

Bournemouth Community Safety Partnership

Domestic Homicide Review Report:

‘Marie’

Died: May 2014

Tony Blockley
Director: Johnston and Blockley Ltd

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	Subject	Page
1	Introduction	3
	Preface	3
	The circumstances that led to the domestic homicide review	3
	Scope of the review	5
	Terms of reference	5
	Methodology	8
	Panel	9
	Family involvement (Genogram)	11
	Information from work colleagues and friends	13
2	What agencies knew prior to Marie 's death	15
	Marie	15
	What was known about the Perpetrators	16
3	Additional information	17
4	Analysis of involvement	19
	Dorset Police	19
	Royal Bournemouth and Christchurch hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	19
	NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group (Acting on behalf of Primary Care GP's)	19
5	Addressing the terms of reference	20
	Lessons learned	24
6	Conclusions	24
7	Recommendations	25

1 Introduction

The DHR Panel would like to extend its sincere condolences to Marie 's family and express its gratitude to Adult B (Marie 's daughter) for her support and the courage and dignity she has displayed throughout the process. Her support has been invaluable and has greatly assisted the panel to view events through Marie's eyes.

1.1 Preface

1.2 Bournemouth is the largest town in Dorset, with the 2011 Census showing the population to be 183,491. The mid-2014 estimate was 191,400 and it is predicted to reach 225,000 by 2037, according to the Office for National Statistics' 2012 (ONS) projections. With 4,000 residents per square kilometer, Bournemouth has the highest population density of any authority in the South-West region, and is the eighth most populated.

1.3 Much of the population, 83.8%, describes their ethnicity as 'white British' while other white groups account for a further 8.1%. Asian groups; Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese and other Asian, make up 3.9%. Black British, black African, black Caribbean and other black groups form 1.0% of the population, those of a mixed race make up 2.3% of the population, and 0.9% are from other ethnic groups

1.4 Domestic Abuse is one of the priorities for the Bournemouth Community Safety Partnership, and the work in this area is overseen by a pan-Dorset Domestic Abuse Strategy Group. The Bournemouth & Poole Domestic Abuse Strategy is currently being refreshed to become a pan-Dorset document.

1.5 There has been a rising trend in reports of domestic abuse incidents in Bournemouth over the past 8 months, with an 8% increase comparing 2014/15 with 2013/14 and a 21% increase in the first six months of 2015/16 compared to the previous year. The most recent increase however coincides with the introduction of new systems for crime recording within Dorset Police and so an element of this increase may be made up from better recording.

1.6 Violent crimes related to domestic abuse have also increased, with a 40% increase in domestic abuse violent crimes in 2014/15 compared to 2013/14. This increase seems to have leveled out in 2015/16, with only a 2% increase in the first six months of this year.

1.7 Since April 2013, there have been 7 homicides in Dorset classified as "domestic homicides", in 4 of these cases, the victims have been Bournemouth residents. The Safeguarding Adults Board for Bournemouth & Poole leads on Domestic Homicide Reviews on behalf of the Community Safety Partnerships.

1.8 The circumstances that led to this Domestic Homicide Review

1.9 This Domestic Homicide Review Overview Report is about Marie, a 44-year-old Chinese national, who died in Bournemouth, Dorset, on 23rd May 2014. Her husband, Perpetrator A, who is a French national, murdered her. It is recorded that Perpetrator A killed Marie by blunt force trauma to the head using a heavy instrument.

‘Marie’ is a pseudonym chosen by the report author.

1.10 Perpetrator A was arrested on 28th May 2014 and on 27th February 2015, he appeared at Winchester Crown Court where, after a trial, he was found guilty of Marie ’s murder. He was sentenced to life imprisonment with a recommendation that he must serve 25 years before being eligible for parole.

1.11 Perpetrator A was also married to Perpetrator B and they had a son together, Perpetrator C. Perpetrators B and C were acquitted of conspiracy to murder Marie, but Perpetrator B was sentenced to three years in prison for assisting an offender and perverting the course of justice. Perpetrator C was sentenced to two years in prison after he was found guilty of assisting an offender.

1.12 Before the murder trial, Perpetrator A had admitted bigamously marrying Marie on the 25th July 2007. The court was told that it had been an unusual ceremony at the registry office. As soon as it had finished, Perpetrator left saying he had to go back to work. He left some money for Marie and her friends to buy lunch.

1.13 He had been married to Perpetrator B since 1987. He was sentenced to three years’ imprisonment for bigamy, to run concurrently to his life sentence.

1.14 The prosecution case had been that Perpetrator A had been leading a secret double life, which had led him into money troubles. He had intended to claim £300,000 from Marie’s life insurance policy after he had murdered her. The prosecution contended that all three Perpetrators had conspired together.

1.15 During the trial, the court had evidence from a man who had been in prison with Perpetrator A. He had told him that Marie had wanted a divorce and that she was intent upon returning to China.

1.16 Perpetrator A had described to him the acrimonious relationship that existed between Perpetrator B and Marie and said they hated one-another. He had said that Perpetrator B had persistently told him to divorce her, but he couldn’t because there was too much money involved.

1.17 According to the witness, a week before Marie ’s murder there was a meeting between the three conspirators during which the plot to kill her and claim the life insurance was hatched.

- 1.18 During the trial, the court was told that Perpetrator A's plan had been to bury Marie under the floor of a home they were renovating; he had purchased five bags of cement for that purpose.
- 1.19 He wrapped Marie's body in a plastic sheet and placed her in the back of his van over the weekend, but had felt compelled to report to the police that she was missing once concerns had been raised about her by Marie's daughter, her daughter from a previous marriage.
- 1.20 The police were highly suspicious and on 30th May 2014, having arrested all three Perpetrators, they found Marie's body secreted in the boot of a car owned by Perpetrator C
- 1.21 In accordance with agreed protocols, Dorset police notified Bournemouth Community Safety Partnership (CSP) of the circumstances of Marie's death. There was a delay in the notification due to an administrative error. On 15th July 2014, the Domestic Homicide Review Panel on behalf of Bournemouth CSP decided that a domestic homicide review should be conducted because it was clear that her death had been caused by a person to whom she had been related or with whom she was or had been in an intimate personal relationship, but at that time did not feel there was sufficient information available to formulate specific terms of reference for the review.
- 1.22 A decision was made to postpone the review until the outcome of any criminal proceedings was known.
- 1.23 On 15th July 2014 agencies were asked to review their records to determine whether they had been involved with Marie and/or Perpetrators A, B and C in the past, and to seal any records they may have had.
- 1.24 On 8th October 2014, the Home office was notified of the intention to carry out a review. The review panel was considering what information was available and should have assessed the need to commence the review on the facts of Marie's death.
- 1.25 Scope of the Review**
- 1.26 It is believed that Marie met Perpetrator A around 2005 when she was a customer at his garage and that not long afterwards they began a relationship.
- 1.27 They married on the 25th July 2007; he was 57 and Marie was 37. The scope of the review was therefore set to include information about them between 1st January 2005 and 23rd May 2014 including details of any other relationships they may have been in.

- 1.28 The purpose of examining their respective previous relationships was to ascertain whether there were any patterns of behaviour that could have a bearing on Marie 's death.
- 1.29 Only one agency, the Dorset Police, had experienced relevant contact with any of those mentioned above, and they were asked to provide the panel with an Individual Management Review (IMR) and a chronology of their interaction with them. The IMR took into account the Terms of Reference for the review (see below) and considered whether internal procedures had been followed and whether, on reflection, they had been adequate. They were invited to draw conclusions about any contact they had experienced and to make recommendations if appropriate.
- 1.30 NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group produced IMR's in respect of Perpetrators A and C, which outlined their medical histories. They consisted of routine medical matters and had no bearing on this review. They also produced an IMR in respect of Marie which consisted in the main of routine medical matters, but it also made reference to her attendance with Perpetrator A at an infertility clinic, subsequent IVF treatment and to Marie miscarrying in 2012. This was noted as evidence suggests pregnancy can be both a starting point and a trigger for an increase in intensity in an abusive relationship.

1.31 **Terms of Reference**

1.32 The purpose of the review was to:

- Establish what lessons could be learned from the domestic homicide about the way in which local professionals and organisations work individually and together to safeguard victims of domestic abuse
- Clearly identify what those lessons are both within and between agencies, how and within what timescales they will be acted on, and what is expected to change as a result
- Apply those lessons to service responses and include any appropriate changes to policies and procedures
- Prevent future domestic homicides through the improvement of service responses for all victims of domestic abuse, and their children, through improved intra or inter-agency working.

The review aimed to address:

- Whether the incident in which Marie died was a ‘one off’ or whether there were any warning signs and whether more could be done to raise awareness of services available to victims of domestic violence.
- Whether there were any barriers experienced by Marie or her family, friends and colleagues in reporting any abuse in Bournemouth or elsewhere, including whether they knew how to report domestic abuse should they have wanted to.
- Whether Marie had experienced abuse in previous relationships in Bournemouth or elsewhere, and whether this experience impacted on her likelihood of seeking support in the months before she died.
- Whether there were opportunities for professionals to ‘routinely enquire’ as to any domestic abuse experienced by Marie that were missed.
- Whether any of the Perpetrators had any previous history of abusive behaviour to an intimate partner and whether this was known to any agencies.
- Whether there were opportunities for agency intervention in relation to domestic abuse regarding Marie or any of the Perpetrators that were missed.
- The review should identify any training or awareness raising requirements that are necessary to ensure a greater knowledge and understanding of domestic abuse processes and / or services in the area covered by the Bournemouth Community Safety Partnership
- The review will also give appropriate consideration to any equality and diversity issues that appear pertinent to the victim, perpetrators and dependent children e.g. age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.

1.33 The overall rationale for a review is to ensure that agencies are responding appropriately to victims of domestic violence by offering and putting in place appropriate support mechanisms, procedures, resources and interventions with the aim of avoiding future incidents of domestic homicide and abuse.

The review identified the following general areas for consideration.

1.34 **Family engagement**

- 1.35
- How should friends, family members and other support networks and, where appropriate, the perpetrators, contribute to the review and who should be responsible for facilitating their involvement?

- How matters concerning family and friends, the public and media should be managed before, during and after the review and who should take responsibility for it?

1.36 Legal Processes

- 1.37
- How will the review take account of a coroner's inquiry, and (if relevant) any criminal investigation related to the homicide, including disclosure issues, to ensure that relevant information can be shared without incurring significant delay in the review process or compromise to the judicial process?
 - Does the review panel need to obtain independent legal advice about any aspect of the proposed review?

1.38 Research

- 1.39
- How should the review process take account of previous lessons learned from research and previous DHRs?

1.40 In order to reach a view on whether Marie 's death could have been predicted and/or prevented, the IMR author was asked to include information on, and analysis of, all the following issues:

1.41 Diversity

- 1.42
- Are there any specific considerations around equality and diversity issues, such as ethnicity, age and disability that may require special consideration?

1.43 Individual agency responsibility

- 1.44
- Was the work undertaken consistent with the organisation's policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of adults and with wider professional standards?
 - What were the key relevant points/opportunities for assessment and decision making in relation to Marie and the Perpetrators?
 - What was the quality of any multi-agency assessments?
 - Was the impact of domestic violence on Marie recognised?
 - Did actions accord with assessments and decisions made? Were appropriate services offered/provided or relevant enquiries made, in the light of assessments?

- Was there sufficient management accountability for decision-making? Were senior managers or other organisations and professionals involved where they should have been?

1.45 Issues which relate to ethnicity, disability or faith which may have a bearing on this review

Cultural issues relating to the reporting of domestic abuse were identified and are subject of discussion within the report.

1.46 Other DHRs in the region or nationally which are similar, and the availability of relevant research

(None have been identified at the time of writing).

1.47 Methodology

1.48 This overview report has been compiled from analysis of the information supplied in the police IMR, supplementary reports and witness statements taken by the police from friends and work colleagues, interviews with staff members, certified court reports, open source material, previous Domestic Homicide Review reports, research into various aspects of domestic abuse and with the help and support of Marie 's daughter (Other members of Marie 's family are in China and have not therefore been able to contribute to this review).

1.49 The following documents have also been referred to:

- The home office multi-Agency Statutory Guidance for the conduct of Domestic Homicide reviews
- The Home Office Domestic Homicide Review Tool Kit Guide for Overview Report Writers
- Call an End to Violence Against Women and Girls – HM Government (November 2010)
- Barriers to Disclosure – Walby and Allen, 2004.
- Home Office Domestic Homicide Reviews – Common themes identified and lessons learned – November 2013.
- Prevalence of intimate partner violence: findings from the WHO multi-country study on women's health and domestic violence, 2006.
- 'If only we'd known': an exploratory study of seven intimate partner homicides in Engleshire - July 2007

1.50 Participating Agencies

1.51 The following agencies were asked to provide chronological accounts of their contact with Marie and Perpetrators A, B and C

- Dorset Police
- NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group (Acting on behalf of Primary Care GP's)
- Royal Bournemouth and Christchurch hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
- Bournemouth Chinese School

1.52 Each agency was required to report the following:

- A chronology of interaction with Marie and/or with Perpetrator A (the three perpetrators?)
- What action was taken and to provide an analysis of those actions
- Whether internal procedures were followed and if those procedures were appropriate in light of the death of Marie
- Conclusions and recommendations

1.53 **DHR Panel Chair/Overview Report Author**

1.54 Jane Ashman, Independent Chair of the Dorset and Bournemouth & Poole Safeguarding Adult's Board was appointed Chair of the review.

The Bournemouth Community Safety Partnership requested tenders from suitable applicants to act as Overview Report Author.

Following a competitive process, Johnston and Blockley Ltd was commissioned to carry out the role.

1.55 One of its partners, Mr. Tony Blockley, undertook the task. He is a specialist independent consultant in the field of homicide investigation and review. He has senior management experience in all aspects of public protection. He has been involved in numerous homicide reviews throughout the UK and abroad, was chair of MAPPA and was responsible for all public protection issues when he was head of crime in a UK police force. He has been involved in several DHRs and serious case reviews. He is also a special advisor to a 3rd sector organisation that provides domestic abuse services (not in the area covered by the Bournemouth Community Safety Partnership) a Senior lecturer in criminology at the University of Derby and currently studying for a PHD focusing on risk factors and assessment for domestic violence and abuse.

1.56 **The DHR Panel**

1.57 The Domestic Homicide Review Panel on behalf of Bournemouth Community Safety Partnership agreed the formation of the overview panel comprising of agencies that had contact with Marie and Perpetrator A, B and C (during the period under review, and some others, including a representative from a specialist domestic violence service).

1.58 The DHR Review Panel consists of:

- Jane Ashman Independent Chair, Dorset and Bournemouth & Poole Safeguarding Adult's Board
- Tony Blockley Johnston and Blockley Ltd
Overview Report Writer
- DCI Chris Naughton Dorset Police
- Tonia Redvers The You Trust (Independent DA adviser)
- Matt Wain Head of Patient Safety and Risk, NHS CCG
- Sian Jenkins Community Safety Partnership, BBC
- Barbara O'Brien Interim Service Manager, BoP
- Andy Sharp Service Director, Adult Social Care, BBC
- Fiona Holder Safeguarding Adults Lead, DHUFT
- Anne Humphries Business Manager, B & P SAB
- Ping Hau Southampton University (Advisor on Chinese cultural issues)

1.59 Marie's daughter, Adult B, was contacted as part of the review and has met with the report author, her account is detailed later in this report

Perpetrators A and B have been written to in prison inviting them to participate in the review, but to date neither has responded. Perpetrator C has not been contacted, he was not part of the abusive relationship and was involved with the hiding and movement of Marie's body when she had been killed.

Marie's colleagues were contacted as part of this review, however they did not want to take part. Therefore only their previous police statements have been utilised as part of this review.

1.60 Parallel processes

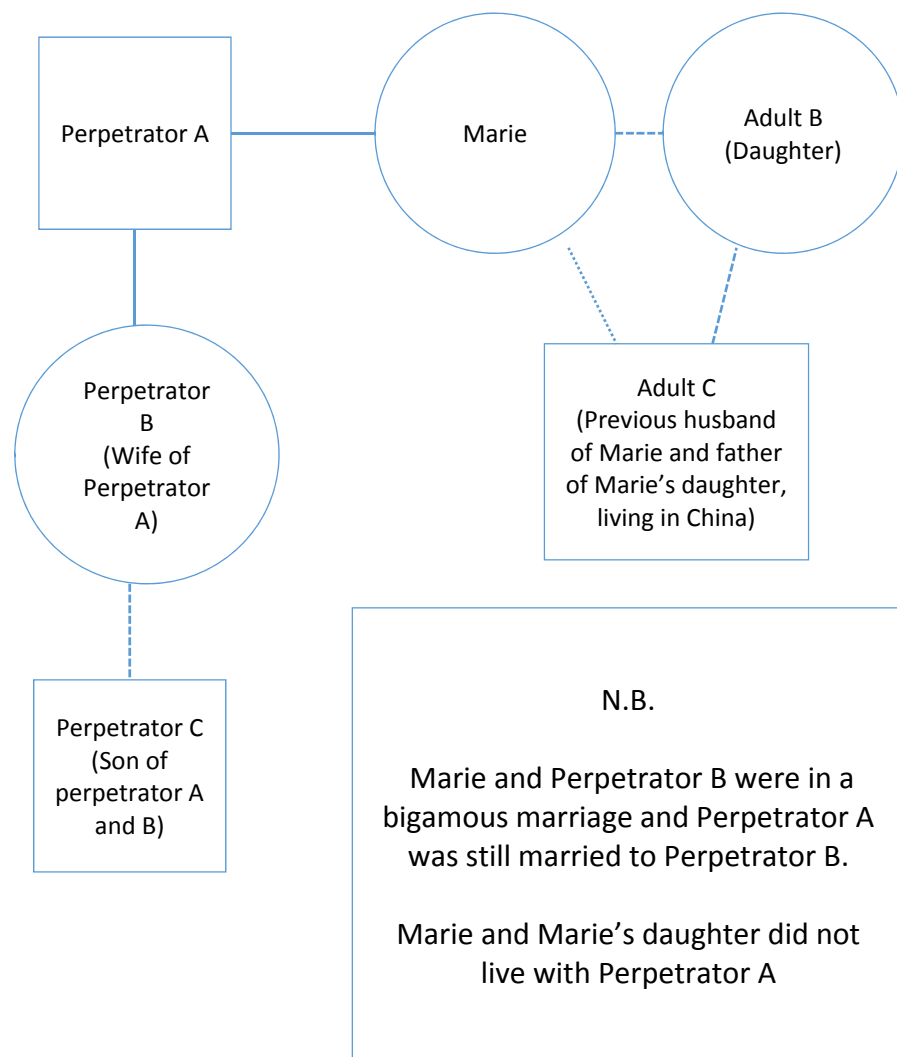
1.61 Inquest / Criminal Investigations

1.62 There was a thorough police investigation into the circumstances of Marie 's death culminating in conviction of Perpetrator A for her murder. He was sentenced to life imprisonment and he must serve 25 years before he can be considered for parole. Perpetrator B was convicted of assisting an offender and perverting the course of justice and was sentenced to three years' imprisonment and Perpetrator C was sentenced to two years' imprisonment for assisting an offender.

1.63 Although Marie 's death was referred to the Coroner, no inquest will take place because all the evidence and information about it was aired during the criminal proceedings.

1.64 The involvement of family members

1.65 Family composition



1.66 The panel agreed that the review would benefit from the involvement of family members; it was recognised that they may have an important role to play in providing background information about Marie and Perpetrator's A and B that agencies may not have previously been aware of.

1.67 **Family Involvement**

1.68 Marie's daughter met with the report author in December 2015 and provided an insight into her mother's history within the UK and her mother's relationship with Perpetrator A, and B.

- 1.69 Marie's daughter was an only child; her father lives in China with the rest of her family. She specifically requested not to contact her mother's parents as her grandfather is unwell and she is afraid of the impact the review would have on him. He suffers dementia and is unaware of his daughter's death.

Marie's daughter provided information to the wider family members.

- 1.70 Marie came to the UK in around 2003-2004 on her own to work and find a better life for her and her daughter. Marie's relationship with her first husband (Adult C) was an abusive one and her daughter often saw Marie being hit by her father.
- 1.71 Marie's daughter explained this was not unusual in Chinese households and there was never any discussion regarding domestic violence and culturally it would never be talked about. (This is significant and is commented on within the learning from the review)
- 1.72 Marie's daughter came to the UK when she was nine, she believes in 2005. They rented a room and lived together. In 2006/2007 they moved and lived in a house on their own.
- 1.73 During this time Marie and Perpetrator A were in a relationship although she could not detail what the relationship was. Marie's daughter described perpetrator A as hot tempered.
- 1.74 Marie's daughter described Perpetrator A as controlling, he would not let Marie meet with her friends and if they did as a couple he would say he did not like them. He did not like Marie and her daughter spending time together. She described that Perpetrator A was always there when she and her mother were together.
- 1.75 Marie and her daughter would never speak in Chinese when Perpetrator A was there, as he would not allow it.
- 1.76 Because of the controlling nature of Perpetrator A and the fact that he was always at the house, Marie's daughter was allowed to do whatever she wanted as long as it did not affect her mother.
- 1.77 Marie's daughter was aware of the fact that her mother performed massages and other acts as Perpetrator A had told her. He had said that he was not happy that Marie did them, but that she (Marie) wanted to. Perpetrator A had also told Marie's daughter that Marie felt used and did not want to do the massages'.
- 1.78 Marie's daughter describes Perpetrator A as initially friendly towards her, but around 2009 he became argumentative, telling her that she was lazy and never did anything around the house, although he also encouraged her to stay at the house.

1.79 Marie's daughter was unable to provide much more detail as she would spend a lot of time at her boyfriend's address, although she knew Perpetrator A was worried that Marie would go to the police over their marriage. There is no indication that Marie's daughter felt in a position to seek help and potentially normalised the abusive behavior because of her previous experiences or due to cultural reasons.

1.80 She described her mother as a strong person who would stand up for herself and worked hard.

1.81 Other family members

1.82 After Marie's murder, her brother and her niece travelled to England from their home in China to offer support to Marie's daughter (Adult B). They have both now returned to China.

1.83 Marie's other relatives consist of two more brothers and her elderly parents, all of whom live in China and do not speak English. Her parents are in poor health.

1.84 During the police investigation, Marie's brother and Niece returned home to China and all liaisons with the extended family of Marie were conducted through Marie's daughter.

1.85 Work colleagues/friends

1.86 At the time of her death, Marie was a Staff Nurse at Poole hospital. The Poole Hospital NHS Foundation Trust had employed her since April 2009.

1.87 The hospital records showed that between July 1989 and July 2003 she had been employed by the Shanxi Province Hospital in China as a Senior Staff Nurse.

1.88 From February to August 2006, Marie had been an Adaption Nurse at a nursing home in London, and then from February 2008 to April 2009, she had been a Staff Nurse at a care home in Bournemouth.

Adaption Nurse's are nurses that originally trained outside the EU and since 2005 they were required to pass a registration process within the UK, comprising of an English language exam and pass the application process through the Nursing and Midwifery Council

1.89 Colleagues at the hospital said that Marie was extremely well liked by staff and by patients. She had a good sense of humour and was described as being very loyal, a hard worker who was always punctual and someone who was prepared to cover for any staff absences.

Marie's colleagues were contacted as part of this review, however they did not want to take part. The details within the report relating to their information has been taken from their statements and comments made to the police during the subsequent murder investigation and evidence provided at the trial of Perpetrator A.

- 1.90 She mentioned she had more than one house and was planning to sell one of them.
- 1.91 She had also mentioned to colleagues that she had a husband in China, but because she liked the UK so much, she had decided to remain here and had brought her daughter to be with her. When asked why she didn't want to go back to China, she said it was because health care wasn't free there and that her daughter also wanted to stay in England.
- 1.92 Colleagues knew that outside of work, Marie liked to go rock climbing and hiking with Perpetrator A. Apparently, they would sometimes go to the Alps for the weekend. They got the impression that she spent all of her spare time in the company of Perpetrator A
- 1.93 Marie 's friends at work said that she was a sociable member of the team and went to the Christmas events.
- 1.94 They said that Marie had at least two mobile telephones. She used one to contact Perpetrator A every break-time and sometimes her daughter as well. Her conversations were often overheard and most colleagues said they usually ended with her saying, "*Love you*".
- 1.95 However, one colleague in particular told the police that Marie would often receive angry phone calls from Perpetrator A. He would call on the ward telephone because her mobile would have been switched off. This was a potential indication of Perpetrator A exerting controlling behavior over Marie and the panel questions if the colleagues had concerns would they who how or where to seek advice or guidance.
- 1.96 The other phone was on a cheaper tariff and was used to contact her family in China.
- 1.97 The same former colleague said that Marie spoke openly about gifts that Perpetrator A bought for her, for example cars and expensive jewelry. She never mentioned that they were married.
- 1.98 She said she met Perpetrator A once or twice at social functions. He didn't circulate but just stood by Marie 's side, although he would offer to buy people a drink. He was clearly a lot older than Marie and she said that as she got to know Marie, it became apparent that her relationship with Perpetrator A was not a happy one.

- 1.99 She added that there was always appeared to be an element of friction - or an atmosphere between the two and that Marie didn't like leaving work if she knew that Perpetrator A was at home with her daughter. She said Perpetrator A and Marie's daughter didn't get on and would have horrendous rows. He would say that Marie's daughter was too westernised and that she should be more like a Chinese woman, meaning that she should do the housework and help more.

This behaviour certainly demonstrated the controlling nature of the relationship by Perpetrator A and the impact it had on the life of Marie. Unfortunately, this behaviour and consequential fear were not discussed at the time by Marie or the colleague. In retrospect it is quite clear the relationship between Marie and Perpetrator A was abusive.

- 1.100 Marie's colleague noticed a difference in Marie's appearance when she attended social functions, depending on whether Perpetrator A was with her. If it were a 'girl's only' function she would dress very conservatively; her dress would be of a decent length and her legs and chest area would be covered. When partners came, Marie dressed provocatively. Perpetrator A didn't interact with others, but he would offer to buy drinks, taking out a large roll of £50 notes when he did so for all to see.

This marked difference in behaviour and dress is a demonstration of the abusive and controlling nature of the relationship. It appears that Perpetrator A was showing Marie off and through sexualising her appearance controlled her, this is clearly abusive although it does not appear to have recognised as such by colleagues.

- 1.101 They would dance in a very provocative manner. They would be kissing constantly whilst dancing. Even though their conduct was in contrast to the way others were dancing, they didn't appear to be embarrassed in any way. Another colleague said that she saw them a couple of times at social events and that she wore a dress that was very revealing of her body. She said that if she talked or danced with someone else, Perpetrator A would pull her back to him.

This is a further demonstration of the control Perpetrator A had over Marie, the sexualised behaviour, provocative clothing and jealousy are all indications of a controlling and abusive relationship.

- 1.102 Marie told her colleague that when friends came to their house, Perpetrator A would make her dress in the same provocative style when she served food and drink. She recounted one occasion when a close friend of Perpetrator A had declared that he was in love with Marie. She said Perpetrator A invited the man to their house one evening and that he made the friend tell Marie of his love for her and then he made them 'interact'. Marie was embarrassed and said she couldn't understand why he had made her do it.

This is a clear demonstration of the control Perpetrator A had over Marie. The abusive nature of the relationship was such that Marie would adhere to his demands even when she clearly did not want to. Identifying potential elements of sexual exploitation present in the relationship.

- 1.103 In 2011, Marie said she was undergoing IVF treatment and that it was going to cost £30,000. Around the same time she became erratic at work; her colleague said she was dashing around, making mistakes and knocking things over. Marie told her that she was on hormone treatment and that it was Perpetrator A who wanted children. She said “*He make me*” and added that she didn't want more children. A different colleague had asked her if she wanted another child and she said “*No*”. That colleague had then told her that it was her body and she should do what she wanted. She had replied, “*He's not the kind of man you say no to.*” She confided in her colleague that she had previously had an abortion in China with her ex-husband.

Such is the controlling nature of the relationship that Marie was coerced and/or forced into potentially having children. This would indicate the extent of the abuse and whilst the information is from a colleague it appears that Marie was not consenting to the pregnancy. This behaviour demonstrates the strength of control Perpetrator A had over Marie and added to her isolation and inability to make her own decisions.

- 1.104 The colleague also said that Marie had had one or two failed attempts at conceiving and that she had been pleased about it. The former colleague said that the IVF treatment had been successful and that Marie had said she was having twins.
- 1.105 A colleague reports Marie said she had told her daughter that she and Perpetrator A were trying for a baby and that her daughter had not been happy about it. Upon further communication, Marie's daughter denies being unhappy about the prospect of a sibling and indeed felt joy at the idea of it.
- 1.106 In 2012, Marie went to China to care for her elderly mother. When she came back, she told the colleague that she had lost the babies. The colleague was sceptical, and wondered whether she had had an abortion while in China because she had remembered that before she went there, she had been sobbing about being pregnant. She hadn't cried when she told her that she had miscarried.
- 1.107 Before her death, Marie had been working overtime for extra money and had booked leave from 13th July to 2nd August 2014. Colleagues thought she had been planning to go to China to attend a niece's wedding. They thought she went to China to visit family a couple of times a year.

On speaking to Marie's daughter they visited family in China about once a year.

2 What the agencies knew prior to Marie 's death

2.1 Marie

2.2 The majority of the statutory partners or domestic abuse agencies that make up the Bournemouth Community Safety Partnership had any record of domestic violence and abuse incidents between Marie and any of the Perpetrators. Contact was made with Bournemouth Chinese School in Winton Bournemouth to establish if Marie had ever made contact with the Chinese School but she had not.

2.3 The police though, did have a record of Marie making a complaint of domestic violence.

2.4 On 22nd March 2005, the police were called to a report of a disturbance that was taking place in the street involving Marie and her Chinese husband (Adult C). Marie explained that she had run away from her husband after he had sexually assaulted her and that she had taken refuge for the night in a local supermarket. The disturbance took place when she had returned to get her car keys so that she could go to work.

2.5 She told the police that she had been working in Bournemouth since 2003 and that her husband, who was a doctor, had been looking after their 9 year old daughter (Adult B) in China.

2.6 She explained that her husband and daughter had arrived in the United Kingdom only two days earlier, on 20th March. He had been issued with a five-year work visa after she had sponsored him.

2.7 She told the police that after she had refused to have sex, her husband had bitten her hand and had attempted to pull her jeans down. He had damaged the jeans in the process and had then gone on to prod her crutch area with a bundle of chopsticks.

2.8 Adult C was arrested. He provided the police with a conflicting version of events saying that Marie had lured him to the UK with the intention of initiating proceedings to secure custody of Marie's daughter. He accepted that he had bitten Marie, but said it was a reaction to her scratching him. He denied assaulting Marie with the chopsticks but was nevertheless formally charged with sexual assault and assault occasioning actual bodily harm.

2.9 Adult C never stood trial. He fled the country soon after his release and has not returned.

2.10 What was known about the Perpetrators

2.11 To date, the Perpetrators have not responded to an invitation to participate in this review.

2.12 Perpetrator A

2.13 In August 2007, Perpetrator A made a complaint to the police that Perpetrator B had repeatedly rammed his vehicle with hers during a heated domestic dispute. Also present at the time of the police attendance was Perpetrator C. The officers who observed that the two men were 'volatile and obnoxious' and gave all parties advice. (It was established during the murder investigation that Marie had been renting accommodation from Perpetrator B and had been evicted from it on 9th May 2007. The investigation team speculated the eviction was likely motivated by the discovery by Perpetrator B of an affair between Marie and Perpetrator A and that it may have had something to do with this domestic incident).

2.14 Perpetrators B and C

2.15 In October 2005, Perpetrator C pushed his 16-year-old sister down some stairs. He was 18. No formal complaint was made and there was no further police action.

2.16 Twice during the first week of August 2007, the police were called to the Perpetrators' family home after Perpetrator C had assaulted his mother, Perpetrator B. During the first incident he allegedly grabbed his mother by the wrists and had then placed his hands around her neck. On the second occasion, during an argument between Perpetrators A and B, Perpetrator C had joined in and had assaulted his mother.

2.17 Perpetrator C was arrested. He later told the police that his mother and father were constantly arguing about his father having an affair and his mother had attacked him because he had supported his father. He claimed that he had been defending himself. Perpetrator A provided the police with a witness statement corroborating what his son had said. No charges were preferred and Perpetrator C was released from custody.

2.18 In January 2008, Perpetrator B again alleged that Perpetrator C had assaulted her during an argument she had been having with Perpetrator A. He had apparently thrown an object at her. Perpetrator C was arrested and was given a formal police caution for assault.

2.19 In August 2008, the police were again called to intervene in an argument between Perpetrators B and C. The next and final call to the police was three years later when, in August 2011, officers attended a dispute between Perpetrator C and his 21-year-old girlfriend. Perpetrator C had smashed a glass during the incident and when the police got there he assaulted one of them. He was arrested and subsequently convicted of the offence.

3 Additional information

- 3.1 A witness came forward after the police had issued a press release saying that Marie had been reported missing. He said that he had met her four years earlier.
- 3.2 He was involved in some military training and in training people who completed physically demanding sports. He said that to aid their recovery after injury, he would arrange massage sessions for them.
- 3.3 One advertisement he saw on an internet site or in the local newspaper provided a telephone number, which he called. It was answered by Perpetrator A, who invited him to the house for a massage.
- 3.4 When he got to the house Perpetrator A met him. He introduced him to Marie, who at the time was wearing a nurse's uniform. He was shown into a room that had a with a massage table in the centre of it.
- 3.5 When Marie returned to the room a few minutes later, she was wearing a leotard. The witness asked her why she was wearing it because he was expecting a 'sport's type' massage. She said, "*Oh, that's what he bought for me*". He got the distinct impression that Marie was not comfortable with the situation and he thought she was acting under duress.

This is evidence of significant controlling and abusive behaviour by Perpetrator A. He was able to make Marie dress in the manner he wanted her to and it appears that the intention was for Marie to have a sexual interaction with the witness when clearly she did not want to, highlighting elements of sexual exploitation within the relationship.

It is not possible to fully ascertain why Perpetrator A was able to exert such control and whether the control was through threat of violence or other intimidatory behaviours, but there is evidence later in the report demonstrating he threatened violence and also that Marie had worries over her immigration status, initiated by Perpetrator A with the intention of isolating her. It is clear that the power he had over Marie was extremely strong.

- 3.6 Marie was concerned that Perpetrator A was listening outside so conversation was difficult. Marie did say that she had taken up massage as a way of making some money, but that Perpetrator A had got himself involved in it. The witness said she was nervous and she appeared to be close to tears.
- 3.7 The witness did not receive a massage and left at the end of the allotted 30 minutes having first told Marie that if she wanted to chat about anything, he would always be there to listen.

- 3.8 About two weeks later, the witness received a telephone call from Perpetrator A asking if he would like another appointment. The witness said he did, and when he went to the house he found that Marie was home alone.
- 3.9 He said that Marie appeared to be far more relaxed than before. She was wearing her nurse's uniform and she gave the witness a normal massage. He said they had a conversation about their respective situations and that she said she was concerned about Perpetrator A trying to get into her daughter's 'good books' by buying her gifts.

This is a significant meeting, Marie provided the witness with personal information clearly showing an element of trust. It also provided further insight into the controlling behaviour of Perpetrator A and that he was buying gifts for Marie's daughter (Adult B).

Whilst it is not possible to understand the motivation behind this action by Perpetrator A, it is highly probable that he was 'grooming' Marie's daughter. The previous controlling behaviours demonstrate his ability to manipulate individuals and the panel felt that the grooming of Marie's daughter was an extension of his abuse.

- 3.10 Marie described Perpetrator A as her boyfriend and said that he was married. She added that he would spend evenings with her and then go home to his wife for the night.
- 3.11 The witness asked her why she put up with it. She said it was a "*complicated relationship*".
- 3.12 After the massage, the witness again told Marie that he was always available to talk if she wanted to. He also told her that he would not be returning for further massages.
- 3.13 A matter of days later, Marie telephoned him. He asked her if she would like to meet for a coffee and she said she did. He collected her in his car and they went back to his house where she told him more about her relationship with Perpetrator A.
- 3.14 She told him that Perpetrator A's wife knew about her but that he would not get a divorce. She said she couldn't walk away from him because he had some sort of hold over her. The witness took it that the hold he had over her was something to do with her immigration status because she also mentioned that if anything went wrong it would interfere with her job and also her daughter's education.

This information and conversation could explain some of the power Perpetrator A had over Marie. Social isolation and the threat of deportation clearly demonstrate the methods Perpetrator A was employing to control Marie. If as suggested he was able to convince her that she would be deported then this would be a significant holding factor and a clear demonstration of the tactics employed to control and abuse Marie.

- 3.15 About two weeks later, Marie telephoned him again. She said she would like to call at his house on her way home from work to see him. When she arrived, they had a cup of tea and she said that her relationship with Perpetrator A was no better. She was concerned that he might be spying on her so she didn't stay long.
- 3.16 She implied that Perpetrator A was a nasty man, that he was jealous and possessive and that he could turn violent. The witness thought she appeared to be more concerned for him than she was for herself.

This is the first indication of the violent behaviour used by Perpetrator A and although there were no reported injuries by or on Marie it is an additional controlling behaviour to exert power over her.

This conversation took place four years prior to Marie's death in or around 2011. There is no doubt that the abusive behaviours continued throughout those interceding years and research shows the strength of control gets more powerful over time to the extent that Marie would have had no control over her life or actions.

The abusive behaviours clearly included coercive and controlling behaviour, threats of violence and the threat of deportation. All these behaviours added to the strength of isolation for Marie. The alienation of Marie's daughter by Perpetrator A could have been an attempt drive her away and so further isolate Marie from her only support network.

- 3.17 When she left, he told her that she could always contact him but he wouldn't get in touch with her because of her concerns. He did not see or hear from her again and only contacted the authorities four years later when he saw the publicity about her going missing.
- 3.18 Other witnesses were traced during the police investigation that gave evidence that Marie had been providing massages from a property she owned and that sexual services had been included.
- 3.19 They had responded to internet advertisements and some were offered the sexual services for payment. Perpetrator A had been present and had participated.

These encounters were after contact with the previous witness demonstrating an escalation of abusive behaviour by Perpetrator A and the extent that he was able to dominate her life. It is not possible to ascertain with any certainty but it can be assumed that Marie was not a willing participant although due to the control by Perpetrator A it is doubtful she would have refused to participate, however it is clearly a demonstration as to the extent of abuse she was subjected to.

- 3.20 During the trial, the court had evidence from a man who had been in prison with Perpetrator A. He had told him that Marie had wanted a divorce and that she was intent upon returning to China.

This information highlighted a high-risk factor in an already abusive relationship. Perpetrator A owed money to Marie and was reliant on the money he had off her to assist in the purchase of houses. He was a possessive, jealous and controlling person who exhibited overtly controlling behaviours towards Marie, which when couple with the threat of separation escalated the risk towards Marie. This information is third party however it was given in a court and as such it is highly probably accurate.

4 Analysis of involvement

- 4.1 In this section of the report, practice is analysed and evaluated against agency policy and procedure. Further analysis takes place in the next section directly answering the terms of reference for this review.

4.2 Dorset Police

- 4.3 Dorset police was the only agency to have relevant contact with any of the parties connected to this review.

- 4.4 There were several interactions with all three Perpetrators involving domestic violence going back to 2007. They were all dealt with in a professional manner and in line with established practice for the time. Appropriate risk assessments and management decisions were made.

- 4.5 Marie did not feature in any of the incidents and Dorset Police were unaware of her and her association with the Perpetrators at that time.

- 4.6 Apart from the complaint Marie made of sexual assault against her Chinese husband, there was nothing to raise any concerns about her welfare.

- 4.7 That incident had been investigated thoroughly and professionally and had culminated in the arrest and charge of the Perpetrator who soon afterwards returned to China. He has not returned to the UK since then.

4.8 Royal Bournemouth and Christchurch hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

- 4.9 They have no information relating to Marie, or any of the perpetrators that could have any bearing on this review

4.10 NHS Dorset Clinical Commissioning Group (Acting on behalf of Primary Care GP's)

4.11 The Group held no information about Marie or any of the Perpetrators that could have had any bearing on this review.

4.12 Some former colleagues of Marie were able to provide useful evidence to the criminal investigation following her murder, but none of them previously had cause to consider she may have been the victim of domestic violence or abuse.

5 Addressing the terms of reference

5.1 Whether the incident in which Marie died was an isolated one or whether there were any warning signs and could more be done to raise awareness of services available to victims of domestic violence.

- The murder of Marie was a pre-planned murder motivated by financial gain. However, on reflection there were signs of abuse through the behaviours Marie and Perpetrator A exhibited, for example the dress and behaviours when out with work colleagues. Had these signs been identified it is possible that support could have been offered to Marie.

5.2 Whether there were any barriers experienced by Marie or family / friends / colleagues in reporting any abuse in Bournemouth or elsewhere, including whether they knew how to report domestic abuse should she have wanted to.

- There do not appear to have been any barriers as far as Marie was concerned to reporting abuse. On the one occasion she did report it, the police took positive action against her Chinese husband culminating in his arrest and charge.
- The nature of the relationship was so controlling that although Marie was coerced into certain behaviours the threats made to her ensured she did not report matters or seek help.

5.3 Whether Marie had experienced abuse in previous relationships in Bournemouth or elsewhere, and whether this experience impacted on her likelihood of seeking support in the months before she died.

- According to Marie's daughter, her mother Marie experienced abuse when she lived in China although this was never reported and never spoken about. The incident involving Marie's Chinese husband in Bournemouth was dealt with

professionally and ultimately resulted in his return to China. It is not thought that the experience would have dissuaded Marie from seeking further support had she felt the need.

5.4 Whether there were opportunities for professionals to 'routinely enquire' as to any domestic abuse experienced by Marie that were missed.

- There were no missed opportunities by professionals. On the one occasion Marie made a disclosure, the police properly dealt it with.
- Staff members who worked with Marie were aware of a number of behaviours and incidents that on reflection could have intimated and identified domestic abuse. Although these were never picked up on they are considered in the learning of this review.
 - *Poole Hospital NHS Foundation Trust did not have a domestic violence policy for either staff or patients although aspects are covered within their wider safeguarding policies. A policy is being developed with the intention of introducing throughout the trust. The trust use Care First as a funded external support for staff which is well publicised along with in-house support."*

5.5 Whether Perpetrator A, B and C had any previous history of abusive behaviour to an intimate partner and whether this was known to any agencies.

- Perpetrators A, B and C had a history of domestic violence between themselves, and Perpetrator C was arrested when he assaulted his girlfriend.
- Dorset police were aware of the history of all three, however they were not aware of any association between any of them and Marie prior to her death.

5.6 Whether there were opportunities for agency intervention in relation to domestic abuse regarding Marie or Perpetrators, A, B and C.

- There were no opportunities to intervene in relation to domestic abuse regarding Perpetrators A, B or C.

5.7 The review should identify any training or awareness raising requirements that are necessary to ensure a greater knowledge and understanding of domestic abuse processes and / or services in the city.

- No training or awareness raising requirements were identified during the review.

5.8 The review will also give appropriate consideration to any equality and diversity issues that appear pertinent to the victim and perpetrator e.g. age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation.

- A significant issue identified within this review is the impact of culture on domestic violence and abuse. Advice was taken from Ping Hau, a Chinese cultural specialist at Southampton University, to inform the review and it is recognised that domestic violence and abuse does take place within these communities but it is never spoken of and is an accepted way of life. To that extent the challenges and the learning focus on how to engage Chinese and other cultures and to provide information to prevent and manage domestic violence and abuse.

5.9 Family engagement

5.10 How should friends, family members and other support networks and where appropriate, the perpetrator contribute to the review, and who should be responsible for facilitating their involvement?

- A letter has been sent to Perpetrators A and B inviting them to contribute to the review, but to date, neither has responded.
- No other members of the Perpetrators family have been identified for involvement in this.
- Marie's daughter has been contacted and has taken part in the review.
- Work colleagues of Marie were invited to participate in the review but did not wish to do so.

5.11 How matters concerning family and friends, the public and media should be managed before, during and after the review and who should take responsibility for this?

- The Bournemouth Community Safety Partnership would be responsible for all matters of communication.
- An executive summary of the review will be published on the Bournemouth Council website, with an appropriate press statement available to respond to any enquiries. Any recommendations from this review will be distributed through the council website. The Bournemouth Community Safety Partnership

will oversee and manage the implementation of any learning from this review and any other learning opportunities with partner agencies involved with responding to domestic abuse.

5.12 Legal Processes

5.13 How will the review take account of a Coroner's inquiry, and (if relevant) any criminal investigation related to the homicide, including disclosure issues, to ensure that relevant information can be shared without incurring significant delay in the review process?

- There will not be an inquest into Marie's death because all the matters relevant to such proceedings were aired during the criminal process.

5.14 Does the Review Panel need to obtain independent legal advice about any aspect of the proposed review?

- No conflicts or issues have been identified that would suggest this will be necessary.

5.15 Research

5.16 How should the review process take account of previous lessons learned i.e. from research and previous DHRs?

- Previous DHR's have been scrutinised during this review to elicit best practice. Research was extended to include academic sources including: Kemshall (2013), Walby and Allen (2004); Bain (2008); Munro (2007); Nash (2010); Brandon et al (2009); Barry (2009).

Specific documents have also been considered

- The home office multi-Agency Statutory Guidance for the conduct of Domestic Homicide reviews
- The Home Office Domestic Homicide Review Tool Kit Guide for Overview Report Writers
- Call an End to Violence Against Women and Girls – HM Government (November 2010)
- Barriers to Disclosure – Walby and Allen, 2004.
- Home Office Domestic Homicide Reviews – Common themes identified and lessons learned – November 2013.
- Prevalence of intimate partner violence: findings from the WHO multi-country study on women's health and domestic violence, 2006.

- ‘If only we’d known’: an exploratory study of seven intimate partner homicides in Engleshire - July 2007.

5.17 Diversity

5.18 Are there any specific considerations around equality and diversity issues, such as ethnicity, age and disability that may require special consideration?

- There was a significant issue of cultural impact on Marie that has already been identified and features in the learning and Ping Hau, an academic from Southampton University was engaged to offer advice to the panel and author in relation to Marie’s cultural heritage.

5.19 Multi agency responsibility

5.20 Was Marie or Marie’s daughter subject to a MARAC/ MAPPA?

- Neither Marie nor Perpetrators A, B or C were subject to MARAC or MAPPA. There was nothing in the review that would indicate any would have been suitable for MAPPA.

5.22 Did Marie have any contact with a domestic violence organisation or helpline?

- Following the incident involving her Chinese husband in 2005, Marie was referred to ‘The Horizon Project’, who worked closely at that time with Dorset Police in supporting victims of Domestic Violence. There was no evidence that she accepted service from them.

5.23 Consideration should also be given as to whether either the victim or the perpetrators were ‘vulnerable adults’

- Neither Marie nor Perpetrators A, B or C were ‘vulnerable adults’ within the definition of Law Commission Report of 1997.

5.24 Were there any issues, in communication, information sharing or service delivery, between services?

- There was no issue in communication, information sharing or service delivery between services.

5.25 Individual agency responsibility

5.26 Was the work in this case consistent with each organisation's policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of adults, and with wider professional standards?

- Dorset police followed their policies and procedures in relation to the incidents they were involved in.

5.27 Was the impact of domestic violence on the victim recognised?

- There was nothing to indicate to agencies that domestic violence was a feature of Marie's life. Although there is comment regarding Marie's work colleagues in the learning of this review.

5.28 Did actions accord with assessments and decisions made? Were appropriate services offered/provided or relevant enquiries made, in the light of assessments?

- There were no opportunities for assessment and decision making in relation to Marie or any of the Perpetrators.

5.29 Was there sufficient management accountability for decision-making? Were senior managers or other organisations and professionals involved at points in the case where they should have been?

- Management accountability for decision-making was not tested.

5.30 Lessons to be learned from the review

5.31 A number of key learning points have come from this review. Firstly the impact of culture on identifying and reporting domestic violence and abuse. It is very difficult to break down cultural barriers but it is important that anyone involved in domestic violence and abuse are aware of the cultural barriers to reporting.

5.32 Colleagues of Marie had information that could have indicated domestic violence and abuse. It is recognised the challenges of colleague disclosures but all staff should be aware of the signs of coercion and control, recognising it is not only in clients/patients and other service users, but within colleagues and staff.

5.33 Throughout the review there is information that indicates Marie was isolated from the general community. She did not appear to have friends outside work and her daughter Adult B, spent a lot of time with her boyfriend. Indeed when Marie and Marie's daughter were together Perpetrator A was always with them. It appears this isolation continued in the workplace, as although she sometimes had social contact with colleagues, none would be considered a friend.

- 5.34 This isolation is one of the key learning points and particularly relevant in respect of the increasing numbers of foreign nationals coming to work in the NHS and other industry. It is important to recognise their vulnerability through isolation and understanding acceptable behaviours within the British culture and the UK legislation.

Threat of deportation is a significant controlling behaviour and one that can be easily applied to non-UK residents. The learning from this review should be to raise awareness in communities that domestic violence and abuse is not tolerated within the UK and that they should report such matters to agencies without fear of deportation.

6 Conclusions

- 6.1 Marie had suffered an abusive relationship over many years, with Perpetrator A subjecting her to humiliating behaviours, controlling what clothes she could wear and how she should behave in public. She suffered isolation and sexual abuse throughout the relationship and he demonstrated his power over her at all times cutting off any support networks she may have formed.

The review has not identified anything that would have indicated the dreadful events of May 2014 were likely to happen. None of the agencies that make up the Bournemouth Community Safety Partnership nor Marie's family had any inkling that she was or would become victim of domestic violence or abuse. The Panel is of the view that the homicide of Marie could therefore not have been predicted or prevented.

7 Recommendations

There is a recommendation relating to the current practice of employing foreign nationals within the NHS. The NHS as an employer is specific to this review and this recommendation should be considered in the wider employment landscape utilising foreign national labour.

The recommendation is

- To examine and assess the current process for integration of foreign nationals into the NHS and other employments. This should include an assessment regarding their cultural vulnerability and staff should be aware of the additional signs and indicators of domestic abuse with relevant policies and guidance to ensure the support and safety of such persons.

- 7.1 There is a recommendation relating to culture and the provision of information into closed cultures whereby domestic violence and abuse occurs but is not acknowledged or

communicated therefore no availability to help victims or perpetrators seeking to address their behaviours.

The recommendation is

- To examine the current strategy with regard to identification of domestic abuse and violence within cultures in the Bournemouth Community Safety Partnership area. To enhance the provision of information and encourage support to those effected by domestic violence and abuse.

7.2 There is a recommendation from the involvement of colleagues of Marie that was considered within the single agency (Poole Hospital NHS Foundation Trust) but it was recognised by the panel this should be extended to all partners of the Bournemouth Community Safety Partnership Domestic Abuse Strategy Group.

The recommendation is

- All staff should be aware of incidents of coercive and controlling behaviours as well as the wider domestic violence and abuse within colleagues and there should be a mechanism for reporting concerns and/or suspicions to enable support to those colleagues