The impact of domestic violence and abuse and of human trafficking on women’s mental health

Dr Sian Oram
King’s College London
Acknowledgements

This presentation presents independent research commissioned and funded by the:

- NIHR Programme Grant for Applied Research
- NIHR Policy Research Programme
- Big Lottery Fund
- MRC

The views expressed are those of the author(s) and not necessarily those of the MRC, the Big Lottery Fund, the NHS, the National Institute for Health Research, the Department of Health and Social Care or its arm's length bodies, and other Government Departments.
Domestic violence and abuse (DVA)

“Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between those aged 16 years or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality”

A range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.
Prevalence in general population

Past year DVA among adults aged 16-59 in England & Wales
Gendered experience of DVA

Scale of DVA crime

• Average of 227,000 female victims and 79,000 male victims per year

• Women are 74% of victims of domestic violent crime; 82% of domestic violent crimes are against women.

Frequency of DVA crime

• 80% of high frequency victims (>10 crimes per year) are women

• 48% of domestic violent crime is reported by 4.5% of victims; these victims are women.

Severity of DVA crime

• 77% victims reporting injurious domestic violent crime are women; 91% of injurious domestic violent crimes are against women

Walby & Towers 2018
DVA and mental health

- Significant association between DVA and mental disorders, across a range of diagnoses
- The severity of abuse is associated with severity of symptoms
- Symptoms decrease when abuse stops
- Similar findings across various country settings and using different methodologies, including longitudinal survey research.

Oram et al 2017
Past year intimate partner violence and diagnosed depressive disorders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Cases n/N</th>
<th>Controls n/N</th>
<th>OR (95% CI)</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afifi</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>27/100</td>
<td>73/846</td>
<td>2.09 (1.41, 3.01)</td>
<td>14.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrews</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>33/72</td>
<td>32/214</td>
<td>3.80 (2.13, 6.76)</td>
<td>11.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayub</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>173/194</td>
<td>21/240</td>
<td>3.35 (2.66, 4.26)</td>
<td>13.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dayouza</td>
<td>2009</td>
<td>79/96</td>
<td>17/1806</td>
<td>1.06 (0.69, 1.67)</td>
<td>15.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pietrzak</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>360/4246</td>
<td>358/6936</td>
<td>4.11 (2.62, 6.38)</td>
<td>26.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolman</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>136/191</td>
<td>50/496</td>
<td>3.51 (2.45, 5.35)</td>
<td>15.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall (I² = 81.2%, p = 0.025)

3.31 (2.48, 4.41) 100.00

NOTE: Weights are from random effects analysis

OR 3.21 (95% CI 2.49-4.14)
Past year intimate partner violence and diagnosed anxiety disorders


OR 2.29
(95% CI 1.31-4.02)
Intimate partner violence and depression – a bidirectional relationship

OR 1.93 (95% CI 1.51-2.48)

IPV → Depression

OR 1.97 (95% CI 1.56-2.48)

Depression → IPV

NOTE: Weights are from random effects analysis
Mental Health and Justice Survey

- Khalifeh et al interviewed patients with severe mental illness who were aged 18-59 and receiving community mental health care in London.

- Questions were drawn from the Crime Survey for England and Wales

- Main outcomes were (1) being a victim of domestic violence since age 16 and in the last year; (2) being a victim of sexual violence since age 16 and in the last year.

- Participants were compared to controls drawn from participants in the 2011-2012 Crime Survey for England and Wales
Findings from 2011-2013 Khalifeh survey

Female patients

• Past year DVA – 27%
• Past year sexual violence – 10%
• Attempted suicide after serious sexual assault – 53%

All patients
• Family violence comprised greater proportion of DVA vs. general population (63% vs 35%)

Khalifeh et al 2015
Human trafficking

- Human trafficking is the movement of people by force, coercion, or deception, for the purposes of exploitation.
- Estimated 40m people in situations of trafficking and modern slavery worldwide
- People are exploited in a variety of settings, including:
  - Forced sex work
  - Domestic servitude
  - Agriculture, construction, fishing, factories, restaurants, hotels, nail salons, car washes
  - Forced criminality (e.g. begging, theft, cannabis cultivation)
Accumulation of adverse and traumatic experiences

Fig. 1. Conceptual model: stages of the human trafficking process.

Zimmerman et al 2011
Psychological risks encountered during exploitation phase

- Physical and sexual violence
- Psychological abuse and entrapment
- Isolation and restrictions on movement, time and activities.
- Manipulation of intimate and familial relationships, and lies, deception and blackmail;
- Coerced use of drugs and alcohol;
- Usurious charges for travel documents and basic necessities
- Confiscation of identity, visa and travel documents
- High-risk living and working conditions.

Abuses typically occur repeatedly, in combination, and over a prolonged period
PROTECT survey - significant psychological distress among survivors in contact with shelters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Women (n=98)</th>
<th>Men (n=52)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>78% 1+ depression, anxiety, or PTSD</td>
<td>40% 1+ depression, anxiety or PTSD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PTSD</td>
<td>51% Suicidal ideation</td>
<td>14% Suicidal ideation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hazardous</td>
<td>4% Hazardous drinking</td>
<td>33% Hazardous drinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drinking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Oram et al 2016
www.kcl.ac.uk/protect-project
PROTECT cohort study - trafficked people are in contact with secondary mental healthcare

- Searched of electronic medical records using the Case Register Interactive Search (CRIS) system
- Identified 98 trafficked adults and 37 trafficked children in contact with South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust between 2006-2012.
- Diagnoses included PTSD, depression, and schizophrenia and other psychoses
- 22% adults self-harmed while under care of SLaM services
- Trafficked adults were more likely than matched non-trafficked patients to be detained under the Mental Health Act and to have a longer duration of inpatient admission.

Oram et al 2015, Borschmann et al 2017
www.kcl.ac.uk/protect-project
PROTECT NHS Survey – a missed opportunity to respond?

NHS knowledge and confidence to respond to trafficking (n=782)

- Your role in identifying and responding to human trafficking
- Indicators of human trafficking
- What questions to ask to identify potential cases
- What to say/not to say
- Health problems commonly experienced
- How to document human trafficking
- Assessing danger for a patient
- Local and/or national support
- Local and/or national policies

Ross et al 2015
www.kcl.ac.uk/protect-project
Summary

- Strong and consistent associations between DVA and mental illness, and a high prevalence of mental illness among trafficked people
- High proportion of mental health service users have experienced violence and abuse
- Women’s experiences of domestic and sexual violence should be key considerations for researchers working across epidemiology, mental health services research, and intervention research
- Greater multi-sectoral collaboration needed, including between mental health and violence against women sector
Violence Abuse and Mental Health Network

- Cross-disciplinary network of academics, practitioners (incl. non-governmental organisations), and people with lived experience
- Aims to reduce the prevalence of mental health problems by addressing associated violence and abuse, with a key focus on domestic and sexual violence
- Activities include:
  - Co-production and prioritisation of research questions, led by McPin Foundation
  - Sandpits and small grant competitions
  - Grant writing workshops and bursaries for early career researchers
  - Developing an online resource to bring together information about datasets reporting on violence, abuse, and mental health

• Follow us @vamhn

• London launch event on 7th December – see poster for details


