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| **Policy Position Summary: Sexual Violence**  **18 June 2018** |
| What does the PCVC wish to achieve?   * All victims to be treated with dignity and respect and in a sensitive manner; * Partners across the criminal justice system working together to ensure victims are supported to cope and recover and achieve positive criminal justice outcomes; * Perpetrators should expect to be pursued and prosecuted to the fullest extent; * Victims have sufficient confidence in the police and the wider criminal justice system to ensure they feel able to come forward and report their experience; * A strong partnership approach that supports a reduction in prevalence, multi-agency protection of victims and successful prosecution of perpetrators; * The expectation that victims will be taken seriously, including those who have experienced non-recent sexual abuse and the perpetrator is no longer alive; * All victims should be able to access support tailored to their individual circumstances. |
| Evidence Base   * The Crime Survey England and Wales (CSEW) reports that, nationally, police recorded rape has increased by 13% (to 37,813 offences) compared with the previous year, while other sexual offences increased by 12% (to 74,208); * Offence categories that directly relate to sexual offences against childrencontributed just under a third (31%) to the total increase in the number of sexual offences recorded by the police; * The high-profile coverage of sexual offences and the police response to reports of non-recent sexual offending (for example, Operation Yewtree) are likely to have improved the willingness of victims to come forward and report offences of this nature; * The NSPCC reports that the health consequences for sexually abused children and young people can be devastating:   + Abused children are more prone to sexually transmitted infections;   + Abused young people are at increased risk of homelessness, which may result in risk-taking behaviours and increased vulnerability;   + The risk of suicide doubles for abused young people when they reach their late twenties;   + Sexually abused adolescents are at risk of ongoing health problems such as chronic pelvic pain and gynaecological problems;   + Sexual abuse in children and young people is associated with mental ill health including self-harm and depression, which may continue into adulthood. |
| How will the PCVC’s aspirations be achieved?   * A Health and Justice Partnership Board has been established to ensure robust governance arrangements are in place for SARC and ISVA provision; * Work is being undertaken to define and deliver a shared strategy and action plan for the support of victims of rape and sexual assault; * A fit for purpose crisis service has been commissioned by NHS England and is now in place; * A rape scrutiny panel has been established; * The Rape and Sexual Assault Counselling Centre (RSACC) has been commissioned to deliver counselling and additional ISVA provision; * The OPCVC is supporting the development of a Child Advocacy Centred approach to working with vulnerable children and young people; * The regional VAWG strategy and the local delivery plan includes sexual violence and abuse; * Sharing learning from initiatives such as operation Seabrook; * Supporting the role out of s.28. |