

Targeting prevention in domestic abuse suicides

Professor Vanessa Munro, School of Law

Partner: Refuge

For some time, Refuge have been campaigning for a new law which would hold perpetrators of domestic violence responsible for manslaughter if their behaviour drives a victim to suicide. As part of this initiative, Refuge approached Professor Vanessa Munro – an expert in evaluating the adequacy of criminal justice responses to vulnerable victims of gender-based violence - to work with them to evidence the scale of suicidality amongst their clients, and to explore any patterns, precursors or mitigating factors to domestic violence suicide identifiable from their case files. Through semi-structured interviews, the researchers will also review the adequacy of existing criminal justice and social service responses, and mental health provision, to this very vulnerable population. The collaboration, funded by Warwick's ESRC Impact Acceleration Account, aims to improve risk assessment processes and increase support to suicidal victims of domestic abuse, and to situate calls for legal change in respect of perpetrators' liability for suicide within the broader context of an understanding of victims' experiences.