



# LEARNING FROM A SERIOUS INCIDENT REVIEW

## SHEFFIELD SAFER AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES PARTNERSHIP

**ADULT: SIR7**

**DATE of incident: 2020**

### WHAT HAPPENED?

In November 2020, Adult 7 attended A&E following an attack on her by her ex-partner, Adult 7P. Adult 7P had attended Adult 7's home address and gained entry as a result of their four year old daughter operating the internal buzzer system. Whilst at the address Adult 7P attempted to make Adult 7 take MDMA <sup>1</sup>(a Class A drug), which, she refused. He then sexually assaulted and raped her. Adult 7P then attacked Adult 7 with a hammer, leading to a fractured skull, and made threats to kill her by "slitting her throat". Adult 7P took Adult 7's phone and would not let her go to the hospital for several hours after the attack. He later allowed his friend to take her, but before the friend arrived, made further threats with a knife, and stated "if she screamed or told the friend what had happened, he would kill her".

In July 2021, Adult 7P was found guilty of 'Attempt Murder and False imprisonment'. He was sentenced to life, with a minimum term of 17 years.

### WHAT DID IT TELL US?

Adult 7 was a victim of childhood trauma, and domestic and sexual abuse perpetrated on more than one occasion by Adult 7P, there was evidence that the incidents were escalating in severity. She would have benefited from a much more holistic view of her history rather than a focus on specific incidents.

She had endured violence when she was a child, the relationship with Adult 7P started while she was at

school, and he was violent when she was pregnant with Child 7.

Adult 7 was not always honest with professionals and at times disengaged from agencies, particularly when Adult 7P was back in her life. The review found that agencies needed to work harder to understand the impact of trauma on Adult 7 and how this may impact on her engagement with agencies.

Throughout all social care's intervention, Adult 7 remained in contact with Adult 7P often without professionals being fully aware, though they had their suspicions. Adult 7P was told not to contact the victim or see Child 7 whilst pending a social care assessment. However, most agencies knew Adult 7P was not adhering to either of these requirements. Agencies found it difficult to collate the evidence required to take any necessary steps to further protect Adult 7 and Child 7.

There were also missed opportunities to alert and liaise with the housing provider following the scheduled MARAC meetings.

The COVID19 pandemic meant that telephone calls were made at some points as opposed to home visits. This made engagement by some agencies e.g. health visiting, especially difficult.

A trusting relationship was not established with Adult 7 in order to partner with her to safeguard her and her child.

### WHAT CAN WE DO NOW?

Consider previous history in relation to Domestic Abuse and childhood trauma and the impact of an abusive relationship starting at such an early age.	Always use professional curiosity – Adult 7 was issued with emergency contraception 10 times, could this have been a signifier of sexual abuse?	Gain an understanding into the many barriers that stand in the way of a victim leaving an abusive relationship: to help empower women to make the best decision for them.	It is important to involve fathers in assessment plans and meetings.	Consider reasons surrounding 'non-compliance' – were the safety plans developed with Adult 7 realistic? Trust needs to be built with victims to enable joint working to safeguard children.
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<sup>1</sup> Methylenedioxyamphetamine, commonly known as ecstasy.

