



Domestic Violence and Abuse Director of Public Health Annual report

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The size of the problem in Buckinghamshire

- Estimated 21,000 adults per year, or 57 people everyday.
- Significant under-reporting
- 4,000 victims of abuse crime recorded by police -71% women (20/21)
- 3,212 perpetrators - 72% men (10 months data)
- 15% of all recorded crime in Buckinghamshire.
- 15 domestic homicides 2011 – 2020.
- Using *estimated* numbers of victims in Buckinghamshire, cost of consequences ~ **£687m**.

Who is at risk of domestic abuse?

- Anyone
- Women 2x as likely to experience domestic abuse as men. 91% of domestic violence crimes causing injuries are against women.
- Increased risk in disabled adults , people with a learning disability , women with mental health problems
- unemployed, single parent households, mixed ethnic group, women from lowest household income bracket, LGBT and transgender people.
- Under-reporting by older people and poor ethnic coding.



Times of increased risk

- 4 - 9% pregnant women abused during pregnancy or soon after birth. Potentially 300-600 Buckinghamshire women affected annually.
- Leaving/preparing to leave partner
- Drug or alcohol use
- Football matches.

Perpetrators

- More likely to be male (72% in Buckinghamshire).
- 64% 40 years and under.
- Often a partner or ex-partner.
- Male perpetrators are more likely to seriously injure or kill their victim.
- Men committed 86% of the 357 domestic homicides in England and Wales 2017 – 2019.

Impact

- poor physical & mental health, chronic pain, memory loss, problems with daily activities, the consequences of sexual violence and “self-medicating” with drugs or alcohol.
- 16% of people experiencing domestic abuse consider or attempt suicide and 13% self harm.
- 1 in 5 high risk victims attended A&E with injuries in the year before getting help offering opportunities to detect and prevent further abuse.
- Increase risk of homelessness, poverty and impact on employment. Domestic abuse is 2nd most common reason for losing a home and it is estimated that 1 in 5 homeless women are homeless due to domestic abuse

Impact on children

- estimated 1 in 5 children are exposed to domestic abuse in UK.
- emotional, psychological, social, educational and developmental problems.
- moving home and school to escape a perpetrator
- a danger that children may in some cases begin to see abuse as normal behaviour.
- In 2020/21 in Buckinghamshire there were 2,400 referrals for social care assessment where domestic abuse was the primary concern (23% all children's social care referrals).
- 700 children were given children in need, child protection plans or became looked after. Accounted for half of all children who became looked after that year.
- **Long term consequences** - alcohol misuse, becoming a victim or perpetrator of domestic abuse, anti-social & risk taking behaviour, early pregnancy, homelessness, increased vulnerability to sexual exploitation & criminal behaviour.

Intimate partner homicides

- From 2009 to 2018 a woman was killed every four days by her partner or ex partner in the UK.
- Controlling behaviour by the perpetrator was the best predictor of homicide rather than a history of violence.
- Research has indicated predictable eight stages leading up to homicide .
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPF_p3ZwLh8
- Almost all cases perpetrator has history of coercive control, stalking or domestic abuse.
- Relationship moves at speed and is controlling.
- Triggers – loss of control over relationship/separation & escalation of control.

What works to prevent domestic abuse?

- School based awareness raising of domestic abuse.
- Campaigns to raise awareness of domestic abuse.
- Bystander interventions.
- Offering safe opportunities to seek help.
- Advocacy interventions with victims.
- Training healthcare professionals (including IRIS for GP surgeries).
- Independent domestic violence advisors.
- Multi agency risk assessment conferences.
- NICE quality standards.
- Need more research on perpetrator interventions.
- Need evaluation of all programmes to build evidence base

Reflections

- Prevention is key – wider societal attitudes, schools RSHE, bystander training, awareness raising and recognition of domestic violence, links with Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy
- Need better monitoring data to tell us who is affected, who is using services and what outcomes are in order to tailor services and ensure they are effective
- Develop services to meet the needs of all potential victims of DV and address gaps including housing and refuges
- Much more focus on perpetrators – primary & secondary prevention
- Learn from domestic homicide reviews

Recommendations in DPH report

1. Domestic Abuse Board should support awareness raising of domestic abuse via coordinated promotion of a national campaign.
2. DA Board should consider how to use and promote bystander training locally, to challenge domestic abuse as an evidence-based intervention.
3. Council Community Safety team should consider how to increase diversity within their domestic abuse champions scheme.
4. DA Board should develop and roll-out high-quality, shared, scenario-based training for stakeholders and front-line staff. Primary care should consider implementing IRIS training.
5. DA Board should oversee development of a referral pathway to ensure responsive services – fully understood by staff and accessible to victims seeking help.
6. DA Board agencies should support the development of an evidence base for perpetrator interventions, to inform commissioning of interventions and evaluation of effectiveness.

Questions for Health and Wellbeing board & partners - How can we make a difference ?

- What is your role in prevention, affecting wider social attitudes, bystander training ?
- What is your role in awareness raising and identifying instances of domestic abuse?
- What training do your staff have ? Is it sufficient , evidence based, comprehensive ? Do staff know where to refer ?
- How do you support people with domestic abuse and other issues ? How do you support your staff experiencing domestic abuse?
- How many domestic abuse champions do you have in your organisation and where are they ?
- What data do you have that could help tailor services ?
- How can we support the work of the Domestic Abuse Board ?