



Changes in NHS CCG Provision for Trauma Counselling

It feels important to raise this concern over Sexual Abuse and Sexual Violence Awareness Week. The recent recommissioning of IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies) services has led to a loss of financial support for counselling organisations working with survivors of abuse. The new provider of IAPT services across Avon and Somerset is Vita Health and they are not providing trauma-focused counselling for survivors of sexual abuse (other than for single-event trauma). Prior to the recommissioning, individuals were able to access support from trauma-focused counselling organisations and this was paid for through IAPT.

Individuals are now having to self-refer to specialist organisations to get the support that they need, which means that the waiting lists across all of those organisations are increasing. The Southmead Project and Kinergy have witnessed a surge in demand and received 80 new referrals for counselling in the last 30 days. The knock-on effect for survivors is that they are experiencing even longer delays in receiving support.

In addition, an under-resourced sector is being put under further strain. There were over 100 clients being seen for counselling each week across Bristol by specialist organisations that were being paid through IAPT. The loss of this vital funding stream will inevitably bring about a wholly unsustainable system for both service providers and survivors.

How you can support us:

- Please contact your local MP or Councillors to let them know your thoughts around this.
- Help us raise funds so that individuals can access support when they need it:
 - Kinergy: <http://kinergy.org.uk/fundraising.html>
 - The Southmead Project: <https://www.southmeadproject.org.uk/>

We thoroughly appreciate your support and ask if you could please raise awareness of this as widely as possible.

#ItsNotOk
#IAPTRecommissioning
#GapsInProvision
#SVAgencies

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