

## What Good Looks Like – Staff Expertise in Trauma Awareness and Training

### Background

This guide has been prepared in conjunction with survivor charities who are supported by the Scottish Government’s Survivor Support Innovation and Development Fund. A workshop took place in June 2019 and was attended by 14 staff from 10 different charities. The workshop involved a facilitated discussion prompted by the following:

- Survivor charities highlighted trauma training and awareness of staff are key to good practice.
- Share current practice to understand more about trauma training and awareness.
- Impact and lessons.
- Plans going forward.

The Survivor Support Innovation and Development Fund is managed by Inspiring Scotland on behalf of Scottish Government. The Fund aims to enable third sector and other organisations to support the delivery of the Scottish Government’s strategic outcomes for these groups. These outcomes are a Healthy Life, Choice and Control, and Safety and Security for survivors of sexual abuse. There are 25 charities supported by the fund. They receive around £1.3m and support 2,300 survivors a year across 32 Local Authorities.

### Thanks

**The following organisations were consulted in the preparation of this guide:**

- Addaction
- Wellbeing Scotland
- Survivors Unite
- Glasgow Council on Alcohol
- Cornerstone
- Break the Silence
- Talk Now
- Moira Anderson Foundation
- Mind Mosaic
- Western Isles Rape Crisis Centre

### Principles of National Trauma Training Framework - ‘Trauma is everyone’s business’

This workshop is based on attendees’ current practice and experience and the output has, as far as possible, being aligned with Scottish Government National Trauma Training Framework. The overarching goal is to support the strategic planning and delivery of training for those who have contact with survivors of trauma across all parts of the Scottish Workforce. There is strong evidence of trauma informed practice leading to better outcomes for people. Key principles are:

- Choice
- Collaboration
- Trust
- Empowerment
- Safety

## Current practice, challenges and views around trauma training and awareness

- It is not good practice to make assumptions that survivors know about trauma, survivors themselves often welcome training about trauma and how it may affect them.
- GPs play a key role in dealing with survivors given they are often the first point of contact. There was a view that not all GPs are experts in the dealing with survivors due to time constraints and the infrequency of survivor patients in comparison with the number of other patients they see. This can prevent them from opening the conversation with patients who may be about to disclose. It was felt that a short awareness raising session from survivor charities to GPs would help to improve this. The community link model for GPs practices works well.
- The referral process for people with trauma is important and the trauma principles above should be incorporated. This can be achieved by building relationships and trust with referral partners and sharing appropriate information ahead of the referral. Strong links in an organisation can make a positive difference and ensure that the survivor is given an enhanced service. A practical example was provided of strong links with DWP, which allowed the charity to go and collect forms on the survivor's behalf.
- Keeping in touch with CPNs, for example, to see how the survivor is progressing and offering to go with the survivor before they start with new service providers will help ease any fears for the survivor. Ongoing support can be provided to the survivor while they are involved with their new service and reduced as they become more settled. It was recognised that this was time consuming and impractical in some areas.
- While the trauma informed principles were not fully known across all the charities, all felt that the values were demonstrated daily in the work they do. For example, charity premises are viewed as a safe place to go with appropriate resources available.
- Survivors are given a choice over how to engage with the organisation; being survivor-led is key.
- Trauma training should be rolled out much more widely across all statutory, third sector and corporate organisations. This will help ensure that people start to see the behaviour not the underlying issues and avoid retraumatising survivors.

## Impact and Lessons

- Good examples of trauma-linked support and training currently provided:
  - Therapeutic trauma training to survivors prior to accessing counselling services (i.e. stage one of the Herman model). After attending, one of the benefits seen is that fewer survivors felt the need to go on to further counselling. Survivors attend 5 weeks of training which focusses on normalising triggers and enabling them to be aware of their own window of tolerance and access resources to deal with them.
  - Trauma cards used by several charities to help inform statutory agencies that they are working with a survivor.
  - Trauma awareness training should be provided to staff at all levels of the organisation at induction and continually embedded into the organisation through CIPD and revised policies.
  - Awareness training should include trustees and volunteers.
  - Train the trainer supports getting the message out quickly to a wider audience.
  - It is accepted that when delivering training to third party organisations, it is not always possible to assess the impact of the training. Often junior staff members get the initial training, and this is not followed up with the required organisational training.

- It is good practice to check understanding while delivering training and learning logs are useful in obtaining feedback. Staff turnover in some statutory organisations is a challenge meaning training quickly becomes out of date.
- Internal training should be supported by good line management and external supervision.
- Open sessions are delivered quarterly to some statutory organisations.

## Plans and ideas going forward

- It is strongly recommended that the wider community receive training. Some good examples already taking place are:
  - Midwives
  - Community centres
  - Schools
  - Dentists
  - Councillors
  - GPs
  - Addiction services
  - Social work
  - Housing or homeless agencies
  - Local police
  - Speed training is provided for Job Centre Plus
- Consider offering training to third party organisations about how people with learning disabilities with trauma present.
- Finding flexible ways of delivering training e.g. webinars can help make it more accessible.
- Trauma awareness should be embedded into the aesthetics and policies of an organisation.
- Hosting a good conference drives demand for more training.
- Consider bringing advocacy into your organisation to provide additional survivor support.
- Rurality remains a challenge highlighting the benefit or partnership working to support people with trauma.
- Services should be personalised to the individual survivor.
- Peer support can be helpful to survivors and should be available for as long as required.