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Background:

- *Olga and *Viktor emigrated to the UK from Russia in 1994, gaining UK citizenship in 1995 and moved to a council property in K&C in 2000. Their only son *Dmitry (and his dog) moved in with his parents in 2015/16 following the breakdown of his marriage.
- It is known Dmitry was controlling and abusive to his parents, especially his mother, whom he hit on at least one occasion. Olga asked him to leave the flat but he refused and his controlling behaviours escalate
- Olga was very fearful of authority figures and reluctant to seek support re: her living situation. In the days preceding her death Olga told a friend she was scared of Dmitry and that he refused to move out of the flat.
- In 2018, Viktor was diagnosed with terminal cancer; by mid-May 2019 he was assessed as only having weeks to live. Olga was his carer. Olga translated at all appointments with Viktor's specialists, GP and CLCH practitioners.
- Viktor was seen by CLCH district nurse in February 2019 and a palliative care nurse in May 2019. Olga told one nurse her son lived with her and told the other she had no children.
- Dmitry murdered his parents (parricide) in May 19 and is serving a 26-year jail sentence.
- Dmitry planned his parent's murder 3 months before the killings, which coincided with when Viktor was told his cancer was terminal. (*Pseudonyms)

Further Resources

Advice: Safeguarding Single Point of Contact **0208 102 4218**

[NHS England Safeguarding App:](#)

DA charities: [ADVANCE](#) ; [Women's Aid](#) ; [Karma Nirvana](#)

[Southall Black Sisters Hidden Hurt](#) (male victims of DA);
[Stalking Helpline](#) ; [End the Fear](#)

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What is a Domestic Homicide Review (DHR)?

- Under Section 9 of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act (2004) there is a statutory requirement to undertake a DHR to learn lessons, where a person, aged 16 or over, is killed as a result of domestic violence, abuse or neglect, by a relation, partner /ex-partner or member of their household.



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Consider referrals to:

- **Interpreters:** Viktor's voice not heard. Using interpreters can ensure confidentiality, prevent conflict of interest and assure risk assessment questions are interpreted correctly
- **Multiagency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC).** Referrals for high risk cases (re: children or adults) should be referred to this multiagency forum where a safety plan is developed.

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Findings from DHR:

- Rarely 'out of the blue' acts /usually 'history of Domestic Abuse (DA)
- DA characterised by patterns of coercive control more likely to end in homicide (Dobash & Dobash 2015)
- In coercive control victims become: dependent on perpetrator, isolated, exploited and unable to change their situation
- **Parricide:** Parricide is the killing of a parent or near relative. **Statistics:** Parricide is rare (9 cases annually in UK); mainly female victims; 92% of perpetrators were adult sons, but grandsons also found to be perpetrators; patients with a terminal illness may be at higher risk

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What have we learned?

- Lack of professional curiosity re: what is happening in family
- Questions re: abusive or controlling behaviours not considered
- Professionals made assumptions /accepted things at face value
- Missed opportunities to explore vulnerability & risk
- Professionals unaware of shifting the balance of need & control
- Use of formal interpreter not considered –Viktor's voice absent
- Viktor's palliative diagnosis increased his and Olga's risk
- Lack of professional awareness of adult-child to parent abuse
- Migrant communities may lack confidence & trust to disclose concerns or seek help from those in statutory or authoritative roles.

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Thinks to remember that make a difference:

1. Do not presume you know what is happening in the family home – ask questions and seek clarity if you are not certain.
2. Do not be afraid to ask questions of families, and do so in an open way so they know that you are asking to keep the child or adult safe, not to judge or criticise.
3. Nurturing professional curiosity and challenge are a fundamental aspect of working together to keep children, young people and adults safe and it is vital that professionals understand the complexity of domestic abuse and are curious about what is happening in the child, adult and perpetrator's life.