

**THE SCOTTISH GOVERNMENT**

**EQUALLY SAFE STRATEGY**

**CONSULTATION WITH SURVIVORS**

**OF**

**GENDER BASED VIOLENCE**

**ACCOMPANYING REPORT**

**COMMENTS PACK**

**2017**

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## CONSULTATION COMMENTS PACK

This document comprises of comments, statements and opinions from the **112** women who participated in The Scottish Governments Equally Safe consultation with survivors of Gender Based Violence.

During discussion on each section note takers recorded women's comments with the facilitator recording additional comments on flipcharts.

Women had an opportunity to add statements in sections in the questionnaires. The option to indicate whether they wanted the comments to be included in the report was given with none of the women objecting to the use of comments therefore all are included.

This document accompanies the report however makes powerful reading in its own right and reflects the depth of women's experiences and opinions.

We would like to thank and give our respect to the women who participated for their honesty and willingness to share, what for many, were painful and traumatic experiences.

## SECTION 1 : Violence Against Women & Impact

- Pressure to participate in pornography.
- Forced abortion and bodily mutilation.
- Stalking – false allegations made by himself and third parties, used third parties to harass me.
- Financial problems.
- Education jeopardised.
- Still unable to consider a relationship after 3+ years due to experience.
- Verbal attack in front of church congregation because I'd reported Priest to local police. During investigation, another Priest took £5000 from people's charitable donations and gave it to my assailant enabling him to escape to a country where UK authorities had no locus to interview him, therefore case was closed in the UK.
- Was forced to watch Pornography by Stepdad, sexually abused by Stepdad. Was stalked/raped by ex-boyfriends and sexually harassed at work by work mate think on reflection of a life lived as a prisoner of sorts! The abuse as a child has continued/traumatised me as a child and affected/infected and damaged my life beyond all reason. The Abusers don't realise what they do. They should bring back capital punishment. It is the only punishment that fits the crime. Abuse of a child ruins lives forever.
- Financially, Education, Attachment, Loss.
- Had to make the decision to leave the RC Church which apparently has no genuine support for women and a deep disrespect for Women's ministries.
- Was diagnosed has having Depression and Post Traumatic Stress. I cannot have relationships with men due to fear.
- I do not trust men and this has completely put me off them. Have not been in a relationship for years as I don't trust them.
- I made plans to leave the country (escape). Never managed to do it.
- Physical Abuse – friend's husband.
- Honour Based Violence – Male and Female abusers.
- Overeating so I would become so fat, I hoped it would protect me – it didn't!
- I have great difficulty maintaining relationships.
- The way I was mentally and physically abused by family members when I spoke out. They refused to believe me. Eventually my abuser spoke out and admitted being 'inappropriate' not because he was a paedophile, but simply because he fell in love with me as a person. They still hated me.
- Forced to stay with the person 24/7.
- I was being raped and the guy's friends stole money from my bag.
- Attempted to kill me and my children on several occasions.
- Was in my car. Attacker opened door and grabbed my handbag.
- Things that happened in teenage years, I did not realise who to speak to.

- I'm over-protective with my daughter.
- My personal experiences of domestic abuse, sexual assault, stalking, rape, sexual harassment, child abuse, mugging, hate crime and pornography, have all had a negative impact on my life.
- Law has to change to support Rape victims.
- Found it hard to trust people, left me feeling like all I deserve is pain, now shut myself and always only want my current boyfriend and to be with him all the time.
- Lack of actually putting trust into anyone or any future personal relationships. Has affected my relationship with my children too.
- I had cultural difficulties when expressing in my own language (BSL) misconstrued as possible mental health problems.
- Always looking for an escape route. I have to be in a room with a window. Am hypervigilant and always alert.
- Impacted on work and extended family.
- Unable to work.
- I was raped when I was six. I have been left with mental and physical scars.
- Self-hatred; feel useless; feel unloved and unheard. No-one gives a shit! They say they do but in reality they don't want to know. Constantly judged, treated unfairly and left to feel like damaged goods.
- Caused me to have time off work (financial effects).
- Witness to attempted murder, threats and attacks by family of perpetrator.
- There was a guy in our scheme who was well known for "touching up" kids. We were told not to go near him. Unfortunately that advice was too late for me and it wasn't just "touching up".
- My Dad made me marry a man his age when I was 14 years old – because he owed the man money.
- Left me with trust issues in new relationship.
- Threatened my girlfriend in her work.
- Forced, by my parents, to be a man when I knew I was a woman.
- Threatened to 'out' me.
- We use the word Rape all the time but do people really know what it is and what it does to you.
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.
- When a victim kills themselves, I feel this should be classed as murder.
- I don't trust people.
- I became aggressive and hostile. Put in care, expelled from school. Arrested twice. I got in fights with adults (mainly).
- Threatened and intimidated (feelings).
- Lived a lie to keep others happy and to keep safe.
- I went a bit crazy for a few years and went to a children's panel I got put in a care home and he (my Dad) got sent for bereavement counselling as he had lost his wife and that's probably why he had sex with me.

- Trust issues. I'm hypervigilant. That's why I can't be in relationships.
- I felt very guilty because it happened with a man and a woman.
- Hated my body.
- I realised I was a girl and I'm not sure if this was before or after sexual abuse.
- I blamed myself for years. I hated my body, I hated how I looked and who I was. It's almost like I keep abusing myself mentally.
- I didn't know it was abuse. This is what men in my country do. You have no rights. I got away when he turned on my daughter. When I got here I saw that men do it here too. This is wrong.
- Honestly its F\*\*\*\*ing everywhere. *Everywhere*. What's being done about this S\*\*t?
- I don't go out anymore.
- I was in a residential school. A teacher and a janitor did it. It happened to my pals too. None of us spoke about it. One of them committed suicide.
- I have an eating disorder now. I was fine before it happened.
- I stayed with him until my kids grew up. When I left they still fell out with me. After he died they said they stuck up for him because they were scared of him. I understood that.
- I have nightmares.....this is weird but sometimes I have them when I'm awake. I just freak out. My support worker says they are called flashbacks.
- I know if someone did to my children what happened to me I would kill the bastard.
- I can't cry anymore. It doesn't help. I hate what they did to me.

## Section 2: Disclosure, Reporting and Accessing Support Services

### **What Services did you contact when reporting/disclosing your experience(s)?**

- Police Scotland.
- Women's Aid.
- Rape Crisis.
- My Support Worker – works with families.
- Social Work then Police.
- GP.
- The police, through Rape Crisis.
- Perpetrator was Senior Officer – superintendent.
- Family.

- On third occasion, my daughter hid in cupboard and phoned my sister. My sister then reported it to the police.
- Quarriers Family Resource Centre reported on my behalf as requested
- GP referred to Police.
- Police, A&E, Women's Aid (Clydebank).
- Immigration, then Women's group from Home Office.
- Wise Women
- Say Women.
- Social Work (Adult Support and Protection Order) – NOT by choice!!.

## **Comments on Reporting**

### **Police Scotland & wider Criminal Justice System**

- Was positive with the Police, but a challenging and upsetting procedure.
- Very helpful and understanding. Offered support.
- This was the right thing to do for me. I wanted something done about it.
- I needed to scare him, to get justice for myself and to try and stop him from doing it to anyone else.
- Although I believe this was maybe done in my best interests, I felt compelled to talk to two male police officers. Further talk to CID – felt ashamed, disbelieved to the point that I dropped the report. I felt unable to protect my family and out of control of a situation I should have been supported on.
- It was good to be heard but the whole process that followed afterwards was awful. I felt isolated.
- Police came to my flat. I was bleeding, bruised and had glass in my head. Two male officers told my abuser to go for a walk round the block until I calmed down!
- It made me feel terrible. It made me feel worthless and like I obviously deserved it.
- First experience of reporting to Police was very negative as female officer was very rude and unprofessional. Told me I was "hysterical" whilst severely injured. I felt I had no choice but to go back to the situation.
- No! I wasn't treated greatly near the end of the investigation and there was insufficient evidence of the rapes. Other abuse is going to court and still not being treated fairly, like a victim/witness. Overall it put me off reporting a second rape that happened.
- The way the police dealt with me was horrific. Nobody told me anything. I felt isolated and scared. No sensitivity, no respect.
- I wanted my keys from my abuser and to have him removed from my flat.
- Although currently awaiting a criminal court case it does not include rape and a number of serious assaults.
- Due to previous experience, treatment by CID, Courts and the overall process, it has put me off reporting. Don't want to go through it
- I was a child

- Because of previous experience of reporting to the police – I was not taken seriously.
- They treated it as an everyday occurrence. As acceptable. I was shocked and traumatised again.
- Police officer was lovely but the other was wasn't.
- Victim support made me justify why I needed Special Measure.
- Police never informed me of the outcome. I felt blamed.
- Police provided a prompt, courteous reception and further support recommendations.
- Police Officers were very judgemental.
- The Police were every-day Police and not trained in the crime of Rape. I, being a law-abiding citizen thought to report it would be to get help.
- I overheard 2 police officers saying "so do you believe her?" My mental health was used against me. Was seen as attentions-seeking and taking things the wrong way.
- Was not followed-up by Police for some time when in hospital as a result of life-threatening internal injuries. Was told there were no witnesses therefore no case! Felt very let down and vulnerable. Police Officer's notes were inaccurate!
- They started asking me about when I came to the country etc – very irrelevant questions.
- I was arrested also. I played on a blood disorder I have to try and get out arrest. I was taken to hospital and handcuffed to a bed. I knew if I could get to hospital, I'd feel safer, maybe get a chance to speak to nurses. Nursing staff were on my side and let me stay in toilets for long periods to avoid distress, humiliation and anger of being handcuffed with 2 officers present. Nurses also delayed blood tests so I could stay longer in hospital.
- No. I left feeling even more traumatised and had no-where to turn. The law/protection had let me down. People could commit crimes – sexual – RAPE and it did not count somehow.
- I found out the outcome through friends of the perpetrator.
- It was pointless because my then-partner was only locked up overnight and that was it.
- The more I said, the more I felt the Police wanted to get him.
- Charges were dropped.
- They tracked him down and he was held for three days. Also had a restraining order.
- Experiences with Police Scotland were positive.
- He didn't even get questioned, nothing happened.
- Forced to drop the charges – was in a relationship with him.
- My ex-husband was not charged with marital rapes (over 17 years) due to no evidence, despite knowing the age I was married at and that I was subjected to Honour Based Violence. Police charged him with serious offences but not with rape.
- Scared no-one would believe me. My Mum wouldn't have believed me – he had been our dentist for years. I'm disabled. He had special equipment he got in for me.

- If I'd reported it, my brothers would have given him a doing and then they'd have ended up in jail.
- Lack of awareness about what constituted abuse.
- Fear of the official process.
- Didn't think I'd be taken seriously.
- I was out of the situation – he wasn't around in this country.
- There was an elderly person involved in incident. Felt I had to deal with the situation on my own, not sure I would have been believed.
- Police remained impartial.
- I felt like I had to prove what happened. They believed him over me.
- I was cross-examined by Procurator Fiscal for over 6 hours and there weren't enough tissues in the building! Felt like a criminal, treated that way. They were unprepared to deal with it. Treated like it was me that caused it.
- The whole process A-Z was male-dominated. Cross examined by a male. Felt vulnerable because of this. I felt small. He hadn't listened to me, he was ticking boxes, going through the motions. He wasn't empathetic. Feel I would have got more empathy from female Procurator Fiscal. No understanding of culture or gender issues.
- Didn't believe me and felt I was to blame.
- As my husband was a serving police officer, pressure was put on me by his Superintendent not to prosecute, but he was removed from house to his parents.
- Did not believe woman.
- Would have helped if I had support during reporting to the police
- Police did not signpost me anywhere, but I had rights to support services
- Police refused to provide an interpreter and listened to my ex as he could speak well. As a result I spent a night in custody. I am a deaf BSL user.
- He has access to other women and kids and wasn't convicted.
- No – I got half salary – Perp maintained full salary. I went through hell – no impact for him! I was punished for raising the flag and trying to obtain justice. Where was the justice? Don't be ridiculous – women don't get justice – no real-life understanding in 2017. No equality and diversity.
- I felt that his attempt to kill me and strangle my son was not taken seriously. My children were ignored that they had gone through a traumatic experience.
- The way they were talking to woman. Not listening to woman.
- There was no support from police and no charges brought.
- Family thought it would ruin the family and possibly kill other members of the family.
- Was not believed – but they continued to put me in this situation.
- My older sister reported it for us both – before she made her first Communion.
- I was only 5 years old and my sister was 7. The line of questioning was in relation to the size of his penis (which we did not see). He walked away



and more or less had permission to continue the abuse until we were 12 years old.

- There was a lack of communication and information. I felt judged.
- I don't feel that I have got justice, I have no faith in them at all.
- I went thinking I would get justice and believed my honesty would ensure I would get justice.
- No outcome yet, they are still looking for the person.
- I was regretting it as there wasn't any help provided to me. I had to deal with all that stuff on my own. It was, and still is, a nightmare for me to go through that horrible stuff without support. I would never make that mistake again and will never report any assault again.
- The justice system is slow and I have to 'prove' I am telling the truth. The burden should be on him proving his innocence. The justice system has left me feeling anxious about the details of my assault and worried I will be portrayed as a liar.
- This made us feel as though we were in the wrong. Just shut up and put up, basically.
- The justice system needs to change. The abusers are getting a message that it's not that bad to abuse or act out sexual violence against women. The impact on women's lives after the fact MUST be shown, must be believed and taken into consideration. It's NEVER over, it's NEVER behind them, even if they do receive justice. There is no understanding of what goes on in a survivor's head; what they have to do to try and be normal.
- I feel sad that I have not been able to go to court and say what happened.
- The Police Officer was very helpful and was on my side at court.
- Police reacted quickly and were very understanding and very sensitive. Gave me a home visit and I was made to feel safer.
- He got charged.
- Police were ok I suppose.
- I took in to the Police information given to me by Rape Crisis on Hate Crime. I could report to them but I wanted to do it with Police. They were ok but couldn't get me in and out quickly enough.
- The Police came to our LGBT Centre to talk to our group and we all gave them reports.
- I can pass as a woman (I've been told) but up close they see and the abuse starts. The older transwomen had a hard time.
- The focus was on my behaviour: closed off; aggressive; hostile; cheeky. Not at all on the reasons why. My Dad got more sympathy than I did, even though he was the abuser.
- They looked at me like I was dirt. I was living as Sarah and I had been constantly intimidated, harassed and sexually assaulted by my neighbour and group of friends. They (police) said it might be best not to be Sarah and maybe dress butch like lesbians.
- No outcome, they just recorded it, which will be used to profile but I didn't know then. That happened several times.

- I'm glad I got out whilst my lads were young and he wasn't interested in seeing them. He's moved away and has no contact. I'm scared he will find out I'm gay as he would probably want the lads, but I'm not sure. I didn't take it to court. I decided it would be too upsetting. He did get charged once but I never told police he raped me. Don't think they would believe me. And no evidence of stalking – they said it wasn't stalking (Police).
- Appalling! This was when Hate Crimes just came in about 2000. Don't think they had a clue – but still – no excuse.
- This person was known to them. He hung about LGBT Centre in Dixon Street. The police said they would patrol the area after group nights.
- I'm a Lesbian and I couldn't face judgements or lack of understanding. 'Can a Lesbian be raped – does she just really want a man?'
- I didn't want to report the sexual abuse. They already knew about the physical. Hate crime legislation didn't exist then.
- Some of the police believed me straight away and weren't judgemental even though I was involved in prostitution.
- My abusers never got caught. I did not get any justice whatsoever.
- Giving false hope!
- I feel like when it went to court, the perpetrator got away with it as the Police said there wasn't enough evidence, even though he didn't show up at court.
- On one occasion the perpetrator was sent to prison but other occasions I have been made to feel not believed and at fault for what happened to me.
- I felt it was a waste of time going to the Police.
- They should have listened to me more and should have done more to take him to court.
- Police – constables were fine but CID changed my approach totally. I would think twice before having any dealings with them in future. They put me off reporting and taking it further.
- Some experience of reporting to the police has been positive but others have been negative.
- Situation/concerns not being taken seriously.
- CID need to be more aware that no two survivors are the same.
- Police were very reassuring about what I could do if threatened again.
- Following violent assault in my own home, resulting in life threatening injuries/surgery, Police did not follow-up or report to Procurator Fiscal.
- You get treated as the criminal and most of the time it is thrown out anyway, so nothing happens. The non-result is not worth the stress and anxiety.
- All Police need to have specialist training in how to handle violence and abuse and empathy.
- Better training for Police, lawyers, etc.
- Feeling very let down. Not believed. Having to go through everything over and over. Lack of understanding. Feeling of NO importance.

- The case was Not Proven even through another 3 girls spoke up and reported after I did.

### **Social Work**

- Social Work were somewhat helpful.
- I was fortunate enough to be placed in a care facility that was great. It was a positive experience while it lasted. I didn't want to leave.
- Women workers don't get sent to his house – he assaulted Care Workers too.
- Social Worker didn't want to write it down, but I made them.
- Social Work Services did not believe anything I had disclosed, despite knowing I was a child bride at the age of 14, married to a man 11 years older.
- I was judged by Social Work about my family.
- I was just seen as a problem because I'm and addict.
- Too quick to assume your children are at risk.
- Child protection is their priority. My son was fine. He was a good dad just a sh\*\*e husband.
- He told me I would lose my kids if I didn't leave him.
- It was like being under a magnifying glass. They question everything you do. I don't think they would have questioned a non-disabled persons ability to protect their child.
- Attitude of reception staff was appalling. Looked up and down.
- I was put in care. I never spoke about the sexual abuse, just the physical.
- In my own time. Support. For my report not to have passed to Social Workers, who imposed their power onto me.
- Social worker was so aggressive I didn't want to talk to him. When I did he made excuses for my man's behaviour.
- Support in dealing with child contact issues from abusive situations.
- Social Services were useless.
- Social Workers need better training in how to help trauma survivors.

### **Health Services**

- Experiences with GP were positive.
- My GP gave me the number for Womens Aid.
- I had a CPN for a while and she really helped me. Very supportive.
- I was admitted to hospital after being assaulted and the Nurses knew and he was being a d\*\*k to them and they got him lifted. They arranged for someone to visit me from a group. That saved my life.
- I was referred to Rape Crisis.
- Doctor offered different approaches to dealing with stress and anxiety. I didn't want to take drugs.

- I didn't get on with my health visitor. I wasn't confident to talk to her about things in the past.
- Difficulties with communication.
- I told my GP I was depressed and couldn't sleep and he told me I "just had to get over it" Doesn't he not think if it was that f\*\*\*ing easy I would have done that?
- Had injuries – was discharged without medication.
- A&E were brilliant. I had put up with him for years. I always knew I was gay but I stuck with it as we had lads.
- I took in information given to me by Rape Crisis on Hate Crime. I could report to them but I wanted to do it with Police. They were ok but couldn't get me in and out quickly enough.
- I was forced to talk to the Police in order to get medical care on several occasions.
- I went to A& E and they were complete b\*\*ches. One said I was never going to get a decent man now because of the state of the scars on my arm.
- If Archway had offered me a forensic report when I asked for one, the evidence would have been there.
- NHS hardly any help at all. They were awful!
- Didn't have required support when discharged from hospital.
- I was patched up and sent back to the house.
- Not enough support being offered/people fobbed off with pills.
- After reporting to them all of a sudden I was classed as the "nutcase" because I was drinking and out of control.
- My doctor asked a lot of really personal questions about my sex life with my husband and if the abuse as a child affected that. He was a bit too interested in that so I never went back to renew my sick line and they wouldn't let me see a woman Doctor.

### **Third Sector Comments**

- The place I went to is for women like me. Understood my language and culture. Understood what we go through back home.
- Saheliya saved me.
- The third sector is easy for me to talk about everything to because I felt it was like talking to someone close like a friend.
- Easy to explain my problem and to be understood. Especially third sector, better than others it's friendly and familiar.
- I am not sure if they can understand me like my community did because of that I'm not sure about talking to them about anything.
- Women's Aid were amazing. I think they just understood.
- I was forced to marry at 15. My parents were abusive to me and my sister. We came on holiday to the UK where he was. I ran away. My parents knew I was gay – that's why they forced the marriage. I went to Immigration and they helped me escape and sent me to a women's

group in Bristol. Then I came here and applied for asylum. It's been difficult but I can be me now.

- Rape Crisis saw me about the Rape which really, really helped.
- I went to Course and it was there I realised that what happened to me was abuse. It wasn't my fault.
- Doing this questionnaire was the first time I admitted that I was a boy when it happened and now I'm a woman. The worker wasn't fazed by this and put a lot into perspective for me.
- Being supported by an organisation that understands instead of causing further damage is positive for moving forward.
- I got the help and support I needed.
- Felt like I was going to be judged. I wasn't (Rape Crisis)
- I had to wait 2 months before they could help me. That was a big problem for me.
- They didn't have a space for me so I had to go to another refuge miles away from the kids school and my family.
- There are no refuges in my area and they wouldn't be safe to go to anyway as it's a very small rural area.
- I couldn't have any men in the refuge. My son was 20 and still dependant on me.
- Some of the workers know more than others.
- I didn't think I could talk about also being sexually abused as a child as it was a Rape service for women and they never ask so I didn't say anything.
- I went back to a service I had been to before and they had been closed because their funding was cut.
- There are more services in the City I had no one to talk to for years about the abuse.

### Other

- I still don't know if I can stay. They said it can take up to 7 years so it's not good living with that fear. I know women who have had kids and been sent back, so I have very poor chances. The Home Office are horrible.
- I was interviewed in front of my children. How could I be honest about my situation? They were already scarred by what happened to us.

## **Not Reporting and Why?**

- Are you joking? With our court system? No chance?
- I lived in Australia at the time and didn't know where to go and thought I would lose my children as he always told me that as I was in HIS country now, he will get the children.
- If the process was better and more supportive, I might have reported - especially more understanding.
- Proper support would need to be available before I reported.

- The criminal justice system is set up by and for men. Women have no chance of coming out of that process unscathed, even if the swine does get sentenced which is highly unlikely.
- More awareness that unwanted sexual attention, lewd comments, groping is wrong. Children should be made aware of this at various points throughout childhood by specialised people who know how to talk to young people.
- They compound negative attitudes.
- My friend reported and she felt she had been abused a second time so there's no way I would report.
- If I had good support, I might report. I hate the thought of him having the opportunity to rape again.
- Knowing I was going to be taken seriously might have helped me report.
- Having somewhere safe to go with my children.
- If better support was in place then I may report in the future, but right now the last attack at Christmas is under the carpet.
- I have reported things to the police, but not pressed charges as I have little evidence and I believe it would anger my abuser.
- I might report in the future because then I would feel my children and I were safer.
- No, I didn't report, due to previous treatment by CID and the Courts.
- Would want to report but I am now completely mistrusting of CID and Police.
- I am afraid to report as I feel social services will become involved and will pick at, and dissect, every part of me.
- No as I ended up in Resus with an overdose until I settled into the Say Women Project.
- It was a Child Sexual Abuse case and I never told anyone for years due to personal threats. Also no-one I could tell without destroying the family.
- I was blackmailed by my Stepdad to remain silent.
- I was a child of 7 years old. How did a little innocent girl know it was a crime? Who/How do you tell?
- Personal threats. Would destroy the family.
- It stopped when I was 12, at 28 it's my word against his. My brother. I didn't want to lose my Dad or be questioned. Not long dealt with addictions and still am. Standing in court is not going to help me. He has house, job, and family. I am a recovering addict. Why would they believe?
- Why would I? CSA – memories are not clear. No evidence. Rape – I was drunk. He was part of a friendship group. I didn't see the point.
- I believed what my Stepdad said.
- Feeling frightened/anxious/panicky/depressed.
- Family circumstances at the time (Mum seriously ill) – I didn't want anyone to know it had happened.
- Was a child, didn't want anyone to know what was happening to me.
- I was raped on holiday and I had no proof – my word against theirs.

- Having experienced the negative attitude of the Police before, I did not want to experience that again.
- I didn't want to bring pain to my Mum, who also survived Child Sexual Abuse from the same person (her father). I thought if it doesn't come out, it would save her from further hurt/anger.
- The unknown of what happens after reporting.
- Fear of it becoming worse. Lack of support from family and services.
- If the adults in my life behaved appropriately/responsibly, I'd have been fine.
- If I'd never been born it wouldn't have happened.
- If I knew about Say Women at an early stage.
- If my parents noticed at the time and did it for me. Fears stopped me.
- Being taught about blackmail at school.
- Having a Criminal Justice system that actually provided "Justice".
- If I thought I would be given a chance to be heard and not treated like the bad one.
- Someone to help me through the process. Years ago it was a case of "what happens behind closed doors stays behind closed doors".
- Better support from family/Better support from social work and medical professionals.
- I would have if there was someone I could have gone to straight after it happened – not the police.
- I felt the situation was traumatic enough, I did not want to revisit the situation. At the time attitudes were very negative to women. Not much better now!
- I didn't want to cause any more pain to my family and I was also afraid of what some family members may do to me.
- I was scared and I was told to be quiet.
- Didn't want to re-live it. Scared of what would happen. Couldn't face them if it had gone further (court).
- Had no choice.
- I didn't know what would happen and he was waiting outside the door to take me home. He was so unpredictable and unstable he could have harmed me.
- Felt I put myself in the situation.
- Why would I report? He would just get a slap on the wrist.
- I was afraid of people/family reaction. I didn't want to go through horrible time during reporting as from experience I know how horrible it is. I didn't want to hear the question "are you sure that happened?" or "are you sure you didn't want it?"
- Because I think people will think I am lying because how can these things happen more than once? Also I don't have any evidence.
- I knew that there wasn't enough evidence and that the system was against me. I didn't think the Police would believe me and I couldn't put myself through that.
- The event happened whilst abroad in another country where women are much lower class citizens. Also in the country if it goes to court and

the abuser is found not guilty, the woman then faces a charge for being a liar.

- I was scared and thought it was my fault.
- Because I did not know this was abuse.
- I thought it was not worthwhile reporting as he was under the influence of alcohol.
- Because you feel you are not getting a good outcome or they don't listen to you.
- I have had abuse done to me but it was back home and I never reported any of it because nobody would believe me and I was very scared to do so. It really did affect me up to now but I can't tell anyone. I would not like any of it to happen to my child.
- If there was an organisation in touch with the police.
- Not enough evidence to pursue a court case.
- My abuser got away with it at court as I didn't feel I was confident for a while.
- Because I had been through the same domestic abuse with a previous partner and I felt I would be called a liar and judged for going into another abusive relationship.
- Sentencing is not a deterrent. It's a Joke.
- It was a partner. After we had split up, wasn't sure what to do about it.
- I felt subdued and ashamed that I let this happen again!
- Having reported one assault, I just couldn't bring myself to do it again. I don't think anything at that time could've helped.
- I've been through it before – wouldn't want to go through it again.
- No! I'm here and I'm happy. I'm out and I have a girlfriend and a flat and work. I'm safe. If I go home my family will kill me...truly. They say I've humiliated them and the man I married. His family have sued my parents. I feel terrible for them but I couldn't live like that. I'm happy.
- My parents made me feel it was my fault because I was queer. I'm not queer, I'm a trans person. How would court or jury see it?
- I'm sure if he stole the Sheriff's car the Sheriff wouldn't be asked where he had parked it and was the window open inviting it to be stolen.
- My Dad sexually abused me. No way was I reporting. My Mum would be shattered if she knew and I can't put her through that.
- My ex-husband would have told everyone I was gay. I could lose my kids. Eventually he left me. Didn't think I would be believed that a woman had abused me. I'm bigger than her.
- It happened at school and he was a teacher. I was troubled and he used that and nobody would believe me. He was nice which is crazy because of what he did. He seemed to understand my trouble.
- No, homophobia and trust in the police which I don't have. They were good with the Hate Crime but I have friends who had bad experiences reporting sexual assaults.
- There are certain types of women who are treated unsympathetically.



- The feeling that I would be believed. Nobody spoke about this then. It was the 70s. I was mortified. I didn't even know how to explain it without being embarrassed or feeling sick. NO-ONE SPOKE ABOUT IT. EVER.
- No trust in a system that didn't recognise my issues. It's better now so that's good.
- Things been taken out of my control and choices being made for me by people who didn't understand how damaging it was. Caused me to stop talking, leaving me being assaulted and unable to speak to anyone because I was unable to talk to the police at the time.
- No – the justice system is shocking.
- Felt like my support wasn't actually giving support and they made the decision.
- My abuser is my brother. I have been off the rails in the past. I was left to deal with this in a homeless hostel by myself. Mum and Dad didn't speak to me because I hadn't told them what had happened. I don't want to lose my Mum and Dad. If he doesn't get charged, I will look like I've made it all up.
- I know there wouldn't be evidence and I was afraid of my abusers. If they knew I'd reported and they got away with it, things would have been worse for me (safety wise).
- A previous report of another assault didn't go well.
- If it wasn't a family member it would be easier. If I'd spoken out when I was 12. If I knew he would admit it to the court as he has to my Mum
- I am thinking about it. He has a baby. I feel responsible.
- I don't know if I can put myself through the interrogation. I've already experienced 3 mental breakdowns. Can't deal with it happening again.
- It would probably be a waste of time.
- Experience with the Police was very negative so I didn't report when it happened again

## **MIGHT YOU REPORT HISTORICAL ABUSE IN THE FUTURE?**

- I did as I had correct support in place but due to funding cuts many women are not given the support or having a safe place to stay after reporting due to Say Women project only being able to accommodate 8 places. Temporary housing projects are NOT the place to put a survivor.
- Yes: Because of all the information I am now aware of – what is wrong and what support there is out there to help.
- Yes: attitudes have changed.
- Yes: The publicity lets folk know this happens
- Yes, because abuse shouldn't be "accepted". If I had reported earlier I might not have had to deal with medical issues.

- Yes: because now there are wonderful projects in place – but still not enough services.
- Yes: but only if there were local support services which are easily accessible.
- Yes: I now have more confidence and less fear of consequences.
- Yes: To know that he couldn't do it to someone else.
- Yes: If it might have felt like it helped the problem.
- Yes: I became stronger and I want to report. So it would not happen again
- Yes: it might help me to understand, get supported and understand my problem.
- Yes: Only if it would stop it happening to others.

- Maybe: if I had proper support.
- Maybe: If I was believed by my mother.
- Maybe now due to age and experience. Looking back on life I realise I was young and didn't realise that it was wrong.
- Maybe: Would report if got support at the police station
- Maybe when my Mum dies. She's old and it would upset her.
- Maybe: If I knew that I would get support and didn't need to go through that difficult time alone.
- Maybe: If my Mum left my Dad.
- Maybe: if there was somewhere to go. I didn't think I could go to a refuge because it was a woman who abused me.
- Maybe: I'm saying no, but I'm not sure. Oh I still get abuse in the streets and outside and I don't report because I can't even go into a Police Station. There is 3<sup>rd</sup> party reporting I have used. Is that reporting?
- Maybe: If there was maybe a key person in school to go to. Not a Principle but an outside person linked to the school or a school helpline.
- Maybe: I didn't report the hate crime. I know I can do it now. I might think about it.

- No: Something will be done about it. Also not fearful as support is there for me.
- No: Life has been a chore as it is, due to abuse!
- No: I am finally starting to move on. I still have guilt and shame. It would break me. Child Services know he has a child.
- No: I feel like I've moved on. I don't want to go back there.
- No: I was constantly told I wouldn't be believed.
- No: There is absolutely nothing about the 'System' that inspires confidence. Women do NOT report abuse/violence just for the sake of it? Why would anyone put themselves through that if it 'hadn't happened'? Women should not be treated as liars or attention-seekers.
- No: as still don't have any proof.
- No: I was threatened so I wouldn't report.
- No: Because I didn't want to be isolated.

- No: Maybe, if Police had been more understanding.
- No: I don't need to be blamed again.
- No: Because the police said I couldn't prove it when I did report it
- There needs to be awareness/education from a younger age.
- No: Don't feel I really wanted to.
- No: He is retired and I'm still scared no-one would believe me.
- No: Support Worker believes me but it was too long ago.
- No: I think he is dead.
- No; It would be too painful to bring it all up again.
- No: I wouldn't put myself through it.
- No: I wouldn't trust that anything would get done.
- No: Wouldn't want to open it all up again.
- No: Would have no expectation of a positive outcome/prosecution.
- No: For me, the incident has passed and I have moved on.
- No: If I could feel it would be considered as a valid complaint.
- No: Because I ended up very ill because of it all and I had a breakdown. I received great help from professionals which helped me get better and turn life around. But I would not want to relive it and end up ill again.
- No: Don't want to re-live it.
- No: I'm an addict. No one believes a Junkie.
- No: I would not want him to know I am unable to fly and fight. And also wouldn't want him to know where I live now.
- No: Have been put off reporting completely.
- No: it was my decision not to report.
- No: but maybe if we had a justice system that believes women and has a higher rate of conviction.
- NO: I would if it hadn't been my sister's husband.
- NO; If society had different attitudes/perception that rape isn't just what you see on TV/press.
- NO: but maybe if I had support and somebody who understood what I was going through and how difficult it was.
- I have reported historical abuse.
- No: Nope, never.
- No; I still don't think I would be believed and I don't think I could cope with the trauma of reliving it and being judged.
- No: Because it would hurt my sister.
- No: I still believe it was my fault and that my silly actions led to the event
- No: it left scars. Can never be forgotten.
- So I wouldn't feel alone.
- So that it will not stay within me.
- No: Too traumatic. I don't think I would be prepared. Worry about confidentiality. I'm not back at work.
- No: My mum doesn't know and he's an old man now.
- No: My rapist is a Police Officer
- No: point! It's in the past and I want to leave it there.
- No: point. He's dead.
- No: I'm a woman now – I was a man then. That would just confuse things

## What Services did you contact for support?

- Rape Crisis
- Women's Aid
- Barnardo's
- Eating Disorder Service
- Mental Health Services
- Occupational Health
- Sexual Health Centre
- Private Psychotherapist
- Say Women
- Youth Services
- GP
- Psychiatrist
- Group Therapy
- Private Counselling
- Local Church (not my own)
- Daisy
- Lifelink
- Domestic Abuse Proj. Castlemilk (now Daisy Project)
- Hemat Gryffe
- Karma Nirvana
- Sandyford clinic
- Women and Children First
- GDA
- Wise Women
- University counselling
- Physical Rehabilitation Services
- Breathing Space
- Samaritans
- Saheliya
- Refugee Council
- Red Cross
- Waverley Care
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Quarriers
- Cordia
- Holistic Support
- West Scotland LGBT
- GAMH
- Child Line
- LGBT Switchboard
- \* Women Kind
- \* Social Work
- \* Home Office
- \* Archway
- \* Action Against Incest

## GENERAL COMMENTS ABOUT SERVICES

- Great support from **Rape Crisis**, helped me through the court process. Helped me recover. Purchased me a new bed to replace the one bloodied from the rape.
- **Rape Crisis**, **GP** and **Occupational Health** were helpful and considerate and sensitive to my situation. Professional and approachable. They helped me and supported me as and when I needed it.
- **Rape Crisis** made me realise that I wasn't to blame and they supported me through making the statement to the police.
- If I hadn't gone to counselling, I would have committed suicide.
- **Women's Aid** have been great, helping me access other services and supporting me through legal and other issues.
- **Women's Aid** and **Rape Crisis** were both fantastic.
- **Women's Aid** didn't help me. I then turned to **Rape Crisis** who were great.
- Specialist services for survivors who are experiencing multiple effects, e.g. PTSD, solvent use, physical conditions.
- Waiting lists – women shouldn't be turned away from any service.
- There has to be more support – in all areas – in all services.
- Specialist services provided by voluntary sector which provide everything: IDAA; Support; counselling; Doctor; psychologist; physician; psychiatrist - with a generalised analysis.
- Services not to be complacent. They should all have training on equality issues.
- Women should be offered interim email/phone support or courses if no counselling is available at that time from whichever service they contact.
- The Government need to fund more support services and study the true effects.
- I was given a safe environment at **Say Women**. Had staff who knew how to help me and gave me a lot of support to move forward and start reclaiming my life.
- **Say Women** have saved my life. I was hospitalised many times trying to die. I walked in one day and they helped.
- It made me realise I was the only person who could deal with it and spurred me on to doing just that. Made me accept the things I could not change.
- Received support from a **local church** (different denomination to my own).
- **Wise Women** really opened my eyes.
- **CPN** was excellent but was only allocated 6 sessions without knowledge when it would end.
- Care by **nurses/doctors/consultants** was mostly excellent/sensitive.
- **Rape Crisis** were very helpful.

- **Private psychotherapist** – really great, but I shouldn't have to pay for help. I have to get help from family to afford it. If I didn't have that financial help, I would have nothing!! I was categorically told by **NHS Mental Health Services** that there was no help!!
- Was a small group of young girls doing activities and talking and counselling sessions. Staff were lovely and most aspects were great (**Say Women**).
- Counselling was very positive. I got 8 sessions on a one-to-one basis and I was able to talk about it (**Rape Crisis**).
- **Rape Crisis** – I felt I was being judged by young member of staff. Not helpful at all. Lack of funding resources.
- **Mental Health team** – not the right people to see.
- **CPN psychologists** – “Can't help till you admit to yourself”. I wasn't ready to admit. Put on anti-depressants, kept OD'ing.
- Didn't access any services as I didn't know about them.
- My **social worker** told me about **Wise Women** and I went to their Confidence Building Group. It was brilliant. They should run more.
- I thought seeking help would “fix” things finally, but it is not like that – there is no “switch” where everything is suddenly ok.
- Received absolutely no support from my own **church** (RC) after reporting one of their Priests.
- After 6 support sessions, I was told I'd had “more than my fair share of attention” (**Rape Crisis**).
- When referred to **Mental Health Services**, they refused me psychological help because as far as they were concerned, I'd had 'help' through **Rape Crisis** and it hadn't worked! They weren't interested that the help at RC had stopped suddenly, so it was unfinished 'help'.
- **Rape Crisis** counsellor went off sick. Was passed to another Rape Crisis counsellor who also went off sick. I never heard from them again. Being 'cut-off' mid-help also had an extremely detrimental impact!
- Useful to meet people in same or similar circumstances (**Rape Crisis**).
- Very good. I didn't feel ashamed. Nice ladies and knew what I was talking about (**Rape Crisis**).
- My counsellor was great and I could open up to her (**Rape Crisis**).
- **Daisy** and **Social Work** was positive.
- Gave me the space and support to process the experiences I had lived (**Rape Crisis**).
- Was very helpful to report. I got support from the Project and counselling (**Daisy**).
- I received the help I needed from **Daisy** and they were there when I needed someone to talk to. They were always calling to see how I was.
- **Rape Crisis** were a key service in my recovery process. Their knowledge and understanding was invaluable.
- **Police** was mixed.
- Wrong that I felt the need to go to a **private therapist** as I was not aware of a service I could access when I needed it.

- **Social Work** opened case then closed it while I was pregnant without seeing me. After birth was forced to leave relationship or lose my son.
- I received very negative responses and inappropriate remarks from a Support Worker and a manager regarding my experience. **Hemat Gryffe** were/seemed more interested in using my experiences for their publicity, than offering support.
- **Social Work** threatened to take my child with everything that was going on.
- **Police** – not understanding how tired I get trying to communicate/they didn't have time for the pace I needed them to go at.
- Need to explain exactly what the police process is.
- Lack of awareness about what services are out there.
- **Social Work** – Lose my son/Lawyer – left with bill.
- I feel that **Social Work Services** lack knowledge and adequate understanding of situations women find themselves in e.g. Domestic Abuse/Honour Based Violence etc.
- Need more groups for Domestic Violence survivors.
- Crèches and outings for kids/women.
- Not enough services/resources.
- In the end I changed **GP** and my new **GP** was amazing in supporting me to access intensive therapy that supported me for years to get better, come off medication and change my life around.
- Counselling helped. (**Private Counselling**).
- Gives me a voice and to be able to believe in myself. To be with like-minded people and to feel safe (**Say Women**).
- I decided to look for help as a 'grown-up', my doctor was supportive and made time for me (**GP**).
- I was able to move on with my life and I was safe. I am really grateful for the help and support from these services.
- I didn't feel like the lady got me. As a consequence of reporting my MS became worse and chronic. No-one really understood what was going on, no one organisation to turn to. I lost my job – retired due to ill-health against my will. I tried self-care. (**Health**).
- My original **GP** was awful. She judged me, looked down/rolled her eyes at me and told me that unless I walked away from my whole family, I would just need to accept it 'happened' and get on with it, for as long as I choose to have them around me, then I have to deal with it!
- I was told to stand on my own feet. I would not be able to rely on any financial help or other support as he was a serving police officer and I was completely dismissed. Felt degraded and unsupported
- No support at all when reporting to the **police**.
- **GPs** don't know what services are available. Many phone calls later, I found **Women and Children First**.
- **Police** were sensitive to the subject matter. Gave me information on **Rape Crisis** Centre so I could access services.
- I was believed and taken seriously. People were patient and kind and didn't blame or patronise me (**Rape Crisis**).

- Were very supportive of what had happened and showed me ways to cope (**Say Women**).
- I have found **Rape Crisis** invaluable in helping me to recover – very supportive and listened without judgment. For the first time I didn't feel ashamed.
- They helped me to understand what happened and that I was not at fault. I also met other people that survived similar abuse and I didn't feel so alone (**Say Women**).
- It has helped me reduce the flashbacks and intrusive images (**Rape Crisis**).
- I found it very difficult to access counselling and one counsellor (private) who was very insensitive and forced me to retell my experiences in detail, causing me to be re-traumatised.
- **Mental Health Services** – I have been continually let down and denied help. I am going to ask for a different psychiatrist. My **Rape Crisis** worker sent a letter on my behalf but they lost it and then didn't help me. I have not been taken seriously.
- FUNDING!!!!
- You pay your taxes and then when you need help the system lets you down, but piles money into other events/campaigns.
- Get a psychiatrist that understands me – the needs of a survivor and the families of survivors.
- **GP** was understanding/sympathetic and suggested **Women's Aid**. I was able to speak to people who understood and didn't judge.
- **Women's Aid** gave me a lot of support at the time and made me feel better for talking about it.
- **Police** were very understanding.
- Being able to talk to someone wholly without judgement. They were sympathetic and understanding.
- **Social Work** were fairly understanding but were judging me, asking questions about my kids.
- There does not seem to be enough funding to keep good services going. There may be shortfall in services to cope with refugee/migrant women as their numbers increase in Scotland.
- **LGBT** was ok but they put me onto **Rape Crisis** Glasgow and they gave me support. Then **Wise Women** did a Confidence Building course with our group and I did a further course with **Wise Women** after that.
- Just accepted what I was saying (**Rape Crisis**).
- I was put into care. (**Social Work**).
- I felt believed. Understood my confusion and my transition. I went to a centre and just meeting others like me was amazing (**Rape Crisis**).
- **Rape crisis** gave me counselling and support just when I needed it. I could have done with more though and didn't say about child abuse. They never brought it up.
- **LGBT** just understood, I didn't talk about the abuse though.
- **Say Women** Helped me recover and I have a safe place to stay. Helped me get a job. I came out too.



- I accept there's nothing the **Police** can do if the attacker (Hate Crime) is not known.
- **Police** encouraged me not to pursue stalking as he could claim he just wanted to see the lads, which is true, I suppose. It saved me going through courts and social work for no reason.
- **Social Work:** Couldn't mention sexual abuse and they focussed all support on him because he was a "poor widower raising this Harpie on his own".
- Only **Say Women** have helped me realise my addictions were an escape only. Say Women understood that.
- Times I have been listened to and been given the knowledge of the impact of abuse. Letting me feel empowered and not blaming myself for problems I have now. Also understanding how abuse works, how abusers keep victims isolated and quiet. So I didn't blame myself for what they did to me. (**Say Women**).
- There was someone who listened and believed me without judgement. (**Say Women**).
- Being judged and made to feel guilty and at fault or crazy for reacting in a normal way to trauma (**GP**).
- Counselling – going through the wrong services (**NHS**).
- **Police** – Not being believed due to their lack of knowledge. They seemed to feel threatened.
- **Social Work** – Confidentiality/unprofessional, judgemental workers
- **Counselling** – they didn't listen! (**NHS**).
- **Social Workers** were very cruel to me.
- People are not aware enough to help. **Say Women** understand. **GPs**, **Police** etc are not trained in these circumstances to give out the right help. Unless they have personal experience.

## **BARRIERS TO SERVICES \ SUGGESTIONS?**

- Attitudes, Attitudes, Attitudes and More Attitudes.
- More of a focus on the barriers faced by women who identify with additional equality issues.
- Lack of knowledge/Education/Information.
- Low self-esteem.
- I was sanctioned for going to a support group at **Wise Women**.
- Seen as a lot of work due to disability.
- We worked in the field and I didn't want to be identified.
- Bullying techniques within **RC Church** structures.
- Most Services operate during school/work hours. Find it difficult getting time off to attend.
- Whilst in hospital with life-threatening injuries, I missed an appointment for **NHS** 'talking' therapy, so was taken off the waiting list.
- Attitudes – e.g. being told I didn't want help – just because what I needed didn't fit in with what their idea of 'help' was. (**GP**).

- Financial – if I couldn't pay for help, there'd be none.
- I felt the number of counselling sessions available wasn't enough and that I would have benefitted from more. (**Rape Crisis**).
- Some Services are very judgemental.
- Ability to get there/too intimidated to attend (**Rape Crisis**).
- Accessibility, Knowledge, Awareness, Waiting times.
- Between **GP/Hospital** and **Police**, there was no continued care.
- There is definitely a class issue with some services.
- No understanding or compassion from **GP** about psychological impact of my assault/resulting injuries. When I became upset I became labelled! That impacted on my trust in Services. People appeared interested in procedures and ticking boxes!
- **GPs** can be too quick to write a prescription instead of finding alternative 'help'.
- Funding - The Government need to put into appropriate services, especially the Third Sector.
- Support put in place to assist the person to access the support (taxi/disabled friendly/smaller groups).
- Need people with experience, not just qualifications.
- More resources. More trained workers.
- Cant access services in rural areas as there is only **social work or health**.
- Possibly a phone call 6 months after closure to check how a victim is moving on? (**All Services**).
- Government investing more time in these Services, e.g. financial/advertising.
- People who are adequately trained and understand the impact of Violence against Women.
- By communicating and understanding.
- Change the **Criminal Justice System** to benefit the victims, not letting abuser away Scot free whilst scrutinising the victim.
- More funding for support groups/services for women and more advertising of what is currently available. Many women don't know.
- Help should be more accessible in **schools** and **medical facilities**.
- Existing policies not enforced.
- No understanding of what's needed for women.
- Practical Support/not just Emotional.
- Some services seem to gain their understanding/knowledge from text books, not from survivors.
- Local services for women to access and do so in a safe, confidential way.
- Speak to more women.
- Need support workers to help you with housing and additional support day in, day out.
- By the Government giving more money to these wonderful services.
- Training for **Social Workers** around disclosure so they don't have a Nanny Rooney.
- Practical support – ie housing.

- Training for **social workers/lawyers/professionals** making decisions around child protection.
- Consistent/adequate funding for services for women/children.
- More awareness campaigns aimed at Men. They're the only ones who can ACTUALLY stop this!
- More funding.
- Training for workers in other sectors to raise awareness of Domestic Abuse and how to support women in a meaningful way. Not to judge women for their decision making.
- I felt I was in a predominately white arena. Police, PF etc were all white. White males were all around me. Total lack of diversity. Attitude was that I shouldn't be challenging/reporting a **police** officer. Felt they were trying to put me off.
- **Family.**
- Attitudes about having a chip on your shoulder.
- Not listened to in Care when young (**Social Work**).
- Financial.
- **Police** attitude was a barrier and would not report again.
- I wanted to receive counselling but it was not available to a deaf BSL user.
- Knowledge of who to contact.
- Pre-conceived attitudes within the law.
- Safety nets for women and families.
- Not being taken seriously.
- Don't know what services are available.
- Within the Asian community – no specialised skills that combine culture, abuse and disability.
- Proper training!!
- Lack of information.
- Because there are no services out there that I could access.
- More investment in teaching Womens' rights.
- Involving women in maintaining safe places.
- Not feeling children could be removed.
- Services need to advertise better.
- Somewhere people can go and feel safe and open within the Asian community.
- Training for services around cultural and diversity issues, to ensure survivors are getting the right service for them.
- Listen to right people – not just white people.
- Ensure that any person in a position where they may be approached for help with an abuse case is properly trained or at least be able to refer the victim! My original **GP** should have dealt with me better!
- Give people more information – educate people at an early age.
- Make information more easily accessible to all.
- Training and knowing the next step.
- **GPs** knowing about services – where to refer you on to.

- Work and getting time to attend workshops – did not want to say to work why I wanted time off.
- I didn't get any clear information when I could get access to support. I was left alone after making report.
- **Social Work** had no interest in understanding and listening to the mental health problems that I have that are linked to the early trauma.
- Better support throughout the **Justice System**.
- There is just not enough ongoing support, mainly due to funding and demand.
- More locations – service in South Lanarkshire just isn't good enough.
- Waiting lists.
- Help for families of survivors.
- Lack of interest and dismissing attitude towards the mental health difficulties I have e.g. obsessive compulsive symptoms, depressions, mood swings. They continually cancel my appointments and make unhelpful comments. Refuse me help that I'm asking for (**Health Services**)
  - Clear message/information when you can reach support. Listen to what we have to say. How we feel and how all this process is difficult for us as it is a traumatic experience for us.
  - Earlier support from the **Witness Support Service**.
  - The government needs to provide more funding...not that I believe that will actually happen.
  - People dealing with survivors should be more understanding of what the person is actually going through. Understand how this has affected their entire life. It never goes away. The smallest thing, smell or item can trigger it off and send the person on a downward spiral in to a very low feeling of despair, so low that they feel that the only way out is to die. This is the worst feeling and they need to be aware of this. If someone burns or cuts themselves, other people can relate to the pain they're feeling. But if someone has never experienced sexual violence, they can NEVER understand how a survivor feels.
  - FUNDING!!!! Groups need funding to expand their services.
  - You pay your taxes and then when you need help the system lets you down, but piles money into other events/campaigns.
  - Get a psychiatrist that understands me – the needs of a survivor and the families of survivors.
  - Because it is free (does not cost me anything) and they provide me with an interpreter which means I could explain my problem without difficulty (**Saheliya**).
  - That's where I get some of the help I need (**Saheliya**).
  - We get help because they listen to us and they speak our language (**Saheliya**).
  - I found them helpful (**Saheliya**).
  - **Saheliya** was welcoming and helped me with my problem.
  - Didn't know where to find counselling.
  - Language barriers.

- No interpreters.
- No other people who speak our languages.
- To understand what's really going on in the Community and to reach those people with information.
- Lack of training, education and awareness.
- To have a place to complain about our problems.
- Giving women more training and more information.
- Empowerment of women.
- Funding has to be made available to make sure women's services are able to reach the women who desperately need the services.
- There is a lack of ongoing support that treats the person holistically, rather than with specific issues. Eg – **addiction services** – where is the long-term support for the reasons many people started using negative coping mechanisms in the first place?
- Invest money so that **Housing** can be available to people so they can leave abusive relationships/situations.
- Attitudes of **police**.
- Going to **Health** services was really difficult but changed **GP** and she was better about gender reassignment. I'm also disabled and they were very patronising but I've had that since I was 20 when I became disabled. I think they thought I was just attention-seeking.
- My **GP** was too interested in my gay relationship and how I knew I was gay.
- **Home Office**: Horrible attitudes and they make judgements and look down on you. They think I'm exaggerating - my family WILL kill me.
- **Police** – Attitude/lack of information.
- **Health** – lack of information. Very judgemental.
- **Health services** were so quick to latch onto my sexuality influencing the rape.
- Lack of information for **LGBT** people. It's all about the socialising, not the other stuff we experience.
- Attitudes from the **Home Office**.
- Violence against **LGBT** Services. Nothing for older **LGBT** it's all younger people. Also staff not very up on other issues. I'm disabled too and have been abused. They just focus on sexuality.
- Lesbian support staff who might get what it's like to be gay and raped.
- More refuge spaces needed. My refuge was full all the time. More children's' workers and more support to help you move to a new area.
- There aren't enough funding/resources available. Women's services chasing their tails and can't cope with the demands. Pop up charities/ Aleos /private cheap consultants being brought in and funded when experienced long-term, professional services are already there providing excellent support and value for money. Politicians don't really get what's needed. It's not cheap if you want it to work.
- Transgender Service.
- **LGBT** refuge.
- More services set up for more women to talk to.

- Not sure. Maybe more funding and the council should be doing more about safe housing for women and children.
- We are more than our sexuality. We experience different things and that needs to be recognised.
- Tendering process needs to be scrapped. "Pay cheap, buy twice".
- **Council** and **Scottish Government** need awareness training.
- **Police** need ongoing training.
- **Housing** need training in working with people with complex needs.
- Stop making cuts...review funding strategies.
- Women's inequality issues dropping off the agenda.
- The assumption we are all equal is an excuse to dismiss. Increases invisibility.
- More trans and **LGBT** people in positions of power. It needs to be that it's seen as just the same thing and we are not seen as different or special. I don't want people to notice me. I just want to pass by like all other people.
- More training and awareness raising.
- Maybe more support to stay in this country. I love Glasgow, I love Scotland. I'm safe here. Please see that?
- Not enough information given to people when they need it about where to go for help. Time limits/Age restrictions for support.
- Funding cuts = Staff cuts + less time.
- Organisations being made to be more focussed on external goals/influences, instead of being able to support people based on individual needs.
- Special Officers to deal with these complaints/accusations. People who are the first port of call to report have to understand or be taught how to understand.
- Obviously funding – but by giving organisations more freedom to make their own outcomes instead of these being dictated by people who don't have experience/knowledge or understanding of the impact of abuse and how difficult it is to access support to deal with these issues.
- Rape/Abuse Centres put in place like drug/alcohol centres.