

Case of Clare

On a morning in August 2023 Clare was found at home and was pronounced deceased by paramedics that morning. She was found to have died by suicide.

Clare worked for a statutory agency and in the months leading up to her death was seen by agencies for her mental ill health and substance/alcohol dependency. Clare had a partner who reported Clare to her employer, making allegations relating to drug/alcohol usage and breaching of client confidentiality. The partner subsequently withdrew these allegations. Clare was subject to an internal investigation and moved from her work location. These allegations were not substantiated.

Clare had also reported her partner to police and Clare had also received a DVDS disclosure in relation to her partner.

Clare's partner threatened her own suicide to Clare.

What did we learn

For Clare the investigation by her employer was difficult, removing her from her normal workplace. Clare loved her work and took pride in what she did, and it was a significant part of her identity. Clare expressed concern at times about how her mental health difficulties or engagement with mental health services might impact on her employment. She expressed worry that if she was unable to successfully return to work and control her panic attacks that she would lose her job. Clare expressed to colleagues that she did not wish to seek support from the HR/Safeguarding departments as they had been involved in the previous investigation into her.

The review found that financial control of Clare was a factor.

The review found that Clare's peers and Managers did not fully understand the role of the internal Safeguarding team.

The themes identified were.

The panel recognised this is a complex area working in a public facing organisation with a lot of responsibility and how this mixes in with DA is a key theme.

The panel believes that the wider suicide timeline needs to be better understood. As a result there is a recommendation for the multi-agency task and finish group to continue to develop the suicide prevention and DA toolkit which will include the suicide timeline and embed this suicide prevention and DA toolkit locally.

Economic Abuse, this is often a hidden abuse, not often recognised by individuals. Understanding the dynamics of a relationship and various pressures that are placed on individuals in respect of decisions made whilst in an abusive relationship.