

Home Office: Stalking Consultation

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/publications/about-us/consultations/stalking-consultation/consultation?view=Binary>

February 2012

**Q3. In your view, do you consider that local agencies (including the police, other Criminal Justice partners and other police services) and the public are sufficiently aware of what stalking is and the behaviour it covers? Please provide additional reasons to support your views.**

The ManKind Initiative charity believes that the public and local agencies do not sufficiently recognise that men can also be victims of stalking. This is despite the fact the BCS 2010/11 shows the victim population was 43% male and that since the age of 16, men make up one in three of all stalking victims.

While the policy is gender neutral on stalking, it is vital that the application of policy is gender neutral. This includes all publicity, speeches and training on the subject. What we feel is needed is that when the subject is raised, there should be case studies of female and male victims rather than just female victims. In addition, rather than using the word 'victims' publicity should state 'female and male' victims.

This will ensure it is more firmly put into the minds of the public and agencies that stalking affects women and men. Our concern is the default mindset is that victims are only female victims. Certainly, when the charity attended the recent presentations on this, the CPS presentation was all female focussed (the other presentations were not thankfully) and the CPS were very defensive when this bias was rightly challenged.

In addition, by using the word 'female and male' victim will encourage more men to come forward and also to recognise they are a victim in the first place.

The National Stalking helpline and others are great at ensuring that stalking is seen as an issue for men as well as women, but more can be done.

We continue to be disappointed that the government has placed stalking policy under the umbrella of Ending Violence Against Women and Girls, as already this suggest and gives the false impression that stalking is an issue that only affects women and girls.

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**Q4. In your view, are local agencies (including the police, other Criminal Justice partners and other police services) provided with sufficient training**

**on how to address stalking? Please provide additional reasons to support your view.**

We have concerns that the training that local agencies receive does not sufficiently address or recognise male victims of stalking.

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**Q7. In your view, what, if any, improvements could local agencies make to their response to victim complaints? Please provide additional reasons to support your views**

As set out before, we feel that local agencies must ensure that a male victim receive the same response as a female victim rightly would. This must be emphasised. We do have men who have called our national helpline complain that when they have approached a local agency because they feel they are a victim of stalking that they have not been taken seriously.

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**Q8. In your view, what, if any, barriers are there to victims coming forward to the police? Please provide additional reasons to support your views.**

There are certainly barriers for both female and male victims of stalking.

For men, there is the problem of not recognising they are a victim of stalking, a lack of awareness of who to turn to and a fear of not being believed when they do come forward.

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**Q9. In your view, what, if any, barriers are there to the Crown Prosecution Service gaining prosecutions that result in conviction? Please provide additional reasons to support your views.**

We were greatly alarmed at the CPS presentation during this consultation as is completely focussed on female victims and when challenged they were very defensive (this was the only presentation with such a bias).

Our view is therefore whether a barrier is the CPS themselves in not recognising male victims in the same way as they rightly recognise female victims. This means we are concerned whether there is a lack of prosecutions where the man is the victim because the CPS are not actually looking to take as many potential prosecutions forward.