

Graduate Diploma Professional Police Practice

LEVEL 6 - 40 Credits

Workbook title: Competency Based Workbook 2 (DHEP)

**(SOUTH WALES POLICE, GWENT POLICE AND
UWTSD)**

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FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT PUBLIC SERVICE PROGRAMME

Module title: Policing in the Workplace 3 (DHEP) - BMPP6001D

Task 1

Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum: Vulnerability and Risk, Evidence-based policing

You must choose **a policing incident** in which you played a significant role with a victim of crime or anti-social behaviour and reflect on what happened.

Give a brief description of the incident including social and legislative contexts and any relevant cultural, ethnicity and language issues.

Critically evaluate the appropriateness of different approaches (by professionals and the police) in supporting or managing vulnerable people or people at risk of harm.

Explore what works in relation to tackling repeat victimisation and repeat offending. Consider the use of evidence-based policing.

2000 words (+/- 10%: include your actual word count at the end of each section)

ANSWER:

Vulnerable victims become repeat victims quickly without the right support services and intervention from the police. The police and other professionals utilise various frameworks and strategies to support vulnerable victims especially domestic abuse victims. These include MARAC, IDVAS and victim support services. There are factors that affect the appropriateness of these services, approaches like the level of risk and the willingness of the victim to engage with the specialist support services. The problem is bigger than shown in official statistics, as many victims don't tell anyone about the abuse, and they aren't recorded.

Evidence-based policing is an approach that is used to tackle these issues it uses scientific evidence and evaluation in decision-making to develop problem-solving

strategies in the hope of improving effectiveness and efficiency. The objective of evidence-based policing is to provide the police with an opportunity to make informed decisions on policy and practice in reducing crime, repeat victims and repeat offending. This requires targeted interventions such as offender focused approaches or community awareness. This inevitably leads to a decrease in repeat victimisation (College of Policing, 2024).

Considering the above, the incident I will be discussing is a domestic incident involving a high-risk vulnerable victim. The report came from a third party with little information provided, only the names of the alleged victim and suspect. Both parties were well known to the police with the female being a repeat victim of domestic abuse from the offender.

“(1) Domestic abuse is defined in the domestic abuse act 2021 as behaviour of a person

(2) (“A”) towards another person (“B”) is “domestic abuse” if—

(a) A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and

(b) the behaviour is abusive.

(3) Behaviour is “abusive” if it consists of any of the following—

(a) physical or sexual abuse.

(b) violent or threatening behaviour.

(c) controlling or coercive behaviour.

(d) economic abuse

(e) psychological, emotional, or other abuse (Gov.uk, 2021).

It's important that I reflect and evaluate on how I conduct myself in my initial attendance, my actions and what I do afterwards to provide the best support and safeguarding to the victim. To do this I'll make use of the Gibbs Reflective Cycle, to provide framework for experience-based learning. It provides a framework for analysing experiences and, because of its cyclical structure, works well with recurrent experiences, enabling me to make plans and learn from things that went well or didn't. With domestic incidents being the most common call, I attend during my working day this reflective cycle works. The cycle covers 6 stages: -

- (1) Description of the incident,
- (2) Feelings and reflecting on emotional responses to the incident,
- (3) Evaluate the effectiveness of my actions,
- (4) Analysing the factors that influenced my actions and decisions,
- (5) Conclusion to identify the key lessons learnt.
- (6) Action plan on how I would deal in a similar incident and enhance my professional practice.

After gathering the information from the Police National Computer about the victim and suspect it was identified that she was vulnerable and a repeat victim of domestic abuse. The warning markers showed she was a high-risk victim of domestic abuse this was key in identifying the actions needed when I attended. The information

gathered made this incident a G1 response using the THRIVE approach (Threat, Harm, Risk, Investigation, Vulnerability and Engagement) to assess the incident.

“Applying the THRIVE approach requires the following four steps.

1. Identify an individual’s vulnerability or vulnerabilities.
2. Understand how these vulnerabilities interact with the situation to create harm or risk of harm.
3. Assess the level of harm or risk of harm.
4. Take appropriate and proportionate action if required, involving partners where they have the relevant skills and resources.” (College of Policing, 2021).

South Wales Police adopts the THRIVE definition when looking at vulnerability. A person is vulnerable if, because of their situation or circumstances, they are unable to take care of or protect themselves from harm or exploitation (College of Policing, 2021). It was clear the female in this incident was vulnerable due to the situation she found herself in. She was unable to protect herself from the perpetrator, so there was a risk of serious harm if there was no intervention from response officers and relevant support that was needed to be put in place to safeguard the victim.

On initial response to the incident, I used the National Decision-Making Model (NDM) gathering information from warning markers and PNCs of both parties this allows me to assess the potential risks and to develop a working strategy. This would need to be assessed again when attending, due to gathering further information at the incident.

It was important for me to recognise the signs of abuse and the need for safety planning to protect the victim and to identify criminal offences. I could then consider the powers I had available to me, whether that be arresting the offender or considering another safeguarding approach using discretion. My main priority when attending was to protect all people present from injury or further harm, this included the victim, attending police officers and the suspect. My Body Worn Video (BWV) is immediately activated on attendance as per South Wales Police policy. BWV is a tool that I use when attending an incident to protect everyone involved, information gathering and for safety. It can have significant impact and record the demeanour of the parties involved. BWV is helpful since the recording gives accurate and instant account of the disturbance throughout the scene and its emotional impact on the victim. My BWV caught proof of the offender's continued actions, language, and demeanour while they were still present. In these situations, utilising BWV can greatly bolster the prosecution's case by highlighting the full scope of the offence. When a victim is unwilling to file a formal complaint, the recording can serve as evidence to support an arrest warrant. It can be helpful in deciding when to move forward with a case without the victim's cooperation. Domestic abuse victims often become less affected by the event over time. Initially, BWV can be used to record feelings and responses right away (NPCC, 2022)

There is good evidence to show that officers equipped with a BWV responding to domestic abuse incidents result in a criminal charge increasing (Richards, 2018). BWV is a good tool for reflection, the whole incident is recorded which helps me identify key

learnings. The last step in the NDM is acting. Seeing the harm the victim had come to at the hands of the offender, he was immediately arrested under Section 24 of PACE with the necessity for the arrest to protect a vulnerable person and to prevent the person in question causing physical injury to himself or any other person. By using my BWV I reviewed the incident, reflected on my actions and learnt from mistakes made.

As important as attending the incident, I needed to reduce the risk of her becoming a repeat victim of domestic abuse. I needed to submit the relevant forms for the victim to get support they needed. A form of support offered when dealing with domestic incidents is a PPN (Public Protection Notice). A PPN is an important information-sharing document that records safeguarding concerns. PPNs are shared with partner agencies to form a multi-agency response. Officers must “gather all available and relevant information required to complete a PPN including the DASH risk assessment (Domestic Abuse, Stalking, Harassment) at the scene. Obtaining answers to the risk assessment question is possible through conversation with the victim rather than a series of questions and answers and would be a less formidable means of getting the information if the victim is in an emotional state or vulnerable. It is important that both officers and victims understand why we are asking the questions, so that a suitable risk management and safety plan can be implemented” (Cleveland Police, 2022).

The female was already working with the South Wales Police DAU (Domestic Abuse Unit) and involved with MARAC. A MARAC is a way for relevant agencies to meet and discuss the victim's needs, it involves information shared on the highest risk domestic abuse cases between representatives of local police, health, child protection, housing

practitioners, Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs), probation and other specialists from the statutory and voluntary sectors. They discuss options for increasing the safety of the victim and turn these into a co-ordinated action plan. The primary focus of the MARAC is to safeguard the adult victim (Safelives.org.uk, 2014).

The victim had an IDVA this is “A trained specialist who provides a service to victims at high risk of harm from intimate partners, ex-partners, or family members, with the aim of securing their and their children’s safety. They are known as independent domestic violence advocates and serve as a victim’s primary point of contact” (HMICFRS, 2023).

South Wales Police have had a massive focus on victims in recent years and trying to reduce the risk of repeat victimisation, they have pushed officers to consider the victim focus approach with a Victim Focus Referral (VFR) being discussed with all victims of crime and their details passed to South Wales Victim Focus for them to provide help and support after being a victim of crime. This was offered to the female with her details passed to Victim focus.

Having multi-agencies involved with the after care and support is important for the victim, it gives them a piece of mind that they have a support network to help them deal with what can be a stressful upsetting time. Different professions and agencies don’t necessarily have the same approach as the police when working with vulnerable people as they can have different aims and objectives. Kennedy et al. (2008) suggested that the police were concerned with risk management and public protection,

whereas social services tended to be concerned with the welfare of the person and mental health professionals were concerned with safeguarding. Whilst these approaches come into conflict, they aren't exclusive to one another and, in many cases, professionals will share common objectives of protection and support, and in others, their differing objectives may complement one another.

The multi-agency approach is good as it shares information about what they are doing with the victim. Whenever two or more agencies are working together with the same victim, it is important to regularly review and, if necessary, change the level of their interventions. To achieve the most effective multi-agency practice, two or more distinct agencies work together to achieve a common goal.

The policing of domestic abuse incidents have been acknowledged to having past failings in this area due to a lack of understanding of the complex nature of such cases. In response to this, there are initiatives for specific training of officers, and the greater involvement of Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA) and related legal measures such as DVPN (Domestic Violence Protection Notice) and DVPO (Domestic Violence Protection Order) have increased the level of victim protection.

"A DVPN is an emergency non-molestation and eviction notice which can be issued by the police, when attending to a domestic abuse incident, to a perpetrator. Because the DVPN is a police-issued notice, it is effective from the time of issue, thereby giving the victim the immediate support they require in such a situation. Within 48 hours of the DVPN being served on the perpetrator, an application by police to a magistrates' court for a DVPO must be heard. A DVPO can prevent the perpetrator from returning

to a residence and from having contact with the victim for up to 28 days. This allows the victim a degree of breathing space to consider their options with the help of a support agency. Both the DVPN and DVPO contain a condition prohibiting the perpetrator from molesting the victim” (Gov.uk, 2022)

The victim in this incident was a repeat victim indicating the vulnerability of the victim. There were several factors that indicated the victim was vulnerable the main one being substance misuse and excessive alcohol. The offender in the incident had issues with substance misuse and alcohol. Identification of repeat offending and repeat victimisation is a concern in the prevention of further victimisation and offending. By identifying specific patterns in an offender's criminal history, specific risk factors can be identified and managed to prevent further offending (Wilcox, 2005). An example is the link between substance abuse and domestic abuse. By recognising this link, an intervention to treat the offender's substance addiction may reduce the likelihood of further domestic abuse. Identification of high-risk offenders and victims allows for more specific targeting of resources to prevent further offending and victimisation in higher-risk cases.

Target Hardening is one resource that can be used and aims to increase the effort and risk for offenders to commit a crime and reducing the likelihood of the crime occurring. “Target Hardening or Sanctuary Schemes are a person-centred initiative help survivors of domestic abuse feel safer in their homes. It's done by enhancing their security, which offers victims confidence to regain control of their lives. The support received can help reduce feelings of isolation. This is done by helping survivors to deal with practical, security issues after leaving an abusive relationship” (Paragon, 2024)

Words - 2200

Task 2

Choose 1 of these 5 options to answer

(Note for officers who have an interest in becoming a detective and wish to specialise in this role, you **MUST** choose option 5)

1. Response Policing.
2. Policing Communities.
3. Road Policing.
4. Information and Intelligence.
5. Conducting Investigations.

Task 2 Option 1:

Relevant areas of the National Policing Curriculum:

Response Policing

A core part of the policing mission is to prevent crime and disorder. Domestic abuse causes both serious harm and constitutes a considerable proportion of overall crime

You should choose **a domestic abuse incident** that was of a complex nature, in which you played a significant role in providing a response.

Critically assess the challenges associated with a domestic abuse incident that you have attended, and the strategies developed for effective policing in such challenging situations.

2000 words (+/- 10%: include your actual word count at the end of each section)

ANSWER:

In my short career, I have attended several domestic incidents, involving partners/ex-partner. Each one is different and require a fresh pair of eyes and open mind as you'll never know what you are going to turn up to. High risk victims are a priority and as a police officer how we deal with these situations will always be under scrutiny. It's not just dealing with the incident at the scene, but the support and safeguarding provided after. Most people think about domestic abuse incidents as man towards woman. Male domestic abuse victims have become more common in recent years and no longer has a stigma attached with more males coming forward to report than before.

The domestic incident I played a significant role in providing a response to was complex due to the victim being a male and the female being the suspect. The incident was made complex as the male was the reporting person but on attendance the female was also reporting domestic assault so there was a possibility of a dual arrest. As response officer it's about gathering all the information, assessing risks and the powers at my disposal then using this to act, but importantly it's about reviewing these actions and making sure I safeguard the victim and get the support needed to prevent them becoming a repeat victim or an offender. I was provided with all the information I needed before attending the domestic incident, with warning markers of both involved and markers placed on the address, I was aware that they were a high-risk victim and offender of domestic abuse.

“(1) Domestic abuse is defined in the domestic abuse act 2021 as behaviour of a person (“A”) towards another person (“B”) is “domestic abuse” if—

- (2) A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other,
- (a) A and B are each aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other, and
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- (a) physical or sexual abuse.
 - (b) violent or threatening behaviour.
 - (c) controlling or coercive behaviour.
 - (d) economic abuse
 - (e) psychological, emotional, or other abuse.

it does not matter whether the behaviour consists of a single incident or a course of conduct (Gov.uk, 2021)

The definition is helpful as the behaviour provides a clear focus for criminal justice interventions and a basis for identifying harmful behaviour. It's significant in terms of understanding the nature of domestic abuse and how it can damage the victim's freedom and well-being. It is agreed that it can be single or repeated incidents and doesn't just involve the female as the victim but a male can be a victim of domestic abuse.

Domestic abuse has become prioritised in the last couple of decades as it has been an issue because it is persistent. It doesn't only affect the victim, but their family and friends and effects are long-lasting. In many cases, it results in serious injury, some cases death. 2020 - 2022, 186 women were murdered by their male partner or ex-partner in England and Wales. In comparison, 30 men were murdered by their female

partner or ex-partner (Home Office, 2022). The Office of National Statistics reported in the year ending March 2022, the police recorded nearly 1.5 million domestic abuse related incidents in England and Wales (Elkin, 2022)

Statistics show men reporting domestic incidents more than before. Many cases result in victims being reluctant to testify and withdraw cooperation, 21% of male victims (2022/23) fail to tell anyone they are a victim of partner abuse which is big improvement as previously it was 49% in 2017/18. The figures for female victims are (Mankind, 2024). Of domestic abuse crimes recorded by the police, 25% were committed against men with 4.8% of victims of domestic abuse being supported by local domestic services being men according to Safe Lives data. This highlights how few men are being supported for local domestic abuse services (ONS 2022/23). 6.5% of male victims (2.8% women) have considered taking their life due to partner abuse in 2022/23. The charity has seen an increase in calls regarding suicide ideation over the pandemic period and beyond. (ONS 2022/23).

In 2022/23, 13 men died at the hands of their partner or ex-partner compared to 56 women. (ONS 2022/23). Male domestic abuse has had more media coverage over the past few years with several tv programs, documentaries and newspaper articles showing how much men are coming forward to report being victims.

Kleaver et al. 2019 states there has been an increase in research efforts with little success in finding an effective intervention for the problem. A multi-agency approach for victims of domestic abuse is used to provide them with the support they need as well as having an early intervention to prevent them becoming a repeat victim. Police

forces have a specific domestic abuse team that support the victim and able them to work closely with multi-agencies.

The issue of domestic abuse has recently come under the spotlight. There has been much criticism concerning the way the police and other agencies have dealt with domestic abuse cases and a growing pressure problem. It has been argued that domestic abuse is the most challenging and problematic incident police attend. There are challenges faced by the police, given the private and sensitive nature of domestic abuse and the low rate of victim reporting to the police, there are limitations on what the police do to try and prevent domestic abuse from occurring. The police play a significant role in preventing domestic abuse and supporting the victim to prevent repeat victims this is where the multi-agency approach works well. Referrals made to specialist domestic abuse services, including independent domestic violence advisors (IDVA) and multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARAC), were most made by the police in the year ending March 2018 (Elkin,2022). High-risk victims of domestic abuse require extra support and safeguarding due to being at higher risk or being a repeat victim, a MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) meeting will be called to discuss what help and support agencies provide the victim.

A MARAC is a meeting involves information shared on the highest risk domestic abuse cases between representatives of local police, health, child protection, housing practitioners, Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA), probation and other specialists from the statutory and voluntary sectors. They discuss options for increasing the safety of the victim and turn these into a co-ordinated action plan. The primary focus of the MARAC is to safeguard the adult victim (Safelives.org.uk, 2014)

Effective policing reduces domestic abuse through specific and general deterrence or prevention. An effective response might demonstrate to victims that the criminal justice system takes the matter seriously. This may increase victims reporting of abuse and increase the chances of successful convictions. If victims believe that the police take positive action against the abuse and that the justice system offer protection, they might report incidents of minor abuse in the hope of prevention before abuse escalates to more serious forms. Effective police interventions break the cycle of abuse in some relationships or prevent newly formed abusive relationships escalating to more serious forms of abuse.

Policing domestic abuse is a challenging and emotive area of police work. Research suggests that police attitudes towards domestic abuse are sometimes inappropriate (Myhill, 2018). Police response to domestic abuse is often seen as less effective than their response to other forms of violence (Hoyle and Sanders, 2000). Given the frequency of such abuse, the harm it causes, and the attempts of victims to gain police assistance, policing effectively in this area is highly important.

Difficulty facing police is the one of "dual arrests" and dealing with situations in which it is difficult to ascertain an aggressor. However, it is problems relating to victims' and offenders' cooperation and behaviour which police identify as particularly troublesome (Hirschel, 2008).

When investigating and prosecuting domestic abuse, police officers face several challenges although there are specific operational and legislative difficulties. According to research evidence and the findings of various governmental and non-

governmental inquiries, problems are replicated in other parts of the world. A study by Hagmann, (2019) into police, probation, and court responses to domestic violence in the state of Victoria, Australia, found that legal professionals consistently underestimated the scale of the problem.

The underreporting of domestic abuse is a challenge. The second type of underreporting is an issue that was raised by officers in a study into domestic abuse and policing by Davies et al. (2021) in his study of domestic incidents. These officers referred to the fact that the victims frequently change their statements and become uncooperative or refuse to testify against the offender which led to a break down in the case and difficulties in taking it to court. The UK Crown Prosecution Service makes it clear that "the decision to prosecute a case is the responsibility of the CPS, not the victim or any other person involved in the case." (CPS, 2024) Therefore the victim's cooperation and testimony are important but not essential to the prosecution of the case.

An offender can exercise tight control over the victim, which restricts their ability to talk to the police. Various measures such as isolating the victim or closely monitoring their behaviour makes it difficult for the victim to make contact without this being detected by the abuser. In extremely severe situations, the abuser may have total control over the victim's actions, this form of domestic abuse is referred to as coercive control, there is no physical violence but economic, psychological, or emotional abuse towards the victim. This is becoming more reported since it was made a criminal offence in 2015 (CPS, 2024).

One of the most important components in dealing with domestic abuse cases is the role of the victim. Without their cooperation, it is difficult for any legal intervention to be effective. The conflict of interests between the victim and the police may result in the victim refusing to cooperate in fear that it will exacerbate the situation if the abuser is prosecuted. Alternatively, the victim may cover up what has happened to prevent the police from taking further action.

Domestic abuse cases are difficult to prove and prosecute. This is due, in part, to the fact that domestic abuse incidents frequently involve conflicting stories, leaving the police trying to figure out what happened. There are times serious incidents of abuse aren't reported until some time has passed. This makes evidence collection difficult, if not impossible. General evidence collection in domestic abuse cases is difficult because it is often difficult to corroborate information given by victims, offenders, and witnesses of abuse. A lack of witnesses to abuse is a barrier to evidence collection. Physical evidence is frequently not documented through pictures or medical exams so are only left with the account of the victim.

Enhanced training for officers is essential for effective police responses to domestic abuse. Since officers encounter more domestic abuse calls than any other violent crime, it is essential that officers are properly trained in understanding abuse, its implications, and how to effectively respond to it. The primary goal of training is the safeguarding of the victim and the safety of the officer and the community and reduce the offenders use of abusive behaviour.

Police forces have made progress in dealing with domestic abuse and implementing effective strategies for dealing with domestic abuse over the past few years. Over the past three decades, awareness about domestic abuse has increased and departments that concentrate on domestic abuse have been developed. As a result of these departments, the understanding of domestic abuse and how it can be successfully reduced and prevented has undergone dramatic changes. With today's policing and the victim service providers there is a belief that police stop the violence, prevent its recurrence, and keep victims safe even without a complete arrest and prosecution of the abuser.

South Wales Police have taken steps to help empower victims and improve information sharing with support services through the development of a new risk assessment framework Domestic Abuse Stalking and Harassment (DASH) to assist attending officers to assess the risk of further harm more accurately to a victim. This is completed at every domestic incident and then shared to relevant agencies through the domestic abuse unit who risk assess every DASH that's completed by officers (College of Policing, 2015). Developing a proactive relationship between police and support services help identify high-risk victims and then being involved in the process of managing risk. This involves regular contact and information sharing between police and support services and the victim if consent is given.

The domestic abuse units set up have been established in recognition of the unique problems associated with responding to domestic abuse that require intervention strategies that differ from those used for other types of crime. These specialised units

represent a departure from traditional methods of policing domestic abuse, moving away from the 'confront and arrest' approach used for general crime. This is in recognition of the fact that domestic abuse situations are often highly complex, involving multiple incidents, and requiring ongoing monitoring and follow up. The primary goal underpinning specialised units is to increase victim safety.

Words - 2200

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Bibliography

The bibliography should only include sources referenced within the workbook using the Harvard referencing system. Information about referencing in written assignments and how to avoid plagiarism can be found on Moodle. It is important that you are aware of the importance of ensuring that the work submitted is your original work.

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