

MK-SASS

Rape & Sexual Assault Support Service



Presentation to Community Safety Partnership by Colleen O'Farrell

Monday 15 January 2007

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Background

- MK-SASS was set up in July 2004
- Replaced MK's branch of Rape Crisis which closed
- We are funded by MK Council and recently received a one-off grant from the Victims Fund specifically for Assessments, Training & Computer Equipment
- Part of the setting up process involved consulting with various MK agencies such as Victim Support and MK Lighthouse
- Consultation purpose was to avoid any duplication of service already offered within MK and to discuss the needs of the people in MK who have suffered from a sexual assault.
- MK-SASS sits under the umbrella of the City Counselling Centre and is operated from the CCC's offices based at Christ the Cornerstone Church
- We are an agency that deals with the after affects of any sexual crime (reported or not) by way of information, support & counselling

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Purpose

- To meet the specific needs of adults who have been raped and sexually assaulted
- To offer a service to adults who have experienced a recent or historic assault. The latter, for example, may have occurred in childhood
- To offer a service that is not gender restrictive, but which is open to both men and women
- To provide support for the people of MK which is based in MK
- To work in partnership with other agencies in order to be informed of the services which might also be accessed by any client. For example, if domestic violence is an issue, we could refer or provide information about MK Lighthouse

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MK-SASS Personnel

Diana Savage – CCC Manager (as required)




Linda Farthing – Project Manager (4 hours)



Colleen O'Farrell – Assistant Counselling Co-Ordinator (3 hours)



Bridget Mattingley – Administrator (2 hours)


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Referral Process

- We take direct referrals from clients who contact us via telephone or in person at the CCC which includes their Drop-In Counselling Service
- We receive referrals from other agencies within MK such as Victim Support
- We will then offer an initial assessment meeting where we will assess a client's suitability for counselling
- It may be that a client purely wants information. For example, if they are unsure of where to go to be medically checked outside of their doctors surgery
- It might be that a client's psychological state requires alternative support such as psychiatric or trauma support. The latter can be provided by Linda Farthing who also manages the trauma service based at the CCC

Our Counselling Service

- We offer a confidential, non-judgemental counselling service to 17yrs and over
- We will only break confidentiality if we feel a client is at risk to themselves or another person. Our confidentiality policy is clearly explained to any client before engaging in any counselling relationship
- We will offer the service regardless of whether a client wishes for any police involvement
- We are an accredited organisation with the BACP (British Association of Counselling & Psychotherapy) via the CCC
- We adhere to the BACP guidelines and code of ethics.
- All counselling takes place at the CCC and we do not do home visits

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Our Counselling Service

cont'd.....

- Dependent upon the level of support needed and our waiting list, holding sessions may be offered until a counsellor is allocated
- Once allocated a counsellor, we offer a weekly counselling service of up to 26 weeks (6 months)
- If a client requests additional sessions, this will be reviewed but generally counselling is not extended
- Our fee for counselling is on a donation basis dependent upon earnings. However, we will not turn away any client if they are unable to make a donation
- From Aug – Oct 06, 30 people came to our service. Of those 19 were new contacts
- We have provided 158 counselling sessions during this period

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Our Counsellors

- We have up to 8 counsellors who work on a voluntary basis
- All of our counsellors are fully qualified or in their second year of diploma level training
- Most of our counsellors are Person-Centred but any orientation of counselling would work with this client group
- We provide monthly group and individual supervision as required by the BACP
- We will provide extra support to our counsellors as and when required, eg: if working with particular difficult client issues that warrant such support
- We hold team/training meetings every two months

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Metamorphosis

- Metamorphosis was set up 10 years ago to offer support to adult women who were sexually abused in their childhoods
- Linda Farthing who is the Project Manager at SASS is one of the founding members
- The service offered both 121 and group support, facilitated Art days and provided 121 counselling
- As mentioned previously, to prevent any duplication of service, Metamorphosis' members have been combined with MK-SASS to bring across resources which will expand our service
- Such activities and support offered will include Art days and group work
- A press release to this effect appeared in the Citizen last week

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Our Future Aims

- Ideally.....For every funding application to be successful and/or to win the lottery and never have to worry about funding and resourcing again!
- Realistically.....(subject to funding and resourcing):
- To expand our counselling service (more counsellors means more counselling)
- To increase our personnel (management, administrators, counsellors, supervisors etc)
- To increase our marketing in order to strengthen awareness within the MK community
- To increase our working in partnership with other organisations
- To encourage more male victims to come forward as there is still some stigma attached to this type of crime. Out of our 19 new contacts from Aug-Oct 06, 17 were female and 2 male

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