

What should we do next?

10. Recommendations for consideration by commissioners

In the context of limited finance, the emphasis over the next period will be on improving the provision from mainstream health and criminal justice services to encourage earlier disclosure of sexual abuse and implement appropriate support to support victims. Where possible, Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County Council will work together to avoid duplication and develop services that meet the needs of local residents.

Recommendations are grouped under four headings:

10.1 Prevention to reduce levels of sexual abuse in the population.

- Promote media campaigns that challenge harmful gender stereotypes and sexualisation of young people. Use the media to encourage greater awareness of risk and publicise the benefits of support services.
- Encourage safeguarding leads in schools to identify young people at risk from sexual exploitation and harmful relationships and signpost them to services that will engage these young people in learning protective behaviour and understanding of risk
- Work with commissioners of children's services to ensure Healthy Relationships Education is included in the "Mainstream Offer" to all schools.
- Support the research proposal for a longitudinal study of Healthy Relationships Education for young people to test whether knowledge, understanding and attitude change are sustained over several years.

10.2 Improved awareness and identification of sexual abuse by mainstream services

- Ensure criminal justice, mental health and primary care service providers are aware of sexual abuse and how to respond and signpost appropriately.
- Clarify and support the implementation of routine and selective enquiry about sexual abuse in identified mainstream services to increase identification and disclosure. . (Recognising that prior training is essential for successful implementation)
- Analyse existing information from specialist services, Health and Police into a quarterly data report on sexual abuse
- Include sexual abuse as an element in the Human Resource support programmes of partner agencies. Eg The Workplace Health Scheme being developed by Nottinghamshire County Council

10.3 Support and access to services for survivors of recent or current sexual abuse and for survivors of historical sexual abuse

- Promote the support services in Nottinghamshire through the widespread use of the 24 Hour Freephone Domestic and Sexual Violence Helpline information cards available free to all agencies, and targeting mainstream NHS services that survivors already access.
- Work with mental health commissioners to address waiting times for access to psychological therapies and the availability of specialist counselling services. Developments to include a consistent approach to measuring outcomes for counselling services.
- Work with the Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Commissioner and NHS England to ensure that Nottinghamshire SARC is commissioned successfully with adequate staffing
- Ensure services can safely meet the needs of both male and female survivors of sexual abuse

10.4 Criminal Justice

- It should be recognised that effective investigation and prosecution of sexual assault and rape are key to building the confidence victims need to disclose sexual abuse.
- The criminal justice agencies have a number of plans in place to improve their procedures. These should be linked with the work of other partners using the existing Safer Nottinghamshire Board and Health and Well-Being Board structures