

Developing the evidence base

Nationally consistent data on the police use of force means there is now scope to build the evidence base on police and public safety.

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Guideline – developing the evidence base

Chief constables should work with the College, the wider police service and relevant partner agencies, as well as academia and other experts to develop the evidence base on the use of force, assaults against the police and police/public injuries, by:

- analysing police data
- exploring and sharing current training practices
- testing the impact of training innovations (eg, content, method of delivery and frequency of training)

Evidence summary

The evidence review identified a limited number of well-designed and implemented studies and very few that were carried out in a policing context, which demonstrated a clear gap in the evidence.

Evidence base

Empirical evidence

Limited

Practitioner evidence

Available

Opportunity for research

The evidence review carried out to support the development of these guidelines revealed a general lack of research from the UK on issues relating to the police use of force. There is an opportunity for the police service and its partners to work collaboratively to address these gaps in the evidence. The availability of nationally consistent data on use of force incidents means there is now scope to carry out exploratory analysis, for example, on:

- the factors associated with officers and staff being assaulted or injured, different types of force being used, public injuries and incidents escalating
- individual, team and force-level differences
- the effect of personal safety training

Critical gaps remain in the evidence on personal safety training about what specific techniques should be taught, how they should be taught, for how long and how often, and what effect training has on officer/staff and public safety. The **conflict management skills guidance** in particular provides the scope for the police service and its partners to develop and test the impact of innovations in training (eg, coverage of the non-physical aspects of conflict management and use of realistic scenario-based learning) through carefully designed and executed studies. In addition, exploratory research using a range of methods (eg, the analysis of body-worn video footage) would help to develop a better understanding of the issues that officers, staff and members of the public face during conflict situations and how personal safety training is currently delivered across the service, both of which could inform the design of innovations in professional development.

Tags

Evidence-based policing Conflict management