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Dear Beth

Thank you for submitting the Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) report (Sarah) for Dacorum Community Safety Partnership (CSP) to the Home Office Quality Assurance (QA) Panel. The report was considered at the QA Panel meeting on the 26th April 2023. I apologise for the delay in responding to you.

The QA Panel felt this review is sensitive and well informed by the involvement of Sarah and Samuel's family and friends throughout. This builds an accurate picture of what was going on and the struggles this family were experiencing to try to secure help and support.

The Panel felt this was a probing, thoughtful and robust review that has generated significant learning and flagged the issue of older people and domestic abuse.

There is a detailed equality, diversity and inclusion section which considers intersectionality of protected characteristics including sex, disability, and age. Highlighting barriers to accessing services and the feeling of being overwhelmed by the number of agencies involved in the context of Samuel as Sarah's carer with input from wider family was noted.

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:

- The review could have benefited from a recommendation around systemic invisibility of domestic abuse in elderly communities and routine enquiries. For example, health agencies asking risk-based questions in dementia patients with carers and any risk to carers attending households included within assessments. It could have included raising awareness and staff training along with professional curiosity, challenge and consideration for a more co-ordinated approach.
- Anonymity is breached with the date of death in the Terms of Reference and at 13.2.2.
- The Panel felt an absence of Sarah's voice within the report, especially as she was described as having a 'strength of character'.
- 16.1.13-16.1.14 would benefit from acknowledgement that Sarah's capacity to agree to such a course of action may have been questionable.
- 16.1.6, the phrase, 'crime of passion' is outdated language which minimises domestic abuse and should be rephrased.
- 16.2.4 would benefit from some analysis regarding the potential reasons for Samuel's declining support and barriers to his engagement.
- The recommendations/action plan all contain actions that have intrinsic value, however, issuing guidance, producing learning bulletins, updating training and sharing learning are not, in themselves, outcomes. This report has produced such important learning that the QA Panel would ask the chair and local panel to think about reframing the recommendations to include outcomes, with clear milestones. The action plan could also benefit from including the individual agency recommendations which are listed in the Overview report.
- Agency involvement is repetitive as it is presented both chronological and by agency, this could be cut down to make a more concise report.
- There are quite a lot of acronyms used and different agencies listed. A brief glossary at the start of the report which the reader can refer to may be useful. Similarly, a brief footnote explaining what the jointly App (16.8.31) would be beneficial.
- The data collection sheet would benefit from the cause of death being inserted, the reasons why the family did not meet the Panel (the Overview Report makes this clear the family only wanted limited input) and checking the ages as these differ to the Overview Report by one year.
- The CSP may wish to ensure that the Contents page includes the excellent one pager at the back of the Overview Report.
- The CSP may wish to consider that the statutory guidance no longer requires a conclusion to be drawn on preventability. The Terms of Reference include

that the reviewers should conclude on this – “*State clearly, where apparent, when the death(s) were deemed to be preventable and the rationale behind this.*”

- The CSP should know that citation of references is incomplete, for example, “(Burns, 2000)” and “(Etters, 2008).”, Para 16.4.12.
- The report would benefit from a proofread to check for typos and grammatical errors.

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.

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,

Lynne Abrams

Chair of the Home Office DHR Quality Assurance Panel