



**HEDDLU
GOGLEDD CYMRU
NORTH WALES
POLICE**

Response Date:15/05/2024

2024/404 - Non-fatal strangulation and non-fatal suffocation

In response to your recent request for information regarding;

- In the dates between 7 June 2022 and 12 April 2024, has your force investigated the following offences:
SC15005 (non-fatal strangulation),
SC15006 (non-fatal suffocation)
Home Office code 008/77 Non fatal strangulation and suffocation.**

For each offence, please provide:

- How many times your force has investigated the offence**
- Whether the investigation led to a charge or summons**

For more information on the offences and the codes, please refer to this [link](#).

HO Code	HO Description
008/77	Non-fatal strangulation and suffocation

Outcome	Occurrence Count
01A. Alternate Offence Charged / Summoned / Postal Requisition	45
01. Charged / Summoned / Postal Requisition	140
03A. Alternate Offence Adult Caution / Conditional Caution	1
05. Offender Has Died	1
08. Community Resolution / Youth Restorative Disposal	4
09. CPS Prosecution Not In Public Interest	6
10. Police Formal Action Not In Public Interest	4
11. Named Suspect Below Age of Criminal Responsibility	2
12. Named Suspect Too Ill To Prosecute	3
14. Victim Declines / Unable to Support Action to Identify Offender	10
15. CPS Named Suspect, Victim Supports but Evidential Difficulties	38
15. Police Named Suspect, Victim Supports but Evidential Difficulties	112
16. Victim Declines / Withdraws Support - Named Suspect Identified	320
17. Suspect Identified but Prosecution Time Limit Expired	2
18. Investigation Complete No Suspect Identified	19
20. Other Body / Agency has Investigation Primacy	54
21. Police Named Suspect, Investigation Not in the Public	4

Interest	
22. Checkpoint	2
Outcome Not Yet Assigned	121
Total	888

- 2. Has your force received training on the two offences SC15005 (non-fatal strangulation), SC15006 (non-fatal suffocation) Home Office code 008/77 Non fatal strangulation and suffocation.**

since they were created on 7 June 2022.

Yes

- 3. If the answer to Q2 is "yes", please provide:**
(a) How many serving police officers have received the training

All PC probationers have received this training: 184

- (b) Copies of the training materials used**

Please see the attached

THIS INFORMATION HAS BEEN PROVIDED IN RESPONSE TO A REQUEST
 UNDER THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT 2000, AND IS CORRECT AS AT 23/04/2024

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 provides legislation for non-fatal strangulation as a criminal offence in its own right

- 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. When domestic violence perpetrators choke (strangle) their victims, not only is this assault, but it may be an attempted murder.
- Strangulation is an ultimate form of power and control where the assailant can demonstrate control over the victim's next breath: it may have devastating psychological effects or a potentially fatal outcome.
- **The idea that 'if there are no marks you weren't really hurt' is a myth to dispel.**
- Not all injuries show on the outside; there can be internal physical injuries. In addition, there may be neurological damage from the loss of oxygen.

Further guidance on strangulation

- When one person puts hands around the neck of another and squeezes, that is strangulation.
- It is a serious word that fits the potentially lethal action. Often erroneously called 'choking', it is not.
- 'Choking' refers to a blockage inside your throat, making it difficult to breathe. Strangulation is when pressure is applied from the outside, cutting off blood vessels and/or airflow in the neck, preventing oxygen from reaching the brain.
- This pressure can cause loss of consciousness in 5 to 10 seconds, and it can cause death in a few minutes.

12 key points on non-fatal strangulation (NFS)

1. NFS is well known as a high prevalence form of assault in domestic abuse.
2. NFS is often used to instil fear, power and control, rather than a failed homicide.
3. NFS is often a terrifying experience and many victims report they genuinely believed they were going to die. NFS is linked to PTSD and other psychiatric conditions.
4. Some victims lose consciousness, but research has also found that some people don't remember that they had lost consciousness.
5. Loss of consciousness, even temporary, can cause brain damage, including long-term neurological damage such as memory loss and facial droop.
6. Some victims lose control of bladder, and more rarely bowels, during strangulation. They are unlikely to report this unless asked. This can be used as evidence of lengthy strangulation and should form part of an investigation. Soiled clothing/bedding may be evidence.
7. Victims should be asked about what they experienced during the strangulation. Possible symptoms include: loss of vision including blurred, tunnel vision, seeing stars, dizziness, difficulty speaking, loss of strength, hearing and pain.

12 key points on non-fatal strangulation (NFS)

8. Victims should be asked about their symptoms after the strangulation. Possible symptoms include: neck injuries, pain, swelling, hoarse raspy voice, difficulty or painful swallowing, coughing, vomiting, headache, memory disturbances.
9. Victims should have any physical marks photographed. Pinprick dots (petechiae) on the neck, face, eyes, mouth, scalp, behind the ears, are possible signs of strangulation which appear immediately or very soon after the incident and should be photographed before they fade. Bruising may emerge 2 to 3 days later.
10. NFS frequently does not leave any physical marks, this does not undermine an account. Cases should never be closed simply because they are 'word on word' as there is no legal requirement for corroboration.
11. NFS should be considered within a wider pattern of abuse, for case building and to consider other possible offences such as coercive control.
12. NFS can take place during sex. The victim may consent to sex but not to NFS. It is not possible in law to consent to NFS where injuries of ABH or worse are caused.