DOMESTIC ABUSE, HOMICIDE AND GENDER: STRATEGIES FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE

Monckton Smith, Williams and Mullane Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan
Why do we need to understand coercive control?

- Predicts homicide more effectively than violence by six times
- New definition reflects its importance
- Emerging findings from Domestic Homicide Reviews support international findings
- Course of conduct legislation – stalking and coercive control – reflect its importance
- HMIC inspections 2014 – suggest we don’t understand DA
- Extant research/risk assessment checklists support the centrality of coercive control in domestic homicide and high risk abuse
ABUSER PSYCHOLOGY

HIGH RISK MARKERS

TRIGGERS
Perpetrators

- A recognisable psychology which is ‘who they are’
- Deep seated fear of the victim leaving
- Unable to take rejection or challenge
- Obsessive, repetitive, compulsive behaviours
Victims

- Skilled manager of a dangerous individual
- Someone who has had their ability to make choices taken away
- A life dominated by fear and the needs of the perpetrator
WHAT DO THEY CONTROL?

S SPACE
T TIME
A ACTION
R RESOURCES
E EMOTIONS

Through the use of FEAR – violence is not always necessary, but it is effective in creating fear.
REMEMBER THAT THE ONLY PERSON WHO CAN GUARANTEE THE SAFETY OF THE VICTIM IS THE ABUSER

ABUSERS ARE NOT LOSING CONTROL WHEN THEY ARE VIOLENT OR HOMICIDAL THEY’RE EXERTING CONTROL

THE VICTIM IS NOT RECKLESS IN FAILING TO LEAVE, BUT WE MIGHT BE IN EXPECTING THEM TO

THE VICTIM HAS A STRATEGY FOR MANAGING THE DANGER – WE SHOULD WORK WITH IT

The whole point of coercive control is to stop the victim leaving
DART is a response model and app developed from research with professionals, victims and people bereaved by homicide, which helps with:

- Understanding domestic abuse, stalking and coercive control
- Understanding perpetrator behaviour
- Responding to victims
- Gathering evidence for prosecutions
- Developing a knowledge of threat assessment
- Easy access to information via an App and Support centre
- Bespoke guidance as per force or organisational policy
- Master classes covering all of the above
THE DART APP
Coercive control

Victim care and information

Offender guide

Evidence gathering

FAQs
Menu

- Strangulation evidence aid
- General guidance
- Interview guide for coercive control/ course of conduct offending
Strangulation Evidence Aide

- Note changes to the voice
- Does the victim have difficulty swallowing?
- Is there any difficulty breathing?
- Nausea or dizziness?
- Are there any marks on the victim’s neck? Note and photograph if possible
- Redness swelling or bruising on the neck?
- Defensive injuries
- Petechiae (tiny red spots) in the eyes or on the neck
- Injury to lungs or fluid in the lungs
- Memory loss
- Loss of consciousness
- Loss of bowel or bladder control
- Follow up photographs when bruising may appear
- How did the victim feel during the assault?
- Did they think they might die?
- What was said by the perpetrator, before, during and after the assault?
- Always consider corroboration
Victim Care and Information

- Stalking – high risk characteristics
- Stalking – advice for the victim
- Cyber stalking – potential behaviours
- Cyber stalking – advice for the victim
- Useful phone numbers
- Interviewing victims
- Validation and rapport
- Male victims
Cyber Stalking:
Advice for the Victim

- Maintain a log of all contact or tracking online
- Evidence can be deleted – take screenshots where you can
- Try to limit or delete personal information available about you online. This includes not publishing on social media
- Be aware that others can ‘tag’ you or your activities
- Change your passwords regularly and adjust your privacy settings
- Use and update anti-virus software
- Do not accept any options on your computer to remember your passwords or username
- Always clear your search history
- Contact the ISP to inform them of cyberstalking
- Keep any emails and do not forward original emails to anyone else
- Remember everything you post on social media may be seen by the stalker
- Carefully manage what you put online (even privately)
- Consider all advice from Card 8
When you get the card up on your phone you can press each section to receive further more detailed information.

- Information available on other public protection areas like CSE and sexual assault.
- Cards updated with latest information.
- A support centre where you can ask questions or share information.
Is this Domestic Abuse? F E A R S

Frightened
Is the victim very frightened?

Estrangement or its threat
Has there been a separation, or is one imagined or planned?

Aggression, Control and Violence
Is there disclosure of aggression, control or violence happening at any time? (including sexual violence)

Repeat Abuser
Has the alleged perpetrator got a history of abuse in this or any other relationship?

Stalking /Harassment
Is there any stalking or harassment occurring?