

Strong and safe communities: Effective interventions for adult victim/survivors of sexual violence

Researcher forum
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Project links

- MWA leading research in partnership with Ministry of Justice, New Zealand Police
- Accident Compensation Corporation, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs, Te Puni Kōkiri
- Taskforce for Action on Sexual Violence (TASV)
- National Network – Ending Sexual Violence Together, National Collective of Rape Crisis

Objectives

- Generate a research evidence base that will:
 - identify ways of improving the safety and longer term well-being of adult victims of sexual violence
 - provide a strong evidence base for policy and operational responses

Definitions

- Adult = 16+ at time of offence
- Childhood sexual abuse outside scope
- Sexual violence = sexual violation
 - Rape and unlawful sexual connection (*s 128, Crimes Act 1961*)

Parameters

- Explore victim/survivors' needs and system responses at different stages
 - Crisis
 - Longer-term / follow up

Support sources

- Formal
 - Medical
 - Justice and allied
 - Emotional support
 - Advocacy
 - Religious organisations
- Informal
 - Family / whānau / friends

Diversity perspective

- Women
- Young
- NZ European
- Māori
- Pacific
- Disability
- Rural
- Men
- Ethnic, migrant, refugee (EMR)
- Others: GLBTI, elderly, sex workers
- Ethnicity, disability, sexuality – self-defined demographic data
- Intersections across diverse groups
- Māori - impact on wider whānau?
- How to include hard to access groups
- Diversity of Pacific and EMR
- Capture the impact of location

Project framework

- Gendered perspective <http://www.mwa.govt.nz/gender-analysis>
- Human rights perspective
- Other perspectives?
 - Cultural
 - Same-sex
 - Male victims

Requirements

- National focus
- Research useful for policy purposes: provide an evidence base for policy development in justice and social sector agencies

- Researchers required to offer conclusions based on findings not recommendations or policy advice
- MWA will formulate policy options based on research evidence
- Police vetting, confidentiality agreements
- May be evaluated by external ethics committee
- Deliverable dates for draft and final reports staged across 2008
- Two stage peer review
 - Advisory Group
 - International expert

Why collaboration?

- Collaboration to form research teams:
 - Expertise in sexual violence / violence against women
 - Diversity – address comparable issues using appropriate methods
 - Networks for hard to access groups
 - Multi-disciplinary / multi-sectoral focus
 - Mixed methods
- Conversations across work streams
 - Work streams linked
 - Desirable to have some comparability, consistent language
- MWA has links to some networks that want to participate. Will provide contact details to contractors

Key Dates

Work streams

- Pathways from crisis to recovery
- Key informants and service providers
- Attrition of sexual violation charges
- Literature review of best practice and challenges in service delivery
- \$300,000 across four work streams

Key research questions

- Key points at which and reasons why different groups of victim/survivors opt in and out of the criminal justice system
- Basis for victim/survivors' decisions about accessing non-criminal justice services
- Key points at which government and non-government intervention and support is most effective

1. Pathways from crisis to recovery

- Individuals' journeys to recovery, particularly factors influencing which support sources they engage with

- Formal and informal support sources
- Types of solutions sought
- Victim/survivors' views on whether their needs were met by different support sources
- What promotes recovery and resilience
- Factors inhibiting or promoting engagement with the criminal justice system
- Victims across New Zealand who have
 - Reported to Police
 - Been through different stages of the criminal justice process
 - Used other formal systems, but not Police
 - Used informal and formal support
- Victims with 'live' cases excluded
- Ethical / safe ways of engaging victims who do not access formal services?
- Methodological and related issues
 - Participant safety and well-being
 - Addressing comparable issues across diverse groups using appropriate methods
 - Survey
 - Interviews e.g. intellectual disability, Māori, Pacific, some migrants
 - Accounting for cultural differences in perspectives / ways of talking about SV
 - Impact of location
- Methodological and related issues
 - Sample size / sub-samples
 - Quota for Māori?
 - Sampling / recruiting methods
 - Debriefing / follow-up
 - Acknowledging interviewees' participation
 - Working with SV and other services
 - What is in and out of scope?
 - Timeline?

2. Survey of key informants and service providers

- Focus on the way that systemic factors influence victim/survivors' decisions and recovery
- Two components
- National survey of key informants and service providers
- Case studies in three areas, including interviews with victim/survivors

2.1 *National survey*

- Medical, legal, emotional and other support needs
- Capacity to meet needs
- Systemic / organisational issues for different sectors e.g.
 - Recovery and resilience (SV services)
 - Attrition (criminal justice system)

- Formal systems
 - Medical e.g. DSAC, Emergency Departments, GPs, Family Planning
 - Justice and allied e.g. Police, Prosecutors, Judges
 - Emotional / mental health e.g. counsellors (ACC and others), student services, psychiatrists
- Formal services, non-government
 - Specialist SV services e.g. Rape Crisis, Wellington HELP, Male Survivors of Sexual Abuse Trust
 - Non-specialist victim services e.g. Refuge, Shakti, Pacific Island Safety and Prevention Project, Victim Support
 - Non-victim services e.g. Refugees as Survivors, Age Concern, IDEA Services
- Key informants
 - Advocacy / umbrella groups e.g. Prostitutes' Collective, Disabled Persons Assembly, NNEST, National Network of Stopping Violence Services
 - Non-mainstream services e.g. Outline
 - Religious leaders
 - Community leaders
 - Community workers
- A way of gathering information on groups that are hard to reach or not talking about SV?
- National survey
 - North and South Island coverage
 - Focus on organisations / informants that respond to victims or have special insight into issues for their members
- Methodology and related issues
 - Comparability across sample plus tailored questions for different sectors
 - Mixed methods: mail, telephone, internet, interview?
 - Will advise on engagement with criminal justice personnel
 - Quantitative analysis desirable
- Timeline?

2.2 Case studies

- Three geographically and socially distinct areas
 - urban, rural, ethnically diverse, Māori, Pākehā, student population, different levels of victim services
- Impact of systemic factors on reporting / non-reporting and attrition
- Not a comparative analysis
- Interviews with victim / survivors, SV services, other services (e.g. DSAC, student services)
- Link results with survey of criminal justice personnel
- Possibility of gauging attrition prior to reporting e.g. through SV services' client statistics?

3. Attrition study

- Retrospective analysis of a national sample of recorded sexual violation offences against adults
- Around 1,700 offences recorded by Police between July 2005 and December 2007
- Will provide a baseline for future attrition analyses
- MWA and Police have selected victim, offender, offence, investigation and outcome variables
- Attrition rates at successive stages of the criminal justice process
- Conviction rate
- Correlates and / or predictors of outcomes
- Outcomes for diverse population groups
- Compare results for Police Districts against national results
- NZ Police will extract and code the data
- Data will be supplied in an Excel spreadsheet – timing to be confirmed
- Definitions of all terms and coding schedule will be supplied
- Will need some familiarity with previous attrition studies – importance of variables, etc.

4. Literature review

- Range of systems involved in effectively responding to victim/survivors' needs over time
 - Medical
 - Justice / allied
 - Support /advocacy
 - Crisis
 - Longer-term
- What does the international and NZ literature say about:
 - How these systems could / should work together?
- What does best practice mean?
 - In a crisis situation
 - A longer-term response
- Evaluations of initiatives e.g. multi-agency centres
- What best practice guidelines exist in NZ?
- Guidelines for Māori, Pacific, people with disabilities?
- Challenges to implementing best practice in NZ, particularly for diverse population groups
- Timeframe?