

# [ MS'IN ]

PREVENTING MALE SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL HARMS *MISSIN' OUT*

DATE: MAY 2025

ISSUE: 1

The **Male Survivor Information Network (MS'IN)** is an information sharing network, facilitated by *We Are Survivors*, that aims to provide a space to share information; be part of influencing; know what is happening in the world of the male survivor (both at Home and Away); and ensure that leaders and staff of services supporting male survivors of sexual harms don't keep **MS'IN** out.



Should you wish to include information in the **MS'IN** circular, please email [duncan@wearesurvivors.org.uk](mailto:duncan@wearesurvivors.org.uk) by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month, with the circular being sent around the 14<sup>th</sup> of every month.

MS'IN also now host two informal networks as follows:

- **ISVAs working with Male Survivors** – a bi-monthly online 'brew and chat' with ISVAs working with male survivors.
- **OUT Reaching OUT Spoken** – A bi-monthly online 'brew and chat' for any survivor organisations leaders or staff who have services for male survivors in prison and the secure estate or are working with male survivors in prison settings.

As the membership of MS'IN grows (229 members to date from a range of organisations and institutions working with male survivors), more people are asking about adding new aspects to it and MS'IN picking up tasks or asking about getting involved. We will continue to work with **The Survivors Trust**, the **Men and Boys Coalition** and the **Centre for Policy Research on Men and Boys** to ensure nothing is being duplicated and we can either add benefit or fill a gap.

Duncan Craig OBE  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
We Are Survivors

## [ THE PRACTICE BIT ]



### ISVA/IDVA GUIDANCE PUBLISHED

The Government has commenced section 16 of the Victims and Prisoners Act 2024 and brought into force the Victim Support (Specified Roles) Regulations 2025 which specify victim support roles for the purposes of this measure.

You can view the regulations here: [The Victim Support \(Specified Roles\) Regulations 2025](#).

This has enabled the Ministry of Justice to now publish the guidance on IDVAs and ISVAs (two separate pieces of guidance).

The links to the guidance on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) can be found here:

- IDVA (Independent Domestic Violence Advisors): [idva-guidance.pdf](#)
- ISVA (Independent Sexual Violence Advisors): [isva-guidance.pdf](#)

Pursuant to section 16(7) of the Victims & Prisoners Act, criminal justice bodies and others with public functions relating to victims/the wider criminal justice system will be under a **statutory duty** to have regard to the guidance and the best practice within it.

The new guidance also supersedes the current '*Role of the Independent Sexual Violence Adviser: Essential Elements*' guidance that was introduced in September 2017.

The Victim Support (Specified Role) Regulations 2025 also commit the Government to issuing guidance on **Independent Stalking Advocates (ISA)**.

Government are pleased to announce that the Suzy Lamplugh Trust, in their role as chair of the National Stalking Consortium, will be drafting the ISA guidance which we expect to be published February next year at the earliest.

Whilst the guidance is very welcome, there are a few concerns.

- Specifying Level 3 training at a minimum will be set at 'best practice' rather than be MANDATED as guidance cannot mandate in the absence of legislation. This means that the ISVA and IDVA roles across England and Wales will now have practitioners fully trained and 'accredited', and practitioners who are not, which is of grave concern for such a specialist role.
- 'Safe Caseloads' are not recommended as it is the Government's belief that this is a matter for organisations, however wording is aligned more closely to 'Essential Elements Guidance', with risk assessments being updated after EVERY contact as a minimum for ISVAs and at least every 6-8 weeks for IDVAs.
- The Government has opted to not to include anything on the concerns the VCFSE sector had about ISVAs and IDVAs being 'co-located' particularly in Police Stations as the concern the sector had about retaining independence.
- The ISVA Guidance issued under the Victims and Prisoners Act 2024 will replace the 'Essential Elements Guidance'

Survivor organisation umbrella agency, The Survivors Trust, is writing to Secretary of State for Justice and the Home Secretary, supported by We Are Survivors as the largest male survivor org in the UK and having the first and longest running male specific ISVA service in the UK; amongst other UK services.



## NATIONAL ISVA SERVICE SURVEY RESULTS

At the recent LimeCulture National ISVA Conference, results of the ISVA Survey were presented with some fascinating insights from 91% of PCC areas.

- 87% of ISVA were in VCFSE organisations
- 53% of services had 5 – 10 ISVAs in their team
- Average caseload for ISVAs was 56 clients
- 87% completed ISVA training
- 86% accessed CPD but 50% of ISVAs in role more than 3 years had not accessed any refresher training
- Less than 50% of ISVAs had received training for their specific client group they support
- 61% of ISVAs accessed external supervision
- 50% of ISVAs do not currently attend any network meetings

We Are Survivors has started a bi-monthly **ISVAs for Male Clients** 'peer support' network, which is facilitated by the ISVA Manager, Gayna Williams. If you are an ISVA or ISVA Manager working with adult

male survivors and wish to join for a brew and a chat, then please contact [gayna.w@wearesurvivors.org.uk](mailto:gayna.w@wearesurvivors.org.uk).

**This informal network does not replace any other formal ISVA network by The Survivors Trust, Lime Culture, Rape Crisis England and Wales, and should only be seen as a way of ISVAs working with male survivors to connect with other ISVAs working with male survivors, sharing tips and ideas and staying connected.**



## **SURVIVORS WEST YORKSHIRE HAVE KINGUTSI CONVERSATIONS**

Rob Balfour, CEO and Founder of Survivors West Yorkshire and Ben's Place has been producing podcasts as part of a project called Kintsugi Conversations.

A few of them focus on a range of conversations around male survivor needs and the history of male survivor activism and invites MS'IN members to have a listen:

### *Boys and Men Healing*

Discussion looking at the recovery of male survivors following the online screening of the documentary Boys and Men Healing. <https://youtu.be/BcVKnucpgQ0?si=j8o5vqduY0LAHYc7>

### *Boys and Men Healing - Film As An Activism Tool*

A discussion with the Directors of the most widely seen documentary in the world exploring the Survivorship of male survivors of sexual violence <https://youtu.be/iWnk6JuZ2h8?si=G8-kBcJpUVrRS9H5>

### *Nigel O'Mara A Co-Founder (1985) of what become Survivors UK*

Part 1: A Life Time of Activism <https://youtu.be/Li6botkos1o?si=i8H-x-U-vVsT9VT6>

### *Nigel O'Mara A Co-Founder (1985) of what become Survivors UK*

Part 2: "without being united as a moving force, we won't make the changes that are necessary" <https://youtu.be/x3jj3lu-w94?si=2nzYxlArqBajB6o8>



## **WORKING WITH MALE SURVIVORS IN PRISON**

Following on from a number of presentations We Are Survivors has given over the last 6 months on working with male survivors in prison, the organisation is now developing a specific network for those doing the same.

*OUT Reaching OUT Spoken* is a new informal network that will enable staff in survivor organisations and Rape Crisis centres working with male survivors in prison and male survivors going 'through the gate', to connect with peers doing the same work to enable greater understanding of themes, issues and grow innovation.

The network will be hosted by *We Are Survivors* Criminal Justice Services Director, Jonathan King, and supported by the *OUT Spoken* Managers (the Prison therapy team) and the Manager of the new *OUTside/OUT Spoken Service* (supporting male survivors through the gate).

If you are a survivor organisation and are working in prisons or secure estate and would like to connect, removing the isolating nature of this work, then please contact [jonathan@wearesurvivors.org.uk](mailto:jonathan@wearesurvivors.org.uk)



## **BEYOND THE SILENCE – THE KNOWLEDGE ISSUE**

The latest edition of Beyond The Silence has hit the shelves and you can download it here from the ISSUU shelf: [www.issuu.com/survivorsmanchester/docs/beyond\\_the\\_silence\\_issue\\_6\\_spring\\_2025](http://www.issuu.com/survivorsmanchester/docs/beyond_the_silence_issue_6_spring_2025)

This is the *Knowledge Issue* and is focused on everything knowledge/research/information to do with male survivors and work with male survivors, including a great 'Men's Health Checklist' from our very own 'Older Males' Thematic Lead – Riz.



## **TRAUMA INFORMED VICTIMS DATA COLLECTION GUIDANCE**

The Ministry of Justice has just recently issued guidance support for organisations working with victims in how to collect data in a trauma-informed approach.

The guidance is aimed at ensuring collection of data with victims feels comfortable and empowers the victim to share their information while also preventing the data collection process from creating any additional barriers for victims accessing support. By empowering victims to feel comfortable to provide their information, this can lead to better quality data collection.

See attached for the document.



## [ THE DATA & RESEARCH BIT ]



### MENS HEALTH STRATEGY

Government has launched a call for evidence on men's health, which will inform England's first ever men's health strategy to tackle the life expectancy gap.

The [12-week call for evidence](#) will gather vital insights from the public, health and social care professionals, academics and employers so the government can properly consider how to prevent and tackle the biggest issues facing men from all backgrounds.

It will ask for their views on what is working and what more needs to be done to close the life expectancy gap between men and women, as men in England die nearly 4 years earlier than women, on average.

The call for evidence will run for 12 weeks from 24 April 2025 to 17 July 2025 and can be found here: [www.gov.uk/government/calls-for-evidence/mens-health-strategy-for-england-call-for-evidence](https://www.gov.uk/government/calls-for-evidence/mens-health-strategy-for-england-call-for-evidence)



### POLICY IMPACTING MALE SURVIVORS

*We Are Survivors* has begun developing a new aspect of its work, looking at Information and Policy.

The organisation's new Information & Policy Co-Ordinator, Rory Brooke, has been with the organisation for a number of years working in data and administration, and has led the organisations work on engagement in research.

In his new role, Rory will be working with Duncan (CEO) and the team on identifying local, regional and national policy and strategy that has any impact on male survivors; will be providing support to the organisations Information and Data Manager, Sam, in the development of more reports on data collected by the organisation for public dissemination; and generally ensuring that We Are Survivors is doing what it can to best support improvements in all understanding of the needs of male survivors in Policy.

Rory is keen to connect with others working in the area of sexual harms, particularly those working with data and strategy on male survivors, and can be contacted at: [rory.b@wearesurvivors.org.uk](mailto:rory.b@wearesurvivors.org.uk)



### THIRD PARTY MATERIAL REQUEST CODE OF PRACTICE - CONSULTATION

The Home Office have this week published a consultation on the 'Code of Practice' covering requests for third party material (counselling notes, ISVA notes, etc) and the definition of counselling service.

The team at the Home Office would greatly value your views on the draft code and the appropriate definition of counselling services.

The consultation will run for 12 weeks from 8<sup>th</sup> April to 1<sup>st</sup> July.

(see [Victim information requests: code of practice - GOV.UK](#))



### POST TRAUMATIC GROWTH RESEARCH GROUP

Liverpool University Clinical Psychology Dept & Bens Place (Survivors West Yorkshire) Male Survivors CSA - Posttraumatic Growth (PTG) A Research Group Reflective conversation – What outcomes generate from investment in good practise male survivor support services?

See here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qUoHgPmxLD4>



## TRIAL BY GENDER? EXAMINING JURY DECISION MAKING IN CASES OF RAPE AND SEXUAL ABUSE INVOLVING MALE VICTIMS

In year ending March 2022, data shows that 275,000 men over the age of 16 experienced some form of sexual assault (including attempts). Despite the prevalence of male victimisation, no existing mock jury research conducted within the context of the criminal justice system in England and Wales has involved rape scenarios with a male complainant.

This, coupled with the fact that male victims have particularly gendered experiences of sexual violence and encounter specific gender and sex-role myths and stereotypes, means that research is needed to explore how jurors make decisions in cases involving male rape.

Across the first stream of research, focusing on a case of male rape, we conducted four highly realistic mock-trials with a ticketed judge, prosecution and defence barristers, and actors playing the complainant and defendant.

This research addresses an important knowledge gap within academic literature and looks to directly inform policy and practice by providing empirical evidence examining how criminal law juries in England and Wales make their decisions in rape cases involving male complainants.

As a partner in the research, We Are Survivors are in discussion with Dr Weare and the team to look at creating a video recording of the presentation to be able to share with MS'IN members and wider.



### [ THE HOME BIT ]



## INTERPERSONAL ABUSE AND VIOLENCE AGAINST MEN AND BOYS (STRATEGY) BILL

Ben Obese-Jecty MP will be presenting the second reading of his Private Members Bill (under the Ten Minute Rule) ***Interpersonal Abuse and Violence Against Men and Boys (Strategy) Bill*** on 16<sup>th</sup> May 2025.

For those that would like to see the presentation of the first reading of the bill, you can click here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=34HlvNwF410>

and the transcript is on Hansard: [https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2025-04-23/debates/12C0577E-2DD8-4891-B91C-56442A5674C2/InterpersonalAbuseAndViolenceAgainstMenAndBoys\(Strategy\)](https://hansard.parliament.uk/commons/2025-04-23/debates/12C0577E-2DD8-4891-B91C-56442A5674C2/InterpersonalAbuseAndViolenceAgainstMenAndBoys(Strategy))

At a time when male victims/survivors are still referred to as male victims of violence against women and girls; and at a time when VAWG is rightly so identified as a national emergency and therefore effort must be made to half VAWG in a decade **BUT NUMBERS STILL INCLUDE MEN AND BOYS AS VICTIMS**; this bill gives us as a civil society the opportunity to do the right thing.

As called for in the We Are Survivors MANIFESTO (see attached), removing the data pertaining to male victims from the VAWG strategy; developing a simple parallel strategy focused on male survivors that compliments the VAWG strategy; and provides us the real facts and movement forward to address the national emergency that is VAWG.

You can follow the bill by clicking here: <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3964>



## THE MISUSE OF NDAs

Zelda Perkins, the ex-assistant of the convicted sexual predator and offender Harvey Weinstein has long campaigned for the banning of the misuse of NDA (non-disclosure agreements). Recently, along

with [www.cantbuymysilence.com](http://www.cantbuymysilence.com), she delivered a petition of over 100,000 signatories to No 10 Downing Street asking for the Government to make a small and free amendment to the Employment Rights Bill that would ban the use of NDAs for 'covering up wrong doing'.

Talking to Emily Maitlis, Zelda said:

*"Every scandal there is an NDA at the root"*

*"if you have a legally enforceable agreement that is hiding harm, it shouldn't be enforceable."*

*"the reality is it is not generally enforceable, but for somebody who has been coerced and pushed into signing one, they aren't going to have the money or ware with all to take it to court to test it"*

Zelda was forced to sign an NDA to prevent her from speaking out against Weinstein, which included ensuring she wasn't able to speak to HMRC, Police, a Therapist or friends and family, and wasn't even allowed a copy of the NDA.

In a recent FOI from the BBC on this subject, it was discovered that over £90m was spent in 3 years on these secret settlements by Higher Education institutions and whilst not all of them will have been on sexual harms, they would have also included bullying or student on student harassment.

Zelda told Maitlis that The Higher Education Act has come in and set a two-tier, which now protects lecturers and students on Campus from signing NDA with regards to sexual harms, but people such as cleaners and other outsourced staff in the same environment are not protected.

Whilst the discussion between Zelda and Emily Maitlis is all about the way NDAs have harmed women; those organisations delivering support to male survivors will also be aware of the harm caused by the misuse of NDAs, brought into focus for many of us during our response to the FA abuse scandal post Barry Bennell.

At We Are Survivors, we supported a number of ex-players who had been forced to sign NDAs at the time, as teenagers, by clubs that have the same amount of wealth as a small country!

If you want to know more about Zelda's campaign, please see [www.cantbuymysilence.com](http://www.cantbuymysilence.com) and sign the petition at [www.cantbuymysilence.com/petition-options](http://www.cantbuymysilence.com/petition-options)



## THE TIMES CRIME AND JUSTICE COMMISSION FINAL REPORT

The Times Crime & Justice Commission has published its report into the state of the Criminal Justice System.

We Are Survivors was proud to give evidence and be quoted in the report

You can read the report here: <https://embed.documentcloud.org/documents/25881132-tcjc-full-report/?embed=1> (no paywall)



## [ THE AWAY BIT ]



## SAMSN IS LIVING WELL

Following the decommissioning of the ground breaking Australian male survivor organisation, Living Well, it's great to hear that SAMSN is now the custodian of the information and rich source of data created by ex-pat Dr Gary Foster and his team over the years.

The content of the Living Well website has been updated and transferred to **Survivors & Mates Support Network (SAMSN)** at [www.samsn.org.au/](http://www.samsn.org.au/) where we know Craig and the team will look after it with great care.

## [ DIARY DATES ]



● **Mental Health Awareness Week (12 – 18 May 2025)**



This year's theme is **Community**. Being part of a safe, positive community is vital for our mental health and wellbeing. We thrive when we have strong connections with other people and supportive communities that remind us, we are not alone. **Communities** can provide a sense of belonging, safety, support in hard times, and give us a sense purpose.

● **Men's Health Week (09 – 15 June 2025)**

We need a Men's Health Strategy for the NHS. The Government has promised this and we need to make sure they get it right. So for Men's Health Week 2025, we'll be talking about why we need in Men's Health Strategy and what it needs to include. One issue is that many of us don't know what the NHS offers already so we'll also be producing a simple guide to how the NHS currently works for both men and women.

● **National Coming Out Day (11 October 2025)**

National Coming Out Day is an annual LGBT awareness day observed on October 11 to support anyone "coming out of the closet".

● **International Men's Day (19 November 2025)**

The purpose of this day is to focus on men's health and well-being. In light of this, 'Zero Male Suicide' serves as the theme for International Men's Day 2025.