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Violence against women and girls (VAWG) newsletter

Introduction

Welcome to the Summer edition of the VAWG newsletter. A lot has happened since our last newsletter on International Women's Day in March. We have:

- Created two new offences of stalking and stalking involving fear of violence or serious alarm or distress in the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012;
- Started our domestic violence disclosure scheme pilot in Gwent and Wiltshire;
- Launched the first ever "Ugly Mugs" pilots scheme designed to protect sex workers; legislated to tighten the notification requirements for sex offenders.

In addition, the Ministry of Justice has announced that offenders will be forced to pay up to £50 million a year to help victims recover from the trauma of serious crime and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office have launched an initiative on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict on 29 May.

Details on all these issues, and more, are inside.

If you have any questions relating to violence against women and girls, please email us at:

VAWGenquiries@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

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New stalking offences

Two new offences created by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 – stalking and stalking involving fear of violence or serious alarm or distress – have been added to the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, sitting alongside existing offences of harassment in the Act. The police will also be given new powers of entry to investigate stalking offences. Until now, the police have only had a right of entry in respect of conduct that puts people in fear of violence. This will help police to secure the evidence needed to bring perpetrators to justice. The new provisions received Royal Assent on 1 May. The Home Office is working with partners across the criminal justice system to ensure that effective guidance and training is in place before the measures come into force later this year.

Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme

A pilot to test a domestic violence disclosure scheme began on Monday 16 July 2012 in the Gwent and Wiltshire police force areas, with the Greater Manchester and Nottinghamshire police force areas joining the pilot by no later than 10 September 2012. The pilot will conclude in September 2013.

Under the scheme an individual can ask the police to check whether a new or existing partner has a violent past ('right to ask'). If police checks show that a person may be at risk of domestic violence from their partner, the police will consider disclosing the information. The pilot will also look at how the police might proactively release information ('right to know') to protect a person from domestic violence where it is lawful, necessary and proportionate to do so. Both processes

can be implemented within existing legal powers. Interim guidance to accompany the pilot can be downloaded here: www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/crime/dvds-interim-guidance

Domestic Violence Protection Orders

The Domestic Violence Protection Order (DVPO) scheme is continuing in the Greater Manchester, Wiltshire and West Mercia police force areas, pending the completion of the evaluation due in the summer of 2013. The year-long pilot closed on 30 June 2012 but all three police forces will continue the scheme while the Home Office carries out an in-depth evaluation in order to decide whether or not a change in the law is needed. Any decision to roll DVPOs out nationally will be taken once the evaluation reports in 2013.

Under the scheme, the police and magistrates can use a DVPO to protect a victim when they are at their most vulnerable in the immediate aftermath of an attack, by preventing the perpetrator from contacting the victim or returning to their home for up to 28 days. This helps victims who may otherwise have to flee their home and gives them the space and time to access the support they need and to consider their future options. Around 320 Domestic Violence Protection Orders (DVPO) have been issued since the scheme began in June 2011.

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Home Office Domestic Homicide Review Training

The Home Office is currently developing training materials for those who wish to chair Domestic Homicide Reviews. We plan to offer this free training to those in the statutory or voluntary sectors. The training is not open to private consultants.

The training is aimed at developing additional skills within the statutory and voluntary sectors to enable areas to take forward Domestic Homicide Reviews without the need to rely on private consultants.

These events will be free of charge to attend but, unfortunately, we will not be able to cover any associated travel or accommodation costs.

The training will consist of a one day introductory conference for all those who may be involved in the Review or want to find out more. There will then be a separate two days of classroom based training for those who wish to train as chairpersons.

The one day introductory conference will be for statutory partners such as:

- Police
- GPs
- Community Safety Partnership (CSP) members
- Domestic Violence/VAWG Coordinators
- Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVAs)
- Independent Domestic Violence Advisers (IDVAs)
- Councillors

- Multi-agency Risk Assessment Coordinators (MARAC) chairs and coordinators
- Crown Prosecution Service
- Probation Service
- Primary Care Trusts (PCTs).

The two day chairperson training sessions will only be for those who will actually become chairs such as:

- Domestic Violence coordinators
- Community Safety Partnership (CSP) members
- Local charities/Voluntary and Community Sector organisations
- Councillors.

This training is **not** available to private consultants. The free training places are for members of the statutory and voluntary sector only.

We have designed a survey to help the Home Office understand the demand for the number of people who may be interested in attending the one day conference and training sessions. The survey should take no longer than 5 minutes to complete.

It would be extremely helpful if you could ensure that only one person per organisation responds to this survey highlighting the total number of places that your organisation may require.

To take part in the survey, and express an interest in this training, please use the following link:
www.homeofficesurveys.homeoffice.gov.uk/v.asp?i=54263pgtub

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Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference

Co-ordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse (CAADA) has recently published some early research which suggests that after support from a Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC), 45% of domestic abuse victims experienced no further police call outs. Further details of the research can be found at: www.caada.org.uk/news/caada-enews-Mar2012-MARAC-outcomes-research.html

Notification requirements

By virtue of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (Notification Requirements) (England and Wales) Regulations 2012 the Home Office has introduced new measures which will extend and strengthen the system of notification requirements placed on registered sex offenders (commonly referred to as the sex offenders' register). These new measures will come into force on 13 August 2012 making it compulsory for all offenders subject to the notification requirements under the Sexual Offences Act 2003 to:

- notify the police of all foreign travel (including travel outside of the UK of less than three days);
- notify weekly where they are not registered as regularly residing or staying at one place (i.e. where a registered sex offender has no sole or main residence and instead must notify the police of the place where he can regularly be found);
- notify where they are living in a household with a child under the age of 18; and
- notify bank account and credit card details and notify information about their passports or other identity

documents at each notification, tightening the rules so that sex offenders can no longer seek to avoid being on the register when they change their name.

Ugly Mugs

On 6 July the national 'Ugly Mugs' pilot scheme was officially launched by the UK Network of Sex Work Projects (UKNSWP). The pilot brings together a number of locally-run 'Ugly Mugs' projects, which encourage sex workers to report incidents of violence and abuse. Details of perpetrators are then shared with other sex workers to help improve safety, and can be passed on to the police if the victim consents. 'Ugly Mugs' projects encourage individuals to report incidents so that others can be safeguarded in the future, and more perpetrators can be brought to justice.

Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

A new pocket guide to the UK law on female genital mutilation will soon be made available to girls at risk to help them speak out against the practice, Equalities Minister Lynne Featherstone announced on 5 July 2012

The leaflet "A Declaration Against Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) for Families and Girls", is designed to slip in the back of a passport allowing girls to present it as a formal document to friends or family reminding them that FGM is against the law in the UK.

It will also set out what the penalties are for offenders, including a maximum fourteen year custodial sentence, as well as advice on help and support.

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Helping victims

On 4 July 2012, Equalities Minister Lynne Featherstone met with a group of young people who work closely with girls affected by FGM. Representatives from Integrate Bristol and Daughters of Eve shared their views on how the issue affects their communities and told the Minister what they have achieved locally with victims and potential victims, with the help of government funding.

The Minister praised the efforts of all those working with affected communities and shared details on what is being done by the government to help tackle this abhorrent crime. This includes a programme of awareness and community support activities over the summer, such as working with the Metropolitan Police on awareness training, creating a short film on FGM, distributing information leaflets in various languages to help victims and publishing guidelines for frontline staff to help them identify women and girls at risk.

Publication of National Occupational Standards and e-learning package for Independent Sexual Violence Advisors

In an effort to enhance the support that victims of sexual violence receive, the Home Office is pleased to announce that the Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) e-learning package and National Occupational Standards are now available for use.

The e-learning package is an introductory course which aims to provide a basic understanding of the role of the ISVA. It sets out what the role of an ISVA is and the key areas

involved in supporting victims of sexual violence, as well as information about the legislation and criminal justice system. In addition to the e-learning package, the Skills for Justice have published the national occupational standards for ISVAs. These standards have been developed to provide a national benchmark for ISVAs and others who provide support to victims of sexual violence which will develop the skills and competence of ISVAs.

The national occupational standards are published on the Skills for Justice website. To obtain access to the e-learning package and national occupation standards, please e-mail: sexualviolence@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk with the name of your organisation, name of the ISVA and e-mail address the ISVA can be contacted on so that we can arrange access.

Young People's Advocate Funding

The successful bids for the Young People's Advocate, a grant to support young people suffering sexual violence, including by gangs, were announced at the end of May. Further details, can be found at: www.homeoffice.gov.uk/media-centre/news/helping-sexual-violence-victims

Health related work by intensive family intervention research

The Thomas Coram Research Unit (TRCU), Institute of Education (IOE) who were commissioned by the Department of Health to undertake an evaluation of health related work by intensive family intervention services (formerly Family Intervention Projects, or FIPs) published their final report in April 2012.

Contents

.....1	The research aimed to complement the national quantitative monitoring of outcomes for families supported by FIPs, by offering an in-depth analysis of process and progress in relation to work with families, with a particular focus on their health needs.
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.....2	Despite the relatively large number of interviews (for a qualitative study) and the range of perspectives encompassed in those interviews, there was strong consistency in themes emerging from different data sources across the study.
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.....4	Professional stakeholders consistently highlighted domestic violence as one of the most prevalent health risks facing families involved with FIPs. Examples included partner violence, but also violence between children and young people and parents.
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.....4	Further details on the report can be found at: www.cwrc.ac.uk/documents/Final_FIPs_report(acceptedApril2012).pdf
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.....5	IRIS – Identification and Referral to Improve Safety
.....5	IRIS is a general practice-based domestic violence and abuse (DVA) training support and referral programme that has been evaluated in a randomised controlled trial. Core areas of the programme are training and education, clinical enquiry, care pathways and an enhanced referral pathway to specialist domestic violence services. The target patient population is women who are experiencing DVA from a current partner, ex-partner or adult family member. IRIS also provides information and signposting for male victims and for perpetrators.
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IRIS is collaboration between primary care and third sector organisations specialising in DVA. An advocate educator is linked to general practices and based in a local specialist DVA service. The advocate educator works in partnership with a local clinical lead to co-deliver the training to practices.

DVA costs the NHS £1.7billion every year and a system that could reduce these costs using a package such as IRIS is welcome. This does not include mental health costs, estimated at an additional £176 million. IRIS provides a unique opportunity for primary care clinicians and their patients to talk about DVA. General practice can play an essential role in preventing and responding to DVA by intervening early, providing treatment and information, and referring patients and their children on to specialist services.

The way in which a primary care clinician approaches DVA with a patient can make an immense difference to that person's life and the lives of affected children.

The IRIS service

Training and support: the practice team receives in-house training and ongoing support. Clinician training focuses on identification of DVA through clinical enquiry and appropriate response, referral and recording. Training for reception and administration teams focuses on understanding DVA, data handling, confidentiality and safety.

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Electronic prompt: This appears in the patient medical record in the form of a pop-up template called HARKS. HARKS is a mnemonic for Humiliate, Afraid, Rape, Kick and Safety and is triggered by Read-coded symptoms and conditions associated with DVA. HARKS is a reminder to ask and record data about DVA.

Practice champion: at each practice a lead professional is identified to be the main point of contact for the advocate educator and receives a further session of training to enable them to be the practice DVA lead.

Health education resources: posters about DVA are put up in practices and cards provided for patients. Practices receive referral forms and care pathways for all victims and perpetrators.

Named contact for patient referrals: practice staff can refer directly by phone, fax or email to the advocate educator.

Advocacy for patients: the advocate educator provides patients with emotional and practical support and carries out risk assessments and safety plans. The advocate educator acts as a triage and brokering service, signposting patients into other services as necessary.

IRIS data

Practice level (half-yearly): new identifications of women experiencing DVA, breakdown of types of abuse, and record of referral and safety discussion.

Specialist DV agency level (half-yearly): number of referrals received, number of women receiving advocacy, demographic

information on women receiving advocacy (age, ethnicity, sexuality, number of children), self-defined co-morbidity (mental health problems, substance use, disability), advocacy case profiles (immigration status, pregnancy, history of abuse, perpetrator), advocacy case outcomes (frequency of contact and type of support), service-user outcomes.

Use of data

- Monitoring of individual practice performance on identification and referral;
- Basis for feedback to that practice by the advocate educator and identification of additional training needs;
- Monitoring of impact of education and support programme;
- Monitoring of quality and scope of the advocacy provided by the specialist agency;
- Monitoring of patient outcomes; physical & mental health and quality of life.

If you would like further information please contact Annie Howell IRIS Implementation Lead, on 0207 6831270 ext: 227 or 07725 676016 Email: ahowell@niaendingviolence.org.uk

Victims Services Advocates

Advocates have been responsible for drafting 42 local reports (for each police force area) to specifically help inform the Police and Crime Commissioners duty to take the views of victims into consideration when developing their plans. The reports are available on Victim Support’s website at: www.victimsupport.org.uk/About-us/Policy-and-research/Victims-services-advocates

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These reports will be a useful local resource both for incoming Police and Crime Commissioners and stakeholders involved in planning and delivering victims services to help make them more aware of specific local issues for victims. As well as the local reports, there will be a national overview of the findings which will sit alongside the local reports on Victim Support's website.

Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict

Rape and other forms of sexual violence have been used as weapons against women, men and children in conflicts the world over. The Foreign Secretary's Initiative on Preventing Sexual Violence in Conflict which was launched on 29 May of this year and meets fortnightly. It comprises representatives of FCO, Stabilisation Unit, DfID, Home Office, Department of Health, Ministry of Justice, the Metropolitan Police, Ministry of Defence and Attorney General's Office.

UK entry to the European Crime Prevention Award

The annual call for entries to the European Crime Prevention Award (ECPA) and EU Crime Prevention Network (EUCPN) Best Practices Conference 2012 has been announced. This year's conference and awards ceremony will be hosted on 4th December in Cyprus.

The theme for 2012 is:

Community Policing as a Tool for Crime Prevention, related to Burglaries, Domestic Violence and Juvenile Delinquency

Each EU Member States may submit one nomination for consideration by the EUCPN selection panel. We are currently looking to identify and put forward a UK nominee as our selection for the ECPA.

The winning ECPA project will receive a certificate, a trophy and a prize of €10,000. The two honourable mentions will receive a certificate and a prize of €5,000.

We will also be entering up to two additional projects for the EUCPN Best Practices Conference.

More information about the award and previous entries, such as last year's winning entry from Germany "Fairplayer.manual/Fairplayer.sport – Science-based promotion of social and moral skills and prevention of bullying and violence in schools and sports clubs" can be found on the www.eucpn.org page.

UK project criteria and eligibility

Projects may address any aspect, relevant to this year's theme (Community Policing as a tool for crime prevention, related to burglaries, domestic violence and juvenile crime). Entries can originate from a wide variety of sources, for example: local authorities, the police, educational institutions, community groups, sports clubs, youth organisations, business community, probation service, neighbourhood watch schemes, parish councils, public transport operators, voluntary organisations/groups.

The persons entering the projects do not need to have participated in the projects themselves and there is no limitation to the number of applications that can be submitted.

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The dissemination of good practice in crime prevention is the primary role of the EUCPN, so we would welcome as many entries as possible. The very best will be sifted for the ECPA competition and the Best Practice Conference, but all entries will be considered for inclusion in the good practice page of the EUCPN website (see www.eucpn.org/goodpractice/index.asp).

Please use the attached application form and return all entries to both Maria.Athayde3@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk and Georgina.Mallows@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk by Friday 7th September to allow sufficient time for the UK selection process.

Entrants should take note of the following ECPA assessment criteria when completing the application form:

- The project shall focus on prevention and/or reduction of everyday crime and fear of crime within the theme;
- The project shall have been evaluated and have achieved most or all of its objectives. Evidence of impact in reducing crime or increasing safety shall rate over evidence of other kinds of outcome;
- The project shall, as far as possible, be innovative, involving new methods or new approaches;
- The project shall be based on co-operation between partners, where possible;
- The project shall be capable of replication by organizations and groups in other Member States. Therefore, submissions should include information on the financial costs of the project, the source of funding, the implementation process and relevant source material;
- Please refer to the Rules and Procedures on the EUCPN website for further information. This can found at: www.eucpn.org/eucp-award/entries.asp?year=2012.

To complete an application, please go to: www.eucpn.org/eucp-award/entries.asp?year=2012

Please disregard Question one (this is for the Home Office to assess).