

LEARNING FROM SERIOUS INCIDENT REVIEW 9

SHEFFIELD SAFER AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES PARTNERSHIP



DATE - February 2022

WHAT HAPPENED?

- Adult 9 was forced to marry her cousin and brought to the UK in 2019 against her will.
- She was then forced into domestic servitude, was frequently locked in her bedroom and denied food and medical assistance.
- Adult 9 escaped in December 2020 when she noticed that the front door had been left unlocked.

WHAT DID IT TELL US?

- This was a case of **forced marriage** and **modern slavery**.
- The Global Slavery Index (<https://www.globallslaveryindex.org/>) estimates that there could be 136,000 people living in modern slavery in the UK.
- We do not have a reliable understanding of the prevalence of modern slavery and forced marriage in Sheffield.
- Adult 9 was 'hidden' from services, so we have very little information about her and what her daily life was like.
- There may be many victims of forced marriage experiencing domestic abuse and forced into domestic servitude who are not known to services.
- In the second half of 2021, a local specialist provider supported 19 women fleeing domestic abuse who had also experienced forced marriage and domestic servitude.

BEST PRACTICE

- SYP supported Adult 9 to get to safety via the National Referral Mechanism (NRM).
- SYP are in the early stages of planning an awareness campaign across the force around Domestic Servitude and how to spot the potential signs of this strand of Modern Slavery.
- Despite the pressures brought by Covid-19, the GP surgery made regular attempts to contact Adult 9 to arrange routine screening appointments.

LESSONS LEARNED

- A lack of face-to-face appointments due to Covid-19 meant Adult 9 was hidden from services and unable to access help.
- The use of family members as interpreters at the GP practice meant that Adult 9 never spoke to the practice about her situation, so they were not aware of the abuse and she did not have the opportunity to disclose.
- Information was not always shared at the right level and at the right time to mitigate risk and increase safety.
- Professional curiosity was not always used to better understand what was happening in the family.
- There is an overlap between signs and indicators for coercive control and modern slavery.
- Men can experience forced marriage and should be offered support at the earliest opportunity.

WHAT CAN WE DO NOW?

Raise awareness of forced marriage and modern slavery, in a domestic abuse context. Continue to increase numbers of professionals trained in the Karma Nirvana Risk Assessment tool. Raise awareness of local modern slavery resources through the South Yorkshire Modern Slavery Partnership. <http://southyorksmsp.co.uk/resources-and-training/>

Review and update prevalence estimates for the city in relation to forced marriage and modern slavery

Health agencies to review policies around recording names of those who accompany family members to appointments or who advocate for them over the phone.

Promote the importance of professional curiosity across Sheffield, where there are indications of, or concerns about forced marriage and/or modern slavery.

Develop and promote the use of Good Practice Guidance for the use of interpreters for GP practices and other acute healthcare settings where modern slavery is suspected in line with Human Trafficking Foundation Guidance www.antislavery.com/missioner.co.uk/media/1235/slavery-and-trafficking-survivor-care-standards.pdf

Develop Information Sharing Guidance for professionals where there are concerns around modern slavery and/or forced marriage