

Working therapeutically with trafficked adults and young people

Dr Sharon Doherty, Consultant Clinical Psychologist, COMPASS, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde

Dr Rachel Morley, Consultant Clinical Psychologist and team leader COMPASS, NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde

Level: Intermediate

The growing awareness of the trade in trafficking human beings, and of the psychological effects on victims, brings new dilemmas, challenges and possibilities for clinicians working in trauma.

In 2011, the report by the Equality and Human Rights Commission “Inquiry into Human Trafficking in Scotland” highlighted the need for a comprehensive, co-ordinated and strategic response to the trade in human beings. The report made several recommendations including the need to raise public and professional awareness of trafficking indicators so that frontline professionals are able to identify victims of trafficking and act accordingly. Another recommendation was that a trafficking care standard be introduced and inform the development of comprehensive end- to-end recovery services (including psychological care) for victims of trafficking.

This workshop will describe the trauma associated with trafficking for adults and young people, and consider the therapeutic challenges, dilemmas and possibilities in working with those who have been trafficked. The workshop will also set the legal and human rights context for our responses. The workshop will provide an opportunity to consider what culturally-sensitive practice might mean in practice, as well as the dilemmas associated with working therapeutically with clients to support their engagement in legal and child protection procedures.

Drawing on their experiences of working therapeutically with trafficked adults and young people, the facilitators hope to encourage discussion around how to provide accessible, meaningful and beneficial psychological therapy for adults and young people who have been trafficked, and, in this developing area of work, to explore what specialist and targeted support for adults and young people who have been trafficked should look like.

Expected workshop outcomes include:

- Increased awareness of the trade in trafficking human beings, and of human trafficking indicators.
- The opportunity to explore the challenges, dilemmas and therapeutic possibilities in working with adults and young people who have been trafficked.
- The opportunity to consider how to position oneself therapeutically when working within a human rights context.
- The opportunity to consider the implications of on-going legal processes for therapeutic work.
- Increased understanding of culturally sensitive therapeutic practice in this area of work.
- The opportunity to consider ways of working with barriers to disclosure when working with trafficked adults and young people.

The workshop format will be mixed, and include a combination of presentations, discussion and group work.