

West Midlands Sexual Assault and Abuse Mental Health Needs Assessment Specification

Service	West Midlands Sexual Assault and Abuse Mental Health Needs Assessment Specification
Commissioning Lead	Alethea Fuller
Period	Completion before 31 st May 2024 (<i>final report(s) deliverable by 31st May 2024</i>)
Value of Research	Maximum bid value: £54,000.00

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) Mental Health Needs Assessment 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 both statutory and non-statutory agencies including 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 perhaps not exhaustive, particular areas of interest include:

- Impacts of SAA (trauma and medical models).
- Presentation of disclosure/discovery of SAA in statutory health pathways.
- Pathway to specialist support both statutory health and other.
- Commissioning landscape.
- Timescales on referral to support for individuals.
- Waiting lists – current and historic data.
- Geographical location and accessibility of services.
- Specialist pathways/services.
- National recommendations around provision of mental health support for victim-survivors.
- The use of routine enquiry in health settings – maternity, sexual health and substance services.
- Complex pathways of support.
- Length of support need for service users.
- Provision of feedback into the system from service users.
- Examples of good and bad practice.
- Impact on mental health pathways from implementation of [Right Care, Right Person](#) model.
- Future recommendation for improvements.

Please also note the [Funding Opportunities Essential Criteria - West Midlands Police & Crime Commissioner \(westmidlands-pcc.gov.uk\)](#) 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 an expression of interest to Jennifer Alder - jennifer.alder@westmidlands.police.uk by **9am on Monday 19th February 2024**.

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

This project is funded through NHS England and NHS Improvement 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 31st May 2024.