

**WE LISTEN
WE BELIEVE
WE SUPPORT**

**NOTTS
SVS
SERVICES**

**LISTEN
BELIEVE
SUPPORT**

If you're aged 15+ and have experienced rape, sexual violence or childhood sexual abuse
either recently or in the past then we are here to help you

About Notts SVS Services

We are not part of the police, NHS or any other public
service. We are a Registered Independent Charity that has
been supporting survivors of sexual violence for over 30
years in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

You are not alone

We are here to listen to you and
support you. We won't judge you
and most importantly we will
believe you

Nottinghamshire Sexual Violence Support Services

ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

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As Trustees of Notts SVSS we have ultimate responsibility for managing and governing the charity and making strategic decisions about its policies and objectives. Responsibility for the operational running of the organisation is held by the Chief Executive Officer.

Writing this introduction to our annual report gives me an opportunity both to look back on Notts SVSS' activities and finances over the last financial year as well as forward to what is coming up next.

This year we have experienced continued, ongoing uncertainty around accommodation for our services. There is no quick-fix for this but we are reassured that our commissioners will support us, should a move be needed. We have also seen an increase in waiting lists across our counselling/therapy and our ISVA services, which is caused by multiple factors and demonstrates the very real need for services such as ours. We have, like many other organisations, also faced financial constraints as we try to balance the increased cost of delivering services and paying fair wages to staff against a difficult economic background.

Despite these challenges, I am pleased to say that we have had a successful year overall. Achievements include:

- Continued recruitment of excellent trustees from a wide range of backgrounds. We now have a more diverse and very active Board and had our first successful Board away day this year.
- Balancing the books - despite overspending on working to reduce the waiting list and paying staff a cost-of-living award, we have kept within the Charity Commission guidance on reserves
- Being able to award a £1,925 cost-of-living to all staff, with a contribution towards this made by the Nottinghamshire Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
- Meeting all our contractual commitments in terms of service delivery
- Renewing the EMCYPSAS (Paediatric SARC) contract with an increase to contribute to inflation costs

In the next year, some of the focusses for Notts SVSS include:

- Staff satisfaction survey. We will be looking at feedback from this because we value our staff and their opinions matter
- Developing ideas to bring down the waiting list for counselling, which will include continuing the successful Waiting List Service
- Applying to the Peer Support Lottery Bid
- Building on contacts made with PilotLight, a charity where business experts give their time free of charge to provide mentoring and bespoke training to charities
- Prioritising service-user involvement – via a subgroup with our Engagement Officer and two trustees
- Renewal of the ASA Hub & Waiting List Contract
- Applying for the new ISVA Tender
- Looking for additional, alternative sources of funding

I would like to say thank you for all our Trustees, who like myself are all volunteers committed to supporting the work of Notts SVSS. Thanks also go to our Chief Executive Officer Novlet Holness and the Senior Management Team, and all our employees, including our frontline counsellors and therapists, ISVAs and support workers, crisis workers, hub and helpline staff and back-office staff including administrators and those working in data and monitoring, campaigns, engagement and media. There would be no organisation without all of you.

Would like to thank all our funders: including the Nottinghamshire Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Nottingham City Council, Integrated Care Board, Nottinghamshire County Council, Nottingham University Hospital NHS Trust, we very much appreciated all the support. Special thanks are extended to Nicola Wade, Jane Lewis and Louise Graham.

Lastly and most importantly I would like to thank our clients for trusting us to support you through an intensely personal and traumatic time in your lives. We are in awe of your bravery, determination and strength.

Shane Morgan

Co-Chair

Notts SVSS

MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

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This last year has been a challenging one for survivors of sexual violence and the organisations and those close to them who are supporting them.

Whilst society has outwardly moved on from Covid-19 and the direct impact that it had, other related issues have continued or quickly followed. These include the high cost of living, businesses failing, a mental health crisis and wider general turmoil. Services we work with have also continued to be impacted, with those seeking justice being faced by massive delays through the criminal justice system, particularly at Crown Court.

At the same time the high incidence of rape and sexual violence continues. Between July 2022 – June 2023 police recorded 68,109 rapes.¹ But we know that around 5 in 6 women and 4 in 5 men don't report their experiences to the police.² According to Rape Crisis England and Wales 1 in 4 women have been raped or sexually assaulted as an adult, while 1 in 6 children have been sexually abused.³ Research by Mankind found that at least 1 in 6 males have been sexually abused or assaulted,⁴ while a report by Survivor's UK found that nearly half of gay and bisexual men have experienced sexual assault.⁵

Throughout 2022-2023 and against this uneasy social backdrop, we have continued to provide our vital service to survivors of sexual violence. Referrals into our service remain high, with large numbers requiring long-term counselling over short-term options. Many survivors coming to us for support are also experiencing traumatic side-effects such as PTSD. Many experience suicidal thoughts or have attempted suicide. Other impacts include family and relationship breakdown, homelessness and pregnancy/termination as a result of rape. The impacts of sexual violence are desperate and far ranging.

It is not surprising that we have seen an increase in waiting times across all our services. With the support of commissioners, we have put in extra steps to mitigate against some of this. Our waiting list initiative, run by the Hub, includes check-ins, access to mindfulness and group creating safety courses. These interventions have been readily taken and have helped survivors learn how to self-regulate, putting them in a better place to start counselling when it is offered.

The specialist mental health nurse seconded to our service has also worked with survivors to help keep them well while on the waiting list, improving outcomes for recovery. Clients coming to the end of counselling are now asked if they would like to then attend our Beyond Survival group therapy course. This helps people with this commonality to learn that they are not alone in their experiences, building trust, readying them for life away from the service.

This year the Asa Hub and Counselling/Therapy services were accredited by Lime Culture with the Male Quality Standards for support for male survivors of sexual violence. Our ISVA Service is Lime Culture accredited while the whole of Notts SVSS has the Rape Crisis England and Wales National Service Standards kite mark. We are one of very few organisations across the UK to hold all three accreditations, which assures survivors of all genders that they will receive quality assured and safe support which meets their specific needs.

Our Independent Sexual Violence Adviser (ISVA) Service and Survivor's Support Service has continues to be in demand across the city and county. We now have ISVAs based within several police stations and at the Topaz Centre/Sexual Assault Referral Centre.

Many survivors are experiencing adjournments in their court cases, due to staffing and delays at court, and are left feeling like their lives have been put on hold. Our ISVAs are extremely tenacious, supporting survivors with issues that impact their lives, around housing, employment, benefits and wellbeing so that survivors can continue to give best evidence at trial. During the last year, one survivor decided to withdraw from the criminal justice process, which is very much against the UK-wide trend.

At the East Midlands Children and Young People Sexual Assault Service (EMCYPSAS) our Crisis Support Worker team have been very busy supporting examinations and managing the 24/7 helpline. Our Therapeutic Support Worker has also continued to provide support to young people aged 13-17 referred into the service. In this last year the building of a Video Recording Suite at the EMCYPSAS has been completed, which means that young people can give their recorded evidence in a comfortable space away from the police station. All paediatric SARCs are working towards accreditation and I am proud of the work that has been done by our staff in respect of this. We continue to receive positive feedback about our crisis worker team from young people, their families and professionals at the service.

I must also mention our team of back-office staff who work on administration, campaigns, data, office logistics, management, engagement, human resources and so on. They are often unseen but are essential and vital to the success of our services.

While we continue campaigning both as an organisation and joined up with the Consent Coalition we remain proud members of Rape Crisis England and Wales. It is vital that we use our voice, with and alongside others to help disable the myths and assumptions that allow sexual violence to happen.

We know that some areas of the country have very little provision. In Nottingham/Nottinghamshire, we are very fortunate to have commissioners who are aware of the needs of survivors and are willing to put in place long-term funding provision that gives us the stability to meet those needs. I would sincerely like to thank our all our commissioners, stakeholders, funders and donors as they continue to support and fund our services. Your continued understanding of the issues faced by survivors and adaptability to meet their changing needs means that long-term recovery is possible.

I would like to thank our Board of Trustees who voluntarily and thoughtfully devote their time, energy and expertise to support the service and my role as Chief Executive Officer. The board has grown significantly over the last year and we have all felt supported by your engagement with the organisation.

My thanks go to all staff, frontline and back office. Some staff have been here for many years, while others have joined us during and after the pandemic. I am in awe of your dedication, professionalism, adaptability and ability in supporting our survivors and each other.

At the heart of all our work though are the survivors. You drive everything we do and we will always do our best to support you in your decisions and to regain power and control of your lives.

Novlet Holness

Chief Executive Officer

1,2,3: Rape Crisis England and Wales <https://rapecrisis.org.uk/get-informed/statistics-sexual-violence/>

4: Mankind <https://www.1in6.uk/unwanted-sexual-experiences/the-1-in-6-statistic/>

5: Survivors UK https://www.survivorsuk.org/press_media/new-report-into-gay-and-bisexual-mens-experience-of-sexual-violence-published-by-survivorsuk/

- Notts SVSS continued to be commissioned by The Police and Crime Commissioner for Nottinghamshire to deliver Asa Sexual Violence and Abuse Hub Support and Specialist Therapy for adults in Nottinghamshire. The funding secured has enabled Notts SVSS to continue with the provision of all our hub and therapy services raising our profile.
- We have achieved the Lime Culture Accredited Male Quality Standards for our Asa Hub and Counselling/Therapy Services, assuring male survivors on the quality of services we offer to them.
- We have set up a Waiting List Initiative to support those on the waiting list for counselling/therapy. This includes check-ins, mindfulness and Creating Safety groups and enables them to get the most from the counselling/therapy that follows.
- Notts SVSS have continued to be subcontracted by Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust to provide 24/7 hub and crisis support services at the East Midlands Children and Young People's Sexual Assault Service.
- Notts SVSS have continued to deliver an Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) Service and Survivors Support Service (for adult survivors of institutional Childhood Sexual Abuse) as commissioned by The Police and Crime Commissioner for Nottinghamshire.
- Notts SVSS have been working with a full-time Mental Health Nurse seconded to us via Nottinghamshire NHS Trust. This person has worked to embed ethical and holistic mental health care that is risk managed & signposted to the appropriate services
- We have fully embedded a hybrid system of work and delivery. This means that we are able to offer clients their choice of in-person or online face-to-face support for counselling.
- We have researched assistive/accessibility technology for our website to remove barriers to people finding out more about our service. Recite -Me was added to the website at the very end of this year. It includes facilities like text-to-speech, and computer translation, and gives options for font, text size and colour adaptation.
- Networking with partners has resulted in improved awareness and referral pathways and has strengthened joint working activity with other agencies, including probation and prison services and organisations working with the homeless and vulnerably housed.
- Notts SVSS continues to be heavily involved with the development of campaigns and messaging around consent through our partnership work with the Consent Coalition. This year we lead the translation work on the *Your Journey* guide into five additional languages. We also worked in the core group on the development of the Night-Time A-Z of Consent.

WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

8

Notts SVS Services originally started as a self-help group run by women who were angry at the incidents of rape within the county, the way female victims were treated and the images and myths that were attached to rape. The group ran on insecure funding and the determination of women involved becoming the charity Nottinghamshire Rape Crisis Centre.

Today, Notts SVSS is a specialist service providing support to all survivors (aged 18+) of sexual violence and abuse living in Nottingham/shire. We can support people whether the abuse occurred recently or in the past. We are open 7 days a week, including weekday evenings and our services are free-of-charge. This means that we are able to support survivors in the way they need and at a time that is right for them. Our services include:

- Helpline/Hub
- Drop-in
- Counselling
- Therapeutic Support (including Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and Eye Movement Desensitisation Reprocessing)
- ISVA Service (Support through the criminal justice system)
- Support for Survivors of Institutional Child Sexual Abuse

We are able to offer survivors their choice of a male or female counsellor and we are unique in that we offer support to women in our women-only space.

Our counsellors, ISVAs and support workers are highly trained professionals from varied backgrounds in terms of gender, ethnicity, age and personal experience. Our services are available to survivors of all genders and we are aware of the additional challenges faced by those who are LGBTQ+ or who are from black, Asian or minoritised ethnic groups, asylum seekers or Refugees.

We are a member of Rape Crisis England and Wales, and have completed the National Service Standards a 'benchmark for excellence' for organisations working in this area. Our ISVA Service is Lime Culture accredited and our Asa Support Services hold the Lime Culture Male Quality Standards.

“

We are members of Rape Crisis England and Wales, and have completed the National Service Standards a 'benchmark for excellence' for organisations working in this area

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Our Hub acts as a first point of contact and takes all the helpline emails, online referral forms and helpline calls made to Notts SVSS. With a staff team made up of several full-time and part-time staff, overseen by a Hub Manager, we have a wide skill set and ensure quality and continuity throughout the referral process.

A large part of the hub work involves conducting initial assessments. This helps us to carry out a risk assessment and establish the client's needs and desires. We are able to take referrals into our own services as well as provide information and onward referral to other organisations if needed.

Helpline Support

Many people phone our helpline looking for information and support. Sometimes this is done via a one-off call while others access our 'regular caller service.' Regular callers are supported via two 30-minute telephone sessions per week. This gives a space where a caller can be heard and believed, assess how they feel and explore different coping skills. Some callers will use the helpline while they access things like our Creating Safety Online Self-Help Programme or are on the waiting list for support.

Drop In

We offer a 'drop-in' service for those who are in crisis or who might need a longer, more concentrated time and space to explore what support they need and to have referrals made. Appointments last

for an hour and are made in advance so that we can have a trained therapist in place to go through any acute issues a person is experiencing.

Waiting list initiative

Demand on all our services has continued to increase, with waiting lists for counselling increasing from 14 months to 18 months. Clients fed back to us on the need to be offered support and kept informed during this time. Our 'Waiting List Initiative' helps us to check-in with clients, ensuring their details are up to date and offering access to wellbeing and group interventions. The initiative involves:

- Checking in with clients at 6 months, to find out how they are, remind them of other support, including email, drop in, telephone helpline and web site support.
- Inviting those who have been on the waiting list for 12 months to join a six week "Mindfulness course". This course is designed to help people cope with stress and anxiety by adopting mindfulness practices in everyday life.
- At 18 months we invite people near the top of the waiting list to take part in the "Creating Safety Course". This is a 6-week trauma-informed group programme which provides survivors with the skills to make the most of their time in therapy.

These programmes have been well received and we will continue offering them to survivors in the upcoming year.



6930

helpline calls



7

members of
staff



2762

Emails asking
for support



1119

referrals

“

you are wonderful, you are brilliant,
you were the first person to say "I believe you"
those three words saved my life

(client talking about a helpline worker)

”

Farzad - Case Study - Helpline Client

Farzad is an Asian man with long term physical and mental health issues. Farzad originally referred to our service for counselling. He asked to become a regular caller to our helpline, so is able to contact us twice a week for 30-minute sessions whilst he waits for his counselling to start.

Farzad originally called us to refer following a sexual assault that took place outside. As time went on, Farzad began to disclose issues with an ex-partner whom he said was now stalking or watching his property. He was advised to inform the police of this, who also discussed security with him and spoke to his ex-partner.

The ex-partner had denied any wrongdoing and accused Farzad of harassment. Farzad continued to tell the helpline of issues around this person and he was always directed to the public authorities.

Because of the level of risk involved with this client, we contacted mental health services to ensure that someone in the community was in touch with this client. We also contacted adult social services. Both these actions were taken with the client's permission and with safeguarding in mind.

Today Farzad continues to use the helpline for support and to tell us if he feels threatened by his ex-partner. We have details of the local police officer dealing with Farzad's case, social services have also visited and directed him to a local mental health group to help him with socialising.

Identifying details have been changed

Reflective Learning

The calls from Farzad were over several months and answered by different hub support workers. We are able to see interactions on our information sharing database but it was only in weekly team meetings, through discussing this client that it became more evident that there was an escalation in risk occurring in this case. Seeing this allowed the team to take action on these concerns around the client's safety, mental health, and support needs.

Whilst we had no solid evidence as to what was happening for him, we had to ensure the appropriate people in the community, such as social care and the police, were aware of his circumstances so they could visually assess his needs. The ethos of Notts SVSS is to Listen, Believe, and Support, this ethos is crucial to allow Farzad to continue to use the helpline for regular support. He has stated that he would have attempted suicide without the support of our service.

Our counselling and therapy services are provided by an experienced, dedicated team of practitioners who specialise in delivering a range of short-term and longer-term therapies to survivors of sexual violence.

Support available includes, long-term and short-term one-to-one therapy, group therapy, email support, drop-in appointments, EMDR and CBT. Our service is gender-informed with survivors being offered a choice of a male or female support worker and women offered support in our women-only space. We have a range of options to help us adapt to the needs of clients. These include:

- appointments in the daytime, evening and weekend
- support in-person, by telephone or via online counselling rooms.
- flexible appointments to fit around shifts
- accessible rooms and facilities
- access to interpreters

In addition to providing up to 50 sessions of therapy for survivors, we also offer short-term therapeutic support for family members, partners, spouses and carers of survivors.

Successes

This year the Hub and Counselling Services completed the assessment and were awarded the Lime Culture's Male Quality

Standards. While we have provided support for males for several years, recognition at this level is an achievement which will reassure male survivors that our service is inclusive, responsive and aware of their needs.

The internal recruitment of three Lead Therapist posts have ensured frontline staff have been supported in their trauma work and helped bolster our robust and dedicated therapeutic team.

The number of referrals to the service has increased and good feedback continues to be received from clients for the increased weekday opening times and weekend provision of therapeutic and hub support.

The continued support from the appointed Mental Health Nurse appointed from the NHS Trust has been useful for ensuring a continued holistic service to clients needing additional mental health support and a referral pathway into Nottinghamshire NHS Trust's Mental Health Services.

We are now offering clients the opportunity to attend an 8-week course of group therapy when their individual therapy comes to an end. This aims to give survivors the opportunity to meet others with a commonality and build upon feelings of trust and resilience as they move away from the service.



5228

Therapy Sessions Offered



433

people received
counselling/therapy



785

Assessments booked



100%

Rated good/excellent

Challenges

Waiting times for individual therapy has continued to increase. While many other organisations have had to close their waiting lists, we have instead offered clients support via our Waiting List Initiative. The take up of this support and the feedback from it has been very positive and is something we will be building upon in the coming year.

The adjournments of sexual violence cases within the judicial system has continued to increase. This has led to trial dates extending beyond the length of time we are able to offer therapy to the client.

As Crown Courts and Nightingale Courts have continued to operate, we have prioritised clients with an upcoming trial date, offering further sessions around their court case if needed. Working in line with Pre-Trial Therapy Guidelines, means that survivors can still have support without compromising an upcoming trial.

Additional work has been completed by the Criminal Justice System to inform jurors and judicial staff of trauma responses to abuse have been welcomed by Notts SVSS.

“

One thing that I think is going to be really beneficial to our clients is that we are going to be offering them further sessions to have around their court cases as we know a lot of trial dates have been set back.

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“

I came to this off the back of being under the care of a crisis team. To still be here and planning for the future and having been able to talk about that and my experiences which led me to this clinic with someone who I could trust and who had earned my trust was an incredibly rare thing to find in any therapy. And for that, words will never do justice how much it means to me.

(female client on the counselling service)

”

Lily - Case Study - Counselling Client

At the time of working with Lily she was a student, living in shared accommodation and studying within a challenging and competitive field. Lily grew up in a loving and supportive environment, but in her first year of her studies she was raped by a fellow student. She described how this led to a loss of her naïve, carefree former self.

Lily was referred in to us by the local SARC and disclosed in her initial assessments feelings of guilt, flashbacks and intrusive thoughts, anxiety and an overarching disbelief that this could have happened to her. After waiting for approximately 1 year and 3 months to begin her sessions, Lily was initially hesitant and uncertain of what the purpose of therapy might be. The initial distress had somewhat dissipated, but she did note that sex now felt unsafe and triggering and that her ability to form and feel safe in romantic relationships had been impacted, which was a key area she wanted to work through.

A total of 19 sessions were completed with Lily, both online and by telephone. A theme established early on was a polarised relationship with trust and sex: Lily felt that she could trust others too easily, leading to betrayals that would then inhibit a deeper trust. Similarly, following on from the incident, Lily went on to have 'empty' sexual encounters to try and prove to herself she was OK, which then led to her questioning herself around the incident.

Lily began to connect with difficult emotions such as passivity, isolation and loneliness; she began to acknowledge the pain caused by the perpetrator and how this was compounded by the university culture and minimisation from others. At the midway point of counselling, Lily began to acknowledge a more expansive self-concept and that she does have the capacity to assert boundaries given that she made the decision to cut a friend out of her life who betrayed her. We began to explore Lily's high levels of empathy and how this differs from passivity, making it possible for Lily to hold others accountable for their actions whilst still feeling empathy for them.

Lily reflected how our sessions had helped her to see this incident for what it was – an assault – and was also increasingly aware of the perpetrator's manipulation and her body's 'freeze' response during the incident. In the latter sessions, we explored Lily's emotions and their meaning in more depth, addressing the discomfort of regret. As the perpetrator still inhabited spaces known to her we explored techniques and strategies for managing this, prioritising Lily's emotional and physical safety and also her right to inhabit these spaces.

Outcomes Summary

Throughout the sessions, Lily described being kinder to herself and how it had been empowering to have her *feelings* validated. She acknowledged that whilst she was initially frustrated by the wait for therapy, engaging with this process after some time passed has enabled a more fulfilling and reflective use of the space. Throughout the process, Lily's emotional literacy increased, and whilst this came with challenging realisations, she also began to utilise more self-care, such as advising her placement of her survivor status. Being able to ask for her needs to be met was crucial to Lily's growth.

Identifying details have been changed

BEYOND SURVIVAL GROUP SUPPORT

Beyond Survival is designed as an 8-week follow-on course and is offered to clients who are coming to the end of their individual therapy. The aim of Beyond Survival is to instill hope for group members, giving them strategies, techniques and a positive outlook for their future moving forward.

It provides a safe space for group members to connect and feel part of a group that is united by a commonality. The group acknowledges that group members have moved from surviving their experience of trauma into a different phase of their recovery where thriving is possible.

Although the group is planned and structured by the facilitators it is modelled on a person-centered approach led mostly by the group's members, giving them the space to share, explore and connect.

The current 8 weeks topics are as follows;

- Week 1 – Course introduction, Grounding and Meditation
- Week 2 – Trauma and Self-Care
- Week 3 – Healthy Relationships
- Week 4 – Boundaries
- Week 5 – Anger and Creativity
- Week 6 – Positive Thoughts and Affirmations
- Week 7 – Trust and Self-belief
- Week 8 – Group Ending and Moving Forward

Groups have been delivered online this year. It is hoped that next year groups can be offered in a hybrid setting, with clients accessing the service in either online or face -to-face settings.

EMAIL SUPPORT

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Our email support service is available for people who prefer to communicate in writing or would struggle with face-to-face or telephone support for whatever reason. We maintain both GDPR and confidentiality processes, ensuring our clients details are treated confidentially and with the same protection we offer to all our clients.

Online support can ensure privacy for the client as they can engage whilst at home for example. Additionally, individuals may be more comfortable in writing / typing their emotions rather than talking face-to-face. The email service is client driven, so they can choose when to engage; the information they wish to share and the pace of their therapy; this allows time for reflection and for the client to feel more in control.

“

The group really has met my needs and always have asked me my opinions about questions or sections which made me feel included” and “I was hoping to get more confidence out of the sessions and dealing with my emotions better - which I really think I have especially the box breathing technique and other mindful techniques

(female client—group therapy)

”

Our Mental Health Nurse Specialist is a valuable member of our team. Seconded in post via Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust, she has helped to embed ethical and holistic mental healthcare within the structure of our service. This means that we have a strong, risk managed referral pathway into services where this is needed.

Our mental health nurse specialist has been involved with risk management and safeguarding. She helps to risk assess new referrals into the service, helping survivors manage their mental health including whilst on the waiting list for counselling. She also works hard to establish connections and smoother pathways between services. Her work helps to reduce decline in mental health to then improve outcomes for recovery.

Our Mental Health Nurse Specialist has built strong relationships with staff, enabling them to feel more confident when working with people who have complex mental health presentations.

Female Y - Case Study - Specialist Mental Health Nurse

Female Y and her husband are professionals and had one preschool child when she first came into contact to our service.

She disclosed a situation at secondary school where a senior teacher started to “groom” her. He would pay compliments, watch her play football, provide energy drinks etc. The teacher went on to sexually and emotionally abuse Female Y over a 2 year period. Later, during her professional studies, she realised that what she had experienced was abuse and told her supervisor and then the police and social care.

Female Y was referred to the ISVA/SSS service where she was supported for approximately 28 months. During that time she was able to have pre-trial therapy to help work on some of the anxiety she was experiencing. The outcome at trial was not what Female Y or the service had hoped for as the alleged perpetrator was found not guilty. This left Female Y feeling mentally drained, not validated, she felt like people did not believe her.

After a break in therapy Female Y came back into service to seek support. It was at this point that she was referred to me by her counsellor as they had concerns that Female Y did not accept their PTSD diagnosis from the GP. She was low in mood and always presented as anxious, wanting to know if further support was available. My mental health assessment allowed me to address the PTSD diagnosis with female Y.

Female Y became pregnant whilst having therapy, which required close management of antidepressant and anti-anxiety medication pre-conception and during pregnancy. She was also worried throughout the pregnancy due to a very traumatic birth with her first child. This as well as the sexual trauma meant that having intimate parts of her body examined by professionals was very triggering.

A safeguarding plan was drawn up in the interim to manage communication between agencies. Through discussion with Female Y it was decided that a referral to the Perinatal Mental Health Team would be the best idea. However, when this was not followed up by the community midwife, I was able to step in. I helped her to put together a basic birth plan to discuss with the perinatal mental health team, so they could then complete a full plan with awareness of her previous traumas.

After a successful delivery, Female Y put her weekly counselling sessions with Notts SVSS on hold for 3 months. She continued to look at self-help awareness, self-esteem and general wellbeing, visualisation therapy, meditation and breathing techniques, as a way of relaxing and helping anxiety. She was able to check in with myself for additional support if needed.

Outcomes Summary

Female Y engaged extremely well with Notts SVSS and fully participated with anything asked of her from a mental health perspective. She has challenged her own beliefs, engaged in activities that have left her feeling uncomfortable at times but has believed in me as a practitioner and in the process.

With determined intervention and assessment of mental health needs, Female Y was able to be signposted to the correct service, have her needs met whilst being further assessed to make sure that she remained at a level of safety both for her and her unborn child. **Identifying details have been changed**

“

He tells me that he is feeling a little better this morning following the “fantastic” support he had from you last night. He wanted me to tell you he speaks very highly of you and said he would not be here without you.

(quote from client via his ISVA on the support received from our specialist mental health nurse)

”

The Therapeutic Support Service offers therapy and information to young people between the ages of 13 and 17 who live within the Nottingham area. Referrals come to us directly from the East Midlands Children and Young People Sexual Assault Service (EMCYPSAS).

We offer up to 10 one-to-one sessions for each young person referred to the service, although this can be reviewed to include additional sessions if appropriate. Sessions are delivered within the community, in venues such as schools, GP surgeries and college settings as agreed with parent/guardians and provision available.

As part of this work we liaise with schools, social services, families, and GPs to support the young people through safeguarding needs, and to deliver appointments. The development of greater links with more schools following the continued request for face-to-face therapy has helped foster a wrap-around service for young people accessing the service in a setting which they feel comfortable to be seen in.

We often refer into and onto other services, working alongside them where needed. We have strong links with other services that support young people with different aspects following a disclosure, including IMARA and their ChISVA (Children's Independent Sexual Violence Adviser) Team, EMCYPSAS Crisis Workers, CAMHS and Designated Safeguarding Leads throughout educational institutions.

Young people who reach 17 years of age continue to be referred into the ASA Hub and Therapy Service for support if they wish to receive additional emotional or therapeutic support from Notts SVSS. Young people under 17 years of age have been referred to Safe Time for additional therapeutic support.

Ellie (14 years) - Therapeutic Support Service

Ellie was raped on her way home from school. She was alone and had taken a shortcut through a park where she was restrained and assaulted by a stranger. Following the attack Ellie went home and did not say anything as she feared she would not be believed and that people would say it was her fault.

Ellie began to struggle at school and her anxiety levels increased. She eventually disclosed the rape to her school following a particularly bad anxiety attack. She later attempted suicide and was treated in hospital and received crisis support from CAMHS.

When we started supporting Ellie much of the first session was spend around risk assessing and discussing confidentiality and instances where it would be breached. This was really important as Ellie was self-harming at the time. A lot of psychoeducation on trauma and anxiety was provided early on and grounding techniques were discussed. Ellie worked on an Emotional First Aid Kit to use when she felt anxious.

It became apparent that Ellie's current relationships were being affected and we looked at feelings of self-blame. She commented that she felt she was able to offload and open up in the sessions.

It was about a year after the assault that Ellie received an update that the perpetrator had still not been found. This left Ellie feeling unsafe all the time. She was experiencing hyper-vigilance and began withdrawing from her world and life around her. Ellie became very low at this point and only felt safe in her room and bed.

Ellie reported that her mum and dad kept asking why she was so down and she did not want to keep explaining the reason was because of the assault. A phone call was made home to explain where Ellie was emotionally. Mum also required emotional support and we put a plan in place on how she could support Ellie during the holidays.

The therapeutic support we can provide to 13-17 year olds is limited to 10 sessions, after which a decision has to be made on whether further longer-term support is needed. We decided with Ellie that she would like to continue with further support and assisted with the referral onwards as appropriate.

Outcomes Summary

Ellie stated in our last session that the space had helped her off load and she found talking really helped her. Ellie found the psychoeducation very valuable as she was able to understand her anxiety and her responses better. She was able to make small changes to coping mechanisms so that they would serve her better and identify those coping mechanisms that weren't working so well.

Identifying details have been changed.

Our Independent Sexual Violence Advisors (ISVAs) play a vital role in supporting survivors of sexual violence with reporting to the Police and accessing the Criminal Justice System (CJS).

The ISVA Team

The ISVA team consists of an ISVA/SSS Contract Lead (part-time), ISVA and SSS Manager, Senior ISVA, 5 full-time ISVAs, 2 part-time ISVAs and 2 part-time administrators. All our ISVAs are fully trained and accredited, with the service accredited with the Lime Culture Quality Standards.

Our ISVAs are based in Nottingham and out in the community. We often meet clients at venues suitable to them, and have several staff working from bases at Nottinghamshire Police Stations and at the Topaz Centre (Nottinghamshire's SARC).

What an ISVA does

The role of an ISVA is very dynamic; with one foot in the criminal justice system and one foot in the holistic system; during the pandemic this was evermore the case.

The support we offer helps to keep people well and deals with a lot of the practical issues a person may experience as they move through the Criminal Justice System (CJS). On the day of the trial ISVAs motivate, support and re-assure the client, and

where possible we sit in the witness stand with them. We offer support post-trial and to those clients whose cases have not progressed to court.

Our ISVAs provide assistance with safeguarding, housing, employment and education, finance, health, mental health, and emotional wellbeing. We have strong, respected links with Police, CPS, DWP, Witness Services and other statutory and voluntary organisations. We hold and attend many meetings with partnership agencies to ensure clients are receiving appropriate support to meet their needs.

Challenges and how we met them

Although we are now 2-3 years since the start of the pandemic and have seen a lot less life-threatening illness this year, the effect of the pandemic on the CJS is significant.

Breaking Point - the Rape Crisis England and Wales report on the experience of survivors going through the Crown Courts, demonstrates a significant, country-wide, record-high backlog. On average it can take 787 days from an initial report to seeing a case completed in court.¹

Despite the fact that Nightingale Courts have remained in use and there are more court sitting hours, staffing issues across defence, prosecution and judge availability



624
people supported



5661
advocacy hours



69
Court cases adjourned



Bases in the Community
at police stations and the SARC



multi-award winning service



100%
Rated good/excellent



are having a massive, negative impact. Across the UK, many cases are deferred more than once and the long wait for justice leads to survivors withdrawing from the process.

In Nottingham, we saw 138 cases in court this year, including trials, retrials and sentencing. 69 of these were adjourned. The impact of these delays has been extremely detrimental to survivors and their emotional wellbeing.

A key part of our ISVAs' role is to help manage the emotional and mental wellbeing of survivors, keeping them engaged with the Criminal Justice Process. Despite the level of (often repeated) adjournment, only one person supported by us has decided to withdraw from the process. This is significantly lower than the picture we see across the rest of the UK and demonstrates both the strength and determination of survivors as well as the skill and tenacity of our staff.

There are several cases whereby the sexual violence element of support plays a very small part in the support some survivors require. We often find we are concentrating more on their mental and social needs. Some survivors have complex mental health needs which requires a lot of ISVA time. We have weekly case management meetings both as a team and with other departments, so that we can ensure we have robust support and safeguarding plans in place.

The waiting list for the ISVA service is in excess of 100 survivors. This is caused in part by the impact of the court backlog, which prevents movement of clients through the service, and also due to staffing levels and the increase in demand for the service.

Future plans for the service

The ISVA service continues to be in high demand and this is increasing due to the number of survivors seeking support and reporting to the Police. In the coming months we plan to implement 4 specialist ISVAs, each ISVA will specialise in offering support to BAMER, LGBTQ+, Elderly and Disabled survivors.

1. Breaking Point: <https://rapecrisis.org.uk/get-informed/breaking-point/>

“

Honestly you've helped me so, so much by being there and helping me understand everything, so thank you so so much!”

(ISVA client)

”

Case Study – ISVA Client

Our client is a 65 year old female who was referred to Notts SVSS by Nottinghamshire Police after she was physically and sexually assaulted by a family member at home. The perpetrator pleaded guilty prior to the trial date and is currently awaiting sentencing.

It was early days when the client was referred to the ISVA service. She was struggling with the effects of PTSD, suicidal thoughts and anxiety. The complexities of the assault and it being within her family made it really difficult for her to navigate.

The client was risk assessed at multi-agency risk assessment conference (MARAC) level and was advised that should she wish to move this could be arranged at short notice. Due to the security concerns of the client around lighting at her property and with initial repair dates being after sentencing was due, our ISVA liaised with the housing association to successfully bring the repair date forward.

Our ISVA put in an internal referral for counselling and contact was made with her GP to request a review with the client.

We liaised with colleagues in Juno Women's Aid around the support they offered and worked to ensure that the client had someone she was able to talk to each week. This was later reviewed and moved to monthly face-to-face ISVA support.

A Drop-in Session was arranged for the client with counselling, with a request for her to be reviewed for moving up the list a little quicker, for which a mental health assessment was arranged.

At the request of the client the ISVA has liaised with both the Police and Witness Care to pass on that she only wishes to know whether the perpetrator is released or receives a custodial sentence. She didn't want to know what the sentence was, just that he wouldn't be coming out so that she could feel a bit safer.

Outcomes summary

The client is greatly appreciative of the support from Notts SVSS and found it really helpful having someone to go to with any questions. She knew that she could contact her ISVA between appointments if it was needed.

This case shows how vital close multi-agency working is when supporting clients going through such traumatic events, both for safeguarding in the first instance and then for ongoing support moving forward.

Identifying details have been changed

Our Survivors' Support Service offers specialist support to anyone aged 18 and above, living in Nottingham/shire, who is a survivor of recent or non-recent institutional child sexual abuse.

The service was set up in response to the number of people coming forward saying that an institutional organisation had failed to protect them from child sexual abuse. We also support those people who have been sexually abused as a child and told a person in authority, for example a police officer, social worker or a teacher, who then ignored the report or did not act upon it properly.

There were a total of 40 survivors supported by this service from April 2022 – March 2023. Survivors in this service tend to require support for longer periods of time, predominantly due to mental health complexities.

What we do

We support survivors to enable them to exercise greater choice and control in all aspects of their lives. We help survivors experience improved health and wellbeing by gaining appropriate access to health and other services and help them develop coping strategies to better manage their mental health, emotional wellbeing and any substance misuse.

Our support workers work within a multi-agency setting, providing a tailored response to meet the survivor's needs. This can include information provision, support with options exploration and accessing other partner agencies, such as housing, immigration, welfare benefits, education and emotional and physical wellbeing.

The service continues to hold strong working links with the Police, Crown Prosecution Service (CPS), DWP and Nottingham CSA Group. We work closely with the local Clinical Commissioning Group to enable survivors to access a Personal Health Budget.

Challenges and how we overcome them

The main challenge facing survivors of institutional child sexual abuse is the impact on their mental health. Survivors require access to longer term support and more robust therapeutic support.

There can also be a distrust of services and so the support worker, while making referrals, will also advocate for the survivor and support them to access the services they need.

There is no waiting list and this service continues to receive excellent feedback.

“

Due to the impact of institutional child sexual abuse on a survivor's mental health, survivors require access to longer term support and more robust therapeutic support.

There can also be a distrust of services and so the support worker, while making referrals, will also advocate for the survivor and support them to access they need

”



40

survivors supported



305

advocacy hours



work closely with other organisations



100%

Rated good/excellent

“

My ISVA was always someone I could look to for guidance as every aspect of my life changed and improved and I am so grateful to have had her in my corner for the last couple of years. I've always needed a 'grown up' who I could look to for advice and she was very much that for me whilst I worked to improve my relationships, social life, job type, education and upskilling, mental health, and financial certainty

(client on support from one of our ISVAs)

”

EAST MIDLANDS CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SEXUAL ASSAULT SERVICE (EMCYPSSAS)

27

Notts SVS Services is sub-contracted by Nottingham University Hospitals Trust (NUH) to work collaboratively with a broad range of health and voluntary sector organisations across the East Midlands to deliver the East Midlands Children and Young Peoples Sexual Assault Services. Notts SVSS manage the crisis workers working in the centre.

Overview of Service

East Midlands Children and Young Peoples Sexual Assault Services (EMCYPSSAS) is a paediatric sexual assault referral centre that supports children and young people aged 17 and under or until 24 if the young person has severe learning difficulties.

EMCYPSSAS covers the whole of the East Midlands which includes Lincolnshire, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire, and Northamptonshire. There is also a hub in Northamptonshire called Serenity. EMCYPSSAS offers forensic examinations, acute-non-forensic examinations, non-recent examinations, and sexual health screening.

The main point of contact for our service is our 24/7 helpline that is managed by our Crisis Support Worker team. For every child or young person that comes through our service, we are able to refer them on for therapeutic support and CHISVA (Children's ISVA) Support. We are also able to take referrals from professionals and young people aged 16 years and over for support referrals only.

The EMCYPSSAS team is made up of clinically trained staff and a team of six crisis support workers, one senior crisis support worker, seven paediatricians/forensic medical clinicians, one quality and assurance service manager, two

specialist nurses, a regional network coordinator and four safeguarding admin workers.

Crisis Support Workers

The Crisis Support Workers manage the 24hr telephone helpline and work alongside the Safeguarding Nurses and Clinicians to provide expert information and advice to those accessing the centre.

Crisis Support Workers provide support calls for children and young people and their families and carers who may be extremely traumatised, in crisis or suicidal. They will arrange the necessary appointments to facilitate forensic medical examinations and will help to arrange ongoing support for the children and young people after attending the centre, including safeguarding referrals where needed.

Challenges

Throughout the past year we have been faced with a number of challenges relating to staff turnover, phone line systems, a higher influx of case work, the training of new staff and working with changes as we move towards forensic accreditation.

We have recruited three new Crisis Support Workers (CSW). We have seen one of our Specialist Nurses leave the team, this post has been replaced.

Flexible and innovative thinking has enabled us to meet the challenges of providing a 24hr helpline. We now manage the helpline in the suite between 09:00-19:00 and using an external provider to divert the calls to the crisis

workers working from home outside of these hours.

We have had an influx of cases over the year which could be linked to the increase in strategy meeting invitations. In response to this, crisis workers that have been in post for one year or more are currently being upskilled to send onward support referrals and archive inactive cases. In turn, this has lightened the workload for the Senior Crisis Support Worker.

All centres are moving towards accreditation by October 2025. This has led to discussions around referral pathways, following recommendations from NHS England and the retraining of staff where needed.

Successes

This year the service opened its Video Recording Interview Suite, which is located next to the forensic suite within the hospital. This is used regularly by most police forces and feedback shared is that the suite has provided a comfortable place for the children and young people to attend and feel safe during their interviews.

We welcomed doctors from the Immersive Placement Program. We delivered an information sharing session with our Senior CSW and our specialist nurse. The doctors also visited the service and spent the afternoon with us in our forensic suite.

Despite being a very small team, we continue to deliver a high quality service in partnership with NUHT and have a very supportive network of specialists within the team to offer advice and support when needed. We continue to receive very positive feedback from the children and young people who come to EMCYPSAS and we display these anonymously on our white board to share.

Hopes for the future

To continue to work alongside the development of the forensic accreditation. This will mean a change to the footprint within the forensic suite as well as changes to current procedures for the whole team.

To work alongside the specialist nurses to deliver training to local services to ensure that children and young people are aware of who we are and what we provide and know how to refer into our service if needed.

“

My counsellor was very helpful
and listened to me I felt
comfortable talking and opening
to her. As I said earlier my
counsellor was very informative
and helpful. I knew there was
always someone on hand to help
if I needed help

(male counselling client)

”

Engaging with others, including survivors, organisations, the general public are key to ensuring that people know about our services and feel able to contact us if they need support. A specific focus has been on those people under-represented as service users, to help us understand barriers to getting support and how they might be overcome.

This year our Engagement Manager has been busy building networks with partners, raising awareness and improving pathways between services. This has included organisations working with the homeless and vulnerably housed, Muslim women's organisations and the probation service.

She has also been at key meetings, including the Severe and Multiple Disadvantage Partnership, raising awareness on the impact of abuse and how organisations can recognise unmet need.

Reaching out to different providers and community groups

This year we have spent a lot of time reaching out to different service providers and community groups. This has included developing a database for services and organisations, enabling us to circulate information about our service, including links to downloadable information.

We have continued to develop links with Nottingham Muslim Women's Network and they have given feedback on different areas of our work. We

delivered training about our organisation in February 2023.

Attendance at Events

We have attended different events this year, including the Insight Library events in Nottinghamshire County, Nottinghamshire Pride and the Reel Equality screening of the film *Promising Young Woman*. These events enabled us to connect with different groups of people and help pass on information about our own service.

We also attended stalls delivered by the Consent Coalition, which were often student-focussed. This enabled us to let people know about the valuable work of the coalition, our part in it, and direct people to support where it was needed.

At different events we take information about ourselves and the Consent Coalition. We have found that A-Z of Consent has created a 'hook' or way in for people to approach our stall and talk about sexual violence and ask for other information.

Campaigns

Amplifying Survivor Voices

This year we launched and promoted the 'Use Your Voice' page on our website. This space is used to highlight different surveys and consultations that survivors and supporters can take part in. This is in response to requests from survivors about how they can help to bring about wider change.

Over the past year we have included links to the Nottinghamshire Police & Crime Commissioner's VAWG Strategy Consultation, links to the 'Sex for Rent' consultation and a survey on women's reproductive health and choices. This page has been very popular, with over 250 people using the 'Sex for Rent' link to find out more about sharing their views.

Reclaim the Night

This year a freelance worker was paid to manage the overall march, with different organisations feeding into its development. We were heavily involved with the recruitment to this role and then helped with other aspects including advising on its development, risk assessing and marshalling on the night.

Write to End Violence Against Women Awards (WEVAW)

Due to our ongoing #NoMoreRapeMyths campaign and connections we have already built with Zero Tolerance, we were invited to be on the Steering Group for this year's WEVAW Awards. This is the first time that the awards have been made UK-wide (previously only concentrating on Scotland) and we were involved in the shortlisting of articles and how the awards would take place.

“

“I am very impressed with how quick and speedy the helpline contacted me offering support while on the waiting list.

What a relief it is to be able to say how I feel and talk about things that I have never said to another person”.

(helpline client)

”

Notts SVSS are active members of Nottingham's Sexual Violence Action Network (SVAN). This is a group of 20 organisations (including Nottingham City Council, local universities and Nottinghamshire Police) working together to reduce sexual violence and to improve the outcomes of those who have experienced an assault whether or not they choose to report.

The SVAN sits behind the Consent Coalition the public-facing arm of the network. Notts SVSS have been at the core of much of the work undertaken by this group and hosts the website where many of the resources are housed. Work we have been involved with this year has included:

- Being central to the drafting and development of the Night Time A-Z of Consent (which was launched in May 2023) hosting the website and resources for this campaign. This included the design of a new livery for trams and buses, online and physical resources.
- Expanding the background information around the Night-Time A-Z, developing its messaging into something that can be used and understood by all.
- Promoting and presenting the Safe Space Pledge, how it was developed and how it is run, with different partners including the Rape Crisis England and Wales Prevent Group.
- Leading on the work to translate the *Your Journey* Guide into five additional languages most commonly spoken in Nottingham/shire and ensuring it is downloadable from the Consent Coalition (and our) website.

The Consent Coalition has gone on to receive wide acclaim up and down the country for its resources, social media messaging and shareable content.

We are proud to be part of this great initiative and to host such a positive and preventative piece of work on our website.



Male Quality Standards Accreditation

This year we were awarded with the Male Survivor Partnership Male Quality Standards Accreditation. This means that we have demonstrated our ability to provide services for males in line with stated needs of male service users. This included things like:

- Staff attending specific training on the needs and experiences of male survivors
- Offering more flexibility in appointments to fit in around work/shift demands
- Continuing to offer a choice of gender of therapist
- Ensuring that males are aware of our service through specific campaigns, website resources and information, and social media.

We are extremely proud to have achieved this accreditation and are one of only a few sexual violence support services to hold both Rape Crisis Service Standards and MQS accreditation.

Expanding our hybrid-support service

We have continued to build upon how our service is delivered and are now offering counselling, therapy and ISVA support in-person, by phone or via secure counselling rooms.

This is inline with the changing needs and demands of our clients, some whom find in-person support, away from home very effective, while others find online support easier to fit into their work and life schedules.

Increasing accessibility to our service

At the end of this year we added the Recite-Me accessibility tool to our website. This innovative tool enables visitors to our website to access it in a way most appropriate to them. This includes features like:

- Computer translation of the website
- Text to speak (where text is read out aloud, including in many translated languages)
- Font formatting - colour, size, font style etc
- Tools to aid with reading - eg rulers, magnifying glass, margins etc

These new features work across all our online forms, making it more easy for clients to self-refer and on PDFs that are viewable on our site. The tool will be particularly helpful for people who neurodiverse, have learning disabilities or who experience language barriers.

ISVA Reaccreditation

Our ISVA Service will be looking to retain its accreditation with Lime Culture which is up for renewal by August 2024. We have already starting working towards this.

Implementing our Engagement Strategy

We will be reviewing and updating our Engagement Strategy to ensure that it is engaging effectively with different groups, including those who are disadvantaged or are from minoritised ethnic groups.

As part of this work we will be developing stronger relationships with different community groups and opening opportunities to develop mutual awareness of survivors needs and appropriate support pathways.

“

“I genuinely don’t think that I’d be here if it wasn’t for you and your service. I don’t feel guilty any more, I KNOW it wasn’t my fault.”

(male counselling client)

”

The financial year 2022-2023 covered a period of intense financial pressure in the context of a sharp rise in inflation and a nationwide cost of living crisis. Inflation reached a 41-year high of over 11% in October 2022. During this period, our income remained broadly stable at £2.04m. In January 2023 we received a small but very welcome contribution from the Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Commissioner, in recognition of increased demand for our services and rising costs. However we received no other increases in our previously agreed funding contracts during the year, despite the inflationary environment and demand pressures.

During 2022-23 there were further increases in our waiting lists, reflecting an alarming rise in reported sexual violence as well as increased awareness of our services. In the absence of any increase in funding to expand our existing services, which reflected the challenging funding environment felt across the charitable sector, we made use of some of our reserves to try to limit the waiting list increase.

We recognised the substantial impact of the challenging economic environment on our staff, who were also continuing to address the extraordinary challenges arising from the Covid-19 pandemic. We therefore took a decision to award a flat-rate increase in staff salaries, equating to an 8.6% increase for the lowest paid staff and an average of 5-7% for all other staff. This was made possible by our healthy level of reserves, built up during earlier periods. Other expenditure within the organisation was tightly controlled during the year, but inflationary increases to our infrastructure costs were inevitable.

As a result of these additional outlays, our total expenditure was £2.24m, leaving us with an overspend of £200,000 which reduced our reserves to £508,000.

The future of the lease on our main premises remains a matter of some uncertainty and therefore a risk for the organisation. We are continuing to work actively with the other tenants and Nottingham City Council to secure long-term arrangements.

The financial environment remains challenging and we are continuing to budget carefully to protect the financial stability of the organisation. We are not expecting to be in deficit in the financial year 2023-24 and are actively pursuing opportunities to rebuild our reserves. Our reserves policy remains in line with Charity Commission guidance.

Ruth Tarlo

Treasurer

More detailed information about our finances can be provided upon request or viewed on the Charity Commission website.

87%

female
clients

11%

male
clients

6

trans
clients

27

non-binary
clients

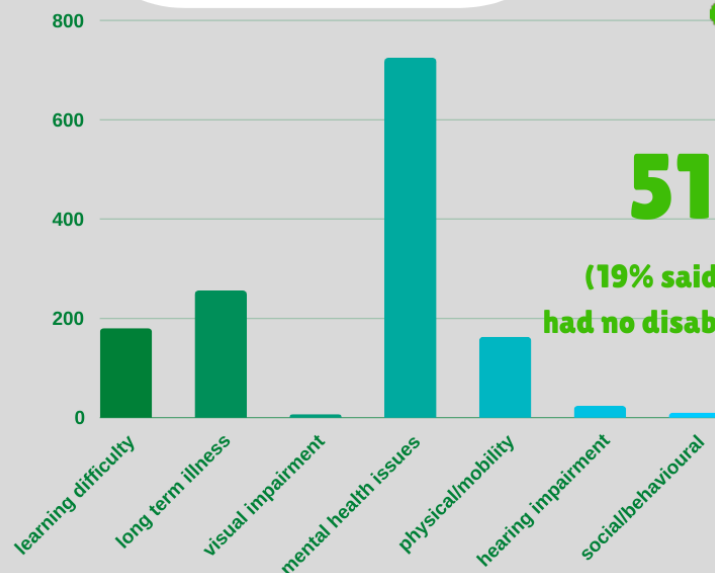
23%

of clients
are from
minoritised
ethnic
groups

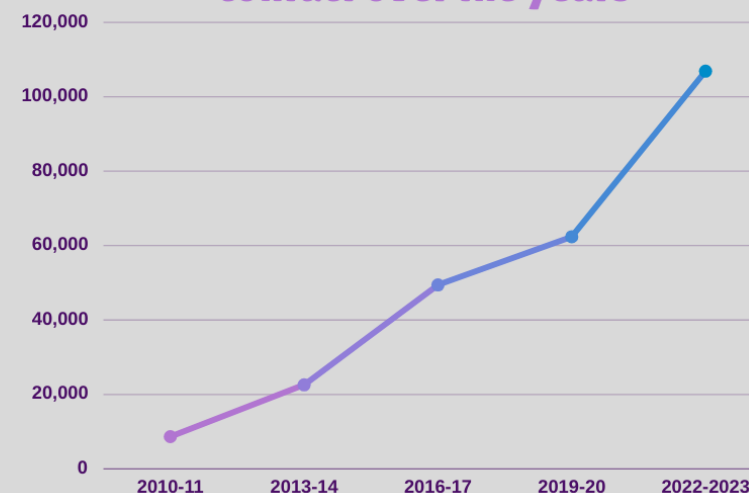


51%

of clients
disclosed
they had a
disability
(19% said they
had no disability)



contact over the years



sexual orientation where
disclosed (%) 17+ years only



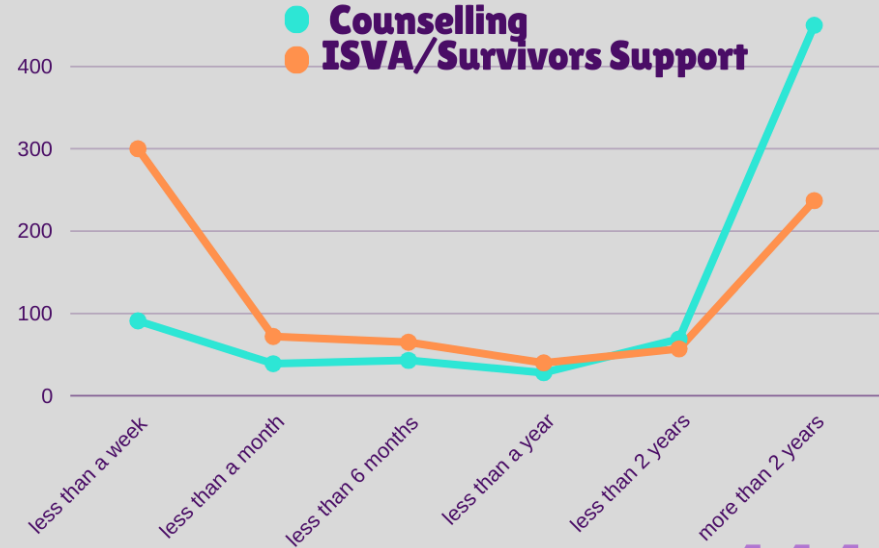
presenting incidents



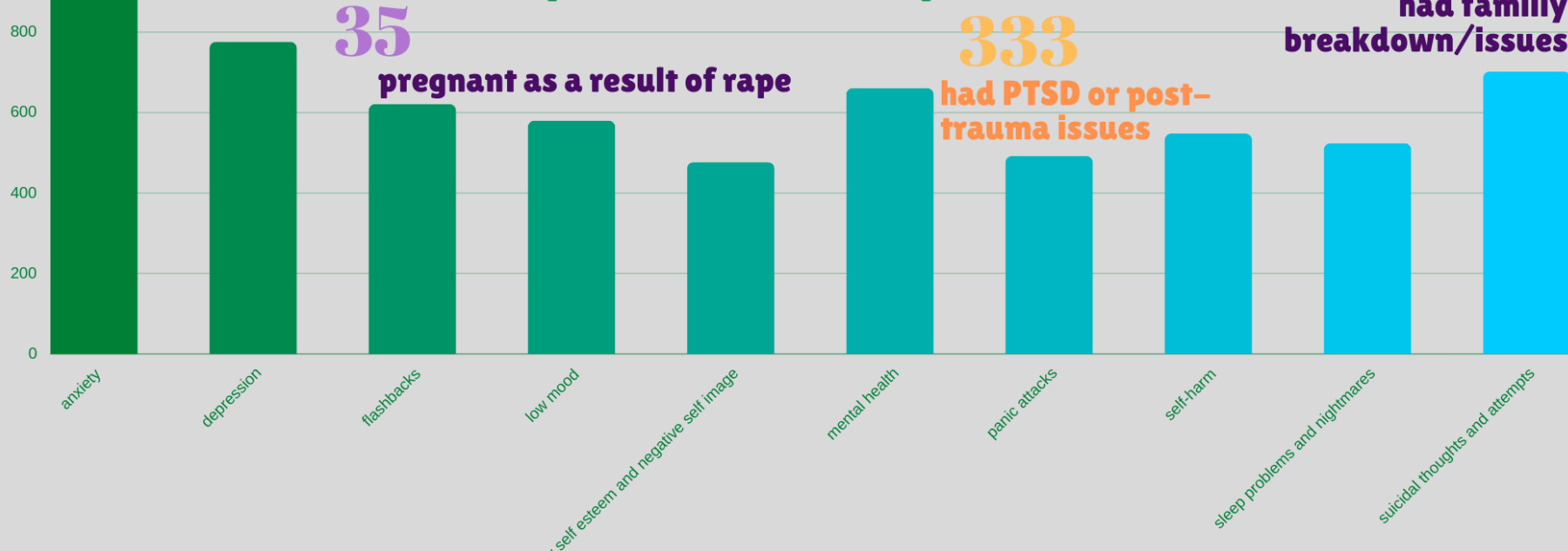
270
misused drugs or
alcohol as a result

54
had homeless or
accommodation issues

time elapsed before seeking support



incident impact – 10 most reported incidents



Aims

- To offer a range of free, confidential, client-focused counselling, support and advocacy services to survivors, aged 13+, of sexual abuse, sexual violence and rape, whether this has occurred recently or in the past.
- To raise awareness through the media and education and training of issues around rape and sexual abuse.

Objectives

- To provide the ASA Hub and Therapy Services for Adult Survivors of Sexual Violence
- To provide the Independent Sexual Violence Advisor Service
- To provide the Survivors Support Service
- To provide services to East Midlands Children and Young Peoples Sexual Assault Services
- To provide resources and information for statutory and voluntary organisations and the public
- To provide talks and training sessions in a variety of settings, e.g. Hospitals, Schools and the Police
- To deliver quality assured, performance managed, equitable services to the population served by each contract
- To secure funding to fulfil the aims and objectives of the organisation and fund new areas of development

Our Commitment to Supporting Survivors

All our policies, procedures and guidelines have been implemented with the intention of providing an ethical and supportive environment to our service users. As part of that commitment we are a member of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP).

Customer Care and Complaints

We take all complaints seriously and are committed to enabling survivors to become more empowered. All staff must adhere to our Code of Ethics. The organisation is recognised by the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) and we work to BACP criteria. If you are not happy about the standard of service received or about the way in which you have been treated, by a paid or unpaid worker(s), you have the right to make a complaint. This is particularly important if you feel that your treatment is a result of discrimination linked to disability, sexuality, race, etc. We will keep a record of all complaints. The Board of Trustees will be informed of all complaints and we aim to resolve any problems quickly and informally. A copy of the complaints procedure can be found on our website or obtained on request.

Notts SVS Services acknowledges and opposes all forms of sexual violence and abuse regardless of whether the violence is from known or unknown perpetrators. This can be any act of physical, psychological and emotional violation inflicted on a person without consent and includes rape and rape in marriage, sexual violence and childhood abuse, abuse which took place in institutions, forced marriage, honour based violence including female genital mutilation, trafficking and sexual exploitation, ritual abuse and sexual harassment, and forcing or manipulating someone to witness or participate in any sexual acts without their consent.

The purpose of Notts SVS Services is to provide a free, confidential and non-judgemental support service run for survivors (aged 13+) who have experienced any form of sexual violence at any time in their lives. We offer a range of counselling, advocacy and support services and can also support those who are also going through police and court procedures or who are survivors of historical institutional child sexual abuse.

We are aware of the many needs that can affect survivors facing multiple, intersecting oppressions. Our services for women are provided in a woman-only space.

Our core values are:

- To support and uphold the survivor's voice and experiences through free, confidential and non-judgmental support and to actively encourage survivors to participate in the further development of centre as a whole.
- To empower survivors by using appropriate person-centred counselling and support, enabling survivors to explore their experiences in a safe non-judgemental environment.
- To work in non-discriminatory way, by supporting survivors, regardless of their age, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, education or socio-economic background, religion or beliefs, health, ability or disability and challenging discriminatory practice in other organisations and wider society.
- To acknowledge diversity and to work on a basis of inclusivity, thus drawing on a range of ethnic, social and economic backgrounds and experiences and making the centre stronger as a whole.
- To uphold one-another's human rights.
- To be pro-choice in our support, by enabling and empowering survivors to make their own decisions with regards to their sexual health, reproductive rights and the right to safe abortion, in a safe, non-judgemental environment.
- To promote social change through active campaigning, raising awareness and challenging misconceptions around issues of women's rights and empowerment, rape, sexual violence and abuse.
- To promote Substantive Equality by examining the root causes of inequality and challenging these through direct campaigning and leading by example and expectation

While Notts SVS Services recognizes and fully supports male survivors, we also acknowledge that, as 85% of rape and sexual assaults are against women, a gender-specific response is required. Our *Vision Statement* for women.

“

One of the best things about my counselling was that my counsellor helped me to see things in a different way, to look at things from a different perspective. Changes are: I can get out of bed now, go outside, make meals, plan

(female counselling client)

”

Vision Statement

Women's rights are human rights. This was confirmed in the Beijing Declaration and the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) 1995, which the UK signed up to. Any violence against women breaches their human rights and is therefore a cause and consequence of perceived gender inequality.

Nottinghamshire Sexual Violence Support Services (Notts SVSS) runs services for women by women, in a safe, women-only space. We work hard to ensure women:

- Have the freedom to take control of their own lives and to make their own choices.
- Are always treated from a basis of equality, without discrimination, where their diversity is supported and celebrated.
- Receive services and support which empower them to achieve their full potential.
- Are always treated with dignity and respect.

Notts SVS Services believe these rights are basic human rights available to all women, regardless of race, faith, sexual orientation, education, age, ability or disability and continuously campaigns to uphold women's rights and respect for women and to end gender-based violence.

Our vision for wider society is one where, operating from a basis of dignity and respect, women are empowered to freely determine their own future, without fear, discrimination or attack.

HOW YOU CAN SUPPORT US

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Donations towards our work are always welcome; cheques should be made payable to Nottinghamshire Sexual Violence Support Services and sent to us at 30 Chaucer St, Nottingham NG1 5LP. We are a registered charity, number 1103071. Many people choose to fundraise for us, details of our Just Giving site are available on the website.

If you are a UK taxpayer you can complete a Gift Aid declaration, which enables us to claim back tax. For details please contact us at the above-mentioned address. Alternatively, if you would like to join the Board of Trustees, contact us on 0115 947 0064 and we will be pleased to discuss how to become involved.

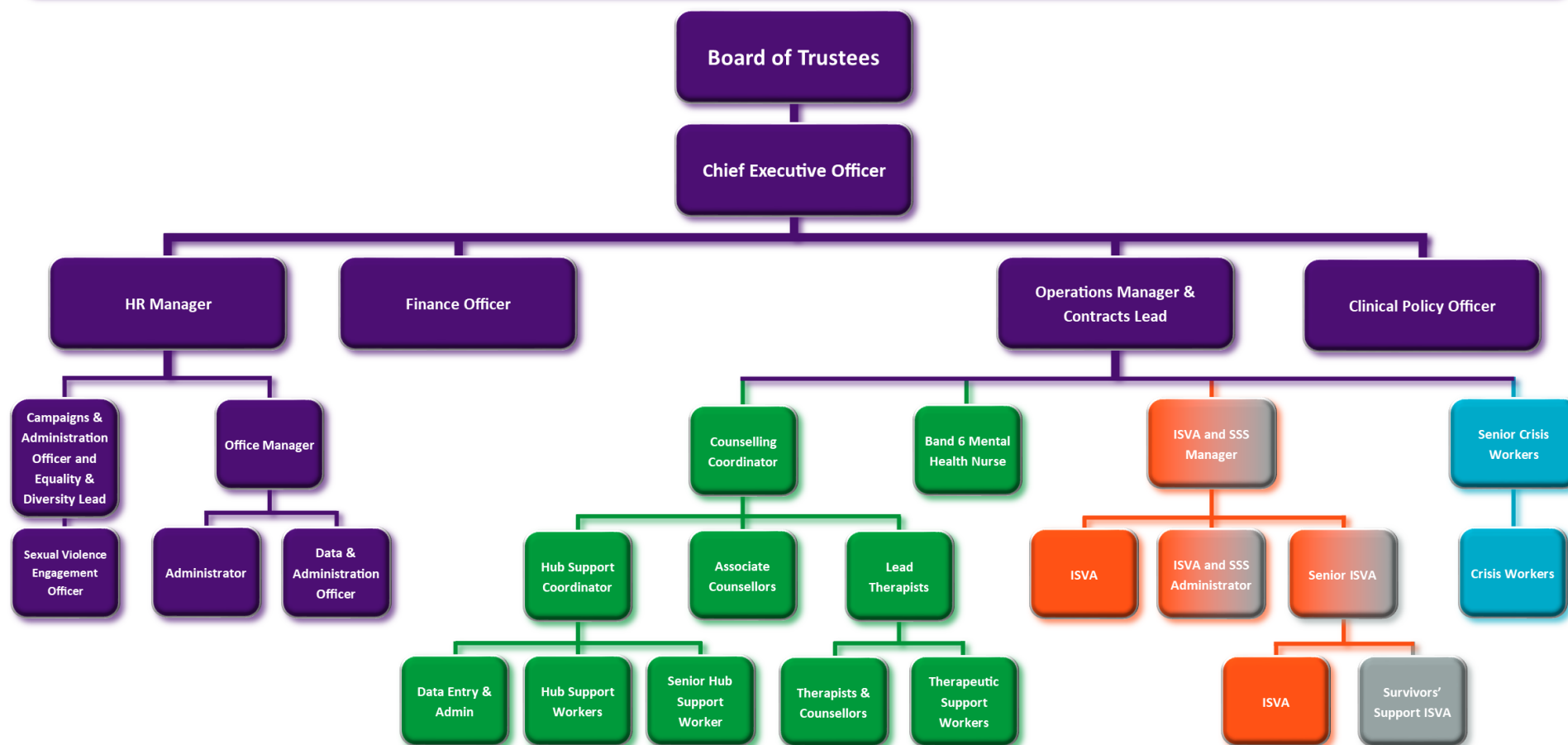
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank the following for their generous support:

All Friends of Notts SVS Services
Barclays Bank
Community Accounting Plus Ltd
East Midlands Children's and Young People's Sexual Assault Service
Equation
Lime Culture
Ministry of Justice
Nottingham City Council Crime and Drug Partnership
Nottingham City Council Communities of Identity Fund
NHS Bassetlaw Clinical Commissioning Group
NHS Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire Clinical Commissioning Groups
Nottingham Council for Voluntary Service

Nottingham University Hospital's NHS Trust
Nottingham Women's Centre
Nottinghamshire County Council
Nottinghamshire County Council Social Services Grant Aid
Office of the Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Commissioner
Rape Crisis England and Wales
Rushcliffe Council for Voluntary Service
Shake Social
Smellie Savage
38 Degrees

Nottinghamshire Sexual Violence Support Services Staff Structure February 2023



Board of Trustees

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Chief Executive Officer

Novlet Holness

We employ a team of dedicated and experienced staff, have received various awards and been recognised for our work with survivors of sexual violence.

“

Thank you for not judging me!

(male helpline client)

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