Reducing harm perpetrated by Domestic Abuse Offenders

Multi-Agency Tasking & Coordination (MATAC)
Welcome to Durham

- Population of 640,000
- 1250 Police Officers
- 1000 Police Staff
- 145 PCSOs
- Top 30% of most deprived Local Authorities
Durham Constabulary had the highest rate of domestic-abuse related crime compared to other police forces in England & Wales:

18% of all crime and 10% of all incidents reported to Durham Constabulary

source: [Domestic abuse in England and Wales - Data Tool - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)](https://www.ons.gov.uk)
Scanning: UK approaches to Domestic Violence & Abuse

- ‘Wife battering’
  1960s 70s

- ‘Domestic Violence’
  1990's

- ‘Domestic Abuse’
  2000's

- Coercion and Control
  Serious Crime Act 2015

- Domestic Abuse Act
  2021

(A. Myhill 2017)
Scanning: Perpetrator Focus

National Domestic Violence Strategy (2016)

Domestic Abuse: Whole System Approach’ across 6 Forces

Violence against Women and Girls Strategy 2021

Strategy to end violence against women and girls (2016 to 2020)

MATAC launched in 2015/16 in Northumbria

‘the relentless pursuit and disruption of adult perpetrators should be a national priority for the police’ Her Majesty’s Inspectorate (HMICFRS) response to Violence Against Women and Girls 2021
Victims remain hidden in approximately half of domestic abuse cases

- Prevalence in England & Wales: 6% (ONS CSEW 2020)
- Prevalence in Durham Constabulary force area: 3% (Durham police data)
Scanning: Hidden harm to children

Children get the picture.

THINK THROUGH THE EYES OF A CHILD
Always ask the child what has been happening, even if they are ‘asleep’ upstairs.
Listen and observe. Use your body worn video.
Check the household conditions. Consider and record (i) immediate (ii) ongoing risks to the child.
Police officers attending reports of domestic abuse submit ‘safeguarding assessment forms’ which are given a risk assessment grade based on the ‘risk of serious harm’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standard</td>
<td>415</td>
<td>396</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>627</td>
<td>773</td>
<td>917</td>
<td>928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1101</td>
<td>1239</td>
<td>1336</td>
<td>1322</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Durham Constabulary Organisational Performance system (DCOP)
Scanning: what is driving this demand?

Increasing trend in ‘medium’ risk submissions, increasing from approx. 55% of all forms to over 70%
Problem identified

An increasing rate of domestic abuse reports, particularly in the medium risk category, reflecting increasing harm to victims and increased demand on services.

Objectives
1. To identify and rank order Medium Risk domestic abuse cases to prioritise where interventions will have the most impact.
2. To reduce the levels of harm in the Medium Risk domestic abuse cohort.
3. To reduce the demand posed by offenders subject to MATAC interventions.
ANALYSIS
Analysis: Responding to Risk

High risk
- Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)

Medium
- GAP
  - Multi-agency screening for children
  - Checkpoint deferred prosecution for low level offences

Standard
- Multi-agency screening for children
### CRITICAL PATHWAYS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HIGH</th>
<th>MARAC – Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference</th>
<th>A victim focused information sharing and risk management meeting attended by all key agencies, where high risk cases are discussed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MEDIUM</td>
<td><strong>MATAC – Multi-Agency Tasking and Coordinating</strong></td>
<td>CHECKPOINT - eligible domestic abuse candidates identified in custody/voluntary attender process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STANDARD</td>
<td>Joint multi agency screening for cases involving children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### POSITIVE ACTION

- Victimless Prosecutions; accounts via BWV
- THROUGH THE EYES OF A CHID
  - Child seen? Spoken to? Safe?
- VICTIM RISK ASSESSMENTS:
  - DASH/THRIVE
- SAFETY PLAN AND TARGET HARDENING
  - mobile phone/ support network/ basic security/SOP/TecSOS/cocoon watch/refuge
- CRITICAL PATHWAYS
  - OUTREACH SUPPORT
  - CLARE’S LAW DISCLOSURE
  - FREEDOM PROGRAMME
  - EMERGENCY ORDERS

### DISRUPTION / PROSECUTION

- Arrest and prosecution
- Unsupported Complainant Prosecution (Evidence Led Prosecution)
- Removal to prevent breach of the peace
- Visits / advice / interaction
- Red Sigma target profiles
- DVPN/O
- Restraining Order
- Civil Orders eg Non Molestation Order
- Stalking Protection Order

### CHECKPOINT

- Offers eligible offenders a 4 month long contract to engage with services as an alternative to prosecution & offers interventions to address the underlying reasons for committing the crime.

### DA PREVENTION PROGRAMME

- Behaviour-change programmes for offender who have used violence and abuse towards their (ex) partners, provided via Barnardo’s and CRC.

### COMMUNITY PEER MENTOR

- The project aims to reduce the pressure on frontline emergency services by engaging with those who make frequent calls.
Analysis: DA Perpetrator Programmes

Mandatory programmes delivered by Probation and Prisons service

OR

Voluntary programmes delivered by the Third Sector
Perpetrator programme ‘gap’ for those who are not convicted

Evidence base for perpetrator programmes suggests ‘one size doesn’t fit all’

Lack of evaluation (see Matczak et al. 2011; Bates et al. 2017)
Analysis: How do we identify the Target Cohort?

- Highest Harm & Highest Demand
- Medium Risk cohort
RFGV model produces a score out of 100, where:

**Recency** – more recent episodes means higher score

**Frequency** – more frequent episodes means higher score

**Gravity (of Offending)** – higher scores aggravated and violent offences

**Victim** – based on the number of victims

*RFGV model uses ‘medium’ risk domestic abuse safeguarding forms and any recorded crimes that are linked to them.*
## Analysis: The RFGV Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nominal</th>
<th>Recency</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Gravity Score</th>
<th>Victim Score</th>
<th>RFGV score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Offender 1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offender 8</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offender 10</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offender 6</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offender 7</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offender 3</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offender 9</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offender 5</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offender 4</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offender 2</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Offender nominals ranked ordered by RFGV score
RESPONSE
Response: The MATAC Process

RFGV: identify cohort

MATAC Offender nominal created on Police IT system

Assessment with victim and offender

Engagement critical pathways work (+ disruption)
Domestic Abuse
Innovation
Officer

MATAC
Offender
Manager

Monthly MATAC Review
Chaired by Safeguarding Detective Inspector

Attend: Domestic Abuse Outreach services, Probation, Housing, Alcohol and Drugs services
Ongoing Liaison: Mental Health Services, Children’s Services, Adult Services
Response: The MATAC Offender Manager

- Not another meeting!
- Trust and accountability
- Bespoke approach
Response:
The MATAC Pathways

Engagement
- Pathways Assessment
- Referrals to Support Services
- Offender Manager mentoring

Enforcement
- Perpetrator not engaging
- Disruption
- Sanction

Sanction:
e.g. Domestic Violence Protection Order
Case Study: Intimate Partner Violence

- Andrew lives with his partner
- They had two children removed from them and adopted
- 23 x domestic abuse reports, including coercive control, threatening behaviour and assaults
- Andrew was given a 19 week prison sentence for assaulting an emergency worker
- He was visited in prison by MATAC Offender Manager and his critical pathways were assessed...
Assessment of Andrew’s critical pathways

- Engaged with a Domestic Abuse Perpetrators Programme
- A mental health assessment was conducted by a Community Psychiatric Nurse (CPN)
- Engaged with alcohol and drugs misuse service
- Engaged with a local charity that helps with finances, access to training and learning new skills.
- One to One work was conducted re: relationships, triggers and stability.
- A ‘Staying Cool’ course was organised and attended by Andrew to help him with his anger issues.
Positive Outcomes for Andrew

- Stopped misusing drugs and alcohol
- Mental health and behaviour has improved
- Secured his own accommodation and is living separately to his partner which has resulted in no further domestic abuse reports
- The couple remain a relationship but have a de-escalation and safety plan in place
- MATAC has contributed to this situation through supervision, education, trust and support.

Before
23 Domestic Abuse Incidents

After
0 Domestic Abuse Incidents
ASSESSMENT
Assessment: Demand

Domestic Abuse Profiles already used – for comparative persons
**Assessment: Demand**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A Domestic Abuse Profile (MATAC)</th>
<th>DA Problem Profiles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>42% reduction</strong> in 'medium' risk forms</td>
<td>13% increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T-test p-value &lt; 0.0001</td>
<td>T-test p-value = 0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect Size, Cohen’s d=0.58 (medium effect)</td>
<td>Effect Size, Cohen’s d=0.09 (marginal effect)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A significant and substantive change in demand at the 'medium' risk level in the MATAC cohort – a real decrease
Assessment: Crime

A significant and substantive change in domestic-related crime in the MATAC cohort – a real decrease

MATAC

43% reduction in domestic-related crime count

T-test p-value < 0.0001

Effect Size, Cohen’s d=0.71 (medium to large effect)

DA

Problem Profiles

23% reduction

T-test p-value = 0.26

Effect Size, Cohen’s d=0.21 (small effect)
The decrease is based on Crime Severity Scores (CSS). (Bangs, 2016)

The decrease was statistically significant at the 85% level rather than the conventional 95%.

### Assessment: Harm

**MATAC**

- **31% decrease** in Crime Severity Scores (CSS)
- T-test p-value = 0.11
- Effect Size, Cohen’s $d=0.24$ (small effect)

**DA Problem Profiles**

- 23% decrease
- T-test p-value = 0.31
- Effect Size, Cohen’s $d=0.23$ (small effect)
Assessment: Recency Frequency Gravity Victim scores

MATAC
12% decrease in RFGV score on average
T-test p-value < 0.0001
Effect Size, Cohen’s d=0.37 (small to medium effect)

DA Problem Profiles
8.5% decrease
T-test p-value = 0.19
Effect Size, Cohen’s d=0.23 (small effect)

A significant and substantive change in RFGV scores in the MATAC cohort – a real decrease
Case Study: Family Related Violence

- Paul witnessed his parents fighting and arguing growing up
- Mother alcohol misuse
- On the streets associating with offenders, committing crime and taking drugs
- Paul would return to the family home – arguments, steal money, damage property, assault parents in front of younger brother and sister
- Police frequently called but never any complaints
- Paul was engaged by MATAC Offender Manager whilst in the cells and critical pathways assessed...
Supervision by the MATAC Offender Manager

- Accommodation - arranged that he could move in with his sister
- attended Domestic Abuse Perpetrators Program
- mental health treatment program implemented via his GP
- referred to an alcohol and drugs misuse service Human Kind – one to one sessions
- Staying Cool course attended to help anger issues
- employment - referred to the local job centre
- Health and Safety Course passed & started to work for a local building firm
- referred to Citizen’s Advice to organise benefits / finances
Paul stole a tablet from his sister’s child
– went missing for a week
– returned to his mother’s address and set fire to the shed because she would not give him money
• Paul was arrested and spent the weekend in the cells
• He re-engaged with Offender manager and trust increased, continued employment in the building trade

Outcome?

Before
52 safeguarding reports over 4 yrs
(37 with Paul as suspect/offender)

After
only 1 report (theft of tablet & arson)

‘...without the help, support and guidance from Ian, I would not be drug free, working and looking for my own house’
Finding 1: All three main objectives achieved

- The **most prolific perpetrators** of domestic abuse at the medium risk level were identified using an offender targeting model.

- The results indicate that the Durham MATAC **can impact the demand** placed upon policing services by this cohort.

- There is a **meaningful reduction in the amount of crime and harm** perpetrated against their victims.
Assessment: Findings

Finding 2: Improved understanding of relationship types
From the 94 MATAC offender cohort,
• 81 (86%) were involved in IPV (intimate partner violence),
• 12 (13%) were involved in FRV (family related violence).

Finding 3: Critical Pathways
1. Relationships
2. Mental Health
3. Alcohol
4. Attitude thinking and behaviour
5. Finance
6. Substance Misuse

Finding 4: Diffusion of Benefits
Making perpetrators aware that their behaviour is being monitored can have an impact.
Assessment: Cost Effectiveness

Average cost of 1 Domestic Abuse crime to Police = £645 ($828) (Home Office 2019)

Cohort of 94 offenders committing 209 less crimes = cost-saving of £134,805 ($172,000) p.a

£250,800 ($321,000) cost-saving to Health Services
£35,530 ($44,483) cost savings to criminal legal services.
• Targeted offender management approach to Domestic Abuse is effective
  – One-to-one approach with offenders
  – ‘Engagement’ vs ‘Deterrence’ approaches

• Using data more intelligently
  – limited resources in the face of increasing demand
  – ‘Power few’ approach

• Coordinating Partners (working as a team)
References


Questions?

David Ashton  
Detective Chief Superintendent  
david.ashton@durham.police.uk

Meggan Rutherford  
Police Constable  
meggan.rutherford@durham.police.uk

John Cooper  
Analyst  
john.cooper@durham.police.uk
Embedding a problem solving approach to DA - Guidance using PAT

**DURHAM CONSTABULARY**

**POSITIVE ACTION AT DOMESTIC ABUSE INCIDENTS**

Police have a duty to take **positive action** when dealing with domestic abuse incidents. In any given circumstance officers are trusted to do the right thing. Often this means **making an arrest**, provided the grounds exist and it is a necessary and proportionate response. **Officers must be able to justify the decision NOT to arrest in those circumstances.** For example, arrests are expected whenever there is evidence leading to any injury including psychological harm or any significant damage, whenever there is evidence of coercion and controlling behavior or where there is a risk of harm to children.

**ALWAYS TAKE STEPS TO MAKE THE VICTIM & CHILDREN SAFE.**

- BWV always on and record interaction with children and associates
- Account for all children whether present or not
- Is there cumulative harm? (multiple episodes of abuse or harm to children)
- Is there evidence of coercion and control?

**NECESSITY TEST**

Among other grounds, an officer may carry out an arrest to allow prompt and effective investigation of the offence or the person’s conduct where there are grounds to believe that a person may instil fear, threaten or cause contact with victims or destroy evidence. (Code G PAGE)

**EVIDENCE LED ACTIONS AT**

- BWV every time
- Arrest
- Record initial accounts and written statements including emotions, injuries, details of witness/ neighbours
- IPP code
- Social med
- CCTV

**POSITIVE ATTITUDE**

Always demonstrate a positive attitude towards victims. This alone can make a difference.

**IT’S THE OFFICER’S DECISION NOT THE VICTIM’S**

The decision whether or not to arrest a suspect rests with the police officer, and officers should not ask victims whether they require an arrest to be made.

**DVPN/O POLICING ACTIONS**

**RED SIGMA PROBLEM PROFILE**

- Access Victim Risk assessments
- Ensure children are listed on the Profile and SAP reports are uploaded to notify agencies of DOM/DA
- Interest with other victims to ensure they understand the conditions of the no-contact order
- Provide safety planning with the victim utilizing of partnering agencies - obtain Consent for referral
- Make police officer/ Probation basicic referral
- Attempt to engage with the victim to establish if any further evidence can be obtained relating to DA offences
- Consider victim’s risk assessment
- For high risk cases link with DVCA for Medium Risk Order Life (with OAP)
- Ensure the victim is fully aware of the support available eg. ‘Harbour Freedom Programmes, health support, housing, finance etc.
- Utilise partners for problem solving - notify them of conditions and invite partners to assist in policing of order
- Consider longer term solutions - application for non-injunction
- Refer to a specialist Family Lawyer for advice on civil orders. (e.g. Probation Deep Order - prevents the removal of children from the care of a parent, Occupation Order - allows occupation of a dwelling excluding one or more party, Residency Orders - determines where a child will live)

**DOMESTIC ABUSE PERPETRATORS IN CUSTODY?**

Make best use of their time in custody...

**CONSIDER VICTIM**

- **CRITICAL CRITERIA** - consider the need to keep the victim safe and safe from harm. See guidance in DA/07/19 and use discretion in cases of risk

**CONSIDER OFFENDER**

- Use information in DA/07/19 and DA/07/19/1 to help plan the approach to the offender - use discretion in cases of risk

**COMMUNITY/PAT PARTNERS**

- Consider the need for other agencies to work with the offender to reduce the risk of future offending and use discretion in cases of risk

**CONTACT DETAILS**

- Contact details for DVCA, Probation, Victim Support, Victim Services, etc.

**COMPLAINTS**

- Consider complaints from DVCA, Probation, Victim Support, Victim Services, etc.

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