WHAT WORKS IN SUPPORTING VICTIMS OF CRIME:

A RAPID EVIDENCE ASSESSMENT

Elaine Wedlock and Jacki Tapley

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FOREWORD BY THE VICTIMS' COMMISSIONER, THE BARONESS NEWLOVE OF WARRINGTON

As the Victims' Commissioner for England and Wales I am keen to encourage good practice by criminal justice agencies in their dealings with victims in accordance with the Victims' Code. However, victim contact isn't limited to the criminal justice agencies covered by the Victims' Code. Victims can be affected by their interactions with anyone that they come into contact with on their journey through the criminal justice system, from police; magistrates; judges and prosecutors; to independent domestic violence advisors; volunteers in support services and counsellors.

Much has been written about what works to support victims, but that evidence is scattered far and wide, often focusing on specific crime types or characteristics of victims.

The aim of this rapid evidence assessment is to collate the international evidence on what works in supporting victims and to evaluate the strength of that evidence. This report aims to establish an evidence base that can be drawn on by key criminal justice agencies and practitioners to inform and improve upon their strategy and service delivery for victims. It aims to open up a debate about how services can best be delivered in order to provide victims with the support that they need at this difficult time in their lives.

This evidence of what works to best support victims can be used by:

- service providers to assist in their bids for contracts;
- service providers to evaluate their own performance;
- PCCs to include in contracts and to be used in contract management; and,
- developers of quality indicators for services.

This review also aims to identify any gaps in the literature that could be addressed through further research in order to continue to develop the best evidence for what works in supporting victims of crime.

A rapid evidence assessment methodology has been adopted in the review in order to provide a thorough, systematic and replicable review of the available literature.

I hope that by drawing together the best international evidence on what works in supporting victims of crime, the people who work so hard to support them will be able to use this evidence to develop their practice, aiming to prevent much of the trauma and re-victimisation that victims encounter in the criminal justice system on a day-to-day basis.

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report aims to bring together the best available international evidence on what works to support victims of crime in their journey through the criminal justice system and beyond, both for victims who report the crimes committed against them and those who do not.

A rapid evidence assessment methodology was adopted in order to achieve a rigorous and replicable search of the literature. In addition to a review of the literature examining the factors which have contributed to the development of victims' services, a total of 28 papers were included in the analysis from a range of countries including the UK, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, The Netherlands, Sweden and Slovenia. The data from the papers were extracted and assessed in terms of the strength of the evidence they present. This report presents a thematic analysis of that data. Although the strength of the evidence within the research papers is variable, overall there exists a strong research landscape on what works in supporting victims and the following themes emerged:

- **Information and communication:** Timely and accurate information and effective methods of communication with victims, both in delivering information and listening to their needs. The basic provision of timely information can assist victims in coping with the impact of victimisation. A lack of information can only act to aggravate these symptoms and in many cases can result in victims disengaging with the criminal process and withdrawing their co-operation.

- **Procedural justice:** The quality of service that victims get from criminal justice professionals and associated agencies is often a more important factor in victim satisfaction than the final outcome of their case. Perceptions of fair treatment, including knowledge of and access to entitlements, increases victims' perceptions of legitimacy and aids compliance.

- **Multi-agency working:** Co-located multi-agency partnership working across statutory and voluntary sectors can provide effective support for victims in terms of information sharing. It can assist in reducing the duplication of tasks, so that the process is less confusing for victims. Effective communication can encourage victims to remain engaged with the criminal justice process and may assist in reducing the potential for re-victimisation by reducing risk and vulnerability. Collaboration between agencies can also contribute to effective prevention strategies.

- **Professionalisation of victims' services:** A single point of contact or advocate is an effective way to provide victims with the combination of both information and support required to help them regain a sense of autonomy, which the crime has taken from them. Not all victims will require the same levels of information and support, so early identification of a victim's needs means that services can be targeted at those who most want and need them. The literature demonstrates that in order to provide effective support this single point of contact should be undertaken by a trained professional, with sufficient knowledge of the criminal justice system, as well as the compassion and empathy to be a source of moral support.

As highlighted by this review, significant progress has been made in the development and co-ordination of support services for victims of crime. However, the services available tend to reflect the historical context in which these services have emerged and a number of gaps remain. While there remains no one single agency with overall responsibility for victims, the responsibilities placed upon the Police and Crime Commissioners to provide support services in accordance with the EU Directive has created an opportunity to develop and co-ordinate a range of support services to meet the needs of all victims in their area. Timely and accurate information about the criminal justice process, combined with well-funded and co-ordinated support services, will enable victims to make informed choices, have a sense of autonomy and assist them in their recovery.

INTRODUCTION

Significant progress has been made to improve victims' experiences of the criminal justice system. Since commentators first started to document the failure of the criminal justice system to respond to victims of crime appropriately (Vennard, 1976), and indicated that the criminal justice system would benefit from 'being nicer to victims' (Kelly and Erez, 1997:232), the crucial role of victims in the criminal process has gained increasing recognition and continues to spark debates regarding their needs and rights (Mawby, 1988; Ashworth, 1993; Goodey, 2005:122), including proposals for a new victims' law in 2016 (Strickland, 2016).

The subsequent shift in focus towards a 'victim-centred' criminal justice system has resulted in the introduction of a plethora of reforms since the 1990's, including the Victim's Charter (1990), subsequently revised in 1996 and replaced in 2006 by the Code of Practice for Victims of Crime (Victims' Code). The Victims' Code was revised in October 2013 and subsequently revised again in November 2015 to incorporate the principles of the European Union Directive (2012/29/EU). The UK formally adopted the Directive in October 2012 which establishes minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime.

The development of government policies at both national and local levels has placed increasing responsibilities and duties upon statutory agencies to work with victims of crime. The Crime and Disorder Act, 1998, placed a responsibility on local authorities and a range of statutory and voluntary agencies to adopt a multi-agency approach when working with victims of crime. As a consequence, in addition to improving the criminal justice response to victims, the crucial role of support services has been recognised, and the advantages of criminal justice agencies and support services working in partnership to ensure that victims get the protection and support to which they are entitled, to assist them in their recovery.

The benefits of effective multi-agency working are outlined in a report by the Home Office (2014a), based upon a funded project to better understand the multi-agency information sharing models that are currently in place. While the report does not endorse a specific model for the effective delivery of multi-agency approaches, it identifies a number of factors that contribute to successful multi-agency working. One such factor is the co-location of partnership agencies in hubs, the benefits of which include better information sharing and intelligence gathering, more accurate assessments of risk and need, a reduction in repeat referrals, greater efficiencies in processes and resources, in particular, a reduction in the duplication of tasks, and a better understanding between professions (Home Office, 2014a).

The greater co-ordination of support services has been a fundamental development in the delivery of support services during the last twenty years. Historically, support services have evolved from a range of voluntary, third sector and non-statutory agencies, responding to specific needs and providing services where none previously existed. Some of these formed part of the initial grass-roots "victims' movement" emerging in the 1960s and 1970s, including Rape Crisis, Refuge and Victim Support (Mawby and Gill, 1987; Rock, 1990). While this collection of quite disparate groups, with fundamental differences in their underpinning ideologies and aims later became known as the "victims movement", this term provides a misleading impression of unity and, as such, remains a loose association of groups and individuals today, supporting different aspects of victimisation and advocating on behalf of victims who have experienced a range of crimes (Williams, 1999, cited by Tapley, 2005a:239). This has resulted in a range of specialist services being developed, some aimed at victims of specific types of crime, others providing more generic services and support, all developing invaluable experience and insight to the needs and requirements of victims. However, this organically evolving landscape of support services and victim-centred policies, aided only by piecemeal and predominantly short-term funding, created an environment of victims' services which Crawford and Enterkin (1999:4) described 'as lacking coherence, co-ordination and synergy', and which tended to 'manifest a lack of clarity, confused and often conflicting aims and overlapping priorities' (*ibid*). The development of a more co-ordinated approach has made significant progress in the delivery of services to some victims. However, the challenges of multi-agency working must not be underestimated, as it requires agencies with substantial differences in organisational culture, funding, terminology, practice and priorities to work together, creating tensions which need to be acknowledged and addressed in order for effective partnerships to be developed (Tapley, 2010:142). This review will attempt to capture the diversity of some of the existing multi-agency partnerships.

In 2012, the Ministry of Justice published a consultation document '*Getting it Right for Victims and Witnesses*' and following the consultation process it was announced that the majority of support services for victims of crime would be commissioned at a local level by the Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) from October 2014. This marked a significant change in the way support services for victims would be commissioned and funded in England and Wales, and a number of PCCs commissioned research to clarify existing services, identify what support is required and highlight gaps in service provision in order to assist in the commissioning process (Sarkis, 2013; Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner, 2014; Tapley, Stark, Watkins and Peneva 2014).

Responsibility for providing services within the EU Directive is now shared between the Ministry of Justice and the 42 local Police and Crime Commissioners. Responsibilities include providing all victims with access to free and confidential support services (whether or not the crime has been reported to the police), advice and practical support to prevent repeat victimisation. It also requires that those victims with specific needs be provided with specialist support, including trauma support and counselling. All statutory agencies stipulated within the Victims' Code (Ministry of Justice, 2013a) are required to comply with the key entitlements, together with the standards of care outlined in the Witness Charter (Ministry of Justice, 2013b) and the public sector Equality Duty (Section 149, Equality Act, 2010). However, it should be noted that while the Charter initiatives and the Victims' Code have assisted in clarifying the roles and responsibilities of criminal justice agencies and relevant partners towards victims of crime, the "victim rights" referred to are not currently legally enforceable rights enshrined in primary legislation in England and Wales.

As a consequence of the way victims' support services have evolved, the current landscape consists of a complex network of statutory and non-statutory agencies, competing for funding with other providers in order to sustain and develop the services they provide. In times of austerity, increasing competition for funding has created tensions and distrust between agencies, which can actively discourage information sharing and partnership working. This has resulted in the duplication of services in some areas, whereas in other areas services remain patchy and inconsistent, leaving victims of crime exposed to a postcode lottery of service provision across England and Wales (Tapley *et al*, 2014).

The PCC commissioning framework, guided by the Ministry of Justice (2013c), has provided an opportunity to develop a consistent, coherent and sustainable approach to the provision of high quality services, accessible to all victims of crime who need and require them. To assist in this process, and to enable a clearer understanding of the types of support services that victims want, the aim of this literature review is to collate existing evidence on what works in supporting victims and to examine the strength of the evidence base in the research landscape overall. This will help to establish an evidence base that key criminal justice stakeholders and practitioners can draw upon to inform and improve their service delivery strategies for victims of crime.

A word about terminology

It is important to acknowledge that the terminology itself is deeply problematic in the field of victimisation and that sensitivities exist. The term "victim" is one that we hear almost daily now in a range of different contexts, the definition of which is often assumed, but also much misaligned. The term is predominantly laden with negative connotations; "victims" are often believed to be either vulnerable, weak, and helpless (an "ideal victim", see Christie, 1986); or naïve and easily duped; or considered to be culpable for their own victimisation by being careless, negligent or exposing themselves to greater risks through their own behaviour (Walklate, 2007).

For the purposes of this report, the term "victim" will predominantly be used, because it is the term that the majority of agencies use and understand when referring to someone who has experienced victimisation, and is the term officially used in policies and legislation. However, it is also acknowledged that many non-statutory agencies prefer to use the word "survivor", believing that it returns some autonomy, power and a sense of control to the person harmed, but is not a term accepted by everyone (Jordon, 2013:49). As a compromise, both terms will be used interchangeably in this report.

The often negative connotations associated with the term "victim" creates a label that few would wish to be associated with and it is of little surprise that self-acknowledgement of being a "victim" is often resisted. This has a significant impact on three crucial decisions that someone who has experienced victimisation will make, whether to:

- tell anyone (seek informal support)

- report the crime (seek formal assistance)
- seek help from specialist services (seek formal support)

Studies have found clear evidence that how people perceive the "seriousness" of the harm they have suffered and their perceptions of the types of assistance and support available, heavily influences the decisions they make to seek the relevant assistance and support (Wong and Christmann, 2008, cited by Magic, 2014). To ensure that victims of crime are able to seek the types of support that they require at the time that is right for them, statutory and non-statutory agencies need to be proactive in informing victims of crime of the services available and facilitating their access to them.

Background: understanding the impact of victimisation

It is now more widely recognised that the impact of criminal victimisation is a highly individualised experience and that the impact of crime does not necessarily correspond to the "seriousness" of the crime based solely upon the crime type (Gale and Coupe, 2005; Walklate, 2007). Factors that contribute to how an individual experiences victimisation can include age, gender, ethnicity, culture, socio-economic status, and social networks. These factors reveal different levels of vulnerability which may affect an individual's ability to deal with unexpected and unwelcome events, what Walklate (2007:75) describes as their personal or structural vulnerability. This refers to a person's resilience to crime and the factors that may influence their ability to cope.

Measuring the actual level of harm caused is an even harder task, as observed by Green (2007:93), 'there can be no easy and objective measure of the amount of harm caused to an individual by a particular crime'. Impressions can be misleading and even those individuals assumed (often incorrectly) to be the most resilient to crime; men, those on high incomes and social status, and those with strong social support networks, can still be affected and require support services to assist them. These characteristics can also act as a barrier to some people accessing the services. Sims, Yost and Abbot (2005:361) explored use and non-use of victim services and found that type of crime and age were significant predictors of service use, with older victims of violent crime more likely to report than younger victims of non-violent crime and that:

> 'Those who did not use services reported getting assistance from friends or family members, not being told about services, or not thinking it was worth the trouble to seek out such services. Also, victims demonstrated very little knowledge about the types of services provided by victim service programmes.'

When examining sources of support, the literature distinguishes between formal and informal sources of support. In particular, studies have identified the importance of informal networks and how they facilitate the use of more formal services by encouraging victims to seek out professional help (McCart, Smith and Sawyer, 2010). In a study evaluating existing programmes for supporting families surviving a homicide victim in the United States, Vincent, McCormack and Johnson (2015) identified the important role advocates play in supporting families and ensuring they are informed about all aspects of the criminal justice process, and the role of helplines and websites to enable families to access services. The study also emphasised the importance of informal supportive networks, what the authors refer to as a 'community of survivors' (Vincent *et al*, 2015:59). The study concluded that:

> 'Programmes appear to implement important components, but no programme implements all components. Additionally, there appears to be an omission of survivors' perspectives in the development of these programmes.'
> (*ibid*:60)

This study emphasises the importance of both formal and informal support. In a study examining the use of 'empowerment' as a tool for professionals to use when supporting victims of domestic abuse in Sweden, Helmerson and Jonson (2013:57) found that informal support networks can help to reduce feelings of isolation and stigma, and provide mutual support. In a study where victims of crime participated by attending focus groups, many stated that they found the focus groups themselves very beneficial (Tapley *et al*, 2014), as talking to other people made them feel less isolated and they were relieved to find that other people were experiencing the same feelings as them.

Tapley (2003) found that speaking to close friends or family can reaffirm that what an individual has experienced is victimisation and that help should be sought from formal sources, or contrary, may act to minimise the event thereby creating doubt and discouraging the individual from seeking formal support. The devastating impact of negative responses from informal sources of support has been evidenced in

research undertaken with victims of fraud. Button, Lewis and Tapley (2014:43) found that the impact of fraud highlighted not only financial hardship, but longer term psychological effects, mental and physical health problems, and in particular, damaged relationships; 17% of victims experienced problems with their partner or families and 9% with friends.

Research examining the psychological impact of online dating romance scams found that 'most victims had not found ways to cope given the lack of understanding from family and friends' (Whitty and Buchanan, 2015:10). The research found that victims of romance scams were faced with a "double hit", having lost a relationship as well as a financial loss (*ibid*:2). Victims indeed blamed themselves, but this sense of embarrassment and shame was only compounded further by a lack of sympathy and support from family and friends. Out of the twenty participants interviewed, only one received support from their family. One victim said she 'had revealed some of the details of the scam to her children who did indeed display the anger she feared and were no longer in communication with her' (*ibid*:7). This study details the complexities associated with romance scams, but most importantly, demonstrates the lack of both formal and informal support and the damaging effects of victim blaming:

> 'Most participants were likely to blame themselves for the scam, and few people talked them out of this self-attribution. The few people they disclosed their ordeal to often reinforced this negative self-attribution. Even those who attempted counselling found this to be ineffective as the counsellor had not heard of the crime and informed them that they would be of little help.'
>
> (Whitty and Buchanan, 2015:12)

Lack of support left some of these victims increasingly vulnerable and some suffered a second wave of the scam by remaining in a relationship with the scammer. The authors recommend early psychological intervention to assist recovery in order to prevent a second wave of the scam and further deteriorating mental health. Button *et al* (2009, cited by Button *et al*, 2014:52) concluded that while victims of fraud share many characteristics with other victims of crime, the level of services provided to them is not as comprehensive and that the development of services specifically for victims of fraud is required. Although victims of fraud blame themselves, this blame is extremely damaging. The majority of fraudsters are professionals and are very proficient and convincing in what they do. Greater recognition of the increasing diversity in the types of online fraud (Warrell, 2015) together with the financial and psychological costs has led to an emphasis on awareness and prevention campaigns, including campaigns by Action Fraud. Action Fraud was set up in 2008 as part of the National Fraud Authority, which was subsequently disbanded in 2014. Action Fraud is now part of the City of London Police, but it has a difficult history and continues to suffer many criticisms, including a lack of resources to deal sufficiently with the extent of reported fraud, and many of us still remain vulnerable to the scammers.

Ways in which studies of criminal victimisation have explored the impact of crime through the prism of vulnerability has been examined by Walklate (2011), who explores alternative ways of thinking about the impact of crime by considering the value of the concept of resilience. Das (2007, cited by Walklate, 2011:179) observes that 'to be vulnerable is not the same as to be a victim', implying that 'being exposed to adversity does not necessarily imply an inability to cope with that adversity: becoming a victim' (*ibid*:180). Walklate explores the relationship between resilience and victimisation and how for some people 'the experience of criminal victimisations was so normalised, the concept of victim was meaningless: 'they were just part of life'' (Genn, 1988, cited by Walklate, 2011:187). This can reflect the experiences of people who suffer repeat victimisation, for example, victims of domestic abuse and victims of disability, racially and sexually motivated hate crimes, whereby frequent abuse becomes routine and normalised (Wong and Christmann, 2008, cited by Magic, 2014:328). Victimisation as a process of interactions impacts on how the label of victim is applied, starting with self-definitions and then the subsequent reactions and responses of others, both informal and formal. As observed by Mythen (2007, cited by Walklate, 2011:181).

> 'Being or becoming a victim is not a neat or absolute journey. Acquiring the status of victim involves being party to a range of interactions and processes, including identification, labelling and recognition.'

A recent study in Australia identifies some of the key factors influencing adult male victims of crime accessing support services and the types of support required (Bricknell, Boxall and Andrevski, 2014). They summarised that not only were male victims were more likely to experience feelings of shame, attributed to feelings of failure and emasculation, but that some men normalise some types of violence, ignore or deny the impact of victimisation, and see no reason to seek support, other than medical assistance, if required.

What is important to note here is that all of these experiences and social interactions impact on peoples' abilities to cope with victimisation, depending upon their vulnerability and resilience, which in turn influences the type of support required, if any. Presumptions about vulnerability and resilience should not be made, as an elderly victim of burglary with a strong social network and sufficient resources may be less vulnerable and more resilient than a young male victim of violent crime.

Acknowledging that everyone experiences victimisation differently emphasises the need for a range of support services that offer accessible and flexible services, so that the right interventions can be offered to those who want them at a time when they need them most. As part the consultation process undertaken by the Ministry of Justice (2012a) '*Getting it Right for Victims and Witnesses*', the MOJ identified eight categories of victims' needs, but these categories tended to focus more on general social issues relating to health, accommodation, education skills and employment, drugs and alcohol and finance, which can impact on a person's resilience, but do not acknowledge the support services required that specifically relate to the impact of crime and the subsequent aftermath. This was fed back by those individuals and agencies responding to the consultation, the majority of which work in supporting crime victims, identifying a set of specific victims' needs:

- information and empowerment;
- legal assistance;
- advocacy;
- protection/safety/risk reduction;
- restitution;
- privacy and confidentiality; and,
- emotional health and well-being.

The above categories relate directly to the needs of victims who engage with the criminal justice process and although it is stated in the Government's response to the consultation (Ministry of Justice, 2012b), it recognises the critical role that victims and witnesses play and that 'victims too often feel themselves to be an afterthought for the criminal justice system [and] despite improvements over the last two decades, the system has continued to fall short' (2012b:4), the decision was made not to include the additions suggested by respondents to the consultation, despite a growing body of literature and research evidencing the priority that victims place on those needs identified.

A factor that has perhaps contributed to a system that continues to "fall short" is that despite the introduction of a range of initiatives and policies introduced to improve the experiences of victims, very little evaluation of these initiatives has taken place. JUSTICE (1998:117) highlighted the need for an on-going programme of research, evaluation and monitoring of services provided to victims to ensure that policies were being complied with and victims' entitlements were being met. There has been wide ranging academic debate regarding the needs and rights of victims, however there has been less literature focussing on the services that victims actually want and insufficient monitoring of the effectiveness of interventions. Fundamental to gaining an understanding of the needs of victims is to listen to the experiences of victims and their perceptions of the support they received, so it is essential to incorporate research which has included victims as participants.

This literature review provides an overview of the research that exists on the types of support that is available to victims of crime and what types of support work. It has found that the literature tends to focus on specific types of offences, with a significant amount of literature in some areas and less in relation to others. This tends to reflect the level of services that can actually be found delivering support to victims and reveals gaps in service provision. It also highlights new areas that are currently being developed in response to the emergence of new forms of victimisation, primarily as a result of emerging forms of new technology, in particular, the use of social media and digital platforms. This review has identified a number of key themes associated with what works in supporting victims of crime and these are analysed below, supported with evidence from the key literature.

THE REVIEW METHOD

Rapid evidence assessments

A rapid evidence assessment (REA) methodology was used to provide a thorough overview of the available research relating to what works in supporting victims of crime. This method was used to assess the strength of the evidence within the research providing a synthesis of the evidence in order to answer the following research question:

> What works in providing victims with effective support in their journey through the criminal justice system and beyond?

The REA methodology follows a clear set of procedures, recording all processes and results as they are achieved in order to present a fully replicable and transparent study. The proposed study follows methods based on those developed by Government Social Research in conjunction with The Evidence for Policy and Practice Information and Co-ordinating Centre (EPPI- Centre) which is within the Social Science Research Unit at the Institute of Education, University of London.[1]

This REA followed the standard procedure of developing search strings, developing inclusion and exclusion criteria, conducting database searches and searches of grey literature, screening of abstracts and assessing the suitability of studies for inclusion in the REA and retrieving full texts for inclusion. The results of the searches were checked by an academic expert and some additional papers that were not picked up by the searches were added for inclusion in the review. An illustration of the REA methodology is attached as Appendix 1.

The databases searched included: EBSCO Search Platform: Criminal Justice Abstracts with full text; PsycARTICLES; PsycINFO; SocINDEX. Proquest Search Platform: ASSIA; EconLit; ERIC; National Criminal Justice Reference Service Abs; PAIS International; Social Services Abs; Sociological Abs and Westlaw UK Database. The search string used in searching these databases is attached as Appendix 2.

Papers were included that provided evidence on what works to support victims of crime, both those that report the offence and those that do not. Papers covering the following specific topics relating to support were excluded: child victims; restorative justice, measurement of support, social support from friends and family and financial support.

Data extraction and evaluation of evidence

Key data was extracted from each paper to include: country of study, abstract, study aims/research questions, type of study, description of research methods and sampling strategy, summary of data collection and analysis, summary of findings, limitations of the study, implications/conclusions drawn by study authors.

The strength of the evidence in each paper was assessed according to the Maryland Scale[2] which incorporates research rationale, research design, sampling, data collection, data analysis, interpretation and reporting of results and credibility of conclusions.

Collation of evidence

The data extraction tables, used to collect and evaluate data from all studies, were collated in order to assess the overall strength of evidence in the research landscape. A summary of the evidence assessment is attached as Appendix 3. As well as giving readers an idea of how well individual policies and practices work in supporting victims, this collation of evidence gives readers an understanding of the strength of the evidence base in this research landscape overall. It aims to answer the question – is there a strong or a weak evidence base relating to what works for supporting victims; or is there strong evidence to support some initiatives and mixed or weaker evidence for others? How well do we know what we know about supporting victims?

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1   http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/networks/gsr/resources-and-guidance/rapid-evidence-assessment
2   The Maryland Scale of Scientific Methods was designed by the University of Maryland to classify the strength of scientific evidence. It is a measure of the strength of evidence rather than the impact of an initiative or intervention.

Rapid evidence assessment results

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│ Total Search    │
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│ full text    │      │ inclusion from│      │ and quality  │      │ inclusion in     │
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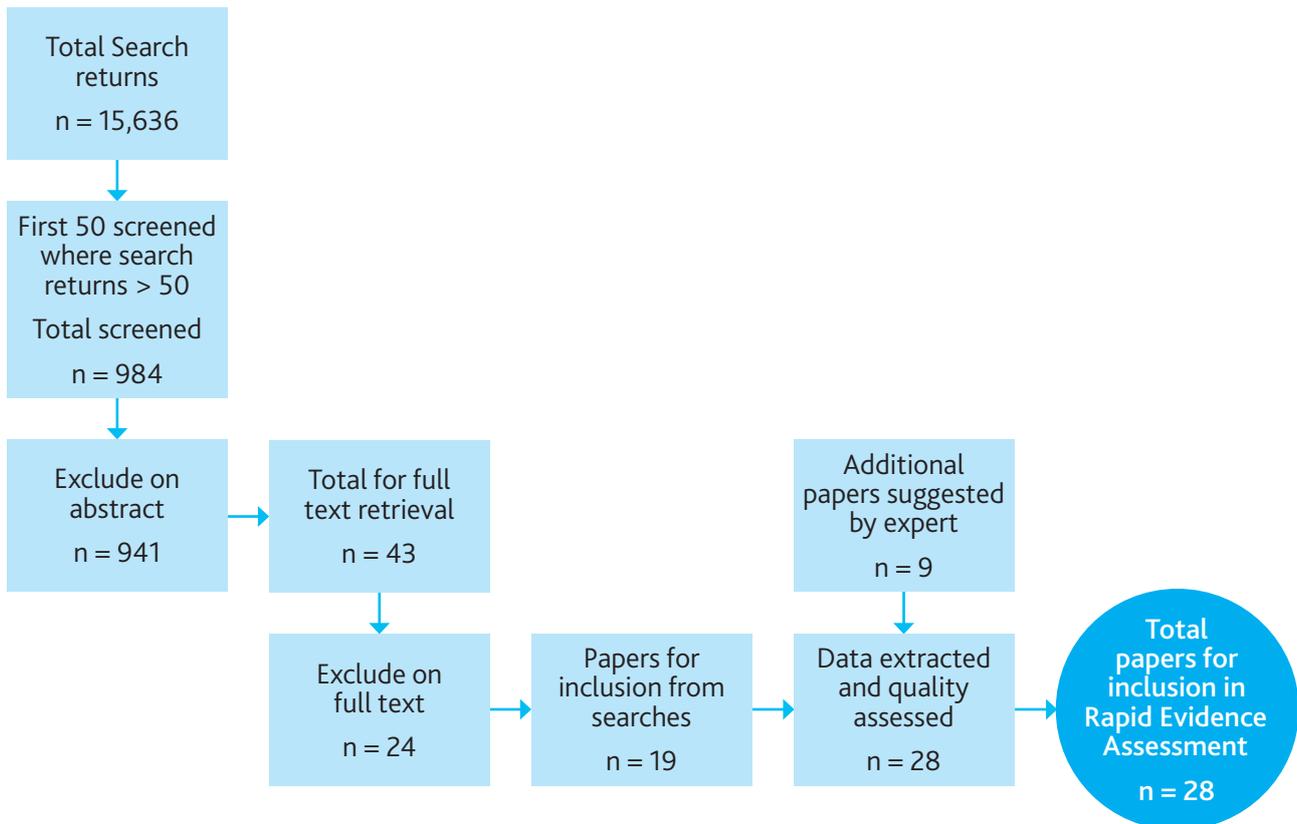
The search string produced a total of 15,636 returns. Assessment was limited to the first 50 references in order to make the process manageable in the time available. The abstracts of 941 papers were reviewed, from which 43 papers were identified for full text retrieval. A further 24 papers were excluded on reading the full text resulting in 19 papers for inclusion from the searches. There were nine additional papers suggested by an academic in the field resulting in a total of 28 papers for inclusion in this REA.

The evidence extracted from the studies was written up into the following thematic narrative document in order to present a comprehensive analysis of what works in supporting victims in their journey through the criminal justice system and beyond.

Limitations of rapid evidence assessment

A REA uses less time and resources than a full systematic review, but this does come with some implications. There is potential to miss some literature that is not catalogued on the key electronic databases. The subject matter of this REA also means that the literature is dispersed through many academic fields making it harder to search for and review literature from so many different disciplines. In a REA the quality assurance of evidence is carried out by one assessor compared with a systematic review in which evidence will be assessed by two or more assessors coming to a consensus on the strength of the evidence presented in each study.

The strength of the evidence presented in this review was quite strong overall. There is some variation in the methodological quality of individual studies and so caution should be applied when generalising from the REA.

FINDINGS FROM THE LITERATURE

Evidence on the role of information in supporting victims

The importance victims attach to being kept informed has been well documented over the last 35 years (Maguire and Bennett, 1982; Shapland, Willmore and Duff, 1985; Victim Support, 1995). Shapland, Willmore and Duff (1985) conducted a longitudinal study involving victims of violent crime and found that the attitude of the police during the initial response was a prime determinant of victims' satisfaction. The study found that victims tended to focus on the role of the police as their main contact with the criminal justice system and the main source of information for advice and support. While the majority of victims were satisfied with the initial contact, levels of satisfaction continued to decline as the case progressed, as communication reduced significantly after the initial investigation stage and only resumed, often months later, if an offender was charged and the victim was required to be a witness at the trial.

Similar results were found by Tapley (2003), almost twenty years later, when she repeated a longitudinal study with victims of violent crime. The lack of information at all stages of the process remained one of the constant sources of frustration. Victims of violent crime and crimes against the person have been found to experience further distress if they are not kept fully informed of what is happening and why at all stages of the process, both pre- and post-trial (Newburn and Merry, 1990). It leaves them with the impression that the police are no longer interested, that there is a lack of recognition of the harm they have suffered and that they are accorded low status (Tapley, 2003). In a study incorporating the perspectives of rape victims of a serial rapist in New Zealand, Jordan (2013:52) found that many of the women struggled with long gaps in information from the police, prompting the victims to contact them, resulting in the police later acknowledging how 'these women had expanded their awareness of victim/survivors' needs'.

Despite an emphasis in the revised Victims' Code (Ministry of Justice, 2013a) on the provision of information, concerns were raised by focus groups undertaken with victims of crime as part of a strategic assessment of victims' services in the South East of England (Tapley *et al*, 2014). The results reflected:

> 'An inconsistency in the approach provided to victims of different offence types and an apparent hierarchy of victims. This was reflected across a number of focus groups across the areas, with victims of burglary receiving a "gold star" service, whilst victims of personal violence, domestic abuse, stalking and hate crimes were left feeling unsupported and uninformed.'
>
> (*ibid*:44).

Despite the introduction of policies and reforms, a substantial body of literature continues to demonstrate that the lack of timely and accurate information remains one of the biggest causes of victim dissatisfaction (Victim Support, 2010; HMIC, 2014; CPS, 2015; HMCPSI, 2016).

The research indicates that victims of crime want three types of information:

- information about the criminal justice process at all stages of the case;
- timely and accurate updates about the progress of their case; and,
- information about the types of support services available and what they can offer them.

Victims also require this information to be communicated in a format that is easy to understand, with details of who to contact if they require a further opportunity to ask questions. This raises the crucial issue of how information can be effectively conveyed to victims and witnesses. As observed by Ashworth (1998:64, cited by Tapley, 2005a:246), greater attention needs to be devoted to the techniques of communication, as '*being told is not the same as being made to understand*'.

Victim Support (2011) found that a crucial aspect of communication was being kept informed and updated, but that despite the efforts of government and police, victims' needs were still too often going unmet. The study found that the official performance data in police satisfaction surveys masks their own findings in that many victims get little or no further communication from the police, or any other criminal justice agency, after they have reported the crime. Lack of information can leave victims feeling uncertain and isolated causing further harm and distress. In addition, if victims know the perpetrator and they are not being kept informed

about their case, they can feel afraid for their own safety and frightened about reprisals. Victim Support also found that a lack of information can leave victims feeling that their case has been neglected or is not being taken seriously, which in turn can lead to a lack of confidence in the criminal justice system.

Analysing data taken from the Crime Survey for England and Wales, Freeman (2013) makes a distinction between the types of support that victims say they want and the types of support that they actually receive. The survey found that individuals want support in the form of information from the police (10% of incidents), protection from repeat victimisation (6% of incidents) and someone to talk to for moral support (5% of incidents). Victims reported that the type of support they actually received were information from the police (3% of incidents) and information about security and crime prevention (2% of incidents). Even though the survey demonstrates that not every victim requires support, it indicates a clear disparity between what victims want, and more importantly – what they are entitled to, and what they actually get. Freeman (2013) found that victims are more likely to want support if they report being emotionally affected or if the incident was perceived as "serious". The survey also confirms that victims' needs change over time following the incident, therefore, accessibility to support services needs to be available at all stages of the process. As victims' emotional reaction and perception of the crime are the biggest indicators of a need for support, these characteristics could be used to better target those victims who are most likely to need it.

To improve and enhance services to those victims identified as vulnerable and intimidated (as defined by the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act, 1999), the police and Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) are required to identify vulnerable and intimidated victims as early in the process as possible to ensure victims are provided with the relevant support services. However, studies continue to demonstrate that not all those entitled to the enhanced services are being identified early or being identified at all (Hamlyn, Phelps, Turtle and Sattar, 2004; Criminal Justice Joint Inspection, 2015; CPS, 2015).

It can be concluded that what victims want and require is information to be provided by a consistent, professional source that can provide up-to-date and accurate information relating to the progress of their case. This source must also be easily contacted and responsive if the victim requires additional information as the case progresses and following the final outcome. As a result of the PCCs' responsibilities for the commissioning of victims' services, a number of different models have subsequently been developed across England and Wales. Some of these were early adopters and started in October 2014, whereas the remaining PCCs started in April 2015. It is now interesting to see the range of models that have emerged. Some PCCs have adopted a significant focus on improving communication with victims and keeping them updated. Avon and Somerset PCC has set up Lighthouse Victim Care, which is a multi-agency team of Police staff and independent support organisations co-located and working together to provide victim care. The officer in the case is initially responsible for updating victims, but if a victim is required to attend court as a witness, they are allocated a Victim and Witness Care Officer to be their main point of contact as the case progresses to court. Dorset PCC set up the Victims' Bureau, which is a team of police staff who contact victims to update them with the progress of their case and inform victims of the support services available. Kent PCC has set up Compass House, which is a co-located multi-agency hub, including Victim Support, the Witness Care Unit and the Witness Service, with good links to a range of independent service providers. Cambridge PCC has set up the Victims' Hub, and Devon and Cornwall PCC has implemented a Victim Care Unit, supported by a website MyVCU.

There are 42 Police and Crime Commissioners in England and Wales who have developed a local strategy for improving victim and witness care, and ensuring victims are informed of the relevant support services available to them in their local areas. These have now been in operation for almost a year, with the early adopters operating for over a year. This now provides an opportunity for all PCCs to evaluate the impact of the models adopted on victim satisfaction in their areas and compliance with the Victims 'Code, it may be the case that some PCCs have already started evaluating their service. An evaluation of the different models adopted is essential to ensure that all areas are delivering what victims want effectively, by consulting directly with victims and service providers. Of crucial importance is that the different areas share the range of good practices found in order to reduce the possibility of victims being exposed to a postcode lottery when it comes to victim care.

Evidence on the role of effective communication in supporting victims

Effective communication is crucial if victims are to be kept informed and updated and there is now a range of ways that victims can be contacted, including telephone, text message, email and by post. During the initial contact, it is essential that the responding police officer asks the victim what is their preferred method of contact, to ensure victims can receive the information required safely, but further research is required into what communication strategies are the most effective.

Irazola, Williamson, Niedzwiecki and Debus-Sherrrill (2013a) carried out an evaluation of Automated Victim Information and Notification Programmes in 47 states in the USA. The automated programme provided victims with information about offenders' status changes and court events. The online programme allowed victims to proactively check the status of the offender in their case by using a secure password to go online and check it themselves, in addition to automatically being informed of any changes by their chosen communication method, such as, in writing, by telephone, email and text message. The evaluation found that notification by text is significantly associated with higher victim satisfaction and perceived benefits. The majority of victims who used the service (76%) reported being extremely or very satisfied. They reported that the automated notification service helped them to make decisions about their safety, helped them to feel empowered, made them feel safe and encouraged them to be more involved in their legal case. Half of the victims who registered for automated victim information and notification services also received regular non-automated notification about the offender. Victims often used both forms of communication so that the automated programme is not necessarily a replacement for regular forms of communication, indicating that victims want to receive information through all available channels.

In a second report based upon the evaluation of the automated victim notification programmes in the USA, Irazola *et al* (2013b) suggested ways in which the notification schemes can be implemented in order to support victims further. These included proactively registering victims and then giving them the option to opt-out. Victims should also have the option to choose the type of information that they are notified of, such as choosing to be notified about release only. During the registration process some schemes showed a picture of the offender, so that the victim can be sure that it is the right person. Some victims did not expect to see a picture of the offender and found this distressing, so it was suggested that victims be given the option of seeing a picture, rather than displaying it automatically. As with any type of information and communication, victims are supported not only by the act of being informed, but by the content and quality of information. Irazola *et al*, (2013b) found that confusing and inaccurate information can lead to further distress for the victim and so automated notification systems must supply accurate and timely information, which victims can understand and that they know the implications of that information. In order to further support victims in interpreting this data, automated victim notification schemes should also provide information on who they can contact to clarify any of the information and who can offer additional assistance should the victim need it.

Automated ways of keeping victims up-to-date with the progress of their case are now being tried in parts of England and Wales. Since 2011, Avon and Somerset constabulary have been using TrackMyCrime, which enables victims to log in using a crime reference number and personal details to check the progress of their case and choose the method they would like to receive alerts regarding their case. This has since been adopted by other PCCs in Nottinghamshire, Humberside and Kent and in 2015 the Ministry of Justice announced that it would be made available nationally. As with the automated service highlighted above, this enables victims some flexibility in choosing how to receive information and updates about their case, but it relies on victims having access to online devices and can leave victims receiving important and often complicated information in a vacuum. It is essential that victims are provided with a contact number which allows them to contact someone who has access to the case in order to clarify the information being provided, if required.

Muir (2012) examined ways in which victims can be empowered through the use of digital data and new technologies and explored the future potential for the use of new digital technologies, but it is essential that the views and perceptions of victims are sought when the innovative schemes are evaluated. No independent evaluations of TrackMyCrime could be found to be included in this review. How victims are responded to, treated and communicated with by statutory and non-statutory agencies influences their perceptions of the fairness of the system and consequently their overall confidence in the criminal justice process.

Evidence regarding procedural justice and perceptions of fairness – how affording victims their entitlements improves the support and satisfaction of victims

There is evidence to suggest that the quality of service that victims get from the criminal justice system is often a more important factor than the final outcome of their case (Tapley, 2003). Perception of fair treatment and access to entitlements impacts on peoples' perceptions of legitimacy and compliance (Hough *et al*, 2010, cited by Laxminarayan, 2015:273). Laxminarayan (2015:274) examined in the Netherlands how procedural and interactional needs impact on the concept of trust and how this results from 'both procedural aspects, such as perceptions of procedural fairness and outcome elements, such as a just verdict'. In a study in Australia, Murphy and Barkworth (2014) indicate that procedural justice is an important predictor of victim satisfaction and that central to this is the initial response of the police. A positive experience increases people's trust and confidence in the police and influences their willingness to co-operate. Murphy and Barkworth (2014:198) concluded that:

> 'Police cannot always control the outcome a crime victim receives. For some victims the crime may be solved, but for others it may remain unsolved. What the police can control, however, is how they treat the victims of crime they come into contact with.'

Much has been written about the 'secondary victimisation' experienced by victims when actions by agencies cause additional trauma. As identified by Jordan (2013:52) there are multiple ways that this can occur. Basing her research on the narratives of survivors of rape, Jordon found that survivors needed a combination of formal and informal support, and to be consulted on important decisions, rather than assumptions being made on their behalf. An example was the use of special measures when giving evidence in court, 'while this seemed sensitive, it turned out to be contrary to the women's wishes. None opted for the use of screens.' (*ibid*:52). As emphasised by Jordon (*ibid*:53), 'no single approach will be appropriate or effective, necessitating the importance of demonstrating a willingness to listen, fully listen, to that woman's narrative'.

It is their perceptions of fairness in procedural justice that has a significant impact on victims' satisfaction with the criminal justice system, and not just the outcome of their case. As outlined above, a number of policies have been introduced to afford victims and witnesses certain entitlements, if not specific legislative rights. However, the literature indicates that a substantial number of victims are unaware of their entitlements, as they are not always informed about them. As Ashworth (1998:246) correctly acknowledges, when right-holders are not informed of their rights, 'it undermines the very value that the right was intended to respect'.

Research with victims of crime indicated that the majority were not informed about the Victims' Charter (Tapley, 2005b) or the Victims' Code (Tapley *et al*, 2014). The CPS Victim and Witness Satisfaction Survey (2015) found that many victims were unaware of their entitlement to make a Victim Personal Statement, 49% of victims were not told about the Victim's Right to Review and many were not aware of the eventual outcome. The CPS survey found that those victims entitled to the enhanced services were not always made aware of them and were not always advised about their entitlement to special measures. Many did not have a needs assessment undertaken by the Witness Care Unit and only a third were made aware of the opportunity to have a pre-trial visit or advised of the role of the Witness Service (CPS, 2015). The survey found that those who were more likely to feel that they were treated disrespectfully included those groups who were most vulnerable and who were entitled to the enhanced services (CPS, 2015:56). Despite the introduction of Victim Liaison Units, HMCPSI (2016:1) found that none of the units were sufficiently staffed and as a consequence had no resilience to staff absences, placing the quality and timeliness of communications with victims at risk. Contrary to requirements and obligations, the report found that in a majority of cases, there was no evidence that victims are consulted before decisions are made to discontinue a case, or substantially alter charges against a defendant (HMCPSI, 2015:2).

In a systematic review of studies investigating links between victim satisfaction with criminal justice procedures and victim wellbeing, Kunst, Popelier and Varekamp (2015) found that victim satisfaction with the criminal justice system is positively correlated with emotional wellbeing, particularly through alterations in positive cognitive states. However, they found the evidence to be quite weak and recommended research to investigate these links further. The current evidence base is enough to conclude that the way in which victims are afforded their rights can have an effect upon their satisfaction with the process. This in turn can improve victims' cognitive state, thereby assisting in them coping and recovering from crime.

In a qualitative study of victims' interaction with police in Australia, Elliot, Thomas and Ogloff (2014) investigated the impact of procedural justice on helping to reduce the trauma associated with the crime, and helping victims to recover from the negative psychological consequences of victimisation. The study included qualitative interviews with 110 victims who had reported a crime to the police. The authors found that police response strategies were instrumental in victims gaining a sense of validation of their victimisation experience, in particular, an acknowledgement that wrongdoing had happened to the victim; non-blaming attitudes; relating to the victim as a person; empathic listening, and taking action. Elliot *et al* (2014) found that the way in which the police responded to victims had a powerful impact upon wellbeing and their ability to cope. Empowerment was found to be an important aspect for victims' recovery, which can be obtained by gaining a sense of closure through the victim's interactions with the police. Another important aspect of this interaction is that victims feel subjectively safer after their interaction with police than they did beforehand. Although terms such as validation and empowerment have been used previously in the literature, the authors claim that this is the first time that victims have spontaneously mentioned empowerment and validation in relation to their interactions with the police. The authors also found that the therapeutic effect of procedural justice comes as validation from the wider community, in that the police represent the moral values of society. So being treated carefully and taken seriously by the police validates victims' sense of place in the wider community.

In Canada, Wemmers (2013) examined secondary victimisation in the effects of the criminal justice system on psychological recovery from the crime. The study followed victims in their journey through the criminal justice system, measuring how they were treated by the authorities and victims' perceptions of procedural justice. The study found that victims who had been treated unfairly by the criminal justice system continued to experience more symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder than victims who felt that they were treated fairly by the criminal justice system. This suggests that the way in which criminal justice agencies treat victims has a tangible impact on their long-term recovery. The results relate particularly to how the police treat victims as this is the agency that victims come into contact with the most. The study asked victims about their contact with prosecutors and judges, but few victims in the study had contact with these agencies and criminal justice partners, as the majority of victims' contact with the criminal justice system was with the police. The authors suggest that the lack of contact with other criminal justice agencies demonstrates that victims are not being afforded all of their entitlements. They suggest that when victims are treated fairly they feel validated and supported and that this is what they seek when they interact with figures of authority in order to perceive a sense of legitimacy in the process.

In a review of policing practice, the New South Wales Ombudsman (2006) identified some key barriers to providing victims of domestic violence with the support that they need as well as making some recommendations for improved practice. The report found that most police saw themselves as having a limited role in supporting victims, some making the point that they are "investigators, not counsellors", although other officers spoke in terms of mediating or problem solving in a domestic violence situation. The police that were interviewed said they appreciate the arrangements that enable them to refer victims on to specialist support agencies for information and support. Some police officers have pre-prepared information packs to give to victims, though some said they often did not use the information packs or the referrals. A number of police officers also said that they had no idea whether the referrals were actually effective in supporting victims. The review included victim advocates who claimed that many police struggled with demonstrating a supportive attitude to victims and this is particularly the case when victims do not present as obviously distressed or if they do not have obvious physical injuries. They reported that police officers often felt a lack of compassion for victims that they view as being "passive or apathetic". More senior members of the police at Commander level expressed an opinion that it may not be appropriate for police officers and DVLOs to provide victim support and that specialist services are funded to do this. However, an opposing view to this came from police in more rural locations in New South Wales where victim support services are not as well funded or available and where police officers are actually the gateway to support for victims of domestic abuse. DVLOs reported concern for victims at court, reporting that there are not always safe rooms available at court, which separate victims from perpetrators. DVLOs report an inconsistent service for victims as they are not able to attend all courts and support all victims of domestic abuse cases.

The above demonstrates the need for a joined-up response to victims of crime to ensure that victims receive the information and services they are entitled to. To achieve this, criminal justice professionals need to work alongside support service providers to ensure victims receive the most relevant types of support at each stage

of the process, giving victims confidence in the system and keeping them engaged with the process. This places an emphasis on the importance of multi-agency working.

Evidence of the effectiveness of joint working/multi-agency working in supporting victims

Acknowledging that no one service can meet all the needs of some victims, specifically in relation to domestic abuse (James-Hanman, 2000), the government emphasis since the 1990s has been on developing a multi-agency approach and co-ordinated partnership working. Co-operation between support services is not new, but what has increased is the integration and co-operation between voluntary and statutory agencies.

The introduction of Specialist Domestic Violence Courts (SDVC) in England and Wales from 2006 represented a partnership approach to domestic abuse and involved police, prosecutors, magistrates, probation and specialist support services. It specifically introduced a number of necessary components, including MARACS (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences) and the role of IDVAS (Independent Domestic Violence Advocates). The process is underpinned by risk assessments and those victims assessed as high risk are referred to a MARAC and an IDVA (CAADA, 2009 and 2011). Evaluations of the SDVC and MARAC process indicate the benefits of a multi-agency approach, but also highlight the challenges (Cook, Burton, Robinson and Vallely, 2004).

In an evaluation of MARACs in Wales, Robinson (2006) carried out an investigation into how risk assessment can inform responses to domestic violence victims. The evaluation focused on how MARACs share information, cooperate and develop proactive strategies as a team in order to protect high risk victims from further victimisation. Respondents categorically stated that the main output of the MARAC was information sharing and that it was this sharing of information that produced positive outcomes for victims. However, respondents pointed out that MARACs can be effectively stopped by the victims themselves if they do not want assistance. This raises the question of whether the protocols of information sharing across agencies in order to put risk assessment and avoidance strategies into place can ever be effective if the MARACs continue to carry out support work 'on' victims rather than 'with' them, and whether there could be scope for a more survivor – defined approach to risk assessment through the MARACs. Robinson (2006) concluded that the MARACs demonstrate a positive, measurable impact in victims' lives and are an important innovation in maintaining a coordinated community response to domestic violence.

A later review of MARACs (Steel, Blakeborough, Nicholas, 2012) found that information sharing, appropriate agency representation and the role of the IDVA in representing and engaging the victim during the process are vital to their effectiveness. An inspection by HMIC (2014:91) however, raised concerns regarding their effectiveness in all areas and, in particular, the very high caseloads which areas were having to manage, resulting in 'cases being screened by MARACs according to the resources available rather than the risks being managed'. This clearly raises concerns regarding victim safety.

Nichols (2013) interviewed 26 domestic violence victim advocates in order to investigate how survivor defined practices can be used effectively in community based responses to domestic violence in the USA. The author assessed the effectiveness of customised and individualised safety planning and provision of resources, which is led by survivors, in reducing repeat victimisation. In particular the report looks at the effect of protective orders. It found that while protective orders can have significant benefits, they do not always prevent re-victimisation and in some cases may even be the cause of it. Nichols (2013) looks to survivor-defined practice as a remedy for this. Victim advocates expressed that although protective orders are effective for offenders that have an underlying respect for the law, they are not effective in cases where this isn't the case. Advocates discussed the case with the survivor and were able to assess whether the survivor thought that in their case a protection order would be effective. If it was anticipated that a protection order would be successful, advocates supported survivors in obtaining one and developing a safety plan. In cases where survivors felt that a protection order would not work or could cause further harm, they were supported instead in safety planning to mitigate re-victimisation. Advocates also used survivor defined practices to enhance the implementation of protective orders, for example, by explaining potential loopholes to survivors and facilitating victims' collection of evidence of breaches of protective orders. Nichols (2013) found that the key to survivor-defined practice is working with survivors as individuals. The empowerment model suggests that by working with survivors in this way, women can regain control and autonomy over their own choices, taking control of their own safety, being facilitated by an advocate rather than having the safety planning done for them, taking that autonomy out of their hands and adding to their sense of helplessness. The author recommends the expansion

of survivor defined practice in victim advocacy as a way to effectively reduce re-victimisation and to empower women to manage their own safety. The use of 'empowerment' as a way of working with victims of domestic abuse by professionals, in place of an emphasis upon a 'self-help' model also demonstrated positive outcomes in the ways that professionals worked with victims of domestic violence, found by a study undertaken in Sweden (Helmersson and Jonson, 2016).

In opposition to policies that advocate autonomy and empowerment, Antle *et al* (2010) carried out an evaluation of the mandatory reporting law for domestic violence victims in the State of Kentucky, drawing on qualitative interviews of 24 female victims of domestic violence. The law states that health care practitioners, social work practitioners and other statutory professional have a duty to report any suspected incidents of domestic violence to the police. Concerns have been raised that mandatory reporting could lead to repeat victimisation rather than prevent it. The research found that victims of domestic violence were in support of mandatory reporting. They felt that mandatory reporting took the pressure out of their own hands to report the offence and so they thought there would be less likelihood of reprisal from the offender because they had reported the offence. The research found that mandatory reporting may provide some validation to the victim in that it suggests that society does not think the behaviour is acceptable. Other victims reported that they may not have sustained the degree of injury that they did if somebody had reported earlier incidents. Some women reported that they are too afraid to report the offence themselves and would appreciate someone reporting on their behalf:

> 'If a woman is too scared to report the abuse, it is good to have someone else to report it. I wanted help, but I wanted someone else to report it. Get it out in the open so that somebody else will know what is going on.'

Participants were asked if they would have prevented the mandatory reporting if they could have and the majority said that they would not. Participants said that if there was more information available in the first place they may not need mandatory reporting. For example participants thought that it would be policy to remove children from a home that has suffered domestic violence and this is what prevents women from self-reporting domestic abuse. When asked if they were better off, worse off, or about the same as the result of the mandatory report, 75% of women stated that they were better off. On the contrary, 4% said they were worse off whereas 13% said they were about the same. The findings suggest that victims of domestic violence generally support mandatory reporting of incidents to the police both for themselves and for others. The authors found that participants in the study did not report any further physical violence as a direct result of the mandatory reporting. The study found that partners were more accepting of an intervention if they are made aware of it from the beginning. Although mandatory reporting has been criticised as a form of social control of women (Paled 1997), this study found that the majority of women whose cases were reported felt that they were 'better off' or 'safer' as a result of the mandatory report.

In a review of new developments in multi-agency responses to domestic abuse, Stanley (2015) highlights the importance of collaboration in prevention strategies, the engagement of health professionals in the frontline response to domestic abuse and the crucial importance of exchanging information. Stanley (2015) advocates a whole-system approach involving a wide range of criminal justice, health, education, housing and specialist service providers and highlighting the value of co-location, as seen in England and Wales in the development of hubs, such as Multi Agency Safeguarding Hubs (Home Office, 2014a).

A greater emphasis on partnership working with survivors of rape and sexual violence has also been established in more recent years in England and Wales, seeing the development of SARCS (Sexual Assault Referral Centres), ISVAS (Independent Sexual Violence Advocates) and the introduction of RASSO (Rape and Serious Sexual Offences) units in the CPS (HMCPSI, 2016b).

Robinson and Hudson (2011) explored the strengths and limitations of two different types of settings that provide specialist support to victims of sexual violence in the UK: Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCS) and voluntary sector organisations, such as Rape Crisis. The study used qualitative data from six case study sites and quantitative data from 35 sexual violence projects in England and Wales. They found that the type of setting affected the types of referrals they received, the type of victims that they supported and, in turn, the nature of support that they offered and the type of work carried out. Fundamental to these differences were the different referral pathways to each service. SARCS represent a partnership between mainly statutory

agencies, including health and the police, and 'aim to provide an accessible, multi-agency, forensically secure, one-stop-shop provision for victims' (Robinson and Hudson, 2011). As a consequence of the funding underpinning the SARCS, the main pathway of referrals is by the police, which means that victims need to have reported the offence before being referred to the SARC. The study found that 80% of the referrals came from the police and the majority involved younger women who had been abused by strangers and acquaintances. There were very few self-referrals to the SARCS, but a reason for this could be that the services of a SARC are not widely publicised or promoted, thereby limiting their accessibility to all rape victims. In contrast, the voluntary projects had twice the level of self-referrals and the profile of those seeking support was older and the perpetrators were more likely to be relatives, partners, and ex-partners, and included a higher number of historical abuse cases. Given the emphasis on the partnership links between the police and the SARCS, a perhaps surprising finding was that, 'although conviction rates are remarkably similar across both types of settings when viewed as a proportion of cases charged (27% versus 28%), voluntary projects have a higher conviction rate as a proportion of cases reported to police (10% versus 2%) (*ibid*, 2011:521). The authors acknowledged that this type of analysis masks substantial variation within both types of settings and therefore it is problematic to draw conclusions about the impact of each setting on case progression. However it does raise important questions about the types of support offered and how they impact upon the continued engagement of victims with the criminal justice process, which further research could explore drawing upon the perspectives of the victims themselves. The study found that there were benefits to the partnership model of SARCS, particularly because of their affiliation with statutory partners, whereas voluntary organisations found it harder to establish and maintain relationships with other agencies, although this may reflect the tensions created by intense competition for funding, as highlighted by Tapley *et al* (2014). The independence associated with voluntary organisations was seen as the key benefit of providing support within the voluntary sector and 'more aligned with victims' needs', in particular, a perception that they would be able 'to tell their story without fear of judgement' (Robinson and Hudson, 2011:525). In conclusion, the study found the nature of the two types of organisations to be complementary in the support of victims of sexual violence in the UK. It acknowledged the diversity of victims' needs and that these can change over time, so the availability of different types of support is crucial for victims. The authors call for the continued financial support of voluntary organisations in this field as they provide a different and complementary service to SARCs.

Greeson and Campbell (2012) carried out an in depth literature review and a review of evaluations of Sexual Assault Response Teams (SARTS) in the USA, upon which the SARCS in the UK are loosely modelled. SARTS are multi-agency coordinated response teams in which the team as a whole takes responsibility for helping victims access all services. Rather than a victim having to identify resources themselves and seek help multiple times from each service individually, SARTs coordinate all of the services. Some are more formalised in their operation than others, but all aim to target and improve the relationships between criminal justice agencies and service providers, and all aim to have a victim centred philosophy to their approach. In their review, Greeson and Campbell (2012) found that SART meetings improved members understanding of each other's roles and remits, created improved information exchange between members, improved contact between them and improved decision making. SARTs have a positive outcome for victims because it means that they do not have to repeatedly tell their story to multiple agencies, hence reducing the effects of re-victimisation. Victims who were supported by SARTs were offered more services than victims who were not supported by SARTS, such as transportation to the hospital, clothing and counselling. However, Greeson and Campbell (2012) did identify a limitation in the evaluations of SARTs, as they are based on reports from SART practitioners rather than based upon victims' perceptions. Although further research could be carried out with victims to gain their perspective of the support provided by SARTs, the evidence is quite strong that SARTs support inter-agency working which in turn provides positive support and outcomes for victims.

Moylan (2015) carried out an investigation into whether the coordinated approach favoured by Sexual Assault Response Teams (SARTs) in the USA actually changes the behaviour of its members and provides an improved support service for victims of sexual violence. They found that there is an increasing rhetoric regarding coordinated models of service delivery with the assumption that this coordinated approach will decrease fragmentation of services and improve the quality of services for rape victims. However, they claim there has been a lack of evaluation to see if this approach achieves its aims in enhancing service delivery. In a qualitative study, the authors interviewed 24 professionals that worked within SARTs. They found 'on-going resistance to the moral imperative and logic of coordination as well as inconsistent and incomplete implementation'.

They found two competing processes in the implementation of SARTs; one which legitimised the co-ordinated approach of SARTs and one which presented ongoing resistance both to the logic of a co-ordinated approach and to its implementation, despite the co-ordinated approach increasingly being identified as best practice, for example by the US Office for Victims of Crime. They found that adopting a co-ordinated approach in policy does not necessarily lead to a co-ordinated approach in practice. They found that a decoupling of theory from practice is carried out by practitioners as a way for them to maintain flexibility for those at the front line of services, to carry out the purposes of their own organisation, which might be different from the formal coordinated structure. The authors also found that some coordinated approaches did not work in the long run because, despite having the best intentions and all being in agreement with the idea of co-ordinating services, in practice the co-ordinated approach simply 'ran out of steam'. They suggest then that institutional theorists should not only look at the theory, adoption and implementation of co-ordinating service, but also that they look at the longer term sustainability of these services.

In her *Report of the Independent Review into the Investigation and Prosecution of Rape in London*, Dame Elish Angiolini (2015) found that policies were being implemented inconsistently and that better information needed to be provided to complainants throughout the process. It highlighted that initial contact with the police is critical in capturing early evidential opportunities and in giving the complainant confidence in the criminal justice system. It also acknowledged the important role of specialist officers and the role of the Havens (as SARCS are referred to in London). However, the review made a total of 46 recommendations covering all aspects and emphasised the importance of the co-location of services, including the development of one major hub, instead of the existing number of existing Havens, embedding a senior police officer and a rape and serious sexual offences (RASSO) prosecutor in the hub to facilitate earlier consultation between the police and the prosecutors.

HMCPSI's (2016) inspection of RASSOs found that there are many committed and professional individuals trying to deliver quality and timely services, it also found a number of obstacles preventing this, including problems with the quality of police files and a lack of staff resources. The report concluded that even though the policy and legal guidance for RASSO casework is sound and, when correctly applied, should deliver quality casework, compliance with the guidance was inconsistent, resulting in 'the level of care for victims and witnesses fell well short of what is expected' (HMCPSI, 2016:1). Difficulties in achieving better procedural justice for rape victims also extends to the courts and the added anxiety and distress caused by delays, often repeated, and the low conviction rates, often caused by juries reluctant to convict. Despite the establishment of joint working in cases of rape and sexual violence, and recognition of improvements in partnership working, the literature demonstrates that more needs to be done to ensure that survivors of rape get access to the information and services they require to support them, regardless of whether they decide to report the offence, so that they are able to make an informed choice, as concluded by Jonson (2013).

Joint working across criminal justice agencies and service providers can support victims not only once they have entered the criminal justice system but also in reporting crime in the first place. In an evaluation of an American community policing programme, Huey and Quirouette (2010) identified that a community policing approach in which homeless victims of crime could report crimes to homelessness service providers instead of contacting the police directly, supported homeless victims in reporting crime. However, the authors warned that the community policing model requires strong ownership and leadership in order to be successful as there is a tendency for police to abdicate responsibility for the programme to service providers who are not able to assume this responsibility.

The above demonstrates that there is a need for multi-agency working both across statutory organisations and with the voluntary sector. However, multi-agency work predominantly focuses on high risk cases, in particular, domestic abuse. This raises concerns as it reduces the emphasis on prevention and early intervention, so that few resources are put into working with standard risk cases that may become the high risk cases of tomorrow. Due to limited resources, they tend to be focused on crisis management rather than avoiding the crisis in the first place.

In cases of domestic abuse assessed as high risk, victims may be contacted by a number of different individuals and organisations, many with similar sounding titles, and many performing similar tasks, which only adds to their confusion. A successful joined-up approach should lead to effective information sharing, reducing duplication for agencies and for victims, and the provision of timely services which are less confusing and more supportive of victims' needs.

Evidence on how professionalisation of victims' services helps to support victims

The expansion of statutory responsibilities for victims and witnesses has seen a growth in the professionalisation of victims' services and this was extended not only to the police and prosecution services, but also to the Probation Service. Victim Contact Work first became a responsibility of the Probation Service as part of the first Victims' Charter in 1990 and was limited to contact with the families of homicide victims when the offender was approaching release from custody. The contact was extended further as part of the revised Victims' Charter in 1996 to include contact at the beginning of the sentence and to cover a wider range of victims; those whose offender was sentenced to 12 months and over in custody for sexual offences and violent crime. Section 69 of the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 placed victim contact work on a legislative footing, thereby making the Probation Service the first agency to have a statutory responsibility towards victims of violent crime. However, practices in different areas have evolved independently of each other, resulting in a number of different models being developed.

In a review of victim contact work and the Probation Service, Crawford and Enterkin (1999) found that:

> 'Many victims regarded services which were informative and of practical use as more valuable than those which were simply "emotionally supportive"…the professional affiliation of victim contact services was also important in victims' assessments of their status. Services affiliated with statutory criminal justice agencies were considered by interviewees generally to be more substantial than those organisations which were, associated either, for example, volunteers or charities.'

This reflects victims' perceptions of their status within the criminal justice process, as indicated by the status of those individuals tasked to work with them. While the provision of volunteers to provide emotional support has its place, the majority of victims wanted practical information about the criminal justice process and specific information about the progress of their case (Tapley, 2005a).

An inspection was carried out in 2013 by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation at the request of the Victims' Commissioner, in response to complaints received from victims about the Victim Contact Scheme. Interviews with 28 victims were undertaken as part of the inspection and although the majority of victims were generally satisfied with the service, areas for improvement were identified. The inspection found that the scheme was not always clearly explained to victims post sentence and, as a consequence, victims were not given sufficient information to make an informed choice as to whether to participate in the scheme. Difficulties in sharing information between the offender manager and victim liaison officer were also found, so that communication with victims was not always timely and accurate. The inspection found evidence of good liaison practices between victim contact officers and offender managers in order to ensure victims were prepared for the release of offenders and appropriate safety measures put in place, but it found that not all offender managers were 'victim-focused' and as a consequence, victims needs were not always fully recognised and addressed (HMIP, 2013).

In an investigation into the professionalisation of victim advocates in the USA, Maier (2007) found that victim advocates in the USA had a limited knowledge of rape law and rape law reform. She found that while victim advocates are a good source of moral support for victims their lack of professional knowledge on rape law would limit the legal support that they can provide.

In the UK, Robinson (2009) carried out an assessment on behalf of the Home Office into how Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) services have been implemented in various settings and their perceived impact in providing support to victims of sexual violence. ISVAs are trained support workers that provide assistance and advice to victims of sexual violence. Her findings supported the professionalisation of the ISVA as a specialist role, as it is a role that is not replicated in any part of the criminal justice system. The author found that the most important benefit of ISVAs is to keep the victim informed about their case as it progresses through the criminal justice system and providing support and advice at various stages of the case progression, for example, from reporting the crime to going to court. These benefits were perceived by some respondents in the study to encourage victims to engage with the criminal justice system and to remain engaged. The ISVAs in this study felt that their professional status was supported with regular access to peers, staff and clinical supervision. They felt well-equipped to do their jobs, though there was a general concern that they did not have access to a specialist accredited training programme, as has been designed specifically for IDVAs.

One method that can be employed in order to develop the professionalisation of support services for victims

and to standardise good practice across services and practitioners, is to develop professional standards for working with victims. DeHart (2014) presents one such set of standards for serving victims and survivors of crime which have been developed by the National Victim Assistance Standards Consortium, established by the Federal Office for Victims of Crime in partnership with the University of South Carolina. The consortium has 25 members from a range of statutory, third sector and academic backgrounds, and the standards were developed following a consultation process, surveying existing victim service certification programmes and examining 17 existing sets of standards relating to victim services as well as examining sets of standards from other related fields such as social work and substance abuse services. The Consortium developed programme standards which address documentation and administration, competency standards which relate to knowledge, attitudes and skills, and ethical standards which identify behavioural expectations based on the core values for this area of practice. Each of these three sets of standards are organised into the following five sub sections: scope of service; coordinating with the community; direct services, privacy; confidentiality, data security and assistive technology and administration and evaluation (see examples of NVASC standards in Appendix 4).

The author suggests that the a set of standards provides a shared resource for victim service providers and practitioners, promoting quality, ethical practice, promoting competency and a consistent approach for victims. The standards have already been adapted and used by high profile service providers, such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation's victim service programmes in all 50 states.

The evidence presented above on the delivery of victims' services, supports the call for the further professionalisation of victims' services in terms of a single point of contact. This single point of contact or victim advocate can provide a central professional service, providing information to victims and communicating it effectively, listening and responding to victims' needs. The evidence points to a need for a professionally qualified advocate who has an understanding of the criminal justice system and has access to the relevant criminal justice databases, in order to provide information about the progression of their case. The advocate should also be knowledgeable about the range of support services available and the process whereby victims can be referred to and access these services at a time appropriate for them. The provision of information about the criminal justice system, the progress of their case and the support services available, will assist victims to make informed choices and enable them to gain access to their rights and entitlements.

GAPS IN THE EVIDENCE

As highlighted by this review, significant progress has been made in the development of support services for victims of crime, delivered by a network of non-statutory and statutory agencies, in an increasingly co-ordinated way. The types of services available reflect the historical context in which services have emerged and the subsequent requirement of statutory agencies to take responsibility for victims and witnesses at various stages of the criminal justice process. As a consequence, a number of gaps in service provision can be identified, which reflect groups that have previously been marginalised, including male victims of crime, individuals from the transgender, lesbian and gay communities, and victims of behaviours that have only more recently been recognised as crimes, for example, honour-based violence, cybercrime, revenge porn, online dating scams. There are also offences where legislation has previously existed, but where increasing awareness and activism has contributed to the strengthening of legislation to afford these victims greater protection and place greater responsibilities on those responsible for identifying and protecting these victims, for example, female genital mutilation, stalking and harassment, child sexual exploitation and human trafficking. Support services are emerging for these victims and examples of good practice have been found, including co-ordinated approaches between criminal justice, health and social care professionals, but more research and evaluation needs to be undertaken to ensure victims are receiving the support they require and that legislation is being implemented as intended.

Responsibilities placed upon PCCs to commission support services and assist in the co-ordination of these services have now been in place across England and Wales since October 2014. It is important that PCCs in each area monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the co-ordination and provision of support services, so that good practices can be identified and shared, reducing the postcode lottery that some victims of crime face, either through lack of information or other barriers which may prevent them from accessing services due to their own personal or structural vulnerabilities.

CONCLUSIONS

This rapid evidence assessment draws together the current evidence base on what works in supporting victims of crime in their journey through the criminal justice system and beyond, as well as what works in supporting victims who do not report the crimes against them. There is a strong evidence base to suggest that the key things that support victims are timely and accurate information; effective methods of communication with victims, both in delivering information and listening to victims' needs; multi-agency partnerships across the statutory and voluntary sectors and providing a range of services that are accessible and flexible which victims can access when they need them.

All professionals working with victims of crime must be aware that the basic provision of information can assist them in coping with the impact of victimisation, the intensity of which can be wide ranging. Lack of information, protection and support can only act to aggravate these symptoms further and in many cases result in victims disengaging from the criminal justice process and withdrawing their co-operation.

Individual differences in how criminal victimisation is experienced means that not all victims will need to access the same services at the same time. Tapley *et al* (2014:52) demonstrated the different timelines that victims experience. Some victims require support immediately after the event, while others may not realise the impact of the offence upon them until perhaps noticing changes in their own behaviour some time later and want to access support services when they are ready to. At whatever stage this occurs, it is important that victims know where and how to access the appropriate services.

It is important to note that even though a majority of victims are able to turn to informal sources for emotional support, the research examined here has demonstrated their need for information; advocacy and tangible resources frequently remain unmet (Tapley *et al*, 2014; CPS, 2015; HMCPSI, 2016).

One of the fundamental problems regarding crime victims is that there is no one agency taking responsibility for them, instead the journey of the victim involves varying degrees of contact from a range of agencies at different stages of the process, often based upon the type of crime they have suffered and the level of risk they are perceived to be of further harm. At some stages, contact from the different agencies may overlap, but often between stages there may be long periods of time where no contact is being made and victims are left to wonder in a seemingly endless vacuum. Overwhelming evidence from the literature examined above indicates that the majority of victims were most dissatisfied with the perceived lack of information and communication from the relevant agencies. Evidence has also indicated that a common barrier to accessing appropriate support services is not being aware of the services that exist and what they can offer. This can be due to a combination of not being informed and the agencies themselves not being able to actively promote their services due to a fear that they will be unable to cope with the subsequent increased numbers, due to a lack of sustained and sufficient funding.

The victims' journey can be clearly mapped out by drawing upon the various stages outlined in the Victims' Code and the responsibilities of the agencies at each stage. The Victims' Code recognises the complexity of this journey and highlights the number of opportunities for contact to be made with the victim, in order to update them and remind them of the support services available. Not all victims will require support services. However what the literature makes abundantly clear is that what victims of crime want most is sufficient information in order to make informed choices about what is best for them, and the importance attached to regaining a sense of autonomy. As recognised by Christie (2008:19):

> '*A good victim policy would be to reduce the importance of being a victim and instead emphasise an identity based on having been able to restore dignity as a decision maker in one's own life.*'

The literature in this REA highlights not only the need for accurate and timely information, but also for effective means of communicating this information to victims, and indeed effective ways of listening to victims to ensure that they get the right information at the time they need it. Effective communication also ensures that they understand this information and what it means for them. The literature shows that a combination of automated communication and personalised communication is most effective in supporting victims.

The literature demonstrates that multi-agency partnerships can be effective in sharing information and reducing the duplication that can often cause so much more harm and distress to victims. Providing a joined up service reduces the confusion felt by victims. It supports them in their journey through the criminal justice system and also means that they are more likely to engage with that system, increasing the likelihood of successful prosecutions.

The evidence presented on the effectiveness of IDVAs, ISVAs and advocates in supporting victims demonstrates that a professionalised single point of contact service is an effective means of providing emotional support and providing victims with timely and accurate information. The literature demonstrates that in order to support victims in this way the single point of contact should be a professional post with sufficient knowledge and training in the workings of the criminal justice system as well as the compassion and empathy needed to be a source of moral support.

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APPENDIX 1: The Review Method

STAGE 1 Setting the scope of the review	The research question is set, initial inclusion and exclusion criteria are devised, initial scope for years of searches are set according to key policy decisions and known publications.
STAGE 2 Identify sources and develop search strings	Electronic databases, academic journals and websites are identified. Search terms and subsequent search strings will be developed with input from the VC team with feedback from academic consultant.
STAGE 3 Conduct database searches and searches of grey literature	Relevant academic databases will be searched and all results noted in order to create a replicable study. Grey literature searches will be advised by colleagues and the academic consultant and searched, again noting searches and findings.
STAGE 4 Remove duplicates and screen article abstracts	Articles are often held on a number of databases. Search results will be screened for duplicates. All abstracts are read and the decision to obtain the full text is made according to inclusion and exclusion criteria.
STAGE 5 Full text retrieval	Full texts of each article are retrieved.
STAGE 6 Screen full texts from searches including grey literature	Even though an abstract suggests that an article is appropriate for inclusion, reading of the full text may reveal that the article is not appropriate according to the inclusion and exclusion criteria, any such paper will be removed from the study at this stage.
STAGE 7 Extract data and quality assess evidence	Data from each study will be extracted using a data extraction spreadsheet. The quality of the evidence in each study will be assessed using the Maryland Scale.
STAGE 8 Synthesise evidence into thematic narrative based on strength of evidence	The strength of the studies will be collated in order to assess the overall strength of the research landscape. Findings from the included papers will be synthesised into a thematic narrative report.

(Adapted from Munton, Wedlock and Gomersall 2014)

APPENDIX 2: Search Terms

Search string:

("What works" OR "evidence based practice" OR "evidence based policy" OR "best practice" OR "victim satisfaction" OR evaluation OR efficacy OR effective* OR success* OR model* OR benef*)

AND

(state OR national OR "public sector" OR government* OR nongovernmental OR "non profit" OR "third sector" OR "voluntary organi?ation" OR charit* OR community OR local OR private OR "private sector" OR "self-help" OR organi?ations OR associations)

AND

(program* OR support* OR assist* OR services OR help OR care OR treat* OR contact* OR advice OR advoca* OR counsel* OR intermead* OR interact* OR lias* OR mediat* OR intervent* OR scheme* OR facilit* OR "crisis centres" OR shelters OR hotline* "drop in" OR safe* OR "safe guarding" OR secur* OR protect* OR "re-housing" OR "re-locat*" OR "safe house" OR "well-being" OR rehabiltat* OR recover* OR rebuild OR referral OR "care of victims" OR "victim rehabilitation" OR "victim liaison" OR "victim advocate" OR "victim facilitator" OR "victim mediator" OR "victim mentor" OR "victim intermediary" OR "victim recovery" OR "victim assistance" OR "commissioning victim services" OR "single point of contact" OR "care coordinator" OR complain*)

AND

(Victim* OR witness*) N1 (crime* OR "secondary victimisation" OR victimis* OR intimidate* OR "serious crime" OR "organi?ed crime" OR racketeering OR gangs OR fraud OR "economic crime" OR robbery OR theft OR burglary OR trafficking OR "bereaved by homicide" OR homicide OR murder OR violence OR assault OR battery OR "domestic violence" OR abuse OR rape OR incest OR "sexual assault" OR "sexual offences" OR "sexual violence" OR "sex crimes" OR stalking OR harassment OR "hate crime" OR racis* OR homophi* OR "youth crime" OR vandalism OR "anti-social behaviour")

AND

(police OR "police officer" OR "police station" OR "law enforcement officer" OR "reporting crime" OR statement* OR interview* OR "medical examination" OR "prosecution service" OR "legal advice" OR "legal aid" OR "criminal justice" OR "criminal justice system" OR "criminal proceeding*" OR "judicial proceedings" OR "pre-trial" OR "criminal trials" OR "attending court" OR court* OR "court personnel" OR prosecution OR defence OR defendant OR Judge* OR jury OR "witness box" OR "cross examination" OR "giving evidence" OR "special measures" OR "impact statement" OR sentencing OR "restorative justice" OR restitution OR compensation OR expenses OR "post sentencing" OR "post release" OR "post-conviction notification" OR "prison release notification" OR "release notification" OR "parole board" OR probation OR coroner* OR inquests)

APPENDIX 3: Summary of Assessment of Evidence

Summary table of assessment evidence in primary studies

	Reference	Is there a convincing rationale for research strategy and how it was designed to meet research aims.	Is the research method employed appropriate for the question?	Is the sampling and recruitment strategy rigorous and robust?	Are the methods of data collection rigorous and robust?	Was data analysis sufficiently rigorous and robust?	Is there a clear interpretation of findings and reporting of results?	Are the study conclusions credible?	Overall score	Country of study	Study methods	Maryland score* if appropriate
1	Antle, B., Barbee, A., Yankeelov, P. and Bledsoe, L. (2010) A Qualitative Evaluation of the Effects of Mandatory Reporting of Domestic Violence on Victims and Their Children. *Journal of Family Social Work*. 13 (1). pp: 56-73	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	8	USA	Random sampling of victims with qualitative semi structured interviews. Some quantitative analysis of a low sample size to demonstrate the proportion of victims who agree with mandatory reporting.	1
2	Button, M., Tapley, J. and Lewis, C. (2013) The 'fraud justice network' and the infra-structure of support for individual fraud victims in England and Wales. *Criminology & Criminal Justice: An International Journal*. 13(1), pp. 37-61.	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	14	UK	Research commissioned by the National Fraud Authority. Random sampling of victims of fraud (identified by the London Police) involving a large telephone survey and a smaller sample of semi-structured interviews.	
3	Collett. S (2014) Thematic inspection of victim contact arrangements in probation trusts. *Probation Journal*. 61 (2), pp: 200-201.	N/A a summary of previous reports	N/A a summary of previous reports	N/A a summary of previous reports	N/A a summary of previous reports	N/A a summary of previous reports	N/A a summary of previous reports	N/A a summary of previous reports	N/A a summary of previous reports	UK	Government inspection	N/A a summary of previous reports

#	Reference								Total	Country	Methodology	
4	DeHart, D., (2014) A University Partnership for Victim Service Professional Development: Model Standards for Serving Victims and Survivors of Crime. *Journal of Criminal Justice Education*. 25 (4), pp: 421-434	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	14	USA	Convening of experts, literature review and qualitative consultation.	4
5	Elliott, I., Thomas, S., and Ogloff, J. (2014) Procedural justice in victim-police interactions and victims' recovery from victimisation experiences. *Policing & Society*. 24(5), pp: 588-601.	2	1	2	1	2	2	2	12	Australia	Qualitative semi structured interviews with victims.	1
6	Freeman, L. (2013) *Support for Victims: Findings from the Crime Survey for England and Wales*. Ministry of Justice. London HMSO	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	14	UK	Statistical analysis of nationally representative survey	5
7	Helmersson, S. and Jonson, H. (2013) The use of 'empowerment' among organisations supporting victims of domestic violence in Sweden. *European Journal of Social Work*. 18 (1), pp: 51-64.	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	12	Sweden	Email survey of support services for survivors of domestic abuse using a membership list (N=320)	
8	HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate (2016a) *Communicating with Victims*. London: HMSO	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	14	UK	Mixed methods inspection report.	N/A
9	HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate (2016b) *Thematic Review of the CPS Rape and Serious Sexual Offences Units*. London: HMSO.	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	14	UK	Mixed methods inspection report.	

#	Citation									Country		Method
10	Huey, L. and Quirouette, M. (2010) Folks Should Have Access ... How You Do it is the Difficult Thing: exploring the importance of leadership to maintaining community policing programmes for the homeless. *Policing & Society*. 20 (2), pp: 172–186	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	13	USA	1	Qualitative interviews.
11	Irazola, S., Williamson, E., Niedzwiecki, E., Debus-Sherill, S. and Stricker, J. (2013) *Evaluation of the Statewide Automated Victim Information and Notification Programme, Final Report*. Available at URL: https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/243839.pdf Accessed 25.01.16	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	14	USA	3	Evaluation using qualitative interviews, quantitative survey and case study.
12	Irazola, S., Williamson, E., Niedzwiecki, E., Debus-Sherill, S. (2013) *Automated Victim Notification: Practices Aimed at Supporting Victims*. Available at URL: https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/243843.pdf Accessed 25.01.16	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	14	USA	3	Evaluation using qualitative interviews, quantitative survey and case study.
13	Jordon. J. (2013) From Victim to Survivor – and from Survivor to Victim: Reconceptualising the Survivor Journey. *Sexual Abuse in Australia and New Zealand*. 5(2), pp: 48–56.	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	13	New Zealand		Small scale qualitative research, interviewing a sample of 14 out of 27 survivors of a serial rapist. An exploration of their narratives.
14	Laxminarayan, M. (2015) Enhancing trust in the legal system through victims' rights mechanisms. *International Review of Victimology*. 21 (3), pp. 273–286.	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	14	Netherlands		Psychological study examining the use of victims' rights instruments on the impact of victim's trust in the legal system.

#	Reference								Total	Country	Methodology	Score
15	Maier, S. L. (2007) Rape Victim Advocates' Knowledge and Insight on Rape Laws. *Women & Criminal Justice*. 18 (4), pp: 37-62.	2	1	0	1	1	1	1	7	USA	Qualitative interviewing	1
16	Magic, J. (2014) 'Social and Psychological Factors Influencing Reporting of Homophobic Hate Crime' *Socialno delo*. 53(6), pp: 321-334.	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	13	Slovenia	Mixed method, utilising an online survey and focus groups, involving a total sample of 30 self-identified gay, lesbian and bisexual individuals.	
17	Moylan, C. A. (2015) *Institutionalizing an ethic of coordinated care for rape victims: Exploring processes of legitimacy and decoupling in sexual assault response teams*. Social Service Review, Vol 89(1), Mar, 2015. pp. 138-165.	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	13	USA	Qualitative interviews	3
18	Murphy, K. and Barkworth, J. (2014) Victim Willingness to Report Crime to the Police: Does Procedural Justice or Outcome Matter Most? *Victims and Offenders*. 9, pp: 178-204.	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	14	Australia	Large quantitative survey. Random sample from electoral role. N = 1204.	
19	New South Wales Ombudsman (2006) *Domestic violence: Improving police practice*. Australia: NSW Ombudsman	N/A review of current practice	N/A review of current practice	N/A review of current practice	N/A review of current practice	N/A review of current practice	N/A review of current practice	N/A review of current practice	N/A review of current practice	Australia	In depth review of current policing practice, surveys, qualitative round table meeting and stakeholder consultation.	N/A review of current practice
20	Nichols, A. (2013) Survivor-Defined Practices to Mitigate Revictimization of Battered Women in the Protective Order Process. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*. 28 (7), pp: 1403-1423	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	13	USA	Qualitative interviews.	3

No.	Reference								Total	Country	Description
21	Robinson, A. L. (2006) Reducing Repeat Victimization among High-Risk Victims of Domestic Violence: The Benefits of a Coordinated Community Response in Cardiff. *Wales Violence Against Women*, 12 (8), pp: 761-788.	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	14	Wales, UK	Process and outcome evaluation.
22	Robinson. A and Hudson. K. (2011) Different yet complementary: Two approaches to supporting victims of sexual violence in the UK. *Criminology and Criminal Justice*, 11 (5), pp: 515 – 533.	2	2	1	1	2	2	2	12	UK	Case studies approach with qualitative interviewing and quantitative case monitoring.
23	Tapley, J. (2005b) Public Confidence Costs – Criminal Justice from a Victim's Perspective.' *British Journal of Community Justice*, 3(2), pp: 25-37.	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	13	UK	A summary of three studies focussing on victims' experiences and perceptions of the criminal justice process and the support they received.
24	Vincent, N.J., McCormack, J. and Johnson, S. (2015) 'A Comprehensive Conceptual Programme Model for Supporting Families Surviving a Homicide Victim.' *Child Adolescence Social Work Journal* 32, pp: 57-64.	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	11	US	An analysis of existing models of programmes to assist families surviving a homicide victim.
25	Wemmers. J.A. (2013) Victims' experiences in the criminal justice system and their recovery from crime. *International Review of Victimology*. 19(3), pp: 221-233.	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	13	Canada	Qualitative: The study follows a quasi-experimental time-series design.
26	Whitty, M.T. and Buchanan, T. (2015) The online dating romance scam: The psychological impact on victims – both financial and non-financial. *Criminology and Criminal Justice*. 1 (19). London; Sage.	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	14	UK	Qualitative study involving 20 victims of online dating fraud. In-depth and some repeat semi-structured interviews.

Key to Maryland Scale of Assessment of Evidence

Key features of study	Maryland Level
Observed correlation between an intervention and outcomes at a single point in time. A study that only measured the impact of the service using a questionnaire at the end of the intervention would fall into this level.	1
Temporal sequence between the intervention and the outcome clearly observed; or the presence of a comparison group that cannot be demonstrated to be comparable. A study that measured the outcomes of people who used a service before it was set up and after it finished would fit into this level.	2
A comparison between two or more comparable units of analysis, one with and one without the intervention. A matched-area design using two locations in the UK would fit into this category if the individuals in the research and the areas themselves were comparable.	3
Comparison between multiple units with and without the intervention, controlling for other factors or using comparison units that evidence only minor differences. A method such as propensity score matching, that used statistical techniques to ensure that the programme and comparison groups were similar would fall into this category.	4
Random assignment and analysis of comparable units to intervention and control groups. A well conducted Randomised Controlled Trial fits into this category.	5

Summary table of assessment of evidence in reviews

	Reference	Are review methods robust?	Are search strategies sufficiently comprehensive?	Are sift criteria reported in sufficient detail?	Has quality appraisal of studies been adequately reported?	Have the results of quantitative studies been adequately synthesised?	Is the synthesis of qualitative studies adequate?	Is the interpretation and reporting of results presented clearly?	Are the study conclusions credible?	Overall score	Country of origin	Review method
1	Greeson, M. R. and Campbell, R., (2013) Sexual assault response teams (SARTs): An empirical review of their effectiveness and challenges to successful implementation. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse.* 14(2), pp. 83-95.	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	10	USA	Rapid Evidence Assessment
2	Kunst, M., Popelier, L. and Varekamp, E. (2015) Victim satisfaction with the criminal justice system and emotional recovery: A systematic and critical review of the literature. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse.* 16(3), pp. 336-358.	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	16	The Netherlands	Systematic Review

APPENDIX 4: Competency Standards for Serving Victims & Survivors of Crime that relate to direct services – National Victim Assistance Standards Consortium (DeHart 2014)

COMPETENCY STANDARD 3.1: The victim assistance provider develops rapport and communicates effectively with victims/survivors.

COMPETENCY STANDARD 3.2: The victim assistance provider helps victims/survivors to identify appropriate resources.

COMPETENCY STANDARD 3.3: The victim assistance provider advocates appropriately for individual victims/survivors within the organization and the community.

COMPETENCY STANDARD 3.4: The victim assistance provider assists individual victims/survivors to address their traumatic responses to victimization.

COMPETENCY STANDARD 3.5: The victim assistance provider uses effective crisis intervention skills when confronted with a crisis situation.

COMPETENCY STANDARD 3.6: The victim assistance provider adequately prepares victims/survivors for interacting with justice and service systems.

COMPETENCY STANDARD 3.7: The victim assistance provider successfully advocates for victims/survivors in criminal justice settings (as appropriate to programme goals).

COMPETENCY STANDARD 3.8: The victim assistance provider engages in ongoing support and follow-up for individual victims/survivors, families, and groups.

COMPETENCY STANDARD 3.9: The victim assistance provider uses specific interventions appropriate to the type of victimization.