

Middlesbrough Survivors Panel

Survivor engagement self-audit checklist

These questions have been developed to support domestic abuse victim survivors decide whether they would like to be formally engaged as a survivor advocate. These questions might provide useful guidance for discussions between an organisation and a survivor during the recruitment process.

Joining

- What are my reasons for wanting to participate as a survivor advocate?
- Do I really want to participate or do I just feel like I should?
- Am I ready to talk about my own personal experiences if required?

Resources needed

- Do I have enough resources in place both personally and professionally to do the work required as an expert by experience?
- What support will I need to ensure my health and wellbeing is not negatively impacted by participation?
- How will I manage the emotions associated with talking about domestic abuse?
- What strategies will I use if someone reacts negatively or judgmentally to my expertise?

Safety considerations

- Is it safe for me to participate?
- Are there any ongoing risks posed by the person who abused me?
- Are there protections that can be put in place to increase my safety?
- Do I know if this organisation has procedures in place to record and remember the safety protections I want to put in place?

Boundaries

- How will I ensure my personal and professional boundaries are upheld?
- What are my personal limits regarding what I am happy to contribute as a survivor advocate?

- Am I clear about the limitations of this role and who I can represent when I speak publicly?

Legal considerations

- Am I involved in any ongoing legal proceedings that may be jeopardised by participating as an expert by experience?
- Are there any potential legal consequences of being an expert by experience?
- Am I clear about how I would make complaints or provide feedback about my involvement with this organisation?

Privacy

- What information am I ready to share and what information do I want to keep private?
- How do I feel about colleagues or family members finding out about my experiences?
- Do I want to participate in this work anonymously?
- Am I able to use my own name or do I want to use a pseudonym (alternative name)?
- Is it okay for photos of me to be used in promotional materials or online?

Other considerations

- Are there people in my life who need to be aware of my decision to be an expert by experience?
- How might my children or family feel about my decision to participate?
- What impact might this decision have on them?
- How might my community feel about, and react to, my decision to participate?
- How might their responses impact me?