

Deceased Kamile (30 years)

Background

The Safer Lincolnshire Partnership (SLP) commissioned a Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) into the death of Kamile who was killed by her partner, Ruben. Kamile and Ruben had been in a relationship for 6 months, Ruben was found deceased at the scene of Kamile's murder, having taken his own life. The DHR considered all aspects of agencies involvement to identify what lessons were to be learned regarding the way in which local professionals and organisations work individually and together to safeguard Kamile; how and within what timescales they will be acted on, and what is expected to change as a result. The purpose of a DHR is to prevent domestic abuse and homicide and improve service responses for all domestic abuse victims and their children by developing a co-ordinated multi-agency approach to ensure that domestic abuse is identified and responded to effectively at the earliest opportunity.

Ruben was a serial domestic abuser who had been convicted for domestic abuse offences against three different women before he met Kamile. Kamile had been a victim of domestic abuse in her marriage before she met Ruben. The existence of the couple's relationship was not known to any agency; however, information gathered from friends after Kamile's death indicated that there had been domestic abuse in the relationship. In the month prior to Kamile's death, she had told a former partner of Ruben's that he had been abusive to her. It is not known why Ruben murdered Kamile. Kamile was a Lithuanian national and had lived in the United Kingdom for the previous 10 years. Ruben was a South African national and had lived in the United Kingdom for the previous 14 years.

Key Learning

- Cultural and language barriers have a role in reducing the likelihood that domestic abuse victims from the Lithuanian community, and other communities of Eastern European origin, will report domestic abuse or stay engaged with services if they do make a report.
- Diverse cultural attitudes can result in community tolerance of unacceptable abuse.
- Existing regulations are not sufficient to recognise and act upon the risk posed by a serial domestic abuse offender who exhibits high-risk behaviours, unless they have been sentenced to 12 months or more in prison.

Improving Practice

- Lincolnshire Community Safety Partnership should coordinate and monitor a programme of activity in place to support domestic abuse victims from communities of Eastern European origin in engaging with local agencies.
- Lincolnshire Community Safety Partnership should develop a programme of activity to build community confidence and knowledge of what is unacceptable behaviour relating to domestic abuse. The programme should ensure that information on reporting domestic abuse, third party reporting, access to services, and non-acceptance of abuse is promoted to communities of Eastern European origin.
- The Home Office should take steps to ensure that repeated domestic abuse offending is taken into consideration when permanent leave to remain, citizenship, and other immigration applications are decided.



Next Steps – What you can do

- Understand this 'Briefing Note' and discuss at your next team meeting and make sure you and everyone understands and is able to apply the learning.
- When working with victims of domestic abuse, including those from a minority community ensure that they are aware of how to access support and report abuse.
- Maintain a 'Think Domestic Abuse' approach where possible.
- Prevent domestic abuse before it happens.
- Maintain your professional curiosity.

