

**REPORT ON THE
IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE
MULTI-AGENCY
STATUTORY
GUIDANCE FOR
DEALING WITH
FORCED MARRIAGE
(2008)**



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office



Home Office



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on behalf of the Forced Marriage Unit
(a joint Foreign & Commonwealth Office and Home
Office Unit).

The Forced Marriage Unit would like to express its
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In October 2010 the Forced Marriage Unit began its review of the implementation of the Statutory Guidance on forced marriage across public agencies in England and Wales. The Statutory Guidance is relevant to all persons and bodies in England and Wales who exercise public functions in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults.

Although the review specifically examined the work being carried out by the statutory agencies, it is clear that a considerable amount of work around forced marriage is being delivered by voluntary organisations.

The review took place in two phases. First, a questionnaire was sent to all relevant agencies with responsibility for safeguarding children and adults. Second, a series of regional multi-agency meetings were carried out to examine the response to forced marriage at a local level.

There was a disappointing response to the questionnaire with eighty-one respondents in total. Forty-three local authorities, twenty-seven police forces, three responses from the health sector, only one response from a school and one from a probation service. No questionnaires were returned by local authority housing departments, the prison service or the British Transport Police.

Forced marriage is far better understood than it was several years ago. Frontline professionals are more aware of the particular dangers facing victims of forced marriage. No longer are large numbers of children, young people and vulnerable adults routinely turned away from services because frontline professionals fail to recognise forced marriage as a safeguarding issue. Nevertheless, many agencies have not embedded forced marriage within existing children and adult safeguarding structures, strategies, policies and procedures. Furthermore, the analysis demonstrated that there is:

- A lack of commitment within agencies to address the issue of forced marriage

- An inconsistent approach to training with few agencies routinely and regularly training their staff to respond to cases of forced marriage efficiently and effectively
- A disparity in the way different agencies and individual departments within those agencies handle and monitor cases of forced marriage

Overall, the review showed that the police recognise the need to address proactively forced marriage although their implementation of the guidance is not always consistent. However, schools, further education colleges, health services, local authorities and local authority housing departments will need to do more if they are to achieve a reasonable response to this form of abuse. Without greater senior management commitment to forced marriage within each agency, it is unlikely that the Statutory Guidance on forced marriage will be implemented to the standard that was intended.

The report concludes that to achieve an acceptable standard, all agencies should have in place:

- i. A forced marriage strategy
- ii. Policies and procedures together with an inter-agency protocol for handling cases and sharing information
- iii. Clear lines of accountability throughout the organisation with a lead person who has responsibility for forced marriage and a senior manager who has undertaken additional training who can advise on complex cases
- iv. Training on forced marriage ideally incorporated into routine training on child and adult safeguarding
- v. The ability to monitor and evaluate cases

The recommendations set out a number of steps to assist agencies to improve their response to forced marriage. These include requesting that inspectorates take account of forced marriage during routine inspections, re-launching an updated and more succinct version of the Statutory Guidance, developing a template for an inter-agency protocol, updating the Multi-Agency practice guidelines and producing detailed information on Forced Marriage Protection Orders. It is also recommended that the Forced Marriage Unit identifies local areas that could build on their existing multi-agency working and practice to achieve a level of excellence which could be showcased to inspire other regions to develop their own services.

2. INTRODUCTION

In October 2010 the Forced Marriage Unit began its review of the implementation of the Statutory Guidance on forced marriage across public agencies in England and Wales. The Statutory Guidance is relevant to all persons and bodies in England and Wales who exercise public functions in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as listed in s.11 (1) or s.28 (1) Children Act (2004), or under s.175 Education Act (2002). Such persons and bodies include:

- Maintained schools, independent schools and further education colleges
- Local authorities
- Police authorities and chief officers of police
- Youth offending teams
- Local probation boards
- Strategic health authorities
- Primary care trusts
- NHS trusts
- NHS foundation trusts

The guidance is also given to the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS and CAFCASS Cymru) under s.11 Criminal Justice and Courts Services Act (2000), and Local Safeguarding Children Boards (s.13 or s.31 Children Act (2004)).

The Statutory Guidance is given to all persons and bodies in England and Wales who exercise public functions to protect vulnerable adults from abuse. Examples of these bodies may include (but are not limited to):

- Police authorities and chief officers of police
- NHS trusts
- Local authorities and or district councils particularly adult social care services
- Strategic health authorities
- Primary care trusts
- Local health boards

The review specifically examined the work being carried out by the statutory agencies but it was clear that a considerable amount of work around forced marriage is being delivered by voluntary organisations. There are a wide variety of voluntary organisations working on forced marriage including voluntary sector forums, specialised forced marriage and honour-based violence organisations, Women's Aid, Black and Minority ethnic women's groups, Barnardos, youth workers, resource centres and Connexions. In some regions the voluntary sector is also well represented on local safeguarding children board sub-groups.

Many of the voluntary organisations work closely with statutory agencies to offer victims of forced marriage a higher level of service – although a number of these voluntary organisations are becoming increasingly concerned that funding is an issue and the services they offer may have to be restricted in the future.

The review took place in two phases. First, a standard questionnaire was sent by the Forced Marriage Unit to local agencies throughout England and Wales via (amongst others) local authorities (LAs), primary care trusts (PCTs), local safeguarding children boards (LSCBs), directors of housing and chief constables. A copy of the questionnaire can be seen at appendix three.

There was a wide range of topics covered in the questionnaire including questions around senior management commitment, whether agencies had a lead professional in place as well as a senior specialist who had received additional training. Further issues in the questionnaire covered:

- Forced marriage strategy
- Policies and procedures
- Inter-agency working and information sharing
- Community engagement and outreach work
- Training
- Risk assessment
- Lines of accountability
- Victim-centred approach
- Monitoring of cases

The Forced Marriage Unit received a total of 81 responses to the questionnaire. This was disappointing and points to a lack of commitment on the part of many agencies. Even some of the agencies that did respond held the view that this was not a problem they needed to address.

‘Forced marriage has not been identified as a priority issue for this local authority by the strategic assessment consultant and so we are focusing on other crime issues. I have reviewed the questionnaire and the questions raised are not relevant to us because we don’t work in this area. Our neighbouring local authority does work on forced marriage and keeps us updated on current issues’.

Local authority response to questionnaire

- A total of forty-three local authorities responded to the questionnaire. Thirty-nine local authorities responded from England (9%) and four from Wales (18 %). There are 433¹ local authorities in England and twenty-two in Wales²
- Twenty-seven of the forty-three police forces in England and Wales responded (62.8%)
- There were three responses from health. One from a hospital, one from a community mental health service and one from an NHS Trust
- One school responded
- Seven ‘other’ organisations answered the questionnaire. These organisations include voluntary organisations working within the violence against women sector, refugees who house women facing forced marriage, a probation service and solicitors who are familiar with Forced Marriage Protection Orders

Percentages have not been calculated for respondents from education or health as it is not possible to establish an exact figure for the total number of possible respondents. Furthermore, the limited number of responses from both education and health means that some statistics/percentages in the report may appear skewed.

The responses to the questionnaire provided the Forced Marriage Unit with an initial sense of the levels of implementation, activity and knowledge around forced marriage throughout England and Wales. For further information on the respondents to the questionnaire and performance ratings please refer to pages 30 – 31.

The second phase of the review then built on the findings of the questionnaire, with a series of regional multi-agency meetings that examined the response to forced marriage at a local level. These brought together the relevant public bodies in a multi-agency forum, to open a dialogue and get a better understanding of the practical steps that are being taken to address the issue. The aim was to highlight good practice, identify challenges and provide sufficient information, for the Forced Marriage Unit to propose recommendations to improve the implementation of the Statutory Guidance nationally.

In addition to the issues addressed in the questionnaire, several further issues were discussed as part of the regional meetings, including agency engagement, managing risk, Forced Marriage Protection Orders, monitoring cases, resources, and ideas to improve both the Statutory Guidance and multi-agency guidelines. The Forced Marriage Unit would like to thank all the agencies, organisations and services (both statutory and non-statutory) that completed questionnaires, as well as everyone who helped organise, attended and contributed to the regional meetings.

This report sets out some of the key findings from the returned questionnaires, together with information gleaned from the regional meetings, and makes recommendations for future practice.

1 <http://www.communities.gov.uk>

2 <http://www.direct.gov.uk>

3. ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT

The review explored whether agencies were able to demonstrate organisational and senior management commitment to the issue of forced marriage.

3.1 ORGANISATIONAL LEAD

Of the eighty-one respondents, fifteen stated there was no lead person with responsibility for forced marriage within their organisation. Thirteen local authorities did not have a lead person and neither did one health organisation and one 'other' organisation. However, as a result of the questionnaire, four local authorities stated that they would be reviewing this situation. All the police forces that responded to the questionnaire had a lead person in place.

3.2 ACCOUNTABILITY

Twelve organisations did not have a designated person accountable for promoting awareness of forced marriage. These tended to be local authorities (nine) however, one police force, one community health service and one 'other' organisation also failed to have an accountable person within their organisation.

Reasons given for not having a designated person accountable for promoting awareness were varied and included 'we have no cases'; 'this is the responsibility of the LSCB'; and 'not in adult safeguarding'.

Twelve organisations stated that they did not have clear lines of accountability between frontline staff and senior managers. Eight were local authorities, three were police forces and one was a crime prevention partnership.

3.3 AGENCY ENGAGEMENT/INVOLVEMENT

One specific area explored during the regional meetings concerned which agencies were taking forward the work on forced marriage and which agencies were not as engaged.

3.3.1 ADULT SOCIAL CARE

Adult social care has responsibility for vulnerable adults³ but often the link between vulnerable adults and forced marriage is not clearly understood. One local authority stated that although there were adult social care cases where forced marriage was present, the cases had been handled solely as cases of mental capacity thereby overlooking the use of the Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007 to assist them.

3 The core definition of a 'vulnerable adult' from the 1997 Consultation 'Who Decides?' issued by the Lord Chancellor's Department, is a person over 18 'who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of disability, age or illness; and is or may be unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation.' – see <http://www.safeguardingmatters.co.uk>

CASE STUDY – SANDWELL

A forced marriage steering group was set up in Sandwell. The group had representatives from the police, probation, Women's Aid, Sandwell Organisations Against Domestic Abuse, the Adult Safeguarding Team, Children's Services, LSCB, local schools, Sandwell College, Sandwell PCT, Sandwell South Asian Targeted Health Initiatives and Sandwell Homes. The steering group also established links with local faith leaders and local councillors.

As part of the group's development, all the members attended a presentation by the Forced Marriage Unit. This ensured that everyone on the group had an understanding of forced marriage and honour-based violence.

The steering group then produced an annual work plan and progress was fed back to the Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership and the Safeguarding Adults and Children Boards. One of the main areas the group focussed on was training.

Training was delivered to professionals from a variety of backgrounds by a local trainer who had forced marriage expertise. The training programme included a 'train the trainer' course as well as:

- Multi-agency training for the Safeguarding Adults Board with some sessions focussing specifically on forced marriage and people with learning disabilities
- Multi-agency training for the Local Safeguarding Children Board which was delivered in collaboration with a lead police officer from Sandwell's Public Protection Unit
- Training for all midwives on domestic abuse which included forced marriage

In addition, an information sheet was produced for teachers. This was distributed in July and September to make teachers aware that children could be missing school as a result of forced marriage.

A forced marriage conference was held that was aimed at professionals from a wide range of agencies. This had national speakers as well as a performance by an interactive theatre group (New Vic Theatre Company).

The result of this work was an increase in the number of referrals to all agencies, particularly referrals from the Safeguarding Adults Teams. All forced marriage cases where the victim is over 18 years old are discussed at Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences and there has been an increase in the number of Forced Marriage Protection Orders.

Dee Edwards (Violence Against Women and Children Consultant)

3.3.2 CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

From the regional meetings it became clear that not only did children's social care have difficulties responding to cases of forced marriage involving children fifteen and under, but departments had even greater difficulty providing an appropriate level of response to sixteen and seventeen-year-olds facing forced marriage. Many children's social care departments found it hard to find this age group appropriate housing or foster placements.

The problem of services for sixteen and seventeen-year-olds was addressed in one social care department by having a dedicated social worker linked to housing who has specific responsibility for this age group. This region also had specialist social workers working within the police child abuse investigation team, the

police domestic abuse team and within health. These strong links between police and children's social care meant that specialist social workers had additional training on specific issues such as forced marriage.

A further issue that arose was that only a limited number of local authorities apply for Forced Marriage Protection Orders even though local authorities are the 'relevant third party' under the Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007. Some appeared not to recognise their role in applying for orders whilst others felt it was the responsibility of the police. This failure to understand their role as set out in legislation, and subsequent over reliance on the police, means that cases are often handled inappropriately by social care services and only come to attention when the victim requires immediate assistance.

CASE STUDY – CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

Following the multi-agency training on domestic violence and the Statutory Guidance on forced marriage in Hillingdon, cases where forced marriage is disclosed or suspected are treated seriously by social care departments.

Social workers have been trained to apply the principle that forced marriage cases are very high risk and should be dealt with immediately, with regular monitoring. Staff are also advised to refer to the multi-agency practice guidelines for handling cases of forced marriage.

All cases of forced marriage are discussed at strategy meetings. The Child Abuse Investigation Team and the Sapphire Unit attend these meetings and work collaboratively to determine safety implications for victims of forced marriage. Social workers liaise with their line managers step by step at the assessments stage, and interventions and safety plans are put in place to ensure the immediate safety of the victims.

Social workers regularly refer cases to the Independent Domestic Violence Advisors team and other specialist agencies for support, and are able to access the Domestic Violence Strategic Co-ordinator and other relevant agencies for guidance and advice.

The Hillingdon Domestic Violence Action Forum on children and young people, chaired by a local councillor, meets quarterly. Part of its role is to follow up on cases and discuss the responsibilities of agencies and what actions would be expected of them. Where an agency has not completed a given task, it will be escalated to the senior manager of that agency for immediate action.

Erica Rolle (Domestic Violence Strategic Co-ordinator, Hillingdon)

3.3.3 EDUCATION – SCHOOLS, COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

Schools and colleges were viewed as difficult to engage within a number of regions because they tended to shy away from raising awareness about forced marriage with their pupils. The reasons cited were around not wanting to stigmatise particular ethnic groups and concerns around the reaction of parents and governors – as a consequence some schools refuse to display posters and leaflets or participate in training and awareness raising.

This unwillingness to raise the subject of forced marriage within schools means that the issue is not addressed within safeguarding structures. Many schools and colleges do not have a designated teacher who has attended additional training to assist in complex cases, there are no clear policies and procedures on forced marriage, and there are no specific systems in place for students to alert staff if they are facing the threat of forced marriage.

During the regional meetings it became clear that those schools and colleges that do undertake work around forced marriage can make a huge contribution towards safeguarding their pupils.

CASE STUDY –WHALLEY RANGE HIGH SCHOOL

Whalley Range 11-18 High School is in South Manchester. An all girls school, it has 1300 pupils plus 250 young women in the in the sixth form.

Child protection and safeguarding are treated very seriously at Whalley Range. The Senior Leadership Team have developed robust policies to ensure all the adults that work at Whalley Range work together to safeguard, and promote the welfare of, its pupils. Our policies go beyond implementing basic child protection procedures, and the way we deal with potential or actual forced marriage disclosures are embedded into our child protection procedures.

All staff attend basic in-house child protection training. This training outlines their individual and professional responsibilities, and the action they must take if they have concerns about the welfare of a child; all concerns however minor MUST be referred to a member of the Child Protection Team.

The Child Protection Team (CPT) comprises of the Senior Child Protection Officer (full-time post), Head of Inclusion, Behaviour Manager, School Health Advisor and School Police Liaison Officer, and the Designated Lead on the Senior Leadership Team. All have attended relevant training, including specialist training in a number of key areas including forced marriage, working with gang members, child sexual exploitation and learning from serious case reviews.

All referrals to the CPT are responded to immediately. Some require an urgent referral to another agency, for example children's services or the police. A non-acute referral may require monitoring within the school systems, or noting. A 'Vulnerable Young Person' file is set up for each referral, which allows the CPT to see quickly which concerns need escalating.

CASE STUDY –WHALLEY RANGE HIGH SCHOOL CONTINUED

In relation to disclosures of forced marriage, the initial response by the CPT is to initiate an urgent referral to the police Public Protection Investigation Unit. They would facilitate a strategy meeting involving all key agencies. We have found this method ensures an immediate, effective response. The police have statutory powers to remove documents such as passports, and the child can be immediately removed with a Police Protection Order if necessary.

Decisions about seeking a Forced Marriage Protection Order can be made whilst the young person is in a safe environment. We work closely with the agencies who apply for these Orders; local solicitors with particular expertise in this area and Independent Domestic Violence Advisors.

Within the school environment we ensure students are aware of how to access help, and from whom. Advice is available in school where services can also be accessed via websites and telephone help-lines are highlighted on prominent displays. As part of the Citizenship curriculum all students from Year 8-13 regularly receive information on forced marriage issues with workshops run by the police, Women's Aid and the Pakistani Resource Centre.

We are more than happy to discuss forced marriage issues with any parent who has an interest in how the school approaches this issue. However, if a child discloses concerns about potential forced marriage we would not discuss this with parents in accordance with Forced Marriage Unit guidelines.

We make no apologies for taking direct and protective action to safeguard and inform our young women. We are always more than willing to share the good practice that we have developed with any other interested party.

Sharon Allen (Senior Child Protection Officer, Whalley Range High School)

3.3.4 HEALTH SERVICES

Health services often do not appreciate how they may be able to help children, young people and vulnerable adults facing forced marriage. This is perhaps best summed up by a development worker for mental health (minority ethnic communities) who stated in the questionnaire that forced marriage is 'not seen as relevant in their part of the organisation'. This is concerning the disproportionate number of South Asian women and girls who self harm.⁴

In the regional meetings, discussions included engaging with health services and developing training for GPs, school nurses, midwives, health visitors and mental health services. On the whole participants felt that most health professionals did not engage with this issue. In several areas health professionals were described as 'quite open and engaged', but on closer examination this appeared to be specifically in relation to attending Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences to discuss individual cases. Overall, the review found that health services do not engage or work proactively to ensure staff are able to identify cases of forced marriage.

⁴ See for example Hussain M, Waheed W and Hussain N. Self harm in British South Asian Women: psychosocial correlates and strategies for prevention, *Annals of General Psychiatry* 2006

3.3.5 POLICE FORCES

Police appeared to lead on forced marriage in many areas. They were more likely to have a senior officer with force-wide responsibility for forced marriage and honour-based violence. Interestingly, participants at the regional meetings felt strongly that police were the main agency taking work forward and responding to individual incidents. Furthermore, both in the questionnaire responses and at the regional meetings it was assumed that there should be one specific agency that should lead all the other agencies on forced marriage and this should be the police.

In contrast, both the questionnaires and regional meetings highlighted that the police had concerns about the level of engagement from some other agencies and were concerned that much of the work around forced marriage was falling to them.

‘We are concerned about the degree to which other agencies are engaged in this issue and in particular in regard to the role of local authorities in the obtaining of Forced Marriage Protection Orders and social care’s response to forced marriage cases involving 16 and 17 year olds, particularly in relation to accommodation with foster carers’.

Police response to questionnaire

3.4 SUMMARY OF ORGANISATIONAL COMMITMENT

There appears to be a lack of clarity within organisations around commitment to the issue of forced marriage. Many organisations hold the view that one single agency (and generally not them) should have overall responsibility. This means that they do not recognise that their agency should have structures, procedures and processes in place to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults from being forced into marriage, and that in order to do

this effectively they need to be part of a multi-agency approach to the issue. The lack of commitment is evident in the small number of agencies that have a senior specialist who has received additional training on forced marriage and the number of agencies that did not have a forced marriage lead professional.

‘The main difficulty in relation to the guidance is the lack of clarity about which individual, board, partnership, organisation should be leading on this. At a local level there will be a number of partnerships where this issue should feature, but there needs to be clarity about whom within the partnership needs to lead and how this should be done. Chief Executives may have the overarching responsibility, but it is unrealistic and doubtful for them to be taking the lead here. Whoever is identified therefore needs to be given some authority to move this agenda forward across a number of partnerships. It is difficult to assess the effectiveness of the current approach which seems to leave this largely to the Domestic Violence Co-ordinators (DVC) to manage without giving them the authority to prioritise this on the relevant board. DVCs are generally speaking NOT senior managers and therefore are not regarded as having authority. DVC posts are also likely to be deleted from some Local Authorities because of the current economic cutbacks. It is therefore essential that there is well thought through guidance around leadership, data collection/monitoring and outcomes/evaluation of processes’.

Domestic violence co-ordinator Response to questionnaire

To achieve the appropriate level of organisational commitment will not require agencies to develop new structures or procedures; it simply requires forced marriage to be embedded within the existing and established systems for safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults from any type of abuse.

4. STRATEGIES, PROTOCOLS, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

4.1 FORCED MARRIAGE STRATEGIES

The review looked at whether agencies had a forced marriage strategy (either standalone or as part of a wider violence against women and girls strategy or a safeguarding children/adults with support needs strategy).

Seventy-eight respondents answered the question. Fifty (64%) responded that they had a forced marriage strategy in place. This comprised:

- Twenty-two local authorities (51%)
- Twenty police forces (74%)
- One health organisation (33%)
- One school (100%) – note, only one school responded to the questionnaire
- Six ‘other’ organisations (86%)

4.2 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Seventy-seven respondents answered the question about whether their agency had policies and procedures in place. Fifty-five agencies (72%) stated that they had policies and procedures in place – this comprised:

- Twenty-six local authorities (60%)
- Twenty-three police forces (85%)
- One health organisation (33%)
- One school (100%) – note, only one school responded to the questionnaire
- Five ‘other’ organisations (71%)

Seven agencies stated that although their organisation had policies and procedures in place, they were not up-to-date with existing statutory and non-statutory guidance on safeguarding children, protecting adults with support needs or protecting victims of domestic violence.

Eleven of the twenty agencies that did not have policies or procedures stated that they were under development or awaiting approval by senior management.

4.3 INTER-AGENCY PROTOCOLS FOR HANDLING CASES

Although few areas had a specific inter-agency protocol for handling cases of forced marriage, it was clear that many areas used Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs) to handle forced marriage cases.

In some areas all cases were discussed at the MARAC meeting using MARAC’s information sharing and confidentiality agreements – this included victims between sixteen and seventeen years old. However, in other areas only cases where the victim was over eighteen years old were discussed at the MARAC.

Some areas had considered having specific MARACs for cases of forced marriage and honour-based violence but the majority of areas stated that they do not have sufficient case numbers to hold regular MARACs for these specific issues.

Although MARACs may be an effective way of handling cases of forced marriage, meetings are often held on a fortnightly or monthly basis and therefore other systems must be in place to take action immediately if there is an imminent risk of harm to the victim.

Sixty-six agencies answered the question on inter-agency protocols and, of those, thirty-five (52%) stated that their local safeguarding children board had developed an inter-agency protocol. Seventeen (26%) responded that their local adult safeguarding board had developed a protocol and eighteen (28%) stated that a protocol had been developed by their community safety partnership.

‘Statistically, reporting has increased year on year in force since 2005 (from two in 2005 to fifty-three in 2010). In terms of crude numbers the increase directly relates to the timing of implementation work and improvements made to deal with the issue of forced marriage. The scale of non crime reporting of low level concerns has also increased

(in line with our policy of positive action and early intervention), allowing risk assessment and risk management to inform the tactical options required to prevent the occurrence of further harm?.

Police implementation report 2011

4.4 SUMMARY OF STRATEGIES, PROTOCOLS, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Many agencies have not included forced marriage within their strategies, policies or procedures. While it is encouraging to see that for some agencies this is 'work in progress', it is unacceptable for others to refuse to address forced marriage on the basis

that there are no local cases. Evidence shows a clear correlation between implementing the Statutory Guidance and a rise in the number of referrals to local agencies. Equipping frontline professionals with the tools to handle cases effectively means that more victims come forward because they are confident that their needs will be dealt with in an appropriate manner.

MARACs provide a useful tool in protecting young people and vulnerable adults from forced marriage but other systems need to be in place so any potential risk of harm to the victim can be responded to at the earliest opportunity.

CASE STUDY – BRISTOL NEXT LINK

Bristol Next Link Domestic Abuse Services generated funding for a part time specialist forced marriage worker following a Ministry of Justice forced marriage pilot project in 2010.

We set up and chaired a multi-agency sub-group of the local safeguarding children board. The group included representatives from health (treatment nurse, school nurse, MARAC nurse, and child protection lead for NHS Bristol), education (child protection lead, Personal, Health, Social and Economic education lead), the police, housing, legal services, children's social care, Bristol safeguarding policy and procedures officer, a senior representative from Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Trust and the specialist forced marriage service from Next Link.

Over a period of nine months the group drew up a set of forced marriage procedures and guidance for professionals which were approved by the Bristol LSCB. The protocols will be included in the Board's training programme and we are now working with the Board to draw up a multi-agency training package.

The result of this work has been to increase the number of referrals being made to Next Link and the police. We have also seen a corresponding rise in the number of Forced Marriage Protection Orders that have been applied for in the Bristol area: there had been no orders applied for at the end of the pilot project; there have been six to date.

We are rolling out training to both children's and adults' services. The work on forced marriage has gradually built up momentum and is definitely becoming part of professionals thinking now.

Carol Metters MBE (Director, Missing Link and Next Link, Bristol)

5. TRAINING ON FORCED MARRIAGE

The review explored aspects of training: whether frontline staff had received training on forced marriage; whether this had been incorporated into existing training; and whether training addressed issues such as confidentiality, information sharing, referrals pathways, risk assessments, legal remedies and the dangers of family counselling mediation and reconciliation.

5.1 LEAD PROFESSIONAL

Seventy-six agencies responded to the question 'does your agency have a senior specialist who had undertaken additional training on forced marriage in order to provide advice on complex cases'. Of those seventy-five agencies, fifty-two (69%) responded that they did have a senior specialist in place. This comprised:

- Twenty-seven local authorities (63%)
- Twenty police forces (73%)
- One health organisation (33%)
- One school (100%) – note, only one school responded to the questionnaire
- Four 'other' organisations (57%)

One police force stated that although they had an officer who had undergone further training, they would like 'clarity over the recommended quality assured programmes available for senior specialists' so that the response to forced marriage would be consistent.

In the majority of the local authorities that responded, the specialist was their safeguarding children or adult lead, the domestic abuse co-ordinator or the independent domestic violence advisor.

The reasons for not having a trained specialist lead professional who could give advice for complex cases included 'not aware of any such training', 'insufficient capacity within children's social care', 'the current domestic violence co-ordinator has not had training on forced marriage' and 'only basic training offered in this area'.

5.2 FRONTLINE STAFF

There are wide variations in the way agencies train their frontline staff. In the questionnaire, sixty-nine agencies (87%) responded that forced marriage had been incorporated into existing training. This equates to:

- Thirty-four local authorities (79%)
- Twenty-seven police forces (100%)
- Two health agencies (67%)
- No school (0%) – note, only one school responded to the questionnaire
- Seven 'other' organisations (100%)

The regional meetings, however, painted a more varied picture with many participants talking of the difficulties they faced around resources and capacity. Some regions did address forced marriage in their multi-agency safeguarding training but the issue is often only covered in broad terms as 'it is not possible to cover it in great depth due to the length of training for all safeguarding issues'.

It was apparent from both the questionnaires and the regional meetings that only the police recognise the need to train a wide variety of staff including call handlers, frontline officers, front desk staff as well as specialists.

The constraints around resources and capacity mean that many agencies reserve training for frontline staff who are most likely to be in contact with children, young people and vulnerable adults facing forced marriage whilst other agencies focus on ensuring that frontline staff know which specialist to contact if they come across a case.

Several regions hosted conferences specifically addressing forced marriage or had undertaken an awareness raising campaign in the past, but these tended to be 'one-off' events that did not address the need for on-going training across all frontline staff.

Some areas provide a rolling programme of multi-agency training on forced marriage (see for example the case study below). Other agencies/areas had addressed the issue of ongoing training by developing e-learning packages or DVDs so a larger number of employees could be trained.

The types of training and awareness raising tools include:

- Train the trainer sessions
- Two hour briefing sessions
- Half day briefings
- DVDs
- E-learning packages
- Workshops for Personal, Social Health and Economic education co-ordinators
- Local Safeguarding Children Board multi-agency safeguarding training

Often the training available is aimed at safeguarding children and young people facing forcing marriage –

few agencies mentioned specific training for handling cases involving vulnerable adults or children and young people with disabilities.

While some areas incorporated forced marriage training into their ‘targeted’ and ‘specialist’ training (levels 2 & 3), few agencies mentioned addressing it in their ‘basic awareness’ safeguarding training (level 1). Only three local authorities stated that forced marriage is addressed in their adult safeguarding training.

Even though much of the training available on forced marriage is multi-agency, some agencies are less ‘visible’ than others. Respondents to the questionnaire as well as participants at the regional meetings described the difficulties of involving some agencies (particularly teachers and health professionals) in multi-agency training.

CASE STUDY – LONDON BOROUGH OF HILLINGDON

ACTION

Hillingdon’s Domestic Violence Multi-Agency Training deliver a rolling monthly training programme which includes using the Statutory Guidance for dealing with forced marriage as critical learning for handling cases effectively. The training is available to all departments and disciplines across the council including children social care services.

The Hillingdon Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy Project also delivers multi-agency training on domestic abuse including the impact that domestic abuse has on children as well as the importance of performing risk assessments. The training incorporates guidance on forced marriage for frontline practitioners as well as how to undertake risk assessments on both children and adults.

The Local Safeguarding Children Board attends domestic abuse training. The Board also included forced marriage as a key theme at their annual conference – this introduced good practice procedures and preventative work for practitioners and professionals in the borough.

CASE STUDY – LONDON BOROUGH OF HILLINGDON CONTINUED

IMPACT

As a result of the training, professionals are aware that children, young people and vulnerable adults facing forced marriage are at risk of harm. Safety planning and protection of potential victims are therefore put in place and frontline practitioners are signposted to specialist services for support. All cases are handled using the forced marriage guidance and risk assessments are completed in all cases.

Following the multi-agency training, agencies are referring more cases to the police, the Forced Marriage Unit and the Independent Domestic Violence Advisors service. This has had an impact on the number of disclosures, safety and wellbeing of victims and has increased the level of awareness of forced marriage among children and vulnerable adults. In addition the training information is cascaded down to other sections within children's social care.

Erica Rolle (Domestic Violence Strategic Co-ordinator, Hillingdon)

5.3 SUMMARY OF TRAINING ON FORCED MARRIAGE

Both the questionnaire responses and the regional meetings showed that there is an inconsistent approach to training with few agencies routinely and regularly training their staff to respond to cases of forced marriage efficiently and effectively.

On the whole, police forces provide a wider range of training to a wider range of staff than other agencies. The other agencies frequently viewed 'one-off' events such as a conferences or briefing sessions as an adequate method of training staff, rather than keeping a range of their frontline professionals updated on an ongoing basis. Within social care, health and education, forced marriage was rarely included in basic safeguarding training and specialist training was not routinely available.

'Our experience is that a key element of successfully supporting victims is having highly trained specialist staff and officers. Greater emphasis should therefore be placed on all agencies ensuring that their staff who deal with victims are provided with such specialist training'

Police response to questionnaire

6. HANDLING AND MONITORING CASES

6.1 HANDLING CASES OF FORCED MARRIAGE

The review assessed the way cases of forced marriage are handled by agencies, and looked at some of the ways victims can be helped to come forward and disclose their concerns. It also reviewed the ways in which ongoing cases of forced marriage are monitored.

It is apparent from the responses to the questionnaire and the regional visits that the police tend to be the lead agency when handling cases of forced marriage. Despite taking the lead, there remain some areas where police could make significant improvements. For example five forces that responded to the questionnaire did not have officers in post who had undertaken additional training to advise on complex cases.

One force did not have a named person who is responsible for ensuring that cases are handled, monitored and recorded effectively. However, many forces actively train all frontline staff including call handlers so that cases of forced marriage do not go unrecognised. This means that cases are often identified before they escalate and the victim is taken overseas.

Locally, twelve civil protection orders have been successfully granted since the Forced Marriage Civil Protection Act came into force. However, these statistics evidence a current problem that is national and not specific to our force, that of local authority (including children's social care) responsibility. The Act makes a local authority a statutory 'relevant third party' for the purpose of obtaining an order on behalf of a victim or other person. To date, no such orders have been applied for on behalf of local authorities in this area with all successful cases being led by the police in association with NGO victim support services. While our strong approach is undoubtedly protecting victims, we have become in effect third party to proceedings in the civil court which was not the original intention of the Act. This is linked to a further, as yet unresolved issue of who

acts as a 'responsible person' for the purposes of taking voluntary DNA and fingerprints from victims up to the age of 17. The other main issues that have persisted are the refusal of some head teachers to allow posters and advice to be displayed in schools for fear of upsetting certain sections of the community even though this is a form of child abuse, the reluctance of community leaders to overtly and visibly challenge the issues from within, and the precarious financial position NGO refuge providers constantly find themselves in.

Police implementation report 2011

Other agencies, especially social care, health, housing and education, find it harder to provide a consistent response to children, young people and vulnerable adults facing forced marriage.

Schools and colleges tend to be reluctant to inform their pupils about forced marriage and many were even unwilling to display posters designed to help pupils. The reasons given for this reluctance were around not wishing to offend or stigmatise certain groups of pupils and not wishing to upset parents or governors. However, when the issue of forced marriage becomes embedded in everyday safeguarding of pupils, it can make a significant difference to individual children.

Children's and adult social care had fewer specially trained staff and cited capacity as a barrier to further training. Sixteen local authorities had no trained specialist who could assist with complex cases – often the reason given was that they would seek advice from other agencies if they had difficulties. In addition, seventeen local authorities did not have a named person who is responsible for ensuring that cases are handled, monitored and recorded effectively. The knock-on effect is that cases of forced marriage are not handled effectively, Forced Marriage Protection Orders are not sought and young people are inadequately safeguarded.

Interestingly, one of the recurring themes that came up in the regional meetings was that forced marriage was often only tackled if there were individual professionals in post who felt passionately about the issue.

‘I cannot think of any other area of policing that relies so heavily on the professionals involved in the case being passionate about the issue for anything to be done about it’.

Detective Chief Inspector at a regional meeting

CASE STUDY – WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

The police referred HK to the forced marriage & HBV support worker at Next Link after fleeing her parent’s home in the north of England.

HK disclosed that her parents were about to take her overseas to be married to a man she had been engaged to the previous year. HK had not wanted to get engaged to him but she went through with it as she was afraid of her parents.

During an argument with her parents, HK disclosed she had a boyfriend and she wanted to be with him although she did not tell them anything about him. Her parents were furious, HK was assaulted and threats were made to her life.

She was locked up and was not allowed to use her mobile, internet or facebook. However, after a few days she managed to get hold of a mobile phone and text a friend. The friend contacted her boyfriend and he travelled up to try to bring HK to Bristol. This was eventually done when HK was able to make her family believe that she could be trusted and was left on her own when the family were attending a funeral.

HK’s boyfriend’s family allowed HK to stay at her boyfriend’s brother’s house. Next Link made contact to offer support to HK and options were discussed. HK did not want to go to a refuge as she felt safe with her boyfriend’s family. To help ensure her safety, the police ‘flagged’ the address so any officer would know to treat any incident at that address as urgent. The option of a Forced Marriage Protection Order was also discussed with HK. Initially, she did not think an order would be necessary as she was sure her family would not be able to find her. However, several members of her family turned up a week or so later although they were unable to confirm that HK was living there.

After talking with HK and her boyfriend it was decided to urgently apply for a Forced Marriage Protection Order. The Next Link support worker went with HK to the solicitors and the County Court to obtain the order. It was served and HK was not required to attend the return hearing as it would put her at risk if her family turned up.

HK is still in Bristol, her family have not made contact with her, she is hoping to start college in the autumn to resume her childcare course and is hoping to work to support herself and be independent. She and her boyfriend hope to marry in a few years.

Carol Metters MBE (Director, Missing Link and Next Link Bristol)

6.2 PROCESSES TO ENABLE VICTIMS TO DISCLOSE

Many of those who responded to the questionnaire provided details of training and awareness raising that their organisation had undertaken to help frontline staff recognise the issues surrounding forced marriage and disclosure.

However, only a few organisations developed their services taking into account the particular difficulties someone facing forced marriage may encounter such as the risks around disclosure, the limited opportunities available to disclose and the victim's potential concerns around confidentiality.

In order to enable victims to disclose, one police force described how they developed a 24-hour confidential hotline available to all members of the public. The phone line is staffed by police officers who have had specific training in handling cases of honour-based violence (HBV) and forced marriage. After the on-call staff have dealt with the initial management of a case, longer term issues are handled by specially trained officers. These officers maintain contact with the victim and ensure all the safeguarding procedures have been carried out, including applying for a Forced Marriage Protection Order.

Another police force explained that although the force had considered setting up a specialised phone line, this was not possible because of current financial restrictions. However, the force is considering whether there is scope to widen the remit of an existing force-wide domestic abuse free-phone service to include victims of honour-based violence and forced marriage.

'The force has worked closely over recent years with local Black and Minority Ethnic women's support groups and Women's Aid groups. The result is the numbers of referrals coming to the force (previously two or three a year) are now thirty-five to forty each year.'

Police response to questionnaire

CASE STUDY – POLICE HELP-LINE

Between June 2008 and January 2011 Cambridgeshire Police ran a dedicated 24-hour helpline called Choices, which was based on Cleveland Police's 'Choice Helpline' launched in 2007. The helpline was staffed around the clock by specially trained officers, who would take calls from members of the public experiencing honour-based violence and forced marriage. The officers' role was to provide information and signpost the caller to support groups and, most importantly, to ensure the immediate safety of the caller. These officers would deploy to see the caller at a safe location, often with a cover story and in plain clothes, to obtain details, photograph the caller, take DNA and photographs and arrange appropriate refuge accommodation.

The information generated by these meetings was stored in a secure database with very limited access. During this time we took over 1000 calls and raised 374 incidents where officers were deployed.

Since January 2010 because of the current spending review, funding was removed from the helpline and the 24-hour response was reduced. The helpline is now staffed Monday to Friday between 9am and 5pm; an answering service is in place outside these hours. The responsibility for 24-hour safeguarding has returned to our uniform officers on reactive patrol.

We have carried out a programme of training with our front counter staff and reactive officers to raise their awareness of the issues and press home the need for immediate action. Often the person reporting may have only one opportunity to get away safely. We have experienced prominent members of the community trying to access information about girls who have fled. Also officers and PCSOs have been approached and asked to provide information to families who are trying to trace girls who've left. However, the biggest problem we have is once the girls have been placed in refuge accommodation the pull of their family and friends has meant they have returned home to 'face the music'. We have put measures in place to check in on them regularly, put markers on their addresses and telephone numbers, but once they are back home (and over 18) it is extremely difficult to ensure their safety.

The force's response to honour-based violence and forced marriage is under review and the Choice hotline will be re-launched within the next few months. The force is carrying out a restructure; creating a multi-agency referral unit encompassing colleagues from adult social care, children's social care, fire service, probation, mental health, health and the domestic abuse advocacy service, we are also moving towards dedicated domestic abuse units. It is the officers within the domestic abuse units who will staff the hotline on a 24/7 basis. Once the referral is received it will be triaged within the multi agency referral unit where risk will be managed through the multi agency forum. The investigations will be managed by the dedicated domestic abuse investigators who will work alongside the multi-agency referral unit.

All staff within the multi-agency referral unit will receive training in honour-based violence to ensure that everyone has the same level of knowledge.

Detective Sergeant Lucy Mason (Child Abuse Investigation Unit, Cambridgeshire Constabulary)

6.3 MONITORING CASES

Although most agencies were able to state how many Forced Marriage Protection Orders had been sought by their organisation, fewer agencies routinely undertook qualitative monitoring of the cases.

NUMBER OF CASES

Sixty-nine percent of the respondents collected statistics on the number of forced marriage cases.

- Twenty-one local authorities (49%)
- Twenty-three police forces (85%)
- One health organisation (33%)
- No school (0%) – note, only one school responded to the questionnaire
- Five ‘other’ organisations (71%)

SOURCE OF REFERRALS

Information concerning the source of referrals was collected by 59% of respondents.

- Eighteen local authorities (42%)
- Eighteen police forces (67%)
- One health organisation (33%)
- No school (0%) – note, only one school responded to the questionnaire
- Five ‘other’ organisations (71%)

AGE, GENDER OR DISABILITY

Information about the victim’s age, gender or disability was collected by 63% of respondents.

- Twenty-one local authorities (49%)
- Nineteen police forces (70%)
- One health organisation (33%)
- No school (0%) – note, only one school responded to the questionnaire
- Four ‘other’ organisations (57%)

CASE STUDY – POLICE

A 19-year-old young woman contacted police asking for a lift to the train station late on a Tuesday afternoon. When probed by the call handler, she was dismissive and said that she would come to the local police station. The front office clerk was quick to get an officer to speak with her. The officer had undertaken DASH training and contacted officers from the Domestic Abuse Team.

The Domestic Abuse Team established that she had signed an agreement a few years earlier to marry in her home country and that her parents were making arrangements for the wedding which was due to take place at the end of the week. Flights were booked and bags were packed at home. She challenged this with her parents and she was hit with a stick and told that she would be letting the family down. She managed to leave the house and then contact the police.

Through police intervention, safe accommodation was arranged and she was advised to leave the city which she reluctantly did. Having notified the new police area, the local police were able to continue to support her and discuss long-term strategies. We then discussed Forced Marriage Protection Orders which proved quite difficult with our legal team as they had not previously had any dealings.

During the investigation, the young woman did not want any criminal prosecutions taken against her family. She was reported as missing and her family contacted the control room asking for information – as the crime report was ‘sanitised’ and it highlighted the need not to disclose her whereabouts etc, the family was only told that she was safe and well. During this period, the girl did make contact with her sister and returned to the area as her sister had told her that their mother was ill. Whilst this was partly true, it was also seen as an attempt to put pressure on her to return to the family. The girl chose to leave the family and cut off all contact.

After several months the young woman returned to this force area (but not to her family) and signed a memorandum of understanding outlining the help the police could offer together with some safety options and advice.

Detective Inspector from regional meeting

6.4 MONITORING FORCED MARRIAGE PROTECTION ORDERS

The issue of monitoring Forced Marriage Protection Orders was raised at the regional meetings.

Interestingly, there were instances when police had not been directly informed when a Forced Marriage Protection Order had been sought – even when a power of arrest had been attached. It appears there are occasions when a copy of the order automatically goes to a central police station and local officers handling the case may not be made aware of the situation.

Furthermore, many local authorities still did not appear to be aware that they are a ‘relevant third party’ under the Forced Marriage (Civil Protection) Act 2007, despite separate guidance being issued to them in November 2009.

Most of the regions visited acknowledged that statutory agencies inadequately monitored Forced Marriage Protection Orders and some police forces were not always aware of what action was taken (if any) following a breach. However, many agencies recognised that further work was required to improve

their ability to monitor forced marriage protection orders.

EVALUATION OF OUTCOMES OF CASES

Only 21% of respondents evaluated the outcomes of forced marriage cases.

- Four local authorities (9%)
- Ten police forces (37%)
- No health agency (0%)
- No school (0%) – note, only one school responded to the questionnaire
- One ‘other’ organisation (14%)

During the regional meetings one police force described its procedure for handling ongoing cases of forced marriage and the risk assessment that is used to ensure the continued protection of the victim (see page 31).

6.5 SUMMARY OF HANDLING AND MONITORING CASES

There is disparity in the way different agencies and individual departments within those agencies handle and monitor cases of forced marriage. There are examples of good practice where professionals work hard to identify potential victims and provide them with an appropriate response in order to safeguard and protect them. However, others fail to embed forced marriage within their existing safeguarding children and safeguarding adult structures. This leads to cases not being handled or monitored adequately.

It is important to monitor cases not only in order to learn lessons and develop more effective services for future victims, but also to keep up-to-date as to the welfare of the victims. This could be simply a short-term ‘keeping in touch’ agreement or the development of a long-term safety plan. It was disappointing to find this was not happening in many cases.

CASE STUDY – NORTHUMBRIA CRIMINAL JUSTICE BOARD (NCJB)

The NCJB (with funding from Ministry of Justice) has, since 2009, improved local awareness, reporting and handling of forced marriage and honour-based violence (HBV). This work has helped the criminal justice agencies in the Northumbria area raise the profile of HBV and forced marriage and the impact it has on victims. It has also increased the awareness of Criminal Justice System (CJS) staff to the issue of forced marriage, and improved the efficiency and effectiveness of the response of CJS staff to victims and witnesses in cases of HBV and forced marriage.

The work was initiated because CJS staff noticed that a significant number of victims of HBV and forced marriage were fleeing to and settling in the North East. The criminal justice agencies who make up the NCJB worked in partnership to:

- Improve the quality of engagement, trust and confidence between the voluntary sector and the CJS by working closely with the Angelou Centre
- Assist the voluntary sector to access funding through Race and Confidence Challenge Fund and Ministry of Justice Victims Fund
- Improve co-operation between private practice solicitor firms, community groups, criminal justice agencies and the voluntary and community sector
- Involve academics to ensure that projects are effectively evaluated, lessons learnt and knowledge is disseminated to improve policy and practice around HBV and forced marriage

Durham, with the support of Northumbria and Cleveland Criminal Justice Boards, developed an HBV and forced marriage protocol, and delivered multi-agency training, including ‘train the trainer’. The training aimed to enable CJS staff to understand the issues involved in HBV, differentiate between arranged and forced marriage, identify good practice and recognise risk.

Northumbria CJB provided expertise and project management skills to support the Newcastle-based Angelou Centre in developing its SEED Project, a support network for survivors of HBV, forced marriage and domestic slavery. The project supports around twenty-five survivors, provides a programme of personal development and confidence building sessions, facilitates group discussions and organises activities to keep women engaged and overcome isolation.

Other initiatives include:

- a) Supporting the Angelou Centre to host an international conference which helped extend the North East Regional Black Women’s Domestic Violence Network. This network is open to voluntary, statutory and private sector professionals working with black and minority ethnic survivors of domestic abuse.
- b) A Therapeutic Care Project helping women and children recover from the long term effects of violence in a culturally sensitive manner.

Andy Dale (Northumbria LCJB Programme Manager) **Emma Moir** (Northumbria LCJB Project Manager)

7. SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Professionals were asked whether anything further would assist them to implement the Statutory Guidance. The responses can be summarised in four key areas.

A. DEVELOPMENT OF AN AUDIT TOOL

Some agencies requested that an audit tool be developed so they could monitor their performance against specific standards. Others felt it would be beneficial to have forced marriage established as a performance indicator.

B. TRAINING

Agencies were keen to have further training from the Forced Marriage Unit and have a national steer on what should be incorporated into training and awareness raising. One area stated that they found the Forced Marriage Unit's e-learning package difficult to use.

C. MULTI-AGENCY GUIDELINES

Agencies asked that the multi-agency guidelines on forced marriage include more about information sharing, Forced Marriage Protection Orders and an adaptable leaflet for victims and professionals. One agency requested that the guidelines be more succinct for frontline practitioners.

D. EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

Agencies were keen to receive data from the Forced Marriage Unit about the number and nature of calls by region so they could compare their performance. They also requested that the Forced Marriage Unit provide some good practice examples from different local authorities, partnerships and organisations so agencies could understand how different areas had implemented the Statutory Guidance.

8. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 CONCLUSION

Bodies covered by the Statutory Guidance on forced marriage must have clear lines of accountability for handling cases of forced marriage. The Guidance also requires that agencies should have senior management commitment to the issue and provide a victim-centred approach, together with training for specialist and frontline staff so that all professionals have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities concerning forced marriage.

The purpose of the Forced Marriage Unit's review was to understand whether or not the Statutory Guidance had been implemented across England and Wales. Both the questionnaire responses and the regional visits identified pockets of good practice that were undoubtedly making a difference to the lives of children, young people and vulnerable adults facing forced marriage.

It was also good to find that the issue of forced marriage is far better understood than it was several years ago. Frontline professionals are becoming aware of the particular dangers facing victims of forced marriage as well as the links between honour-based violence and forced marriage. In addition, many agencies have put in place structures, systems and procedures that help potential victims disclose and equip frontline professionals to respond effectively. No longer are large numbers of children, young people and vulnerable adults routinely turned away from services because frontline professionals fail to recognise forced marriage as a safeguarding issue.

However, despite the pockets of good practice and the fact that forced marriage is now recognised more widely, there remain a significant number of areas where local agencies are finding it difficult to address the issue and systems are not in place to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults. This is perhaps surprising as every agency that works with children or vulnerable adults should have a safeguarding lead – this may be the designated teacher, the head of safeguarding within the local authority

or a senior police officer – who should have a wealth of knowledge around a wide variety of safeguarding issues which could reasonably be expected to include forced marriage and honour-based violence.

To achieve an acceptable standard, agencies should have in place:

- A forced marriage strategy
- Policies and procedures together with an inter-agency protocol for handling cases and sharing information
- Clear lines of accountability throughout the organisation with a lead person who has responsibility for forced marriage and a senior manager who has undertaken additional training who can advise on complex cases
- Training on forced marriage ideally incorporated into routine training on child and adult safeguarding
- The ability to monitor and evaluate cases

During the review, it became evident that a number of agencies did not provide a consistent or appropriate response to children, young people or vulnerable adults facing forced marriage. Schools, further education colleges, health services, housing and local authorities will need to do more on the issue if they are to achieve a reasonable response to this form of abuse.

Without greater senior management commitment to forced marriage within each agency, it is unlikely that the Statutory Guidance on forced marriage will be implemented to the standard that was intended.

8.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

i. AGENCY COMMITMENT

The FMU could request that OFSTED, HMIC, CQC and other inspectorates consider an agency's response to victims of forced marriage as part of each inspection.

ii. RE-LAUNCH AN UPDATED VERSION OF THE STATUTORY GUIDANCE

It may be advantageous to re-launch an updated version of the Statutory Guidance.

The current guidance contains a great deal of information about the issue. This could be condensed into an appendix as the majority of professionals now have a reasonable understanding of forced marriage.

The statutory part of the guidance could then be simplified and abridged enabling agencies to identify their responsibilities proficiently.

A re-launch of the updated version may help raise awareness of forced marriage and clarify the responsibilities each agency has for safeguarding victims of forced marriage.

iii. UPDATE MULTI-AGENCY GUIDANCE

Several agencies requested that the Multi-Agency Guidance on forced marriage be updated to include:

- A summary of the Statutory Guidance
- A flowchart on forced marriage outlining when and where to refer cases
- The forced marriage disability guidance
- Information on Forced Marriage Protection Orders
- An inter-agency protocol
- An audit tool

iv. INTER-AGENCY WORKING PROTOCOL

The Forced Marriage Unit could, in partnership with various agencies, develop an inter-agency protocol that sets out how agencies should work together to protect and safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults facing forced marriage.

This template could include a flowchart and a self-audit tool which could be adapted at a local level to establish and ensure an appropriate level of service for victims of forced marriage.

v. INFORMATION ON FORCED MARRIAGE PROTECTION ORDERS

The Forced Marriage Unit could work with the Ministry of Justice to set out information about Forced Marriage Protection Orders for practitioners.

This might include information on monitoring cases, good practice when filling out forms as well as information on relevant third parties.

This would be a useful resource for police and local authorities handling cases of forced marriage.

vi. LOCAL GOOD PRACTICE

The Forced Marriage Unit could work with the Local Government Association and the Department for Communities and Local Government to identify local areas that could build on their existing practice.

The Forced Marriage Unit could work alongside the agencies in those areas to help them achieve excellent services for victims of forced marriage using a multi-agency approach.

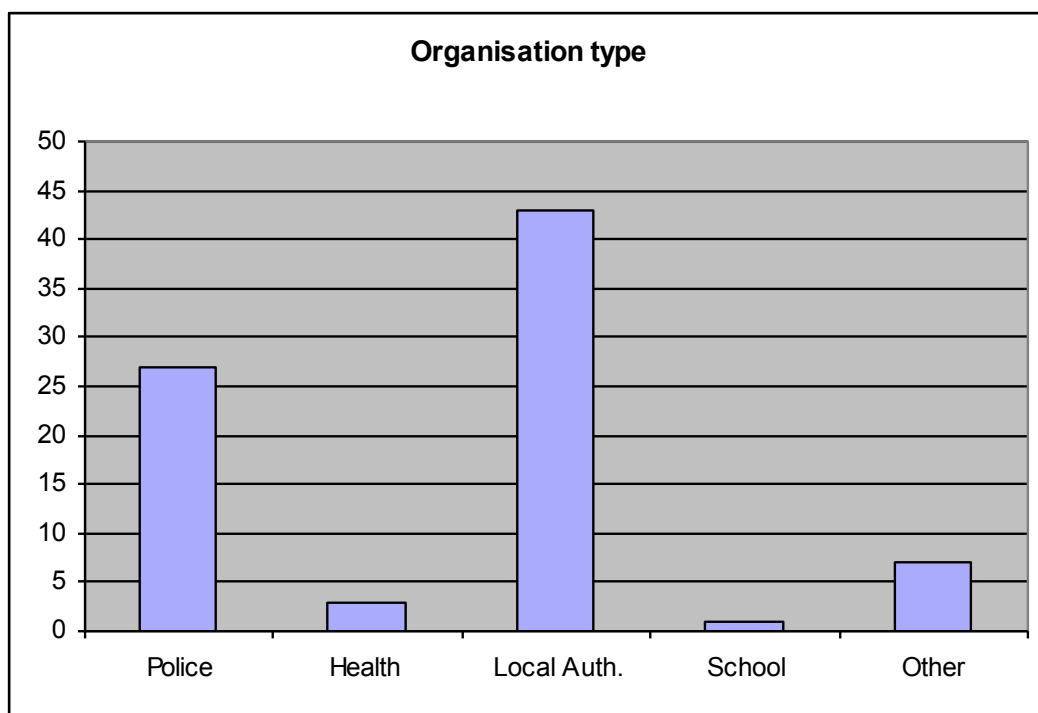
These local areas would be able to showcase their knowledge and expertise to inspire and coach other regions to develop similar services in their areas and thus attain the same level of excellence.

APPENDIX ONE

RESPONSE BY ORGANISATION TYPE

The Forced Marriage Unit received a total of 81 responses to the questionnaire.

- A total of forty-three local authorities responded to the questionnaire. Thirty-nine local authorities responded from England (9%) and four from Wales (18 %). There are 433⁵ local authorities in England and twenty-two in Wales⁶
- Twenty-seven of the forty-three police forces in England and Wales responded (62.8%)
- There were three responses from health. One from a hospital, one from a community mental health service and one from an NHS Trust
- One school responded
- Seven 'other' organisations answered the questionnaire. These organisations include voluntary organisations working within the violence against women sector, refuges who house women facing forced marriage and solicitors who are familiar with Forced Marriage Protection Orders.



Note: The limited number of responses from education and health means that some statistics/percentages in the report appear skewed.

5 <http://www.communities.gov.uk>

6 <http://www.direct.gov.uk>

APPENDIX TWO

RAG PERFORMANCE RATING

Each agency was given a RAG performance rating (red, amber or green) based on their response to the questionnaire. A red rating shows that the agency has neither systems nor procedures in place to help victims of forced marriage. An amber rating demonstrates that although some systems are in place, there is still further work that needs to be undertaken. Green equates to a good rating where a range of systems are in place to assist young people and vulnerable adults facing forced marriage.

RED RATING EXAMPLE

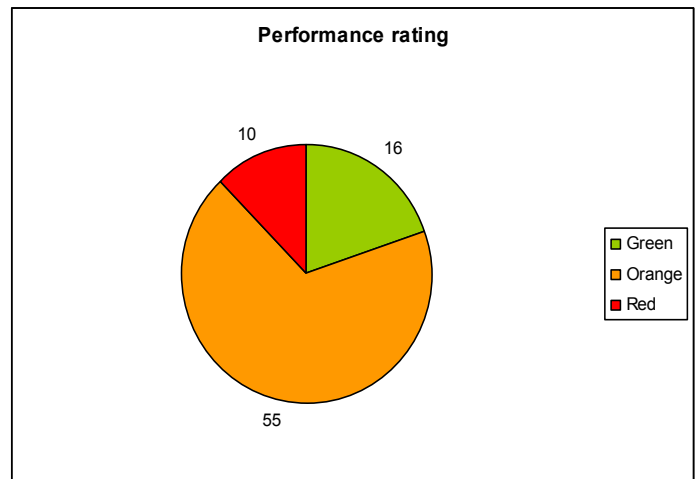
This agency stated that forced marriage was not their priority but the responsibility of the police. There was no professional lead, no strategy and there was a limited amount of inter-agency work and limited training. The local authority did not undertake any outreach work and there was no referral pathway or evaluation of cases.

AMBER RATING EXAMPLE

This agency was currently reviewing the role of the lead professional and did not have a strategy but did have policies and procedures in place and undertook a limited amount of training.

GREEN RATING EXAMPLE

This agency had in place a forced marriage lead, a strategy together with policies and procedures – the agency also undertook outreach work and had a rolling programme of training whilst also maintaining a helpline that was staffed by specially trained officers.



- Forty-three local authorities responded to the questionnaire of which nine were rated red, twenty-nine were rated amber and five were rated green
- Twenty-seven police forces responded of which none were rated red, seventeen were rated amber and ten were rated green
- Three health organisations responded to the questionnaire of which one was rated red and two amber
- One school responded and was rated amber
- Seven 'other' organisations responded of which none were rated red, six were rated amber and one rated green

The questionnaire allowed agencies to 'self-report' and there was evidence to indicate that some agencies may have inflated their RAG rating by overestimating the amount of work that was being undertaken – this became apparent during more in-depth discussions at the follow-up meeting.

APPENDIX THREE

HONOUR-BASED VIOLENCE AND FORCED MARRIAGE CASE REVIEW

Public protection

RMS No:

Name of CST officer/DAC:

Date of original incident:

Date form completed

Situation as originally presented to police – The index Offence/incident

(Names of those involved)

Triggers and warning signs identified

(As identified in force policy on HBV / FM FPP 02408)

Risks identified on presentation to police (what is likely to happen)

(e.g violence forced marriage, murder)

Action taken to reduce risks	Offered	Accepted
Alarm		
Change of locks		
Refuge provision		
Crime reduction officer referral		
Crime reduction		
Handheld personal alarm		
Sim card or phone replacement		
Door brace		
Alarmed door wedge/window alarm/sensor lights		
Safety plan leaflets/information		
Housing support		
Immigration information		
Civil orders information		
DNA/Fingerprints/photo (HBV)		
Forced marriage protection order		
Cocoon watch		
Disruption plan		
Overt monitoring		
Covert monitoring		
Name and address flagged (AD252)		
Name and address flagged (RMS)		
Other		

Referral to other agency

Agency	Offered	Accepted
Women's Aid		
Counselling		
Alcohol/drugs		
Mental Health services		
Rape crisis		
Independent Domestic Violence Advocacy Service		
Victim Support Service		
Child services		
Safeguarding adult services		
Health visiting/midwifery		
IDAP women's safety worker		
HBV/Forced marriage support service		
Referral to MARAC		
Fire safety officer		
Other		
Other		
Other		

Developments since last review

(to include additional risks identified and action taken to reduce risks, and date of last review)

Current Criminal investigation status

(Charges, court dates, bail conditions)

Policy decisions re safety planning and investigation

(to include name of senior officer making those decisions and the date)

Current risk level evaluation

Real and immediate
Real but not immediate
Minimal

APPENDIX FOUR

NORTHUMBRIA POLICE

FLOWCHART FOR CALLS CONCERNING HONOUR-BASED VIOLENCE AND FORCED MARRIAGE

ESTABLISH THAT THE CALLER IS SAFE TO TALK

CALLER REQUIRES POLICE ASSISTANCE	CALLER REQUIRES ADVICE
<p>If appropriate, establish safe method to re contact caller (consider use of 'code word' or using trusted friend or colleague). If call is disconnected, do not re-contact caller, but inform CIM.</p>	<p>If advice only call: take as much information as possible</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create incident 2. Honour-Based Violence in Summary 3. Create Grade 1 or 2 (your decision) 4. Switch to CIM 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create incident 2. Honour-Based Violence in Summary 3. Create Grade 2 4. Switch to CIM 6. Update log 'awaiting PPU Update' <p>PPU open Mon – Fri 9am – 5pm</p> <p>CIM to assess and action if further police action required – CIM to instigate whatever necessary</p>

ORGANISATIONS WHO ARE ABLE TO PROVIDE SUPPORT:

Forced Marriage Unit 0207 0080151

National Domestic Violence Helpline (24hr)
0808 2000247

Karma Nirvana Honour network helpline
0800 5999 247

(Most volunteers and staff are survivors of HBV and/or FM)

INFORMATION REQUIRED

- Full name. Some callers may be reluctant to give their name – explain why this is required, but respect their anonymity if they decline
- Age, date of birth & nationality
- Address
- Contact number and safe time to call
- Details of incident
- Is anyone else at risk?
- Has the victim been physically harmed or think they may be.... If so by whom?

- Is the victim afraid of further injury or violence?
- Has the victim told the family they do not want this to happen?
- What was the family response and what does the victim fear are the consequences?
- Does anyone know the caller is speaking to the police? Details
- Does the victim wish to remain at home? If 'Yes' why

IF IT'S A FORCED MARRIAGE AND THE VICTIM THINKS THEY'LL BE TAKEN OUT OF THE COUNTRY IMMEDIATELY WE NEED:

- Date, Time and location of departure
- Destination
- Airline
- Passport details
- Dual nationality.....advise to travel on UK passport
- Where they will be staying and who with
- Who they will be travelling with

If the risk is not immediate and you are able to talk to victim, this is additional information you should try to get if applicable:

- School details
- Employment details
- Passport details/dual nationality
- Driving licence details
- Family details
- Other needs:
- Language barriers – Interpreters – use language line
- Medical needs; Disabilities

REMEMBER:

'Yours may be the only contact we have with the victim'. **'You have one chance to get it right'**.

APPENDIX FIVE

ORIGINAL QUESTIONNAIRE SENT DISTRIBUTED BY THE FORCED MARRIAGE UNIT

REVIEW OF IMPLEMENTATION THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE: MULTI-AGENCY STATUTORY GUIDANCE FOR DEALING WITH FORCED MARRIAGE

INTRODUCTION

Under the Forced Marriage Civil Protection Act 2007, which came into force on 25 November 2008, the Forced Marriage Unit (FMU) on behalf of HM Government issued **The Right to choose: multi-agency Statutory Guidance for dealing with forced marriage** to coincide with the commencement of the Act on 25 November 2008. As part of its continued efforts to tackle this abuse, Ministers have agreed that the FMU should review implementation of the guidance.

We are therefore asking those to whom the guidance applies (those who exercise public functions in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children; and protecting adults, including those with support needs from abuse) to take part in the review.

This questionnaire will form the basis of the review. The review intends to evaluate how agencies have applied the strategic principles for dealing with forced marriage as set out within the Statutory Guidance with a view to identifying patterns, good practice and possible areas for improvement. As part of the review the FMU may approach local agencies to seek follow up meetings.

Your feedback will be invaluable in assisting us to find out whether further practical help and support for agencies is needed in order for them to respond appropriately to forced marriage. Therefore we strongly encourage all partners to complete the questionnaire.

The FMU will publish a short report outlining the key findings, including areas where improvements have been identified. The report will be generic in approach and will not name specific areas or agencies within those areas.

We would be grateful if you would return your completed questionnaire to the Forced Marriage Unit by 17 December 2010. You can do this by e-mail to fmu@fco.gov.uk or by post to:

Forced Marriage Unit
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
K4.7
King Charles Street
London
SW1A 2AH

If have any queries relating to this review then please contact the Forced Marriage Unit, by email at:

fmu@fco.gov.uk

or Suzelle Dickson on 020 7008 8759.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to contribute to this review.

We value your feedback.

Name:	Organisation:
Role:	Contact details:

ACTIONS FOR CHIEF EXECUTIVES, DIRECTORS AND SENIOR MANAGERS

1. SENIOR MANAGEMENT COMMITMENT

1.1 Has a lead person with responsibility for forced marriage been identified and in place in your organisation?

YES NO

If NO, please explain reason(s) why:

1.2 How long has the person held this position?

2 Years

1.3 Is the lead the same person that has overall responsibility for safeguarding children, and/or protecting adults with support needs and/or victims of domestic violence?

YES NO

If NO, please explain reason(s) why:

1.4 Is there a named person who is responsible for ensuring that cases of forced marriage are handled, monitored and recorded?

YES NO

If NO, please explain reason(s) why:

although there is not a single named person in that position the safeguarding process would ensure monitoring through the correct team i.e. if domestic violence bought a case to light then the MARAC service would manage.

If YES, is it the same person who leads on forced marriage?

YES NO

1.5 Do you have a Forced Marriage Strategy (this may be part of a wider violence against women and girls strategy or a safeguarding children/adults with support needs strategy)?

YES NO

1.6 Have policies and procedures to protect those facing forced marriage been put in place and being followed by staff?

YES NO

If NO, please set explain reason(s) why:

If YES, are they in line and up to date with existing statutory and non-statutory guidance on safeguarding children, protecting adults with support needs and protecting victims of domestic violence?

YES NO

Please use the space provided below to set out further information on what has been put in place.

2. EFFECTIVE INTER-AGENCY WORKING AND INFORMATION SHARING

2.1 Has a multi-agency protocol for responding to forced marriage based on Statutory Guidance been developed by;

Local Safeguarding Children's Board Adult Protection Committee
Community Safety Partnership Other, Please state: MARAC

If the options above do not apply and no protocol has been developed, please explain reason(s) why

2.2 Does the protocol include information sharing and referral procedures for:

Children and Young People Adults Adult Protection Committee

Please use the space provided below to set out further information on what has been put in place.

2.3 Has your organisation taken part in any community outreach work to raise awareness of forced marriage and the help and support available? Please set out details below including any outcomes.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Staff Training and Awareness Raising:

3.1 Has training and awareness raising on forced marriage for frontline staff been incorporated into existing training.

YES NO

If YES, how is the training delivered? Please give further details:

If NO, please explain reason(s) why:

3.2 Are the following factors fully embedded and emphasised in staff training:

- Awareness and understanding of how to respond quickly and appropriately to those at risk of or already in a forced marriage?

YES NO

- Additional factors governing confidentiality in cases of forced marriage?

YES NO

If NO, how is confidentiality assured?

- How to apply the common assessment framework to children and young people facing forced marriage

YES NO

If NO, how are assessments of children and young people's needs made?

- Awareness of legal remedies to protect those at risk of or already in a forced marriage, including Forced Marriage Protection Orders?

YES NO

If NO, how are staff made aware of the additional protection available to individuals?

- An understanding of the level of risk facing victims of forced marriage, their siblings and other family members , including the possibility of honour-based violence, threats to kill, murder, kidnap, rape, imprisonment and being abducted overseas?

YES NO

If NO, how are staff made aware of the additional protection available to individuals?

- An understanding of the level of risk facing victims of forced marriage, their siblings and other family members , including the possibility of honour-based violence, threats to kill, murder, kidnap, rape, imprisonment and being abducted overseas?

YES NO

If NO, how are staff made aware of these factors?

- The dangers of family counselling, mediation, arbitration and reconciliation, including the use of interpreters?

YES NO

If NO, please explain reason(s) why:

- The risk factors in relation to placing a child/adult with support needs with another family member or a member of the same community?

YES NO

If NO please explain reason(s) why:

- The risk to other siblings in the household who might also be at risk of or already in a forced marriage?

YES NO

If NO please explain reason(s) why:

3.3 Do staff have an understanding of their roles and are they familiar with their duties and responsibilities in protecting those at risk of or already in a forced marriage?

YES NO

If YES, please give further detail, including how this is measured:

If NO, please explain reason(s) why:

3.4 Are all staff aware of the referral pathway within your organisation and when to refer cases to other agencies?

YES How is this information communicated?

NO Please explain reason(s) why:

3.5 Are records belonging to individuals at risk of or already in a forced marriage kept secure?

YES What procedures are in place for this and how are they monitored?

NO Please explain reason(s)why:

3.6 Have record keeping procedures been agreed and are all staff clear about the process? Please give details⁸.

3.7 How are staff kept informed of new developments to address forced marriage and honour-based violence?

Internal Intranet: Newsletters Team Meetings Email

Other: (please give details)

4. RISK ASSESSMENT

4.1 What risk assessment tool is used by staff to identify risks and or assess the needs of individuals facing or already in a forced marriage?

The DASH⁹ Risk Model Common Assessment Framework

Other, Please state:

If the options above do not apply, what other form of risk assessment is taking place?

4.2 Is the assessment tool indicated above commonly agreed and used across agencies in your area?

YES NO

If NO, how is multi-agency risk management determined?

⁸ The Right to Choose: Multi Agency Statutory Guidance for dealing with forced marriage (page 19, para 66).

⁹ DASH – Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Harassment and Honour Based Violence

4.3 Are any forced marriage cases routinely taken to MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference)?

YES NO

If NO, how else is risk managed?

4.4 Do staff use the Common Assessment Framework to assess the additional needs of children and young people?

YES NO

4.5 Is a forced marriage protection order or other legal remedy considered by agencies when managing the risk to an individual?

YES NO

If YES, how many orders have been sought/applied for by your organisation since they have been available?

If NO, please explain reasons why:

5. CLEAR LINES OF ACCOUNTABILITY

5.1 Is there a designated person accountable for promoting awareness of forced marriage

YES NO

If YES, please give further details of what activities have been undertaken

If NO, please explain reason(s) why:

5.2 Is there a designated person responsible for developing and updating policies and procedures?

If YES, please give further details about this role, including whether the person is a specialist in domestic violence, adult protection, child protection or another field.

If NO, please explain reason(s) why:

5.3 Is there a senior specialist who has undertaken additional training who staff can approach for advice or refer difficult cases to?

YES

Please give further details: Safeguarding leads – Wiltshire Council
Safeguarding leads – PCT
Senior Officers – Public Protection

NO

Please give further details:

5.4 Are there clear lines of accountability between frontline staff and senior managers? Please give further details.

6. VICTIM-CENTRED APPROACH

6.1 What process has been put in place in your organisation to enable victims to disclose and how is the process managed?

6.2 Has information on forced marriage, including the support and help available been made easily accessible to the general public?

YES Please set out how this has been achieved:

NO Please explain reason(s) why:

7. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

7.1 Have monitoring processes been put in place e.g.:

Collecting information on the number of cases The source of referrals Information about the individual such as age and gender, disability etc.

Other, please state:

7.2 Has there been an evaluation of outcomes in forced marriage cases?

YES Please set out how this has been achieved:

NO Please explain reason(s) why:

8. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

8.1 Is there anything further that would assist you/you think would be helpful in relation to the use of the Statutory Guidance?



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