

Intimate partner femicide in Australia: A victim-centred exploration

Information sheet for families and friends of intimate partner violence victims

Who is conducting this research?

- Professor Paul Mazerolle, Pro Vice Chancellor (Arts, Education and Law) and Director, Violence Research and Prevention Program, Griffith University
- Dr Samara McPhedran, Senior Research Fellow, Violence Research and Prevention Program, Griffith University
- Dr Li Eriksson, Lecturer, School of Criminology and Criminal Justice, Griffith University

Why is this research being done?

In Australia, most women who become homicide victims are killed by current or former intimate partners (such as their husband/de facto or boyfriend). This highlights the need for improved prevention efforts focussed on reducing this form of extreme violence against women. The goal of the study is to better understand IPF, in order to help reduce the occurrence of IPF in the future.

Why are we interested in victims of non-lethal violence, as well as lethal violence?

We know that many victims of intimate partner femicide (IPF) previously experienced non-lethal intimate partner violence (IPV), but we do not fully understand why some women who experience violence are killed while others are not. This project seeks to explore the characteristics and life-course of both IPF and IPV victims, across multiple domains including behavioural, psychological, and environmental/situational, as well as victims' perceptions of risk and help-seeking. By collecting data from family members or close friends of IPV victims, as well as IPF victims, the study will be able to compare the experiences of those two groups of women and identify whether there are particular aspects of IPF victimisation, relative to IPV victimisation, that may help in better identifying women who are at especially high risk of being killed.

What will your participation include?

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to engage in a phone interview, conducted by a clinical interviewer and lasting for approximately two hours. This will be arranged at a time to suit your availability. The questions will ask about various aspects of life of your loved one who experienced violence from their current or former intimate partner. You do not need prior knowledge or skills to participate; however, you do need to feel that you are able to talk about this topic.

You are invited to participate if:

- You are aged 18 years or over; and
- You are a family member or close friend of a woman who experienced violence from their current or former intimate partner; and
- It has been at least 6 months since your loved one experienced the violence.

Consent to participate

You will be asked to give an informed consent statement prior your interview, and you may also withdraw from the interview at any time, without penalty.

What benefits can I expect from this research?

Your participation may have no direct benefits to you. However, it may benefit the community more broadly by providing a greater understanding of intimate partner femicide and, based on that, helping in the development of more effective violence prevention programs and support services.

What are the risks of participating?

Given that knowing your loved one was experiencing violence would have been a difficult experience for you there is a risk that you may become upset or distressed either during or following the interview. Should you become upset or distressed during the interview, please inform the interviewer, as they are trained to assist you in such situations. Should you, however, become upset or distressed after the interview, please contact Lifeline (13 11 14), or talk to your GP or health professional.

Your participation is voluntary

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. If you do decide to participate, you may withdraw from participation at any time, without giving a reason. You also have the option of not answering questions if you do not wish to, and withdrawing any information that you have contributed. The clinical interviewer may withdraw a participant if it is considered in the participant's best interest. If this happens, the interviewer will explain why, and advise you about any follow-up procedures or alternative arrangements as appropriate.

Your information will remain confidential

The interviews will be recorded and the audio-recordings will be transcribed by the research team. The audio recording will be erased once the transcribing has been completed, and the transcripts will be stored in a secure location at Griffith University. The Chief Investigators will have control over access to data and only members of the research team will have access to the data. Data obtained in this study will be used exclusively for research purposes, and no information that identifies you or your loved one will be passed on to any person outside the research team. Please be reassured that all information that you will provide will remain confidential at all times. While reporting of the results may include quotes from participants, these will be de-identified to maintain confidentiality. Information will be given at a 'group' level, rather than for individuals, in order to maintain anonymity.

Feedback to you

A summary of project results will be provided to you, and you are welcome to contact the research team at any time if you would like extra information. The data will also be reported in a full length project final report and publications, which the research team will be happy to provide to you if you wish.

Ethical conduct of this research

The study has been approved by the Griffith University Ethics Committee (Reference No: 2017/246), which acts in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research. However, if you have any concerns or complaints about the ethical conduct of this study, please contact the Manager, Research Ethics on (07) 3735 4375 or research-ethics@griffith.edu.au.

Questions/further information

If you have any questions or would like further information about this project, please do not hesitate to contact the research team:

- Professor Paul Mazerolle (p.mazerolle@griffith.edu.au, 07 3735 5710)
- Dr Samara McPhedran (s.mcphedran@griffith.edu.au, 07 3735 1194)
- Dr Li Eriksson (l.eriksson@griffith.edu.au, 07 5552 7740)

Privacy statement

The conduct of this research involves the collection, access and/or use of your identified personal information. The information collected is confidential and will not be disclosed to third parties without your consent, except to meet government, legal or other regulatory authority requirements. A de-identified copy of this data may be used for other research purposes. However, your anonymity will at all times be safeguarded. For further information consult the University's Privacy Plan at <http://www.griffith.edu.au/about-griffith/plans-publications/griffith-university-privacy-plan> or telephone (07) 3735 4375.