

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report demonstrates the total value that women's organisations delivering health services provide to the NHS in terms of monetary cost savings and long term health outcomes. The findings indicate that the annual savings made to the NHS by the women's health sector amounts to £454,296,693. That is almost half a billion pounds per year!

A Social Return On Investment (SROI) model has been used to calculate indicative figures of NHS savings accrued by the women's health sector. It quantifies their value, and shows how and why they offer quality care, address gaps, reduce health inequalities, save money, and improve health and care outcomes. The report has focused on services offering "dedicated space and services for women", in particular delivered by women's specialist voluntary organisations.

The aim of the project is to assist health and local authority commissioners and other policy and decision makers to support and promote dedicated services for women.

Some of the key statistics of this report include:

- 36% of women's voluntary and community sector organisations in the UK are involved in the provision of adult health and/or social care and support services.
- Among survivors of abuse, 70% were more satisfied with voluntary sector services than with statutory services.
- 70% of women psychiatric in-patients and 80% of those in secure settings have histories of physical or sexual abuse.
- Women who have experience sexual violence as an adult or sometimes as a child are 2.9 times more likely to suffer Common mental disorder such as depression and anxiety.
- Women who have experienced sexual violence as an adult or sometimes as a child are 10 times more likely to suffer Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).
- Women who have experienced sexual violence as an adult or sometimes as a child are 6 times more likely to experience Homelessness.

Savings to the NHS by the Voluntary sector:

- Women's voluntary and community sector organisations collectively save the NHS nearly £500 million pounds annually.
- Maternity Action's intervention would most likely contribute to an increase in breastfeeding duration which could save the NHS at least £9.5 million annually.
- Tyneside women's health's wellbeing for women project, showed that in one year of the project, it could save the NHS over £1.3 million.
- Rape Crisis centres collectively could save the NHS almost £75 million.
- Positively UK has identified the potential NHS savings over £886,157 in its programme 'From pregnancy to baby and beyond', which supports women living with HIV.

Some of the recommendations of this report include:

- Commissioners should undertake a mapping exercise of women's organisations in their area.
- Commissioners will gain from encouraging input from women's organisations to service planning and delivery for health and wellbeing.

- Fund women's organisations to create a service-provider mix and save the NHS money.
- Commissioners should explicitly specify the inclusion of smaller specialised organisations to deliver services for women and other marginalised groups.
- Local commissioning should consider gender, women's inequality and the need for dedicated women's services as part of government's mental health reforms.
- Improving access to psychological therapies (IAPT) need to allow scope for women's organisations to deliver services.

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Email: patricia@wrc.org.uk