

Diana Davies
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Penmorfa,
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20 September 2023

Dear Diana

Thank you for resubmitting the Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) report (Betty) for Ceredigion Community Safety Partnership (CSP) to the Home Office Quality Assurance (QA) Panel. The report was considered at the QA Panel meeting on 23rd August. I apologise for the delay in responding to you.

The QA Panel were pleased to see condolences offered to Betty's family and friends. The DHR engaged well with Bettys friends, neighbours and other associates. The report highlights that due consideration was given to the coronial and criminal processes before contacting the family.

The QA Panel felt that there are some aspects of the report which may benefit from further revision, but the Home Office is content that on completion of these changes, the DHR may be published.

Areas for final development:

- Paragraph 12.7: 'There was also an identified need to emphasise that domestic abuse is not gender specific...'. No amendments have been made to clarify the fact that domestic abuse is a gendered crime. Whilst domestic abuse does affect all, it should read in line with information based on statistics. The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) estimated that 5.0% of adults aged 16 years and over experienced domestic abuse in the year ending March 2022; this equates to an estimated 2.4 million adults (1.7 million women and 699,000 men).
- The review was asked to add more information on the police force the Chair was employed by and the date of retirement, and this now states 'He retired from an English police service in 2005', which is not the level of detail asked for.

- There is very little rationale provided for the delay in commencing the DHR process and why it has taken 3 years and 5 months to be submitted to the Home Office.
- The comment following paragraph 1.10 suggests that the “Review Panel are keen to stress they are not suggesting that Betty was to blame” yet Para 1.10 contradicts this. Paragraph 1.10 states, “it is the view of the DHR panel that a breakdown in Betty’s mental wellbeing was the main cause of arguments and friction between the couple”. This can be perceived as victim blaming and should be addressed.
- Betty’s voice appears lost within the report, which appears very perpetrator centric. Whilst the QA panel can appreciate this was a DHR, it is evident that there has been some lost learning opportunities due to the absence of any professional with specialised knowledge of Alzheimer’s. The post-mortem identifies evidence of Alzheimer’s, and it is accepted that Betty had not been clinically diagnosed before her death, but it is clearly a factor, which does not appear to have been explored in-depth. It is acknowledged that the report references the Alzheimer’s Society, however exploring the life limiting illness of Alzheimer’s and the likely stages of dementia, cross referenced with Betty’s increasing isolation, loss of interest in talking to people and repeated episodes of aggression, could have better reflected Betty’s deteriorating health. It may have also provided strong mitigation for some of Betty’s behaviour and helped the reader understand the difficulties Betty would have been experiencing with her declining mental health.
- Paragraph 12.16 – It is not a sufficient reference to link to Dewis Choice’s research projects page when citing specific findings, and there are areas where references are needed but are not provided for example 9.7 (particularly the claim that men may be ‘more’ reluctant to report abuse), 9.11, 9.22, 9.25.
- Please include any plans for learning events, inclusion of learning into training etc.

Once completed the Home Office would be grateful if you could provide us with a digital copy of the revised final version of the report with all finalised attachments and appendices and the weblink to the site where the report will be published. Please ensure this letter is published alongside the report.

Please send the digital copy and weblink to DHREnquiries@homeoffice.gov.uk. This is for our own records for future analysis to go towards highlighting best practice and to inform public policy.

The DHR report including the executive summary and action plan should be converted to a PDF document and be smaller than 20 MB in size; this final Home Office QA Panel feedback letter should be attached to the end of the report as an annex; and the DHR Action Plan should be added to the report as an annex. This should include all implementation updates and note that the action plan is a live document and subject to change as outcomes are delivered.

Please also send a digital copy to the Domestic Abuse Commissioner at DHR@domesticabusecommissioner.independent.gov.uk

On behalf of the QA Panel, I would like to thank you, the report chair and author, and other colleagues for the considerable work that you have put into this review.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lynne Abrams', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Lynne Abrams

Chair of the Home Office DHR Quality Assurance Panel