DADS / Clare's Law Fact Sheet

(Domestic Abuse Disclosure Scheme / Clare's Law)

What is DADS / Clare's Law?

The Domestic Abuse Disclosure Scheme (DADS), also known as Clare's Law, launched1st April 2014 (9th June in Hertfordshire). It originally launched in September 2012 in four pilot areas. It came about after the domestic homicide case of Clare Wood and will give people a 'right to know' or a 'right to ask' whether a partner has a violent past (similar to Sarah's law – the child sex offender disclosure scheme relating to the murder of Sarah Payne). It forms part of the 'Ending violence against women and girls in the UK' strategy. Approximately two people are killed by their current or former partner each week in England and Wales and so this is just another way to safeguard members of the public from Domestic Abuse.

History

36 year old mother of one, Clare Wood, was murdered in 2009 by a former partner George Appleton who had a history of violence against women including repeated harassment, threats and kidnapping at knifepoint. Had Clare known about these previous offences, she could have made an informed decision about whether or not to continue the relationship. Clare's father campaigned for the introduction of Clare's Law after the death of his daughter.

George Appleton had been jailed for 3 years in 2002 for harassing another woman and for 6 months a year earlier after breaching a restraining order.

The coroner's inquest in 2011 advised that "…consideration should be given to the disclosure of such convictions and their circumstances to potential victims in order that they can make informed choices about matters affecting their safety and that of their children."

The 'right to know' and the 'right to ask'

Police forces can disclose information in response to requests from members of the public ("right to ask") or to an agency where a proactive decision is made to consider disclosing the information in order to protect a potential victim ("right to know"). It will also enable police to act in the best interests of those people who believe they are at risk of violence by sharing information of a partners' violent past.

A disclosure under this scheme can be made to someone who has concerns that their partner may harm them or by a parent, neighbour or friend who has concerns about someone's safety. Information will only be given to someone who is in a position to use the information to protect someone from abuse. A third party person reporting concerns would not necessarily receive the information.

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Process Chart

