



Wales Safer Communities Network response to: updating the domestic homicide review statutory guidance consultation
Closed 29 July 2024

Response submitted via the online survey

Questions:

1. Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation?

Organisation

2. If you are responding as an individual, please select the option which best describes your status.

N/A

3. If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please select the option which best describes the type of organisation.

Other (please specify):

The Wales Safer Communities Network (hosted by WLGA) representing: 22 Councils, 4 OPCC, 4 Police Forces, 3 Fire and Rescue Services, Probation in Wales, Public Health Wales, 3rd Sector, WLGA and Welsh Government.

4. What is the name of the organisation?

The Wales Safer Communities Network

5. From the list below, where are you or your organisation based?

Wales

6. Do you have any comments on 'Section 1.1 Purpose of a DHR' in terms of content or clarity?

No

7. Do you have any comments on 'Section 1.2 Criteria and definitions for a DHR' in terms of content or clarity?

No

8. Do you think 'Figure 1: Domestic Homicide process map' is useful?

No

Please provide explanation for your answer in the text box below:

We suggest there is a need to have two separate diagrams, one for England and one for Wales. This would allow the different steps in Wales needing to be taken to



be highlighted easily. However, we appreciate that the diagram is clear and well laid out.

9. Do you have any comments on 'Section 2.4 Notification of a death to the Community Safety Partnership' in terms of content or clarity?

No

10. Do you have any comments on 'Section 2.5 Scoping Review process' in terms of content or clarity?

No

11. Do you have any comments on 'Section 2.6 Coordinating a Domestic Homicide Review at a local level' in terms of content or clarity?

Yes

Whilst we recognise Section 1.3 and 2.12 look specifically at the Welsh approach, we feel there is a need to highlight the SUSR under 2.6. Part of the SUSR approach and delivery will be providing a list of approved Chairs and panel members, who have had sufficient and specific training. We feel this should be recognised here.

12. Do you have any comments on 'Section 2.7 Conducting the Domestic Homicide Review' in terms of content or clarity?

No

13. Do you have any comments on 'Section 2.8 Compiling the Domestic Homicide Review' in terms of content or clarity?

No

14. Do you have any comments on 'Section 2.9 Parallel Reviews' in terms of content or clarity?

Yes

There is no mention of the SUSR, under this section. Whilst it is highlighted in 1.3 and 2.12 we feel it is important that the approach in Wales is explained here.

15. Do you have any comments on 'Section 2.10 Criminal investigations' in terms of content or clarity?

No

16. Do you have any comments on 'Section 2.11 Coronial Inquests' in terms of content or clarity?

No



17. Do you have any comments on Section 1.3 and Section 2.12 ‘Conducting a DHR in Wales: The Single Unified Safeguarding Review (SUSR)’ in terms of content or clarity?

Yes

We welcome both of these sections and the clarity provided around the purpose and aim of the SUSR in Wales and what this will mean for CSPs (though as above a separate map would be helpful).

However, we feel it is important to note that the lengthy delays associated with DHRs being sent to the Quality Assurance Panel at the Home Office will have significant impact on the publication date of the review, which for the SUSR should be 3 months. The impact the delayed time frame has on all those involved does not feel an acceptable outcome, especially when the Welsh Ministers have offered to provide their own Quality Assurance of SUSR reviews. By providing their own quality assurance if further amendments were required, they could be acted upon in a much more reasonable timeframe and prevent unnecessary delays to publication. As such, the Network would like to add our support to the ongoing ask for the Home Office to allow Welsh Government Ministers the authority to convene a Welsh specific Quality Assurance Panel.

It is disappointing that the final SUSR Guidance is not yet available to view and draw from further within this document, and would suggest publication of this document is held until such time that this is available.

18. Do you have any comments on ‘Section 2.13 Anonymisation’ in terms of content or clarity?

No

19. Do you have any comments on ‘Section 2.14 Data Protection’ in terms of content or clarity?

No

20. Do you have any comments on ‘Section 2.15 Home Office Quality Assurance Board’ in terms of content or clarity?

Yes

The Wales Safer Communities Network does not disagree that DHRs need to have quality assurance review, however as previously stated we are concerned that the need to submit DHRs to the Home Office QA Board will continue to lead to lengthy delays.

It is disappointing that there is no mention in this section of the SUSR and the timeframe for publication of three months, which is unlikely to be achievable through the HO QA Board. As long as a specific Welsh QA Board and the HO QA Board have an agreed matrix/ framework of assessment, then it is difficult to understand why this is not being put in place. Especially, as the Guidance recognises that over 80% of



recommendations made within Domestic Homicide Reviews conducted in Wales involve devolved Welsh authorities.

21. Do you have any comments on ‘Section 2.16 Publication’ in terms of content or clarity?

Yes

Please see response to question 20

22. Do you have any comments on ‘Section 3: Implementation of Learning – Making the Future Safer’ in terms of content or clarity? Please specify which subsection you are referring to or enter ‘No’ if no further comment.

The Wales Safer Communities Network recognise that a Policing in Wales response has been submitted separately and ask you refer to this for the Police stance. From a wider Community Safety perspective we recognise that PCC involvement in DHR’s and in CSPs more broadly has varied across the force areas. We feel this statutory responsibility to PCCs may not be wanted by all CSPs and there should be provision where there is local agreement for PCCs to ensure delegated authority to the CSP Chair. However, where there is PCC engagement it seems that they would be well placed to act as a facilitator. We have no doubt all PCCs would welcome engagement re recommendations and learning across the partnerships.

23. Do you think the DHR Toolkit is useful?

Yes

24. Do you have any comments on the ‘DHR Toolkit’ in terms of content or clarity?

No

25. Do you think there are any ways that the guidance could be improved overall?

Yes

Following feedback from our members we feel it would be helpful to include a recommendation from a recent DHR action plan. This recommendation was for the Home Office to include direction in respect of the sharing of information relating to individuals in cases where there has been no conviction or consent provided. By means of explanation, lack of direction to date caused a particular issue for one of our members during a review where the alleged perpetrator was found not guilty and then passed away before the review was completed. One of their partner organisations took the stance that information could not then be shared for the purposes of the review.



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26. Is there anything missing in the guidance that you would like to see included?

Yes

Please see response to question 25

About you

Please use this section to tell us about yourself.

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If you would like us to acknowledge receipt of your response, please tick this box: ✓

Address to which the acknowledgement should be sent, if different from above

N/A

If you are a representative of a group, please tell us the name of the group and give a summary of the people or organisations that you represent:

This response is on behalf of all of our members which includes the 22 Councils, 4 Office of Police and Crime Commissioners, 4 Police Forces, 3 Fire and Rescue Services, Probation in Wales, Public Health Wales, 3rd Sector, Welsh Local Government Association and Welsh Government.