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Honorary Patrons – Lord Cotter, Ann Goodchild, Sara Westle, Ian McNicholl, Paul Chivers and John Penrose MP

Equalities and Human Rights Commission
Fleetbank House,
2-6 Salisbury Square
London,
EC4Y 8JX

7th January 2019

Dear Equalities and Human Rights Commission

Ref: Draft Strategic Plan

I am writing in response to the above on behalf of the ManKind Initiative charity which supports male victims of domestic abuse.

Our response focusses upon the **second question** (“Do you have any thoughts on the suggested activities under each priority aim”) and the **Priority Aim 9** (“Public bodies with responsibility for addressing violence against women and girls comply with equality and human rights requirements”).

Response

It is assumed that the inclusion of the priority aim, which we support in principle, is based on the umbrella “Ending Violence Against Women and Girls” (VAWG) strategy led by the Home Office but also supported throughout the statutory, private and voluntary sector at a national level and regional/local level.

As you know, this umbrella strategy covers a wide range of crimes including: victims of rape, sexual abuse and exploitation, domestic abuse, stalking, forced marriage and “honour”-based violence.

Importantly, this umbrella strategy covers male victims of these crimes as well. This is national Government policy and is reflected in the policies of regional and local statutory organisations. Statistics for the numbers of male victims of these crimes can be found in

Appendix 1. To differentiate from wider crime types, often when they are applied to male victims, they are classed as being “intimate crimes against men and boys”.

Male victims of these crimes face the same institutional and structural problems that female victims of these “VAWG” crimes do and therefore there is an equal need for “*public bodies with responsibility for addressing intimate violence against men and boys comply with equality and human rights requirements.*”

They also need to be included in:

- Conducting an inquiry to examine effectiveness of special support services.
- Compliance and enforcement activities to challenge inappropriate decisions in relation to specialist support services
- Compliance and enforcement activity in relation to rules and practice that undermine access to justice for those who have experienced violence against women and girls.
- Activity to influence standards applied by oversight and standard-setting bodies.

Failure by the Commission to not be inclusive in conducting this activity would mean an inquiry, compliance and enforcement activities as well as influencing standards, would be sought for:

- Female victims of rape **but not** male victims of rape
- Female victims of domestic abuse **but not** male victims of domestic abuse
- Female victims of forced marriage **but not** male victims of forced marriage.

To fail to be inclusive in this way would go completely against the equalities and inclusion agenda and ethos that underpins the vital and valuable work of the Equalities and Human Rights Commission.

The charity urges the Commission to therefore make clear that Priority Aim 9 also includes male victims of VAWG crimes.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely

Mark Brooks

Mark Brooks OBE
Chair
The ManKind Initiative

Annex 1: Statistics

- For every three victims of partner abuse, two will be female and one will be male. Every year 450,000 men in the UK suffer from partner abuse.
- Every year, 450,000 men in the UK are victims of stalking
- One in five victims of forced marriage are male
- 12,000 men are raped in England and Wales every year