

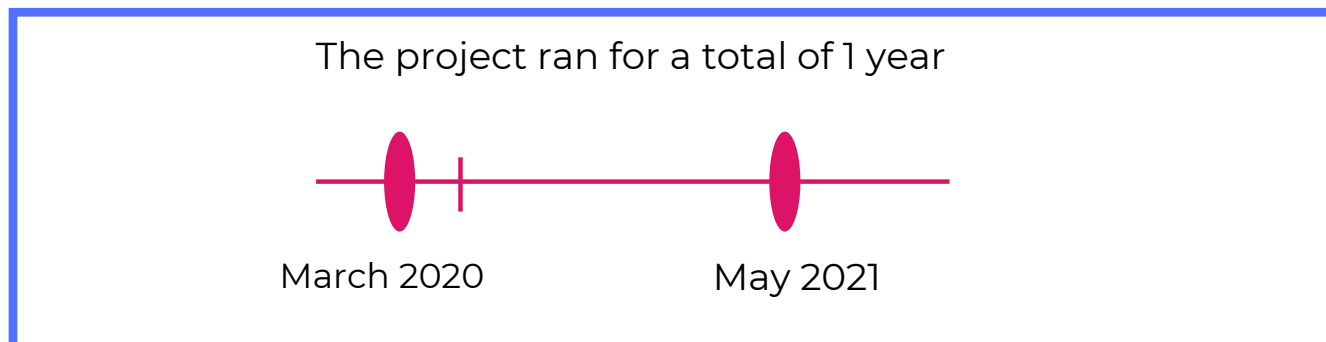
Lifetime cost of sexual violence in Essex

Project report

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Project background

This project was funded by the UKRI Violence, Abuse and Mental Health Network as part of its workstream on the theme of measurement of violence, abuse and mental health.



Project team:

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- Rebekah Brant, South Essex Rape & Incest Crisis Centre

Project partners and collaborators:

- South Essex Rape & Incest Crisis Centre
- Rape Crisis



Project summary

Background

Sexual abuse is a crime that has devastating consequences for its victims, including acute feelings of betrayal, powerlessness, and guilt, as well as mental health-related problems that result from trauma. In the UK, there is little evidence around the lifetime costs of sexual violence and abuse.

Methods

The aim of this study is to estimate the lifetime cost of sexual violence and abuse in Essex, UK and evidence return on investment for support services. There are three main methodological components to this study. First, a rapid review using a systematic approach was conducted to identify relevant unit costs that may be attributable to child and adult sexual violence and abuse. Second, administrative data was analysed, and regression predictions based on multiple imputation used to infer adjusted relative proportions attributable to each victim of sexual violence and abuse. Administrative data was also used to infer the duration of harm where relevant. Finally, an estimate of the cost of sexual violence and abuse was calculated by cost component, differentiating between child sexual violence and adult sexual violence.

Results

The estimated lifetime cost of child sexual abuse using administrative data from Rape Crisis centres in Essex is £472,048.53. In turn the estimated lifetime costs of adult sexual abuse using administrative data from Rape Crisis centres in Essex is £248,431.50. This is the first attempt to estimate a lifetime cost per victim using administrative data, thus it contributes to a gap in the literature around costing of abuse.

Conclusions

Sexual abuse is more costly than previously estimated in other studies. While not directly comparable, our study reinforces the further need to make best possible use of administrative records to address gaps in knowledge. Further studies should focus on lifetime costs of victims with disabilities and other co-morbidities.

Key messages

Top 3 key messages from the project



The estimated lifetime cost of child sexual abuse using administrative data from Rape Crisis centres in Essex is £472,048.53.

The estimated lifetime costs of adult sexual abuse using administrative data from Rape Crisis centres in Essex is £248,431.50.



While the estimated costs in this study are higher than previously published estimates, previous estimates differ in methods to the one we estimated, since they focus on contact (or single event), while we take a lifetime approach.

The Violence, Abuse and Mental Health Network

We will be sure to keep our members updated on any outputs linked to this project in the future. To keep updated you can sign up to our mailing list and receive our monthly newsletter. You can also follow us on our socials . All links can be found at the bottom of this page.

About the VAMHN

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.

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

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