

Understanding gendered approaches of care amongst police investigators of rape and serious sexual offences (RASSO) in England and Wales

Operation Soteria Bluestone - Panel 2

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European Society of Criminology Conference

September 2023



Overview

- To gain an understanding of whether officers display differences in care for their own welfare and wellbeing, based on their self-identified gender
- Acknowledging the role of care by both male and female officers for (predominantly female) victims of RASSO
- Recognising the potential for stress and trauma to officers with regular exposure to RASSO cases

Note: Although there has been an increase in non-binary gender identity, it is only since June 2021 that UK government data has included a further category, allowing police officers to identify as 'unknown', as an alternative to 'male' and 'female' (Gov.UK, 2022). Whilst we acknowledge non-binary identification of gender, this presentation uses the terms 'male' and 'female' throughout, in order to share findings and theory from existing literature and datasets





'We're the tough guys. We're the ones that save the day, rather than actually putting up our hands and saying we struggle too' (Male officer)

SURVEY FINDINGS	MALE	FEMALE
High levels of work-related stress	60.4%	67%
Suffering from ill health/felt unwell to work	57.9%	61.2%

Gendered reflections on wellbeing - findings

Interviews (n=28) and focus groups (n=23) totalling (n=129) participants



- *Depersonalisation: I have accepted the fact that possibly one day I might lose my job or be subject to scrutiny or comment that will be unfair and there's nothing I can do about it, so I might as well not worry about it' [Male officer]*
- *Emotional exhaustion: 'I want to spend time with my young children, I don't want to be here some days. The workload and the stress is too much. It is breaking people and people are broken' (Female officer)*
- *Lack of personal accomplishment: I desperately want them [victims] to get the best service and they're just not, because we don't have the time. So yes, it's embarrassing and it's disheartening' [Female officer]*

Summary



- Recognising care is a necessary component of policing
- Care is important both for the victim and for the officers themselves
- The organization has a responsibility to support its officers, through learning, development and welfare support
- The work of Operation Soteria Bluestone has provided impact to change the way police forces support their officers through the new RASSO National Operating Model

References



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**Thank you for
listening. Any
questions?**

