

Offender management for domestic abuse

Working in partnership to deliver interventions that address the behaviour of domestic abuse perpetrators.

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Key details

Does it work?	Promising
Focus	Prevention Diversion Reoffending
Topic	Offender management Violence against women and girls Violence (other) Vulnerability and safeguarding
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Region	South West

Key details

Partners	Police Criminal justice (includes prisons, probation services) Education Health services Local authority
Stage of practice	The practice is implemented.
Start date	August 2021
Scale of initiative	Local
Target group	Children and young people Families Offenders Victims

Aim

The aim of the initiative is to reduce the risk that the most serious domestic abuse (DA) offenders pose to victims, other vulnerable people, and the wider community. The selection of the DA cohort is based on risk. This is a combination of professional judgement and data (a risk score based on recency, frequency and gravity of offending). Selection is agreed at Domestic Abuse Perpetrator Panels (DAPP meetings) where all partners are present. The police partner with [DRIVE](#) who focus on disrupting and changing the behaviour of domestic abuse perpetrators. They make the final decision based on their capacity. This is a national initiative in one of the 5 local authority areas.

The diversity and equality of the participants in the cohort is monitored, although this is not a factor in selection for the scheme. This is monitored on a police system called Qlik, an analytical tool used for for a range of policing purposes including charting data.

Ultimately, the aim is to enable participants at risk of causing high harm to recognise the need to change their harmful behaviours and break the cycle of domestic abuse.

Intended outcome

Intended outcomes include:

- reduction in harm score which is calculated from the recency, frequency and gravity of offending
- decreased reoffending rates of the participants in the cohort
- decreased reoffending rates of participants who have completed the scheme

This is achieved by using Information Driven Integrated Offender Management (ID-IOM) and Qlik.

Description

The DRIVE cohort is selected from Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) and police recommendations. DRIVE deliver the interventions. The [Drive project](#) is an innovative domestic abuse intervention that aims to reduce the number of child and adult victims by disrupting and changing participant behaviour.

The project focuses on high-risk, high-harm and/or serial perpetrators, as this group carries the greatest risk of serious harm and engagement with available services is low. DRIVE implements a whole-system approach using intensive case management alongside a coordinated multi-agency response. DRIVE works closely with:

- victim services
- the police
- probation
- children's social services
- housing
- substance misuse
- mental health teams

DRIVE focuses on reducing risk and increasing victim safety by combining disruption, support and behaviour change interventions alongside crucial protective work by victim services.

The DA team sit within the Integrated Offender Management (IOM) unit, a department in policing that manage the most persistent and dangerous offenders. This team was initially set up as a pilot in 2021 but has since been embedded force-wide. Police officers on this team receive bespoke DA

training managed by DRIVE.

The DA team use the principles of offender management to address the underlying causes of offender behaviour. This includes working closely with partner agencies such as probation, health and local authorities to address their basic pathway needs in the same way as other managed offenders. Police and probation are co-located and regularly meet to discuss risk management and migration on/off the IOM.

The training currently being rolled out aims to provide police DA offender managers with the tools to address the underlying causes of high-harm high-risk perpetrator behaviour. Identifying the typology of their abusive behaviours will lead to the creation of a bespoke intervention plan by police and probation.

Behavioural moderation tools can be given to the perpetrators by the DA offender managers to assist in reducing the harmful effect of their actions. DA offender managers are to be trained in the use of motivational interviewing techniques and basic CBT behavioural change exercises with the ultimate aim of allowing the perpetrator to recognise their own needs and to break the cycle of relationship abuse.

Overall impact

Data already indicates that participants who have completed their behaviour change programme with DRIVE have a significant drop in reoffending.

A range of perpetrator harm scores, standard [Cambridge Crime Harm Index](#) scores and bespoke DA offence impact gravity scoring are also collated and compared in six-month blocks before and after different stages of engagement. All available information is used to make informed decisions. These scores are all trending in a positive outcome direction for DRIVE.

Currently, across the entire population of the crime recording system there is a DA reoffending rate of 38%. For the High Harm High Risk offenders selected for DRIVE case management, there was a 98% DA reoffending rate. For post-selection of DRIVE case management there is a 44% DA reoffending rate, where this disruption activity has taken place. For post-full engagement in DRIVE behavioural change interventions, there is a 36% reoffending rate, where behavioural change activity is engaged.

Moreover, average DA specific gravity scores in the six months prior to DRIVE full engagement are 4 times greater than in the 6 months post-full engagement.

Learning

It has been identified, through local police experience, that the management of DA perpetrators requires a change in approach different to the traditional format of management for perpetrators of serious acquisitive crime. What motivates and perpetuates a cycle of DA offending in a person is not the same thing which drives a person to commit multiple burglary offences. Therefore, a specific approach for DA perpetrators is necessary.

Cohort selection has been standardised and automated to an extent, with the introduction of a more scientific approach to gauging risk using an RFG (recency, frequency, gravity) based numerical ranking scoring system. It is an evolving process that started about 2 years ago that was put in place to be more accountable and efficient.

Cohort management seeks to address the basic needs of the perpetrator, for example housing, benefits and addiction. In addition, the force engage and understand the perpetrator to identify the nature of their abuse. This helps the perpetrator achieve self-awareness of their harmful behaviours, leading them to understand what caused these behaviours that lock them into a cycle of relationship abuse. This self-awareness will allow for the use of coping strategies to reduce risk to the victim and at best will lead to permanent behavioural change in the perpetrator.

Best available evidence

The [Crime Reduction Toolkit](#) currently includes the best-available evidence on [motivational interviewing](#) to support behaviour change with domestic abuse perpetrators.

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Tags

Domestic abuse Domestic violence