



Violence Abuse & Mental
Health Network

Violence, Abuse and Mental Health Network: Opportunities for Change

Year in review

2018-2019



@VAMHN



vamhn@kcl.ac.uk



www.vamhn@kcl.ac.uk

The Violence, Abuse and Mental Health Network

Who we are

We are a network of individuals and organisations aiming to reduce the prevalence of mental health problems by addressing associated violence and abuse, particularly domestic and sexual violence. We bring together and support research by experts from a range of disciplines, sectors, and backgrounds - some with personal experience, others with expertise from the work that they do, and survivor researchers with both.

What we do

The VAMHN runs a number of free events and activities including:

- Providing grants of up to £25k through our annual competition, and training bursaries of £250;
- Hosting meetings, lectures, and conferences;
- Developing new resources, including an online research database;
- Disseminating the latest findings and collaboration and funding opportunities;
- Identifying priorities for future research

The activities of the network are organised into 3 themes:

Measurement

Measuring the extent and impact of domestic and sexual violence in relation to mental health. Our first year activities focused on the theme of measurement.

Understanding

Understanding the pathways that lead to domestic and sexual violence and their relationship to mental health problems

Intervention

Planning interventions and services to prevent, reduce and address domestic and sexual violence in people with mental health problems or at risk of developing mental health problems

The year in numbers



562

Network members



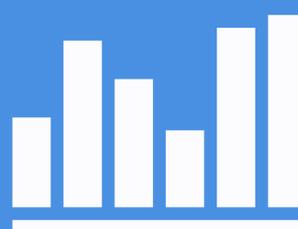
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Newsletters



1,274

Twitter followers



401,100

Twitter impressions



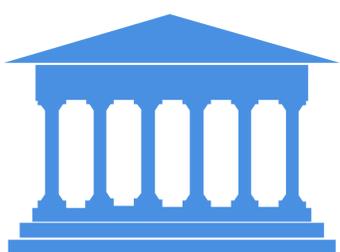
12

Events held



380

People attending our events



4

Grants awarded

£99,719



9

Early Career Researcher
Bursaries awarded

£2,068

Launch & Spring 2019



7th December 2018

Launch Event

We celebrated our launch at the Royal College of Psychiatrists, following on from their first ever conference on domestic violence and mental health.



December 2018

McPin Priorities Survey

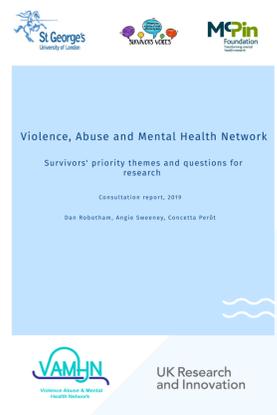
The consultation, led by Survivors Voices, McPin Foundation, and St George's University of London on behalf of VAMHN, aimed to identify survivors' priority themes and questions for research. 89 people responded.



11th March 2019

1st Network Meeting

Our first network meeting welcomed speakers from Safe Lives, Standing Together Against Domestic Violence, McPin Foundation, and the Domestic Homicide International Research Group.



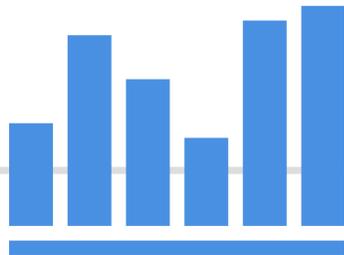
9th and 16th May 2019

McPin Survivor Consultation Workshop

Two workshops were held in London and Birmingham with people with lived experience of violence and abuse to refine survey findings. You can find the VAMHN Survivors' Priority Themes and Questions for Research Report at www.vamhn.co.uk/resources.html.

Summer 2019

18th June 2019



19th June 2019

Measurement Workshops

The activities of the network in our first year were based on the theme of 'measuring violence, abuse and mental health'. Our first measurement workshop was hosted by Prof Sylvia Walby at City, University of London which brought together a number of key stakeholders to discuss how we can move towards the development of a common measurement framework. Two more workshops are planned for 2020 and 2021

Our second measurement workshop was hosted by Dr Emma Howarth at UCL in collaboration with the NIHR Children and Families Policy Research Unit. The workshop contributed to the development of a core outcomes set to inform family interventions. The day brought together academics, practitioners, the third sector and people with lived experience of violence, abuse and mental health problems.



20th & 21st June 2019

Lancet Psychiatry Commission on Intimate Partner Violence and Mental Health

We are delighted to be partnering with The Lancet Psychiatry on this important Commission. The Commission group brings together expertise from around the world, and met for the first time in June 2019.



June - September 2019

Small Grant Competition

We launched our first small grant competition on the theme of Measurement and were delighted to receive 23 fascinating applications. After careful deliberation, our panel selected 4 proposals from institutions across the country. See page 7 for information about the successful applicants.

Autumn 2019



7th October 2019

2nd Network Meeting

For our second network meeting hosted by Dr Julie McGarry (the University of Nottingham), we welcomed speakers from Survivors' Voices, the University of Warwick, the University of Sheffield and Standing Together Against Domestic Violence.



8th October 2019

International VAMHN Meeting

In October, network member Dr Roxanne Keynejad (King's College London) launched the inaugural meeting of iVAMHN which hosted a number of researchers from around the globe. Presenters shared findings from Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Somaliland, India, Uganda and Vietnam.

Winter 2019



**Economic
and Social
Research Council**



4th November 2019

Resilience to Transformation Workshop

In November, the VAMHN collaborated with network member Dr Helen Adams from the Centre for Integrated Research on Risk and Resilience (King's College London) to hold a workshop on “Resilience to Transformation” as part of the ESRC Festival of Social Sciences. The workshop explored differences between the geographical and psychological definitions of resilience and considered their utility to violence, abuse, and mental health.

7th November 2019

Policy Lab Workshop

We collaborated with the King's Policy Institute to hold a policy lab (structured workshop) to consider what is needed for a Trauma Informed Approach to be effectively implemented across all relevant public service settings. We are currently developing a briefing note summarizing the outcomes of the lab which we will share with our network members.

Grant competition

The VAMHN has awarded funding for 4 projects of up to £25k as part of our 2019 grant competition on the theme of measuring violence, abuse and mental health. To find out more about each project click [here](#). Our next grant competition on the theme of understanding violence, abuse and mental health will open in June 2020.

£24.9k

The Development of Measures to Assess the Long-Term Support Needs of Adult Sexual Assault Survivors

PI: David Gadd
University of Manchester

£24.9k

Estimating the lifetime cost of Sexual Violence and abuse in Essex, UK

PI: Estela Capelas Barbosa
University of Bristol

£25k

What difference does it make? An intersectional framework to measure mental health harms in women and men associated with different thresholds of violence and abuse: a systematic review and meta-analysis.

PI: Nadia Mantovani
St George's University of London

£24.8k

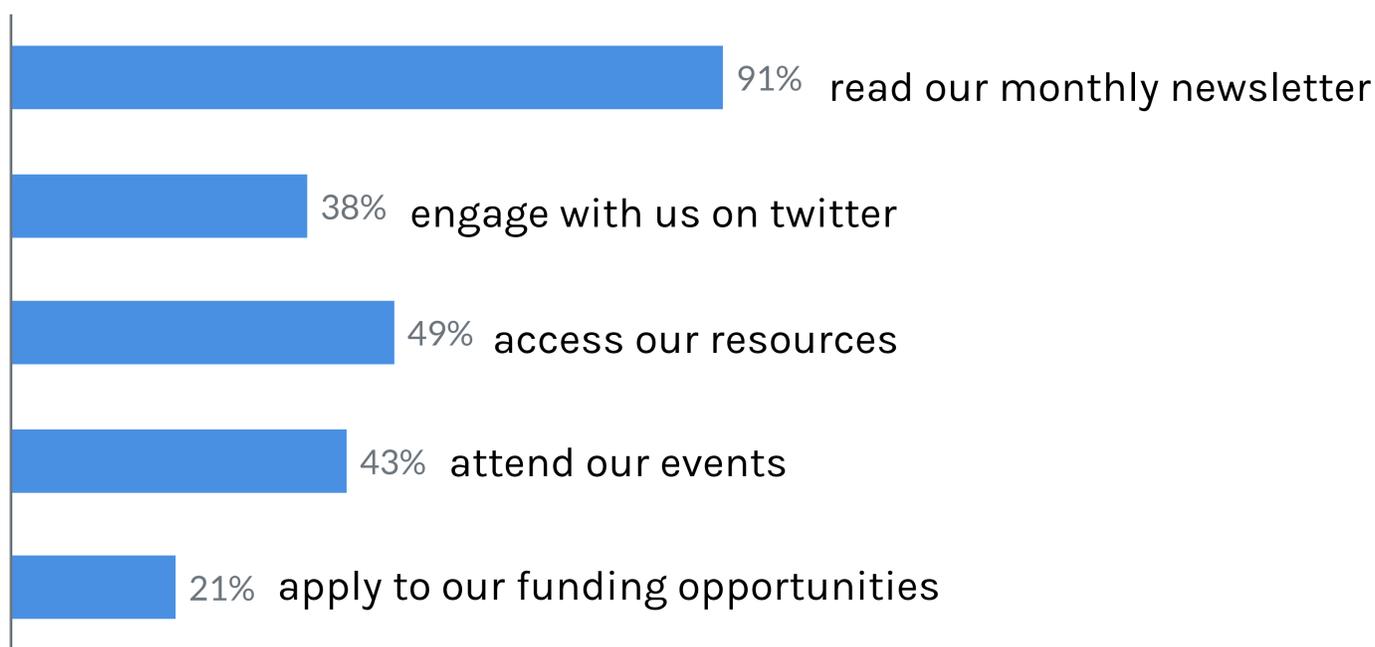
PaRental intimate partner viOlence and abuse: measurement of the risk of Exposing Children and the menTal health impact: PROTECT study

PI: Ruth McGovern
Newcastle University

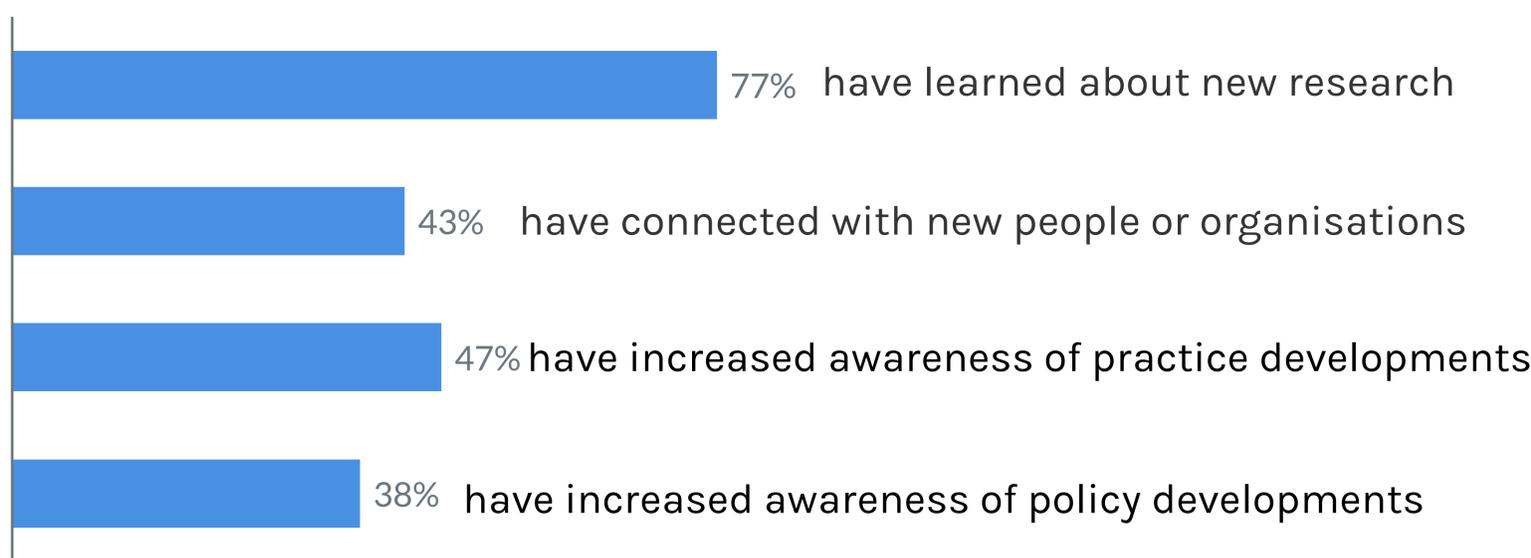
Your feedback

We put out a survey to get feedback from our members on what we've done so far. 47 people completed the survey. Here's what they told us:

Which of the following activities have you engaged with as part of the network?



What have you gained from being part of the VAMHN network?



"I have identified staff members in my institution with similar research interests."

"[I have made] better strategic and policy health connections"

"[I have made] new connections and awareness of others work."

"I've made a few contacts on Twitter through VAMHN"



Your feedback – what are we doing well?

Newsletter

We use our newsletters to connect people and share resources

"The monthly newsletter is a mine of information keeping abreast of the latest research, training and events."

" I find the newsletters useful and informative"

Interdisciplinarity

One of our main aims is to facilitate interdisciplinary connections and collaboration.

"Very useful and timely network, promoting inter-disciplinary work and forging stronger connections between survivors, practice and research. Feels supportive to people of different personal and professional backgrounds."

"VAMHN has a wide reach - there are lots of people involved from a range of backgrounds..."

ECR support

We aim to support the professional development of our early career researchers through our funding opportunities and activities

"I...appreciate the support for education by giving the grants to new researchers in the field to receive training."

"...investment in the early career/ small research grants is very encouraging and gives the message that VAMHN are open to new ideas and supporting people."

Lived experience involvement

We promote the ethical, safe and meaningful involvement of survivors in research including as research leaders.

"Bringing together survivors, service users and professionals. Recognising that many professionals are survivors and many survivors are professionals and all survivors have important contributions to make."

Addressing key issues

We want to increase awareness and recognition of the impact of violence, abuse and mental health in both public and professionals spheres.

"Asking important questions, working on a traditionally under-served topic and incorporating diversity of perspective"

"Increasing the profile of domestic abuse issues within the mental health world, joining together different pieces of research and methodologies, pushing for commitment from the mental health and academic worlds to better join up and focus on the common work."

What can we do to improve?

Increasing our policy and practice platform

Some members asked to use our platform to push for policy change.

We will address this in collaboration with the King's Policy Institute, who are supporting us to strengthen our policy engagement activities, and integrating policy-related activities into our regular work and events. Look out for our policy briefing note on implementing trauma-informed

More regional activities

A few members encouraged us to host more events across the country.

We pledge to hold half of our open network meetings in cities outside of London and aim to make as many of our events virtually accessible as possible. If you'd like to have a look at the podcasts and slides from our previous events, you can view them on our website. Additionally we are planning to host online grant writing workshops for our ECRs which will allow participation from across the country.

Third sector involvement

Some members suggested engaging local and community organisations more as well as involving the broader third sector.

We will consult our third sector members on their priorities for engagement. We are increasing third sector representation on our network advisory group, and will be issuing clearer guidance on our expectations around third sector involvement in our next grant competition

More feedback on bursaries and funding

Some members mentioned they would like more transparency regarding feedback on their funding/bursary applications.

Feedback on applications to our grant competition is available on request via vamhn@kcl.ac.uk. We are updating our ECR bursary pages to include our assessment criteria."

Coming up...

We are re-designing several of our 2020 events and activities following the introduction of the coronavirus containment measures. They will, however, include:

- Our second small grant competition on the theme of "understanding violence, abuse and mental health"
- A workshop aimed at those planning to apply to our grant competition
- Another round of our ECR bursary competitions
- Virtual ECR grant writing workshops
- The launch of our Lancet Psychiatry commission on intimate partner violence and mental health
- Open network meetings
- Recruitment to our lived experience advisory group
- Our Basecamp launch, which makes it easier for members to connect.
- The launch of our online data directory

Thank you!

Thank you to all our members for your contributions over the past year. We want to keep growing and to keep reaching new people - please do keep sharing information about VAMHN, and sending through your ideas

I think there has been a lot of good momentum for such a young organisation. I've enjoyed seeing how many events have been happening throughout the year.

Thank you!

Keep up the great work and look forward to seeing phase 2

Very much enjoying my membership and the opportunities sent my way.