Registered Office
Unit 9, Brewery Yard
Deva City Office Park
Salford
M3 7BB

+44 (0)161 236 2182
support@wearesurvivors.org.uk
wearesurvivors.org.uk

Twitter: @ThisIsSurvivors
Facebook: /ThisIsSurvivors
Inst: @thisissurvivors

Male Survivor-Led Research Policy

WE ARE SURVIVORS.

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DOCUMENT CONTROL PANEL

Title	**Title:** Male Survivor-Led Research Policy **Version:** 001 **Reference Number:** MSLRP001
Supersedes	**Supersedes:** Research Engagement Guide [REG] (REG002) **Significant Changes:** Principles-based recommendations to research proposal assessment, formal operational procedure for community and prison-based research, Document Control Panel
Originator or Modifier	**Originated by:** Information and Policy Co-Ordinator, Expert-Reference-Group, Chief Executive Officer **Modified by:** N/A **Reference Material:** - *Turning Pain into Power: A Charter for Organisations Engaging Abuse Survivors in Projects, Research and Service Development,* Survivors Voices. - *Survivor Involvement Ladder*, Survivors Voices. - *Conflict of Interest Policy* - *SUINM Policy* - *Safeguarding Policy*
Ratification	**Referral Date:** 12.08.25 **Referred by:** Information and Policy Co-Ordinator **Ratified by:** Chief Executive Officer **Ratified Date:** 19.08.25
Application	**Applies to:** All We Are Survivors Trustees, Employees and Volunteers, Researchers **Authorised for inclusion in:** Quality Standards, Funding Application, Grant Agreements or Contracts, or other uses as agreed with Operations Director
Circulation	**Issue Date:** 19.08.25 **Circulated by:** Information and Policy Co-Ordinator **Accessible:** YouManage, Teams Drive (General > Files > Policies)
Review	**Last Review Date:** 19.08.25 **Next Review Date:** 19.08.26 **Reviewer Responsibility:** Information and Policy Co-Ordinator

1. Purpose and Scope

This policy acts as a principles-based toolkit in communicating best practice for centring research around survivors of sexual abuse, exploitation, or rape. In setting out an organisational research ethical approval process for incoming proposals, this policy recognises male survivors as both participants and leaders in research.

It also sets out a formal operational procedure for We Are Survivors' and its Expert-Reference-Group's engagement, liaison, and impact creation with external researchers.

2. Introduction: What is this Work Seeking to Address?

Research and our Organisation

The Male Survivor-Led Research Policy speaks to how We Are Survivors' engagement in research activities (across processes of formal survivor-led input, administration, and impact creation processes) seeks to further the organisation's Charitable Objects.

Firstly, our organisation's engagement with research fulfils the second Charitable Object:

> For the public benefit, to promote and protect the good health and wellbeing of male victims / survivors of sexual harms, and their loved ones, across Greater Manchester and throughout England and Wales by:
>
> Providing training and education in, and awareness raising campaigns of, the prevention and impact of sexual harm on males, sharing knowledge and information to support a greater societal understanding of sexual harms.

Formal engagement in research projects ensures continuous knowledge-exchange between organisations, universities, and other data/information rich bodies, to ensure the continuous improvement and quality assurance of services that seek to break the silence around men and boys' sexual harms.

Further, as a data rich organisation, it is our responsibility to represent ourselves and our community in relevant research projects that align with our services' development trajectories and awareness raising goals.

Secondly, our organisation's engagement with research fulfils the first Charitable Object:

> For the public benefit, to promote and protect the good health and wellbeing of male victims / survivors of sexual harms, and their loved ones, across Greater Manchester and throughout England and Wales by:

Providing qualified health and social care professionals, ISVAs, IDVAs and advocates to treat, support and advise them to cope and recover and move beyond these harmful experiences.

Participation in research should not outweigh, but be balanced with, the healing and wellbeing of male survivors participating in research activities.

Moreover, as long as this policy maintains that research should inform improvement in service provision, attention should be given to how knowledge is implemented in a service setting. Research must be for the benefit of the survivor participant's own healing journey, and with all men and boys in mind, regardless as to whether the project directly engages in survivor interviews/focus groups or seeks to create impact only after publication and dissemination.

Such participation, part of the male survivor's healing journey, means that research activity must be integrated into care plans laid out by service staff. Moreover, difficult topics raised in research, relevant to survivorship or not, should be acknowledged as risks to healing.

Our Survivor-Led Study

Towards producing this policy, an internal research project was overseen by Rory Brooke, Information and Policy Co-Ordinator. This was co-led by external academics Dr Siobhan Weare (Reader in Law, The Law School, University of Lancaster), Dr Emma Sleath, (Associate Professor of Criminology, University of Leicester), and Dr Grace Carter (Assistant Professor, Centre for Healthcare and Communities, Coventry University).

In 2023, Coventry University was awarded funding from the Economic and Social Research Council's Impact Acceleration Account (ESRC IAA) to undertake a programme of activities to translate research into real impacts in society. Dr Grace Carter was awarded 'Follow-On' funding to build on her team's research projects in sexual violence and abuse. One of these projects was the JiCSAV project, led by Coventry and Lancaster Universities.

The JiCSAV project examined the impact of Covid-19 on criminal justice journeys of child and adult survivors of sexual assault and abuse, and was founded on trauma-informed and survivor-focused research principles as laid out in the Survivors Voices Charter for Engaging Abuse Survivors in Projects, Research, and Service Development. The JiCSAV project provided a set of recommendations for survivor involvement in research projects more broadly. Stemming from this, We Are Survivors approached the JiCSAV team to discuss how the findings and experiences from JiCSAV (and other related projects) could inform the development of internal policies and process around ensuring meaningful and ethical survivor involvement in research.

In light of this collaboration, the ESRC IAA funding supported the costs of the workshops that took place to support this work.

The study consisted of two hybrid in-person and Microsoft Teams based workshops, within which both Expert-Reference-Group Members and Survivor Staff at We Are Survivors were encouraged to discuss the value of research towards placing experts-by-experience at the centre of the assessment and decision-making processes in external research engagement.

Taking part was voluntary, and participants could withdraw at any time before or during the workshop. After the sessions took place, participants had up to 28 days after the workshop to request for any information disclosed to be altered or removed.

The workshop began with an introduction to the concept of research being Survivor-Led, per the Survivors Voices Charter. Seven questions were then presented to participants as prompts for discussion, concerning the value of survivor research, the expertise of researchers, ethics, and all apparent risks present in direct survivor participation.

At the end of the workshops, participants were given the chance to comment on any other relevant issues that came to mind, and to provide feedback concerning the conduct of the workshops.

Discussions were recorded digitally, and key points were noted by minute takers and compiled into an anonymised transcript.

While topics raised in this discussion informed the operational procedures of this policy, ideas and arguments raised by survivor participants have also informed particular wordings and phrasings present in the 5.1 Toolkit section of this policy.

This policy has also been reviewed by Executive Staff at We Are Survivors, as well as by Jane Chevous and Arti Naithani at the Survivors Voices organisation. It has been reviewed based on its adherence to the Survivors Voices Charter and Ladder, and how effectively its findings have been transferred into the specific sphere of men and boys sexual harms.

Survivors Voices: Being Survivor-Led

This policy benefits greatly from the Survivor Research Involvement Ladder, by Jane Chevous, Concetta Perôt and Simone Kennedy, alongside the Charter.

The Ladder sets out a research engagement scoring system based on a five-row grid system, providing a metric for survivor involvement. These five rows demonstrate three definitive categories for survivor research:

- Survivors lead research.
- Survivors co-produce the research.
- Survivors act as advisers to the research project.
- Survivors are consulted about some aspects of the research.

- Survivors are only subjects or participants of the research. [1]

The respective 'rungs' of the ladder, especially those categories that measure 'Planning and Decision Making' and 'Dissemination', are encouraged to be consulted alongside relevant questions found in the 5.1 Toolkit section of this policy. Moreover, it is encouraged to download the Survivor Research Involvement Ladder alongside The Charter For Engaging Survivors and Male Survivor-Led Research Policy (please follow the embedded links to request and download the documents).

Most importantly, the Ladder sets out a definition of Survivor-Led research, as its highest category for survivor engagement. With respect to 'Research Activity' and 'Planning and Decision Making';

> Survivors decide what to research. They design and undertake all aspects of the research project. The conduct of the research meets all the principles of the Survivors' Charter.
>
> Survivors make all key decisions. They decide the purpose of the research and lead the planning and preparation, including securing funding.[2]

This policy will endeavour for all external research engagements to involve survivors as leaders in research, regardless the extent to which survivors participate in the project. Projects that cannot be categorised as Survivor-Led by the Ladder's definition will nonetheless be considered by way of the 5.1 Toolkit section in this policy.

These categories for survivor involvement, the toolkit, and operational processes laid out in this policy take ethical inspiration from the Survivors Voices Charter for Organisations Engaging Abuse Survivors in Projects, Research, and Service Development, authored by Concetta Perôt, Jane Chevous, and the Survivors Voices Research Group. The Charter functions as the initial bedrock upon which this policy is built on. It benefits in recognising the following primarily:

> All work with all people affected by abuse and trauma needs to look unlike and be the opposite of abuse - otherwise it can inadvertently replicate the dynamics of abuse and cause harm.[3]

The Charter further lays out 'Seven principles for good survivor engagement':[4]

> … our organisation will ensure survivor engagement is:

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[1] Chevous, J; Bewley, S; Kennedy, S; Perôt, C. (2019). *Survivors Voices: Survivor involvement in research ladder (pilot draft 2)*.

[2] Ibid.

[3] C. Perôt; J. Chevous; Survivors Voices Research Group. (2019), *Turning Pain into Power, A Charter for Organisations Engaging Abuse Survivors in Projects, Research & Service Development*, page 1.

[4] Ibid, page 1.

- Safe
- Empowering
- Amplifying the voices of survivors
- Promoting self-care
- Accountable and transparent
- Liberating
- Creative and joyful[5]

This policy seeks to bring the purpose and principles set out in The Survivors Voices Charter within the sphere of men and boys sexual abuse, exploitation and rape. Specifically, the goal of Male Survivor-Led Research Policy is to function as a principles-based toolkit in communicating best practice in a manner that mirrors how the Charter lays out in its recommendations of 'When and how to use the charter':

- as a discussion starter when shaping any projects, research, services and events engaging with survivors.
- as a guide and checklist for research ethics applications involving survivors.
- as a planning and evaluation tool for organisations who are seeking to be intentionally survivor-safe, survivor- sensitive, survivor-empowering and trauma-informed.
- as a tool for survivor activism and survivor-led projects. [6]

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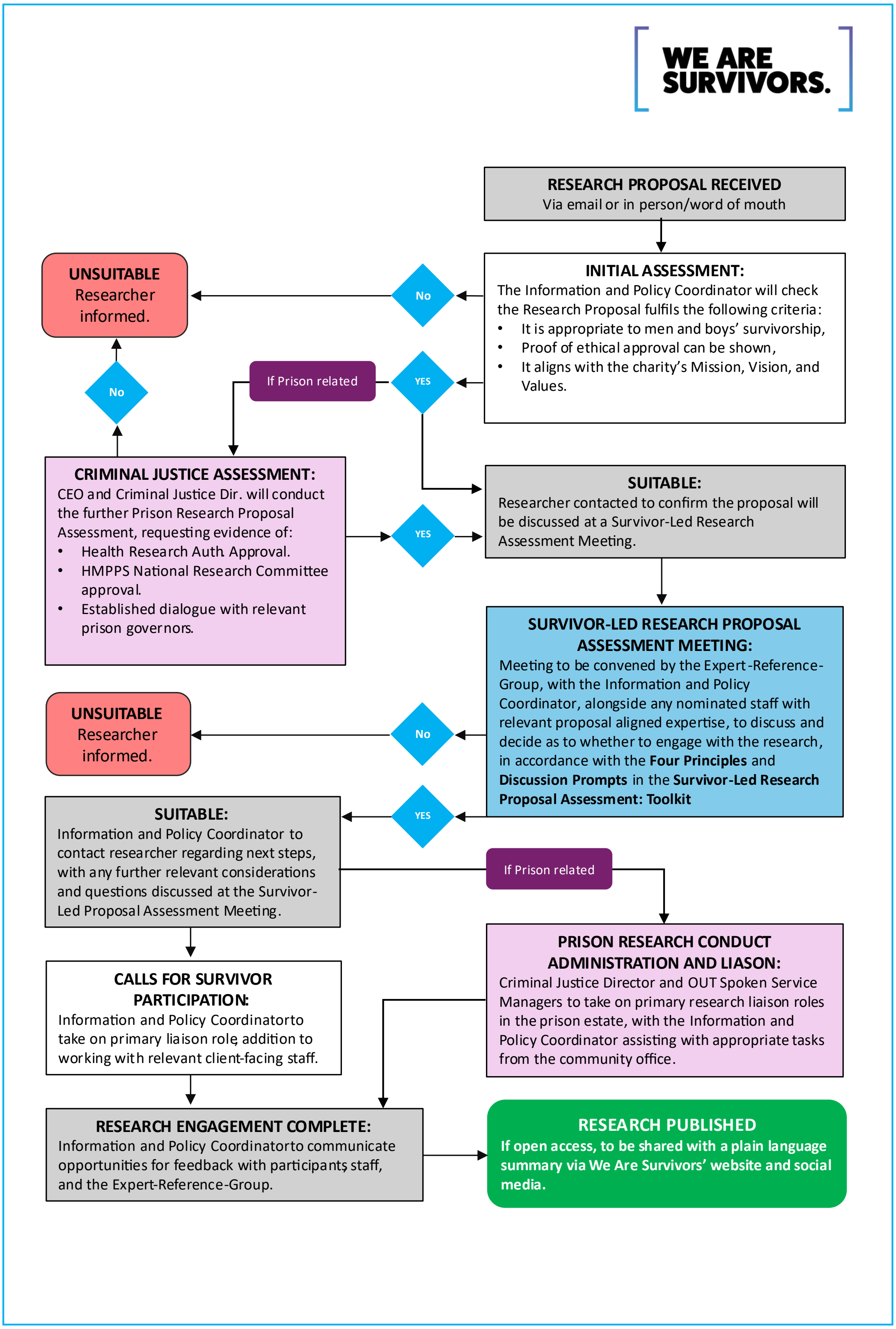
[5] Ibid, page 3.

[6] Ibid, page 1.

3. Research Lifecycle Flowchart



RESEARCH PROPOSAL RECEIVED
Via email or in person/word of mouth

INITIAL ASSESSMENT:
The Information and Policy Coordinator will check the Research Proposal fulfils the following criteria:

- It is appropriate to men and boys' survivorship,
- Proof of ethical approval can be shown,
- It aligns with the charity's Mission, Vision, and Values.

UNSUITABLE
Researcher informed.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE ASSESSMENT:
CEO and Criminal Justice Dir. will conduct the further Prison Research Proposal Assessment, requesting evidence of:

- Health Research Auth. Approval.
- HMPPS National Research Committee approval.
- Established dialogue with relevant prison governors.

SUITABLE:
Researcher contacted to confirm the proposal will be discussed at a Survivor-Led Research Assessment Meeting.

SURVIVOR-LED RESEARCH PROPOSAL ASSESSMENT MEETING:
Meeting to be convened by the Expert-Reference-Group, with the Information and Policy Coordinator, alongside any nominated staff with relevant proposal aligned expertise, to discuss and decide as to whether to engage with the research, in accordance with the **Four Principles** and **Discussion Prompts** in the **Survivor-Led Research Proposal Assessment: Toolkit**

UNSUITABLE
Researcher informed.

SUITABLE:
Information and Policy Coordinator to contact researcher regarding next steps, with any further relevant considerations and questions discussed at the Survivor-Led Proposal Assessment Meeting.

PRISON RESEARCH CONDUCT ADMINISTRATION AND LIASON:
Criminal Justice Director and OUT Spoken Service Managers to take on primary research liaison roles in the prison estate, with the Information and Policy Coordinator assisting with appropriate tasks from the community office.

CALLS FOR SURVIVOR PARTICIPATION:
Information and Policy Coordinatorto take on primary liaison role, addition to working with relevant client-facing staff.

RESEARCH ENGAGEMENT COMPLETE:
Information and Policy Coordinatorto communicate opportunities for feedback with participants, staff, and the Expert-Reference-Group.

RESEARCH PUBLISHED
If open access, to be shared with a plain language summary via We Are Survivors' website and social media.

4. Research Proposal Initial Assessment

Firstly, the Information and Policy Co-Ordinator will take responsibility for administration and liaison throughout the time We Are Survivors are involved in the research lifecycle. Otherwise, this role may be taken up by a manager or executive staff member. The Information and Policy Co-Ordinator will assess whether the proposal meets the basic requirements for being Initially Suitable for support.

Initial Suitability Criteria

All incoming research proposals are acknowledged by the Information and Policy Co-Ordinator, and a digital file is made. Incoming proposals will go through the following stages before the final stage of approval.

To be considered Initially Suitable, a proposal must achieve three basic requirements:

- It is appropriate, in that the project is specific to men and boys sexual abuse, exploitation, and rape.
- It has institutional ethical approval, and proof is provided from an appropriate research ethics body.
- It aligns significantly with We Are Survivors' Mission, Vision and Values assessed through the abstract or project description.

If the proposal passes these three initial stages, the research co-ordinator will inform the Researcher that their proposal is now being considered by the Expert-Reference-Group.

For research proposals requesting prison access, see Section 6., Prison Client Participation and Initial Assessment.

5. Survivor-Led Research Proposal Assessment

A Survivor-Led Research Proposal Assessment meeting will be organised with the Expert-Reference-Group by the Information and Policy Co-Ordinator, either within the agenda of regular quarterly meetings, or as a separate specially convened meeting. For decisions to be made on proposals at this stage, quorum must be met by ERG members.

They will be briefed by Information and Policy Co-Ordinator on the research project and an outcome determined through the survivor-led discussion. The discussion and outcome will be recorded in a minute's document that will be saved to the Expert-Reference-Group drive on Microsoft Teams.

If a research proposal is deemed Suitable for engagement by the Expert-Reference-Group, then the Information and Policy Co-Ordinator will notify the researcher regarding next steps, or book in time for a meeting with the researcher.

Suitability may, however, depend on a number of questions or even amendments the Expert-Reference-Group may wish to pass on to the researcher. These will be communicated by the Information and Policy Co-Ordinator and may call upon prior attendees of the Survivor-Led Research Proposal Assessment if further oversight is required as to whether the research proposal answers questions or considerations raised.

While the Four Principles and Assessment Discussion Prompts in the below Toolkit section are useful in guiding discussion in the meeting, they should be taken up more explicitly if and when further clarification is required beyond the Assessment.

If a research proposal is deemed unsuitable, the researcher will be notified with reasons for this. A file with their proposal details will be kept for archival purposes. The researcher is entitled to re-submit their proposal, as well as request time to speak with the Information and Policy Co-Ordinator about how to change their proposal in order to meet the Four Principles.

5.1. Toolkit

University/Institutional ethical approval is a fundamental requirement of undertaking research with survivors. The principles laid out here mirrors such an approval process, guiding discussion and decision-making during Survivor-Led Research Proposal Assessment sessions attended by Expert-Reference-Group members. These constitute a ‘charity-side ethical approval’ procedure for external research proposals.

Via the aforementioned prior conduct of internal research within We Are Survivors’ own survivor community, underpinning the guiding questions of the Toolkit, and in accordance with ‘research as the opposite of abuse’ position laid out in Survivors Voices’, *Turning Pain into Power*, the following Four Principles are the product of narrative analysis of male survivor’s own words in discussing a higher standard of research ethics; rooted in *trust*, *collaboration*, and the *meaningful and inclusive involvement* of survivors throughout their journeys, and the research lifecycle.

Any research proposal should be assessed as to whether it satisfies the following Four Principles:

Four Principles

Survivor involvement that is Authentic, Integrated, and Holistic

a) Authentic; survivors’ participation/leadership is not tokenistic, and their perspectives are embedded across the research.
b) Integrated; research is a shared endeavour with survivors and is clear about the level of survivor involvement.
c) Holistic; the promotion of survivors’ choice, autonomy/agency, trust, and transparency builds new connections within the survivor community and amongst allies.

Research has to be purposeful and contribute to meaningful change.

d) Clear and concise communication about the need for the research is vital; its purpose and potential impact is key to organisational and external stakeholders and is accessible for survivors in providing options for (non)participation.
e) Research Impact and making a difference must be shown; a demonstrated commitment to pursuing change from the project findings and communicating those avenues for change. A demonstrated commitment should be a clear plan for how knowledge will be communicated beyond the end of the research lifecycle.

Embedding safety for all involved, at the core of the research and throughout its lifecycle.

f) Researcher safety; that that the researcher is aware of risk, including vicarious trauma and re-traumatisation, and that this can be incorporated into a support plan which may make use of We Are Survivors', Survivors Voices', and other external organisations' services.
g) Survivor safety; that survivor participation is always optional, and that staff and service based measures are in place to ensure safety depending on the research activity.
h) Disclosure protection; that both the researcher and We Are Survivors abide by any and all confidentiality agreements and GDPR/Data Protection policies.

Research can be conducted with specific groups of survivors, but should never seek to undermine or diminish the experiences of survivors outside of this group.

i) Demographics and experiences that are relevant to survivorship; that research investigates and answers questions regarding mental or physical health issues related to survivorship, in addition to socio-cultural, economic, or wider systemic problems appropriately.
j) Research with all Survivors in mind; that decisions, conduct and outcomes in the research are of categorical benefit to breaking the silence of men and boys sexual abuse, exploitation and rape.

Assessment Discussion Prompts

The following prompts are a further product of the narrative analysis of male survivor's own words in discussing the expertise of researchers, the value of the prospective project, and any apparent risk to survivor-healing.

They are organised in accordance with the Four Principles. While all four should be considered in the assessment, the following prompts aim to guide discussions about the details of the research proposal. As such, not all of the following prompts will be applicable to every proposal, so they should be selected and used as needed during discussions.

➢ *Survivor involvement that is authentic, integrated, and holistic:*

  - What does survivor involvement look like in this project (e.g. survivors as participants, as co-creators, as partners via survivor-led organisations etc)?

- How will language be used in a way that will promote and centre survivor agency?
- What structures, approaches and/or methods will be in place throughout the project to facilitate authentic survivor involvement?
- How are survivors' voices/those with lived experience of abuse shaping the way the study will be designed and carried out? (What has been their involvement to date?)
- Have survivors been involved in the development and/or review of project materials?
- Within the project, are there opportunities for survivors to act as co-researchers/ develop capacity building within the survivor community?
- How will survivors' involvement in the research be acknowledged? (e.g. in outputs)
- How will survivor involvement be renumerated? What will funding cover?
- How will survivors be involved in the dissemination of project outputs and even beyond the research life cycle?

➢ *Research has to be purposeful and contribute to meaningful change:*

- What does meaningful change look like for this research project? Is this clearly outlined and documented somewhere? Has this change been sense-checked and informed by survivors?
- Do research outcomes have impact in education/training?
- Do research outcomes have impact in practice and service delivery/influencing policy/research?
- What is the engagement strategy associated with the research project?
- Who are the external stakeholders associated with the project and how are they embedded as collaborators in the project to maximise meaningful change for survivors/ their experiences within systems?
- How are engagement activities and activities with external stakeholders being communicated with survivor participants? Is this communication strategy accessible for the widest possible audience? Has a long-term plan been identified for ongoing communication with survivor participants and the larger community?
- Have pathways to impact been identified and how will they be effectively pursued?
- How will contributions to meaningful change be documented and communicated?
- What role do survivor participants have in relation to the pursuit of meaningful change? How will survivor participants feel empowered to build a community around change/build connections with like survivors?

➢ *Embedding safety for all involved, at the core of the research and throughout its lifecycle:*

- What risks are there for researchers in terms of this research project; <u>Consider the following questions below and have a clear support plan should these risks materialise</u>.

    a. What physical risks are there and how will these be mitigated? (e.g., safe and accessible spaces to undertake research)

  b. What emotional risks are there and how will these be mitigated? (e.g., distress in hearing about challenging topics)
  c. What psychological risks are there and how will these be mitigated? (e.g., secondary/vicarious trauma)
  d. Can they access appropriate training, support, and mentorship within the context of the project?

- What risks are there for participants in terms of this research project; <u>Consider the following questions below and have a clear support plan should these risks materialise.</u>

  e. What physical risks are there and how will these be mitigated? (e.g., safe and accessible spaces to participate),
  f. What emotional risks are there and how will these be mitigated? (e.g., distress in discussing challenging topics)
  g. What psychological risk are there and how will these be mitigated? (e.g., re-traumatisation, increasing anxiety)

- Has consideration been given to how language can contribute to or minimise re-traumatisation and harm, as well as empower and be inclusive for participants? Have survivors been consulted in relation to the language used in the project?
- Do risks differ depending on the capacity within which survivor participants are involved in the project, e.g. survivor- researchers vs participants etc? How will the complexities of the risks in such roles be addressed?
- Are there clear processes in place in relation to disclosure by survivor participants, pre-, during, and post-project? If requests for data access are made by the police, what processes are in place? E.g., university data governance policies.

➢ *Research can be conducted with specific groups of survivors, but should never seek to undermine or diminish the experiences of survivors outside of this group:*

- Has a specific survivor group/community/demographic been reflected appropriately in the project's research life cycle?
- Have considerations been made for representation and involvement from a specific survivor group/community/demographic if the topic addresses intersectionality, minoritisation, and/or people that are otherwise excluded from research?
- What considerations are there with regards to breaking the silence for survivors as a whole?
- Is this research valuable in the context of wider inter-organisational male sexual/domestic abuse strategies, or valuable in pursuing the VAWG Strategy?
- Has consideration been given to this in relation to the dissemination of research findings and the process of contributing to purposeful and meaningful change?

- Have considerations been made with regards to difficult or controversial topics raised in the research? Further, are these understood to have an impact that might attract political or media attention?

6. Operations: Research Conduct Administration and Liaison

Calls for Survivor Participation

Once a research project has been approved in or following a Survivor-Led Research Proposal Assessment, the Information and Policy Co-Ordinator will share the opportunity for research participation with the We Are Survivors' community in the following ways.

Firstly, they will maintain direct communication with the Expert-Reference-Group, in which members are welcome to contribute further to nominating themselves as research participants. If a member requests their participation remain confidential, then it is the responsibility of the Information and Policy Co-Ordinator and We Are Survivors staff to uphold this.

Secondly, the Information and Policy Co-Ordinator may consult client-facing staff members in assembling a list of relevant current clients to contact. This could involve consulting with Community Development, Therapy, ISVA, and relevant Service Management Staff as to whether there are any survivors that can participate.

Thirdly, the Information and Policy Co-Ordinator may work alongside the Communications and Engagement Team to advertise a call for participants over social media, the organisation website, or in outgoing reading materials.

A Plain Language Information Sheet and Consent Form should be made available by the researcher for the Information and Policy Co-Ordinator to distribute to potential participants. For accessibility reasons, it may be requested that these are available in video or audio formats.

Staff Participation as Survivors

We Are Survivors recognise the expertise of its staff, especially given a large proportion of staff have expertise-by-experience as survivors. This staff experience greatly benefits service provision, and is valuable to research moreover. As a survivor-led organisation, a staff member is entitled to participate in research towards sharing their own story, and doing so as part of their own healing journey.

However, a therapy staff member will not be allowed to contribute in group research activities if it is possible for their role as participants to become known to their own current clients, or clients up to 7 years previous, who are also participants. This relates both to in-person or online group research activities. This is to ensure there is no conflict of interest to the healing journey of survivor clients during and/or following on from a course of therapy.

The Information and Policy Co-Ordinator will liaise with potential staff participants in research and will maintain confidentiality about their participation if requested. Staff members are expected to sign a Consent Form prior to participation. Time spent in research can be claimed back as TOIL on pre-authorisation with the individuals Line Manager.

For staff participants, a debrief following on from the research engagement may be requested from their Clinical Supervisor, Line Manager, or an appropriate Senior or Management staff member.

Carrying Out the Research

If the Researcher attends an in-person meeting at We Are Survivors' office, then the Information and Policy Co-Ordinator will familiarise them with Fire, Panic Alarm, and Client Debriefing procedures.

Once the participant has signed a Consent Form, then the Information and Policy Co-Ordinator must save this to the relevant digital file. With the consent of research participants having agreed to participate, the Information and Policy Co-Ordinator, and, when necessary, an appropriate client facing member of staff, will act as a liaison between participants and the researcher. Unless it is necessary for the research activity to be conducted over Microsoft Teams or Zoom, the research co-ordinator will arrange for a space at We Are Survivors' Salford office to be made available for research activity and debriefing.

If the client attends the office in-person or remotely, while the researcher themselves conducts the activity itself remotely, then any imminent risk is to be relayed by Researcher to the Information and Policy Co-Ordinator via a pre-established means of communication (such as telephone or text), to follow Organisational Safeguarding and SUINM Policy. The Information and Policy Co-Ordinator will still offer an office venue for the participants to connect via an office laptop/iPad, to receive an in person for debrief, and a guaranteed safe space.

Travel expenses and time spent on the research activity will be sought to be to be reimbursed the client/volunteer participant in full no more than seven days after the research activity from We Are Survivors' own account if possible. The Information and Policy Co-Ordinator will discuss reimbursement offered by the researcher and set up the charity as a supplier with their respective researcher's institution for expenses to be paid back into We Are Survivor's account. If the researcher would prefer to reimburse participants through vouchers or appropriate redeemable items, then this will be accepted.

All survivor participants are entitled to a post-research activity debrief. The Information and Policy Co-Ordinator will arrange for a client-facing member of staff to be available to provide a debrief as soon as possible following the end of the research activity in order for any risk to be followed up appropriately. If the participant and researcher are both engaged in an activity remotely, then the

Information and Policy Co-Ordinator will ensure that a client-facing staff member is available to provide a debrief by telephone/Microsoft Teams. A follow-up check-in phone call will also be booked for the participant one week after the research activity and follow-on check-in calls will be offered if the client wishes. If the survivor requires healthcare or specialist support beyond what We Are Survivors provide, then they are offered a referral into the Pathfinder service, which will support them access other specialist care services.

While the primary purpose this serves is to follow up on risk, it also serves as an opportunity for survivors to give feedback to the researcher. Clients are welcome to contact the Information and Policy Co-Ordinator to pass feedback on to the Researcher (named or anonymously). The client is also welcome to contact the researcher themself to provide feedback.

Researcher Safeguarding

We Are Survivors acknowledge that researchers themselves are often not provided supervision when dealing with vulnerable people and sensitive topics. The Information and Policy Co-Ordinator will inform the researcher that We Are Survivors can signpost to support with regards to vicarious trauma or feelings following difficult topics raised in research. If the researcher communicates that they would like support themself, it is the responsibility of the Information and Policy Co-Ordinator to signpost them to Survivors Voices' own online researcher focused peer support group.

Prison Client Participation and Initial Assessment

Researchers, staff, and clients face obvious barriers when conducting research in the prison estate. As such, if the proposal passes the Initial Assessment, then, prior to going to a Survivor-Led Research Assessment Meeting, the Information and Policy Co-Ordinator will pass the proposal onto the Chief Executive Officer and Criminal Justice Director for a Criminal Justice Research Initial Assessment. This will ascertain as to whether the proposal has:

- NHS Health Research Authority approval: This is required to be shown to the CEO and Criminal Justice Director, or evidence be shown that the project is subject to alteration in line with amendments recommended and relevant training is being undertaken
- HMPPS National Research Committee approval: This is required to be shown to the CEO and Criminal Justice Director, or evidence be shown that the project is being altered in line with amendments recommended and training is being undertaken
- HMP Governor(s) approval: As the culture and climate of individual prisons can vary wildly from on to another, approval from Prison Governors is required to be shown to the CEO and Criminal Justice Director, or evidence be shown that the researchers are in dialogue with Governor(s).

Once the CEO and Criminal Justice Director have agreed that the proposal passes the Out Spoken Initial Assessment, it proceeds as normal for final approval at a Survivor-Led Research Assessment meeting.

If approved, Out Spoken Management staff will take leading roles in research administration and liaison, ensuring that other staff members are consulted with regards to potential prison client participation.

A Plain Language Information Sheet and Consent Form will be brought to the nominated client by a prison client-facing member of staff, to be sent to the Information and Policy Co-Ordinator to save in the participant's client file on Microsoft Teams.

Towards ensuring participant safeguarding within the prison setting, administration and participant debriefing will be organised by the Out Spoken Management Staff, with appropriate assistance from Out Spoken prison client-facing staff. The post-research activity debriefing and check in process should mirror the community procedure as closely as possible, with respect to the relevant prison climate and structure.

The Information and Policy Co-Ordinator will otherwise be expected to support the researcher and Out Spoken staff when the need arises from the Salford office.

7. Contacts

We Are Survivors

Rory Brooke, Information and Policy Co-Ordinator, rory.b@wearesurvivors.org.uk

Christopher Egan, Community Development Co-Ordinator [Expert-Reference-Group Chair], christopher.e@wearesurvivors.org.uk

Sam Jennings, Data and Informatics Manager, sam.j@wearesurvivors.org.uk

Jamie Legge, Operations Director [Information Governance Lead], jamie.l@wearesurvivors.org.uk

Caleb Cunniffe, Community Services Director [Safeguarding and Clinical Governance], caleb@wearesurvivors.org.uk

Jonathan King, Criminal Justice Director, jonathan@wearesurviors.org.uk

Duncan Craig OBE, Chief Executive Officer, duncan@wearesurvivors.org.uk

External

Dr Siobhan Weare, Reader in Law, The Law School, University of Lancaster, s.weare@lancaster.ac.uk

Dr Emma Sleath, Associate Professor of Criminology, School of Criminology, Sociology and Social Policy, University of Leicester, emma.sleath@leicester.ac.uk

Dr Grace Carter, Assistant Professor, Centre for Healthcare and Communities, Coventry University, ad0082@coventry.ac.uk

Jane Chevous, Director, Survivors Voices, jane@survivorsvoices.org