

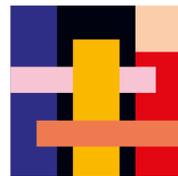


**Disclosure to Formal Agencies and Specialist Support Services among  
Victims of Intimate Partner Domestic Abuse:**  
*Comparing Inequality Patterns, Victim Profiles, and Harms by Disclosure*

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*The views expressed are those of the researchers and not necessarily those of the UK Prevention Research Partnership or any other funder.*

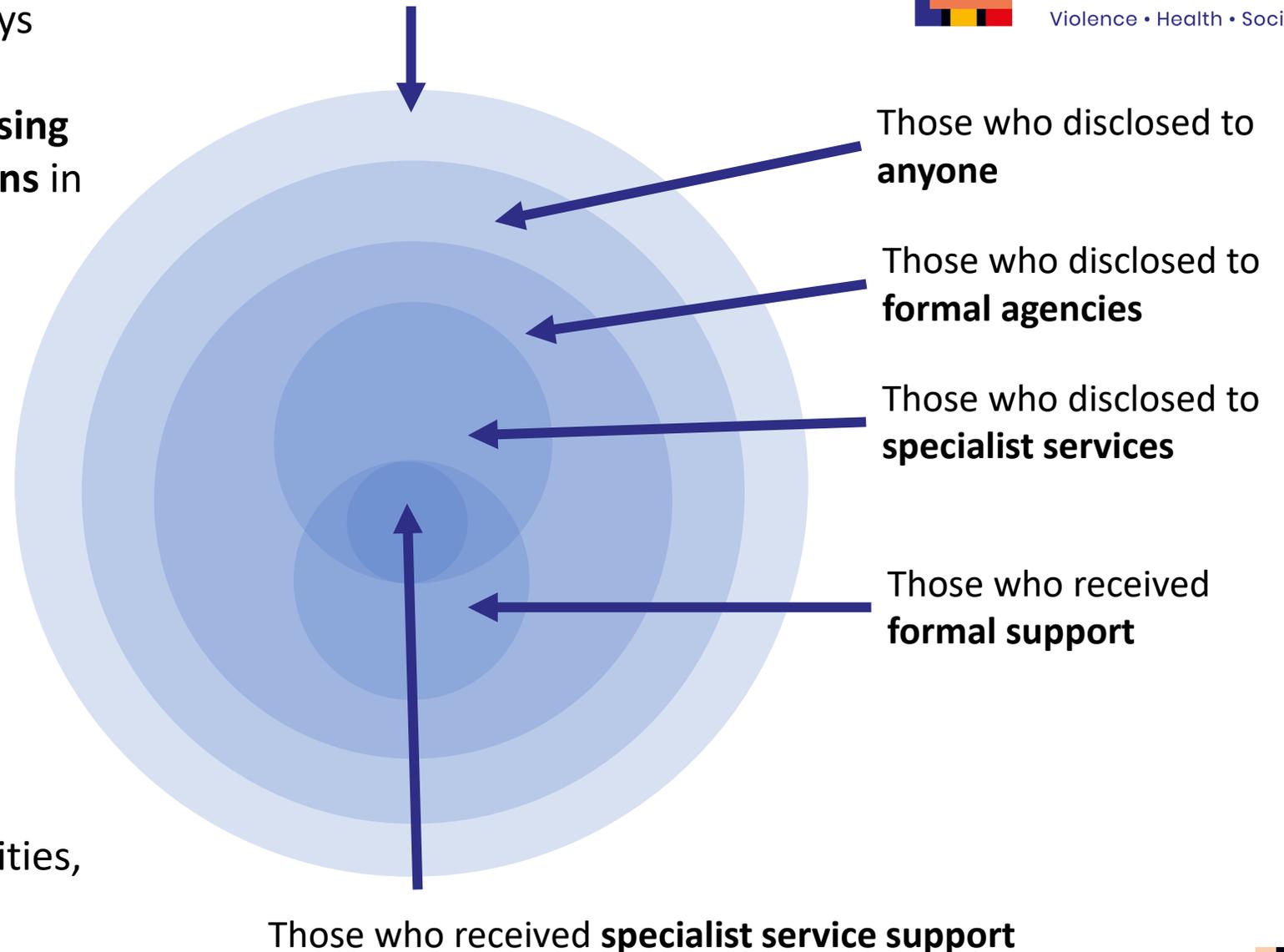


All victims of intimate partner violence and abuse

Population-based victimisation surveys offer a unique opportunity for **understanding otherwise non-disclosing victims + identifying risks and patterns** in disclosure

- How does disclosure vary by risk-factors, victimisation profiles, harms, and intersecting inequalities
- How does these patterns vary by who they disclose to?
- Who is missing from data, evidence, and support provisions on DV?

**Our study:** situates disclosure as a patterned process shaped by inequalities, victimisation profiles, and harms.



- **Data:** Crime Survey for England & Wales<sup>1</sup>
  - Self-completion module on intimate partner domestic abuse (IPDA)
  - Pooled data across 4 years (2010, 2012, 2014, 2017)
- **Sample:** 4,657 past-year IPDA victims.
- **Analysis:** Weighted crosstabs + logistic regression (Stata 18)

## Dependent variables:

- **Formal disclosure** (police, health, victim support, council, lawyer, helpline).
- **Specialised services** (e.g. refuges, women's services).

## Independent variables:

- **Social demographics:** gender, ethnicity, migrant-status (+ their intersections), age, and occupational class
- **Victim/isation profiles and risk factors:** unemployment, cohabitation, children (household and witness), victim and perpetrator substance use
- **Harms:** physical injury, suicide attempt, mental health, economic/social harms).

1. Office for National Statistics. (2025). Crime Survey for England and Wales, 1996-2020: Secure Access. [data collection]. 11th Edition. UK Data Service. SN: 7280, <http://doi.org/10.5255/UKDA-SN-7280-11>



# Results: Victim Sample Descriptives

- 72% of victims were women 
- 40% were 16-29 years old
- 76% were employed
- 64% were cohabiting with the perpetrator (past year) 
- 48% had children in the home 
- 11% of last incidents were witnessed by children
- Substance use in 14% of victims and 39% of perpetrators in last incident 

- 83% experienced physical injury 
- 13% experienced economic harms (time off/job loss) 
- 18% experienced social harms (distrust)
- 37% experienced mental/emotional harms 
- 3.3% attempted suicide as a result

(Unweighted percentages of IPDA victim sample 2010, 12, 14, 17)



# Results: Disclosure Rates



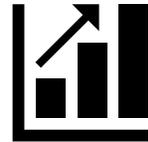
- 71% of victims didn't disclose to any formal agency/actor (FA)
- Only 3.5% of victims disclosed to a specialist service (SS)
  - **Women** had greater odds of SS disclosure than FA, compared to men (sig. higher for both, 2 x odds for SS than FA)
  - **Older people** (50+) lowest odds of FA and SS disclosure. 30-39 much more likely to disclose to SS than FA compared to others.
  - Similar FA disclosure rates among **lower and higher OCs**, but SS disclosure odds sig. dropped for lower. Highest for semi/routine occupational class.
  - Similar rates of formal disclosure among migrants and BME, but ...
    - **BME/migrant men** least likely to disclose formally, and Migrant BME women least likely to disclose formally among women
    - Much higher disclosure rates to specialised services, esp. for migrants



# Results: Risks, Patterns, Harms

- Risk factors relating to:

- (1) unemployment
- (2) children presence
- (3) cohabitation



... all sig. increased disclosure, although more for SS than FA



- **Physical injury** did **not** sig. increase disclosure, but economic, mental/emotional, social harms, and suicidality were

(\*esp for SS disclosure)



- **Variation** by victim vs perp **substance use**:



- victim use not sig. for FA but decreases SS disclosure
- perp-use not sig. for SS disclosure but increased FA disclosure

- **Variation** by **relationship status** and who **ended relationship**:



- People still with perp sig. lower odds of FA disclosure (only marg. For SS)
- SS disclosure sig. higher if victim ended, but not sig. for FA



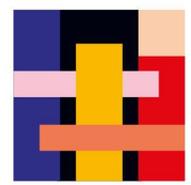
# Key Take-aways

- **Hidden populations:** majority of victims excluded from admin data and evidence.
  - Profile: men, older people, without children or cohabiting, ongoing relationship
  - Still hidden: most vulnerable and least likely to disclose
- **Harms:** Non-physical harms increased disclosure likelihood, esp. social and psychological for SS
  - Need to take non-physical harms seriously – less visible but often as impactful
  - Need to reach victims before harms escalate (economic breakdown and suicidality trigger help-seeking rather than more accessible entry points).
- **SS vs FA disclosure:** Women and migrants have greater odds of SS than FA disclosure
  - Refuges/specialised services *especially critical* for victims in highest harm categories → continued funding essential
- **Risk thresholds:** Risk factor increase disclosure, yet less severe or ‘risky’ IPDA may persist as a result (dating violence)
- **Risk variations:** Non-disclosure risks vary by FA and SS – perp v victim substance use, relationship status
  - Need to address victim blaming and trust, stereotypes of ‘good’ victims
  - Role of substance use in violence and formal intervention (driving perpetration, but mixed for victims – vulnerability & blame)





**Thank you**



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