was provided by the victim's family who engaged and were consulted throughout the review.

04. Concerns

- The victim experienced DA at the hands of husband. To many, he tried to present himself as a well-educated man who was a successful pharmacist and businessman. The reality is that he was a bully, a liar and a perpetrator of domestic abuse. He had been carrying out searches about how to kill her and had taken out several life insurance policies in her name.

07 What will Middlesbrough Community Safety Partnership do?

- Review effectiveness of information provided to family, friends, work colleagues, small business and diverse communities about recognising the signs of DA and where to go for support.
- Seek assurance from health agencies that professionals are trained in recognising abuse, being alert to indicators and understand the links between Mental Health and DA.
- Consider if relevant agencies have policies and training in place to recognise and respond to 'so called' honour-based violence.
- Seek assurance that policies and training in relation to DA recognise the barriers that victims of domestic abuse may face, and that measures are in place to help victims overcome their fears.

06 DHR report Review concluded 20 June 2019. It will be published May 2020 once approved by Home Office Quality Assurance Panel and will be available on Middlesbrough Council Website.