

Quotes from SARSVL questionnaire into the need for a women only counselling service in Leeds for women and girls who have experience rape and/or sexual violence at any time in their lives:

“I am unaware of any existing specific provision other than STAR and WCTS, which is only two services for the whole of Leeds’ female population.”

“The main gaps are long-term counselling and support for victims of child abuse.”

“There is a real need to support people who face organised and persistent abuse and to protect them from further assaults.”

“I know there has been no Rape Crisis Service for a number of years which for a city the size of Leeds is quite unbelievable so it’s great that you are now able to set something up.”

“Leeds has been missing a Rape Crisis Centre for years.”

“Male violence against women is still not taken seriously by the criminal justice system. The women we support often find themselves trapped. They do not know where to access support. SARSVL can help them. It will also thus save expenditure on prison places, places in mental health institutions, and child protection.”

“Most of the women we support have never had any support to help them deal with child sexual abuse or sexual violence from partners. We hope SARSVL will expand beyond the Helpline in order to offer this.”

“Leeds needs a complete fully functioning Rape Crisis Centre. The Helpline is a good start but it needs also to offer counselling.”

Q. What, in your opinion, are the key services that SARSVL should offer?

“The main gaps are long-term counselling and support for victims of child abuse.”

“Free, confidential support for women and girls who have been raped or sexually assaulted, either over the phone or face to face if you have the capacity to do this. Contacts with other organisations who can help them and advice about how to contact the police etc.”

“Often women experience multiple abuse and over years. They very much need support. Those who have reported to police, even gone to court, even if successful still need ongoing support. SARSVL can help women rebuild their lives after the destruction of rape and sexual abuse. Those experiencing sexual abuse as part of domestic violence seldom tell anyone about it. They need this vital lifeline.”

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