

P-05-798 Male domestic violence victim support services to be independently run & funded, 5.11.18

Dear sirs

Please find attached our response for the Committee's consideration at their next meeting on 13th November.

We would be delighted to attend and present oral evidence to the Committee on these significant issues.

regards

Paul



BOTH PARENTS MATTER

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5th November 2018

David Rowlands AM
Chair- Petitions Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
CF99 1NA

Dear David

Petition P-05-798 – Male domestic violence services

We are grateful to the Committee for sharing the correspondence from the Leader of the House.

I feel that it is important for us to state that we have complete confidence in her good intentions in relation to the recognition of the separate needs of male victims of domestic violence and abuse and the importance of appropriate services being developed for them. We acknowledge that the Summary of Responses and the Key Themes documents do identify the separate needs of male victims of abuse, which we warmly welcome.

We hope that Committee will carefully consider the data that we have previously supplied in relation to the gap in provision for male victims in several areas of Wales – specifically the detailed data from Gwent and North Wales set out in our letter of 18th September to the Committee. The chasm in provision of support in relation to need is clear and obvious.

We are encouraged by the developing trend identified by some Local Authorities in South Wales – notably Cardiff – to seek to commission separate services for male victims of abuse. There is however a worrying trend that is also emerging with feminist organisations seeking to secure additional funding by claiming to provide support to men.

This development is concerning because many of these organisations remain members of Welsh Women's Aid and are being accredited under their National Quality Service Standards. These standards can be accessed here: <http://www.welshwomensaid.org.uk/what-we-do/our-members/standards/>

The Standards specifically provide for a differential approach when dealing with men (rather than women) as victims of abuse, which we understand is unlawful under the Equality Act 2010

– based on detailed correspondence between the Equality & Human Rights Commission, Mark Drakeford AM and our Vice Chair Anne O'Regan. These differential treatment of men is set out mainly under Standard One of the document.

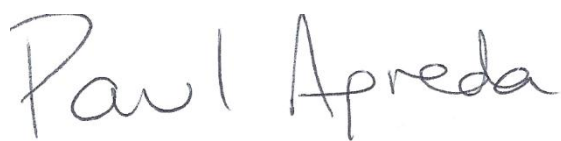
The approach from Welsh Women's Aid and its member and related organisations has clear benefits for the majority of victims / survivors of domestic violence and abuse who are (or identify as) female. In much of their literature – and in particular within the National Standards document – the concept of services 'by and for women' is strongly advanced. We entirely support this model of service development and delivery – as it is grounded in the needs of survivors. We also believe that men require the development of services that too are 'by and for' them rather than to be offered services provided by feminist organisations funded from the public purse. We strongly contend that services for men need to be developed and delivered safely separated from services for women and strongly focused on their needs and wishes by organisations grounded in their own experience rather than a feminist one.

In a recent survey of 728 male victims of abuse by our charity 82.3% of those who responded to this question (n.460) believed it IMPORTANT or ESSENTIAL that services for men be separated from services for women. This strikes at the heart of our petition – the opening line of which is:

'Male domestic violence victim support services to be independently run & funded separately from Women's Aid Cymru & all associated....'

We are now asking the Committee to invite feminist organisations to explain why they believe they are best placed to provide support to men as well as women and more importantly to seek public funding for this work.

Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Apreda". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letters of "Paul" and "Apreda" being significantly larger and more stylized than the rest of the letters.

Paul Apreda

National Manager
FNF Both Parents Matter