

# Q-Step Internship: Honour Based Abuse with Greater Manchester Police

Elizabeth Smith, BA Criminology



Greater Manchester Police have a Honour Based Abuse team based in the Public Protection Unit. I've worked within this unit to create a report

on the prevalence of HBA. The report I created will be presented to the Victims Commissioning board and will be used to change the way GMP strategically approach HBA and could lead to more funding to tackle the crime.

## Objectives

Honour Based Abuse is defined as "a crime or incident, which has or may have been committed to protect the honour of the family and/or community members" - ACPO working definition 2008 There is no specific offence of "honour based abuse" it is an umbrella term used to encompass various offences already covered by existing legislation..

The aims of the report were to provide a better understanding of HBA and the prevalence of HBA across Greater Manchester. In order to better support victims of HBA the research aimed to highlight changes that would allow for better risk assessments and consequently improve the handling of HBA victims to minimise their risk of future harm.

A further aim of the project was to provide a more accurate picture of HBA - providing a breakdown of the demographics that are most effected as well as the demographics for the perpetrators.

## Methods

**1- Review incidents that have been identified to contain HBA and assess the way officers dealt with incidents in relation to the amount of information being obtained to fill out the risk assessment form.**

Reviewed all of the cases that had been closed under a HBA flag and transferred it into a spreadsheet including a breakdown of demographics and division.

**2- Assess prevalence of BME/HBA related death in GM for disproportionality and successful identification of HBA.**

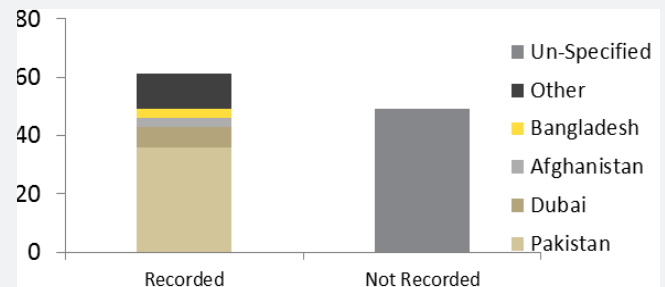
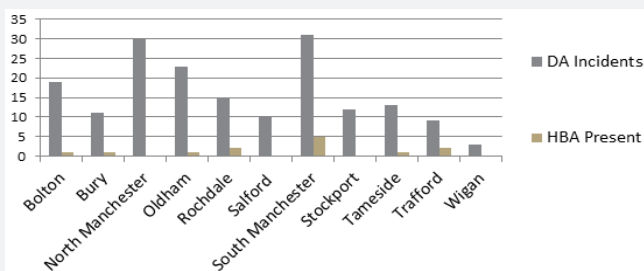
All of the domestic homicide reviews from 2014 were accessed and reviewed - checking for any signs of HBA within the case.

**3- Review prevalence of BME/Domestic Abuse cases in GM assessing for disproportionality and successful identification of HBA.**

Data was collected on all crimes that had been closed under the "domestic violence" marker involving a BME victim. All relevant cases from March 2016 were accessed and reviewed - checking for any signs of HBA that may have gone undetected/un-recorded.

## Key Findings

Due to the dataset I was working with being confidential; I cannot present all of my findings. A couple findings I can disclose are pictured beneath. The first table gives a breakdown of where domestic incidents are taking place in Greater Manchester by the force divisions and it shows the proportion of HBA incidents that make up the total number of domestic incidents. North Manchester and South Manchester have a similar number of DA incidents, yet there were no HBA incidents in North Manchester. The second graph goes to highlight the amount of information that officers are failing to capture - that is relevant to HBA cases. The HBA team at GMP have found that knowing the 'Focus Country' for HBA related offences is important in preventing victims being taken out of the country against their will - yet nearly half of the cases reviewed did not mention a Focus Country.



## Conclusion

GMP have placed a huge amount of emphasis onto the 'one chance rule' in relation to HBA crime; but the research shows that this chance is not being used to its full potential. GMP needs to be collecting more information whenever they come into contact with a potential HBA victim - this information can be used to better risk assess victims and put the appropriate safe guards into practice.

Further HBA training should be administered to officers force wide to ensure there is more consistency in the handling of HBA cases. This training should incorporate the use of flags, markers and closing codes when adding an incident to the database. This recommendation has been made as there are a lot of inconsistencies between the recording of cases and although some cases were dealt with appropriately and according to policy - they have not been recorded appropriately - this could give the illusion that GMP officers are not handling cases as well as they could be.