



# DOMESTIC HOMICIDE REVIEW (DHR)

## LEARNING BRIEF - JULIA

### Background Information

Julia (pseudonym) was in her 40s when she was murdered by her partner, David (pseudonym) in February 2017. Julia and David were Brazilian nationals whose first language was Portuguese. They had come to work and settle in the UK in January 2016. Julia was noted to have been able to speak English as an additional language.

The couple had limited contact with agencies prior to Julia's death except for David's GP and the Mental Health service. Both attended church.

Key themes: mental health, religion, immigration, and domestic abuse.

### Good Practice

There are examples of good practice that were highlighted in this review.

- The GP and Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership (AWP) provided interpreters, as well as information in both English and Portuguese to David and Julia. An interpreter was present during the majority of interactions between David and AWP, including both assessments.
- Safeguarding leads of AWP advised staff to contact the police to conduct a welfare check on David and Julia. This is an example of good practice as it shows cross-working between agencies.
- The GP's attempts to contact David, Julia, and David's friend after David did not attend a scheduled appointment with the recovery nurse showed good practice.

### Domestic Homicide Reviews

The Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act (2004) defines a Domestic Homicide Review as a review of the circumstances in which the death of a person aged 16 or over has, or appears to have, resulted from violence, abuse, or neglect. This multi-agency process seeks to identify lessons to be learnt from the death and prevent harm from happening in similar circumstances in the future. More information on the DHR process can be found on the [KBSP website](#).

### Key Learning

- The review highlighted that David appeared to have ongoing issues with paranoia. David was experiencing stresses in his life, such as an ongoing court case with his ex-wife in Brazil, work stress, and he believed that Julia was having an affair. These stresses were indicated to the GP by Julia.
- Both the GP and secondary mental health services faced challenges due to high volumes of service users, as well as limited resources.
- Julia had not managed to register with a GP as she was deemed to be outside the catchment area.
- The Chair gained perspective from those who worked with the Brazilian community that both mental health and domestic abuse are not as addressed as it is in the UK.

## Recommendations

### Recommendation 1

*KBSP to seek assurance that all agencies recognise the need and use the Domestic Abuse, Stalking, and Honour-Based Violence assessment tool (DASH) to assess risk in appropriate cases.*

KBSP developed and has rolled out Multi-agency Domestic Abuse and Safeguarding Training since December 2022. This includes information about the need for DASH risk assessments, who can complete a DASH, and how it feeds into Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference referrals.

### Recommendation 2

*New residents, particularly for those for who English is not their first language, to be supported to register with a GP practice.*

The Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Integrated Care Board have shared guidance through a GP bulletin to remind staff to signpost other GP practices that are in the service users' catchment area. The bulletin will be circulated in the KBSP Newsletter in September 2024.

### Recommendation 3

*As part of the reform of Domestic Homicide Review Statutory Guidance, the Home Office should consider whether homicides involving acute mental health episode meet the criteria for a Domestic Homicide Review.*

During the Domestic Homicide Review guidance consultation, it was requested that the Home Office should consider whether homicides involved in acute mental health episodes meet the criteria for a Domestic Homicide Review.

## Support

### Domestic Abuse

The Next Link Plus service offers specialist domestic abuse support for women, men and children and young people from all communities (including LGBTQ+ and global majorities).

Call 0800 4700 280, text 07407 895620, email [enquiries@nextlinkhousing.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@nextlinkhousing.co.uk) or online chat via the [Next Link website](https://www.nextlinkhousing.co.uk).

### Mental Health

Mind provides services that are accessible, relevant and empowering to people using them. Call 0117 980 0370 to speak to [Mind Information Service](https://www.mind.org.uk/information-services) about the support you could receive or email [info@bristolmind.org.uk](mailto:info@bristolmind.org.uk). You can also call Bristol MindLine, an out of hours confidential listening service on 0808 808 0330.

### Immediate Danger

**Call 999 if a crime is happening now or you're in immediate danger.**

### Where to find us:



[KBSP@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:KBSP@bristol.gov.uk)



[@KBSPPartnership](https://twitter.com/KBSPPartnership)



[www.bristolsafeguarding.org](https://www.bristolsafeguarding.org)