



Domestic abuse perpetrators and the Priority Perpetrator Identification Tool

Dr Amanda Robinson
Cardiff University

ExChange Wales
April 2017



Before we begin...

- **Aim of today's workshop**

- To provide a space for considering how agency responses to domestic abuse perpetrators could be improved

- **Responsibilities**

- You: to share your understanding and perspective on the issues raised
- Me: to learn from your experience to inform this work going forward

- **Introductions**



Overview of today

- **Part 1: Domestic violence/abuse and social work**
 - Children's safeguarding
 - Adult safeguarding
- **Part 2: The Priority Perpetrator Identification Tool**
 - Background and development of the PPIT
 - Rationale and design of the PPIT
 - Current work with the PPIT
- **Part 3: Group work on case examples**

CARDIFF
UNIVERSITY

PRIFYSGOL
CAERDYDD



CARDIFF
UNIVERSITY

PRIFYSGOL
CAERDYDD

Part 1

Domestic Violence/Abuse and Social Work

- ***“Domestic violence will be present in the practice of social workers in all settings, yet rarely is it the main ‘business’ of these services. Recognition and action informed by an understanding of domestic violence intervention with its emphasis on safety and autonomy for victims and accountability and responsibility for perpetrators should change practice across the service system.”***

Laing et al. (2013)



Domestic Violence and Abuse

- ***“Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality”***

Home Office (2013)

- ***Section 76 of the Serious Crime Act 2015 - Controlling or Coercive Behaviour in an Intimate or Family Relationship***

Home Office (2015)



DVA and Child Abuse

- There are 130,000 children in the UK living in homes with domestic abuse where there's a high risk of murder or serious injury.
- Major overlap between domestic abuse and direct harm of children.
 - High risk DVA: 62% of children were also directly harmed. [CAADA \(2014\)](#)
 - Any type of DVA: 28% of children were physically or sexually abused and/or neglected. [Radford et al. \(2010\)](#)
 - DVA features in a majority of Serious Case Reviews. [HMIC, 2014](#)
- The perpetrator of the domestic abuse is very often also the perpetrator of direct harm to the child (predominantly the father or mother's male partner).



DVA and Child Abuse

- In England and Wales, the Adoption and Children Act 2002 amended the definition of significant harm provided by the Children Act 1989, adding a new category of “impairment suffered from seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another”.
- Since domestic violence and children’s exposure to it represent a widespread social problem, this amendment has drawn a large group of families within the remit of children’s social services.

DVA and Older People

- In the last year approximately 120,000 individuals aged 65+ have experienced at least one form of domestic violence/abuse (psychological, physical, sexual or financial).
- Older victims are more likely to:
 - Experience abuse from an adult family member
 - Have lived with the abuse for prolonged periods before getting help
 - Be living with the perpetrator after accessing support
 - Have a disability
- Dementia and disability are significant risk factors for abuse.

DVA and Older People

- The Statutory Guidance issued under the Care Act, published in October 2014, states that adult safeguarding ‘means protecting an adult’s right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect’ (Section 14.7).
- The guidance outlines that abuse takes many forms, and local authorities should not be constrained in their view of what constitutes abuse or neglect. It also states that abuse and neglect can be caused deliberately or unintentionally.



Lessons from DHRs for social work practice

- Women experiencing abuse are often held accountable for safeguarding their children, while perpetrators remain invisible and are not challenged for their behaviour.
- Staff need to be aware of the specific risks to children living with domestic abuse and that in most cases the best way to keep a child safe is to increase the non-abusive parent's safety.
- Staff should also be alerted to the risk of perpetrators making false allegations.
- All services need to be alerted to the increased risk for abuse in a caring relationship when the carer is a partner.
- All services should be alerted of the increased risk of domestic abuse for disabled women.



The PPIT and social work: Why?

- Helps shift the focus to the perpetrator of violence (usually the father or mother's male partner) so that it can be understood and addressed
- Highlights power and control issues at the heart of DVA
- Enables a route for more effective collaboration with police about the 'priority perpetrators' which are undoubtedly present in social workers' caseloads
- Can inform efforts to outline and evidence social workers' concerns about the severity and consequences of DVA for Family Court proceedings

CARDIFF
UNIVERSITY

PRIFYSGOL
CAERDYDD



CARDIFF
UNIVERSITY

PRIFYSGOL
CAERDYDD

Part 2

The Priority Perpetrator Identification Tool



Background to the PPIT

- Research reveals different subtypes of domestic abuse perpetrators
- The majority of domestic abuse harm perpetrated by the ‘power few’
- Repeated exposure to domestic abuse causes significant and negative consequences for victims and children
- Need for more proactive and effective approaches for tackling perpetrators (ACPO, 2009)
- Little evidence of effective interventions with perpetrators (NICE, 2014)



Welsh research on domestic abuse perpetrators

- **Study 1 (2014)** Clancy, Robinson & Hanks (2014)
Defining and profiling serial domestic abuse in Wales
- **Study 2 (2014)** Robinson, Clancy & Hanks (2014)
Prevalence and characteristics of serial perpetrators
- **Study 3 (2015)** Robinson & Clancy (2015)
Development of the Priority Perpetrator Identification Tool
- **Study 4 (2016)** Robinson & Clancy (2016)
Multi-agency implementation testing of the PPIT
- **Next steps** Robinson & Clancy (2017, forthcoming)
PPIT as part of live perpetrator-focussed pilot interventions



What is the PPIT?

- The PPIT is a simple form to be used by a range of practitioners in order to help inform a more proactive multi-agency response to domestic abuse perpetrators
- The PPIT contains 10 items about the perpetrator
 - 5 items about the characteristics of the OFFENDING
 - 5 items about the characteristics of the OFFENDER
 - Each item evaluated according to RECENT and HISTORIC (<> 6 months)
- The PPIT can help inform a more proactive multi-agency response to domestic abuse perpetrators

Unique reference # _____

PPIT-PRIORITY PERPETRATOR IDENTIFICATION TOOL

November 2016 (version 10)

This tool has been designed to aid practitioners in the identification of domestic abuse perpetrators who will be considered priority targets for multi-agency monitoring and management within a local partnership. Please refer to the additional guidance at the end of this document before using the PPIT.

PPIT Instructions: Evaluate each of the following items in relation to this domestic abuse perpetrator. Determine whether there is evidence for the item (0=absent and 1=present,) for both recent (within past 6-months) and historic (beyond 6-months) timeframes. Note additional information and supporting evidence on the next page, giving details of significant/critical '1' scores.

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE OFFENDING				
	RECENT <6 mos.		HISTORIC 6+ mos.	
1) ACTIVE: Onset and duration of the domestic abuse <i>Identify whether the offending is recent, historical, or both.</i>	0	1	0	1
2) ESCALATION: Offending increasing in frequency and/or severity <i>Consider situational triggers e.g., relationship breakup, pregnancy, etc.</i>	0	1	0	1
3) REPEAT: Offending (2 or more incidents) against any single victim <i>Is there a pattern of physical and/or psychological abuse?</i>	0	1	0	1
4) SERIAL: Offending against multiple (2 or more) victims <i>Has the offending affected more than one victim?</i>	0	1	0	1
5) LINKED forms of offending (other violent/abusive behaviour) <i>For example, stalking, sexual violence, child abuse, elder abuse, HBV, etc.</i>	0	1	0	1
CHARACTERISTICS OF THE OFFENDER				
	RECENT <6 mos.		HISTORIC 6+ mos.	
6) Subject of a MAPPA <i>Consider the reason for the referral and the outcomes.</i>	0	1	0	1
7) Highly harmful to victims (psychological and/or physical abuse) <i>Events with significant consequences for victims; also consider MARAC.</i>	0	1	0	1
8) Noticeable worsening of mental health <i>Evidence of suicidality, PTSD, personality disorders, etc.</i>	0	1	0	1
9) Noticeable increase in alcohol and/or drug misuse <i>Changes in the frequency and/or type of substance used.</i>	0	1	0	1
10) Known history and/or current access to weapons <i>Threats and/or past use of any objects or weapons, including arson.</i>	0	1	0	1
What are your primary concerns in relation to this perpetrator? (e.g. coercive control)				
TOTAL SCORE (ranging from 0 minimum to 20 maximum)				

Unique reference # _____

SUPPORTING EVIDENCE: Note here specific examples, considering the robustness of the available information, and clarify when information was limited or missing.	
1) ACTIVE DA OFFENDING	
2) ESCALATING DA OFFENDING	
3) REPEAT DA OFFENDING	
4) SERIAL DA OFFENDING	
5) LINKED OFFENDING (RELEVANT TO DA)	
6) MAPPA (NOTE WHETHER DA-RELATED)	
7) HIGHLY HARMFUL DA	
8) MENTAL HEALTH	
9) ALC/DRUG MISUSE	
10) WEAPONS	
In your professional judgement, is this a PRIORITY PERPETRATOR?	YES NO UNSURE
Date of Completion (dd/mm/yy)	
Your Name	
Your Agency	



Overview of the PPIT implementation testing

- Data collection took place November 2015-February 2016
- PPIT data (n=406 PPITs)
 - Four police forces, five IDVA services, and nineteen probation LDUs participated
 - Numerical scores on 10 PPIT items (page 1)
 - Qualitative comments and supporting evidence (page 2)
- Practitioner feedback survey (n=42)



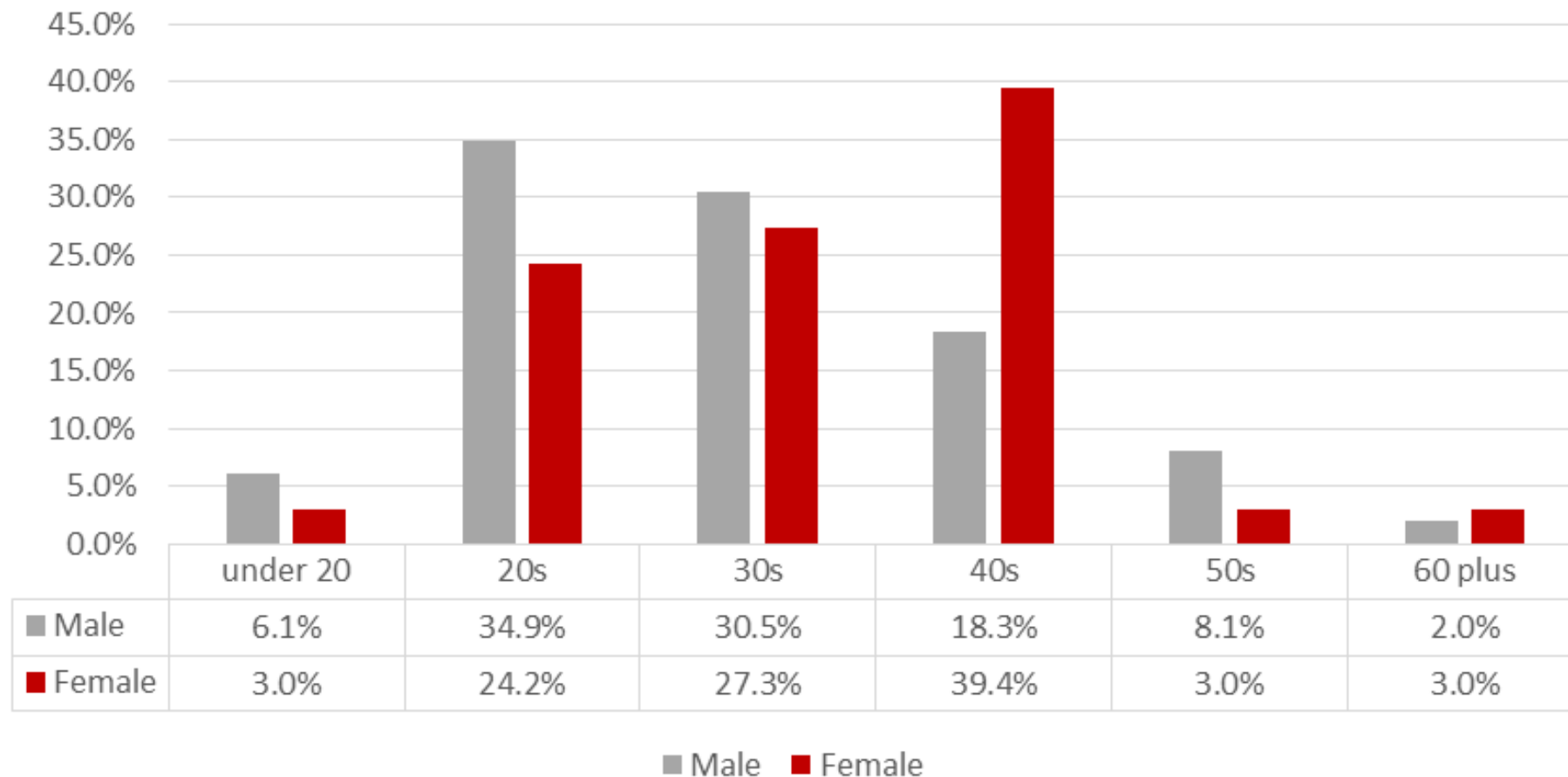
What can be learned from the PPIT implementation testing?

- The size and profile of the subset of perpetrators deemed to be ‘priority perpetrators’ by frontline practitioners
- The evidence and information used by practitioners when making these assessments
- Differences in the interpretation and scoring of the tool across agencies
- Practitioners’ perspectives on the utility and functionality of the tool



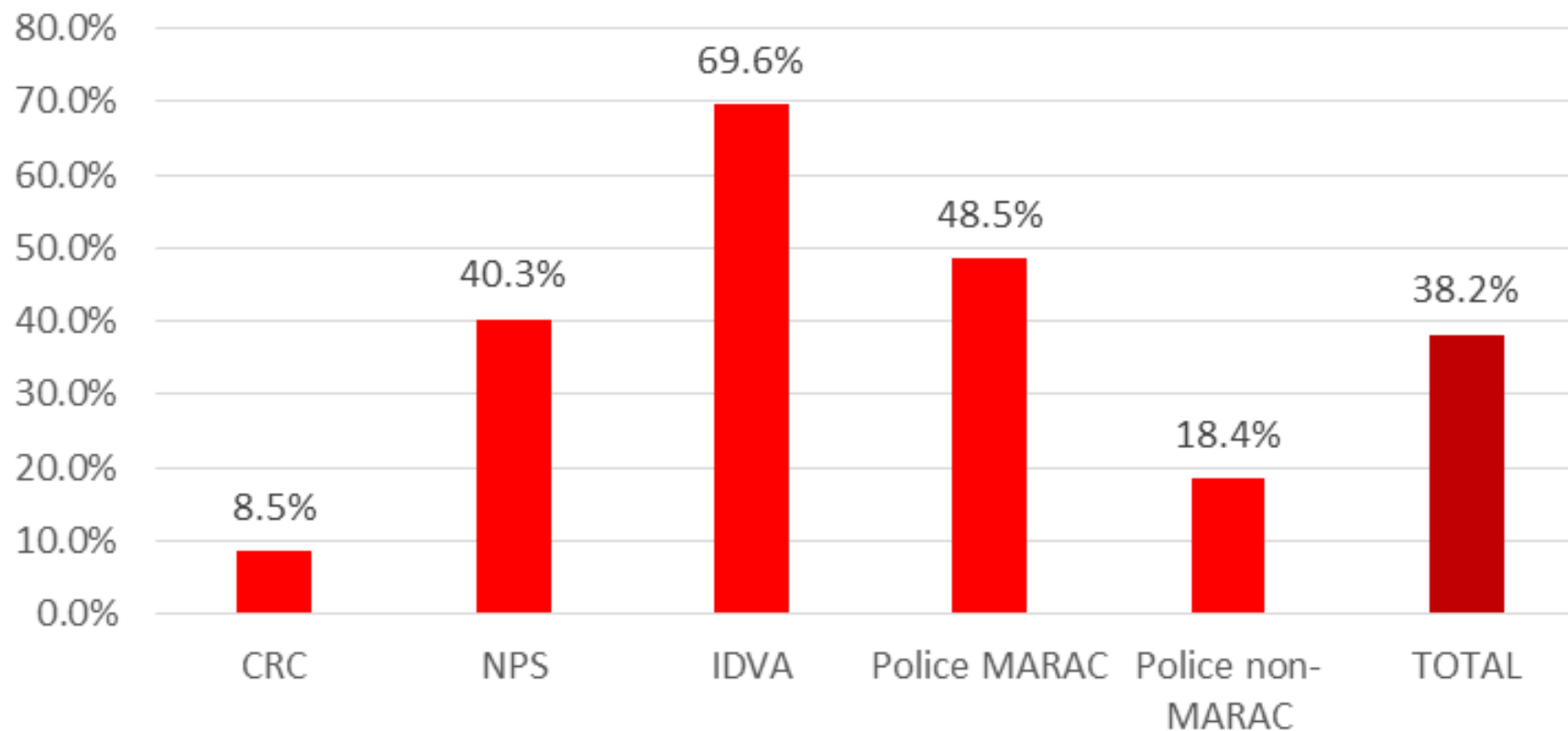
PPIT sample (n=406)

Gender and age breakdown of the sample



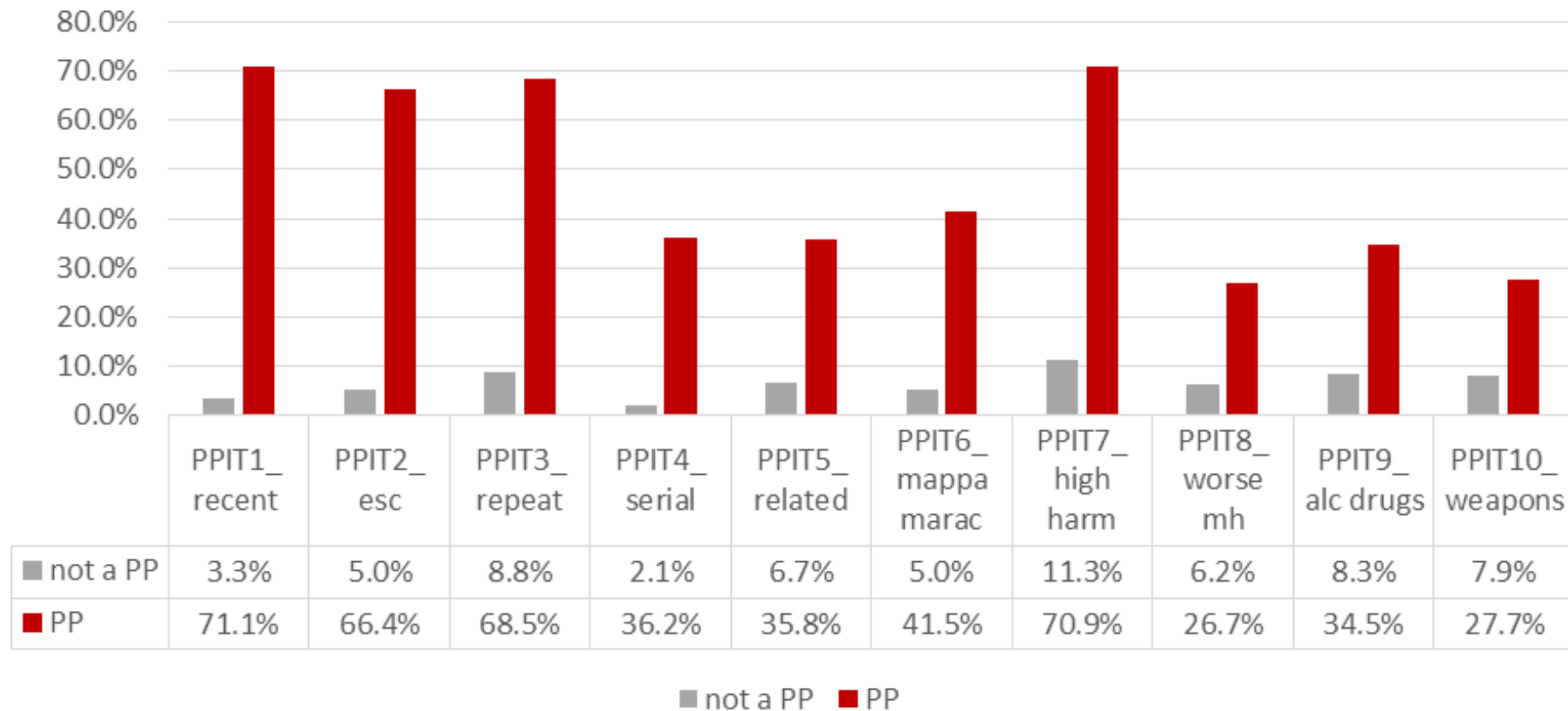
The priority perpetrator subset

Percentage judged to be Priority Perpetrators,
by type of agency



Distinguishing priority perpetrators

Percentage of Priority Perpetrators at critical level on each PPIT item





The priority perpetrator judgement

- Quantitative analysis identified the significantly influential PPIT items:
 - #1 recent
 - #2 escalating
 - #5 related
 - #7 high harm
 - #9 alcohol/drugs
- Qualitative comments revealed importance of practitioners' perceptions of coercive control, more often considered present for priority perpetrators (34.9% compared to 61.7%).

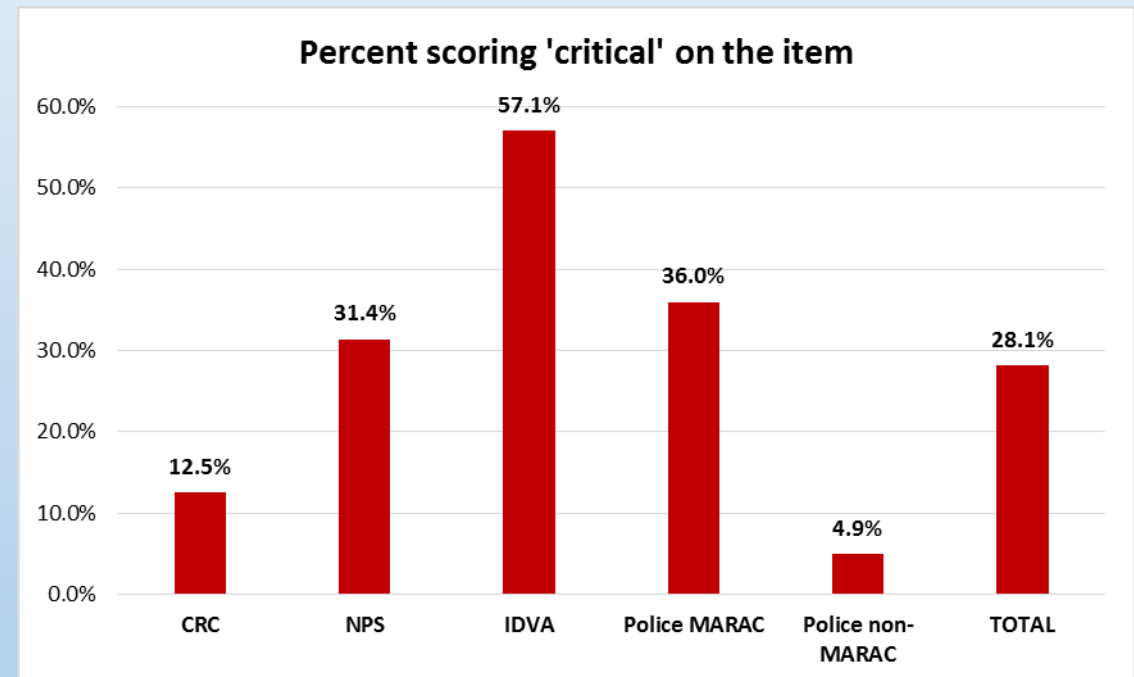


Variations in judgements

- Agency of origin was clearly related to the patterns of scores produced on the PPITs and the likelihood of making a priority perpetrator judgement
- Demographic characteristics of perpetrators (gender, age, race/ethnicity) were generally unrelated to the item scores as well as the overall judgement

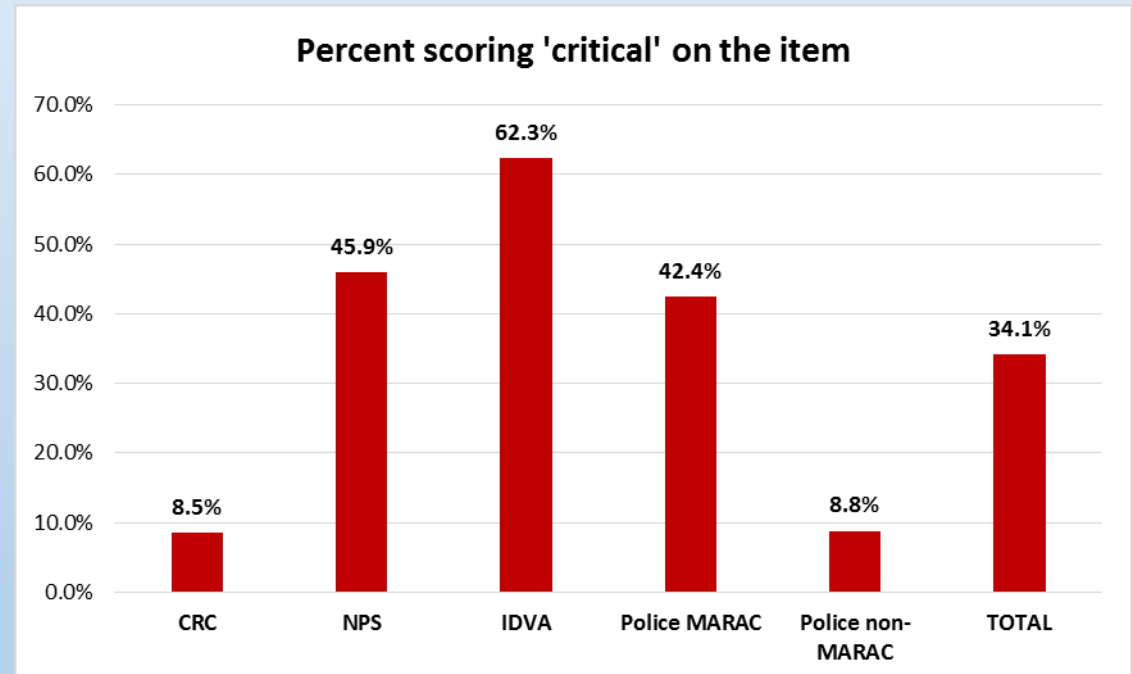
2) ESCALATING: Offending in frequency and/or severity in the past 12-months

Consider situational triggers such as relationship breakup, victim's pregnancy, etc.



7) High level of harm to victims from psychological and/or physical abuse

Serious and worrying events with significant consequences for victims.



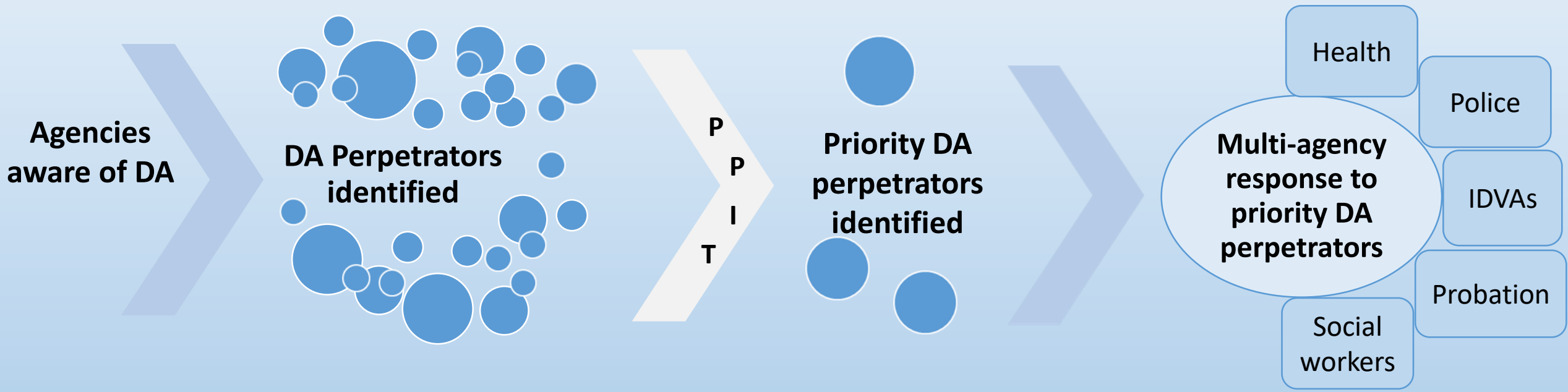


Practitioners' perspectives

- Practitioners appeared positive that the PPIT could act as another tool to assist in the identification and management of risk associated with priority perpetrators....
 - *“Identification and being able to put all the facts together.”*
 - *“The idea itself it very positive. It is a clear way of identifying perpetrators.”*
 - *“I’m confident greater consistency and information sharing will increase partners’ collective ability to keep victims safe and hold perpetrators to account.”*
- Need for clarity around the purpose of the PPIT and how it will align with existing processes.
 - *“Would be beneficial if the outcome refers the individual to a multi-agency team to work with.”*



The PPIT in practice: The ideal model



Hampshire DAPP



- ✓ Creation and delivery of an identification and information sharing system on perpetrators to include a single point of contact referred to as the Serial/ Priority Perpetrators Coordinator (SPPC)
- ✓ SPPC is led by Aurora New Dawn and is a co-located post into Hampshire Constabulary Offender Management Hub
- ✓ SPPC aims include the following:
 - ✓ To enable target hardening and closer tracking of serial perpetrators
 - ✓ To assess, plan and monitor risk in context of perpetrators



Identification, Assessment and Disruption of Domestic Abuse perpetrators

- Each month eligible perpetrators identified from police data
 - Repeat offenders: 1 incident in current month and 2 in previous 3 months
 - Serial offenders: 2 or more victims in previous 3 months
- List sent to police staff to pull data and complete PPIT for each
- DAOs receive PPITs and make judgment as to 'priority perp' or not
- MARAC coordinator reviews priority perpetrators to consider MAPPA eligibility.
- Based on the PPIT, new referrals made & accepted into MAPPA.

Domestic Abuse Priority Perpetrator (DAPP) Oldham Pilot (GMP)



PPIT pilots in North Wales (currently under development)

- NPS Court Team
- North Wales Police
- HMP Bedwyn

CARDIFF
UNIVERSITY

PRIFYSGOL
CAERDYDD



CARDIFF
UNIVERSITY

PRIFYSGOL
CAERDYDD

Part 3

Group discussion of case examples



Discussion Questions

- Based on the information you have been given, what barriers / challenges have the family faced ?
- What information was available regarding DVA in the family?
 - Adults: Mother/victim, Father/perp
 - Children
 - Statutory Agencies
 - Historical vs Recent
- How would you approach this situation in attempting to engage with the family?
- Was there one single decision made by agencies which, if it had been different, might have led to a different outcome?
- Could using the PPIT have added value in this case? If so, how?

CARDIFF
UNIVERSITY

PRIFYSGOL
CAERDYDD



CARDIFF
UNIVERSITY

PRIFYSGOL
CAERDYDD

Thank you for your time and input!

Robinsona@Cardiff.ac.uk

You can keep up to date with PPIT by signing up for a free account on ResearchGate and following this project:
<https://www.researchgate.net/project/New-initiatives-to-tackle-domestic-violence-perpetrators-using-the-Priority-Perpetrator-Identification-Tool-PPIT>



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



Gwasanaeth Cenedlaethol
Rheoli Troseddwyr Cymru

National Offender
Management Service in Wales