



# Link

For national participants in the  
MNADV's Lethality Assessment Program

A periodic newsletter to update Lethality Assessment Program (LAP) participants throughout the country on events, reports, best practices, and other significant actions occurring in participating jurisdictions related to implementation of the LAP.

## BREAKING NEWS: Oklahoma LAP study released

For the past six years, at the request of the MNADV—Dr. Jacquelyn Campbell from The Johns Hopkins University; Dr. Jill Messing from Arizona State University; and Dr. Janet Wilson from The University of Oklahoma, among others—to conduct a study of the LAP's effectiveness.

The 11 questions on the Lethality Screen have always been “evidence-based,” and are proven to be predictors of intimate partner homicide. This study, however, was designed to provide further evidence-based support for the LAP *process* and *protocol*.

Law enforcement agencies from several jurisdictions in Oklahoma participated, implementing the LAP as trained, and recruiting participating victims to do follow-up interviews (immediately after the law enforcement-referral, and again approximately 7 months later) with researchers. Victims in this “intervention group” were compared to victims in a “comparison group” who did not go through the LAP.

There are several key findings that came out of this study:

- Participants in the LAP experienced *less frequent* and *less severe* violence than victims in the comparison group.
- The Lethality Screen correctly identified 93% of women who experienced severe violence between the baseline interview and follow-up interview approximately seven months later.
- Participants in the LAP also engaged in protective actions (e.g., hiding their partner's weapons, or accessing formal domestic violence services) more often than participants in the comparison group.
- Abusive partners of participants in the intervention group were more likely to “go someplace where they could not see the victim” (e.g., jail). This could indicate that victims assessed through the LAP are more likely to engage the criminal justice system, or that the system sees the partners of High-Danger victims as more dangerous.
- Participants in the LAP were significantly more satisfied with the police response than the comparison group.

The results of the study designate the LAP as a “supported intervention,” according to the CDC's Continuum of Evidence Effectiveness. The comprehensive results of the study are now available through the [NCJRS](https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/247456.pdf) (<https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/247456.pdf>).

## UPDATE: Web site features enhanced

For the past several months, MNADV has been preparing to make available a portfolio of LAP materials for sites. In addition to updating familiar documents—like the Communication Guidelines, Implementation Instructions, and the LAP protocol for law enforcement and DVSPs—we also created new materials in response to needs that sites have expressed to us. Some new additions include a [Sample MOU](#) that jurisdictions could use as a reference to formalize their LAP relationships in writing. [Safety Planning Guidelines & Checklist](#) were created to help hotline advocates remember essential information they need to ask and provide on High-Danger LAP calls.

Your jurisdiction's Team Coordinator may e-mail [Abby Hannifan](mailto:ahannifan@mnadv.org), National LAP Project Coordinator, at [ahannifan@mnadv.org](mailto:ahannifan@mnadv.org), to request a password to be able to access these materials on our Web site.

Two of our national sites—**Paducah, KY**, and **Connecticut**—have made videos about how the LAP has positively benefitted their communities, and they want to share their stories with you! Please visit the [national page](#) of our website to view.



# LAP Link

## For national participants in the MNADV's Lethality Assessment Program

Over the last several months, MNADV realized that some of the statistics we've been using in training or in our materials have been paraphrased and are not accurate to the research we're citing. We've also noticed that others have re-paraphrased our interpretations of the research, making them doubly-distorted. We've been working closely with Drs. Campbell and Messing to make sure that we fully understand the research and are not paraphrasing anything inaccurately. MNADV will be using these new statistics in all publications and presentations moving forward, and encourages partners to do the same! Please visit our [website](http://mnadv.org/lethality/) (mnadv.org/lethality/) to read more about the reasons for these changes.

### Formerly-used statistics

**In 50% of DV-related homicides, officers had previously responded to a call on the scene.**

The research article analyzed the number of perpetrators who had been arrested in the year prior to the homicide, not how often officers had been on the scene.

**Only 4% of victims of actual or attempted intimate partner homicides had ever utilized the services of domestic violence programs.**

The research refers only to *actual* homicide victims who had been abused. Additionally, the research defines "services" as hotline or shelter, accessed in the year prior to the murder.

**There is a 60% reduction in risk of severe assault when victims utilize the services of a DV program.**

This statistic has not yet been published, but a re-analysis of the data that originally produced this figure is "under review" for publication.

### Current statistics

**In the year prior to the homicide, more than 44% of abusers were arrested, and almost one-third of victims contacted the police.**

**Only 4% of abused victims had used a domestic violence hotline or shelter within the year prior to being killed by an intimate partner.**

**Women who went to shelter were significantly less likely to experience re-assault than those who did not go to shelter.**

\*\* Findings from the forthcoming publication. We hope to be able to provide the specific data supporting this once it is published. Stay tuned!

### COMPLETED TRAININGS: Grand Forks & Burlington

Since our last *LAP Link* in August, we've trained the first two jurisdictions of the new award: **Grand Forks County, North Dakota**, and **Chittenden County, Vermont**. The Grand Forks team is made up of four police agencies and one DVSP. In Vermont, the Burlington Police Department is already implementing the LAP, and with our Train-the-Trainer in September, their 10 neighboring agencies will soon be implementing, too! Both teams were engaged and enthusiastic participants, and we're confident they'll implement the LAP faithfully and well!

### ATTENTION: Call for more applications

MNADV has already made commitments to train several other sites, which brings us to about one-third of our LAP training goal.

We still have about **15 training opportunities** over the next two years. Sites that are interested in the LAP are welcome to contact MNADV via [Abby Hannifan, Project Coordinator \(ahannifan@mnadv.org\)](mailto:ahannifan@mnadv.org), to learn more about our cost-free technical assistance and training for teams of law enforcement agencies and domestic violence service programs. For sites that are already implementing the LAP, MNADV is available to provide ongoing TA. If you know of any neighboring agencies / programs that would be interested in the LAP, feel free to share the good news about this award!



The four agencies trained in Grand Forks—the University of North Dakota, Grand Forks; Northwood PD; Grand Forks PD; and Grand Forks County Sheriff's Department;—shared patches with our trainers. They are now proudly pinned on our LAP bulletin board!