

DHR2023-2 Operation Mula – Learning Brief

A Learning Brief from the findings of an independent domestic homicide review – now known as a Domestic Abuse Related Death Review (DARDR) - into the death in the summer of 2023 of Erin, a 24 year old woman, was published by the Derbyshire Safer Communities Board on 24 June 2026.

A DARDR is a multi-agency review which seeks to identify and implement lessons learnt from deaths which have, or appear to have, resulted from domestic abuse.

The learning brief from this review, which you can find attached below, highlights key learning and practice improvements in order to strengthen early identification, safeguarding, and multi-agency responses to domestic abuse and vulnerability.

The report's independent author Nicki Norman said: "I would like to express my sincere condolences to the family and friends of Erin who they lost in such tragic circumstances. We have carried out an independent review of the events leading up to her death and have fully involved all the agencies and professionals as well as the victim's family. Everyone involved in this review is committed to learning from Erin's experiences to improve the system-wide response to victims and survivors of domestic abuse to help reduce the risk of similar deaths in future."

To safeguard the children of those considered in the review, the panel which carried out the DARDR agreed to publish the learning brief only.

The recommendations in the review include:

- Better identification of cumulative incidents, with greater consideration being given to coercive control being a factor in reluctance to support police action or engage with support services.
- Disability, poor health and abuse to be considered collectively as they were found to compound vulnerability.
- Medical staff to remain professionally curious and alert to substance use and potential abuse and to recognise that healthcare settings provide important opportunities to ask about safety and coercive control.
- As anti-social behaviour (ASB) and noise complaints may be signs of domestic abuse, they should be considered by housing and community safety practitioners as part of their response to anti-social behaviour.
- Risk assessment by the police must reflect history, context and repeated nature of abuse, not isolated incident data alone.

The chair of the Derbyshire Safer Communities Board Councillor Dan Price said: “This was a very tragic case and I’d like to express my sincere condolences to everyone who knew and loved Erin. Our review looked at what lessons could be learned with all the agencies involved and as a Board we will continue to monitor and ensure improvements are made. The Derby and Derbyshire Domestic and Sexual Abuse Partnership Board will also ensure that the learning from this review is shared across all relevant agencies and other governance boards including the local Safeguarding Children Partnership and Safeguarding Adult Boards in Derby and Derbyshire.”