

24 September 2013

Agenda Item:10

**REPORT OF SERVICE DIRECTOR
POLICY, PLANNING AND CORPORATE SERVICES**

SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND ABUSE UPDATE 2013

Purpose of the Report

1. To outline the key areas of work being undertaken in response to sexual violence and abuse in Nottinghamshire.
2. Provide a background to the specialist sexual abuse services available across Nottinghamshire.

Information and Advice

3. Tackling sexual abuse is a clear priority for the Safer Nottinghamshire Board (SNB) and the Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Commissioner (NPCC). This resides with the SNB Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group and governance structure.
4. This paper relates to sexual abuse for adult victims. Child sexual abuse is the responsibility of the Children's Safeguarding Board. There is a cross over in young people aged fourteen and over with adult and specialised sexual abuse services.
5. The SNB has nominated John Robinson, CEO Gedling BC, to be its Domestic Violence Champion and Chair of the SNB Domestic and Sexual Abuse Executive Group. This group now encompasses sexual abuse and champions these issues.
6. Specialist support services for the victims/survivors of sexual violence are delivered by third sector organisations commissioned or grant aided by NCC and other funding bodies. There is no defined commissioning framework for sexual abuse services.
7. Work in this area is under-developed compared to Domestic Abuse. Therefore, work was initiated in April 2013 following discussion at the November 2012 Strategy Group. The piece of work was to liaise with SNB partners to scope current funding, services and work and to identify future

priorities for sexual abuse work. Any findings will be incorporated into the Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy for Nottinghamshire.

Definition and Volume

Definition

8. Sexual violence and abuse can be defined as any behaviour perceived to be of a sexual nature which is unwanted and takes place without consent or understanding.¹
9. Serious sexual assault includes rape or assault by penetration including attempts. Less serious sexual assaults include indecent exposure, sexual threats and unwanted touching by any person including a partner or family member (British Crime Survey 2004/5).
10. Sexual abuse and violence is known to be widely underreported nationally, with an estimate of only one in ten adult victims of serious sexual assaults reporting the incident to police.² Young women are now at the greatest risk of sexual assault, with a prevalence rate of victimisation in 2011/12 rising to 7.9%.

Table 1: Sexual Offences Reported to the Police England and Wales³

Type of Offences	Apr-02 to Mar-03	Apr-07 to Mar-08	Apr-11 to Mar-12	Apr-12 to Mar-13
Rape	12,295	12,673	16,038	16,327
Other sexual offences	44,357	39,493	36,722	37,213
Total	56, 652	52, 166	52,760	53,540

Table 2: Overall Sexual Offences Since 2009/10 in Nottinghamshire

	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2012-13 % Change	2009-13 % change
Serious Sexual Offences	444	392	352	414	+17.6%	-6.8%
Other sexual offences	637	591	487	517	+6.2%	-18.8%

¹ NIDirect Government Services

² K. Smith, K.Coleman, S. Elder et al (2011) Homicides, firearm offences and intimate violence 2008/9: supplementary volume 2 to Crime in England and Wales, Home Office.

³ Data from the Office of National Statistics (2013) Crime In England and Wales Ending March 2013

11. There were 414 Serious Sexual Offences recorded in 2012/13 across Nottinghamshire. A further 517 other sexual offences were recorded. Although there has been a small increase in the number of recorded offences between 2012/13⁴, there has been a general downwards trend in offences between 2009 and 2013.
12. In 2012/13, 2.9% of serious sexual offences were repeat victimisation, with a total of 12 offences.
13. Demographic data shows that the most common age band is age 10-14 with 27% of reported offences. This also shows that 71% of reported offences are against victims aged 24 and under. 87% of serious sexual offences between 2009 and 2013 were against female victims, 12% were against male.

Table 4: Summary of Victim/Offender Relationship 2009-13

Victim/Offender Relationship Description	%
Partner (Current or Ex)	13%
Family Member	18%
Known (non family)	8%
Stranger	31%
Other	30%

14. 'Other' refers to a category not listed or to the victim/offender relationship not being recorded at the time of the incident. The data shows that overall 40% of victims knew the perpetrator in some capacity.

Performance Framework

15. The SNB has devised a performance framework to measure how successful are the various interventions and initiatives undertaken to domestic and sexual abuse. There is currently one performance measure for sexual abuse, to monitor the numbers of serious sexual offences (rape and sexual assault). Reporting levels for sexual offences are nationally recognised as being low.
16. Partners have agreed an overall aim to increase the reporting of domestic and sexual violence and abuse, but to reduce repeat victimisation. At its best, this will reduce overall crime levels because agencies can intervene sooner and implement safety measures and criminal procedures earlier.
17. In order to achieve a wider understanding of local need, a recommendation would be for three additional performance measures to be included in the framework:
 - Monitor the numbers calling the 24 hour Helpline about sexual abuse.
 - Monitor the numbers calling the Rape Crisis counselling line.
 - Monitor the numbers of service users which the Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs) support, which report sexual abuse.

⁴ The 2012/13 data is partially attributable to the rise in reporting of historical offences and changes in definitions.

Sexual Abuse Service Provision

Specialist Sexual abuse services

18. Currently, specialist sexual abuse services are provided by a range of third sector organisations. The funding for these organisations is provided by a range of agencies, including grant aid from Nottinghamshire County Council. They provide a range of services including immediate support and forensic examination after a rape, counselling, self-help groups, befriending and creative therapy. There is no commissioning framework for sexual abuse services. Sexual abuse services are also provided by the domestic abuse charities across the county, for women who are experiencing sexual abuse as part of domestic abuse.

19. The following specialist sexual abuse services operate in Nottinghamshire:

- 24 Hour Helpline for Domestic and Sexual Abuse
- Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC): The Topaz Centre
- Nottingham Rape Crisis
- Incest and Sexual Abuse Survivors (ISAS)
- Survivors Helping Each Other (SHE)
- Nottingham Counselling Service Sexual Abuse Project (group counselling).

20. The current services available for victims of sexual abuse are mapped out in Appendix 1. The pathways for victims of both historical and recent sexual abuse are outlined in Appendix 2.

21. Male victims represent 12% of reported sexual abuse offences in Nottinghamshire since 2009/10 and can access counselling from ISAS, services from the SARC, Victim Support and a specialised service run by Derbyshire Rape Crisis.

Funding from Nottinghamshire County Council

22. As part of three year agreements, Grant Aid Funding has been allocated to the following organisations:

Organisation	Funding
Nottingham Rape Crisis Centre	£26,000 per annum
ISAS (Incest and Sexual Abuse Survivors)	£15,000 per annum
SHE (Survivors Helping Each Other)	£14,500 per annum

Work with Young People

23. All specialised sexual abuse services support young people aged fourteen years and over.

24. The SARC support young people aged thirteen years and over. The SARC have a dedicated Children's Support Worker supporting young people aged thirteen to twenty one years of age. The Support Worker provides short-term support and refers the victim to other appropriate agencies for on-going support.

25. The Police and Crime Commissioner has funded Teen Support Workers for young victims of domestic and sexual abuse as pilot initiatives until March 2014. The following pilots have been funded for the county:

- North Nottinghamshire, Nottinghamshire Women's Aid have been funded for the STAR Project, supporting teenagers in abusive relationships.
- Nottinghamshire Independent Domestic Abuse Service - Teen Relationship Abuse Support Worker (16 yrs – 17 yrs) for Mansfield and Ashfield.

In the City:

- Nottinghamshire Rape Crisis has been funded for a Young Person's Outreach Worker in the City.
- Women's Aid Integrated Services (WAIS) have been funded for a Teen Domestic Violence Pilot Project.

Domestic abuse services

26. Wider domestic abuse services are also provided by a range of organisations across the county. These agencies provide support to women who have experienced sexual abuse as part of domestic abuse, in a domestic relationship. The Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVAs) have received sexual abuse training, particularly in dealing with sexual abuse within domestic abuse. Sexual abuse disclosures often present much later than domestic abuse, once women are already being supported by an IDVA or the wider Women's Aid services.

27. The Court IDVAs support women through the criminal process for domestic abuse cases, which also includes sexual abuse. The numbers of women known to the IDVA service and Women's Aid services who are experiencing sexual abuse within domestic abuse is not known as this data is not currently collected.

Community support for sex offenders

28. Sex offenders are managed by the Dangerous Person's Management Team within the Public Protection Unit of the Police. They are managed by officers on a geographical basis and report at agreed times. Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) are in place for people who pose significant risk to the public.

29. There is a gap in service provision and support for sex offenders living in the community. Probation deliver a male sex offender's rehabilitation programme in prison and in the community for up to 40 men per year. The Lucy Faithful Foundation is a charity which offers service for male and female sex offenders.

It is the only major service which provides courses and community support to sex offenders. Funding for offenders to attend these courses is from Probation.

Issues Raised and Strategy Development

30. A range of stakeholders are being consulted on current sexual abuse services and priorities. The themes emerging are summarised below and will be incorporated into the Domestic and Sexual Violence Strategy and recommendations will be brought to this Committee in January 2014, and to the Safer Nottinghamshire Board for consideration.

1) Young People

31. Sexual abuse within teenage relationships is an emerging issue, with most sexual abuse services seeing an increase in the numbers of young people seeking help. The SARC have also noted an increase in the sexual abuse of teenagers as a consequence of online grooming and social networking.
32. There are current countywide gaps in service provision for young people who are victims of sexual abuse. This gap is also evident for young victims of domestic abuse. These gaps have been acknowledged by the Police and Crime Commissioner's (PCC) funding for two pilots for Teen Support Workers for young victims of domestic and sexual abuse. However, these are only pilot initiatives with short-term funding until March 2014.

2) Waiting lists and service capacity

33. Increasing numbers of victims of historical and childhood sexual abuse are disclosing abuse and seeking support from agencies. This is likely to be linked to media attention on the scale of sexual abuse nationally following high profile cases such as Jimmy Savile and Stuart Hall. Services in Nottinghamshire have reported an increase.
34. Waiting lists for counselling services are impacting on a victim's ability to access services. The issue is acknowledged by the providers and they are currently reviewing potential means to reduce waiting times. There are few interim solutions available countywide while victims are waiting for long-term counselling. The waiting lists for all agencies require consistent monitoring and a clear referral pathway to show alternative services, particularly when there are long waiting lists. Consistent provision of interim service support is required while victims wait for long-term support countywide.
35. Male victims are able to access counselling support from ISAS which has a waiting list. However, Victim Support and the SARC provide male services with no current waiting lists.

3) Partnership Working

36. Due to the variety of agencies providing sexual abuse services, partnership working is key to ensure that victims are referred to the most appropriate agencies. A clear pathway is required to support professionals.

4) Awareness raising

Public

37. It is evident that public awareness raising work for sexual abuse needs to be undertaken. The scale of the problem both nationally and locally, and low levels of reporting show that we need to give victims the confidence to report abuse and seek help.

38. Information cards have been developed specifically for Sexual Abuse in conjunction with the charity Equation (previously Nottinghamshire Domestic Violence Forum). These promote the helpline and other sexual abuse services. The cards need to be promoted more widely across the county. The 24 Hour Helpline has now been expanded to take sexual abuse calls. The Helpline number is promoted on every bus stop and timetable across Nottingham City. The county need to look at how the Helpline can be creatively promoted. For recent sexual assaults, forensic evidence needs to be gathered within 7 days of the assault for a female and 3 days for a male, in order to support a criminal prosecution. Campaigns need to encourage victims to come forward as soon as possible. A victim may report anonymously to the SARC and undergo a forensic medical examination after which evidence is stored while the individual takes the time they need to decide whether to come forward to support a prosecution. The Sexual Abuse Information Cards need to be developed to reflect this.

Professionals

39. Stakeholders reported that professionals across a wide range of services lack confidence in how to support victims when they disclose abuse. Training for professionals needs to be consistent, promoting the warning signs of abuse, the referral pathways and where staff can go to for support. We need to ensure that professionals know the referral pathways for sexual abuse and where to best signpost people to for the right support. Also, consistency in the use of routine and selective inquiry into abuse is important.

40. As a result of this identified gap, the Community Safety team are currently working with Nottinghamshire Healthcare Trust and Nottingham City Crime and Drugs Partnership to develop a training film to support front-line professionals in dealing with domestic and sexual abuse disclosures and supporting victims appropriately. This will be developed by the end of October 2013.

41. The Nottinghamshire Healthcare Trust are launching their new Domestic Violence and Abuse Strategy in October 2013, which includes a specific work stream on sexual abuse. The Community Safety team will be working closely with the Trust on this.

5) Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation

42. There are gaps in county based services which provide support to victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation. It is evident that these are still issues which are not fully understood and therefore service provision is not yet developed. Child Sexual Exploitation work is being developed through work by the Safeguarding Children's Board and the creation of a countywide Child Sexual Exploitation Group.

Risks and Issues

Service Capacity

43. The main concern is the current capacity and availability of specialised sexual abuse services, particularly regarding access to the 24 Hour Helpline and counselling services. Before any awareness raising and communications work is undertaken, the capacity of services to cope with increased demand needs to be reviewed and monitored.

Other Options Considered

Separate Sexual Abuse and Violence Strategy

44. It was explored as to whether Nottinghamshire should have a separate sexual abuse strategy or combine the Domestic and Sexual abuse agenda into one strategy for Nottinghamshire. Strategies from other county areas were researched and took different approaches to this work. All areas linked sexual and domestic abuse either through their strategy or local action plans. All stakeholders were consulted on this issue. The majority felt that domestic and sexual abuse issues were fundamentally linked and therefore a joint strategy was important. However, all stakeholders also felt that sexual abuse needs its own focus to progress work in the area. We are therefore recommending a joint strategy, with a separate work stream for sexual abuse which will be taken forward by a Sexual Abuse Task and Finish Group and action plan.

Statutory and Policy Implications

45. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, the public sector equality duty, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Implications for Service Users

46. The Community Safety team are currently consulting with victims of sexual abuse via specialist services. We are planning to run a focus group before the end of September and also to gather questionnaires individually from service users. A summary of the findings will be produced in October 2013. The aim is to ensure that victim's views shape future service provision.

RECOMMENDATION/S

1) Members are asked to note the contents of the report and request for a further report to

come to the January 2014 Community Safety Committee, with a Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy and recommendations for service development, to cover the issues of:

- Young people's services
- Waiting lists and service capacity
- Partnership working
- Awareness raising – public and professionals
- Trafficking and sexual exploitation

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Constitutional Comments

As this report is for noting only no constitutional comments are required.

Background Papers and Published Documents

None

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Map of the sexual abuse services in Nottinghamshire

Appendix 2: Pathway of services for recent and historical abuse

Appendix 1

Sexual Abuse Services in Nottinghamshire

Helpline Support

Domestic and Sexual Abuse 24 Hour Helpline
Tel: 0808 800 0340
Run by WAIS

Protection

Topaz Centre - SARC
Sexual Assault Referral Centre provides forensic medical examinations, support and crisis work 24/7.

ISVAs

Independent Sexual Violence Advisors for men and women.
Accessed from the SARC

IDVAs

Independent Domestic Violence Advocates
Run by Notts Women's Aid and WAIS to support victims of domestic abuse. Many are also victims of sexual abuse.

GUM Clinics

Genito-Urinary Medicine for sexual health support

Counseling

Nottingham Rape Crisis
Counseling Line
0115 9410440
Telephone and face-to-face counseling support for women

ISAS

Incest and Sexual Abuse Survivors
Counseling for male and female survivors of childhood sexual abuse

Nottingham Counseling Service

Sexual abuse project which provides short and long-term group counseling for women

Family Care

Counseling support for children and young people, and their families, who have been victims of sexual abuse.

Let's Talk Wellbeing
NHS Counseling Services

Ongoing support

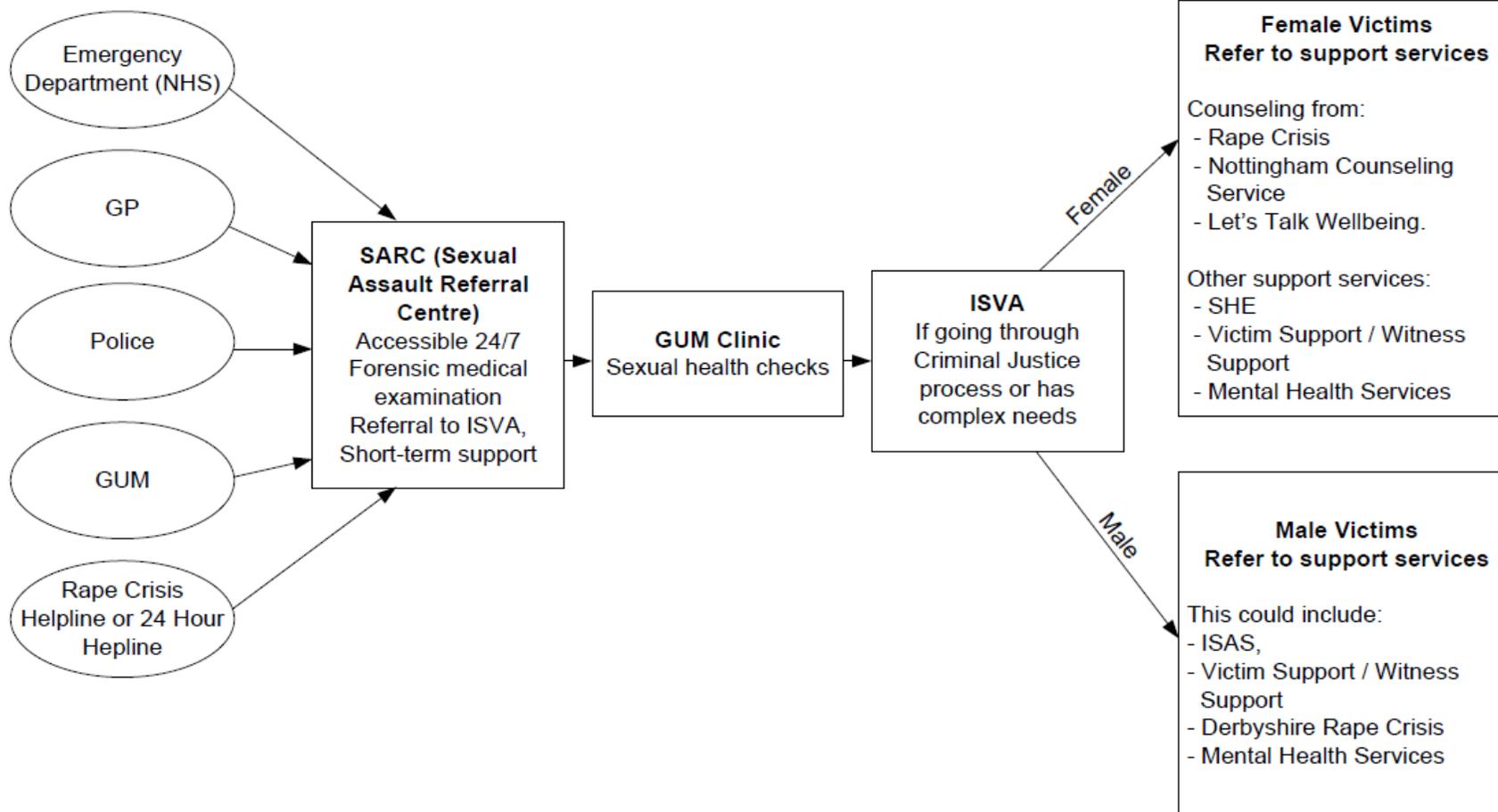
SHE
Survivors Helping Each Other
Self help groups, creative therapies, befriending for women
Newark, Mansfield, Bassetlaw

Victim Support

Volunteers trained to support victims of sexual abuse, both long and short-term. Also specialist Witness Support Service.

Appendix 2

Recent Sexual Abuse - Pathway of Services in Nottinghamshire



Historical Sexual Abuse - Pathway of Services in Nottinghamshire

First Point of Contact

GP

Self referral to any support services / 24 Hour Helpline

Police

Domestic abuse charities (if historical abuse disclosed)

Referral to services is dependent on the current needs of the client

Whether pursuing Criminal Justice, counseling, self-help, ongoing support services

If the victim is pursuing the Criminal Justice route →

Mental health services

ISAS

Rape Crisis

SHE

Victim Support

SARC (Sexual Assault Referral Centre)
Referral to ISVA if going through criminal justice system, Short-term support.
For male and female victims.

→

ISVA
If going through Criminal Justice process or has complex needs.
For male and female victims.

