

The problem

- The first people to suspect or know about someone becoming involved in violent extremism will often be those closest to them: their friends, family and community insiders.
- Very little is known about what reporting of an 'intimate' means for community members, particularly their views, experiences and concerns about approaching authorities, especially the police, when they have concerns or knowledge to report.
- Therefore, 'intimates' reporting is a critical blind spot in current Countering Violent Extremism (CVE)/Prevent thinking and strategy internationally.

These points have been demonstrated by a ground-breaking original Australian study led by Professor Michele Grossman. This UK study is a replication of the earlier Australian research. When it was conceived, there was no open-source evidence-based research which investigated the views of either UK Muslim communities or of professionals at the forefront of Prevent policy implementation.

Aims, objectives and methodology

The research sought to understand and assess whether community respondents would consider sharing concerns with authorities about an 'intimate' other (partner, family member, or close friend).

In-depth individual interviews (Muslim n=41; marginalised White British n=7), based on hypothetical scenarios, were carried out in three study sites (West Yorkshire, Greater Manchester and London). A range of professional practitioners (n=18) were also interviewed to gain their perspectives on community reporting.

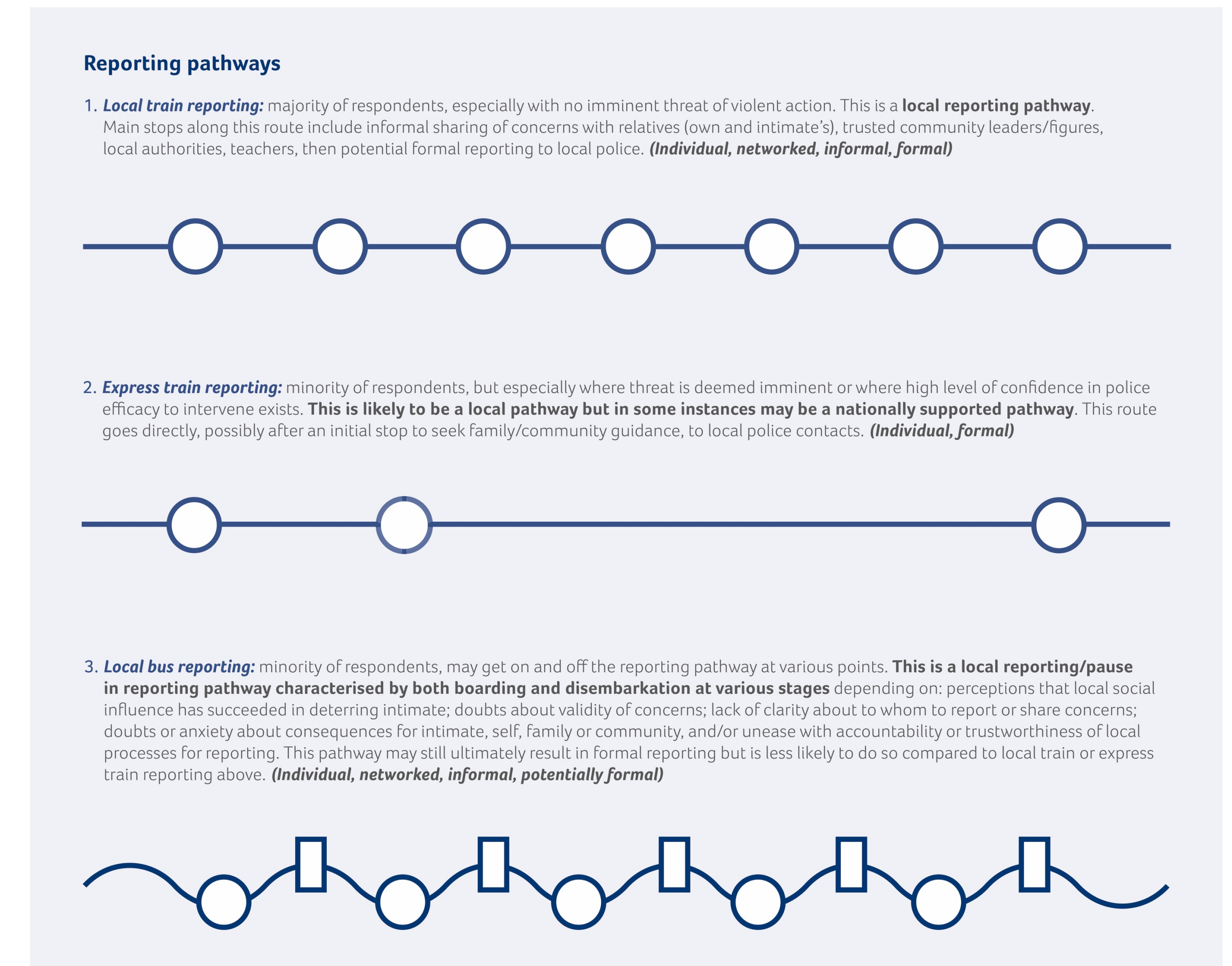


For more information, refer to final project reports (full report and executive summary available).

Selective key research findings: community respondents

- The overwhelming motivation for reporting by community respondents is **care and concern** for the 'intimate', even if the act damages the relationship/friendship.
- For most respondents, the police are the best placed people to deal with such situations.
- However, given the gravity of reporting someone, virtually all respondents would first go through a **staged process** of attempting to personally dissuade the intimate and/or drawing on others close to them within their community to intervene.
- Within this staged process, threshold judgments are crucial, with respondents willing to report directly to the police once they judge that the situation has passed beyond a certain point of seriousness and/or tangible evidence.
- Such threshold judgments are **difficult in the making and often far from clear**.
- An overwhelming majority of respondents wanted to report to their local police, not counter-terrorism specialists.
- They also wanted to report through face-to-face means, allowing them to assess how seriously their concerns were being taken and actioned, and wanting to have the opportunity for questions about implications.
- What happens after reporting is a very significant consideration for most community respondents (i.e., negative collective impacts of reporting).
- Many respondents want reporting to be a two-way process, with a **feedback loop** that keeps them informed about what happened, the status of the investigation and what will or might happen next.

Three reporting pathways



Some key future considerations

We make five strategic considerations for future policy and practice:

- **Consider rethinking the tone, content and targeting of social messaging initiatives around community reporting.** 'Safeguarding' and 'health promotion' messages are more likely to be effective than focusing on criminality and threat.
- **Understand that sharing concerns with authorities is a staged process**, and that communities play a vital role in the 'supply chain' of reporting pathways.
- **Localise and personalise the reporting process.** A large majority of community respondents preferred to report to local police.
- **Develop support mechanisms for reporters.** Reporters feel concern for themselves, the intimate and others and need support, guidance and where possible to be kept informed.
- **Clarify reporting mechanisms.** There is confusion and uncertainty for many community respondents, and for some professional practitioners, around how reporting processes actually work.