

MAYOR OF LONDON

Dr Onkar Sahota AM
Chair
London Assembly Health Committee
Onkar.Sahota@london.gov.uk

Our ref: MGLA051223-1463

Date: 15 February 2024

Dear Onkar,

Thank you for your letter regarding the London Assembly Health Committee's investigation into trauma-informed approaches to youth violence in London.

First, I would like to thank the Committee for undertaking this important piece of work. I agree that trauma-informed approaches have great potential for supporting young people who have been impacted by or who are at risk of being impacted by violence.

I established London's Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) in 2019 to take a public health approach to tackling violence and its causes. As our understanding of trauma-informed practice grows and becomes more systematically embedded across the London system, I hope the VRU will be considered an innovative leader in this area.

Please find my response to the recommendations in the annex below. Thank you again for investigating this very important issue.

Yours sincerely,



Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London

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Annex

Mayor of London's response to the recommendations of the London Assembly Health Committee's investigation on trauma-informed approaches to youth violence in London

Recommendation 1

The GLA Public Health Unit and London Violence Reduction Unit should make their framework on trauma-informed practice publicly available, and support its implementation through proactive engagement with London health and care services and the Metropolitan Police Service, to increase understanding of trauma and ensure strong take-up amongst front-line practitioners.

The Mayor recognises the importance of a London-wide definition and approach to trauma-informed practice.

The London VRU, supported by the GLA Group Public Health Unit, is currently in the process of commissioning a qualitative research piece mapping trauma-informed and trauma-responsive practices related to violence prevention across the capital. Linking to the Serious Violence Duty, this commission and associated research will focus specifically on Local Authorities, the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), and London NHS Integrated Care Boards (ICBs).

The specific aims of the research, focusing on the three sectors identified above, will be to:

- Collaboratively establish a definition of trauma-informed that is contextualised for London.
- Provide the VRU with a broad understanding of the current landscape of trauma-informed and trauma-responsive practice.
- Develop a suite of promising practices that can be shared across the sector and support the growing evidence base for trauma-informed work in the violence reduction field.
- Generate a roadmap or framework through which organisations across London can understand and progress on their journey towards being trauma-responsive.
- Ensure the development of the evidence base relating to the impact of trauma-informed and trauma-responsive practices on violence reduction and beyond.

Once this piece of work has been completed, it will be made publicly available and shared with the services named above to support a consistent take-up of this approach.

Recommendation 2

The London Violence Reduction Unit should create and maintain an online library of evidence on the impact of trauma-informed approaches to reducing youth violence.

The London VRU is working closely with the NHS London Violence Reduction Programme, which is currently developing the [Violence Reduction Academy](#), which will identify, synthesise and promote evidence-based models of violence reduction in health and social care, sharing the latest research and supporting wider implementation across the capital.

The London VRU is establishing its evidence hub to link into and complement the academy's resources. Building on the VRU's existing [published research and evaluations](#), the hub will include learning and best practices from across the VRU's programmes while signposting to relevant external resources. The first iteration of the hub is scheduled for spring 2024.

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Recommendation 3

The London Violence Reduction Unit should share with the Committee the latest information about the Behavioural Insights Team's evaluation of the hospital-based youth work programme and the work carried out by Social Finance Limited to support delivery organisations. This information should include the key objectives, plans for implementation and timescales of the work.

The Behavioural Insights Team and Social Finance Ltd started work with the VRU in October 2023 as the Evaluation and Learning Partners, respectively, for the Hospital-Based Youth Work Programme.

They will work together closely on several aspects of the programme, particularly in the design and implementation of the Hospital-Based Youth Work Programme Data Framework (until March 2024), which will be an essential foundation for the evaluation of the service.

Social Finance Ltd will also provide active contract management for all the VRU's Hospital-Based Youth Work providers until March 2025, supporting them through:

- Reactive troubleshooting: helping delivery partners identify and resolve issues as soon as possible.
- Incremental improvements: continual sharing of learnings across sites and providers.
- Systems reengineering: scoping throughout the programme for opportunities for system-wide change.

This will ensure the successful delivery of the hospital-based youth work service as well as the learning and implementation of improvements for the VRU and partners throughout the contract period.

The Behavioural Insights Team is tasked with delivering a series of evaluation packages. This includes:

- A robust impact evaluation looking at both individual and organisational-level outcomes. This will look at both self-reported and objective measures (for example, looking at hospital readmissions and police data).
- A performance and process evaluation to explore the implementation of the programme and the impact of the learning partner.
- An evaluation of the cost-effectiveness of the programme.

The Behavioural Insights Team will work closely with Social Finance throughout the programme to ensure that the data being collected is of sufficient detail and quality to support a robust evaluation of impact.

The Behavioural Insights Team will produce an interim report in December 2024 and a final report in December 2025.