

# HARMFUL PRACTICE CASE STUDIES: SPOTLIGHTING NUANCES AND PRACTICE POINTS

Co Action Hub



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JOSHUA\*

**JOSHUA\*** has been referred to MARAC by the local hospital trust following an assault from his partner, Adam which resulted in a broken cheek bone. He told the hospital that he did not want the police to be involved and appeared visibly scared. At the MARAC the police advised that they had had several reports over the past 2 years from Adam with Joshua as the perpetrator but in each case, Adam had declined to make a statement.

Joshua was referred to the local LGBT+ by and for agency prior to the MARAC. The agency tells the MARAC that Joshua disclosed that he has been subject to physical, sexual and emotional abuse for several years. He told them that Adam calls the police when he thinks Joshua is going to leave the relationship. He stated that he is too scared to tell police or any other agency the truth because his partner has photos of them in bed kissing and has threatened to send them to his family. Joshua's family do not know that he is gay, and his partner uses this as a form of control. Joshua has stated that his father is very right wing and often uses homophobic slurs in front of him. In the past he has stated that he would kill any of his sons if they were gay.

The MARAC chair asks the by and for agency to encourage Joshua to report to the police, but the case worker states that they have already discussed this, and Joshua feels this would make him more unsafe. There are no other agencies involved with Joshua and Adam. MARAC actions are for police to put 'special schemes' or 'treat all calls as urgent' on the address and for all agencies to flag and tag their files.

## PRACTICE POINTS

- Victim/ survivors of harmful practices may be experiencing or at risk of abuse from a partner or ex-partner and family members.

\* The asterisk indicates anonymization of the name to maintain confidentiality of information and identity of the person

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## JOSHUA

- If there is a risk of harmful practices from family members, an abusive partner may use this as a form of control.
- Threats to out a victim/ survivor who is LGBT+ to family members is a common form of abuse and can escalate risk significantly.
- Harmful practices are often complex cases, and there may be overlapping forms of abuse. A survivor such as Joshua may also be at risk of forced marriage.
- 'Honour' based abuse relating to same sex relationships can occur in a range of communities, including White British and White European communities.
- Issues of 'honour' may be closely related to homophobic attitudes and stereotypes around masculinity and femininity.