

'An eight day working week'

LGBT+ Domestic Abuse Sector
Snapshot
2020

Prof Catherine Donovan
&
Dr Kate Butterby

THE CONTEXT

Between 2009/10 and 2019/20, central and local government public sector funding **decreased by over £45 billion[^]**

In 2010/11, funding to DA services was **cut** by local authorities by **nearly a third**

LGBT+ services rely heavily on voluntary sector funding, so were **disproportionately affected** compared to other sectors

AUSTERITY

In 2019, the National (England and Wales) LGBT+ Domestic Abuse (DA) Network for professionals and researchers identified 3 key issues facing the sector:

1 Funding

2 Increasing demand for services

3 Sustainability

Decision made to carry out research to explore 'pressure' on the sector...

THE STUDY

5 projects within LGBT+ organisations in England

Training for professionals

11 practitioners whose roles involved...

Management

Face-to-face support

Development work

Snapshot week
24-28th February
2020

Practitioners emailed us their **work-week diaries** for the snapshot week

We phoned them to **talk through their diaries and working week**

We asked questions relating to the **3 key issues** identified earlier

KEY FINDINGS



Passionate about their work



Juggling tasks and being reactive



Working on tasks outside their remit

“ PRACTITIONERS WERE... ”



Working over their contracted hours

Stressed, worried and exhausted



Struggling to find time



THIS OVERWORK WAS NORMALISED AND UNDERPINNED BY...

Economic fragility

- Lack of dedicated fundraisers/ 'backroom' support
- Impact of multiple funders on individual contracts
- Funding decisions made late
- Short-term funding
- Short turnaround for funding applications
- Lack of funding for core costs

Need for credibility work

- Extra (often unfunded) development work needed with mainstream and specialist DA services
- Being required to (re-) establish value of the LGBT+ DA sector
- (Re-) establishing the need for a LGBT+ DA sector with specialist skills, experience and knowledge

"They give you an enormous amount of money to spend very, very quickly. But that same sum could fund my service for ten years"

"Projects like ours are somehow considered 'negotiable' or 'niche' or 'innovative' when realistically we should be a pillar in our community services"



THIS RESULTED IN...

Difficulty planning for the future



Staff turnover



Practitioner stress



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUNDERS/COMMISSIONERS

Be aware of the emotional impact of working within the sector

Be aware of the fragility of the sector

Understand the extra time/resource needed to establish credibility

Cost the training/awareness work provided by the sector

Recognise the need for longer run-in times for commissioned services

Provide longer term funding (3 years rather than 1)

Change funding streams to allow organisations to apply for 'backroom' costs



References:

^Dagdeviren, H.; Donoghue, M. and Wearmouth, A. (2019). 'When rhetoric does not translate to reality: Hardship, empowerment and the third sector in austerity localism' *The Sociological Review*, 67(1) 143-160.