

Diya – DHR – Summary, Key Issues and Recommendations

This review examines the circumstances surrounding the death of Diya in November 2022. The review found that Diya experienced coercive control, emotional abuse, and harmful practices, including honour-based abuse (HBA), primarily from her husband (Adult 2) and extended family. These abuses escalated after Diya sought independence through employment and separation. Despite multiple disclosures to agencies, responses were fragmented, lacked cultural competence, and failed to link domestic abuse (DA) and HBA to her deteriorating mental health. Opportunities for safeguarding Diya and her child were missed, and delays in mental health support compounded her vulnerability. Diya, originally from India, died from Amitriptyline toxicity and bilateral pneumonia, with no evidence of a suicide note.

Key Issues

- **Missed Opportunities:** Agencies treated disclosures as marital disputes rather than DA/HBA, failing to recognise escalating coercive control and economic abuse.
- **Cultural Competence Gaps:** Limited understanding of honour-based abuse and marital captivity; lack of referrals to specialist services a).
- **Mental Health and Suicide Risk:** Delays in urgent mental health appointments; inadequate exploration of suicidal ideation linked to abuse and cultural pressures.
- **Information Sharing Failures:** Over-reliance on consent; appointment letters sent to abuser's address; poor coordination between agencies.
- **Child Safeguarding:** Two referrals regarding Child 1 did not progress to statutory assessment; lack of recognition of co-victim status and emotional impact.
- **Systemic Barriers:** Diya faced isolation, financial strain, and cultural stigma, which were not adequately addressed by professionals.
- **Law Enforcement Response:** DASH risk assessments not updated after new incidents; no MARAC referral; potential offences (CCB, theft, assisting suicide) not investigated.

Recommendations

- **Cultural Competence & HBA Awareness:** Develop tools and training for professionals on harmful practices, transnational pressures, and the 'One Chance Rule.'
- **Risk Assessment & Professional Curiosity:** Refresh coercive control and risk assessment training; ensure dynamic risk reviews when circumstances change.
- **Suicide Prevention Strategy:** Embed DA/HBA-related suicide prevention in local strategies; deliver training on suicide timelines and crisis intervention.
- **Child Safeguarding:** Improve professional curiosity, recording, and multi-agency coordination; recognise children as co-victims.
- **Information Sharing:** Strengthen protocols for safeguarding overrides; ensure accurate contact details and secure communication.
- **Specialist Referrals:** Mandate signposting to HBA and DA specialist services; consider protective orders for marital captivity.
- **Workforce & Health Services:** Enhance DA policy awareness among managers; ensure routine enquiry in safe spaces; improve liaison between mental health teams and GPs.
- **National Learning:** Share findings with Home Office, College of Policing, Ministry of Justice, and Foreign Office to inform policy on HBA, private investigators, and protective legislation.

Link to full review: [Domestic Abuse Related Death Reviews - Cambridge City Council](#)