

8 May 2019



Rt. Hon. Matt Hancock MP  
Secretary of State for Health and Social Care  
39 Victoria St  
London  
SW1H 0EU

Our Ref: SC7065

Dear Matt,

I am writing to you in my capacity as Chair of the APPG on Adult Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse.

Over the last six months, the APPG has been running an inquiry into the experiences of survivors in accessing support services and the criminal justice system. Data was gathered in various ways: a survey of 365 survivors; direct testimony from 12 survivors in Parliament; evidence from the sector including the Victims Commissioner, The Survivors Trust, NHS, and Victim Support; written evidence from survivors, academics and specialist third sector organisations.

The data we have collated has been drafted into three reports to be released through 2019. On Tuesday 7 May we launched the first report, which looks at the quality and availability of information and support for survivors. I have enclosed a copy of the report along with this letter.

I am writing to you specifically regarding the recommendations that fall within the purview of the Department for Health or concerns a health policy, while recognising it is a cross-departmental response that is required to improve outcomes for survivors.

#### Commissioning

- NHS England should collect data on Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) expenditure on long-term therapeutic care for survivors, and consider ringfenced funding as a way to ensure CCGs commission specialist voluntary sector services to meet demand.
- NHS England should set out plans to meet the minimum recommended number of SARCs, as set out by the Council of Europe.
- The SAAS Partnership Board, comprising representatives from the Department of Health and Social Care, the Home Office, the Ministry of Justice, NHS England, Public Health England and specialist sexual violence and abuse support services (SSVSS), should be mandated to develop guidelines and levels of accountability to support commissioning and delivery of specialist sexual violence and abuse support services.

#### Guidance and training to frontline professionals to practice in trauma-informed way.

- Government departments should issue guidance to frontline professionals on how to respond in a trauma-informed way, developed in collaboration with specialist sexual violence and abuse voluntary sector umbrella agencies.

**Sarah Champion**

**Member of Parliament for Rotherham**

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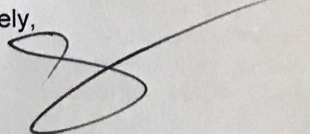
- Government departments should issue guidance to organisations with frontline professionals who regularly encounter survivors on how to respond in a trauma-informed way, developed in conjunction with SSVSS umbrella agencies. This should include, but not be limited to: Department for Education for teachers and social workers, Department for Health and Social Care for GPs and sexual health nurses, Department for Work and Pensions for Jobcentre Plus staff and contracted employment providers, the Home Office for police, Ministry of Justice for CPS and judges.
- National Institute for Health Research should commission research into effective support and therapies for survivors of sexual abuse.

A nationwide public health campaign.

- The Government should fund a nationwide public health campaign to: raise awareness of the issues around childhood sexual abuse, highlight the potential impact on survivors, tackle social myths and stereotypes about sexual abuse and direct survivors and professionals to sources of support and information.
- The Government should provide and promote a one-stop-shop website where survivors can access information about the impact of abuse and be able to locate relevant services in their area. **[www.victimandwitnessinformation.org.uk](http://www.victimandwitnessinformation.org.uk)** should be reimagined as the first port of call for survivors independently trying to access information and should be co-designed with SSVSS to ensure survivors' priorities are reflected in the design.
- The website should be widely publicised so that frontline professionals such as GPs can direct survivors to the site, wherever they are based in the country, in the knowledge they can locate local services from there.
- The website should enable survivors to locate up-to-date information about local SSVSS, health and police services by typing in their postcode. The website should therefore integrate information with Police and Crime Commissioners' websites, as well as SSVSS locators, like The Survivors Trust's listings.

I would welcome a response from your Department regarding the recommendations and would be pleased to discuss further with you at your convenience.

Yours sincerely,



Sarah Champion MP.

Chair of the APPG on Adult Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse.