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Llywodraeth Cymru
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Welsh Government
Consultation – summary of response

National Strategy on Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence

A framework for delivery 2016 - 2021

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Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is also available in Welsh.

National Strategy on Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence

A Framework for Delivery 2016 - 2021

Consultation – summary of responses

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A summary of responses to the ‘National Strategy on Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence’

1. Introduction

- 1.1 On 15 August 2016 a consultation was launched entitled ‘National Strategy on Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence - A framework for delivery 2016 - 2021’. The consultation ended on 10 October 2016.
- 1.2 The Welsh Government proposes the adoption of the principles in this Strategy which outline the ways Welsh Ministers propose to tackle violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence and to move to a society where everybody can live fear free. The principles provide strong strategic direction which promotes consistency and best practice in the way in which these issues are tackled across Wales, focusing on preventive, protective and supportive mechanisms.
- 1.3 It fulfills the requirement as set out in section 3 of the Domestic Abuse, Violence against Women and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015.
- 1.4 In addition to the written consultation, direct consultation took place with service users across Wales to hear their views on the National Strategy and incorporate their ideas and feedback into the final version.
- 1.5 Three engagement events were held in Llandrindod Wells, Llandudno Junction and Cardiff which were all very well attended and participants were very engaged in providing feedback on the Strategy in order to inform the final document.
- 1.6 In addition a specific event was held with members of the VAWDASV Advisory Group – 4 members attended representing Welsh Women’s Aid, New Pathways, Wales Probation and WLGA. The National Adviser also attended. The Head of VAWDA attended the Violence Against Women Action Group to hear their feedback during the consultation period – the feedback from this group centred on the lack of detail within the Strategy and an offer to provide a Task and Finish Group was made which was accepted in relation to development of the detailed Delivery Framework which will be published at a later date.

2. Consultation Events

- 2.1 A total of 92 people attended three events across Wales.
- 2.2 In total 75 responses were received for this consultation. The responses represented organisation groups as follows:

Local Authority	18
Government Agency / Other Public Sector	11
Third Sector	25
Professional Body	6
Other Interest Group	7
Individual	7

3. Feedback from Consultation Events

3.1 Notes from the events have been summarised below:

- **Prevention**

Raising Awareness – one of the key issues raised around prevention was that all agreed that raising awareness was a key priority in terms of early intervention but in raising awareness there is the inevitable outcome that there will (in the short to medium term) be an increase in referrals to VAWDASV services and this needs to be managed within limited budgets. The key theme throughout is therefore consideration of sustainable funding with a more coherent clear approach to how services work together.

Education – it was noted across all events that the Act doesn't place a duty on schools specifically, it is a key objective and attendees were concerned about long term sustainability as this is an effective way to make an impact.

The focus of the strategy appears to centre on public sector even though attitudes in the community need changing. Need to focus on changing attitudes – remove the stigma.

Perpetrators - Guidance is very welcome. There were conflicting views on the terminology of holding perpetrators to account. A number of questions were raised including; is holding to account more an objective for the Criminal Justice System? Should Social Services be included under Perpetrators as a shared responsibility?

- **Protection**

Attendees felt that there is the need for an “All Wales” integrated referral pathway. Too many different systems lead to confusion and disparity in local areas. To be more sustainable having a clear pathway was regarded as essential along with early information sharing.

All acknowledge the National Training Framework is a positive step forward but taking into account the issue of raising awareness and the

impact on services has it been introduced too quickly and are the expectations too high? Training and a 'go to' person were the two most important aspects to a person experiencing VAWDASV.

A number of people commented that MARAC should be compulsory for all agencies and actions need to be followed up.

- **Support**

Lack of services/funding for services so can't meet the demand. Long term funding needed. Need more guidance on how regional funding will work. Comments were raised that consortium working could be a resolution longer term as larger organisations support the smaller ones – but not a perfect solution whereas others questioned the rationale behind a joint LHB/LA Strategy particularly if different services means different pathways – goes back to is there a need for an "All Wales Referral Pathway" as noted above.

Issues were highlighted around Perpetrator funding – and where funding will come from.

Issues around the geography of rural areas provide barriers in terms of accessing services.

- **Protected characteristics**

Attendees felt that transgender/protected characteristics needed to be treated equally.

There are some areas missing which would fall under the umbrella of 'equality' type issues. Would it be better to have an Equality section as opposed to specifically naming them? For example – disability isn't listed.

A need for equal access to services – needs to better reflect diversity.

- **Welsh language**

Welsh Language standards are important and need to be adhered to across the sector. Comments were made that this can have an impact on availability of training.

- **Other comments**

A need to ensure that the links to other Acts (Social Services and Wellbeing and Future Generation Acts) are clear.

The underpinning objectives and Welsh Government objectives are inconsistent. Some are very specific and some aren't.

Anti-slavery should be covered/included more broadly in the Strategy.

4. Summary of Responses to Specific Consultation Questions

4.1 Most respondents to the consultation welcomed the proposed National Strategy.

Question 1 - Do you agree with the priorities under prevention? Do you have any further suggestions? Please include any evidence (data, research or anecdotal).

- **Objective 1:** Increase awareness of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence across the Welsh Population
- **Objective 2:** Enhance education about healthy relationships and gender equality
- **Objective 3:** Challenge perpetrators, hold them accountable for their actions and provide interventions and support to change their behaviour

Most of the respondents agreed with the priorities under prevention.

Objective 1

Some respondents requested the title “Increase awareness” should be replaced by “Increase awareness and change attitudes”.

A number of respondents felt the Strategy should raise awareness on a national level.

Several respondents highlighted the need to further raise awareness of and introduce measures at all levels to address child sexual exploitation and abuse in all its forms.

Many respondents express that awareness raising campaigns should be more meaningful and conducted throughout the year with more emphasis on targeted campaigns including better use of social media to access a wider range of people and age groups.

Objective 2

Many respondents are fully supportive of this objective.

A couple of respondents expressed a need for compulsory school nurses in schools to educate young people about health and relationships and to learn about the importance of respect and consent.

A number of respondents raised the issue of the need to ensure requirements link in with Estyn reviews to encourage schools to raise the profile of the issues surrounding Healthy Relationships.

Some respondents felt that an emphasis should be placed on a holistic approach to enhancing education about healthy relationships and gender equality.

Objective 3

Most respondents were pleased to see the Strategy challenging perpetrators. Several respondents expressed caution in expanding the use of perpetrator programmes, particularly in respect of high risk cases and especially where much of the current and previous evidence respectively still shows mixed success.

Respondents felt that thought needed to be given to work with female perpetrators.

Consideration should be given to high-quality and evidence based perpetrator programmes that can be consistently offered and delivered across Wales.

Question 2 - Do you agree with the priorities under protection? Do you have any further suggestions?

- **Objective 4:** Ensure professionals are trained to provide effective, timely and appropriate responses to victims and survivors

Many respondents welcomed the intentions of objective 4.

They identified a need to ensure that frontline staff have the requisite tools and expertise to identify victims of sexual exploitation and trafficking.

Respondents noted that it is important not to identify victims and survivors as one homogenous group with similar needs.

The strategy needs to outline what it means by an integrated referral pathway and the stakeholders that form a fundamental part of an integrated referral pathway.

Respondents welcomed the proposal to develop a national survivor engagement framework but it needs to make clear how the views of children and young people experiencing domestic abuse will be heard and responded to.

Question 3 - Do you agree with the priorities under support? Do you have any further suggestions?

- **Objective 5:** Provide victims with equal access to appropriately resourced high quality, needs led, strength based, gender responsive services across Wales
- **Objective 6:** Work together as a sector to understand and meet the needs of our communities, increasing the sustainability and capacity of the sector

Objective 5

Respondents considered that a consistent and responsive service must be offered to clients in rural areas to ensure that issues of often extreme isolation do not prevent individuals from accessing the specialist support that they require.

As part of the model it is important that support services are needs-led, survivor centred and adhere to national accreditation and quality frameworks.

Objective 6

Responses were as follows:

More sustainable funding, planned over longer periods of time will allow projects, and organisations, to feel secure in the future and plan to work more collaboratively over longer time periods.

The National Strategy needs to impose clear and appropriate duties on the Public Sector to fully involve the specialist voluntary sector in Wales in the planning and implementation of local/regional strategies.

A monitoring service needs to be introduced to oversee the strategy's introduction into services to ensure commitment from all services.

The strategy needs to explicitly outline a commitment to address the provision of children and young people's specialist support and that it includes a commitment for national and local recognition of the role and value of specialist children and young people's services including within any model for sustainable funding of the specialist services that is developed.

To provide the best possible support to victims and survivors, co-location should be promoted where appropriate with multi-agency teams and integrated planning.

Question 4 - Do you think the priorities will have a positive / negative impact on protected characteristics? If so, which and why/why not? Are there further opportunities not covered by the priorities to promote equality?

Specific comments are listed below:

- A need to create a greater awareness of domestic abuse in all communities.
- To create a greater awareness of domestic abuse in protected characteristic relationships.
- Increase awareness of Human Trafficking in all communities.

- Need to move perception away from the “traditional” view of domestic abuse.

Question 5 - What opportunities does this strategy give to promote the use of the Welsh Language? Do you have concerns that this strategy could have an adverse effect on opportunities to use the Welsh language?

Specific comments are listed below:

- Consensus that the Welsh language should have an equal stance to English.
- The use of the Welsh language should be maximised in areas as needed.
- Local Authorities & Local Health Boards should have their own strategy to implement the use of the Welsh language.
- Concern over the cost of delivering services in Welsh.

Question 6 - We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them.

Specific comments are listed below:

- Men are not considered equally in the strategy.
- Strategy lacks clarity, detail.
- Funding is a challenge.
- Increase in demand as victims identified but no increase in service provision as a result.
- Need to see the delivery plan.
- Concerns raised that the definition of VAWDA&SV used in the strategy does not align with internationally recognised definitions.

5. Next Steps

5.1 The Welsh Government would like to thank respondents for their comments and ideas. We are currently considering the responses from this consultation and they will be used to further refine and develop the National Strategy for publication on the 4 November 2016.

6. List of responses

Responses were received from the following organisations and individuals:

Name

Looked After Children
Conwy County Council - children and families
Precious O'Driscoll
Richard Ebley
Flying Start
Victim Support
Older People's Commissioner for Wales
Cardiff Flying Start
Gwynedd and Anglesey Community Safety Partnership
South Wales Fire and Rescue Service
All-Wales DAC group
AoLE Health and Well-being, Welsh Government
Cwm Taf Regional
Wales Citizens Advice
Four Welsh Police Forces
Cyfannol Women's Aid
The Survivors Trust
The Royal College of Midwives
Neath Port Talbot Older Persons' Council.
Cardiff & Vale University Health Board
South East Wales Consortium: Education Safeguarding Group
Torfaen CBC
New Pathways
YOT Managers Cymru
The Free from Fear Partnership C/O Charter Housing
Welsh Women's Aid
Wales Violence against Women Action Group
Public Health Wales
School of Social Sciences, Cardiff University
City of Cardiff Council
Cardiff and Vale SARC
Domestic Abuse Housing Related Support Modernisation Group
WLGA
Betsi Cadwaladr University Local Health Board
CARE (Christian Action Research and Education)
National Federation of Women's Institutes-Wales
White Ribbon Campaign UK
Llamau Service User Response
CAHA WOMEN'S AID Clwyd Alyn Housing Association
Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council
Royal College of Nursing Wales
Police and Crime Commissioner for North Wales
Community Housing Cymru

Conwy & Denbighshire CSP
City & County of Swansea
Cymorth Cymru
Safeguarding Children
Hywel Dda University Health Board
Stonewall Cymru
Women's Equality Party Cardiff Branch
South Wales Police and South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner
Regional VAWDASV Team Gwent
Swansea Women's Aid
NSPCC Cymru/ Wales
Both Parents Matter Cymru
Safer Wales
Age Cymru
Llamau
BAWSO
NPT Homes
Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service
Aneurin Bevan University Health Board
University of South Wales
HMCTS Wales, Head of Crime, HM Courts and Tribunals Service
Rape & Sexual Abuse Support Centre north Wales
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gwent
Family Action
Soroptimist International Anglesey
North Wales Fire and Rescue Service
ABM University Health Board
NOMS in Wales