



CSE Aware bulletin special issue: 2022 year in review

Dear readers,

Nine months ago we launched CSE Aware and the first issues of this bulletin. Since then, we have explored four topics related to the needs of women who sell or exchange sex, had over 600 people join our webinars and we are preparing new topics and more exciting things for 2023!

In this issue we want to go back and take you through everything we have shared this year: in-depth articles, interviews, events and reports. We encourage you to continue using our resources (they are for you!) and to share them with people in your team, your organisation, your networks and beyond.

Finally, we would also like to say THANK YOU for being part of CSE Aware and for your commitment to improve responses to women involved in selling or exchanging sex. We hope you continue to join us on this journey!

Until next year,

The CSE Aware Resource Worker

"I'm so interested in CSE, mental health and stigma that I am arranging a local event/workshop for the 16 days of action in our local library where we will ... discuss stigma and its impact on the women. I found the bulletin really helpful, and it inspired me to take this forward, so thank you!"

- feedback from frontline worker

April - May: HOUSING

Housing insights

HOUSING INSIGHTS

Research carried out in Stoke on Trent with **women in street prostitution** found:



59% women had stayed in **squats**



most had **relied heavily** on friends and family for a place to stay.

Housing is a pressing issue in the lives of women who sell or exchange sex, particularly during COVID and the Cost of Living crisis. It can push women into getting involved, remain an issue whilst involved and prevent them from stopping selling or exchanging sex. It can also bring them back into the 'sex industry.' Workers from all services must be aware of the impact of housing. Read on to find out the main housing issues for women involved in selling or exchanging sex.

[READ MORE](#)

A housing worker's perspective

“

We often find that, with survivors of sexual violence and trauma, there's a cyclic pattern of abuse which links with the cyclic pattern of homelessness. What happens is that they're being abused, they'll have to flee their tenancy in order to find safety and they'll end up in homelessness. While they're in mainstream homelessness accommodation, there can be a risk of exploitation and the cycles interlink with each other.”

Zoe Taylor, Services Manager at SAY Women



A worker's perspective

How are women's cycles of abuse and trauma interlinked with the cycle of homelessness? And what is the connection to selling or exchanging sex? Read our interview with SAY Women to find out.

[READ MORE](#)

Housing webinar

On May 2022 we held our first online event for workers exploring the housing needs of women who sell or exchange sex, as well as the experience of service providers who have supported women in this context who are facing housing issues.

[Read the event summary.](#)



A New Deal for Tenants - consultation response

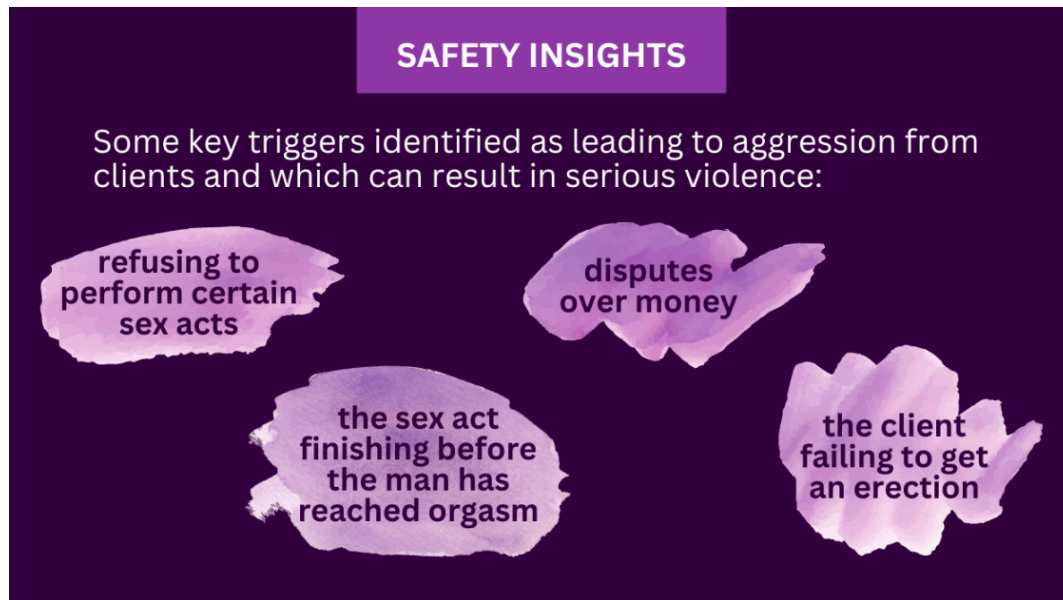
Our response to the A New Deal for Tenants consultation focuses on question no. 10, which asked what measures can be implemented to support people involved in selling or exchanging sex in the rented sector.

[Read the response](#)



June-July: SAFETY

Safety insights



The risks that women face when selling or exchanging sex and the trauma they may carry can impact on their needs, the level of support required and whether they access support. Read on to find out the issues affecting the safety of women who sell or exchange sex.

[READ MORE](#)

A support worker's perspective

“

Women are always trying to manage their safety, whether they're on the streets or indoors. When we go and talk to them it is about making sure that they are recognising the dangers and abuse, and that they continue to safety plan... For us, and for me in particular, it's really important to make the women aware that we know they are out here and we want them to come back safely, we want them to be as safe as possible.”

Zara Wynn, Women's Worker at Another Way



A worker's perspective

Safety is a crucial consideration for women involved in selling or exchanging sex. We spoke to Zara from Another Way, about how her service approaches supporting women involved in different contexts: on the streets, in saunas and online.

[READ MORE](#)

Safety webinar

On July 2022 we held our second online event. On this occasion, we looked at how the issues of risk, harm and safety are integral to the lives of women selling and exchanging sex.

[Read the event summary.](#)



Aug-Sept: MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health insights

MENTAL HEALTH INSIGHTS

Some of the main issues that can affect the mental health of women involved in the 'sex industry':



In this article, we explore some of the ways in which selling and exchanging sex can impact on women's mental health, the barriers that prevent them from engaging with mental health support, and the ways in which workers in any service can support women's mental wellbeing.

[READ MORE](#)

A mental health worker's perspective

“

... above all, mental health is a human right. No more, no less important than your physical health, having food on your table and having a roof over your head. Although, we tend to neglect it because I think we tend to prioritise our physical needs over our wellbeing needs, not necessarily realising how connected the two are. I see that in particular with women who are selling or exchanging sex in whatever shape or form or platform.”

Angela Voulgari, Psychotherapist



A worker's perspective

We interviewed Angela Voulgari, a trained psychotherapist and VAWG expert, who during the pandemic helped to run a pilot project offering women involved in selling or exchanging sex free and flexible counselling sessions. Here she shares the learnings from the project.

[READ MORE](#)

Mental health webinar

On September 2022 we held an online event exploring the impact that selling or exchanging sex can have on women's mental health as well as the support needs of women.

[Read the event summary](#)



Mental health and wellbeing strategy - consultation response

This response highlights what is needed to support, promote and maintain the mental wellbeing of women involved in the 'sex industry.'

[Read the response](#)



Oct-Nov: TRAUMA-INFORMED SUPPORT

Trauma-informed support insights

TRAUMA-INFORMED SUPPORT INSIGHTS

A recent report by the Scottish Government highlighted that **on average** women involved in selling or exchanging sex sought support for:

7 different needs

And it identified reasons why women decide not to engage with services, such as:

- stigma
- fear of being judged
- lack of understanding of issues related to their involvement in the sex trade

In this article, we consider the five principles of trauma-informed practice and explore how responses from services can positively and negatively impact women selling or exchanging sex who approach them.

[READ MORE](#)

A trauma-informed worker's perspective

“

It is really important that women are given choice to say “no, sorry, I'm really uncomfortable. I'd rather have female staff. I don't want to have a male doctor or midwife if possible.” All these little things that can be a bit of a nuisance for staff really matter to the women, and that's what needs to come first – being aware and giving women some control ... If people trust you, then you're more than halfway there, but you've got to think outside the box.”

Alison Scott, Consultant Gynaecologist at WISHES Clinic



A worker's perspective

For this edition, we interviewed Alison Scott, a consultant gynaecologist at the [WISHES clinic](#) and Head of Student Wellbeing Services at the University of Edinburgh's medical school. She shared how she uses trauma-informed practice to make the services more accessible for women who sell or exchange sex.

[READ MORE](#)

Trauma-informed support webinar

Our final webinar of the year was held in November and we invited Angela Voulgari, trained psychotherapist and Lead Officer of the Edinburgh Equally Safe Committee, as well as the Beyond the Streets team to discuss how to provide trauma-informed support for women selling or exchanging sex.

[Read the event summary.](#)

Trauma-informed support



What's coming up?



This 2023 our CSE Aware will continue with more resources, events and training exploring more of the themes that women who sell or exchange sex have identified as central to their lives, as well as other emerging themes:

- **24 January** - Commercial Sexual Exploitation: An introductory session. [Register for free here.](#)
- **1 February** - On the Edge: vulnerability, women and the Cost of Living crisis (co-delivered with the Women's Support Project team). To register, send an email to enquiries@womenssupportproject.org.uk
- **1 March** - Substance use and women who sell or exchange sex
- **26 April** - Sexual health and women who sell or exchange sex.

We will send out advance notice once registrations open or keep an eye on our [Upcoming Events page](#). You can also check our list of [bespoke training](#) if you are interested in organising a session for your team or service.

"Thank you so much for the session! It has made me think a lot about this area and the safety of women, the reasons they need to do this work, how can I feed this back to my workplace, is there any changes we can introduce."

- feedback from webinar attendee

Over to you!

What other themes or needs related to women who sell or exchange sex would

you like us to explore this year?

Submit

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an initiative of the Women's Support Project

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