Let’s work together to tackle hate crime
LIVING IN FEAR-
THE EXPERIENCES OF
PEOPLE WITH LEARNING
DISABILITIES AND AUTISM.
1. Review of calls to Autism London and National Autistic Society helplines
2. Seven focus groups with people with learning disabilities and autism (31 people). Four focus groups with family and paid carers (33 people)
4. Interviews with 27 people with learning disabilities and autism
Helplines take calls from pwLD and pwASD and people that support them about a range of issues.

National Autistic Society - calls spanning over three months - very few calls were related to victimisation experiences.

Autism London’s helpline calls were not primarily related to victimisation experiences, but people who called did have such experiences when probed.
Survey respondents reporting victimisation experiences:

- 46% of the whole sample (includes people living in Kent and London)
- 38% of respondents from Medway

Estimated proportion of victimisation for LD population in Medway:

- The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment estimated that there were 4894 people with learning disability in Medway
- 677 of whom were receiving services
- Number of people with learning disabilities in Medway who may have experienced (or currently are experiencing) victimisation, would be at least 243 and could be as many as 1780 people.
Comparing our sample with the National Survey of People with Learning Disabilities in England (Emerson and Hatton, 2008)

- Similar in terms of gender and ethnicity
- Contained slightly fewer younger people with a learning disability
- A similar proportion reported having experienced some form of victimisation - 32% National survey sample reported having had someone be “rude to them” because of their disability, compared to 36% in Medway.
- In both studies those who had lower support needs were more likely to experience victimisation, including more serious incidents such as assault.
- The sample was also representative in terms of the proportion of people with severe or profound disability. The National Survey estimated 17% of the learning disability population had severe or profound disabilities, we received approximately 18% of questionnaires received back were from supporters.
- We had fewer people living in the family home – 36% compared to 67% in the National Survey – probably due to our recruitment methods initially through services.
CHARACTERISTICS OF PEOPLE WITH VICTIMISATION EXPERIENCES

People with experiences were more likely to be:
- younger people
- those with mental health difficulties
- people with lower support needs (across a range of different indicators)

People without experiences were more likely:
- to be in receipt of 24 hour support from staff or to have support from staff at least some of the time

No differences were found for:
- gender, ethnicity, primary diagnosis or other impairments
- people having 24 hour or just some support from family.
NATURE OF EXPERIENCES-SURVEY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of victimisation</th>
<th>Kent</th>
<th>Medway</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>physically hurt</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>touched on private parts of their body</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>receiving threats</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>verbal abuse</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>laughed or stared at</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>possessions stolen/damaged</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
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NATURE OF EXPERIENCES - SURVEY

- One off events AND persistent low level abuse
- 77% experience multiple incidents
- People with support to go out are more likely than those without support to:
  - have been verbally abused (86% v’s 65%)
  - stared and laughed at (59% v’s 38%)
- Those without support experienced wider range of victimisation

‘He would always point at me and laugh. I wondered if he followed me. I keep seeing him’

‘...and they came down and started tormenting me and my friend and they pulled my friend out of his seat and they jumped all over the chairs and they spat in my hair and everything’
# ACCEPTANCE OF EXPERIENCES

- **Other experiences of abuse, bullying and victimisation**
  - ‘Beaten. Been called names.. by my ex-house mate’
  - ‘last week he had to call the Police there were two instances of him being beaten up in the space of the same day’.

- **Repeat incidents**
  - ‘it’s been going on 25 years and it sort of hasn’t come to a stop yet’.

- **Enduring**
  - ‘...her attitude is because it happens all the time she gets used to it happening to her and it’s awful because the way she sees it it’s just something that is everyday life and that’s really sad’.

- **Accept experiences as part of life**
54% of respondents experiencing multiple incidents reported that on each occasion it was different people doing the bad things to them.

61% said that the person(s) who did the bad things were teenagers.

Younger children and adults, were also implicated.

53% reported the perpetrator as being known to them, suggesting it was a friend, family member or a neighbour.
...the hostel is in walking distance and these so called friends live in the hostel...'

'...it was her partner’s cousin and her boyfriend...'

'It’s mainly teenagers, or you might get odd looks from middle aged people'

'I’m talking... eight upwards'.
‘It’s terrible cause it’s sorta communicates a lack of acceptance doesn’t it?...and you can’t help wondering why people do that...’

‘Perhaps because I was a little bit different, I dunno...hard to join in and socialise in the outside, easy target’.

‘...they think I’m the person to give up... and they are wrong...’.

‘I think they picked out that I did have learning disabilities cause I’m actually.. I’m classified as handicapped, cause I’ve got autism and Aspergers and I’ve also got stress on my brain stem as well’.

‘These people seem to, they seem to be able to see something different even if it is only mildly, they seem to hone in on it’.
People did not always report what had happened to them - 17% had told no one.

Others reported to:
- Someone who supports them 50%
- Family 48%
- Friend 29%

38% had reported what had happened to the police.

Third parties also reported to Police.
For those that had had contact with the police:

- **71% were either ‘very’ or ‘quite’ happy with their contact**
  - police were ‘nice’ or ‘very nice’ to them
  - had stopped or tried to stop the bad things happening to them again.

- **29% were ‘not happy’ or ‘very unhappy’ with their contact**
  - police were only ‘okay’ to them or did not treat them well
  - did not try to do much or anything to help stop the bad things happening again.
The police were very helpful,...when I called them the operator actually spoke to me until I got home, she actually stayed on the line and spoke to me...

Told the police about it, not straightaway, they didn’t do much about it apart from go round to people’s houses.

Well I was quite lucky in a way one of the detective constables, actually he’s got a son who’s got a similar condition as Asperger’s...let’s just say he knew how to go about his work by dealing with it...

The police often don’t know how to deal with people with Asperger’s...they know they’re not quite right, but they don’t know why and they don’t know how to talk to them’
Barriers to reporting to the Police

Barriers mentioned included:

- It was not serious enough/nothing could be done
- Someone else decided it was not serious enough
- Someone else dealt with the incident
- Scared
- Coercion from a perpetrator
- Fear of repercussions
- Can’t report every little thing
- Scared they would be arrested themselves
- Did not know they should have/how to
- Worried they could not explain/provide good enough evidence
- Reporting not being taken seriously by the police
- Pride
- Didn’t want the Police involved
- Felt they should be able to take care of it themselves

‘there are some people who wouldn’t go near the police with a barge pole if something happens...but it’s very individual’.
49% reported that in general their life was better after the bad things had happened
31% said their life had not changed
16% life had changed for the worse.

‘I would become kind of like withdrawn, more depressed than usual, scared and worried about going out’.

‘...annoyed, frustrated, upset, exhausted cause it exhausts you...want to go to bed, properly fed up’.
The events made people feel:
- Horrible
- Distraught and violated
- Frightened
- Why my?
- Haven’t felt right since
- Nervous
- Upset/crying (for weeks afterwards)
- Panicked
- Intimidated
- Vulnerable
- Angry
- Didn’t know what to do or where to go
- Scared - all the time - over many years - every time I went outside
- Worried that it might happen again to me or others

“He has impacted on me and promoted my very low self-esteem...but I felt that I deserved it, it was a deep down instinct, I didn’t belong in the world”

“They last quite a long time actually, it’s as if to say there’s no cure for it, the feelings happen quite a long time, each time a problem happens...there’s no way of getting over that feeling of fear of that happening’.
THE IMPACT OF VICTIMISATION EXPERIENCES - MAKING ADJUSTMENTS

- Avoid people and places
- Avoid transport
- Don’t go to college, work or DC
- Don’t do as many activities
- Don’t see friends as much

Percentage

Type of adjustment

Kent
Medway
‘...she managed to get me moved out of that area, so I could move into Strood and I wouldn’t have that problem no more’.

‘My mum did actually stop me... cause she reckoned that if the guy was out there still looking for me, the guy would beat me up even more...’.

‘...this chap that was attacked he literally walks with his hood up and as quickly as he can not to draw attention to himself’.

‘I also have an issue where I can only go on certain buses, at certain times, because a certain individual might be on it. Therefore, for my own safety, I feel like, kinda restricted in what I can do...’.
VIEWS AND EXPERIENCES OF FAMILY AND PAID CARERS
Focus groups with family and paid carers
Supporters survey

Four themes
- Hate crime as a social issue
- Vulnerability of individuals with learning disabilities and autism
- Perceived protective value of the presence of a carer when individuals are supported in the community
- How carers respond to incidents and the impact they have on them
HATE CRIME AS A SOCIAL ISSUE

- Hate crime and victimisation not just an issue for police to combat
- Concern about lack of community cohesion due to
  - bullying culture
  - Lack of acceptance of difference
  - Unwillingness of people to intervene
  - Media picture of disabled people as benefit “scroungers”
- Need better education in schools about disability and the effects of victimisation and hate crime.
- Those supporting people while in the community need to be skilled and confident.
'I think yes the Police should be supporting disability, people with a disability, but I don’t think it’s just about Police being informed, I think it’s a wider issue'.

‘...I remember moving the people out of Leybourne... looking back now that’s over twenty years ago and to be fair, why should people have to wait to be accepted...’

‘we’ve got to a culture now where it is not to interfere because you’ll be assaulted yourself’

‘...It’s like a bullying culture these days, gangs of people gangs of youngsters who have got nothing better to do...’

‘In the last couple of years there’s been a vicious campaign by the media sort of treating everyone with a disability as a sponger...’

‘...there needs to be a lot more done in schools because, when people look different and act differently it causes people to stare, young children to stare and even a stare a continuous stare is intimidating’.
“vulnerability” – recognition that the way people with learning disabilities and autism behaved could put them at risk of victimisation.

People sometimes become vulnerable if they look physically different or if they have behaviours that are seen by others as “odd”.

‘he’s quite vulnerable he doesn’t think well I’ll stick my wallet in my pocket and leave it, he’ll sit there and he’ll thumb through his wallet while he’s on the bus and this guy had watched this, came into the Pentagon he had seven kinds of everything kicked out of him’

‘...they go out in the street wary of it, looking, and giving off looks and vibes that they’re not aware of because they are so frightened and wary...’
Vulnerability can be a consequence of where people with autism and learning disabilities live.

'where he lives is a block of flats where seven service users live and it took the local youths, I would say, a month, two months, to find out that particularly part of the flats was accommodated by people with a learning disability and they targeted and they targeted'
Carers felt that people who have support to go out in the community didn’t experience victimisation because the presence of a carer reduced opportunities for perpetrators to target them.

‘It’s the ones that are out on their own, the more able really that are targeted because the ones who have to have support all the time have got support with them’.

‘...I feel very lucky in a way, that wherever we go he’s got somebody there to protect him...some of them, are much more independent than X and do travel by themselves and they are the people that do get the abuse, there’s nobody there to stand up for them, they have to try and stand up for themselves’.

PERCEIVED PROTECTIVE VALUE OF SUPPORT IN THE COMMUNITY
PERCEIVED PROTECTIVE VALUE OF SUPPORT IN THE COMMUNITY

- However people still experienced staring, being laughed at and sometimes name-calling even in the presence of carers.

‘..yes he would never be unsupported but we...do have people that make fun of him and, you know he’s lucky in a way that he’s not aware of it so really he’s sort of in his lovely little perfect world’

‘I mean with X she’s very rarely left on her own the odd experiences I’ve had have mainly been people staring...you know part of me wants her to be as fully independent as possible but the other part of me needs to protect her and keep her safe...’.
HOW CARERS RESPOND TO INCIDENTS

- Paid carers sometimes intervened when officially off duty – when they saw people being targeted or in contact with the police in the community.

- Ways of responding to incidents:
  - Commenting to people who are staring to make it clear that the person had a right to be there
  - Parents sometimes returned to challenge those who had been unkind or hostile when the person they supported was out of earshot.

- Emotional responses
  - Stress – sometimes leading to physical ill health
  - Depression and anxiety
Impact on carers acknowledged by people with learning disabilities and autism and by carers

Can be

- direct – carers also subject to victimisation
- Indirect – having to manage and respond to the victimisation of the people they supported

Families made significant changes to their lives in order to manage or avoid further problems for the people they supported.

Family carers never “off duty” and living in fear of the phone ringing

Paid carers expressed anxiety and uncertainty – never knowing what will happen – having to be extra vigilant.

Also had similar effects on siblings.
CARER RESPONSES TO INCIDENTS AND IMPACT ON CARERS AND FAMILIES

‘I mean the lady with behaviour problems I’m taking out tomorrow, I will be on edge all day, that something, someone will say something...’.

‘If I didn’t hear from X in say 2 hours, every 2 hours or every hour if I didn’t hear from her I’d be very, very worried, I’d think there was something terribly wrong’.

‘It did, it did.. it shook them, it shook em’ up and made them cry actually’.

‘Isolation, depression...’

‘I didn’t move, I stayed where I was, and I just looked, to let them know well okay we’re not going’.

‘I ...let X walk on and go back and then give them a little bit of abuse myself... but I don’t want R to hear that cause he’s already struggling with the fact that they are laughing at him because he looks different and he acts different’.
FINDINGS FROM KENT POLICE AND MEDWAY COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP
Focus groups with police officers, PCSOs and members of Medway’s Community Safety Partnership

We talked about the safety of people with autism and learning disabilities when they are out and about in the community

The main themes that came from the focus groups were:

1. The types of things they knew that happened to victims, the words that were used to describe those things
2. The frequency of reporting and barriers to doing so
3. How hate crimes are handled by the police
4. The support available to victims.
1. Types of hate crimes and incidents:

Focus group members said that hate crimes that happen to people with autism and learning disabilities include:

- Sexual harassment
- Assault on the street
- Abuse from family and friends (not generally seen as hate crime)
- Picking on people because of the way they look
- Harassment
- Kids hanging around housing abusing occupants
- Verbal abuse
- Bullying
- Crimes by people the victim would call a friend.
They said that the definition of disability hate crime is a problem.

That’s because the victim of the crime needs to have a view or a perception about why the person did it to them.

The word ‘hate’ can make victims feel bad about themselves.

- ‘I think if someone reports something, say it’s the first time they have ever reported and they have, for example, a disability and you, whoever of us, went round there and mentioned “hate crime”, I think what you are saying is, “there are people out there that hate you” ...that is going to be quite staggering to someone, so I think that is something that ought to be, in my mind, dropped...’
There is no good information about who does the hate crimes.

But some said it’s mostly children who pick on people with disabilities and some do it repeatedly.

- ‘....youngsters that will bully - and bullying is easy - to pick on someone who is obviously different to the majority; they can attach words to it, they can get a reaction from it... it is not necessarily a dislike of anything about them, it can be the way they talk, look, walk or anything like that.... and it is something that can hurt straight away, they must know it can hurt straight away.’
- ‘There’s no pattern of who an offender is, you can have reactive responses as well as deep seated responses............you can have five year old kids picking on someone as much as you can have an 85 year old grandmothers picking on people’.
Police officers may find it difficult to work out if a crime is a disability hate crime.

‘You know if something is right or wrong, it’s wrong - you know you have got to do something with it, and if you are not quite certain and it is one of those, is it a hate crime, is it not, is it a hate incident? What you would then do is phone through to the area crime reporting unit or something like that and they have got a little bit more experience...’.

It can be even more difficult if the victim then commits an offence or has done something to make somebody pick on them in the first place.

‘There’s no pattern of who an offender is, you can have reactive responses as well as deep seated responses, so you’ll get someone who’ll shout something at someone because of a road rage incident, but it turns into a hate crime because of what they’ve said in the heat of the moment... .......you can have five year old kids picking on someone as much as you can have an 85 year old grandmothers picking on people’.
2. Reporting – frequency and barriers

Generally agreed that disability hate crime is under-reported:

‘..work has been put into it but I still think it’s a very underreported... of all the hate crimes reported we’ve had, we get an average of twenty hate crimes a month in Medway you probably get two disability a month, if that, within those twenty…’

This might be for lots of reasons:

- Victims may not know how to report bad things that happened to them
- Services might not know how to support people in reporting incidents
- Victims may have had bad experiences of the police in the past
- They may be afraid it will make the problem worse
- Victims may speak to individual officers they see and that might not be officially recorded.
Victims may be afraid reporting will make the problem worse:

‘..a lot of people are too scared to report antisocial behaviour or, because they are scared of the consequence of doing it. “If I get the police involved am I then going to make it worse for myself?”’

‘.. there is this massive fear of reporting by adults with learning difficulties, whether they’re not aware of what’s going to happen..or there has been an incident that’s happened previously and we’ve not dealt with it properly…’

Concerned police officers may work hard to help victims report incidents and provide evidence:

‘We tried a variety of things with the lad to try and give him the skills he needed to report it as and when, you know “grab somebody nearby, make sure that they see it as well”; no independent witnesses, one word against the other, we never got anywhere with it.’
3. How hate crimes are handled by the police:

- If a victim doesn’t **tell the police** they have autism or learning disabilities it can be difficult for them to know.

- The public shouldn’t expect every officer to know about all types of disabilities.

- The police sometimes get it wrong especially about autism.

- Officers’ *personal experiences* of disabilities help get it right - not police training.

- Call handlers at the FCR might decide a report is a hate crime and refer it to an officer. They might get it wrong by missing a disability or by saying there is a disability when the officer who goes to the victim finds out there isn’t.

- Officers might not see disability hate crimes as their priority because they get stuck on the case load.
Disability hate crime involving people with autism and learning disabilities can be seen as difficult work for the police – getting the right evidence to take a case to court finding out what happened, when, who was there, numbers – all can be difficult for witnesses and victims with learning disabilities.

Repeat victims can be a challenge - more time is needed so police officers may delay responding until enough time is available.

Partnership working is important to the police.

The police often have to take the lead, sometimes doing support tasks that other agencies should be doing, especially social care.
4. The support available to victims

The police do look for specialist support e.g. Victim Support, advocacy.

Commonly held view that there isn’t enough support for victims who have autism and learning disabilities from either:

- The community
- Services.

Support tends to arrive when there is a crisis and not to prevent one.

Support is needed through the whole criminal justice process from reporting through to prosecution and appearing at court.
We had an online survey for police staff - 459 people took part:

- They were experienced people - more than half had more than 10 years service
- Most were uniformed officers (two thirds)
- Some were investigative officers (20%)
- The rest were support staff including the Force Control Room
- Most had contact with people with autism or learning disabilities outside their police job
- Most also had contact in their job, mainly in person e.g. after an incident is reported.
Training

• Between a third and a quarter of the officers had received learning disability or autism awareness training

• It was generally not ‘probationer’ or ‘mandated’ police training

• Only 2% of the support staff had received training that covered autism and learning disabilities awareness.
Disability Hate Crime

Just under half the people who did the survey said the Crown Prosecution Service definition of hate crime was ‘very inclusive’ and ‘clear’.

A further 43% said it was ‘helpful’ but has ‘some grey areas’. Comments included:

• It’s a difficult definition because it relies on perceiving hostility towards the victim

• It’s difficult to identify if the crime was motivated by disability hostility or hatred

• The definition is open to abuse by people who want an enhanced service from the police.
Learning disability and autism awareness

• Police officers in uniformed and investigative roles saw understanding learning disabilities and autism as particularly important.

• Nearly two thirds of support staff also said it was important.

• There was a good general knowledge of learning disabilities and autism and the difficulties that individuals face.
There was poor general knowledge on some items. Most officers were not aware that:

- individuals with learning disabilities and autism are more likely to have mental health or other health-related problems \textit{and}
- people with learning disabilities tend to acquiesce.

Also, a large number thought that:

- a learning disability is a mental illness
- ADHD is a learning disability
- people with autism will always have a below average intelligence.
Those who had (any) training related to autism or learning disability responded correctly to more of the statements than those who did not have training.

Specific training leads to specific knowledge; those who had attended training covering learning disabilities only were significantly more likely to reply correctly to the statements about learning disabilities.

Those who had attended training covering autism only were significantly more likely to reply correctly to the statements about autism.
Respondents who had taken part in training that covered autism and/or learning disabilities were more likely to say they felt –

• *confident* they would know if a person has autism or learning disabilities

• *more competent* in knowing if an incident is hate related then dealing with it.

Officers who felt confident they would know if a victim has autism or learning disabilities were most likely to have had relevant training, plus personal experience of people with those disabilities both inside and outside work.
OFFICERS who felt the most **competent** in **responding** to hate incidents where a person with autism or learning disabilities is the victim were most likely to be those who told us they also felt **confident** they would **know if** the victim has learning disabilities and/or autism.

They would be most likely to have had contact with people with autism or learning disabilities through their job roles and personal experience outside work.
Involvement

Which agencies are involved in responding to reports?

- Police
- Family carers
- Rarely or never housing providers and care managers
- It should be the whole community
- It should be a partnership but let’s stick to our roles

‘I feel that numerous agencies including the police should be responsible for promoting the safety of people with learning disabilities and autism in the community. These agencies should work together I feel in order to ensure that this is effective’
Challenges for the police:

- Communication with people who have autism and learning disabilities
- Officers being able to communicate effectively
- Meeting the communication needs of victims
- Getting evidence to investigate and prosecute
- Time needed to do that, for busy officers.
We were able to look at 999 and other non-emergency reports made to Kent Police that involved victims with autism and learning disabilities.

These are mainly calls made to the Force Control Room (FCR).

To find the reports we chose a list of terms the police used to search their records e.g. learning disability, difficulty, autism, Aspergers etc.

We looked mainly at reports about crimes and incidents happening in Medway.

We found 53 crime reports (GENESIS) made during July 2009 to January 2012.

We found 45 incident reports (STORM) made during July 2009 to January 2011.
All those 98 reports were about 40 different people

11 of the Incident (STORM) reports were about one person and mostly described by the police as ‘disability’ and ‘nuisance’ incidents

13 of the Crime (GENESIS) reports were about one person

Most of the 27 victims of the crime (GENESIS) reports were male

A third of those were described as ‘vulnerable’

One third of the GENESIS reports concluded that they were ‘non-crime hate incidents’

Most of the reports were about things that happened in the street

‘Disability prejudice’ was recorded as the reason for about half the incidents.
Offenders

- The GENESIS reports held little information about offenders.
- In 38% of the reports there was only one offender.
- In 23% of the reports there were more than 5 offenders.
- Kent Police contacted victims offering opportunities to take part in our survey and to be interviewed.

A case study of a young victim we interviewed follows -
We interviewed a young man who had been victimised. We have called him James. When he was 18 years old a local 15 year old girl became his friend while he played outside with other children. She started to victimise him, asked him to expose himself while she took photos on her phone. He agreed. His parents called the police. This all happened outside near to his home sometimes while there were other children around. She admitted she had done it but had deleted the photos. The police warned her about her behaviour.

Over the next 2 to 3 years she ‘bullied’ James when he went out, taking his cap and trainers to throw them over walls, taking his mobile phone, swearing at him calling him a c**t, making offensive remarks about his disability, kicking, hitting and slapping him. When his father spoke to her outside the house she shouted that he was a ‘paedophile’. James’ parents estimate they called the police 15 to 20 times over the 2 to 3 years. One day the girl hit James round the head: he had a drain there and it could have been very serious. His family called the police. The police said it was hate crime. James was interviewed but it was decided the evidence he gave would not help a prosecution. James and his family were later told the girl had been prosecuted and banned from approaching him and his family or going into their road. She did sometimes ignore the ban. They heard that she then moved away to another town.
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
Many people live in the community without experiencing hate crime or victimisation.

However over 1/3 of people in Medway had experienced some form of victimisation as adults.

Wide variation in experiences
- Type of incident
- Who did it
- How often
- Responses of victims and their carers
- Responses from the police

People living in fear of victimisation

Most common response – people changed their lives in some way to avoid reoccurrence of incidents.

Impact can be severe and long lasting
Many are failing to achieve the vision set out in Valuing People Now (2009)

“People with learning disabilities are people first, in seeking to deliver personalised support, the priorities are to enable people to take control of their lives, have employment and educational opportunities, have choice over what they do during the day, have better health and have improved access to housing”.
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<tr>
<th>Issues preventing widespread good practice in responses to hate crime and victimisation:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lack of a clear, common, unambiguous definition of disability hate crime – term “Hate” not helpful.</td>
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<td>Level of knowledge and experience of LD and Autism for police officers, in particular around questioning in order to get a good statement</td>
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<td>Sometimes victims respond in ways that make them more vulnerable or get them into trouble themselves</td>
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<td>Current reporting system does not reliably capture level of vulnerability or whether or not people have a learning disability or autism</td>
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<td>Restructuring in the police – lack of specialist roles and some confusion over responsibilities.</td>
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<td>Resilience and resignation of some victims – not reporting – as don’t think it is serious enough or is just what people with LD have to go through.</td>
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- Need to promote preventative or proactive strategies as well as reactive ones.
- Vision and leadership required
RECOMMENDATIONS – NATIONAL LEVEL

- **Home Secretary** to refresh the government hate crime action plan to reflect findings from this study and add actions specifically related to victims with autism and learning disabilities.

- **Home Office** to define specific expectations and timescales for:
  - Implementing effective systems for identifying and monitoring nature, prevalence and outcomes of offences against people with LD and autism.
  - Simplifying hate crime definition
  - Replacing the use of the word “hate”

- **Department of Education** to review curriculum to improve effectiveness of developing positive attitudes

- **Skills for Care** to support the development of training resources related to hate crime and victimisation

- **The College of Policing** to develop NOS that support the development of police officers knowledge and skills in working with people with LD and autism (to include experiential learning)

- **Department of Health** to produce guidance:
  - for GPs conducting annual health checks in identifying physical and psychological effects of crime and harassment
  - For those completing Fair Access to Care Service assessments – to ensure experience of victimisation and vulnerability in the community are included as a need for support.
Community Safety Partnerships to take on ownership of tackling disability hate crimes working with Health and Wellbeing Boards and the third sector to:

- Introduce a Charter on how agencies will respond to incidents, to victims and their supporters.
- Support nominated learning disability and autism lead officers in awareness raising, training and best practice dissemination.
- Coordinate information and advice hubs to support people in keeping safe.
- Develop a common referral system to police, housing, social and health care and Victim Support.
- Offer post incident and crisis support for victims and those living in fear.
- Facilitate multi-agency panels to review cases, support and disposal options.
PANEL
Any questions?

Chaired by Detective Chief Inspector Andy Pritchard