



## Domestic Homicide Review – Learning Bulletin

### Case of Manpreet

On the morning of September 5<sup>th</sup> 2017, Manpreet was discovered by a neighbour in the bathroom of her home. She had died from the effects of self-immolation and it was concluded that she had taken her own life by suicide. In the months leading up to this tragedy, Manpreet and her husband, Brian, had both been suffering from mental health issues and following an episode of violent behaviour by Brian against her in April 2017, he was charged and convicted of an offence. Consequently, he moved out of the area. It later became apparent that Manpreet was lonely and isolated, and that her culture played a significant part of her lifestyle. Her reliance on Brian compounded her sense of isolation and Manpreet committed several acts of overdose and self-harm in the weeks leading to her death.

### What did we learn:

The domestic homicide review concluded that Manpreet's culture was an Indian Sikh, although this was recognised, it was not a matter that any single agency considered in examining her social isolation. She left her children and family when she chose to enter a relationship with Brian. Even though Brian was responsible for the background to events, Manpreet placed his needs above hers, which reflected her cultural understanding and belief.

It was diagnosed that Manpreet was suffering from an adjustment disorder, due to this separation. It was identified by mental health professionals in August 2017, that the events in Manpreet's life were influenced by Brian's coercive and controlling behaviour. Furthermore, this had been the case for some time and he had convinced her that he was suffering from PTSD, which was untrue.

The combination of her social isolation, cultural belief and adjustment disorder, had a significant effect on Manpreet's day to day living.

She did receive good support to her needs from practitioners, and her close neighbours, but it was not apparent that the combined effect of her situation was recognised until shortly before her tragic death and that this had not been widely shared with professionals.

### Key learning themes:

All professionals should make sure they know what constitutes coercive and controlling behaviour. This is a criminal offence and needs to be more widely understood by all professionals. Even where there is no apparent violence within a relationship, the effect of such behaviour can have a profound effect on the victim and professionals need to be alert to signs and symptoms. Victims of domestic abuse are also potentially adults at risk in looking at the wider implications of separation and the ending of relationships.

Society is by its very nature, multi-cultural and relationships between individuals often transgress heritage, religion and culture. These are important factors in ensuring that professionals look at the

wider implications of relationships, disclosures made and where appropriate, seek independent advice and guidance.

Professionals need to ensure that they share diagnosis of individuals at the earliest opportunity and that all key information sharing happens in the safeguarding of vulnerable persons. Individuals suffering domestic abuse, in whatever form, are frequently at significant risk, not just from the perpetrator, but also from themselves. Professionals need to be reminded of the risk posed by suicide that it can be heightened for victims of domestic abuse.

Suicide prevention strategies must take into account the implications of domestic abuse and consider the potential risks to victims presented by all forms of domestic abuse.

#### **Learning Themes**

- Information sharing agreement needs adopting by all agencies
- Knowledge of Domestic Abuse required in services that work in suicide prevention. Especially the heightened risk of harm at time of or immediately after separation.
- Resolving Domestic Abuse issues in particular coercive controlling relationships, need addressing first in order to effectively treat any mental health symptoms
- Adoption of a Multi-Agency risk assessment process for vulnerable adults may have helped in this case.
- The suicide prevention policy needs updating.
- An extended knowledge of culture/religion of minority communities in Lincolnshire would enhance professional practice.
- An awareness of DA in minority/religious communities would be of benefit.