



Research Priorities for Wales

Authors: Dr Sarah Wallace^{1,2} & Prof Emily Underwood-Lee¹

University of South Wales¹, PRIME Centre Wales²

Lead Author contact details: sarah.wallace@southwales.ac.uk

Background: VAWDASV

- VAWDASV is a major public health and social care problem, and a criminal justice and human rights issue, with a range of adverse consequences for health and well-being over the life course [1]
- During 2019, 2.3 million adults in England and Wales experienced domestic abuse [2]
- Anyone regardless of sex, age, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, disability, religion or belief, income, geography, or lifestyle can experience VAWDASV [3]
- Ending VAWDASV is a priority for Welsh Government and Wales was the first nation in the UK to pass a dedicated VAWDASV Act [4]
- The refreshed WG 'VAWDASV National Strategy (2022-26)', seeks to adopt a whole Wales 'Blueprint' approach to end VAWDASV in Wales [5]

The VAWDASV Research Network Wales

Aim:

An inclusive research community for Wales that provides a safe, open forum to bring together those who are working towards an end to VAWDASV to set the future research agenda, foster collaboration and develop grant applications, undertake high quality research, and work towards the elimination of VAWDASV.

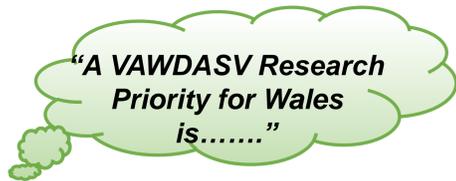
- Officially launched in November 2021 by the Minister for Social Justice, Jane Hutt MS
- Over 60 members across Wales representing specialist and non-specialist VAWDASV sectors, academia, and policy
- First study of the VAWDASV Research Network Wales

Aim: To examine and co-produce the VAWDASV research priorities for Wales with specialist, and non-specialist VAWDASV professionals, other sector professionals, policy makers, and academics across Wales

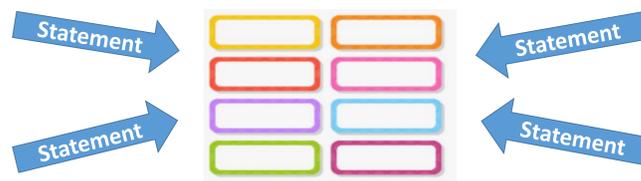
Method

- Group Concept Mapping (GCM) is an online participatory consensus method to engage stakeholders in the research process [6]
- Three participant activities using Concept Systems Global Max™ software:

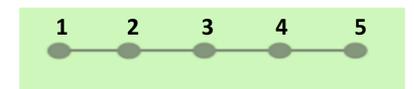
1. Statement generation "Brainstorming"



2. Sorting statements into groups/themed pile and assign a label



3. Rate statements against three scales: Importance, Impact, and Achievability



Analysis

GCM software to conduct 4-steps of data analysis [6]:

- Three participant demographic questions analysed using descriptive statistics
- Similarity matrix from participant sorted statements
- Multidimensional scaling analysis of similarity matrix [point map]
- Ward's algorithm used in hierarchical cluster analysis of statements [cluster map, cluster ratings map, pattern match, and Go-zones]

Participant Demographics (n=39)

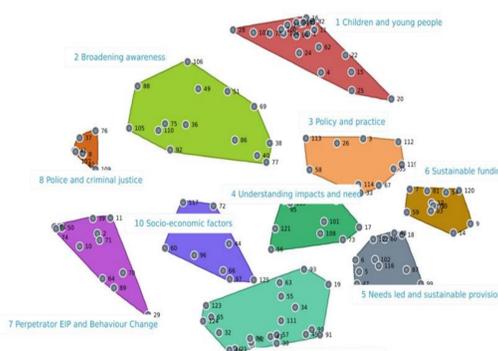
- Most participants based in the third sector (n=16)
- Majority (n=25) confirmed their principle professional interest or focus is VAWDASV
- Participants represented four regions in Wales: North Wales, Mid Wales, South-East Wales, and South-West Wales.
- Mostly professionally based in the South-East Wales region (n=19)

Findings

Cluster Map

125 statements of VAWDASV Research Priorities for Wales, sorted into 10 clusters:

- Children and young people (n=21)
- Broadening Awareness (n=14)
- Policy and practice (n=10)
- Understanding impacts and need (n=10)
- Needs led and sustainable provision (n=11)
- Sustainable funding (n=11)
- Perpetrator EIP and behaviour change (n=12)
- Police and criminal justice (n=7)
- Complex and intersecting needs (n=21)
- Socio-economic factors (n=8)



Statement Ratings

Top five statements in order of highest average rating on importance, impact, and achievability:

- "The funding needs of the sector (from a providers perspective)"
- "How commissioning practices in Wales shape/constrict specialist service provision"
- "How important recovery services are for children and young people"
- "The gaps in specialist provision by and for certain specific groups; e.g., LGBTQ+ etc provision for children and young people"
- "What works to improve police response to VAWDASV?"

Top five statements rated as highest on importance and impact, but rated least achievable:

- "How to achieve a sustainable specialist VAWDASV sector in Wales?"
- "Solutions for uncooperative perpetrators"
- "How do we create cultural change in terms of attitudes toward VAWDASV, particularly Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)?"
- "Improving refuge support for people with complex needs (older people, care and support needs, substance misuse etc.)"
- "What works to address signs of violence and abuse early to prevent it escalating?"

Conclusions

- Study is the first step in developing a consensus on the VAWDASV research priorities for Wales
- Third sector representation – typical of VAWDASV provision in Wales
- Future work will explore findings with survivors, the VAWDASV sector, specialist and non-specialist VAWDASV professionals, policy makers, and academics
- Important first step - scope and map the existing literature/research to determine what work has already been carried out in these areas, what we know, and where more primary data is needed