



Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

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**

Task 1

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

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:

In this essay, I will be reflecting on domestic assault incident where a woman was found in the street by a passer-by with visible injuries and in shock.

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 defines domestic abuse as;

“(a) conduct that has caused, or is likely to cause, harassment, alarm or distress to any person,

(b) conduct capable of causing nuisance or annoyance to a person in relation to that person's occupation of residential premises, or

(c) conduct capable of causing housing-related nuisance or annoyance to any person.”

In terms of the incident that I am referring to in this essay it involves a male who I will be referring to as Mark and female who I will be referring to as Chloe to maintain confidentiality. Chloe and Mark were in a long-term relationship and had been celebrating before the incident occurred. Later on, they got into a verbal altercation which progressed to Mark leaving Chloe with visible injuries including a possible broken bone, this is assault occasioning actual bodily harm. Actual bodily harm is a form of assault which come under S47 of Offences Against the Person Act 1861, it is defined as;

“Whosoever shall be convicted upon an indictment of any assault occasioning actual bodily harm shall be liable to be kept in penal servitude.”

The Office for National Statistics (2021) reports that in 2021 more than a third of violence against the person offences were domestic related which reveals how common domestic assaults are. Woman's Aid (2022) released an early report on their service users and found that 54% of them have experienced physical abuse this was the second most common form of domestic abuse, with emotional being the most common. It is important to note that not all domestic violence/abuse incidents are reported or recorded which refers to the dark figure of crime (ADR UK, 2022) and there are various reasons for this some being that the victims are too scared to seek help and others unaware that they are in an abusive relationship and see this as their norm. This essay does not involve any cultural, ethnicity and language issues.

I attended the street where Chloe was found we had located Mark in his home address and had arrested him. Chloe was taken to hospital to receive emergency attention to her injuries, her family was contacted to come and support her as she requested for them to be contacted. The nature and extent of the assault had a major impact on her, we as the police were able to provide her with an enhanced service under the Victims Code and made several referrals for her to get the support she will need. These incidents highlight the vulnerability of people, a vulnerable person is defined as;

"A person who as a result of their situation or circumstances, they are unable to take care of or protect themselves from harm or exploitation (College of Policing, 2020)."

In domestic related incidents we also guide victims to the LIVE FEAR FREE helpline and advise them to contact them, I put the number into Chloe's phone. LIVE FEAR FREE is a government funded scheme that is designed to help victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence, they are qualified and trained professionals who aid and guide the victims, providing them with various support networks (Welsh Government, 2022). Whilst also giving them initial safeguarding advice, we are able to place a critical marker on their address to enable quick response and bail conditions may be put in place to protect the victim from further abuse (Citizens Advice, 2021). In most incidents that I have attended the victims tend to hide their abuse and not speak to anyone as they are embarrassed so by giving them the opportunity of having confidential advice and a number they can call to discuss their situation they are in a better situation to accept help and understand their situation fully. The bail conditions and critical markers that are placed on their address also give them a sense of

protection as they are aware that the police will assist as soon as possible when a call is made and there are consequences for the subject if they breach their bail conditions.

We also complete a public protection notification report which is used for sharing information with relevant agencies and partners who are able to provide support and advice to the victims, this can then be used in a multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC). MARAC's focus is on safeguarding the victim and creating an action plan to ensure the safety, this is compromised of various agencies including housing officers, health and independent domestic violence advisors (Devon County Council, 2022). This process is also completed by the Community Safety Partnerships who work together to protect individuals/communities and develop safety plans (College of Policing, 2018). A Victim Focus referral can also be made where the similar concept occurs, these referrals can help create a sense of security for the victims with the various services they can offer such as refuges, CCTV installation, panic alarms and letterbox guards. The fire service also gets involved in DV incidents where threats of arson are made as they instal letterbox guards to stop anything being posed through the letterboxes (SCUTUM, 2022). These services have helped victims of DA be able to have a sense of security and independence as they are provided with various options that they can choose to protect themselves and deter further incidents. These services are extremely effective responses towards DV incidents as they are able to implement safety plans and provide devices which can prevent future incidents from occurring.

The UK parliament also introduced a domestic violence disclosure scheme known as Claire's Law, which allows an individual to request information from the police about their current partner's history of violence (Bryant and Bryant, 2020, pp.300). This enables the potential victims to have insight into who their partner is and prevent them from becoming a victim. This scheme would be very beneficial to individuals however, in the circumstances where I have spoken about this to victims, they have advised me that they have not heard of it, so I believe this needs to have better coverage to be able to measure its effectiveness. However, if this was to be a scheme with better coverage to the public, I believe that this would be quite effective in the prevention of domestic abuse incidents as the individuals who apply for it would have knowledge of their partners previous relationships and in

some cases where if it believed that the individual is likely to be a victim of abuse they can implement a safety plan detailing how to make disclosures and share this information with the relevant agencies to safeguard and support the potential victim, this could be through agencies such as ASSIA, DAU and social services (Threshold, 2022).

Research into Claire's Law has found that there are various issues related to this scheme which hinder the effectiveness of it. The Safeguarding Hub (2022) highlight the issues surrounding accessibility, they go on to report that some individuals may be reluctant or scared to speak to the police or even get them involved in the first place especially in cases where children may be involved as the parents worry about social services. These fears alone are enough to prevent a potential victim from reaching out to get help as they believe that there are consequences attached to speaking to the police or social services.

In relation to Evidence based policing (EBP), these services, laws, schemes and assessments have all come from research and experiences. With the accessibility of online forums, toolkits and databases it makes the research into evidence-based policing readily accessible for officers to help inform their decisions. These allow us to have insight into what has worked and what has not worked previously and how we can effectively solve problems. One of the interventions that has come from EBP is the use of Body Worn Camera's (BWV) for response officers, the policy for South Wales Police has changed which means that body worn video must be activated at every domestic incident to enable us to capture their initial disclosure in case they do not support police actions and provide us a statement or end up withdrawing their statement (College of Policing, 2022). Although the use of BWV does not prevent or increase re-offending it provides us with a very strong quality of evidence as it has captured the disclosure made by the victim and provides officers with rationale as to why they chose the actions they did.

Another intervention in the crime reduction toolkit relating to domestic abuse is cognitive behavioural therapy specifically tailored for DA, this is tailored in the sense that the perpetrators will learn how to deal with their emotions and control their behaviour (Manchester University, 2022). This has shown that there is some evidence showing that it has reduced the reoccurrence of DA and the evidence supporting this is strong, but the reduction is not statistically significant (College of Policing, 2022). Lipsey et al (2007) conducted a study on the effectiveness of CBT

in domestic abuse cases and found that since it has been used in the 70's it has consistently proven to be effective, however, this is disputed by Smedslund, et al. (2011) who have more recently conducted a study and concluded that although there was a minor decrease in violence it did not provide clear evidence of the effect of cognitive behavioural therapy being more effective than no treatments.

Whilst some interventions show evidence of having an effect on reoffending others have shown that through research, they have mixed findings. Unfortunately, not one intervention is going to have the same effect on every offender, an example of this is criminal sanctions (College of Policing, 2022). Findings show that it has been effective in some instances but not in others and the quality of evidence supporting its effect is low.

To conclude, there are various approaches that professionals are able to use but it is important to note that not every approach will have a positive impact for the victim. There are some approaches that are not and have not been publicised effectively such as Claire's Law which has the potential to help potential victims of domestic abuse. The MARAC meetings are effective in the sense that different professionals come together and work in partnership to develop action plans for victims and those at risk, this in itself is very effective as the right personnel will be notified of the circumstances and are able to share the options they can implement to safeguard the victims and those at risk. In regards to preventing repeat offending and victimisation, this is difficult to achieve as the methods used will have to be holistic to every victim/perpetrator. In many instances as shown by the results of effectiveness and evidence showing the effectiveness, one method will not be effective for all. The perpetrators and victims all have different life experiences and views which contribute to how they deal with the incidents, for example, one may have been brought up in a house hold where they experiences trauma and domestic abuse from a young age, which means that they may require an intervention such as cognitive behavioural therapy to work on understanding their upbringing, where as sanctions may not be as effective in reducing or preventing the incident from happening again. This is where the person would need to be seen holistically and rather than dealing with what is currently present, also dealing with their trauma which may help them long term.

Word count: 1938

Task 2 Option 1:

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 this essay, I will be reflecting on a domestic incident where a female was assaulted by her ex-partner in her home address. The purpose of this essay is to explore the challenges associated with domestic incidents. For the purposes of this essay, I will maintain confidentiality and anonymity by using pseudonym names, the suspect will be referred to as Pete and the victim will be referred to as Val. This incident was reported by a third party who had witnessed Pete chasing Val into her property and was concerned regarding her welfare. The offences later identified in this incident were S18 Grievous Bodily Harm with Intent contrary to the Offences Against the Person Act 1861, S6 Violence for Securing Entry contrary to the Criminal Law Act 1977 and S51 Intimidation, etc., of Witnesses, Jurors and Others Contrary to the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994. Domestic abuse is still a very hidden crime in society, it makes it difficult to accurately measure its prevalence, but the Crime Survey for England and Wales reported that in the year ending March 2020 approximately 1.6 million women aged 16 – 74 years experienced domestic abuse (ONS, 2020).

In this incident I had attended Val's address and saw her outside with her neighbours in a state of shock with severe swelling and blood covering her face. Val stated that Pete had left the address prior to officers' arrival but a check was conducted in the house to ensure no one else was present in the property. The exterior and interior of the house were covered in blood with splatters on the floor and walls. Val had disclosed to officers that Pete had attended the address where a verbal argument occurred, Pete had then assaulted Val by punching her to her face multiple times during this time she tried to go downstairs to exit the address and seek help. Val escaped and ran across the road to ask passers by to use their phone to contact the police but Pete was running behind her. Val ran back into the address and Pete had followed her forcing the door open as she tried to close it and pushed her out of the way to gain entry. Pete assaulted her again by punching her to the face before leaving the scene. Officers suspected that Val may have a broken or fractured eye socket and jaw, so she was conveyed to the hospital for medical treatment and a statement of complaint was taken from her.

When the statement was taken special measures were explained to Val and she proceeded with the statement of complaint. The next day Val phoned the police to withdraw her complaint stating that she always withdraws and that she shouldn't have made the statement in the first place. On closer inspection of the phone call Pete's mother who is well known to the police was heard in the background telling Val what to say, and when Val was spoken to she stated that she was worried about repercussions from Pete's family. Pete's mother was later arrested for victim intimidation.

Victims of domestic violence are highly likely to withdraw their complaint to the police or refuse to engage with the police following a domestic incident. Barrow-Grint conducted a study in 2016 about the attrition rates in domestic violence, her findings concluded that victims are more likely to retract their complaint 5 days after the incident and this often results in reoccurrences of the abuse sustained. Barrow-Grint looked at perpetrator persuasiveness in her study and found that the majority of domestic abuse victims believed that rehabilitation is what the perpetrator needed rather than punishment, hence why they withdraw their complaint, Barrow-Grint also detailed that the victims only want the immediate violence to stop and once this has been resolved they decide that they do not need any further assistance from the CPS or any other agency as in their eyes the matter has been resolved, when in

reality the likelihood of it reoccurring is high which places them in a cycle of violence (2016). This study could be related to Val's case as she is often involved in domestic incidents but always withdraws her complaint a few days after the incident took place, no matter what support or safeguarding is implemented by agencies. Val contacts the police and once the immediate threat has been dealt with she then refuses to engage with police as she states that further assistance is no longer required this could be because she thinks it's a one off and the abuser (Pete) manipulates Val into believing that he has changed.

Another challenge in this incident was the fear of further violence, not only from Pete but from his family also. These threats or fear of further violence can occur after the incident has been reported causing the victims to withdraw their complaint or before the incident is reported which means that the abuse will not come to light and is more likely to reoccur as the abuser believes that he can get away with it (Burton-Hughes, 2015). Snyder (2021) also highlights that victims of domestic abuse have disclosed to their counsellors and advocates that they have retracted their complaint due to fear of further violence, Snyder (2021) also mentions that another way the perpetrators are able to convince the victims to retract their complaint is via a process called the emotional appeal which aims to attain the victims sympathy in order to force them to feel bad about what has happened and help the abuser in any means they can. These are difficult to prevent as the victim will not always confide in the police to tell them what has happened for them to become unsupportive of police actions.

The above issues were taken into consideration and one method of safeguarding the victims of not only domestic violence but other crimes including sexual offences was to place bail conditions on the perpetrators. The usual bail conditions placed on the perpetrators are not to contact the victims directly or indirectly and not to attend the area in which they live. The victims commissioner (2021) released an article explaining the improved measures on safeguarding victims and explained that the new measures introduced to the bail act would ensure that strict conditions are imposed on suspects, rather than what used to happen which was to release them under investigation and not implementing any safeguarding on the victims. More recently, In October 2022 Kay's Law was introduced whereby the initial pre-charge bail period has increased from 28 days to 90 days which aims for better protection for victims and more effective for suspect

(Welsh Government, 2022). Val had bail conditions imposed against Pete and his mother which aimed to protect her during the investigation and the case going to the CPS.

Belknap et al. (2000) conducted a study on Factors Related to Domestic Violence Court Dispositions and found that the lack of communication between the victim and professionals involved in the case resulted in the phenomenon of victim-witness reluctance-cooperation. This goes from when the perpetrator is arrested to leading up to the court case, the victims do not feel as though they had received enough time or court preparation which causes them to feel anxious and unprepared leading them to retract their complaint (Belknap et al, 2000). Another issue they found in the study was that when the cases did go through to the courts, they did not always reveal all the relevant factors of the abuse that the victims endured. Belknap et al. (2000) came up with recommendations on how to improve the victims supporting their complaints through the criminal justice system and they were to; improve and maintain contact with the victims, to reassure them and fully explain to them what the process will be when they go to court. This also includes the special measures that are now offered to vulnerable and intimidated victims as the pressure of facing their abusers, and explaining their story in front of strangers is often what pushes victims not to make a complaint. The second recommendation was to introduce the victimless process in relation to domestic violence cases into the courts, whereby if they do not make a complaint or if they later retract their complaint, the courts are still able to pursue these cases and prosecute (Belknap et al., 2000).

To conclude domestic abuse incidents are often difficult to police due to the nature of the incidents, the victims often try to protect their perpetrator as stated by Snyder (2021) and Barrow-Grint (2020), either due to manipulation or fear. The criminal justice system is constantly reviewing their policies and laws in order to protect victims as much as possible. Perpetrator persuasiveness is more difficult to prevent if it occurs before police arrive or are contacted, but once the report is made officers are able to prevent this from happening by attaching bail conditions and reassuring the victim that we are protecting them by fully explaining safeguarding measures and special measures. Pete and his mother had bail conditions imposed and Val was explained the safeguarding and special measures we are able to put in place to keep her safe. In relation to the victims believing that their partner needs

rehabilitation rather than prosecution, this is where officers need to push DASH PPNs and live fear free (LFF) to be accepted by the victim as professionals are able to speak to them effectively as they are trained to do this. Officers also are able to advise victims but the professional agencies are able to provide certain services that police cannot which help them through the domestic abuse cycle. Val did consent to the DASH PPN and was advised to contact LFF. Officers must contact their victims with any updates in regards to the investigation and have to make contact at least once a set to ensure that they are checking in on the victim and reassuring them. This contact occurred more often with Val as we continued to check in on her during the week, at least 3 days due to the nature of the incident she was involved in. This gave Val a chance to speak about any concerns she had and allowed us to speak to her more in depth and answer the questions she had in relation to going to court. This was all explained to her on the night of the incident, but the thought of going through the courts had scared her and she had frequent questions in regards to it, so officers were able to speak her through it all and reassure her of special measures. Val then made the phone call to withdraw her statement which takes us to the Victimless process, this is a great option for prosecuting suspects when the victims withdraw or refuse to make a complaint as the criminal justice system are still able to process the case and potentially make a prosecution without the victim's support. This is where officers must ensure they always explore and gather evidence in the golden hour, as this is vital for a successful prosecution which they were in regards to Val's case. Although we continued to safeguard her she decided that she would not be continuing with the complaint so officers went forwards with the victimless process and explained this to her.

Word count: 1895

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