



Adult E Domestic Homicide Review – Learning Brief



What happened?

Adult E, an 18 year old woman of British Pakistani origin, was found dead from stab wounds at the flat of her boyfriend. She was known to agencies as she had reported an alleged rape by the same boyfriend 18 months earlier when she was aged 16. The couple had an on off relationship for over two years until her death. Her boyfriend, who was aged 20 at the time of the murder, was also known to agencies as he had been a Looked After Child after arriving in Sheffield as an unaccompanied child seeking asylum. He was convicted of murder and was sentenced to life in prison.

Adult E told agencies about the alleged rape and efforts were made to safeguard her by some agencies including her education provider, however she was not risk assessed using the ACPO DASH as the definition of domestic abuse in use at the time did not include 16 year olds – it now does and has done since 2013. Adult E retracted her allegation of rape stating that she had lied due to pressure from her family – this retraction was accepted by agencies although there was evidence of physical injuries.

There were indications that the perpetrator's

behaviour was becoming more erratic and risky just as his engagement with agencies was becoming more problematic. Information was not then followed up or interrogated due to changes in workers. Also, agencies did not link the two young people.

What did it tell us?

The Review found that **the event which led to the death of Adult E was not a one off incident**. There had been clear indicators that domestic abuse was occurring especially around the time of the rape allegation. Had opportunities been recognised and worked with then Adult E may have received advice, guidance and support that recognised her vulnerability and could have helped her plan her own safety and possibly break off the relationship permanently with the perpetrator. Had responses from all agencies been better coordinated it might have been possible to recognise that his behaviour was becoming more and more risky and out of control. More could have been done to ensure that the allegations of a 16 year old girl were listened to and taken seriously by professionals.

The full DHR is available here: -

<https://www.sheffieldfirst.com/the-partnership/safer-and-sustainable-communities/key-documents.html>

What can we do now?

All agencies should **report any concerns about children and young people under 18 years of age to CYPF**, particularly where a disclosure is made regarding the health and wellbeing of another young person, or the young person has admitted to breaking the law with regards to another young person. **Don't assume** someone else has made the referral.

If you are working with a care leaver find out if they have a support worker and make contact should you have concerns relating to the young adult or their actions.

If in doubt **ask for advice from your manager, MARAC lead or the Domestic Abuse Helpline 0808 808 2241**

Find out about domestic abuse in young people's relationships – did you know that young people are more likely to suffer domestic abuse than any other age range? Or that an older boyfriend of more than a year is commonly linked to increased levels of sexual coercion?

If a young person retracts an allegation think about why they might have done this – it may not mean they made it up. Training and guidance is available see:- www.sheffielddact.org.uk

Undertake a DASH risk assessment where domestic abuse (including sexual abuse from a partner / ex-partner) is ongoing or recent and the subjects are aged 16 or over.

When **staff are on leave or long term sick**, make sure cases are re-allocated to ensure no gap in provision. This includes ensuring post is opened in the absence of key workers/support staff.