

TRAVAW Seminar
Belfast
19 February 2017

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Looking back.....

**Speaking in May 1958,
Independent TD Frank Sherwin made the
extremely helpful suggestion that
“while recruits should
not be actually horse-faced,
they should not be too good looking;
they should be just plain women
and not targets for marriage”.**

Source: oireachtas.ie

Violence against women can take many forms including:-

Femicide

Rape

Female Genital Mutilation

Reproductive coercion

Forced abortion/sterilisation

Forced marriage

Forced prostitution

Modern day slavery

'Honour' based violence

Sexual assault

Domestic abuse and violence

Coercive and controlling behaviour

Sexual harassment

Threats/intimidation

Stalking

On-line abuse



Changing attitudes towards violence against women?

The NICS found that ‘While most victims did consider their worst incident of partner abuse to be a criminal offence (56.2% in NICS 2010/11), over two-fifths did not, with more than a quarter (28.8%) believing it was ‘wrong, but not a crime’ and a further one-in-seven accepting it as ‘just something that happens’ (12.6%).’

2015 research ‘Attitudes towards Violence against Women in the EU’ in 11 countries (including the UK) found that attitudes of acceptability and tolerance of violence against women, including victim blaming are still prevalent.

For example, in a survey of the general population conducted in one EU country, 54% of the respondents completely or in part agreed with the following statement:

“Victims of domestic violence are often partly to blame for what happened”.

What exactly is Domestic Abuse?

NI Strategy 'Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland' defines domestic abuse as:

'threatening, controlling, coercive behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, virtual, physical, verbal, sexual, financial or emotional) inflicted on anyone (irrespective of age, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability) by a current or former partner or family member'.

Examples include:

- the continual undermining of self-confidence;**
- verbal abuse, insults and threats, including on-line or by phone;**
- the destruction of property;**
- threats to others including children and pets;**
- controlling behaviour such as isolation from friends and family;**
- control over money, phone, personal items, clothes, food, transport, sleep;**
- stalking**

Domestic abuse can happen to ANYONE.

It knows NO boundaries

and can cross ALL sections of our community regardless of:

- **gender;**
- **age;**
- **ability;**
- **dependants;**
- **marital status;**
- **political opinion;**
- **race;**
- **religion;**
- **sexual orientation;**
- **geography;**
- **profession, position, power or wealth.**

**.....It involves police officers, lawyers, prison officers
and other Criminal Justice professionals too,
both as victims and as perpetrators**

Some facts and figures:-

- Police are called to a domestic incident in NI every 18 mins**
- Police are called to a domestic crime in NI every 37 mins**
- Reported domestic abuse is at its highest level since comparable records began in April 2004**
- Yet we know it is still under-reported**
- 6 people (usually women) are killed each year in NI in circumstances of domestic abuse**
- 1 in 4 women and 1 in 9 men will experience domestic abuse in their lifetime**
- 1 in 5 children and young people under 18 have lived with domestic abuse**
- The cost of domestic abuse in NI was conservatively estimated in 2012 at £674m per year**

Current legal protections in Northern Ireland include...

Offences against the Person Act, 1861

Homicide, assaults, threats, abortion

Protection from Harassment Order (NI), 1997

Stalking, alarm or distress to victim, Restraining Orders

Family Homes and Domestic Violence (NI) Order, 1998

NMOs, Occupation Orders

Criminal Evidence (NI) Order, 1999

Special Measures in Court

Sexual Offences (NI) Order, 2008

Consent (age/capacity), abuse of trust, rape gender neutrality,
prostitution, soliciting

Justice Act (NI) 2016

'Revenge Porn'

NI Strategy

“Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland” - 7 year Strategy, 2016

The vision of the Strategy is:

- to have a society in Northern Ireland in which domestic and sexual violence is not tolerated in any form,
- effective tailored preventative and responsive services
- all victims are supported,
- and perpetrators are held to account.



Current policy protections in NI include...

- **PSNI active pro-safeguarding policy**
- **Domestic Abuse Officers and Public Protection teams**
- **Safe Place initiative, and workplace policies**
- **Rowan Centre**
- **MARAC victim-centred risk assessment process**
- **Victim and Witness Care**
- **Problem-solving Courts**
- **Partnership with NGOs e.g. Women's Aid**
- **NSPCC, Prison and Probation offender programmes**
- **PPANI arrangements**
- **ViSOR**

Where are the gaps in Northern Ireland law and policy?

- 1. 'Clare's Law' - Domestic Abuse Disclosure Scheme**
- 2. Coercive and Controlling Behaviour law**
- 3. Domestic Violence Protection Orders**
- 4. More early interventions e.g. routine enquiry on domestic violence for all pregnant women**
- 5. Training**
- 6. Resources**
- 7. Education**
- 8. Public awareness**
- 9. 'One Safe Place'**
- 10. Section 75 Northern Ireland Act 1998**
- 11. Continuing victim blaming?**

Looking ahead

Political uncertainty

Joined up, innovative approaches?

Brexit!

Increasingly diverse society

Modern day slavery

Technology

Increased reporting?

Older people as victims

Changing attitudes?



Daily Mail
TUESDAY, MARCH 28, 2017
www.dailymail.co.uk
NEWSPAPER OF

Never mind Brexit, who won Legs-it!

It wasn't quite stilettos at dawn, but there was a distinctly frosty atmosphere when Theresa May met Nicola Sturgeon yesterday
SEE PAGES 6-7



**“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens
can change the world;
- indeed it’s the only thing that ever has”**

Margaret Mead





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