

## West Midlands Sexual Assault and Abuse Needs Assessment for Black and Minoritised Communities - Specification

Service	West Midlands Sexual Assault and Abuse Needs Assessment for Black and Minoritised Communities - Specification
Commissioning Lead	Alethea Fuller
Period	Completion before 31 <sup>st</sup> May 2024 ( <i>final report(s) deliverable by 31<sup>st</sup> May 2024</i> )
Value of Research	Maximum bid value: £30,000

The Office of the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner is seeking a research partner to conduct a whole system Sexual Assault and Abuse (SAA) Needs Assessment for Black and Minoritised Communities in the West Midlands to support multi-agency partners in the region improve their pathways, provision and strategic and tactical responses to sexual assault and abuse as laid out in the [West Midlands Sexual Assault and Abuse \(SAA\) Strategy 2020-2023](#) and the [NHSE Strategic Direction for Sexual Assault and Abuse Services 2018-2023](#).

The project will require gathering and analysis of quantitative and qualitative information from a variety of sources through both statutory and non-statutory agencies but will prioritise hearing the voices of black and minoritised individuals, groups and communities in the West Midlands and locally in the seven local areas of Walsall, Wolverhampton, Sandwell, Dudley, Birmingham, Solihull and Coventry.

The aim of the research is to identify and recognise inequalities persisting for Black and minoritised individuals and communities in local areas in the West Midlands. Participatory action through partnership work will then be agreed through the key strategic governance forums based on the research findings/recommendations.

Other key partners include criminal justice agencies such as West Midlands Police, CPS and Probation, Health, Local Authority and specialist Sexual Assault and Abuse (SAA) partners. This needs assessment should use the West Midlands definition of SAA and also ensure that it focuses on the needs of children and adults separately.

Sexual Assault and Abuse (SAA) is a form of exploitation:

### West Midlands Definition of Exploitation:

*'An individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child, young person (under the age of 18), or adult and exploits them a) through violence or the threat of violence, and/or b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or c) in exchange\* for something the victim*

*needs or wants. The victim may have been exploited even if the activity appears consensual. Exploitation does not always involve physical contact, it can also occur through the use of technology.'*

*\*There is recognition that using the word "exchange" is problematic due to its lack of representation of grooming and this definition is under review.*

**West Midlands Definition of Sexual Assault and Abuse (Sexual Violence):**

*'Sexual violence' and/or 'sexual abuse' can both be defined as any behaviour perceived to be of sexual nature that takes place without consent or without understanding. It encompasses a broad range of activities, physical, visual and verbal, that are: of a sexual nature; take place without consent or without understanding; are experienced, at the time or later, as a threat, invasion or assault and that take away the ability to control intimate contact. Whilst sexual violence has been recognised as a cause and a consequence of gender inequality disproportionately affecting women and girls, we recognise there are heterosexual male victims, and victims within the LGBTQ+ community.'*

Whilst not exhaustive, below demonstrates key focuses for applicants on particular areas of interest to the needs assessment:

- Local analysis of need and provision – in order to better identify and address under-representation of Black and minoritised individuals in local areas.
- Geographical location and accessibility of services.
- Presentation of disclosure/discovery of SAA in services.
- Local barriers to equal and equitable access.
- Gaps in provision or accessibility.
- Survivor voice and diversity of survivor experience.
- Provision of feedback into the system from service users.
- Mainstream, specialist and "by and for" service provision and pathways.
- Improving health and reducing inequalities across local areas.
- Cultural competence and confidence of statutory partners.
- Intersectional practice.
- Commissioning landscape.
- Racialised forms of sexual assault and abuse.
- Examples of good and bad practice.
- Future recommendation for improvements.

Please also note the [Funding Opportunities Essential Criteria - West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner \(westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk\)](https://westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk) when applying.

In addition, within the bid there is a mandatory requirement for remuneration for victim-survivor consultation input.

If you are interested in working with the Office of the West Midlands Police and Crime Commissioner to conduct this problem profile, then please submit a proposal to Jennifer Alder - [jennifer.alder@westmidlands.police.uk](mailto:jennifer.alder@westmidlands.police.uk) by **9am Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024**.

Evaluations will take place throughout the W/C 19<sup>th</sup>, and it is anticipated that outcomes will be communicated before 26<sup>th</sup> February 2024.

This project is funded through NHS England to support the continued development of whole systems pathways for survivors of sexual assault and abuse across the West Midlands Police Force area footprint. Any parties interested in delivering this research on behalf of the OPCC



must be able to work closely and at pace with the OPCC Policy team and wider Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) partnership to produce a final product before 31<sup>st</sup> May 2024.