



**NON-LETHAL  
STRANGULATION  
PREVENTION TRAINING  
BRISBANE**

**Summary Report  
25<sup>th</sup>- 26<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

Report prepared by



## **Background**

In March 2019 the Red Rose Foundation arranged the visit to Brisbane of world acclaimed specialist trainers, Gael Strack esq and Dr Bill Smock MD, from the San Diego Institute on Strangulation Prevention. Previous training held in Brisbane and Canberra was regarded as an outstanding sell-out success.

The training was designed to advance the knowledge and practice skills of stakeholders, as well as assist with successful medical interventions and prosecutions of non-lethal domestic violence strangulation.

Strangulation has been identified as one of the most lethal forms of domestic violence and sexual assault: unconsciousness may occur within seconds and death within minutes.

The training was designed to enable learners to:

- identify the signs and symptoms of near-fatal strangulation cases;
- understand and recognize the anatomy and medical aspects of surviving and non-surviving victims;
- investigate and document cases for prosecution;
- prosecute cases, including using experts in court; and, most importantly,
- enhance victim safety through trauma-informed advocacy services.

This report presents a summary of the 78 responses received from the Brisbane training.

Full responses are contained in a table (Appendix A).

If attendees supplied email addresses, these are provided in Appendix B.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT NOT ALL RESPONDENTS COMPLETED ALL FIELDS OF THE SURVEY THEREFORE THE DATA ARE INCOMPLETE.

## Feedback on the trainers, content and training

Participants were asked to rate from 1 to 5 using this scale:

1 = poor

2 = fair

3 = average

4 = good

5 = excellent

Feedback was as follows:

Topic	Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor
Trainers' knowledge of the subject matter:	97.44%	2.56%			
Quality of information provided:	91.03%	7.6%	1.28%		
The usefulness of the content:	79.49%	16.67%	3.85%		
The structure of the training:	80.77%	15.38%	3.85%		
The pace of the training:	78.21%	15.38%	5.13%	1.28%	

## Satisfaction with Training

All participants were satisfied, with 87% indicating they were “very satisfied” and the remainder (13%) noting they were satisfied.

In a series of open-ended questions, participants were asked to identify:

- Three things they “learned and will apply in (their) workplace”
- What they liked most about the training
- What could be improved
- If they would recommend this training to other colleagues, and if yes, why they would do so
- If they would be interested in other training provided by the Red Rose Foundation, and if yes, invited to supply a contact email address.

### Things that were learned that will be applied in the workplace

A range of topics emerged but the key themes may be summarised as follows:

- The signs that strangulation has occurred – forensic indicators for strangulation.
- Look for injuries. However, not all injuries from strangulation are visible.
- Symptoms of petechiae.
- Only requires minimal force to cause death or long-term brain injury.
- Areas of the brain that don't recover.
- Victims memory may be lost.
- Document injuries at first intervention – photographs. Document, record, photograph evidence. Ask a greater range of questions.
- Implement a more vigorous documentation process.
- The importance of CT scans.

- Follow up with clients that have experienced strangulation – follow up tests.
- Encourage victims to seek medical follow-up.
- The link between perpetrators who strangle and increased risk to Police and the wider community.
- The importance of education and the use of statistics.
- The long-term effects of strangulation.
- Education around medical injuries not commonly associated with strangulation.
- Earlier consultation with victims prior to attending Court – greater empathy/understanding.
- Multi-disciplinary collaboration is part of the solution.
- Speak to strangulation with peers to raise awareness.

### **What participants liked most about the training**

- The quality of the Presenters – engaging, passionate and knowledgeable.
- The delivery of the Presenters – made content, that is very heavy at times, easy to understand.
- The legal and medical perspectives of the expert Presenters.
- The amount of practical and new information provided on a topic that isn't widely known.
- Diversity and quality of content.
- The quality of the case studies – statistical and journal articles very beneficial.
- The depth of sharing of both participants and Presenters.
- The relevance of the information – easily understood.
- The connection of multi-disciplines to address the issue.

### **What could be improved in the training**

- The duration of the course – needs to be longer – four days. Perhaps shorter breaks – to allow for content not to be rushed.
- More victim advocacy content for frontline domestic and family violence workers.
- Greater use of Australian (Queensland) legislation, statistics and facts.
- Different focus for the relevant professions – Police/Prosecutor, Health and Advocates.
- More focus is needed on the psychological impact of strangulation.
- The jokes are not appropriate for the audience.
- It is evident that the material is constantly updated with ongoing research – improvements occur naturally.

### **Likelihood of recommending this training**

Of the 78 respondents, 74 (almost 95%) indicated they would recommend this training to their colleagues. Reasons for doing so included:

- Increased awareness is essential – knowledge is power.
- It is important to try and avoid unnecessary fatalities and spread awareness.
- The information is vital and can save lives.
- The knowledge of the Presenters is invaluable.
- The content of the course is relevant to Police/Prosecutors and Medical professionals.

- The information provided in the training is not “common knowledge”.
- The training leads to better evidence gathering and support for the victims.
- Training is excellent for Police and Corrective Services – Qld Parole Board assessments.
- Staff in community legal centres would find training beneficial.
- The training highlights the importance of evidence gathering, supporting victims and keeping them informed on the legal process.
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#### **Accessing other training provided by the Red Rose Foundation**

Of the 78 respondents, 55 (almost 71%) indicated they would be interested in other training provided by the Red Rose Foundation.