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An Exploration of Service Delivery to Male Survivors of Sexual Abuse

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Introduction

In 2010 I was awarded a Winston Churchill Travelling Fellowship to investigate service delivery to male survivors of sexual abuse in Australia, America and Canada. The aim of the fellowship was to inform my work at Mankind¹ in developing more sensitive approaches to enable men to engage in counselling for their sexually abusive issues. Mankind is a registered charity that delivers counselling to men (18+) who have experienced sexual abuse/assault at any time in their lives. The agency was founded in 2000 by two counsellors who in their private practice were noticing an increase in male clients disclosing abuse. In looking for resources for these clients and finding nothing, they decided to start an agency that would focus on this area of growing unmet need. The agency was completely staffed by volunteers up until 2007 when a £5k Awards for All grant was awarded to fund the creation of a business plan and fundraising strategy. I approached the agency at the same time and offered my services as part paid/part volunteer to develop these two documents. In 2008 we were awarded a 5 year Big Lottery grant to increase the capacity of the service and develop a model of service delivery to male survivors.

Research figures estimate that in the UK almost 3.4% of the male population have experienced non-consensual sexual incidents as adults² and 11% have suffered sexual abuse as children.³ This translates into an estimated figure of 576,000 men living in the South East of England who have experienced some sort of sexual violence. Internationally, research on prevalence figures concur on an estimate of 1 in 6 men have experienced unwanted or abusive sexual experiences before age 16. Since the change in law in 1995 that recognised men as victims of rape, there has been a steady rise in reported cases to the Police. However it is acknowledged that the official reported figures only represent a small minority of actual cases. This is due to men's concerns over reporting sexually abusive incidents for fear over whether they will be believed and/or how they will be perceived. Traditionally rape and sexual abuse are crimes associated with women so many male victims feel that they are the only one it has happened to and it happened to them because there is something wrong with them as men.

What we have noticed at Mankind is that there is more of an acceptance of men experiencing childhood sexual abuse and as our service figures have grown these represent the majority of our cases. Rape and sexual assault as an adult male still remains a taboo area with many misconceptions about why it occurs and who perpetrates such acts. So as in official reporting these types of incidents make up a smaller proportion (approx. 10%) of our

¹ www.mankindcounselling.org.uk

² Source: *Finney, British Crime Survey, 2004/5*

³ Source: *Cawson et al. (2000) Child maltreatment in the United Kingdom: a study of the prevalence of child sexual abuse and neglect. London: NSPCC*

client group.

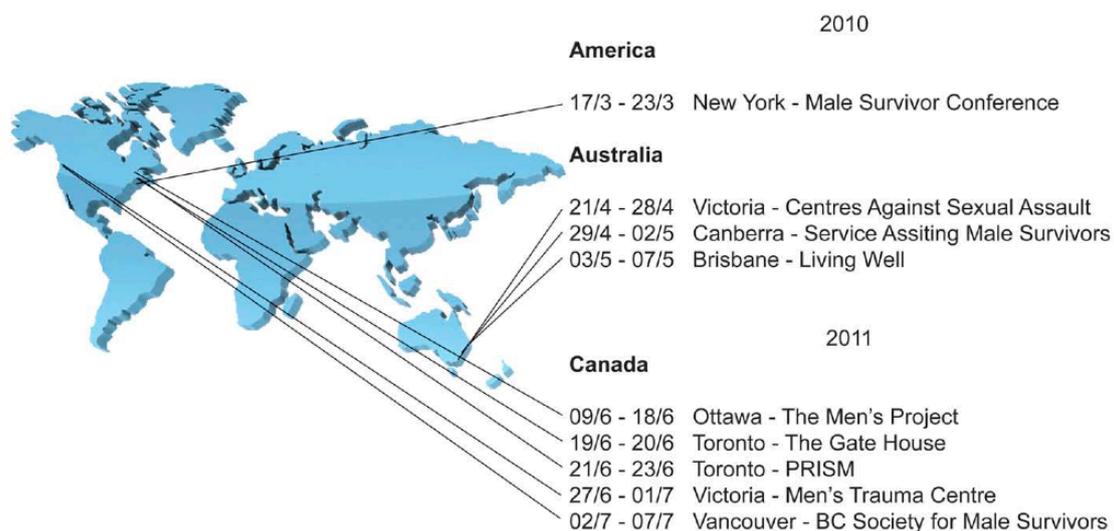
At Mankind we are aware of these issues for men around disclosure and the associated difficulties in seeking help. We also know that when men do engage with counselling there is a high percentage of DNA (Did Not Attend) where clients do not turn up for counselling sessions or unexpectedly leave counselling without notice, which in our experience occurs in approximately 20% of client cases. In developing a model of service delivery we wanted to address these issues by asking the questions:

1. How can we engage men in our service?
2. Once men are engaged what can we do to retain their engagement?

Historically counselling for sexual abuse has been aimed at women using models that have been developed out of structural feminist theory. These address the unique pressures and issues of inequality that women face within a patriarchal society. For men, there is no such history of comprehensive research and coordinated response to develop a model of service delivery. The research that does exist tends to focus on prevalence and effects and though this has helped to highlight the existence and plight of the male victim, there is no consensus or best practice guidelines on delivering services that can inform agencies that offer services to this client group.

There are a small number of specialist agencies such as Mankind within the UK. However due to scant resources that limit the work to focusing only on client based activities such as counselling and helplines, there is a lack of coordination and no defined network for knowledge/information sharing and mutual support. This can lead to feelings of isolation and frustration for service managers such as myself in trying to develop appropriate service models for men. It was within this context that I made my application to the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust (WCMT) to investigate beyond the UK and discover what was happening on an international scale in the area of services to male survivors.

Itinerary



Acknowledgements

I would like to thank everyone who participated and gave their time, knowledge and experience to enable me to complete this fellowship. Not all of the interviews and meetings I undertook have found their way into this report however, they were all of great value in enabling me to get a larger picture of how services are being delivered to male survivors.

I would also like to thank the Trustees of Mankind for supporting my fellowship and especially my colleagues Mona and Vicci who held the fort while I was away.

Special thanks also to Barry, Daren and Ruth for helping me see the wood from the trees when I got lost in the words.

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About Me

For the past 15 years, I have been working in the area of providing therapeutic services to men who have suffered childhood sexual abuse and/or adult sexual assault. This has been in a variety of roles, Helpline worker, Treasurer, counsellor, trainer, fundraiser and more recently CEO at Mankind in East Sussex. Prior to this I had been working in the financial services sector for a number of investment banks, which not only paid for my counsellor training (in Person Centred model) but also gave me a good grounding in financial administration and business acumen. I did not set out to work within the sexual assault sector, after completing my training I was searching for some volunteer work to gain further experience and noticed an agency advertising for helpline workers to answer calls on a men's line for male survivors. I was interested as, like most of the population, I too associated rape and sexual assault with females and knew nothing about the growing number of male victims coming forward. Attending their training caught my interest even more and I was delighted when they offered me a volunteer position.

I wasn't really prepared by the lack of organisation that I found when I joined Survivors UK in 1996. My plan was to volunteer on the Helpline and gain some experience and confidence in using my counselling skills. Little did I know then how involved I was to get. Like most small grass roots charitable organisations working in unpopular, unrecognised and/or minority areas, Survivors UK was very good at providing the much needed client services. What tends to be lacking is the business side of the operation in terms of financing, administration, strategy and planning. The two worlds just do not seem to mix. There is no replacement for the passion, determination, expertise and empathy that drive such organisations. However, without funds and organisational planning many services burn themselves out with exhaustion, frustration and defeat. In the 15 years since I entered the sector, charitable organisations have had to attend more to the business side of operations and now recognise the need for the other skill sets required to successfully deliver services. When I began volunteering at Survivors UK, my background in financial services gave me the opportunity to offer a lot more than I had originally intended and I saw an opportunity to get more involved. I joined the Trustee board as Treasurer and began to investigate different types of funds and fundraising. Within a year I had secured adequate funds to give the organisation some financial security and enable me to become an employee.

Over the years, many people have asked me why I chose to work in such a distressing and harrowing field. I too have asked myself the same question when feeling completely overwhelmed by the stories of men's experiences of sexual abuse and the devastating consequences of such violations. The answer is that within the sharing of these stories I was hearing another story of the experience of men's lives. This was about the pressures and

restrictions of being male that gender socialisation, gender stereotyping and structural patriarchy placed on men, which I not only empathised with but also in my own experience of being male could identify with. Through feminism, the Women's Movement exposed the nature of gender inequality, which disproportionately gave power, privilege and status to men. Working with male victims of sexual abuse began to highlight to me, how such inequality also negatively affected men when in a position that contradicted these gender imposed roles. I became fascinated with this new male voice and the folly of such 'rules' that denied such basic emotions as hurt, pain, distress and confusion. At its most radical, feminism can reduce the male to an ego that is solely preoccupied with and only satisfied by expressions of power and domination. This extreme position does not reflect the true epistemology of feminism that is concerned with the ways in which gender influences our concept of knowledge and so allows for a more expansive discussion of gender that can include the full range of men's experiences. Feminism and gender politics are an extremely complicated field in which I do not consider myself an academic. My interest is more based in the lived experience of men's lives and how an experience such as sexual abuse brings forth issues that show us how stereotypical views of both genders though based in a reality are not absolute and are unhelpful to the recovery of both men and women.

About Men

The emergence of the male victim came about as a consequence of the Women's Movement and creation of Rape Crisis as an organised campaign against the sexual victimisation of women. The fact that men began to contact Rape Crisis organisations was an unexpected and politically difficult occurrence. I have heard many stories from men over the years about receiving a very negative reception when contacting Rape Crisis centres. Conversely I have heard many positive stories and talking to the women that work within these agencies, I have also heard about the difficulties they have had in not being able to help men they empathised with, as that would be at odds with the agency remit.

Though research exists and is growing on men as victims of sexual violence⁴, it just does not carry the same gravitas or weight of argument as the female

The Dilemma of the Male Victim

1. Unlike women, historically men do not come from a position of oppression but one of privilege.
2. This position of privilege brings its own unique challenge for men in being able to recognise oneself as a victim and having the ability to seek help.
3. The challenge for men is not to fight to gain power over an oppressive system but to recognise and denounce the inequality of their privileged power position.
4. The goal is to expose an historic patriarchal system that instills inequalities between men and women and restricts freedom of choice and action for both genders.

⁴ For a comprehensive list and discussion see www.jimhopper.com/male-ab/

position. Of course, it is not a competition and the aim is not to deny the female experience, but there is the need for further research on the male victim to increase our understanding in this area.

The dilemma for men as victims of sexual violence is that unlike women, there is no separate, defined oppressor as the perpetrator is also male. In cases where the perpetrator is female (which in my experience is about 30% in child sexual abuse) there is also confusion as females are supposed to be the nurturing caregivers in society and are also seen as the oppressed, so cannot be dominant. This contradicts the ideas of males as strong, independent, powerful and in control, which are important stereotypical ideals for men within a patriarchal society. Therefore for a man to disclose being a victim of sexual violence, he exposes himself to this contradiction and questioning, internally and externally, of his masculinity. In 1995 Thompson & Pleck⁵ introduced the notion of gender role strain, which recognised the entity of masculinity as a social construction of gender to serve the traditional patriarchal ideal. To be a true or real man in the patriarchal society there are certain rules that have to be adhered to as shown below.

The 4 Rules of masculinity	
1. "No Sissy Stuff"	Distance self from femininity, homophobia, avoid emotions
2. "Be a Big Wheel"	Strive for achievement and success, focus on competition
3. "Be a Sturdy Oak"	Avoid vulnerability, stay composed and in control, be tough
4. "Give em Hell"	Act aggressively to become dominant

From David & Brannon (1976). *The Forty-nine percent majority: The male sex role*. Addison-Wesley

Research into the affect of the internalization of these rules has resulted in a greater understanding of the strain or difficulty men experience in trying to conform to the impossibility of the male role. This not only allows for empathy for the male condition but also reveals that the oppressor for men in a patriarchal society is the very society they live in, paradoxically, the society they have created. The two important factors are how much a society promotes the rules of masculinity and how much the individuals living in that society internalise them and believes them to be true. Everyone violates some gender rules, but it is the number of rules violated within sexual

⁵ Thompson, E. H., & Pleck, J. H. (1995). Masculinity ideologies: A review of research instrumentation on men and masculinities. In R. F. Levant & W. S. Pollack (Eds.), *A new psychology of men* (pp. 129-163). New York: Basic Books.

violence against men (i.e. all of them) that society and the individual can struggle to understand and so comprehend what has actually happened.

This can make it difficult not only for men to recognise, acknowledge and disclose sexual abuse, it can also make it difficult for others to hear and accept what is being said. This is particularly pertinent in the medical and psychological services where practitioners in a 'helping' role hold negative or misinformed beliefs about men and sexual abuse.

Research into the psychological impact of sexual abuse on men has identified the following issues for men:⁶

- Anger
- Fear
- Homosexuality Issues
- Helplessness
- Isolation and Alienation
- Legitimacy
- Loss
- Masculinity Issues
- Negative Childhood Peer Relations
- Negative Schemas about People
- Negative Schemas about the Self
- Problems with Sexuality
- Self Blame/Guilt/Shame/Humiliation

For men that are closely allied to the 4 rules of masculinity, the only one of these issues that they can comfortably express is anger, which may then lead to negative consequences and perceptions. The pressure on men to appear strong and masculine can increase the effect of the psychological impact of sexual abuse and lead to the creation of many complex issues including:

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Low Self-Esteem
- Social Alienation
- Sexual Dysfunction
- Intimacy and Trust Issues
- Aggression
- Delinquency
- Self-Harm
- Substance Misuse
- Relationship Problems
- Marital Breakdown
- Poor Parenting

⁶ Lisak, D. (1994). [The psychological impact of sexual abuse: Content analysis of interviews with male survivors](#) *Journal of Traumatic Stress*, 7, 525-548.

Research into practitioners and their ability to hear a disclosure of sexual abuse from a male states:

'Professionals fail to hypothesise that their male clients may have been abused, and do not create the conditions that would enable males to talk about the abuse... the childhood sexual abuse of males has not yet acquired legitimacy as a problem recognised by society, thus lagging behind the abuse of females'⁷

Though much of the research on these issues is over ten years old the findings are still relevant today. However it is vital to undertake further studies in these areas to reflect the changes in society and assess the ongoing impact of sexual violence on men.

About my Fellowship

I found out about the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust (WCMT) from a friend who told me about a friend of hers that had received a fellowship. I always get confused between the meanings of serendipity and synchronicity but I was sure that one, other or both had occurred and I immediately went to the WCMT website and began to prepare an application. Unlike women, for men there is no formulised network or directory of agencies such as Rape Crisis so my first strategy was to explore the Internet. My initial web investigations grounded me in the fact that like the UK, there was not much out there and due to language restrictions I focused my search on America, Canada and Australia.

My original plan for my Fellowship had been to find and visit other male agencies similar to Mankind, to discuss and learn from them about their experience of delivering services to men. However when I began my search I discovered a number of other approaches that were being undertaken. In Australia I discovered a network of female agencies that had changed their remit to include men. And in Canada I found out about a unique fund that had become available for men's services and was being distributed amongst a network of multi-service agencies. This changed my plans, as I was intrigued to discover how these services had come about and what issues they faced in engaging with male survivors. By visiting these agencies in conjunction with the small number of male specialist agencies I had also found, there was an opportunity to compare different types of approaches and gain a greater insight into the dilemmas for men as victims of sexual violence.

⁷ Holmes, G.R., Offen, L., Waller, G. (1997). [See no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil: Why do relatively few male victims of childhood sexual abuse receive help for abuse-related issues in adulthood?](#) *Clinical Psychology Review*, 17, 69-88.

Project Aims:

1. To produce a report on the delivery of therapeutic services for men who have experienced childhood sexual abuse, usually referred to as male survivors. The report will investigate different models of service delivery provided in countries other than the UK to bring together knowledge and data that can act as a guide for UK voluntary/statutory services seeking to attract and engage men in services for sexual assault victims
2. To use the information to inform Mankind in developing a model of service delivery for dissemination in the UK.
3. To network and bring together male survivor organisations on an international level to highlight the plight of male survivors and the different cultural, political and helping responses to them.
4. Create a snapshot picture of the number of men accessing services and types of services on an international scale.

Through my web search, I had been unable to locate any organisations similar to Mankind in the USA. What I had found was MaleSurvivor⁸, a resource site of information for survivors and professionals that lists support groups and private therapists. They were due to hold a conference in New York on Male survivor issues and this seemed an ideal way to begin my Fellowship.

MaleSurvivor Conference – New York

MaleSurvivor hosted their first conference on male sexual victimization in Minneapolis in 1988. The first of its type in the USA this conference brought together professionals looking for discussion and information on the treatment of adult male survivors. The success of this resulted in a further conference a year later in Atlanta and discussions on how to consolidate and address the therapeutic needs of adult male survivors. In November 1994 key individuals who had been involved in the previous conferences decided to incorporate as a non-profit organization. This was voted upon at the 1995 conference in Ohio and the resource website was created as a central hub for support, information, networking, conference organization and advertising of therapeutic and healing events across America.

Attending the MaleSurvivor conference in 2010 was amazing, not least because it was my first visit to New York City. I was not only able to attend useful and informative workshops on a variety of male survivor issues but also meet up with some of the people that I would later be visiting in Australia

⁸ www.malesurvivor.org

and Canada. This was advantageous in 'breaking the ice' so that the next time we met we would not be strangers to each other. I also made some new contacts and was able to arrange some further meetings in Canada for my project. An invitation to meet up with Steve LePore and Jim Hopper from an organisation based in California called 1in6 was fruitful in gaining further information about their project and finding out what international networks already existed. 1in6.org is another excellent web based resource offering practical advice and support to men including much needed information for family, friends and partners. They also host a live online supportline and helpline, operated by Rape Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN.org), which gives free access 24/7 to a support worker.

For me, the highlight of the conference was the closing presentation by Victor Vieth entitled, *Unto the Third Generation: A Call to End Child Abuse Within 120 Years*⁹. I have never seen such an engaging and professionally presented presentation that took me through a range of emotions but left me with an enormous sense of hope for the future. The whole experience of the MaleSurvivor conference was one of connecting with a community that I hadn't known was there. To meet people, attend workshops and talk about a variety of issues that affect men really helped relieve the isolation that my colleagues and I at Mankind can feel sitting in our little office in Newhaven. A number of fellow professionals from male survivor agencies in the UK also attended the conference and it was interesting to talk with them about how we don't meet up back home. We all work in our geographical areas and experience the same sense of isolation but don't utilise each other for camaraderie and support. I do not know if this is something to do with being British or even to do with being male and having to hold the ship alone.

On my return to the UK it took a few weeks to process the New York conference. I had experienced so much and come away with so many new thoughts and ideas but it was important not to lose the focus of my project aims. What had driven my original application was a need to find out about other agencies experience of engaging and retaining men within a therapeutic environment. I was not so much interested in what the therapy consisted of (though this was to become a large secondary focus) but more so how men found their way into a service and what difficulties were experienced once they were there. In order to do this, I revisited my original project plan and created a short questionnaire. This would give the planned meetings with other agencies a structure, but knowing that there would be other topics we could possibly stray into, I would gain permission to audio record so as not to lose other areas of interest. As a result of this, I ended up with over 20 hours of recorded material, a vast amount of data that would feel completely overwhelming had I not set a strict focus on my aims. I originally set out to visit agencies such as my own to discover how services to male survivors were being delivered. However in doing this I also discovered some other approaches that I was not expecting. In this report,

⁹ www.ndaa.org/pdf/unto_third_generation.pdf

rather than recount my trip chronologically, I have grouped my findings into three themes that represent what I found. These consist of service being delivered:

1. Within existing female services
2. Within existing multi-service agencies
3. Within the specialist male sector.

Services Incorporated Within Existing Female Agencies

Destination

Victoria, Australia.

Visiting

South East CASA - Carolyn Worth
Northern CASA - Charmaine Farrell
- Cameron Boyd
- Maria Katsikas

Melbourne was the first destination on my Winston Churchill Fellowship, here I had discovered a network of 14 Centres Against Sexual Assault¹⁰ (CASA) some of which provide services to men. This intrigued me as traditionally women's agencies operate from a feminist analysis of sexual violence.

These principles define rape and sexual abuse as a form of gender based violence that is a cause and consequence of gender inequality and therefore requires a gender specific response. I was keen to include them in my trip to find if coming from such a strong ethical stance would affect the inclusion of male clients. I planned to visit two agencies within the CASA Forum, South Eastern CASA and Northern CASA to find out more about their history and how the inclusion of services to men came about.

My first meeting was at SECASA in Victoria, where Carolyn Worth the service coordinator, told me how the CASAs were set up in the mid 70's and came out of the Australian Women's Movement/Rape Crisis work. Because of this origin they were seen as women only services and the differing philosophies of the individual agencies within the network, either reinforced this stance or were more open to the inclusion of men. Many of the centres would see male children up to age 12, however CASAs were generally regarded as services run by women for women. There are many reports from the individual centres that they saw male victims from very early on in their development on an ad hoc basis, though there is no documentation on how many and what services were offered.

¹⁰ www.casa.org.au

Services for men came about formally after an incident involving a male victim of rape who approached one of the CASAs based in The Royal Women's hospital, Victoria. He was given a service and had an examination at the hospital. Being a women's hospital, they were not set up for male clients and he was given a pair of female underwear after the examination. The male client was not happy about this and went to the press and created a big story. He also approached a government department that was investigating different types of crimes and CASA was called in and asked to account for its behaviour. From this came a rumour of separately funded men only services being set up, which caused concern within local Rape Crisis organisations about funding sources being stretched. Therefore they lobbied the Government and argued that they were best placed to deliver services to men as they were already delivering services to women under a sound feminist model and they argued this was the best model to also deliver services to men. This application for funds was successful and the CASA remit was changed to include male clients.

SECASA was one of the first agencies under the CASA umbrella to make this change. To inform this transition, a federally funded resource group ran two focus groups for SECASA, one with workers within CASA and the other with members of the general public. The findings highlighted some of the challenges and differences when working with males.

SECASA Focus Group Findings

- Male sexual assault was seen as under-reported.
- There was a perceived link between being a victim/survivor and being an offender on the part of a number of participants.
- Perpetrators were seen as over reporting a history of sexual assault/abuse as a way of normalising abusive behaviour.
- It was perceived there was a stigma attached to attending a sexual assault centre.
- A choice of male or female counsellors was seen as desirable.
- There was a perception that SECASA was more appropriate for females and could not provide men, and particularly young men and gay men with a service.
- It was universally agreed that SECASA should provide training, education and professional support for workers in other agencies working with male victims of sexual assault.

Initially in providing a service for men a male worker was employed however, this transfer of the one of the basic tenants of the feminist model that female victims work with female support workers did not translate for men into male victims only wanting to work with male support workers, as clients also asked to see a female counsellor. This was not expected however, some of the female counsellors were willing to see male clients. The employment of males did cause some problems, Carolyn told me that another women's organisation, the Women's Forum¹¹ was not happy with her over the decision and 2 female workers within SECASSA resigned over the loss of a female only space. Carolyn argued back that as the CASAs had positioned

¹¹ www.womensforumaustralia.com

themselves as experts in this field and were taking on men's work then of course a consequence of this would be the employment of male workers. Shortly after this a number of the other CASAs took on male workers and Carolyn estimates that about 9 of the CASA centres now employ males.

Within SECASA, the male worker population grew quickly with the set up of a project aimed specifically at gay males and a further 2 male workers being employed. Due to the size of the male team, they moved themselves into an annex located next to the main building. Carolyn assured me that this had been their own decision and not prompted by any complaints. There was also the explanation, spoken partly in jest, about differences in lifestyle - the male workers played table tennis at lunchtime whereas the female workers tended to go shopping or attend to other chores. However, it did not go unnoticed that even though the service had successfully included males, there seemed an almost natural inclination for the male and female work to stay separate.

The gay male project highlighted another area of difference when working with a male population. The project came about, as it was known that there was a high degree of sexual violence being committed in 'sex on the premises' venues such as saunas and nightclubs. This led to partnerships with Police and delivery of training on working with the gay community.

Another area that the inclusion of men into the service has brought about is a counselling service for adolescents with problematic and sexually abusive behaviours. This takes the form of individual, group and family therapy and seeks to address inappropriate behaviours in youth. This is important work as sexually abusive behaviours that begin in adolescence can be addressed with appropriate therapeutic intervention and ensure such behaviours are not taken into adulthood.

At my meeting with NCASA we explored further how the inclusion of men into the service had brought about changes. A difficult issue was one of the possibilities of male victims also disclosing abusive behaviours. With adolescents it was more straightforward as it was the identification of behaviour that prompted a referral. With adult male clients, there was concern that this could happen during counselling and they were still grappling with the complex issues of victims who also disclose abusive behaviours. This had led to a gendered discussion and raised questions about gender differences around violent behaviours such as are women more likely to harm themselves (internalise behaviour) and men more likely to harm others (externalised behaviour). Of course there is no hard and fast answer to this, in the past, before the men's service, the CASAs came out of an era where it was not considered that a victim could also be a perpetrator, you were either one or the other. With the inclusion of the men's service, issues were being raised that had not been considered before including complex issues such as female sexual offenders.

Destination

Canberra, Australia.

Visiting

SAMSSA - Christina (surname missing)
- Rachel Hart
- Kate Sably

From Victoria I travelled to Canberra to meet with the Service Manager and two counsellors at SAMSSA (Service Assisting Male Survivors of Sexual Assault¹²) SAMSSA is a male specific service but I have included them in this section because they too came about in a similar way to

the CASAs decision to include men in their service.

In the late 1990's there was a rumour that money was going to become available for a male service. As in Victoria, the local Rape Crisis lobbied the Government for the funds arguing that they were best placed to provide these services. A consultation was undertaken involving many local agencies, a steering committee formed and a service user survey conducted which helped shape the service.¹³ This survey recognised the need for provision of services to men however, unlike the CASAs it highlighted that they should be separate stating, 'The importance of a men's service closely linked to, but separate from women's sexual assault support services.'

Canberra Rape Crisis were aware of male victims through their helpline, however they were only funded to work with women so no face to face service could be offered. They also felt that politically it was important for men to do men's work so when SAMSSA was set up it was originally with the employment of 2 male counsellors. Like the SECASA they found that men also requested females, so in 2005 this was attended to with female counsellors being employed.

The issue of men disclosing violence was raised and SAMSSA has a defined policy, if the violence involved sexual abuse/rape then the client would always be referred out to another agency. If a male client disclosed non-sexual violence, then he could be offered a service, but only by a male counsellor.

Findings

The inclusion of men into the existing service delivery model for females had raised a number of issues for the agencies that I met with. I was extremely interested by their experience as the lack of defined services for men in the area of sexual assault has put pressure on the established female services to consider inclusion of men. This creates a tension between their feminist informed history and the awareness of the growing number of men seeking support for their sexual abusive experiences. In the UK this has resulted in some traditional female services extending their remit to including men in services such as helplines. However there is a very real and valid concern

¹² www.apex.net.au/~samssa/

¹³ www.apex.net.au/~samssa/survey.htm

over the emerging male client group distracting the focus and resources away from their already under resourced work with women.

What I was concerned with for the purpose of my investigation was how the service model could successfully engage men and enable them to access an appropriate service. In doing this I noticed a number of potential barriers in the inclusion of men's services into a feminist informed agency environment.

One of the basic principles of the Rape Crisis delivery model is that services are delivered by female support workers within a defined female only space. This is derived from the core belief of feminist ideology that women hold an unequal position in society due to oppression by men, therefore men should not be involved in women's services that address the consequences of that oppression. The inclusion of male victims and support workers into the CASA umbrella of services challenged this core belief and resulted in varying degrees of tension within the member agencies. My experience of this was confined to SECASA and NCASA where, though this had caused some initial disruption, the establishment of a male service had been achieved. There were concerns about the presence of men in what had previously been a female only space and the effect on female clients. Though no official complaints were received it is not known if this loss of female only space deterred some female clients from engaging with the service. By creating a separate service for men SAMSSA avoided the issues of mixed gender services and potential problems such as these.

However, even though the services for men have been established, there are still a number of ongoing issues in working with men that are affected by other aspects of the feminist theoretical framework. This is best summarized by an extract from a paper written by Carolyn Worth on the development of the male service within SECASA¹⁴

Working With Male Victims

Men as a minority group is always an odd concept. Nevertheless in terms of being victims of sexual assault they are in a minority group. But they are different to all the other minority groups we work with. They are different because as well as being a minority group of victims this group also produces the majority of offenders. Therein lies an issue when working with male victims.

Carolyn was not unaware that the inclusion of men into the service would create tensions and in the same paper detailed these as shown in the box below:

¹⁴ Carolyn kindly gave me a copy of this paper, which to my knowledge has not been published within the public domain.

Other Issues for Women's Services

- How do we deal with male victims who are also perpetrators of sexual assault or family violence especially if they do not disclose until they have been with the agency for several months?
- How do we deal with the reports of female offenders? What does it mean for our theoretical framework?
- How do male workers avoid collusion with male clients?
- At one location where the male workers predominantly work, the waiting area can be filled with a number of men. There has never been a complaint about this but occasionally it has looked daunting for a female rape victim.
- After Hours Crisis Care and Intake/Duty Work. Most female victims wish to see a female counsellor hence the male workers do not participate in the after hours roster or the Intake Worker roster as very few males access crisis care. This leads to two classes of workers in the Centre.
- Most male clients want after hours appointments which is a serious financial issue given the award under which CASAs are funded. There is a loading for working after 6pm.
- There is an ongoing tension in the field over the amount of discourse on male victim services.

A number of these points also came up in my discussions as listed below.

1. Perceptions of the male victim as a potential perpetrator

In all three meetings, discussions on the male victim invariably led to discussion on male perpetrators and there were concerns about male clients being at a higher risk of being aggressive, violent and/or disclosing sexually abusive behaviours than female clients. This seems to be influenced by two factors. Firstly, with regard to male clients becoming aggressive or violent, I have to admit that reflecting on this after the meetings I felt a bit insulted. I understood where the concern came from and that it was influenced by societal beliefs about men's potential for aggression. However this is a stereotypical view and not based in fact. The service is for male victims of violence and it raised concerns for me how such beliefs consciously or unconsciously may adversely affect the engagement and understanding of these clients seeking support for their own victimisation.

The issue of the risk of male victims disclosing sexually abusive behaviours is also based in a stereotypical belief. That being the pervasive myth that suggests that a victim of sexual abuse is more likely to become a perpetrator of abuse. To my knowledge, this myth came from a piece of research undertaken many years ago where incarcerated sexual offenders were asked if they had experienced sexual abuse in their own histories.¹⁵ A high percentage said yes and a link was made. Later the research was revisited and redone using a lie detector test where it was discovered that a high percentage of offenders lied about their personal histories. What this shows

¹⁵ I have not been able to track down the original research, however I did find a paper that discussed this and the subsequent research that discredited it. Unfortunately I have not been able to find this paper to give a reference. For readers that are interested in obtaining this please contact me.

is how perpetrators of sexual abuse distort the truth to justify and relinquish responsibility from their actions. However the initial research seems to have given rise to a vampire syndrome that has permeated societies beliefs about sexual abuse. Many victims of sexual abuse are aware of this myth and fear that even though they do not consciously want to sexually abuse another person, due to this vampire syndrome they will have no control over their actions.

Even though this can adversely affect both males and females in disclosing sexual abuse, as Carolyn states, men are different as a group because they produce the majority of offenders. These types of links can be extremely dangerous in heightening anxieties and paranoia that adversely affect perceptions of male clients. Whilst it is true that some victims of sexual abuse do actually go on to commit sexually abusive acts, they are in the minority of clients that approach sexual abuse victim agencies.

Male victims that do disclose sexual violence in the setting of a counselling service are very aware of the potential consequences such a disclosure could have. So the more important question to ask is, what is the motivation behind such a disclosure? No sexually abusive act can ever be justified or condoned. However, on the rare occasions that a client does chose to disclose an abusive act, it may not only demonstrate the trust the client has in his relationship with the counsellor/agency, but also demonstrate a real desire to acknowledge an act that he knows was wrong and face the consequences of his actions.

2. Disclosure of a Female Perpetrator

The issue of female offenders is an area that feminist organisations struggle with as it contradicts the core belief that men are the sole perpetrators of sexual abuse. This can affect a man who has been sexually abused by a female as he may feel that a feminist based organisation may not believe his story or want to hear about his experience. This can be reflected in agency literature, websites and advertising that advocate a pro-feminist stance, which does not include the possibility of female abusers. Like feminism, pro-feminism does not have an absolute meaning, it is open to interpretation, and in it's most negative interpretation may deter men from engaging. In the literature that was given to me at SAMSSA and on their website is a pro-feminist statement that reads:

SAMSSA acknowledges the gains and challenges of feminism and women's movements that have made possible the communication, discussion and awareness of the sexual assault perpetrated against men and boys. SAMSSA is unequivocally pro-feminist, and seeks to remain accountable to, and respectful of, women, women's services and feminism (feminist theories and practices)

This statement could be read as containing mixed messages as it firstly states that feminism has helped the male victim to come forward but also reinforces that if you do come forward you need to always be accountable

and respectful of women. For the man that has been abused by a female this stance may set up a conflict about his ability to honour this statement in light of his experience and question whether it is a place that would be accepting of him.

3. Consideration of the differing patterns of men's lives

Practical Issues such as men wanting evening appointments were raised in the document Carolyn gave me as, 'serious financial issues given the award under which CASAs are funded' The tailoring of services to meet the needs of men is a crucial factor in enabling successful engagement. The focus groups that were undertaken were with agency staff and the general public and whilst they raised important issues, a more comprehensive gender analysis of men and issues of sexual abuse would have given indications of the differing needs of men and how they engage with support services.

4. Conscious/unconscious attitudes that treat men as less deserving of services than women.

Feminism is not a static theory or movement and is constantly producing a series of 'waves' that build upon previous conceptions and present new understandings about the unequal positions of power between women and men. My discomfort is that at its core, feminism is not 'pro male', or as the points above highlight, treats males differently which is usually in the form of negatively questioning or anxiety about male behaviours. This can result in a split or conflict of interest when delivering service to both males and females within a feminist informed agency that can negatively affect male clients.

I consider the points in these findings critical but they are not meant as criticisms. The CASAs decision to include men is pioneering and it cannot be denied that the individuals I met with embraced the decision and were committed to its success. I am extremely grateful to all those that participated and shared their knowledge, experience and hospitality with me. My interest is in how men engage in a service and what possible barriers may arise to deter this. It would be extremely useful to conduct follow up research on the effects of including men into this type of service delivery model. Unfortunately these are the type of resources that are very rarely available. Both male and female agencies can learn from the experience of CASA and SAMSSA and further research would continue to add insight into providing such a service in this way.

Services Incorporated Within Existing Multi-Service Agencies

Destination Toronto, Canada.		Having explored some of the challenges that exist within incorporating male victims into the existing female services in Australia, I travelled to Canada to investigate another approach. The Regional Municipality of Peel consists of three municipalities to the west and
Visiting	- Julie Pehar - David Delay	
Family Services	- Sandra Rupnarine	
Of Peel	- Chuck Maclean	

northwest of Toronto, with a population of approximately 1.2 million people. I travelled here to visit Family Services of Peel (FSP), a non-profit charitable agency, established in 1971 that provides family and community support services. These include counselling, educational programs, employment support services, support for adults with developmental disabilities and support for victims of abuse. I had found out about FSP from Julie Pehar and David Delany who I had first met in New York at the MaleSurvivor conference in March 2010. I attended their workshop on PRISM: Creating a Collaborative Community Service Response to Male Survivors, which detailed a new community approach to service delivery of which FSP had a lead role. After the presentation I spoke to them about my Fellowship and the possibility of meeting up on the Canadian part of my trip, which I was planning for June 2010. I also contacted FSP and arranged to meet with them at the same time. Due to delays in my schedule, none of this actually happened until a year later in June 2011.

If there is one piece of advice I can pass on to those considering or about to undertake a Winston Churchill Fellowship, then it is to be prepared for setbacks and do not get disheartened if they come along. I had two major setbacks in my plans in that my planned trip to Australia coincided with the eruption of the Eyjafjallajokull volcano, which meant that I was delayed and had to reschedule all my meetings. Then, towards the end of my Australian trip I began to lose the sight in my right eye! The day after my arrival back in the UK I went to the eye hospital and the following day had emergency surgery for a detached retina. Due to the nature of the surgery I was not allowed to fly for at least 3 months and so I had to cancel my arranged trip to Canada and due to my work schedule could not rebook until the following year. My new motto is, 'expect the unexpected and don't get stressed about it.' The Churchill Trust were very understanding and I am very grateful for this and their support through which was quite a traumatic time. When I did finally meet up with Julie and David again, they too had gone through an unexpected time and we met over a long lunch to catch up.

PRISM, which had originally been conceived under the title of The Men's Link Program, was a new approach to the inclusion of men in sexual assault services. The issue of male survivors had been raised a number of times in

the established Peel Committee on Sexual Assault (PCSA)¹⁶ but had never really resulted in any formal response. Like most forums on sexual assault the focus was very much on women's issues. However in 2007, Julie as a member of this committee was instrumental in pulling together a number of local agencies to form a steering group to discuss how male survivors engaged with and were received by the local community agencies. This group included representatives from agencies such as Counselling, Public Health, Police, Justice, and also had representation from a number of male survivors. David, who had been running Men's Violence Programs, joined the steering group as throughout his work he had heard many stories from his clients about their own abuse and was interested in creating resources for the male victim. Julie had been inspired by the work a Priest-psychologist the Rev. Ray Chase, whose work with two male victims of sexual abuse led him to create a presentation called Illuminations,¹⁷ which uses artwork to explore the male experience. She arranged for the steering group to attend his workshop and this began a one and a half year process of regular meetings to identify male specific issues and barriers.

The findings from this group, highlighted further the difficulty in not being able to separate the male survivor from the male perpetrator. Male survivors that contributed to the group spoke about when asking for help as a victim, they would be directed to men's violence programs or not understood and have to be explicit about what had happened to them. Other issues about engagement revealed that in many agencies females would be asked about sexual abuse experiences but males were not so not given an opportunity to disclose. When males were asked, there was concern over how they were asked which led to thinking about re-wording such questions from, 'Have you ever been sexually abused or raped?' to more male friendly questions such as 'Have you ever had any unwanted sexual experiences?' This emphasized further how language around sexual violence was always focused towards women. Rape as a concept is largely understood as something that happens to women so men may not be able to identify with this way of describing their experience. The use of different language allows for this barrier to be addressed and enable men to disclose what has happened to them.

The steering group came to the conclusion that there needed to be a fundamental change, 'a paradigm shift' in the perception of men as victims. Men present traumatic experiences differently to women and different responses were required that attended to this. By affecting this at a community level with comprehensive training and awareness raising it was envisioned that this would create services that were more sensitive to men and enable their engagement. This was timely as there had also been recent media attention on male abuse issues with the disclosure by professional ice hockey player, Theo Fleury of sexual abuse in his childhood. Also, a State

¹⁶ www.trilliumhealthcentre.org/programs_services/womens_childrens_services/womensHealth/pcsa/index.php

¹⁷ www.illuminationsprogram.org

led Inquiry into sexual abuse within the Catholic Church and other Institutions in the city of Cornwall, Eastern Ontario had highlighted the need for greater awareness of male victims.

It was only after the one and a half year period of extensive exploration that the steering group felt it was appropriate to apply for funding for a Men's Services Coordinator to action their findings. As an agency member of the group, Family Services of Peel offered themselves as Treasurer and an application was made to the Ontario Trillium Foundation.¹⁸ This was successful and funds were received. However, it was at this stage in the story that in Julie's words, "Things started to go wrong"

Although the application had stipulated that the steering group would become an advisory group to the project, after the funding was received communications stopped and the steering group were not part of the project planning and implementation. Enquiries as to why this was so resulted in finding out that the Coordinator post had been given to an existing post holder at FSP who was also the Partner Assault Program Coordinator. This was met with dismay as it had gone against all the findings from the steering group about the perceptions of men that linked victims to perpetrators. The name of the project had also changed from Men's Link to Prism and there were serious misgivings about this as when spoken, Prism could be mistaken for Prison. Efforts were made to try and address what had happened, but disillusioned, the original steering group disbanded with many of its members, particularly the male survivors, feeling betrayed and used.

This was a difficult story to hear. Julie and David spoke with a real passion about the work and findings of the steering group and I felt their disappointment at how things turned out. The next day I was due to visit the Family Services of Peel and I was aware that I had to be careful of how the meeting with Julie and David may bias my opinion. That evening I revisited the aims of my project and my role as researcher. With such an emotive subject impartiality can be difficult. However, by focusing on the goals of my project I endeavored to remain neutral and open in my continuing journey of discovery.

The following day I met with Sandra Rupnarine, Director of Client Services and Chuck Maclean, Executive Director of Family Services at the Family Services of Peel offices in Mississauga. The conversation started with the news that FSP had just been awarded a grant of \$460 thousand from the Ministry of the Attorney General Office to be one of five lead agencies in a new initiative to provide services to male survivors. This Ontario wide initiative came out of the previously mentioned Cornwall Inquiry¹⁹ which resulted in funds of \$2.2 million to be made available to establish dedicated services for male survivors of sexual abuse. These were to include individual

¹⁸ www.trilliumfoundation.org

¹⁹ www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/inquiries/cornwall/en/report/

counselling, group counselling, peer support, residential services, e-counselling and telephone counselling. In total 45 existing multi-service community support agencies were to be funded to provide the initiative. FSP was the nominated lead agency for the Peel region and would partner with 7 of these.

This was certainly a significant move forward from the original Trillium Foundation start up grant and showed the strength and robustness of the agency, which Chuck described as, 'A leading edge agency for new and innovative programs.' What was very impressive about Chuck and Sandra's presentation was the mixture of an understanding of the different client groups they served, along with a sound business sense and understanding of the charity sector. Acknowledgement was made to the original steering group in identifying the need for men's services, however a new Advisory Committee had been formed to inform the project.

The Cornwall Inquiry had produced a report that included six key principles in developing specific services for men as victims of sexual abuse. These were used to inform the new initiative and shown in the box below.

1. Survivor engagement – the principle that solutions, no matter how well intentioned, may not work if not informed by the experience of those who have been abused;
2. Consideration of the service needs of men who were abused as children or young people, recognizing that although the abuse of boys and young men is long-standing, our response as a society lags behind that reality;
3. Sustainability of change, because it is better to do fewer things well and have them endure than to diffuse effort and resources;
4. Building partnerships, because employing a variety of skills, perspectives, and information will reduce barriers between organizations and focus on results from the viewpoint of those served;
5. Pragmatism – being prepared to look at implementation feasibility, cost, time required, and accountability for results; and
6. Reinforcing education and public awareness as benefiting the justice system and society at large, because knowledge can be powerful in preventing the sexual abuse of children and young people, in early detection and treatment, and in effective and compassionate responses to adult survivors.

Sandra and Chuck explained that it was believed the Family Services model could best deliver these principles by adopting a more inclusive approach that moves away from the idea of gender specific agencies. It was considered that such models can have an effect on access. Women may not wish to approach a defined 'Rape Crisis' centre due to it identifying and labeling them as a victim of sexual violence. Also as Rape Crisis is synonymous with a political point of view they may feel that they have to 'sign up' to these beliefs in order to access services.

For men, there was the awareness that many disclosures of sexual abuse are made when accessing services for a different issue. For example, a man accessing a substance misuse program or general counselling for an issue such as depression may disclose sexual abuse as part of his life history. A

referral out to a specialist men's agency may bring about similar barriers as above. Whereas the ability to refer across to another service within the same agency that he already knows and has an experience of, may be more successful.

With regard to therapeutic services, there was the belief that the feminist model of therapy was not appropriate for men due to its focus on women's issues. Moreover, a holistic approach that allowed for other ways of working would bring greater choice to match individual needs. This holistic approach included mixed gender support groups for partners to receive help in understanding how to support their partners and themselves. There was also an interest in mixed gender survivor groups and the possibilities for male and female victims to learn from each other so increasing understanding of gender and relationships.

As well as the six key principles from the Cornwall Inquiry, the new initiative referenced a further document, Handbook on Sensitive Practice for Health Care Practitioners: Lessons from Adult Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse.²⁰ Commissioned by the Public Health Agency of Canada and with contributions from many of the men's agencies I was due to visit, the handbook presents a balanced discussion of the experience of both genders that deals with difference in an equal and respectful way. Sandra explained to me how this document would form the basis of a training manual for all the partner agencies.

The new initiative was due to be launched on July 2011 and meeting with Sandra and Chuck I got a real sense of the excitement, expectations and possibilities the project could achieve.

Findings

It is not my place to comment on the history of this project as relayed to me by Julie and David. However there is a familiar theme about processes within the charitable field that is important to comment on.

Driven by Funders and grant providers to the not-for-profit sector, there has been an increasing requirement to consult and work in partnership with other agencies. This involves asking individuals and small charitable organisations to give their time, knowledge and expertise for free without any guarantee of future support. This is putting organisations in a very difficult position as whilst there is the desire to share and increase the sensitivity and appropriateness of services to their client groups, there is also a wariness about how the information may be used and what will happen to them after the process is over. This has created tensions and competitiveness within a sector that is experiencing ever decreasing funds. The fear from many specialist organisations is that as this competitiveness gets fiercer the needs

²⁰ www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ncfv-cnivf/pdfs/nfntsx-handbook_e.pdf

and concerns of the client groups they serve get lost and ultimately service standards suffer.

The new funding stream from the Ministry of the Attorney General Office to establish dedicated services for male survivors of sexual abuse seems to be unique. To my knowledge I have never heard of a distinct fund in the area of sexual violence that acknowledges the lack of male services and seeks to address the issue. The decision to place service delivery within existing multi-service community based agencies seemed to have a number of benefits. Unlike the female agencies, there was no 'political' background that could create tensions and the fact that across the province 45 agencies would be offering a service to men would certainly increase access. As this was a new initiative that had not yet officially started it was difficult to assess how successful the service model was in engaging men. Five months after my visit, I went online to investigate the Peel Region partnership of agencies to see if their websites had any news about the project. Again my focus was on how the service model could successfully engage men and enable them to access an appropriate service. In doing this I noticed a number of potential barriers.

1. Choice of Partner Agencies

I started my investigation by visiting Family services of Peel website. Under their 'News' section I found information about the new services for male survivors of sexual abuse, funded by the Ministry of the Attorney General which linked to a list of the partner agencies. These consisted of two Catholic Family Services agencies, two Family Service agencies similar to FSP, one Community Mental Health Services and two specialist sexual violence agencies.

The inclusion of two Catholic based agencies struck me as a bit strange. Having exposed sexual abuse within the Catholic Church through the Cornwall Inquiry, the offer of support based within the same religious framework seemed misguided. I understand that this could be seen as reparative, however I was unsure as to how this may be perceived by a victim seeking support. Catholic stances on homosexuality may also be a barrier for other groups of men seeking support.

I had similar feelings about the appropriateness of an agency based within Community Mental Health Services. The original steering group had highlighted that this had been one of the service areas where men had reported they had encountered disbelief and inappropriate responses such as being viewed as a perpetrator, not the victim.

2. No specific advertising of men's services

Following the links to the individual partner websites, there was no mention on any of them about the new initiative or specific services for male survivors of

sexual abuse. The only mention of specific services to men was in respect of violence against women and partner assault programs.

My understanding was that the MAG funding had been provided to specifically provide services to men so I was confused by the noticeable absence of any reference to men on the partner websites. For a man seeking support there was nothing that would enable him to engage with the service. This was very concerning, especially if a prospective client had begun with the FSP website and seeing the potential for a service that met his specific needs had gone to one of the partner agencies in his geographical area. Only seeing messages of males as perpetrators and females of victims may inhibit him from investigating further so losing the possibility of receiving a service.

3. Ability of multi-service agency support workers and counsellors to work with complex sexual abuse issues.

All the project partner agencies had confirmed that they had experience of working with male survivors. The initiative utilizes existing, 'traditional' counselling agencies, therefore the practitioners within will have varying levels of experience of this area of work. More importantly they will have varying beliefs, some negative and/or incorrect about male survivors and ways of engaging with them. In acknowledgement of this FSP had partnered with the Faculty of Social Work at the local university to produce a specific training manual for the project that would use the existing Handbook on Sensitive Practice for Health Care Practitioners as its basis. FSP had allocated specific funding within the project for training and were to be responsible for the delivery of this.

I was not aware of the extent or content of this training but did have some concerns over the ongoing training and clinical supervision of such a large partnership team spread over 7 different agencies. Working with sexual abuse trauma and associated issues such as PTSD, anxiety and dissociative disorders, flashbacks, panic attacks, self-harm, suicide, problems with identity and sexuality etc. requires specialist training in many different areas. Inappropriate engagement and counselling styles can not only deter a man from approaching an agency but also cause harm in exacerbating complex presentations.

It was good to see that there were two specialist sexual assault agencies, the York Region Abuse Program (YRAP) and Sexual Assault and Violence Intervention Services of Halton. I had the pleasure of meeting with the Executive Director of YRAP, Alison Peck whilst I was in Canada. This service had always been inclusive of men and in discussing their work it was very clear that it was exactly the type of agency that would bring value to the initiative. Being a specialist sexual assault agency means that in areas such as training and clinical supervision there will be a focus and expertise on the issue that general counselling agencies would not be able to bring.

The other specialist sexual abuse agency, Sexual Assault and Violence Intervention Services of Halton, had no mention of men on their website

except within a downloadable Annual Report. Here they stated that they did get the occasional call from men and could offer 1 – 3 counselling sessions. Otherwise they would look to refer to other local community services. This indicated that they did not have experience of long-term work with men. I also noticed that the agency had an all female staff and though not explicit, appeared to come from a feminist informed background. Some of the possible problems within this have been explored in the previous section on specialist female services.

The use of Catholic based agencies may also encounter other challenges for their staff who identifying with certain religious beliefs may hold strong views over topics such as homosexuality and abortion. As already mentioned, even if this is not so, men may associate the agency with such beliefs which will deter them from approaching them.

In all of this, I am not aware of all of the facts. I have only raised these issues as possible areas of concern. It is difficult to assess the effectiveness of this service delivery model in engaging men, as it does not yet appear to be fully operational. I do hope this is the case otherwise the points above become critical. The initiative launched in July 2011 so they may still be going through set up stages and the websites have not yet been updated. Of course the websites are not the only indication of what is actually happening. However, as websites are one of the major ways the public now accesses information then they are a key component in the projects success. The funding has been granted for two years as a pilot and to my knowledge represents a unique service delivery model. It will be very interesting to see how the project develops and what data it produces that allows for a fuller assessment of its effectiveness.

Services Delivered by Specialist Male Agencies

The final approach to service delivery I investigated was the specialist male agencies. Like Mankind these agencies had come about as a direct response to the lack of services for male survivors. Unlike similar agencies in the female sector that grew out Women's Movement, all the men's agencies came about in isolation. It is only recently that they have begun to connect with each other at events such as the MaleSurvivor conference and the process of sharing experience and knowledge begun.

Destination
Ottawa, Canada.

Visiting
The Men's Project – Rick Goodwin

I had first met Rick at the New York conference, however due to the delays in my trip, it was another 15 months before I was able to visit him in his home town of Ottawa. The Men's project came about as a result

of a conversation between Rick and a former colleague about the lack of service for men as victims of sexual abuse. Rick had been working in a Partner Assault Program, a specialized counselling and educational service offered by community-based agencies to people who have assaulted their partners, so had been mainly concentrating on men as perpetrators. After leaving this job and working for two years in teaching, he reconnected with the colleague and began discussing men's services and the lack of any real resources for male survivors. This led to undertaking a scoping exercise for the Ottawa YMCA who offered the use of a room in their building to start a service for men. Rick and his colleague put in CAN\$1000 of their own money to get started in what they thought then would be a part time volunteer service offering a group program for men. It quickly grew beyond that and in 1999 when Rick was laid off from his college work he received a contract from the Provincial Government to undertake a needs assessment for male survivors. As part of this, Rick negotiated a portion of the funds to use for service delivery arguing that it would be unethical to raise the issue of sexual abuse with men without being able to offer a service to those that came forward to disclose. The Men's Project became a not for profit charitable organisation in 2001 and a small amount of funds were provided for services for the large number of men that were coming forward and requesting services due to the Cornwall Inquiry. All through my meetings in Ontario, I was hearing about the Cornwall Inquiry and it was from Rick that I got the history of how this had come about and the role of The Men's Project in ensuring that funds became available for male specific services.

In 1992, a man reported that as an alter boy he had been sexually abused by a priest and a probation officer. The local Roman Catholic diocese offered the man \$32,000 in return for dropping the complaint he had filed with the Cornwall police. A local police officer found out about this and exposed the cover up which led to a flood of other child sexual abuse complaints. The original investigations into these complaints were so poorly undertaken by the local Police that the Ottawa Police were called in to investigate the Cornwall Police investigation. This also failed to produce any real results so the Provincial Police set up 'Project Truth' to undertake a further investigation. From this 116 charges were made against individuals but resulted in only one conviction. This caused public outrage so in 2005, the Cornwall Public Inquiry was set up by the Ontario Premier to try and resolve the errors of the past.

The Men's Project applied to be part of the Inquiry as a Party with Official Standing, asserting that if there had been a resource for male victims to disclose and receive help then the abuse would not have escalated to the extent it had over a period of approximately 20 years. At the end of the 3 year Inquiry, the Men's Project presented a list of recommendations to the Commissioner.²¹ In the Commissioners final report many of these

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http://www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/inquiries/cornwall/en/hearings/submissions/pdf/MPJ_Phase_II_Final_Submissions.pdf

recommendations were supported and informed the six key principles that guided the Family Services of Peel Initiative. The Ministry of the Attorney General acted on the report, stating that funds would be made available to provide men's services. However, there was a proviso that the new services had to be placed within a pre existing network, which opened up the fund to agencies such as Family Services of Peel who had successfully bid for and won a grant as one of the 5 leading agencies across Ontario.

Initially the news of the \$2.2 million fund was cause for huge celebrations for The Men's Project with the possibility of being able to establish a stronger network of male specialist agencies. However, with further news of the proviso these celebrations turned to catastrophe as the creation of this new fund would replace all existing funding streams. This meant that the Men's Project would no longer receive any of the State funding that had enabled them to run their service.

When I met with Rick, The Men's Project was just entering the final nine months of their funding and unless other funds could be found were facing certain closure.

Over the past 10 years, The Men's Project has successfully developed and delivered a treatment model for male survivors of sexual abuse. The guidebook to this, *Men & Healing: Theory, Research, and Practice in Working with Male Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse*²² is one of the few models of service delivery that has been produced that specifically focuses on men as victims of sexual assault. This document is invaluable in furthering the understanding of men as victims of sexual violence and offering appropriate treatment models. The last time I emailed Rick in September 2011, there was still no prospect of new funds and he was facing the devastating task of having to inform his staff that if new funds could not be sought within the next 6 months, then he would be unable to pay them to continue in their work.

The final blow in this tragic story is that in total, the Cornwall Inquiry cost \$53 million. The Men's Project received an annual budget of \$200,000 meaning the cost of the Cornwall Inquiry would have enabled them to operate for the next 265 years.

Destination Victoria & Vancouver, Canada.
Visiting Men's Trauma Centre - Alana Samson - Francis Strauss BCMSSA - Don Wright

To get to the next two agencies I was due to visit, I travelled by train across Canada from Toronto to Vancouver. I had been looking forward to this as a highlight of my trip. I do not recommend! Due to the ricketiness of the train

²² http://www.themensproject.ca/files/uploads/stfnetw_tmp2-files/menandhealingfinal.pdf

and insistence of travelling at break neck speed during the night, I hardly slept over the four days. It is only with thanks to the company of my equally suffering fellow passengers and a well stocked, but hideously expensive, bar that I care to remember this journey. I have grouped the two agencies together as they were originally one agency that divided so share a mutual beginning.

The British Columbia Society for Male Survivors of Sexual Abuse was the longest established men's agency I met with, having been founded in 1989. At that time the founder, Don Wright an established therapist was living in Vancouver and working with a female sexual abuse client. Unsure of how the work was going he consulted with a colleague working at the Women's Sexual Assault Centre who assured him that he was on the right track. This led to the Executive Director of the centre asking him if he would be interested in working with male clients that approached them. The (now familiar) discussion ensued about issues of men being seen on the same premises as female clients, so Don organised a meeting with local agencies whose client group may include male survivors. This resulted in five of the participants being interested in creating a steering committee to look at establishing a separate service. Don's area of interest was to work with gifted children and his thinking was that once a new non-profit organisation for male survivors had been established he would return to this field. However, as things got underway he found himself becoming more committed to working with men and set up a separate phone line in his home in Vancouver as a contact point for men seeking support. This was the first stage of the creation of an actual agency.

At the same time he was working on a pilot victim/offender reconciliation project in Victoria, that brought together male offenders and female victims (not their actual perpetrators) to share their experiences and for the offenders to gain an insight into the consequences of their acts. Don asked a female colleague if she would be interested in helping him set up a male survivor programme in Victoria, which he had scheduled for 6 months later. However her enthusiasm meant that they began straight away and for the next 13 years Don commuted between Vancouver and Victoria working at the two separate sites that at that time were both operating under the name of BCSMSSA. The project was funded by client compensation claims from the Victim Assistance Programme and later further funding came from Department of Justice Victims Services money. The two-site operation continued until 2003 when it became untenable for the Trustee Board, who were all located in Vancouver, to carry on the management of the Victoria site. There was also pressure from funders to report separately on each operation as they were in different locations. Not wanting the Victoria service to close, Alana Samson, Executive Director and Francis Strauss, Intake Coordinator carried on till the last of the funding ran out and set about establishing the Men's Trauma Centre as a new and distinct agency. During the transition the Women's Sexual Assault Centre provided free office space so that there was no gap in services until a new application to Victim

Services enabled the setting up of a separate premises to house the newly formed Men's Trauma Centre.

For the past 22 years these agencies, albeit in different incarnations, have been providing therapeutic services to male survivors. They cover a wide area across Victoria and Vancouver and are well established and known within the local and far reaching community.

<p>Destination Brisbane, Australia.</p> <p>Visiting Living Well – Gary Foster Cate Harvey</p>

For the last case study, I am back in Australia with the youngest of the agencies that I visited. I also first met up with Gary Foster at the MaleSurvivor Conference. As it was also his first time in New York we buddied up to do a bit of

sightseeing in between attending the conference workshops. This enabled us to get to know each other and after returning to our home towns, kept in regular contact by email.

Originally from the UK, Gary had worked within the Domestic Violence unit and as a Rape chaperone for London's Metropolitan Police in the early 1990's. Here he developed an interest in men as victims of sexual assault and used this as the basis for his PhD on services for men. Having emigrated to Australia and set up home with his wife and children, he began working as a general counsellor within Spiritus Family Services. Spiritus²³ is part of the Anglicare Australia network, a not-for-profit organisation that funds provision of community support services. Here he was able to run a support group for male survivors but funding restrictions meant this could only be done as a 'one off' group. Seeing the need for further support services for men and frustrated by the lack of funding, Gary had the idea to apply to the Gambling Community Benefit Fund²⁴ to create a male survivor resource website. This was successful and after its creation Gary took the website to the CEO of Spiritus who was supportive of creating an actual counselling service for men. New management within the organisation was also supportive and an application to the Anglicare Community Services Commission brought in funds to set this up. Like the Family Services of Peel initiative in Canada, this men's service was also based within a Family Services network and had a similar aim. By being based in a service where men may disclose sexual abuse meant clients could be cross referred rather than referred out to a different service. Also attending to the need for men to be offered a choice of female counsellor, Cate Harvey joined as a female therapist to create a male focused team.

In 2008 a State Government directive had pointed to women's services to open their doors to male clients. However, unlike the CASA network in

²³ www.spiritus.org.au

²⁴ www.olgr.qld.gov.au/grants/gcbf/index.shtml

Victoria, this came with no extra funding so there was a real concern on how this would put pressure on the existing female services to provide appropriate support without diverting resources away from their work with women.

In 2009 Queensland Health commissioned KPMG to undertake a review of sexual assault services.²⁵ This review acknowledged the lack of services to men so to address this Gary produced an initial response²⁶ to the review to add much needed information, research and solutions to the plight of the male survivor when seeking to engage with support services. Gary was well placed to write this review as his history of working within the domestic violence and sexual assault fields along with his studies in gender politics allowed a good understanding of the establishment of services for women and the potential threat men's services can have on funding streams. He very much works from a solution focused frame of mind and saw the importance of offering Queensland Health a focused male gendered view as this was new territory for them. This contains some of the points that I have highlighted in my findings and highlights the tensions that exist in offering services to the relatively new male client group. At the time of my meeting with Gary and Cate the review was still underway so they were waiting to hear on what their response would bring. In the meantime they were continuing to provide the Living Well service.

Findings

There were two obvious advantages within the male specialist delivery model that would enable men to engage with the service:

1. The agencies were set up exclusively to offer services to male survivors so were defined and advertised as such enabling men to clearly see that services were available to them.
2. The focus of the work was solely on the issue of men as victims of sexual abuse allowing for all the resources to address and consider the individual needs of the client group.

There were also two distinct disadvantages:

1. Men may not approach not wish to approach a defined male sexual assault agency centre due to it identifying and labeling them as a victim of sexual violence.
2. There being only a small number of specialist agencies limited access to this type of service so only allowing a small number of men to engage with them

²⁵ www.health.qld.gov.au/sexualassault/docs/KPMGreview.pdf

²⁶ <https://livingwell.org.au/Portals/0/Final%20Living%20Well%20Response%20to%20KPMG%20Review.pdf>

With the exception of BCMSSA, the agencies I visited in the male specialist sector were struggling with establishing a distinct service separate from the specialist female and multi-service sector. This raises the question as to whether there is a need for specialist male services or can such services be successfully incorporated within the existing services? In undertaking my Fellowship to explore service delivery to male survivors of sexual abuse this also became a core consideration in my enquiry.

In setting out to explore service delivery to male survivors, my aim was not to find a one size fits all service delivery model. I was interested in the different types of responses that were being offered, how they had developed and how successful they were in engaging men. It was fascinating to see how the different responses had developed and the stories behind them. The emergence of the male victim of has challenged our understanding of male violence and forced us to examine our stereotypical views of masculinity and what it is to be male. It has also challenged many of the predominantly held views of the feminist position that explains sexual violence as a gender based phenomena and brought the realisation that there are also other causes of sexual violence that yet have to be fully explained. In working with male victims some aspects of feminist theory can act as a barrier to successfully engaging with men and we need to develop different ways of working that address the complexities, subtleties and uniqueness of the male experience. It is hoped that what has been presented in this report captures some of those elements and will lead to further discussion, debate and argument in the quest of fully understanding and being able to deliver effective and appropriate services to male survivors.

What really struck me about my meetings with the men's agencies was how they all shared a similar theme in how they came about. At the heart of each of the stories was an individual who was instrumental in starting the agency and took on sole responsibility for its success. This stands in stark contrast to the other stories I had heard, especially in the Women's sector where there was more a sense of collectiveness and a togetherness that was borne out of having a shared history within the Women's Movement. Of course there were other individuals involved and the success of the agency was very much based in this team however, with the men's agencies there was a named individual who was recognised as being the founder and continued to be the driving force or leader.

What I found useful on reflecting on the meetings with men's agencies was how much of myself I saw in the attitudes and ways that others went about their work. There is a strength in this way, however it is very clear this can lead to a sense of isolation and unnecessary pressure and responsibility, the same feelings that I was experiencing when I was considering an application for a Winston Churchill Fellowship. A personal consequence for me in meeting the variety of agencies and individuals on my trip was that it highlighted that the unnecessary pressure and responsibility I was placing on

myself in my work life. This has led to looking at alternative ways of organising workloads, letting go and delegating to share responsibilities. In doing so I have had to relinquish some control, reach out and ask for support, recognising that I do not have to carry sole responsibility.

Another negative aspect of the 'lone leader' is the danger of turning an agency into a dictatorship, allowing one individual's personal experience, issues and concerns to be the sole informant of the agency's goals and direction. To avoid this requires a delicate balance of self-awareness and ability to be challenged without immediately becoming defensive. Trustee Boards play a vital role in this and though hierarchical structures within the charitable sector, where there is a 'part time' volunteer Trustee Board and a 'full time' paid manager can create a difficult dynamic, it is vital that structures are in place to ensure those that are put in positions of power and control are accountable for their decisions and actions. This can only be achieved by adopting a more cooperative and democratic approach, allowing all volunteers, paid staff and the actual client group contribute to discussions and shape decisions.

As the main activity of the male specialist agencies is the delivery of services to male survivors I shall assess the service delivery model using the findings from my set list of questions I used in the interviews. The answers to these represent the common themes to consider when developing a model of service delivery to male survivors.

Findings from the Questionnaire

How do men engage in services?

1. Community Partnerships

The main referral route was through other community agencies highlighting the importance of good communication and partnerships with a wide variety of external organisations. This referral route followed a common pattern where a man would engage with a service for another issue and during this disclose sexual abuse/assault that would lead to a referral being made. The areas of work where this seemed most prevalent were within the Substance Misuse, Mental Health, Homelessness, Social Services and Probation. This raised the importance of training for support workers within these agencies. Both male and female agencies in the specialist sexual abuse sector were aware of this and saw it as part of their remit to provide training on awareness of men's issues and handling a disclosure.

There was particular concern over the ability of clients who were already dealing with other issues such as substance misuse and homelessness to be able to manage attendance at a number of different agencies. Resources such as outreach work were a counsellor could see a client in the referring

agency addressed these concerns creating stronger partnerships and alternative ways of working for the benefit of the client.

This also brought benefits through discussions about the appropriateness and timing of addressing sexual abuse concerns. Involving the client in a 'care plan' that could offer informed choice and options gave the client a sense of control and autonomy in managing their issues.

2. Identifying different client demographics

Using demography can help agencies identify specific sectors and areas to target their services. Both Australia and Canada also have First Nations populations that require a considered approach to ensure access to services. Other ethnic minorities, immigrants and religions also offered particular challenges in terms of language and cultural beliefs. The gay, bi and trans community was another defined sub group where specific awareness raising and partnership work was being undertaken.

The most difficult demographic seemed to be the man that does not ally with or is defined by a specific sub culture. This mainly refers to, but is not exclusive of, heterosexual men who are not engaged with any other support or helping service. Partners, family and friends played a key role here in identifying issues and finding resources and information.

3. Advertising

Agencies spoke about not having huge resources for advertising and considered that what resources were available were best spent on leaflets, posters and websites. Like in almost every area, the growth and use of the Internet has completely changed how we communicate and receive information. A well put together, male focused website was seen as key to advertising and attracting clients. More than this, websites were also seen as important in reaching those men that would most probably never approach an agency around issues of sexual abuse. The ability to offer a large amount of information about the occurrence of sexual abuse in the male population and present common responses, share stories and advice was seen as invaluable in helping this 'invisible' population. Likewise, online e-counselling, telephone counselling and helplines were also considered to be important options, especially for those living in remote areas.

4. Initial Meetings/Assessments

All the agencies operated under a system that once a man had engaged with them, an initial meeting/assessment would take place to understand further the client's needs and what could be offered. This was seen as an important meeting as the clients first impression of going to an agency could have an effect on their continuing engagement. As well as the content of the meeting, the physical space it was held in was also deemed important. This

raised particular issues for those in the female and mainstream services where details such as posters in waiting rooms tended to be directed at females more than males.

Assessment tools and the type of questions asked were also seen as important and difficult to define as whether helpful or not helpful. There are a number of screening tools for PTSD and measuring traumatic events which some felt could reduce the client to a mathematical equation or statistic. There is no doubt these tools are useful in gauging a client's level of distress and ongoing therapeutic monitoring and discussion mainly centred on how and when they were administered. For some starting with 'administrative procedures' helped give some structure, whilst for others the importance of a undemanding, open, safe space was emphasised.

Assessment questions that asked about any abusive or violent behaviour towards others had the potential of feeding into the clients fear or expectation that he would be considered more of a threat than a person in need of help. Information does need to be gathered and the consensus was that there is no prescriptive way of achieving this. Each client is different and what can be achieved in the initial assessment depended on the clients immediate presentation. What seemed most important was that the client understood the process and had some degree of control in how it was managed.

The first meeting was seen as vital in engaging the client who may be looking for reasons not to be there or expecting a negative/judgemental attitude. Assessment was considered an ongoing process as new and possibly engagement effecting information could arise at any time during the clients journey and would need to be dealt with appropriately.

Once engaged, what common problems occur with male clients using the service?

1. DNA's and unexpected endings

The main answer to this question was the issue of DNA's (Did Not Attend) and what to do with clients that drop out and/or 'disappear'. It also came out as one of the most frustrating problems for agencies and their staff in how to address. In talking with the men's agencies there was interesting feedback about men and counselling and how the traditional concept of counselling as a 50-minute session held at the same time on a weekly basis was not best placed to serve all men. There was also discussion on preconceptions of what counselling may 'demand' of men in terms of an unfamiliar and difficult environment to be in. The potential pitfalls of the traditional approach are represented in the chart below.²⁷ These relate back

²⁷ from Gary R. Brooks, *A New Psychotherapy for Traditional Men*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998

to the 4 Rules of Masculinity and highlight how differing socialisation factors can influence a man's engagement in therapeutic services.

Psychotherapy versus Masculinity	
<u>Typical Psychotherapy Demands</u>	<u>Masculinity Demands</u>
Disclosing private experience	Hiding private experience
Relinquishing control	Maintaining control
Nonsexual intimacy	Sexualisation of intimacy
Showing weakness	Showing strength
Experiencing shame	Expressing pride
Acting vulnerable	Acting invincible
Seeking help	Being self-reliant
Expressing feelings	Being stoic
Being introspective	Taking action
Addressing relationship conflict	Avoiding conflict
Confronting pain	Denying pain
Acknowledging failure	Endlessly persisting
Admitting ignorance	Feigning omniscience

The issue of DNA's and unexpected endings can lead counsellors to question their professional ability and become de-motivated. Professional and regular supervision was seen as a vital factor in enabling personal reflection, evaluation and continuing professional development to ensure the health and wellbeing of counsellors and other frontline staff.

Dealing with DNA's and unexpected endings brought a variety of responses and policies about how many times a client should be contacted before closing their case. It was generally agreed that if possible clients should be contacted if they do not turn up for an appointment. Though there were issues of autonomy and self-responsibility, there was also recognition of the difficulties in attending therapeutic services and talking about sexually abusive experiences. The client may perceive not calling as justification for not turning up and prove an internalised thought such as 'They don't care, so why bother' It was considered that DNA's and unexpected endings are to be expected with the client group and attending to the issues around them (where possible) were important.

2. Differing Lifestyles

Different demographics represented different expectations of DNA's and dropping out of therapy e.g. substance misuse clients lives are generally more chaotic so the likelihood of DNA was seen as higher. However with this type of information, interventions can be formulated that recognise this potential and address a clients individual circumstance and needs. One counsellor told me how he treats every counselling session with a client as potentially the last time they might show up. This kept the focus on the

client's immediate needs and their motivation for attending counselling. Other practices involved the use of longer sessions than the traditional 50 minutes, reasoning that men needed more time to get significant use out of a counselling session. The use of Drop-In services, 'one off' sessions and helplines was also seen as useful to men in allowing them alternative ways of engaging with their issues.

3. Motivation

Motivation was seen as important factor in DNA's and drop out, meaning whether the client was attending under their own incentive or was being pressured by a partner, through a Court order or through an unformed referral, i.e. being told to go somewhere without considered discussion or being given adequate information as to why and what the service does. This is common when a worker is disclosed to who does not feel confident or able to work with the content of the disclosure. It was considered to be important to understand the client's motivation as soon as possible and also be aware that motivations change. Once the motivation was understood then there was a greater opportunity to engage with the client about what they were looking to achieve through counselling.

What is your experience of working with female agencies?

As already discussed, I found a lot of examples of mutual and supportive work between the male and female sectors. This was very pleasing and a good sign that as we move away from the 'hardcore' politics of gender down to the grassroots agencies, there is a lot more discussion and cooperation going on that can only lead better informed client services.

How do you measure success?

In this question I was moving more into the therapeutic side of the work the agencies were undertaking. I was interested in how they measured the effectiveness of the counselling they delivered, what systems they used and how this data informed their practice. Here I found some major differences in how this was done, mainly influenced by the expectations of the funders of the projects.

In the UK, the majority of grant providers have moved to a system of 'outcome funding' where an organisation has to state the expected outcomes of a project and how they will measure them. This ensures accountability of the funds provided and that they have been used to help the causes the funder is interested in supporting. For example, at Mankind, one of our outcomes is that, '280 men will receive a therapeutic service to improve their mental health' and we shall measure this using CORE (Clinical Outcomes in Routine Evaluation). This is a formal system provided by a

company²⁸ that we have had to purchase and implement within our counselling service. CORE was originally used within the UK NHS psychological services so allows us to measure our services against their benchmarks of effectiveness.

The funding for the agencies that I visited did not carry such requirements. The emphasis seemed to be more on the number of people a service was provided to and this formed the basis of reporting back to funders. The exception was The Men's Project who have a defined set of assessment and evaluation tools in their Men & Healing program. Family Services of Peel were also looking to use a defined monitoring outcome data system, but at the time of meeting with them this had not yet been decided on.

There is huge debate within counselling services within the UK about the effectiveness of measuring systems such as CORE. However, we have assessed its limitations and find the data it produces useful in focusing our attention on to therapeutic issues that allow us to constantly monitor and develop our services. We also find it a useful tool to use with clients so they too can monitor and gain insight into their therapeutic journey.

The agencies I visited that used formulised assessment tools at the beginning of the counselling were then able to administer the same tool at the end of counselling to derive a measure of movement. However there were problems around achieving this that mainly centred around two main areas:

1. DNA's and whether the client was physically available to complete the secondary measure. This raises issues around when is the best time to administer the 'tool' and how motivated/involved is the client in the process of using an outcome measure.
2. The individual counsellors belief in the use of such tools and their commitment to take part in a system, which is essentially measuring their effectiveness as a counsellor. This can cause anxiety and nervousness for some counsellors around being judged and lead to an avoidance of exposing themselves to such measures.

The main measure of effectiveness was sought from direct feedback from the client. This was done in two ways. The first was through regular monitoring in client sessions by asking how the client thought the counselling was helping. Secondly many agencies used client feedback forms after the counselling had finished to gain feedback and recommendations for service improvement. The latter was the least effective in that many clients did not return the feedback form so the opportunity for data was lost.

I personally feel that in the relatively new area of delivering counselling to male survivors, there is a real need to be using recognised tools to measure

²⁸ www.coreims.co.uk/

effectiveness. Not in an effort to produce a one size fits all solution but more to keep agencies and counsellors focused on the complexity of the work and enable an ongoing developmental process that places the client at the centre of the discussion. This is particularly important when we consider the variety of therapeutic modalities and styles and are seeking to ascertain which of these are appropriate for use with this wide and varied client group.

Conclusions

When I set out to apply for a Winston Churchill Fellowship, I was completely unaware of what such a profound effect the opportunity to travel and meet others working in the same field would have on me. I began from a position of isolation and concern over the way that I as the CEO of a UK based charity was directing the work that we were undertaking. At the end of this huge journey that has covered thousands of miles and involved meeting so many inspirational people, I feel a sense of relief and renewed vigour to carry on. The relief comes from the understanding, realisation and reminder that I work in a highly complex, emotive and under resourced sector. My experience is not unique and many others feel the same frustrations that I do. Working with trauma can be traumatising. The horrific stories of abuse, betrayal, hurt and devastating life consequences can have the vicarious effect of seeing the world as a bad and scary place. The act of sexual abuse/assault is violent, selfish and completely devoid of care, respect or love. It is an inhumane act that can make you question your belief and faith in humanity as it invades the sanctity of those places that we expect to be safe such as families, religion and interpersonal relationships. It raises the question of why do I work in such a field and want to expose myself to such abhorrence and suffering. The renewed vigour comes from meeting and experiencing the passion, empathy and dedication of those that also choose to work in this field. Of knowing that they also struggle but they also succeed in offering an opportunity for understanding, hope, healing and growth. Their knowledge, insight and willingness to share that with me, has given me a new enthusiasm and perspective.

My Fellowship has enabled me to put myself and the agency I work for in the context of an international dilemma of how to respond to the phenomena of sexual violence. Within this dilemma there are many disputes and tensions, with the emergence of the male survivor creating a situation where the status quo has been disrupted. From its growth out of the Women's Movement, Rape Crisis along with its members and partners, have been the leading authority on sexual violence perpetrated against women. Rape Crisis represents a major success in terms of a highly organised and long fought campaign to bring to the public attention the plight of women affected by sexual abuse and rape. However, with the emergence of the male victim and the rising reports of female perpetrators comes the threat of challenge to the

gender based hypothesis of sexual violence, which is at the core of feminist theory.

In this report I have challenged this, not in an effort to discredit, but more to point out that there are other occurrences of sexual violence that do not fit this hypothesis which equally deserve attention. I have returned with a new understanding of why any male organisation that does not have an appreciation and respect for the context of the Women's Movement and its continuing struggle within the realm of sexual violence, will always find itself at odds with the female agencies, and rightly so. Many of the stories that I collected involved cooperation, mutual respect and partnerships between male and female agencies and this represents the 'grass roots' solution of facing the difficulties and getting on with the job, trying to ensure there are services for clients, both male and female. The larger context is political and societal, we know that women disproportionately suffer more sexual violence than men and we know that we still live in a society that unfairly discriminates against women in many areas.

Add to this, the recent financial situation on charitable organisations has created a situation where there is fierce competition for dwindling funds that were never very large in the first place. An example of this in the UK is the Ministry of Justice Rape Support Fund that UK Rape Crisis were able to influence by including a proviso that any organisation applying to this fund must include a dedicated women's service, thereby excluding male survivor organisations from applying. These are tough times and I heard similar stories in Australia and Canada where the funding streams were created specifically for men's services but still no male agencies received any money, with grants being awarded to the existing women's and generic counselling services.

This is not presented as an affront or an outcry against the other services. As already stated, the fact is at this point in time there is no organised network of men's agencies to work with Rape Crisis and Governments to add to the discussion on how best to serve male clients. In the UK my conversations with colleagues that work within Rape Crisis very clearly show that this would be welcomed. For some, it is not so much that they do not want to work with men, but there is a very understandable tension that this will divert their resources away from women and that is not reasonable to expect. What I witnessed in my travels were organisations that were willing to take on working with men but not fully appreciating the differences between delivering services to men and women in the context of sexual violence. An exception to this was my meeting with Alison Peck from the York Region Abuse Program. It was a shame that I did not know about this agency prior to my trip and arrange a visit. I was intrigued by the lack of gender politics that seemed to have been achieved and it would have been interesting to find out more about them. Another agency that I visited but so far have not

mentioned is The Gatehouse in Toronto²⁹. The reason for this exclusion is that it does not fit into any of my 3 neatly defined themes. The Gatehouse is a community project founded by Arthur Lockhart, who whilst working as a Professor in Justice in 1998 noticed an abandoned 1890s Doctors house and had the vision to restore it as a centre for children and adults that had suffered abuse. The house was owned by the City of Toronto and he managed to negotiate a 10-year lease in return for restoring it as a community space. Arthur is the sort of person that you only need spend 10 minutes in his company and you feel happier about life. I spent a couple of extremely pleasant hours with him and got a real sense of how he was able to inspire an entire community to see his vision and want to make it happen. People and business gave time, skills and money to restore the house, which was completed within just 6 months at a cost of only \$30k. Arthur's vision was to give all survivors, in his words, 'a place to tell their stories, heal their wounds and inspire them to see their own potential.' As well as providing an adult support network for survivors and their families, the centre provides a state-of-the-art interview room for child abuse and sexual assault Police investigations. This unique project is so special because it was built by the community for the community so is not affected by any of the gender and funding politics that have taken up so much of this report. It demonstrates the power and strength of a community to face the reality of sexual abuse and create their own resource for engaging with the victims of sexual violence. It made me think that if there were a place like this in every community, surely this would not only raise awareness and understanding of the needs of those that have suffered abuse making it less taboo. But also with such a raised consciousness within the community, would it not have an impact on the detection and tolerance of sexual violence, so lowering the incidence?

²⁹ www.thegatehouse.org

Findings for Mankind

I returned from my Fellowship with so much useful information and ideas that for a while it was difficult to sort them in my head. The aim of the project was to investigate different types of service delivery and use the findings to inform Mankind in developing a model that would enable men to engage with the agency and retain their engagement in counselling. As well as the findings from the questionnaire there were two other areas that came out of the meetings with agencies.

1. Therapeutic Modality and Style

In my first week in Canada, I was fortunate to be able to attend a training facilitated by The Men's Project on their group based program based on the three phase trauma model as developed by Judith Herman.³⁰ In the UK the predominant modality of counselling within the sexual abuse agencies is the Person Centred model as developed by Carl Rogers³¹ and this is reflected in the counsellors at Mankind. Attending the course made me realise that it is important to explore other modalities of counselling that may be useful to client group.

When considering client engagement and retention, there were a number of factors from the training that were particularly pertinent to these issues:

1. The naming of a therapeutic intervention as a program instead of counselling may be more attractive to men who see counselling as a feminine activity or a place where they will have to expose their feelings and be emotional.
2. A program has structure so may be more attractive to men as they know, to some degree what to expect with a beginning, middle and an end.
3. The structure allows for a mixture of psycho educational learning, experiential and self-developmental elements to be presented.
4. A group allows for sharing of experience so relieving alienation, normalisation and forming of bonds, friendships and sense of community/belonging.
5. For some men going straight into a group would be to anxiety provoking so a mixture of 1-1 and group can allow for preparation and ongoing support.

The key point for me was that for a client to engage and stay in counselling, he has to feel that the counselling is beneficial and that it is worth him turning up every week. This begins with first contact in that he has to feel that the

³⁰ Herman, J. L. (1997). *Trauma and Recovery*. New York: Basic Books

³¹ Rogers, Carl R. *Client-Centered Therapy: Its Current Practice, Implications, and Theory*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1951.

service speaks to his individual needs and will be understanding of where he is coming from. To retain engagement there needs to be some immediate results that 'hook' the client in to demonstrate that there can be a positive result from attending. This can be as simple as giving information that can allow normalisation of how the client feels or just allowing a space where the client can 'be' and allow his feelings to come to the surface without fear of judgement. This highlights the importance of the initial assessment and finding out about the client's motivation for seeking counselling/support. If the intervention can be geared to exploring, working with and achieving this motivation then there will be greater degree in success of the client attending.

2. Counsellor Engagement

None of the agencies I visited used a volunteer base for staffing and all of their counsellors were paid. This is in marked contrast to the UK where it is very rare (and difficult) to get funders to pay for counsellors in the voluntary sector. The use of volunteers brings a number of limitations in the variety and number of counsellors who are able to offer their skills for free/low cost. This can create an issue with counsellor engagement in that whilst they are dedicated to the actual client work, attendance at other team building, training and administration meetings can stretch their time commitment. This can make for a disparate and unconnected team that do not feel part of the organisation and its ethos. This can lead to problems in ensuring that all counsellors are aware of and follow the agencies policies and procedures and our able to clearly define the agencies

The above consideration led to an application to the UK Ministry of Justice Victims & Witness fund detailing the limitations in our work by not being able to engage counsellors fully and the need to offer a variety of therapeutic options to clients. This involved asking for funds to pay counsellors on a freelance basis and run a research project alongside their work to investigate the effectiveness of different therapeutic modalities and styles. I am very pleased to report that we were successful in this application and are looking to have this new team up and running in early 2012. This will allow Mankind to develop further our aim of developing a service delivery model that can be disseminated to other agencies to inform their own practice and work.

UK Recommendations

This study has highlighted a number of key areas to address in the field of male victims of sexual abuse in the UK:

- a) There is a need to bring together and share theory, practice and ideas around the delivery of services to male survivors.
- b) There is a need to carry out further research in the area of men as victims of sexual abuse/assault.
- c) There is a need to formulise and collect data on the number of men accessing specialist male survivor services within the UK so as to provide a clearer picture of the client group.
- d) There is a need to create a partner document to the existing Violence Against Women and Girls strategy paper³² to highlight the plight of male victims within the UK

The main recommendation of this report is that the existing specialist male agencies create a specific forum to address these needs. This would provide:

- a) An identifiable body for Government, Health etc to consult with on issues relating to men as victims of sexual violence.
- b) An identifiable body to meet and form links with Rape Crisis to create a cooperative partnership that respects the remit of their work.
- c) An identifiable body to link with other male agencies internationally.

Further recommendations that could come under the remit of such a forum but may be more suited to separate organisations are:

- a) Further research into the perpetrators of sexual crimes to gain greater understanding of their motivations and behaviours.
- b) Further research into effective prevention and offender rehabilitation strategies.
- c) Creation of a national education strategy for young people to raise awareness of sexual abuse/assault and equip them with tools to prevent, disclose and seek appropriate help/support.

³² www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime/violence-against-women-girls/strategic-vision/

