

27 November 2019

Dear Police and Crime Commissioner, Chief Constable and Chief Executive

Joint letter from Dame Vera Baird QC, Domestic Abuse Commissioner, Nicole Jacobs and Catrina McHugh MBE.

We are writing to ask that you share and encourage your police officers and staff to watch a film of the critically acclaimed play 'Rattle Snake' by the award-winning Open Clasp Theatre Company.

The play is based on real life stories of women who have faced and survived coercive controlling domestic abuse. It will be available to watch online for free to audiences across the world during the UNiTE Campaign to End Violence Against Women 25 November – 10 December 2019.

The play was created by Open Clasp and funded by Durham PCC and the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) to train frontline officers in better responding to sexual and domestic violence – coinciding with the change of law, making coercive control in relationships a crime in 2015. To date, it has been used to train 1,500 frontline police officers and staff.

Together, our ambition is that all forces across the UK and their staff are now encouraged to watch 'Rattle Snake' during this 16 days.

The impact on officers of all ranks is transformative:

"Thought-provoking. The day opened a gateway to seeing and perceiving some things in a different light. A great positive amongst the negatives in my daily role." Police Officer

"The play was able to show all the progression of a controlling relationship; the put-downs, the physical oppression, manipulation and the constant drip-drip effect that eventually normalizes the situation." Cleveland, Police Officer

"Fantastic...Actual awareness of the subject matter. May it be rolled out to everyone!" Police feedback

We have confirmation of forces planning to watch. Katy Barrow-Grint, Superintendent, Head of Specialist Operations, Thames Valley Police is planning to share on their internal Yammer; Cleveland Police is embedding the film on their internal intranet; and Northumbria Police and Crime Commissioner, Kim McGuinness is hosting a screening with a post-show Q&A in Newcastle's Tyneside Cinema.

The film was shown last week to Domestic Abuse leads within HM Prison and Probation Service, ahead of the campaign and probation services in Swansea and Cardiff are hosting screenings.

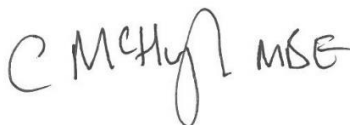
We implore you not to miss this opportunity to encourage your police officers and staff to watch.

You can watch the film directly from the Open Clasp website www.openclasp.org.uk/productions/rattle-snake-online/ between 25 November and 10 December.

If you want to get in touch with Open Clasp you can contact them directly on 0191 2724063.

<https://youtu.be/TCVLzs3PJeM>

Yours faithfully,



Catrina McHugh MBE
Artistic Director, Open Clasp
Theatre Company



Nicole Jacobs
Domestic Abuse
Commissioner for England and
Wales



Dame Vera Baird QC
Victims' Commissioner for
England and Wales