ESSS Outline
Disability hate crime reporting

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Introduction

This Outline addresses the following questions:

1. *What interventions have been effective in increasing reporting of hate crimes motivated by perceptions of learning disabilities and mental health problems?*

2. *What interventions have been effective in supporting people through the process of reporting disability hate crimes?*

3. *What are the potential areas of unmet need?*

About the evidence presented below

We identified a significant body of evidence around the causes and impact of hate crime, and interventions around prevention and dealing with after-effects. These were not the focus of the enquiry, so although these were identified in the evidence search have not been summarised here.

There is a shortage of evidence around the efficacy of interventions designed with the explicit aim of increasing disability hate crime reporting. We identified one systematic review focusing on the effectiveness of interventions relating to the prevention of and responses to violence against people with physical or learning disabilities. A systematic review by Mikton et al. (2014)¹ into interventions to prevent and respond to violence against people with disabilities concluded that none of the studies evaluated could be considered effective because of the potential for bias. However, this conclusion does not necessarily mean the studies identified do not report effective interventions, only that the studies did not reach the quality criteria

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for the systematic review. These criteria include aspects such as sample size, which is often necessarily small in research around disability-related issues.

There is a general lack of research around the efficacy of interventions in disability hate crime reporting and it is therefore not possible to identify which approaches are likely to be the most successful\(^2\). This is an area of hate crime policy that Chakraborti (2015)\(^3\) argues needs to be strengthened through collaborative working, knowledge creation, partnership working and information-sharing. He identifies a symbiotic relationship:

> Policy-formation needs academic substance in order to be fit for purpose; and scholarship needs to inform policy in order to have any lasting ‘real-world’ value to responses to hate crime.

Projects seeking to tackle disability hate crime may therefore wish to explore partnerships with academic researchers and theoretical perspectives.

We identified a raft of interventions that have received positive feedback from the communities and organisations. We also identified several potential areas of unmet need.

### Accessing resources

We have provided links to the materials referenced in the summary. Some of these materials are published in academic journals and are only available with a subscription through the [The Knowledge Network](https://www.knowledgewall.com) with a NHSScotland OpenAthens username. The Knowledge Network offers accounts to everyone who helps provide health and social care in Scotland in conjunction with the NHS and Scottish Local Authorities, including many in the third and independent sectors. You can register here.

\(^2\) Hamad, R (2017) *Hate Crime: Causes, Motivations and Effective Interventions for Criminal Justice Social Work* (pdf)

Background

The introduction of the Offences (Aggravation by Prejudice) (Scotland) Act 2009 means that any criminal offence committed against a person or property that is motivated by hostility towards someone based on their disability can be categorised as a hate crime.\(^4\) The Equality and Human Rights Commission’s Inquiry highlights the importance of access to justice for victims of disability hate crime and argues that a major requirement is for victims to feel “adequately supported by all the agencies involved”, emphasising the need for the route to reporting being “clear and unhindered”.\(^5\)

Adult safeguarding against disability hate crime is a relatively new area in which primary care staff have a lack of awareness, confidence and experience because of barriers including:

- Lack of time
- Perceived difficulty
- Complexity and stress in dealing with disability hate crime
- Access to referral agencies\(^6\)

Research suggests that people with learning disabilities are at increased risk of being targeted and also less likely to receive support from criminal justice.


\(^6\) Shah, R and Giannasi, P (Eds.) *Tackling Disability Discrimination and Disability Hate Crime: a multidisciplinary guide* (Available with NHSScotland OpenAthens username)
agencies. Research suggests that to increase the rate of disability hate crime reporting, significant challenges must be overcome:

- Increasing the reporting of hate crime to the police and non police agencies therefore requires identifying ways to change the attitudes, behaviour and decision-making of victims, their family, friends and acquaintances...

**Reasons for under-reporting**

Research indicates that key challenges to overcome in increasing hate crime reporting are:

- Embarrassment or shame
- Low self-esteem
- Concern about the process being stressful
- No confidence that public authorities will take you seriously
- Low expectation of a sympathetic hearing from public authorities
- Low expectation of having access needs met
- Negative past experiences of dealing with public authorities
- Anxiety about reprisals or other unwelcome consequences
- Self blame
- Uncertain outcomes
- Awareness of what constitutes hate crime

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- Lack of communication skills to report

There are many implications on an individual and social level for underreporting of hate crime. One of these is that the majority of targets do not have access to support because awareness of the support available most often comes from signposting from a public sector agency following the reporting of an incident. Research indicates that less than than 10 per cent of hate crime victims have accessed a support service and that lack of awareness is a significant contributory factor.

**Key recommendations from academic research**

We identified two key recommendations from academic research to tackle under-reporting of disability hate crime:

1. Local learning disability partnership boards need to facilitate the mainstreaming of services for victims of disability hate crime

2. Hate-crime reporting can be increased by improving access, improving the service experience, thorough social marketing, all of which should involve and actively engage the end users

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Effective interventions

We were not able to identify any studies that have demonstrated a causal relationship between interventions and increases in hate crime reporting. However, reports from several projects and information provided on websites indicate several promising areas:

**Awareness-raising**

Central to the majority of projects identified was awareness-raising, to address one of the significant reasons for under-reporting. Different activities have been undertaken to raise awareness of disability hate crime for potential disability hate crime targets, their families and social services, however the effectiveness of these interventions for the different groups has not been assessed.

Those who are closest to disabled people are often well placed to identify and challenge hate crime. One approach taken by police and councils across the UK is to develop resources targeted to raise awareness of hate crime among carers and families of disabled people to encourage reporting. Several projects have used books and guides to develop their projects, such as True Vision’s [Disability Hate Crime Reporting Book](#)\(^{13}\).

Specific projects identified that contain elements of evaluation of impact or which used innovative methods included:

In Scotland, the Scottish Commission for Learning Disability (SCLD) has recently completed phase 2 of their Disability Hate Crime Project. This has included partnerships with North Ayrshire, Stirling and Clackmannanshire and the delivery of awareness raising events including discussion, performance and interactive activities. They provide resources including

\(^{13}\) True Vision (2009) [Disability hate crime reporting book](#) (pdf)
scripts for awareness-raising events, and a what to do guide for practitioners on the SCLD website14.

Equal Lives was a project based in Norfolk from 2012-13 that worked to raise awareness of what hate crime is and what is impacts are, how to report it and how to prevent it. Some resources are provided on the website, including presentations, picture stories, information sheets and videos. They signposted us to the I’m Hating It: Stop disability hate crime resource pack15 which may be a useful starting point for the development of activities and resources in different local contexts. They have shared their final report16 with us which contains information about their activities and evaluation. They are happy for people to happy to talk about their work or send more information and can be reached at info@equallives.org.uk.


North Lanarkshire Disability Hate Crime Project produced a DVD to raise awareness with the aim of encouraging more people to report disability hate crime. The project was undertaken by North Lanarkshire’s Adult Protection Committee and funded by the council’s Social Work and Learning and Leisure Services.

The Welsh Government Framework for Action for Tackling Hate Crimes and Incidents includes an aspect of awareness-raising. Funded by an Equality and Inclusion Grant (2014-17), the Taking Flight Theatre Forum delivered the Real

14 Scottish Commission for Learning Disability (2017) Tackling disability hate crime resources (website)

15 Special Educational Needs and Disability Excellence Gateway (no date) I’m hating it: stop disability hate crime resource pack (pdf)

**Human Being** (RHB) play across Wales. This aimed to tackle disability hate crime by reducing incidence and increasing reporting, as well as educating young people about the impact of disability hate crime. The progress of this project is reported in section 1.14 (p.8) of the Welsh Government’s [Tackling Hate Crimes and Incidents: Framework for Action 2016-17 Progress Report](https://wales.gov.uk/topics/human-rights/). The Welsh Government have also published a ‘what you need to know’ information leaflet on hate crime for carers and other topics including mate crime. [These are available online](https://wales.gov.uk/topics/human-rights/). **Befriending links**

The Scottish Government believe that befriending links will increase disability hate crime reporting:

> What is needed, at a preventative level is to develop and embed good practice throughout Scotland so that people with learning disabilities have more places to go to have fun, feel safe and able to disclose any anxieties that they may have when they think they are being harassed, bullied or harmed.18

This assertion is supported by people working in awareness-raising projects such as Equal Lives, who said in conversation with us that “people are more likely to open up about what happened to them through talking to others who’d been through a similar experience”.

**Third party reporting centres**

Third party reporting centres are the most widely adopted approach to increasing reporting, and the UK Government views them as particularly important for disabled people to report

17 The Welsh Government (2016) [Hate crime resources](https://wales.gov.uk/topics/human-rights/) (website)

hate crime at locations accessible to them. It is believed that this is beneficial for increasing hate crime reporting because people do not always feel comfortable reporting hate crimes directly to the Police.

The Scottish Commission for Learning Disability published a report in March 2017 based on research conducted in 2016 around third party reporting centres (TPRCs) such as libraries and pharmacies where hate crimes can be reported. The study is based on responses to a telephone survey about TPRCs’ level of activity and resources, which SCLD believed to be the most effective way of mapping and getting insight into the resources and work done by TPRCs. The limitations of the methodology are discussed on p.7 of the report, which centre on the availability of contact details and response rates. Despite the study’s limitations in terms of comprehensiveness of data, some useful and relevant qualitative evidence is provided.

Key limitations for the impact of TPRCs include lack of a suitable space in which to guarantee privacy, lack of awareness of the Online Reporting Tool (OTR), and lack of knowledge about how to use the OTR. Importantly, the study indicated that lack of awareness and knowledge was not due to a lack of training but an infrequency of use of the resources. The author suggests that additional training for TPRCs by Police Scotland may lead to the increased use of the OTR, but not increase the overall rate of reporting. The study suggests that increased rates of reporting may require higher staffing levels, particularly in TPRCs where staff work solo, as in some public libraries. The report recommends that public awareness of TRPCs needs to be increased.

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19 Home Office (2016) Action Against Hate: The UK Government’s plan for tackling hate crime (pdf)

Wong and Christmann\textsuperscript{21} also explored the efficacy of third party hate crime reporting centres on hate crime reporting, and concluded that there has not been adequate testing of TPRCs to see if they work as intended. They also argue that there has been “inadequate attention to development and innovation of existing third party reporting centres in order to optimise their functioning within local neighbourhoods” (p.17).

Similarly, Williams and Tregidga\textsuperscript{22} found limitations with regards to the third-party reporting systems in operation in Wales. The majority of third party reporting options are perceived to be online, and they found that “this often serves as a barrier for some people who do not have access to IT facilities” (p.15).

**Safe places initiatives**

The Dundee Safe Places Initiative\textsuperscript{23} is a 3-year project launched in September 2015 and aims to help disabled, vulnerable, and older people in the city centre to feel confident, safe, and free from the fear of abuse, intimidation and harassment. We were unable to identify any publications evaluating the impact of this work. However, research based in South Yorkshire\textsuperscript{24} highlights limitations of this kind of activity, including a general lack of awareness of the initiative from staff working in organisations that had signed up for it and

\begin{tabular}{l}
\textsuperscript{21} Wong, K and Christmann, C (2017) Increasing hate crime reporting: narrowing the gap between policy aspiration, victim inclination and agency capability. British Journal of Community Justice, 14(3), pp.5-23 (pdf) \\
\textsuperscript{22} Williams, M and Tregidga, J (2013) All Wales hate crime research project (pdf) \\
\textsuperscript{23} Hall, E (2016) Enhancing Police Scotland’s response to disability hate crime. Scottish Institute for Policing Research: Annual Report for 2016, p.31 (pdf) \\
\textsuperscript{24} McClimens, A and Brewster, J (2017) Intellectual disability, hate crime and other social constructions: A view from South Yorkshire. Journal of Intellectual Disabilities, epublication ahead of print (Available with NHSScotland OpenAthens username or Open Access pre-print) \\
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inadequate signposting. The study expresses doubt about the overall effectiveness of the scheme.

**Support for reporting**

Evidence indicates that support for reporting disability hate crime is wanted and beneficial for targets. Mencap’s [Don’t Stand By Report](https://www.mencap.org.uk/downloads/don-t-stand-by-report) suggests that people with learning disabilities are more likely to report disability hate crime incidents to social workers or housing associations, “with which they already have relationships and which are therefore trusted” (p.26).

An example of a reporting and support programme that may be of interest is the The West of England Centre for Inclusive Living (WECIL) which offers support through a Victim Support Casework Service and a Disability Hate Crime Reporting and support programme, delivered in part through peer volunteers. Some information can be found in a case study produced by the Department for Work and Pensions [Strengthening Disabled People’s User-Led Organisations Programme](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/strengthening-disabled-peoples-user-led-organisations-programme).

**Disabled people's user-led organisations (DPULOs)**

The Department for Work and Pensions collected a set of case studies, providing key learning points and practical action points for police forces and local authorities. Potentially relevant are the interventions described in several case studies around training and campaigning being done by disabled people. Groups such as Norfolk Coalition of Disabled People (NCODP) and CHANGE People (Leeds) have recruited people with learning disabilities to deliver training and campaigning. More information on the

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25 Mencap (2014) [Don’t Stand By: Hate crime research report](https://www.mencap.org.uk/downloads/don-t-stand-by-report) (pdf)


impact and success of these interventions may be available from the contacts listed in the DWP report. CHANGE People’s approach is described as being integrated and underpinned by an understanding that hate crime is an abuse of power, is linked to all forms of discrimination and that effective interventions should be survivor focused, evidence based and multi-agency

**Unmet needs**

**Understanding the role of social work services**

The SCLD and Scottish Government recommend an investigation into the feasibility of utilising the reach of Social Work Services, Support Workers and Carers to maximise the number of incidents that are reported Similarly, Wong and Christmann suggest that “insufficient consideration has been given to how to make best use of their connections to those communities while at the same time assessing their capacity and capability to work with hate crime victims”. They have developed an Integrated Hate Crime Service Framework that provides an outline of the potential position and role of social services in supporting hate crime reporting (p.15). A funded project could develop the relevant part of this framework in the Scottish context.

**Websites and apps designed for people with learning disabilities**

In our evidence search we identified several websites (for example True Vision) and apps to report hate crime (for example Safe Places, Self Evident and locally adapted versions of Self Evident such as in Sussex), and text services (such as the Dyfed Powys PEGASUS scheme and non-emergency text


messaging service). In Gwent a Disability Access Group has been established to review current mechanisms of reporting for disabled people\textsuperscript{31}. However, we did not identify any apps or websites specifically developed to meet the information and access needs of people with learning disabilities and we did not find any evaluation of the suitability of the resources for people with learning disabilities. There may be scope to work in partnership with a university to develop a resource, test it and measure its impact and accessibility in a rigorous way that effectively and reliably captures evidence of impact. The Digital Health and Care Institute based at the University of Strathclyde may be a good place to contact for potential partnerships. Dr. Marilyn Lennon specialises in capturing, prioritising, and translating user requirements and needs for technology design.

There is also a lack of evidence around which reporting methods are preferred by targets of disability hate crime. However, some research indicates that by phone and in person are preferred approaches, because the people reporting incidents wanted to be assured that the report had been received and something would be done to address it\textsuperscript{32}.

The Keep Safe Scotland app has been developed by I Am Me. At the moment it appears to be only available to download for iPhone users. It aims to map out all Keep Safe places across Scotland, “helping people to plan routes in advance with the reassurance that there are places where they can seek assistance if required”. However, this project is not yet comprehensive across Scotland. There does not yet appear to have been an evaluation of the

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\textsuperscript{31} Welsh Government (2017) Tackling hate crimes and incidents: framework for action 2016-17 progress report, p.29 (pdf)
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initiative, and the disproportionate digital exclusion of people with disabilities should be taken into consideration\textsuperscript{33}.

**Support for d/Deaf people**

The British Deaf Association conducted research with Deaf people in Scotland in 2015. Their Access and Inclusion report\textsuperscript{34} was commissioned as part of their Empowering Deaf Communities project, which aimed to ensure that local authorities and other public services adopt good practices around hate crime and participation, through identifying gaps in current services for Deaf people.

Suggested interventions included:

- Provision of well-trained, good quality interpreters
- Deaf and BSL awareness training
- Frontline staff able to sign
- Online interpreter services
- 24 hour interpreter services
- Translation of police information into BSL

The BDA project aimed to address these gaps in provision, but further work is recommended, particularly around access to interpreting and improving Deaf Awareness and knowledge of BSL by professionals. A limitation of this report is that the recommendations are based on interpretation of need and potentially effective solutions by members of the Deaf community and an organisation that works to represent them, but these recommendations have not been tested for their efficacy in increasing and improving the reporting of Hate Crime incidents for this population. Given the proportion of people with


\textsuperscript{34} British Deaf Association (2015) Access & inclusion: a report on hate crime in Scotland’s deaf community (pdf)
learning disabilities who are also Deaf or have hearing loss\textsuperscript{35}, an intersectional or cross-disability approach may be a worthwhile avenue to explore for future projects.

**Known perpetrators and incidents around the home**

Research indicates that the majority of disability hate crime targets will know the perpetrator\textsuperscript{36}. In some cases this takes the form of ‘mate crime’ and for others there is crossover with domestic abuse from carers and relatives\textsuperscript{37}. The ECHR argues that this means it is necessary to support practitioners to “appreciate that situational factors (that is, location and victim–perpetrator relationships) may differ depending on the type of offence (for example, verbal abuse, harassment etc.) and the type of hate-motivation (for example, homophobic, disablist etc.)”. In our evidence review we did not find any resources around how social services providers can work to ensure carers and relatives can learn to look out for the signs of hate crime targeting and report it or encourage targets to report it. This suggests an unmet need.

‘Place’ is an important yet neglected consideration in relation to hate crime offending\textsuperscript{38}. 56\% of all incidents reported took place either in or around the home and a quarter of all incidents are perpetrated by neighbours or people living locally. A project could focus on helping potential targets raise their awareness and increase reporting of disability hate crimes perpetrated by family, friends and care workers and support them through this process.

\textsuperscript{35} National Deaf Children’s Society (2012) *Prevalence of additional disabilities with deafness* (pdf)

\textsuperscript{36} Williams, M and Tregidga, J (2013) *All Wales Hate Crime Project*, pp.47-49 (pdf)


\textsuperscript{38} Roberts, C et al. (2013) *Understanding who commits hate crime and why they do it* (pdf)
**Intersectional issues**

Disabled LGBT people among those most likely to have experienced an incident of prejudice and discrimination\(^{39}\). A research report by the Equality and Human Rights Commission\(^{40}\) argues that, as “a significant proportion (50%) of hate crime victims is targeted because of more than one of their identity characteristics”, it is important to consider the intersectional nature of hate crime perpetration and victimisation. Potential partnerships with other organisations addressing other aspects of hate crime may be a constructive way of tackling the issue with support from groups who may have a more developed framework for impact evaluation.

**Support throughout the reporting process and afterwards**

Several of the reasons identified for under-reporting of hate crime are based around individuals’ feelings of shame, embarrassment and anxiety. We did not identify any evidence related to supporting people with disabilities through this process. Advice, support and information is available from several support services are available Beyond the Common Reactions After a Crime\(^ {41}\) questionnaire provided by Victim Support Scotland and their Helpline. An avenue for a project may therefore be the provision of support for targets of disability hate crime throughout the reporting process.

A study by The University of Leicester explored the emotional, physical and health support needs of hate crime targets\(^ {42}\). Using data from surveys (1604 people) and interviews (81 people) the study found that targets of hate crime

\(^{39}\) McBride, M (2016) A review of the evidence on hate crime and prejudice (pdf)


\(^{41}\) Victim Support (no date) Common reactions after a crime (web page)

\(^{42}\) Chakraborti, N and Hardy, S.J (2016) Healing the harms: identifying how best to support hate crime victims (pdf)
often have complex and multi-layered support needs. It outlines the emotional needs of targets, including empathy and to be believed, and provides best practice guidance on how organisations and frontline practitioners can meet the support needs of hate crime victims (p.23).

The Centre for Hate Studies at the University of Leicester offers training for practitioners around supporting victims of hate crime and responding to hate crime that combines theory, research and practice and may be of relevance to projects wanting to support workforce development in the social services.

**Potentially useful resources for broader context**

Iris (2017) *Hate crime: causes, motivations and effective interventions*, Iriss.fm episode 181, 9 May 2017 (audio file and full text transcript)


Brief context around the inclusion of disabilities within definition of hate crime. Background on the nature of problems with reporting data accuracy


This book may be relevant - it is available through National Library of Scotland, university libraries, or it is available on Amazon. It has a chapter in it that book review suggests contains evidence that health professionals supporting disabled people with worsening health as a result of targeted hate crime through focusing on the treatment of symptoms may be more beneficial than ensuring the case is taken up by the police.

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Scottish Commission for Learning Disability (no date) *What we need to do to eradicate learning disability hate crime* (website)

Recommends focus on data, education, justice, media representation and multi-agency working as approaches to addressing learning disability hate crime


This book contains chapters on how individuals and agencies should respond to support victims of disability hate crime.

If you found this resource useful and would like to use the Evidence Search and Summary Service (ESSS), please get in touch to discuss your needs:

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