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Additional information:

This was approved by the Critical Services Oversight Group and signed by Chief Executive Angela Leitch, joint chair.

This has therefore been adopted by East Lothian Council and officers will take forward the recommended actions in the Briefing Paper.

Authorised By	Fiona Duncan
Designation	Chief Social Work Officer
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East Lothian & Midlothian Public Protection Office
F28 Brunton Hall
Ladywell Way
Musselburgh
EH21 6AF
Tel: 0131 653 5150
E-mail: emppo@eastlothian.gov.uk
Website: www.emppc.org.uk

01/08/2018

Position statement on Commercial Sexual Exploitation

Dear Colleague,

We are writing to our partners on behalf of the East Lothian and Midlothian Critical Services Oversight Group (CSOG) to ask that you join multi-agency Chief Officers and Heads of Service in adopting the attached *Commercial Sexual Exploitation in East Lothian and Midlothian Briefing Paper* as your Position Statement and consider action to take this forward.

Sexual exploitation can be defined as sexual activity that breaches a person's human rights to dignity, equality, respect and physical and mental wellbeing. It becomes commercial sexual exploitation (CSE) when another person, or group of people, achieves financial gain or advancement through the activity. It involves offering drugs, food, shelter, protection, other basics of life and / or money in exchange for sex or sexual acts.

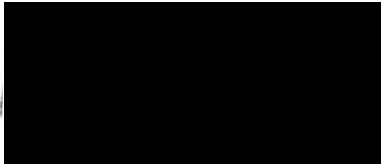
Both the East Lothian and Midlothian CSOG and the East Lothian and Midlothian Public Protection Committee (EMPPC) support the National Violence Against Women Network's (NVAWN) view that CSE is a gendered issue, stemming from gender inequality and is created and maintained by the demand from men to buy sexual access to women. We advocate measures that effect a shift in culture and challenge demand for sexual services from women, which includes decriminalising individuals exploited through the sex industry and providing long term support and exiting services for those exploited.

In line with Equally Safe, Scotland's Strategy for preventing and eradicating Violence Against Women and Girls (2016) CSOG and EMPPC supports a focus on prevention through the delivery of relationship education within the Health and Wellbeing Curriculum and also support the establishment of a legislative framework in Scotland that is founded on addressing the causes of commercial sexual exploitation (i.e. gender inequality and the demand from men to buy sexual access to women).

We would appreciate it if your organisation could take time to review the enclosed briefing paper and consider its recommendations and further action.

If you have any questions, please contact either: Veronica Campanile, Violence Against Women and Girls Co-ordinator, EMPPO – 01620 827 475 / vcampanile@eastlothian.gcsx.gov.uk, or Helen Smart, Senior Health Promotion Specialist, NHS Lothian -0131 537 9542 / Helen.Smart@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk .

Kind Regards,



Angela Leitch
Chief Executive, East Lothian Council



Dr. Grace Vickers
Chief Executive, Midlothian Council

Joint Chairs of East Lothian & Midlothian Critical Services Oversight Group



East Lothian and Midlothian Public Protection Committee

Commercial Sexual Exploitation in East Lothian and Midlothian Briefing Paper

'A strong and flourishing Scotland where all individuals are equally safe and respected and where women and girls live free from all forms of violence and abuse – and the attitudes that perpetuate it'

Equally Safe: Scotland's strategy for preventing and eradicating violence
against women and girls
Scottish Government and COSLA – November 2016

Executive Summary

Background

Commercial sexual exploitation is a significant public health issue. It adversely affects physical, sexual and mental health and, in relation to access to health and social care, women involved in sex work experience considerable inequalities in comparison to women in the general population.

According to the End Prostitution Now Campaign, the majority of women involved in prostitution are affected by poverty, welfare cuts, substance misuse, homelessness and involvement in the criminal justice system. These factors are not seen as causes of prostitution but secondary symptoms that highlight women's inequality and impact on the choices available to them. A small number of women say that sex work is their occupation of choice, however, the vast majority are involved through lack of economic alternatives and choice ^{1,2}.

Exposure to prostitution and trafficking subjects women to long periods of emotional, physical, mental and sexual trauma ². Health impacts include: reproductive problems; human immunodeficiency virus (HIV); sexually transmitted infections (STI) and uterine infections; menstrual pain; chronic hepatitis; cervical cancer; gastro-intestinal disorders; symptoms of traumatic brain injury; repeat terminations of pregnancy and other unspecified, untreated health problems. In order to cope with the dichotomy of 'consenting' to an activity which is essentially unwanted, women learn to dissociate themselves from the reality of their situation, which can lead to a range of mental health problems and lasting psychological harm. Women who are unable to dissociate may turn to drugs or alcohol to mask the realities of their situation ³.

The experience of sexual and physical violence is common among women in the sex industry and those who are trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation. There are many parallels between domestic abuse and human trafficking particularly in relation to the power and control exerted by perpetrators over their victims.

Following a Lothian wide seminar in 2016 to consider the issue of commercial sexual exploitation, the East Lothian and Midlothian Public Protection Committee Violence Against Women and Girls Delivery sub-group, established a short-life working group to take forward recommendations from the event to ensure the delivery of Equally Safe. Specifically, the remit of the working group was to:

- Ensure that commercial sexual exploitation is explicitly addressed in the local Violence Against Women and Girls improvement plan and strategy.
- Ensure adults are included along with the current focus on child sexual exploitation.
- Explore further the extent of commercial sexual exploitation in local areas (e.g. scope issues and needs in East Lothian and Midlothian).

The short-life working group (SLWG) was convened in May 2017 and a scoping exercise was undertaken from June to October 2017. Information was sought around activity relating to: prostitution; adult entertainment and human trafficking, as well as the extent of specialist service provision and sources of information and support in the area. A wide range of agencies were contacted who it was considered might be aware of levels of activity across the region either through direct contact with people working in the sex industry or indirectly (e.g. through the licensing of premises to accommodate adult entertainment services). Findings from the scoping exercise are detailed in the following report.

1) What is Commercial Sexual Exploitation?

- 1.1 Sexual exploitation can be defined as sexual activity that ‘breaches a person’s human rights to dignity, equality, respect and physical and mental wellbeing. It becomes commercial sexual exploitation when another person, or group of people, achieves financial gain or advancement through the activity’ p8 ⁴.
- 1.2 Commercial sexual exploitation involves offering drugs, food, shelter, protection, other basics of life, and / or money in exchange for sex or sexual acts. The National Violence Against Women Network in their position statement on commercial sexual exploitation characterise it as a gendered issue, stemming from gender inequality and perpetuated and maintained by the demand from men to buy sex from women².
- 1.3 Prostitution, pornography and other forms of involvement in the ‘sex industry’ are included in the Scottish Government’s definition of violence against women ⁵. These activities are considered to reinforce negative attitudes toward women and are linked to gender inequality and sexual violence ⁶.
- 1.4 The Encompass Network places commercial sexual exploitation within a wider spectrum of violence against women and considers it to be inextricably linked to many other forms of violence such as domestic abuse, rape, childhood sexual abuse, stalking and sexual harassment. They view it as a particularly contentious form of gender-based violence because of its place in mainstream culture. As such the harms to those involved are less visible ⁶.

2) Legislation and Policy

- 2.1 Equally Safe, Scotland’s Strategy for preventing and eradicating Violence Against Women and Girls (2016) covers all forms of violence including commercial sexual exploitation. It includes an explicit focus on prevention as well as the provision of support services ⁵.
- 2.2 The Abusive Behaviour and Sexual Harm Act was passed in March 2016 which criminalised so called ‘revenge porn’ ⁷.
- 2.3 Research commissioned by the Scottish Government into the reliability of available evidence on the impact of the criminalisation of the purchase of sex notes that evidence is limited and disagreements remain around some of the key issues ⁸. None-the-less violence against women and gender equality organisations across Scotland are calling for legislation which, in addition would: decriminalise individuals exploited through prostitution and provide long term support and exiting services for those exploited. This is known as a challenging demand approach which identifies prostitution, not as a form of employment, but as a form of violence against women

and a consequence of gender inequality¹. The National Violence Against Women Network is a strong proponent of this approach².

- 2.4 The Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Scotland) Act 2015 introduced, for the first time, a single offence for all kinds of trafficking introducing new offences of human trafficking, slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour⁹. Scotland has obligations under the EU directive on preventing and combating trafficking in human beings and in meeting the requirements of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. Other international agreements relating to this issue include: the UN protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, particularly women and children¹⁰ and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)¹¹.
- 2.5 The Scottish Government's Trafficking and Exploitation Strategy (2017) requires all partners to deliver on three key actions: Identify victims and support them to safety and recovery; identify perpetrators and disrupt their activity; and address the conditions, both local and global, that foster trafficking and exploitation¹².
- 2.6 The Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act (2007) may be considered in relation to certain human trafficking or exploitation incidents¹³.
- 2.7 Curriculum for Excellence is the national curriculum for Scottish schools for learners aged 13-18. Learning around relationships, sexual health and parenthood is delivered within the health and wellbeing framework¹⁴.

3) The wider policy context

The impact of welfare reform

- 3.1 In Scotland, the majority of women involved in prostitution are affected by poverty and welfare cuts and it is anticipated that in the light of recent changes to the welfare system this situation can only get worse. The impact of the introduction of Universal Credit in East Lothian and Midlothian is already in evidence, particularly in East Lothian where the new system has been in place for a year. Research conducted by the Citizens Advice Bureau East Lothian found that 52% of claimants lost income compared to what they would have had under the old system, with a median loss of £44.72 per week. 31% of claimants gained with a median gain of £0.34 pence. The research shows that if all 134 respondents to the study claimed Universal Credit rather than legacy benefits at the end of January 2017 there would be a net reduction of £2,923.55 per week paid out to claimants. The time lag between making a claim and receipt of first benefit can be six to seven weeks leading to a range of difficulties such as an accumulation of rent arrears leading to a real possibility of eviction¹⁵.

- 3.2 In Midlothian around 1,000 people are expected by the Department of Work and Pensions to enter the full service in its first year of operation. Extrapolating from the evidence from East Lothian, in a recent report to Midlothian Council it was estimated that £23,254 per week would be lost to the local economy. A significant rise in housing debt, council tax debt and foodbank usage has already been experienced in Midlothian. The increase in rent arrears is anticipated to be £1.5 million per annum. It is worth noting that in Scotland, measures have been taken to enable claimants to receive fortnightly rather than monthly payments ¹⁶.
- 3.3 The current freeze on benefits is predicted to increase poverty more than any other government policy. In a recent blog, the Chief Executive of the Joseph Rowntree Foundation claimed that there will be half a million more people in poverty in 2021 than there would be if benefits kept pace with inflation ¹⁷. There is evidence from Dundee that the impact of benefits sanctions had forced some women, who had managed to exit prostitution, to return to the streets ¹⁸.

4) Evidence base

Perpetrator perspectives

- 4.1 It is very difficult to establish the extent of demand for sexual services. Because this kind of activity is not illegal, no statistics are kept. Estimates from surveys vary widely, with one American study estimating that 80% of men in the US purchased sex. In the UK estimates range between 5% and 15%. The majority of men in Scotland choose not to buy sex. Findings from the Natsal-3 study, conducted between 2010 and 2012 estimated that 4% of men in Scotland have paid for sex ¹⁹. It should be noted however that these figures are based on self-reports from a small sample of men which may have resulted in under-reporting.
- 4.2 Research has shown a relationship between men who purchase sex and attitudes toward women, violence against women and use of pornography. One study found that men who most frequently bought sex were more likely to acknowledge having committed sexually aggressive acts against non-prostituting women. The same study noted a strong relationship between the frequent purchase of sex and frequent use of pornography. Sex buyers were more likely than non-sex buyers to consider that by paying for sex, they have the right to expect women to do what they want ²⁰.

Prostitution

- 4.3 The Scottish Government defines prostitution as the activity of buying and selling sex, including women and men, and from “on-street” or indoor environments ²¹.

- 4.4 It is difficult to assess the numbers of people in Scotland involved in prostitution due to the stigmatised nature of the activity and in recent years the growth in online / off-street work. It has been estimated that street based workers account for only a quarter of all individuals involved in prostitution in Britain ²². Reviews of websites advertising sex for sale provide some scope to estimate numbers. A survey conducted in 2016 found 1,800 adverts for sexual services across 4 main websites in Scotland in a single day. An investigation conducted in 2014 identified 3,000 adverts across 10 websites ²¹.
- 4.5 Police data shows that prostitution in public places has reduced over the last 10-15 years, related to the growth in the use of the internet and mobile phones to arrange meetings. Some practitioners also cite the improvement in access to drug treatments leading to reduction in financial pressures to feed a habit ²¹.
- 4.6 Approaches to addressing prostitution have, to date, focussed on harm reduction although there has more recently been a shift, internationally, toward prevention. Proponents of a challenging demand approach cite evidence from countries such as Sweden, Norway, Iceland and Finland where the selling of sex has been decriminalised and the purchase criminalised. Reductions in demand, changes in attitudes and more hostile environments for trafficking have been observed. Although a recent systematic review of research, commissioned by the Scottish Government, concluded that evidence for criminalisation was limited and contested there was considerable consensus around the need to decriminalise those involved in prostitution ⁸. The challenging demand approach has been formally supported by the European Union and the Council for Europe ¹.

Human Trafficking

- 4.7 Human trafficking and exploitation is not just an international problem, neither does it exclusively involve people from outside the UK: UK citizens are also trafficked and exploited in both rural and urban environments ¹².
- 4.8 150 potential victims of trafficking in Scotland were identified through the National Referral Mechanism in 2016. This was an increase of 3.4% on 2015 figures ¹⁰. 67% were women or children. Female adults were mainly trafficked for the purposes of sexual exploitation. 48% of all females trafficked, both adults and children, were trafficked for the same purpose ²³.
- 4.9 From a National perspective between April – June 2017 the UK National Referral Mechanism (NRM) received 47 referrals of Potential Victims where the referral was subsequently sent to Police Scotland for crime recording considerations. The 47 referrals were comprised of 18 females and 29 males ²⁴.

Adult Entertainment

4.10 Adult entertainment premises are often marketed as upmarket gentleman's clubs and offering glamorous, highly paid jobs for women. In reality, very few women make money by this means and can be out of pocket by the end of a night. Many women are self-employed and have to pay house fees to club owners who may impose fines for breaches of house rules. Evidence suggests that women who work in clubs experience high levels of verbal and physical abuse and are regularly propositioned for sex. While venues such as lap dancing bars do not advertise sex for sale, there is evidence to suggest that this happens ²⁵.

Online services

4.11 There has been a growth in online advertising of sexual services in recent years. More recently, evidence has emerged of sex-for-rent offers being advertised online and concerns have been raised for the welfare of vulnerable populations such as homeless people and students who might be unable to afford high rents. There is evidence to suggest that LGBT young people have been exploited in this way ²⁶. Developments in technology have also resulted in an increase in webcam work. Evidence from research suggests that the Internet has contributed to the normalisation of prostitution ²⁷.

4.12 There is an increasing concern about the risk of rape and sexual assault among young women due to perpetrators using online sites such as Sugar Daddy. These sites provide a platform for young women, many of them students, to advertise their services as companions to older, wealthy, predominantly male "sugar daddies" in return for financial support. In the UK, students make up 40% of the membership of one popular sugar dating site. A recently aired BBC Radio 4 programme which included interviews with student "sugar babies" revealed that finance was the main motivation for engaging with this service. Recent figures also suggest that one in twenty students engage in sex work as a means of financing their studies ²⁸.

Child Sexual Exploitation

4.13 While it is recognised that some people may enter the sex industry as a consequence of child sexual exploitation, as the issue is covered by Child Protection it will not be addressed here.

5) The extent of activity in East Lothian and Midlothian

5.1 Although there are, to date, no recorded crimes of commercial sexual exploitation in East Lothian and Midlothian it should be noted that women who are uncertain about their immigration status, as well as those working in the sex industry may face significant barriers in reporting a crime ²⁴.

- 5.2 Licensing of adult entertainment venues is dealt with by the Alcohol Licensing Boards under the Alcohol Licensing (Scotland) 2005 Act. Licensing for sexual entertainment venues or sex shops fall within the bounds of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act and also dealt with by Alcohol Licensing Boards. There are no premises in East Lothian that provide adult or sexual entertainment, nor are there any sex shops²⁹. At the time of writing no information had been supplied for Midlothian.
- 5.3 A search of 3 online adult services sites on two separate dates in July found five postings from women in Midlothian and one posting from a woman in East Lothian on one day and two from East Lothian and four from Midlothian on a second date.
- 5.4 Requests for referral information from specialist sexual health services yielded very little information. Staff from the Women's Clinic drop-in service in Edinburgh were unaware of any women attending from East Lothian or Midlothian. Similarly, a member of staff from the sexual health clinic in Dalkeith, who also delivers a service to young people attending Midlothian Young People's Advice Service, was unaware of any women who were at risk of sexual exploitation or were involved in the sex industry. This is something staff are aware of and look out for³⁰.
- 5.5 A similar request to social work staff in Midlothian also produced very little evidence of activity. A worker with Spring indicated that they had once worked with a woman who did disclose that she worked in a sauna in Edinburgh but was no longer engaged with the sex industry.
- 5.6 During a workshop in East Lothian one third sector organisation, operating in one of the Eastern electoral wards, which provides support to people with a range of needs reported that four women with whom they were currently working had been involved in the sex industry.

6) Service responses

Police

- 6.1 Police response to commercial sexual exploitation is guided by several detailed Standard Operational Procedure documents (SOPS) and guidance is available from Divisional Human Trafficking Champions and the National Human Trafficking Unit.
- 6.2 Support, Health and Wellbeing visits were introduced by Police Scotland with key partners as an alternative to immediate enforcement. The visits deliver a multi-agency, victim-centred approach to 'off street' prostitution. Visits are carried out by Police Scotland personnel, accompanied by the most appropriate partner, to addresses where those involved in prostitution are believed to be operating. The aims of the visit are to ensure the safety and wellbeing of those involved in prostitution, to

provide advice and guidance to those wishing to exit prostitution and to provide details of support services ³¹.

NHS

6.3 NHS Lothian runs a Women's Clinic for women involved in the commercial sex industry. The Spittal Street Women's Clinic is a joint initiative between NHS Lothian's Harm Reduction Team, Chalmers Centre and SACRO's Another Way service. In addition to providing family planning and sexual health screening the aim is:

- To promote positive sexual health and wellbeing.
- To provide a non-judgemental, professional and friendly service.
- To promote harm reduction in situations associated with substance misuse and sex work.
- To empower women to make positive choices and have control over their lives.
- To promote human rights and women's rights.

6.4 There are no equivalent services outside Edinburgh although there is a weekly sexual health drop-in service in Dalkeith and sexual health provision for young people at Midlothian Young People's Advice Service. It is worth noting however that the aims of the Sexual Health and Blood Borne Virus Programme Board in relation to sex work are to:

- Develop early interventions to prevent entry into sex work.
- Establish and extend sustainable clinical services for sex workers.
- Establish and extend outreach services to attract people into services.

Edinburgh Rape Crisis

6.5 East Lothian and Midlothian Sexual Abuse Services is operated on an outreach basis by Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre. They provide specialist counselling, trauma support, and advocacy for women, non-binary people and members of the trans community who have experienced any form of sexual violence at any time in their lives, including commercial sexual exploitation. Support includes:

- Crisis support for survivors of recent rape/sexual assault.
- Longer-term individual counselling and trauma support.
- Advocacy to support survivors to report to the police and to access health and other community services.

SACRO

6.6 SACRO's Another Way Service works with women involved with or at risk of involvement in sex work. The organisation offers support with addictions, domestic abuse, healthcare, housing, parenting, cognitive behavioural therapy and exiting sex

work if the woman wishes to do so. In addition to 1:1 support, the organisation also provides outreach to brothels in conjunction with the Chalmers Sexual Health Team and to strip clubs and lap dancing bars.

7) Service user perspectives

- 7.1 Information was sought from service users of Women's Aid East Lothian and Midlothian (WAEML) who were involved in the exchange of sex for money or drugs. Within a one month period, six women, one from Midlothian and five from East Lothian were asked about their experiences and about access to specialist services. Two of the women worked in saunas in Edinburgh. Those women that did not work in saunas did not consider what they did as an occupation and did not recognise they would require any support, it was not clear that they were aware of the risks involved. They saw sex as an essential means to gain access to money for drugs, food or rent.
- 7.2 Women who were in the saunas were well informed about services and noted the pro-active outreach of health and voluntary services available. They were based in Edinburgh and therefore used the services available to them there. These women spoke very positively about the services available and the staff who do the outreach work; they had used services for emotional support, sexual health, provision of condoms and needle exchange.
- 7.3 Two of the women, who were in abusive relationships and had been coerced by their partners to provide sexual services in return for drugs, worked mainly from home or at the homes of other drug users. Sometimes meetings were set up in the sand dunes on one of the beaches. These women did not recognise that they were being prostituted by their partners.
- 7.4 Little information was offered about what services would be useful locally although one woman noted that she felt professionals should have a better awareness and understanding of their situation.
- 7.5 Anecdotal intelligence had also been acquired about online platforms such as: dating sites; swingers sites; webcams; and "dogging" locations. It is becoming increasingly evident that the use of technology is serving as a key tool for advertising sexual services. Women at times have voluntarily engaged in these sites although generally describe that they felt pressured to do so. On leaving an abusive relationship they often note regret and embarrassment about having done so. Some women describe that their partners have placed photographs / videos of them on sites without their permission. WAEML have stated that they will continue to gather intelligence about this and encourage women to make use of new "revenge porn" legislation.

7.6 Additional information was gleaned from staff from Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre (ERCC). In relation to referrals from East Lothian and Midlothian, they observed the following trends:

- Where survivors have referred / been referred to the service, they have predominantly been seeking support in relation to historic rather than current experience of commercial sexual exploitation. Survivors have accessed the service with a view to receiving support / counselling to process the trauma of historic commercial sexual exploitation.
- Survivors of commercial sexual exploitation have frequently experienced other forms of gender-based violence, including rape, sexual assault, childhood sexual abuse and domestic abuse.
- Survivors have described experiences of sexual exploitation for commercial and non-commercial purposes. The abuses have been organised, usually involving a number of perpetrators. Survivors have described being groomed into commercial sexual exploitation.
- The service also reports, anecdotally, an increase in younger survivors (18-25 age group) seeking support in relation to rapes / sexual assaults being filmed and then distributed for commercial and non-commercial purposes.

Aurora project

7.7 Edinburgh Rape Crisis Service previously operated the Aurora project: a small-scale (8 hours per week) dedicated project in Edinburgh specifically for women and members of the trans community affected by commercial sexual exploitation. Setup in response to a low level of referrals from survivors of commercial sexual exploitation to its generic support services, this project aimed to improve the reach of rape crisis service provision to women and trans people in Edinburgh with experience of commercial sexual exploitation. Operating in partnership with Streetwork Women's Service, the Salvation Army, Police, NHS, and SACRO's Another Way project in Edinburgh, the project provided specialist trauma support and counselling for survivors of commercial sexual exploitation and street-based outreach with to women involved in street-based prostitution and women working in adult entertainment venues.

7.8 Aurora operated between 2013-2015, successfully reaching women who were currently experiencing commercial sexual exploitation and those who had historic experiences. Overall 26 women were supported by the project. Service users consistently reported that they had felt able to refer into the service or agree to be referred as Aurora was a dedicated service for survivors of commercial sexual exploitation. This increased their confidence that workers would have an understanding of commercial sexual exploitation and its impacts, and that they would not be judged. Service users revealed that shame, fear of being stigmatised and not feeling entitled to access support for the gender-based violence they had experienced.

High levels of self-blame were the key barriers they had experienced to accessing generic violence against women services for support. Aurora unfortunately lost its funding in 2015 and was discontinued.

Anonymised case study

7.9 In counselling at ERCC, 'S' was able to talk for the first time in her life about her experience of childhood sexual abuse, and in doing so she was able to make connections and understand why she had developed drug problems and worked in 'sex work'. All her life she had felt ashamed and that she was out of control, and blamed herself for not having her life 'in order'. When she understood the trauma in her life and how it had affected the path her life took, she felt that 'a burden was lifted and felt lighter'.

Evaluation feedback from a survivor who used the Aurora service

7.10 *'For me it has been a lifesaver. There isn't anyone else that specialises in the kinds of trauma that I have been through, it's often swept under the carpet and ignored by society. For the people it happens to, where does that leave them? Without this service, there would be higher rates of suicide and drug use, etc. There is no other service like this and they don't judge me.'*

It is the ONLY place that didn't make me feel like a freak. It really came across that they really understand and usually people don't. Even the other professionals, they don't understand it at ALL. I have attended other agencies and some have knowledge of domestic abuse, some prostitution, others sexual abuse and violence, but ERCC has knowledge and understanding of them all. I am really pleased to pass on these words and feelings for such a valuable service. I have had support over the phone and face to face and they are always supportive and listen'³².

8) Gaps in support, signposting and information

8.1 GP's would generally look for signposting information on RefHelp. There are no specific links to sources of advice and help on this site for those working in the sex industry.

8.2 There is no specialist provision at Roodlands for people working in the sex industry in East Lothian, nor are there currently any plans to include such provision at the new Roodlands development. However there will be capacity to accommodate new services when the hospital opens early in 2020 and the Clinical Services Manager would be open to discussion should a need be identified.

- 8.3 Similarly, there is currently no specialist provision at Midlothian Community Hospital. Those working in the sex industry may attend the weekly specialist outreach clinic in Dalkeith or, depending on their age, Midlothian Young People's Advice Service.
- 8.4 There is a lack of trauma informed services across East Lothian and Midlothian that can provide support for women to exit from and identify alternative opportunities beyond the sex industry.

9) Conclusions

There is sufficient evidence from women coming forward with historical reports of abuse to justify a programme of awareness raising and information provision. In addition, there is a general failure to equate activities such as prostitution, lap dancing and escort services with gender inequality and gender based violence which needs to be challenged. To this end, attention needs to be directed toward prevention through relationship education in a variety of settings in order to effect a shift in culture and challenge demand.

10) Recommendations

- 1) Seek the commitment of Elected Members and Integration Joint Board members to champion the Violence Against Women and Girls agenda which includes commercial sexual exploitation, and to provide sustainable trauma informed services available to those who are harmed by this.
- 2) Recognise the harm caused to vulnerable women, men and young people involved in commercial sexual exploitation by scoping comprehensive trauma-informed services which support exit and provide realistic and viable alternatives to involvement in the sex industry.
- 3) Explore the opportunity for providing enhanced sexual health services for vulnerable women, men and young people in both localities, through the Integration Joint Boards.
- 4) Develop our evidence base by ensuring commercial sexual exploitation is included within the Midlothian Community Safety / Violence Against Women and Girls strategic assessment, by developing a similar strategic assessment for East Lothian and by working alongside other local organisations to continue to gather evidence, particularly for young people.
- 5) Provide awareness-raising on commercial sexual exploitation across communities and organisations, which enables people to understand the issues and to challenge attitudes and demand.

- 6) Support the delivery of relationship education within the Health and Wellbeing Curriculum based on understanding the interaction between gender inequality and gender-based violence and reinforcing gender equality and positive aspirations for girls and boys.
- 7) Ensure all staff receive Violence Against Women and Girls awareness which includes commercial sexual exploitation and that relevant staff from universal and targeted services receive further training as appropriate.

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Appendix i: Sources of support, signposting and information

NHS Lothian Women's Clinic provides services for those working within the sex industry in Scotland. Works in partnership with Harm Reduction Team, Streetwork, the Salvation Army, SACRO (Another Way). Open to women with alcohol and substance use problems who are not sex workers. Harm reduction principles underpin the approach adopted by the service. The majority of women attending are sex workers.

NHS Scotland National Gender Based Violence and Health Programme have produced guidance for health workers on commercial sexual exploitation¹.

The National Human Trafficking Unit have recently taken possession of posters for "Modern Slavery" which gives a national helpline used by English Police Forces. Police Scotland is currently in discussion with the Scottish Government about whether a specific Scottish poster / Helpline is required. At the present moment no posters have been circulated to Police stations.

National Ugly Mugs (NUM) is a national organisation which provides greater access to justice and protection for sex workers. NUM shares reports of incidents from sex workers and produces anonymised warnings which are sent directly to sex workers and front-line support projects throughout the UK. Support is also provided to sex workers to report incidents to the police. With consent, anonymised intelligence is also shared with the police.

Women's Aid East Lothian and Midlothian provides support, information and temporary accommodation to women (including transwomen), children and young people who have experienced domestic abuse. The service is coordinated from its central office in Dalkeith but operations from two centres (Dalkeith and Musselburgh) and offers outreach across the whole of East Lothian and Midlothian.

Victim Support Scotland provides support and information services to victims and witnesses of crime in Scotland. Victims of crime are given free and confidential emotional and practical assistance and information about the criminal justice system.

Salvation Army Edinburgh: outreach work on Sundays and Mondays with van and car. Volunteering opportunities for exited women to work in SA care home.

Streetwork: focused on street-based outreach in Edinburgh, targeting women who are affected by or excluded as a result of working within the sex industry. Aims to help women out of prostitution and into support, training, employment and housing so they can build a better future.

¹ Commercial Sexual Exploitation: what health workers need to know http://www.gbv.scot.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2009/12/GBV_Commercial-Sexual-Exploitation-A4-81.pdf

Author's name	Helen Smart and the Short Life Working Group ²
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The Integrated Impact Assessment is available at:

www.eastlothian.gov.uk/iacommercialsexualexploitation

² Helen Smart, NHS Lothian; Veronica Campanile, EMPPPO; Stuart Reid, Police Scotland; Julie Watson, Women's Aid East and Midlothian; Caroline Burrell, Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre; Neil Whettam, EMPPPO.