

**Report of the Cabinet Member
Improving Health & Wellbeing**

I have been asked by Councillor Hannaford to report on the services that we commission for dealing with Domestic Abuse (to include comment on the latest figures which appear to indicate a rise in deaths from domestic violence and abuse).

1. Deaths from domestic violence and abuse

There have been 12 Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHR) in Devon since 2011. There was a spike in deaths in 2015.

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Number of DHR's	3	1	0	1	4	2	1

Of the 12, all were female. 1 was a suicide, 2 were murdered by their sons and 9 were murdered by their partner (of these 5 had separated or were in the process of separating). Only the victim who committed suicide was known to a domestic violence and abuse service. Although she had been deemed as high risk on entry to the service, she was assessed as medium risk when she took her life.

The recommendations from the 5 completed DHRs focus on wider system change so that individuals are identified earlier or they identify the abuse themselves and seek help. This would include improving raising awareness of domestic abuse to the public and to front-line professionals, particularly in universal services such as health care settings and improving information sharing between agencies, particularly around alleged perpetrators.

2. Update on commissioned services

The commissioned Devon Domestic Abuse and Support Service (DDASS) is run by Splitz Support Service and successfully gained SafeLives Leading Lights accreditation (the industry's standard) in November.

DDASS is commissioned to reduce the risk to victims of domestic abuse, primarily through safety planning with the victim. The thresholds for support are victims deemed as high and medium risk (above a score of 6 or more on the CAADA risk assessment).

Since March 2016, DDASS has worked with 1,125 victims. 937 high risk victims were referred to the service and 834 engaged with the service (91% engagement rate). At exit, the risk was judged to be reduced for 79% of these victims and 49% experienced a cessation of all abuse.

The number of victims aged over 60 remains high at nearly 7% (the national level of referrals for this age group is 2.5%), which is positive given that in two of the DHRs the adult son was the perpetrator.

3. DSVA Strategy

The DSVA Strategy was launched in autumn 2016 with the aim to end domestic and sexual violence and abuse. The focus is on

- 1) prevention and early intervention to prevent abuse happening in the first place through education about health relationships in schools and embedded sensitive and routine enquiry across all services.
- 2) Support and recovery to prevent domestic and sexual abuse re-occurring through focusing on the needs of the individuals and holding the perpetrator to account for his/her behaviour to challenge patterns of behaviour.

These strategic intentions will inform the re-commissioning of the domestic and sexual violence and abuse services from 1st March 2018.

Councillor Andrea Davis
Cabinet Member – Improving Health and Wellbeing