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New domestic abuse law must lead to a more inclusive approach with greater recognition and more services for male victims

The Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) estimated that 26% of women and 15% of men aged 16 to 59 had experienced some form of domestic abuse since the age of 16, equivalent to an estimated 4.3 million female and 2.4 million male victims, according to the year ending March 2017 (*1 in 4 women and 1 in 7 men – for every three victims, two will be female and one will be male*).

An estimated 7.5% of women (1.2 million) and 4.3% of men (713,000) experienced domestic abuse in the last year (*for every three victims, two will be female and one will be male*).

Following the launch of a consultation on a new Domestic Abuse and Violence Act and a range of new initiatives, **Mark Brooks, Chairman of the ManKind Initiative, a national charity supporting male victims of domestic abuse**, said:

“This welcome consultation presents a real opportunity in taking an even tougher stance on tackling this awful crime which blights so many lives in every town and city. It is vital though that they lead to a more inclusive approach to domestic abuse with greater recognition and more services for male victims.

“If policies and any new law is going to keep all those affected by domestic abuse safe we will be making the case that there needs to a real step change in supporting and recognising men, who make up one in three of all victims. This also includes men who need to escape from domestic abuse alongside their children.

“There needs to be more awareness campaigns aimed at men and changing public attitudes alongside more services and better responses from services when they do come forward.

“Making the right appointment of the proposed commissioner is vital, they must have an inclusive view of domestic abuse. If a commissioner with a one-dimensional view of domestic abuse rather than a holistic and inclusive view is appointed, then a large number of victims will still not receive the support and recognition they need.”

“The charity continues to believe there needs to be a parallel strategy for men who are victims of range of crimes such as domestic abuse, sexual violence and stalking. Current policy means they are classed as being victims of ‘crimes against a woman or girl’ and the policy to support them is called ‘Ending Violence Against Women and Girls’. We feel the time is right now for male victims of these crimes to have their own parallel strategy that recognises focuses on their particular needs and risk.”

Note: A one-dimensional view is one based on viewing domestic abuse as an issue that only affects, and is focusses on, female victims and male perpetrators – rather than one recognises female/male victims and male/female perpetrators.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

1. Source: Office for National Statistics (British Crime Survey) - Focus on violent crime and sexual offences, England and Wales: year ending Mar 2017: <http://bit.ly/2nXfpTC>
2. The Government’s “Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy” includes tackling all crimes such as domestic abuse, sexual abuse, sexual violence, stalking and “honour based” crime - even if the victims are in fact male.

For example, the footballers who were sexually abused when they were younger are, according to Government Policy and the Crown Prosecution Service, classed as being a victim of a crime against a Women and Girl.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/strategy-to-end-violence-against-women-and-girls-2016-to-2020>

About the ManKind Initiative

The ManKind Initiative (www.mankind.org.uk), based in Taunton, Somerset, is a national charity which runs a help-line, information and referral service for male victims of domestic abuse and domestic violence. The help-line number is 01823 334244 (weekdays 10am-4pm). It received 1,500 calls from male victims (or from people on behalf of victims – often mothers and sisters) every year.

Media

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