

Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse Counselling Centre Sligo, Leitrim and West Cavan



Annual Report 2017

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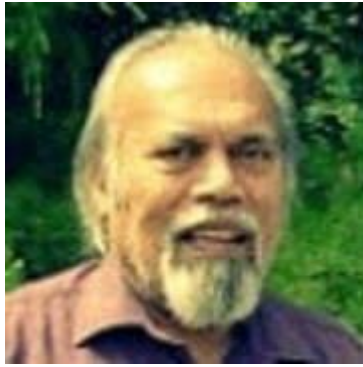
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CHAIRMANS'S REPORT 2017

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the Annual Report for The Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse Counselling Centre Sligo, Leitrim & West Cavan. This report reflects our work and activities for the year 2017.

I firstly wish to recognise the valuable resources that are our committed volunteers and staff, without whom we would not be in any position to deliver our much needed support services for the survivors of Sexual Violence.

2017 marked the continued growth and development of the organisation. Our strategic plan remained focused on the development of our counselling service and the strengthening of our governance systems in line with the welcome changes in the national charity environment. In line with our strategic plan, in 2017 our board took the decision to develop the role of our part time support manager to that of full-time CEO. This has enabled us to look at the long term trajectory of the organisation, and to plan new developments for the future.

I also take this opportunity to express our gratitude to our partners in TUSLA for the continued support that they have provided for our work whilst we continue to campaign, with and to them, to further support us with improved funding and resources to enable our sector to provide increased and improved services to the survivors who look to us for support. My gratitude also goes to our hard working fundraising volunteers and equally to the generosity of the general public in the region responding to our events with such regularity.

I sincerely wish to thank all of our counsellors, staff and volunteers, as well as our other team members for the spirit with which they all execute the work of the organisation. I extend my thanks to all of our Board members for their un-wavering support and commitment to the organisation. On a personal level I acknowledge the support I have received from them in my role as Chairman.

I would like to welcome our newest director, Laura Freeman to the board.

Finally, I take this opportunity as Chairman and on behalf of the Board as well as Team SRCC in wishing Anne Farrington a speedy recovery and to thank Anne for her generous time and expertise which she shared with us in her role as Board Director during 2017. Let us continue to grow in strength and deliver more support to our audience in 2018.

Dr. Parvez A. Butt

Introduction and Context

There are adults everywhere who have experienced some form of sexual violence either as a child or adult. The unacceptability of sexual violence and the devastating effects of such traumatic experiences have long been recognised by the Rape Crisis Movement, resulting in Rape Crisis Centres being set up to address both the needs of survivors of sexual violence and the causes of sexual violence in our society. The Rape Crisis Movement has its roots in feminism and believes that sexual violence is a result of the power imbalance and role differences between men, women and children within our society.

The Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse Counselling Centre was originally established in Sligo in 1996 as a local response to sexual violence within the region. Our geographical remit is essentially the regions of Sligo, Leitrim and West Cavan. However,

people do not have to live in these areas to access our services. The Centre is a member of the Rape Crisis Network of Ireland.

How we work

The Centre provides a safe and confidential space for survivors of child sexual abuse, rape and sexual assault. Here, adults and young people can explore and access help with the legacy of issues resulting from their traumatic experiences. The centre provides a non-directive service where survivors are treated with respect and empowered throughout their counselling process. This process is underpinned by the belief that everyone has the inner capacity and resources to move towards change and well being. We believe that no matter what the circumstances sexual violence is never the survivor's fault, the perpetrator is always solely responsible for their actions. All our counselling and support services are also available to survivor's families and friends.

Our Vision

Sligo, Leitrim and West Cavan Rape Crisis and Sexual Abuse Counselling Centre will tackle the hurt, heal the trauma and ensure justice for victims of sexual violence in its catchment area.

Our Mission

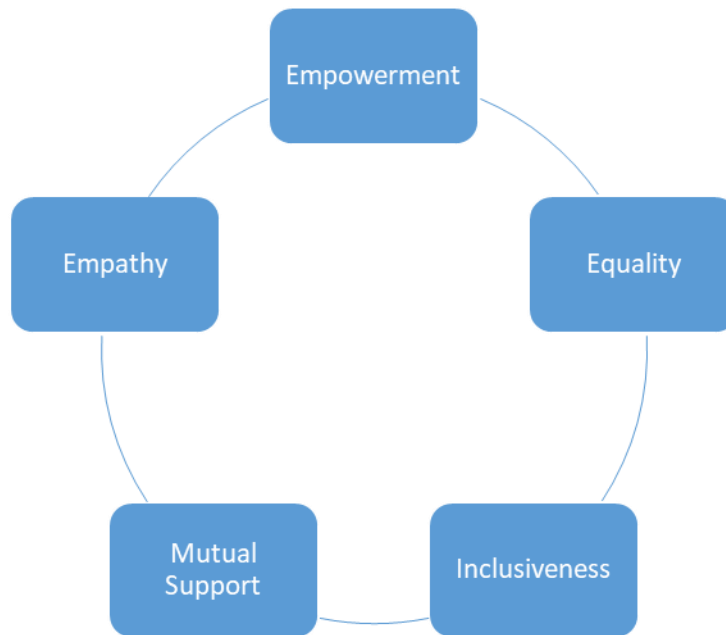
Our purpose is to create a safe place for those who have experienced sexual violence, recently or in the past, through providing a fully resourced professional counselling and advocacy service.

Our Principles

- We believe that sexual violence in all its forms is an abuse of human rights and should never be accepted.
- We guarantee professionalism and ethical practice in our centre and for our clients.

- Our systems and practices demonstrate integrity, transparency, and accountability.
- We ensure clients, volunteers and staff are treated with respect and dignity.
- We take a proactive approach in the area of sexual violence; providing education on the dynamics behind sexual violence, the effects upon survivors and society's reactions.

Our Values



What we do

We provide the following services:

- Crisis counselling
- Ongoing face to face counselling
- Outreach counselling
- Free phone helpline
- Support, advocacy and information for survivors, in particular around legal issues
- Relationship counselling
- Survivors support group
- Counselling, support and information for supporters of survivors
- Hospital, court, GP, Garda accompaniment
- Education, training and awareness-raising
- Lobbying and influencing policy on relevant issues through the Rape Crisis Network Ireland
- Networking, experience and information sharing with other relevant voluntary and statutory organisations.

Who we are

Directors

The following members were appointed and retained as Directors during 2017

Parvez Butt Chair)
Sharon Conway (Secretary)
Kate Duke (Treasurer)
Karen O'Shea
Anne Farrington
Suzanne Donnelly
Laura Freeman

Volunteers

Ursula Devaney
Margaret Thermes
Suzanne Connolly
Cathy Ham
Josephine Duffy
Rosemary McWeeney
Sharon Conway
Paul Harte
Aideen Laverty
Andrea Best
Josette Newman
Syliva Farkasovska

Staff

| | | |
|--------------------------|---|-----------------|
| CEO | : | Trish Flynn |
| Counselling Coordinator | : | Gilla Cornelius |
| Administrator/Counsellor | : | Elaine Hanson |
| Counsellor | : | Tina Horton |
| Outreach counsellor | : | Ursula Devaney |

CEO Report

The Centre was officially opened in 1999 and has developed substantially since this time to a centre which delivers over 1200 hours of face to face counselling as well as a host of other client and supporter services. The centre is core funded by TUSLA and approximately 50% of our counselling services are delivered by unpaid volunteers.

In 2017, a number of additional counselling volunteers were recruited and this has added significantly to the counselling output of the centre as a whole and has enabled us to consider the further future development of our counselling outreach services in south Sligo, West Cavan and County Leitrim.

Our Strategic Plan 2017-2020 is currently operational. We are committed to continuously reviewing and refining our service provision and operation.

All of our staff have undergone the Rape Crisis Network of Ireland Training and the vast majority of our counsellors have further training, many with post graduate qualifications.

All of our counsellors are accredited with bodies including the Rape Crisis Network of Ireland, The Irish Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy, and The British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy.

The Centre is a member of the Irish Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy.

The Centre is committed to providing regular continuing professional development training to its counsellors in order to continue to provide a competent, professional service.

Outreach Counselling Centres

In 2017 we continued our provision of Face to Face Outreach Counselling in Carrick-on-Shannon, and we also extended our outreach to Manorhamilton and Tubbercurry. The Outreach service provides all the counselling and support services offered at our main centre in Sligo. During 2017 we provided approximately four appointments in Carrick on Shannon every week, two in Manorhamilton and one in Tubbercurry. This represents a significant step towards providing counselling and support services throughout our catchment area of Sligo, Leitrim and West Cavan. However, additional investment by TUSLA will be required if we are to meet the high demand for our services throughout the catchment area.

Volunteer Activity

Volunteer involvement ranges from provision of face to face therapy, helpline cover, directorship, fundraising, awareness raising, training and education. We have a number of volunteers with different skills, including client support, office skills and fundraising. These people contribute important skills and time to our operations and we are enormously grateful to them all.

Interagency Work

The Rape Crisis Network continues to act as a source of support, information, training and development to member rape crisis centres and is a medium through

which we as a Rape Crisis Centre can influence policy and lobby for change on a national level.

We are also members of the Managers Forum which meets monthly in Dublin. We network also at a local level and are keenly aware of the importance of local connections and networks in relation to referrals and awareness raising.

TUSLA

In 2017 we continued our positive relationship with TUSLA the Child and Family Agency, who are our core funders. TUSLA continues to support our development and growth as a service provider.

In line with our service level agreement, a number of monitoring meetings with TUSLA were attended by us during 2017, and we are involved in ongoing consultation meetings with TUSLA around commissioning and development within the Sexual Violence sector.

Education and Awareness Raising

A number of small grants were received in 2017 to develop particular projects. For example, in 2017 the Irish Human Rights and Equality Authority have committed €5,800 to us for 2018 projects in the area of sexual violence training and support. We are extremely grateful for this kind of funding which enables us to training and awareness raising work. Also Sligo County Council gave us €650 towards the purchase of volunteer equipment. This work is not covered by our core funding and so the small grants are very important to us.

Fundraising

During 2017 we received a significant amount in donations through our donation boxes in the counselling rooms, and also through private donations. We also held our annual Flag day in October which was supported by a number of dedicated volunteers. All of this money goes towards additional counselling services and is very valuable to us.

A funding application was granted by TUSLA in 2017 for additional funding to support our management function and our governance. This demonstrates their confidence in us and is very welcome.

Finally a big thank you to everybody who supports us through attending our fundraising events. The support of our local communities are invaluable.

Evaluation

During 2017 the Board and executive continued a process of self appraisal around our role, responsibilities and effectiveness including training in the area of GDPR, Governance and Commissioning. We are fully compliant with the Governance Code, We are continuously reviewing our policies and updating them according to best practice. We are registered with the Charity Regulatory Authority (CRA) and are regularly submitting our annual reports which will bring welcome developments in accountability and governance to the charity sector.

Helpline

The free phone help line has been extended to almost full office opening hours Monday to Friday and we have trained a number of supporters to answer the calls. We have applied to TUSLA to assist with capital funding to upgrade our communications system which will streamline the service further.

Future Development

The main barrier to our development continues to be the scarcity of financial resources available to the centre. In 2018 in particular the centre would like to build stronger links through the media and social media to raise the profile of the work we do and the help that is available for people affected by sexual violence, and also to develop our community engagement strategy.

We plan to continue our relationship with the TUS programme and in 2018 we have plans to engage with internships from the Social Care Programme in Sligo IT. In 2018 we hope to further develop our Outreach Counselling Service and extend the service further with a more permanent presence in County Leitrim and a future service in West Cavan.

Statistical Information 2017

The information in this report is compiled using the RCNI Database. The RCNI Database equips RCCs to extract data regarding use of their own local service and simultaneously equips RCNI to deliver comparable national data.

Face to Face Client Information (survivor and supporter)

The following figures refer to information about the survivors and supporters who use our face to face counselling and support services.

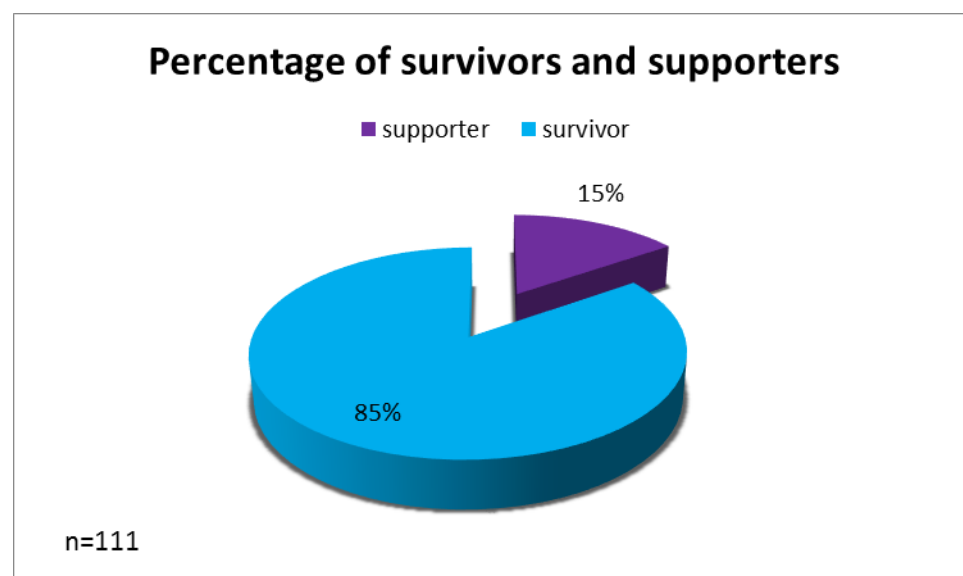


Figure 1.1

The percentage of Supporters has remained almost the same at 15% in 2017 compared with 18% in 2016

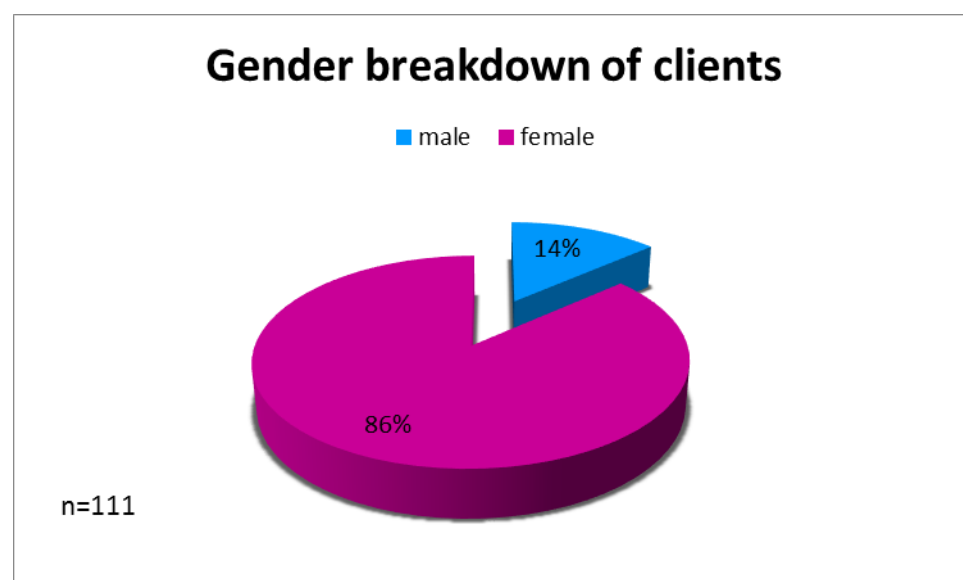


Figure 1.2.

There has been a slight increase in the number of men availing of our service from 13% in 2016 to 14% in 2017.



Figure 1.3

The percentage of clients seen by staff and volunteers remains similar to 2016.

Survivor Information

The following figures provide demographic information on the survivors accessing our face to face Services

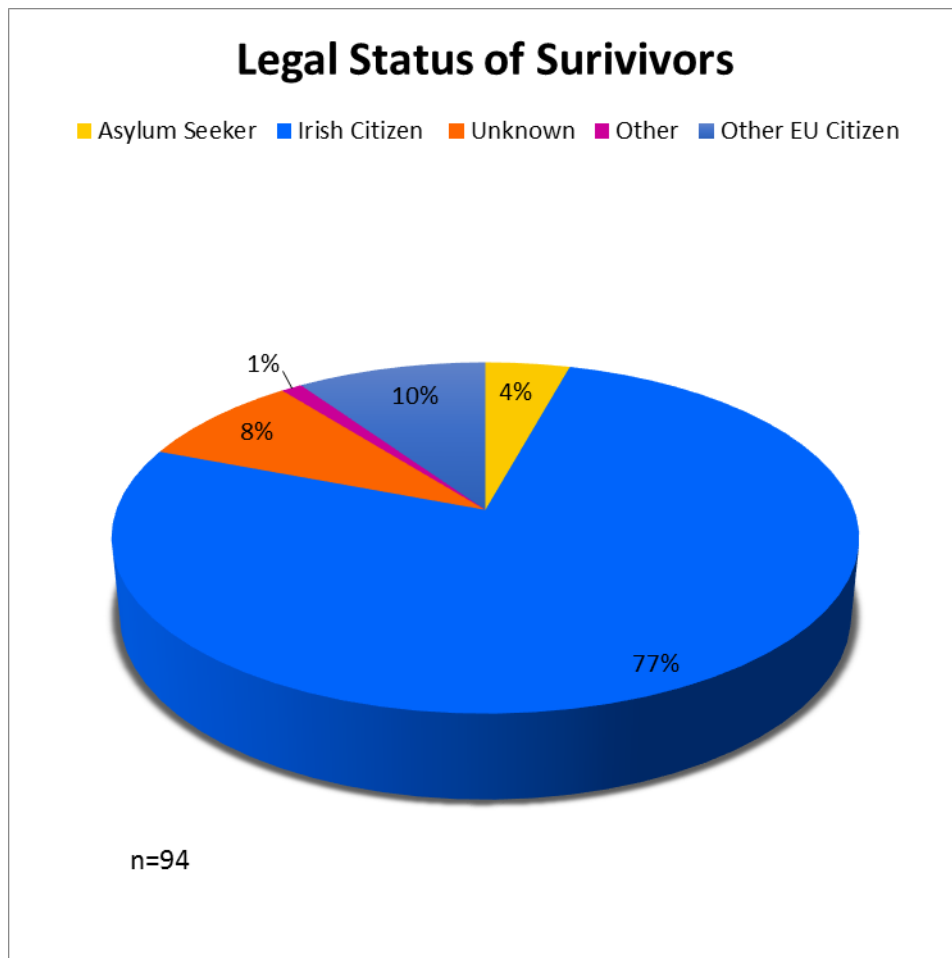


Figure 2.1

The main difference in 2017 is that the number of asylum seekers using our service has decreased from 6% to 4%. This is not surprising given that the services that were in place for Asylum Seekers which used to refer to us have been cut.

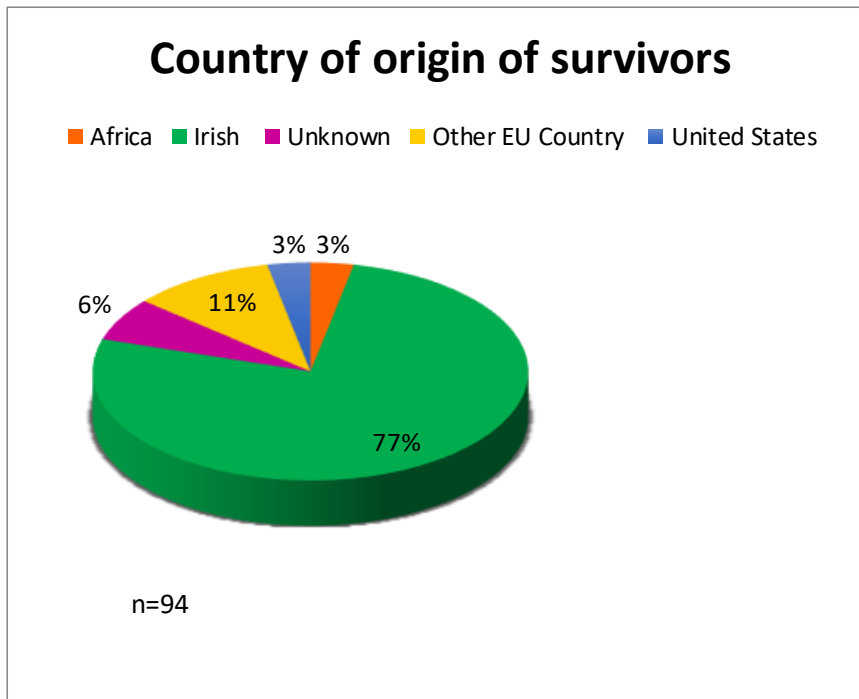


Figure 2.2
This profile remains similar to previous years

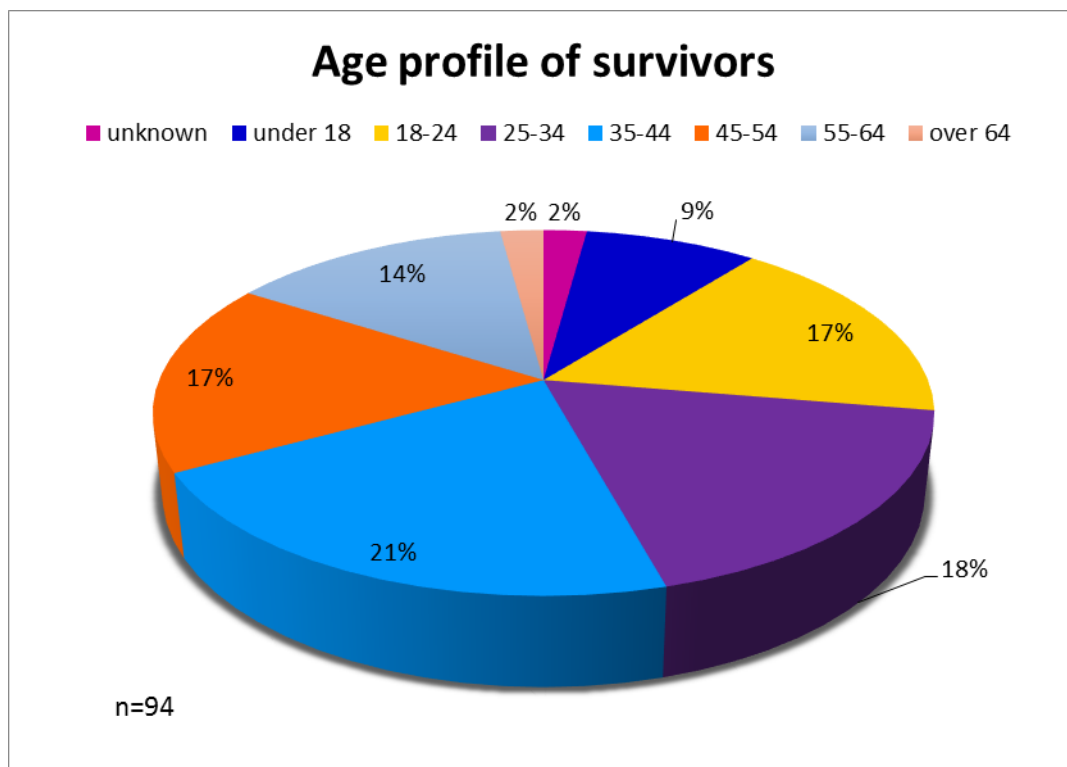


Figure 2.3
In 2017 26 % of our clients were under 24, similar to previous years.

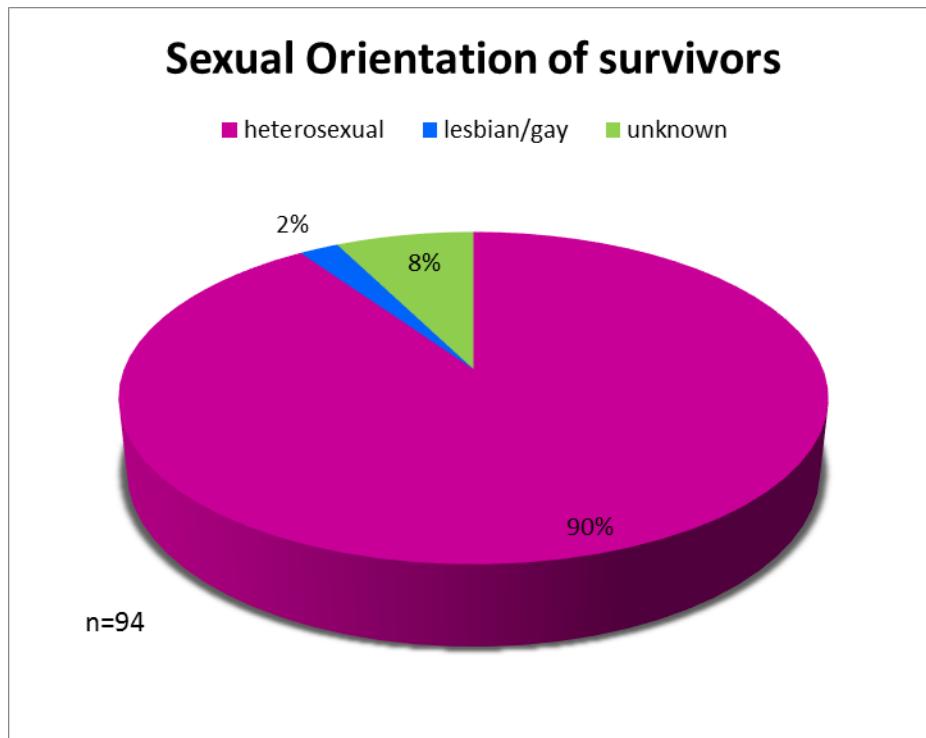


Figure 2.4
There was no substantial change in figures for 2017

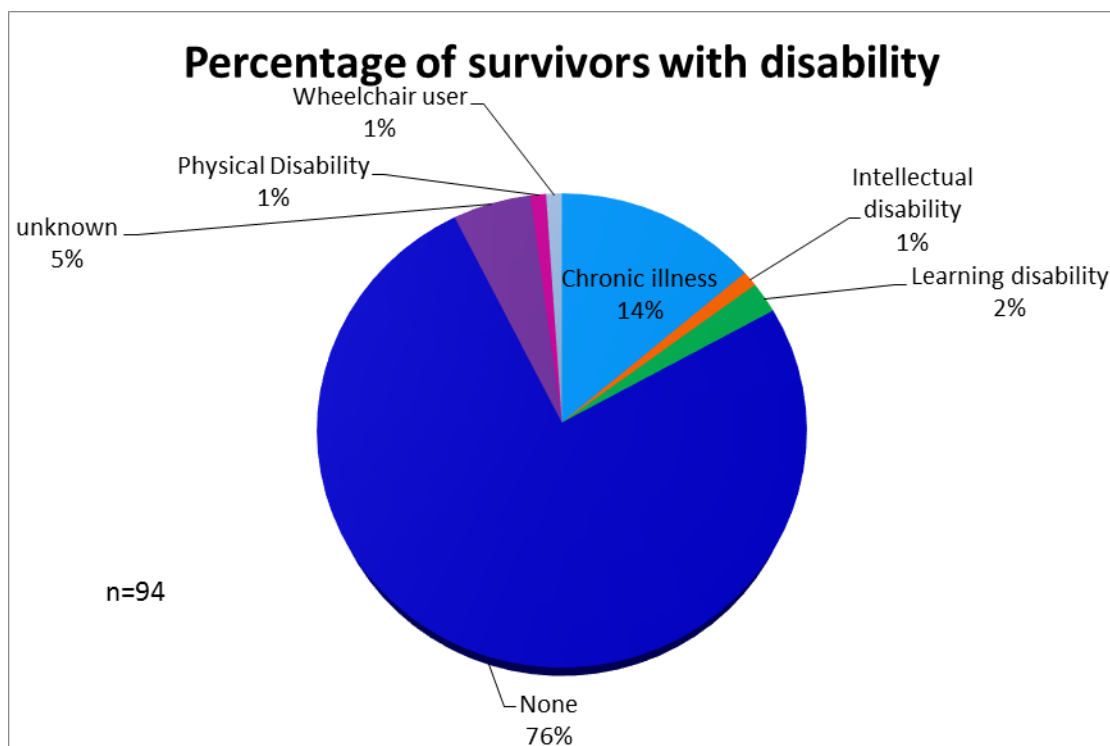


Figure 2.5
There was a further increase in 2017 in clients presenting with a chronic illness from 8% in 2015 to 14% in 2017.

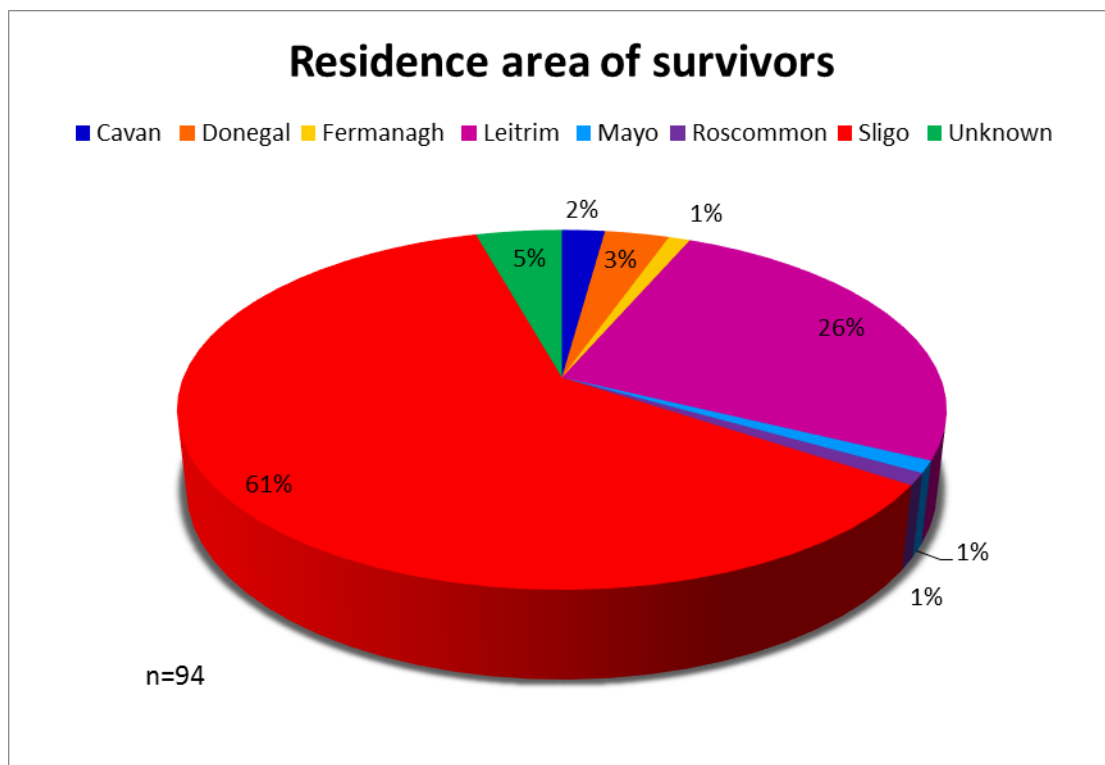


Figure 2.6
Figures remain similar to previous years.

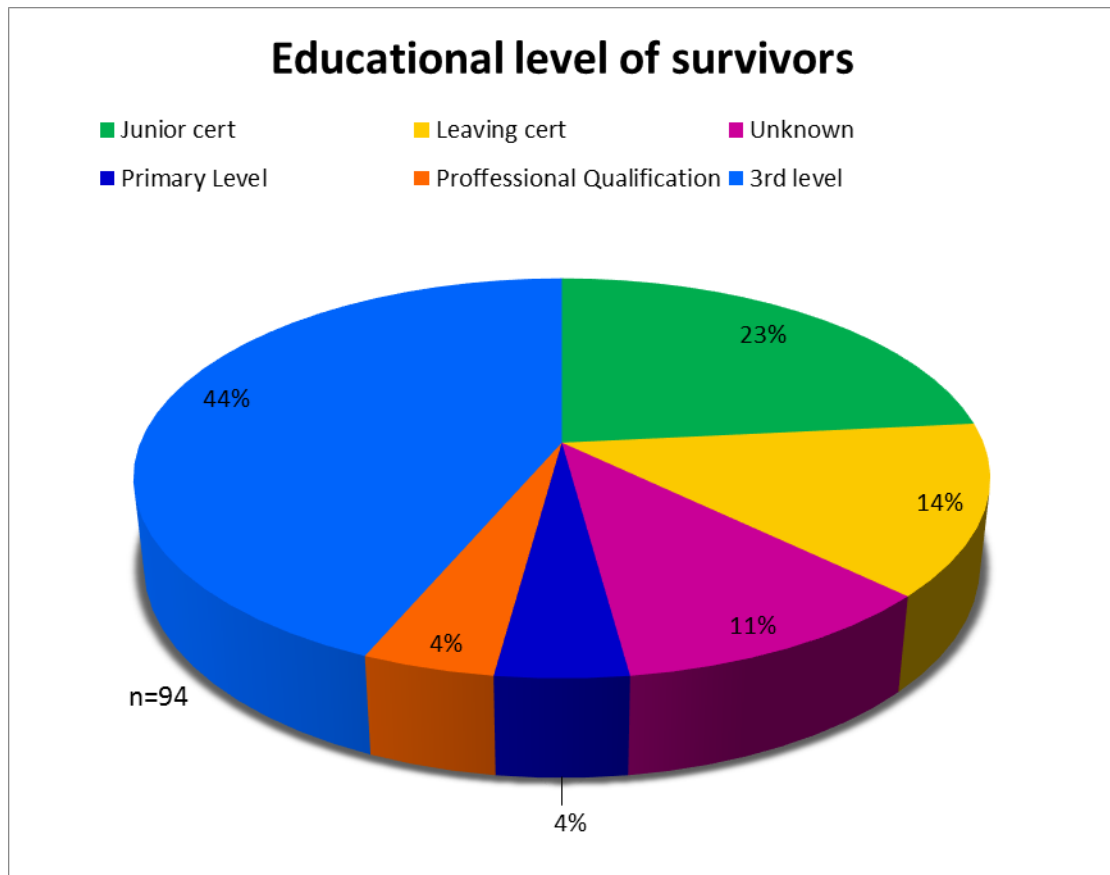


Figure 2.7

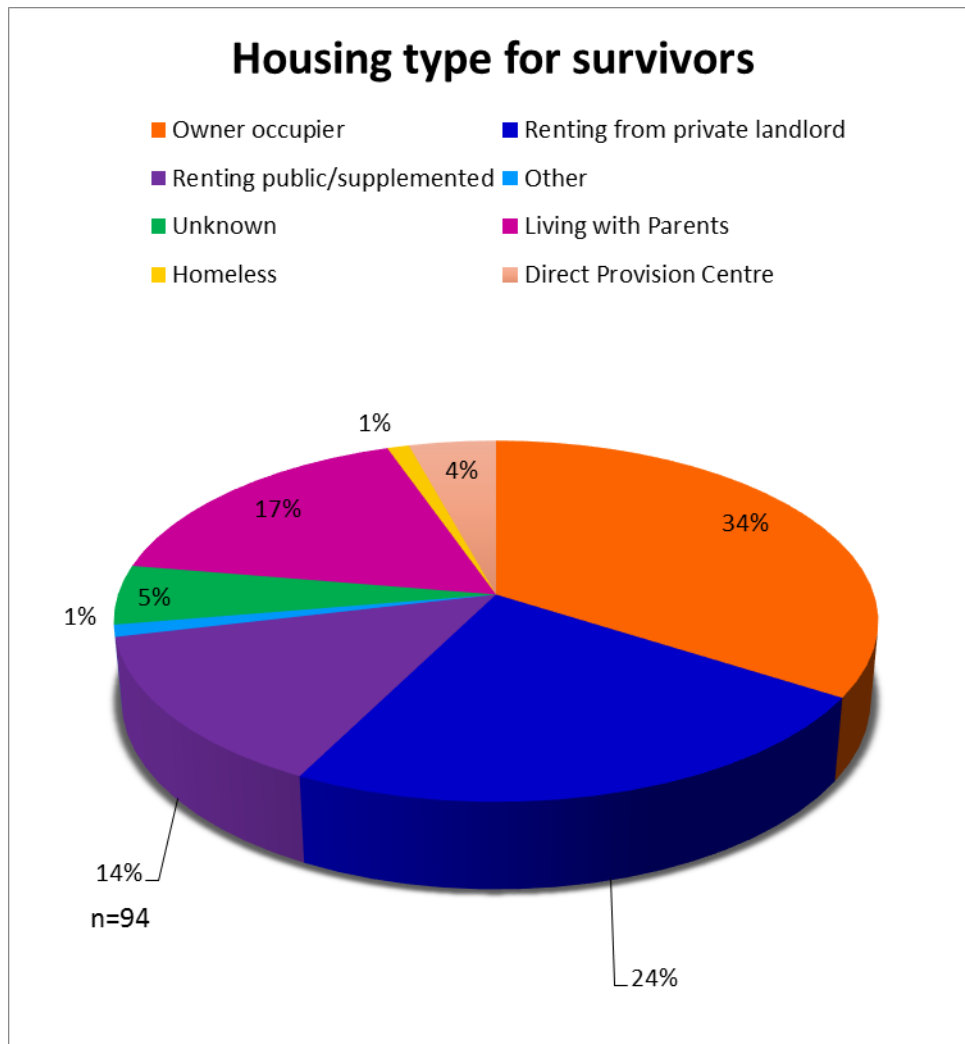


Figure 2.8

Figures 2.7 and 2.8 show that a wide cross section of our community uses our services from all educational and social economic backgrounds

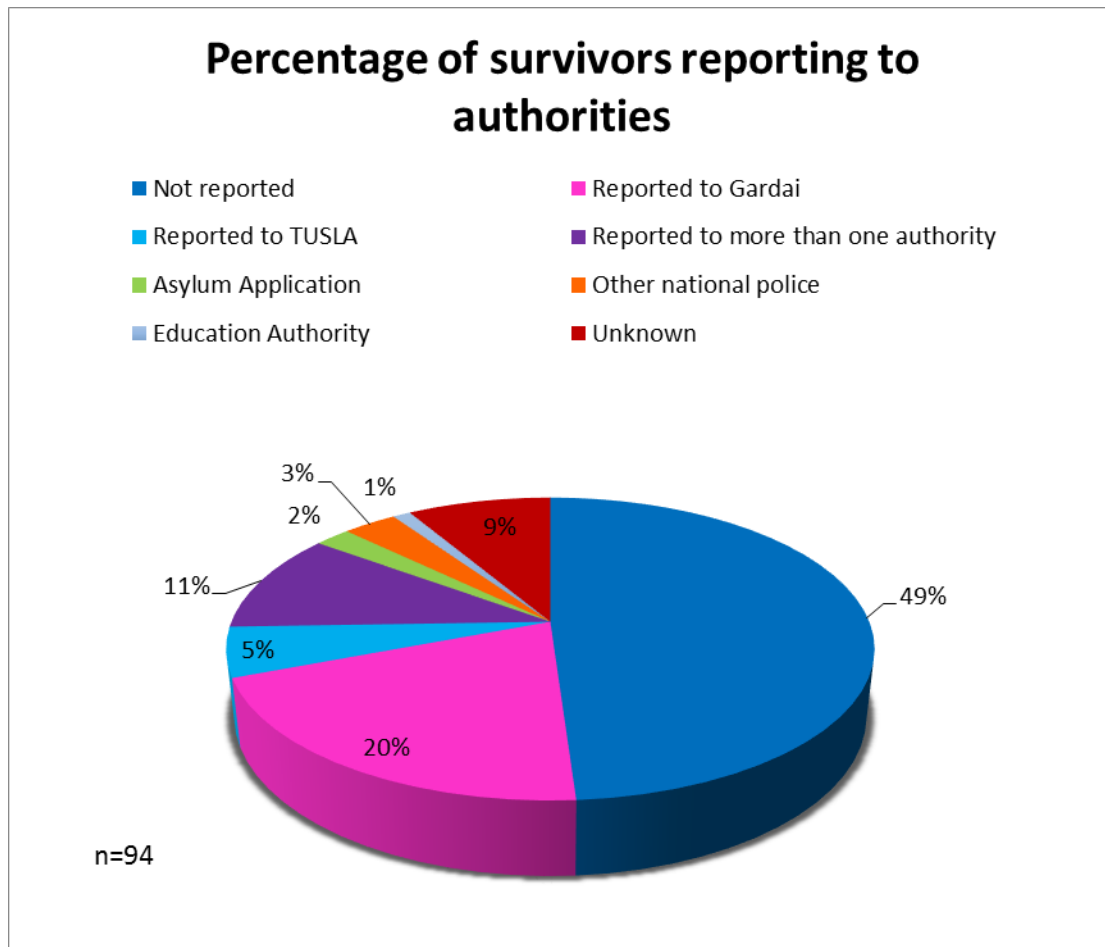


Fig 2.9

The percentage of unreported crimes of sexual violence remained at 49% in 2017. Overall the percentage of our clients that report to the Gardai (19%) is higher than that of the general population which has a reporting rate of 10% (Sexual Violence in Ireland, 2002). Evidently the vast majority of sexual crime is not reported or not taken forward to trial and this is a situation rape crisis centres want to see changed by calling for legislative reform that makes the whole legal process an easier, quicker, more supportive and informed experience for complainants of sexual crime.

Sexual Violence Information

The following figures refer to the type of sexual violence experienced by the survivors availing of our face to face counselling and support services

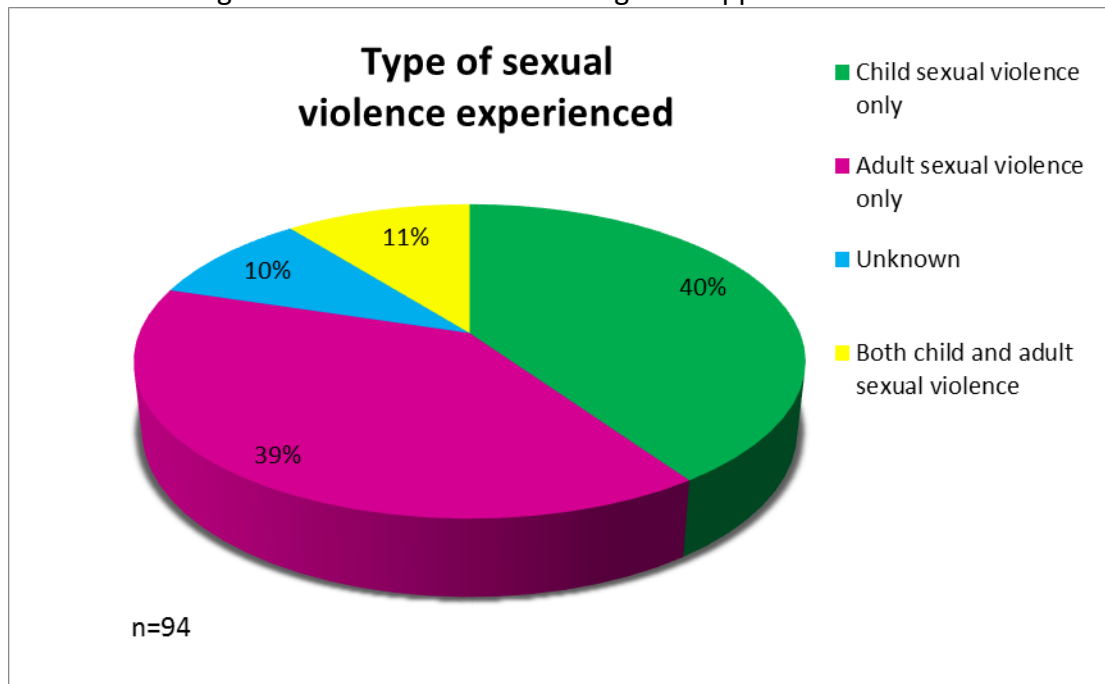


Figure 3.1

In 2017, 51% of our clients had experienced child sexual abuse.

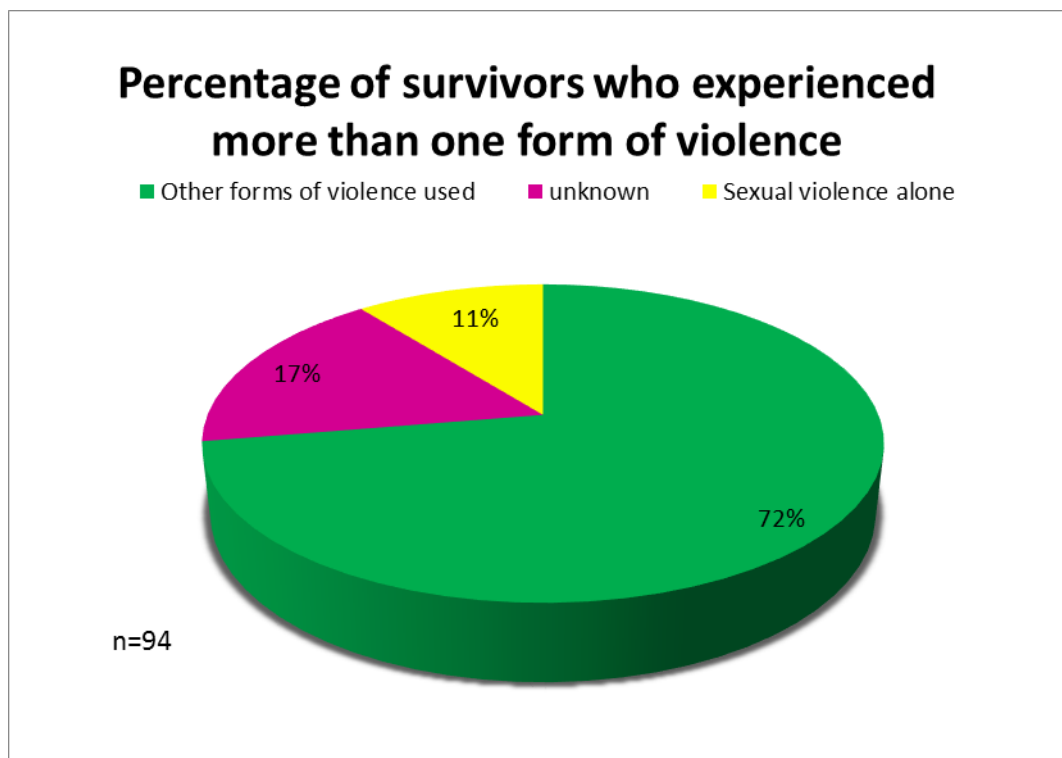


Figure 3.2

The percentage of survivors experiencing more than one form of violence remained similar to the previous year.

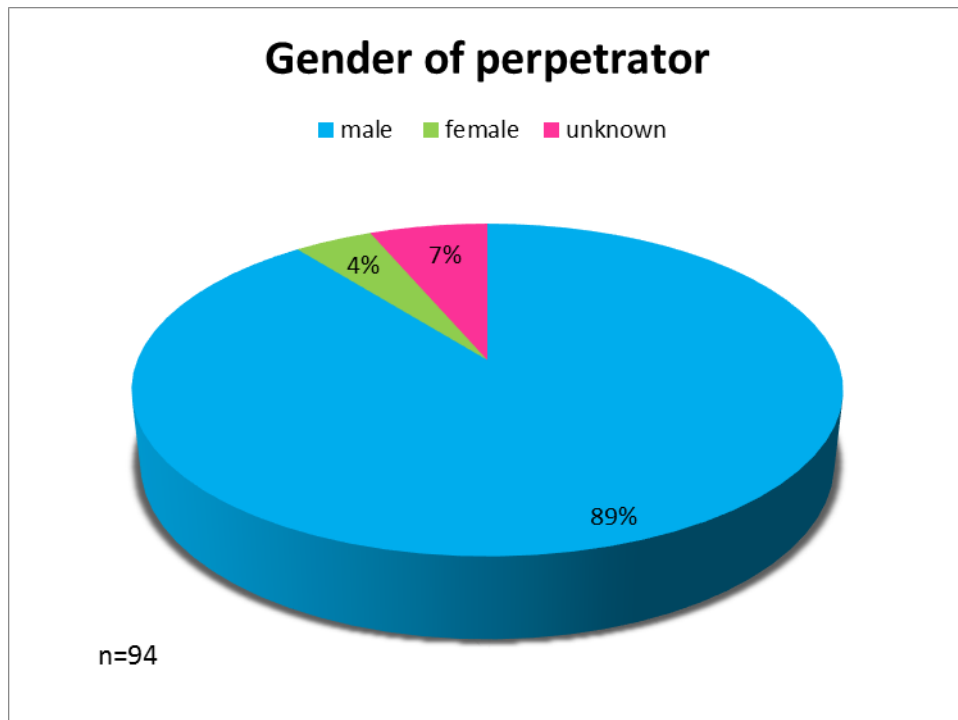


Figure 3.3
The gender profile of perpetrators remains similar to previous years

Service Information

The following figures refer to service statistics relating to how clients come to our face to face service and phone counselling, the types of services clients are using and the uptake of services in comparison with other years

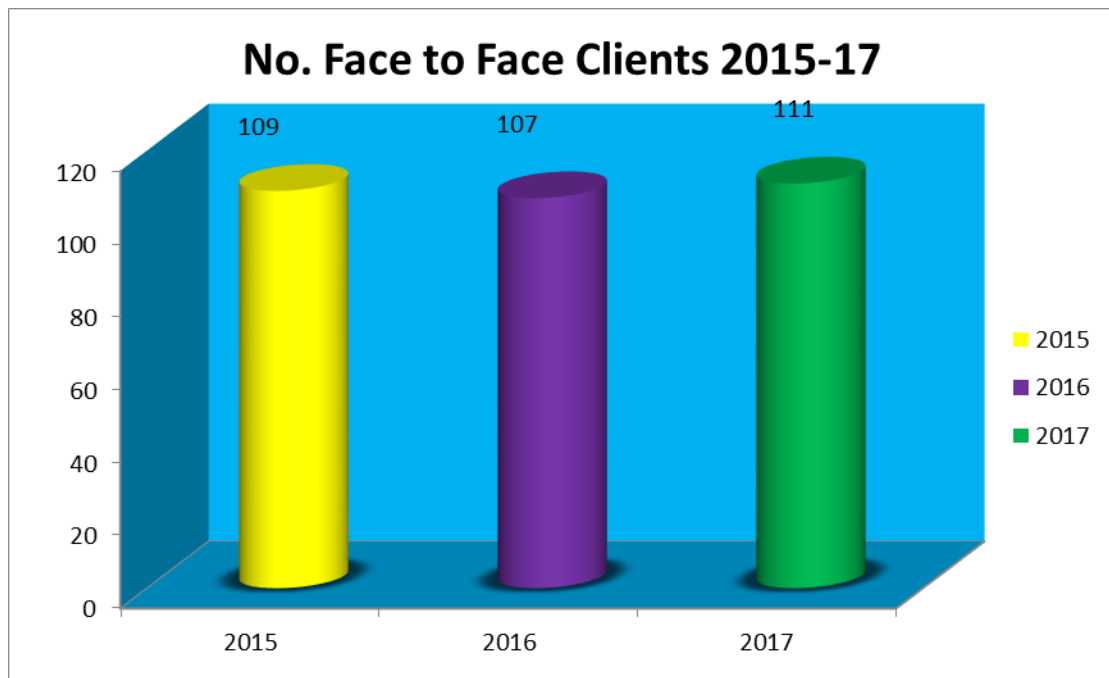


Figure 4.1
There has been an increase in the number of people attending for face to face counselling in 2017

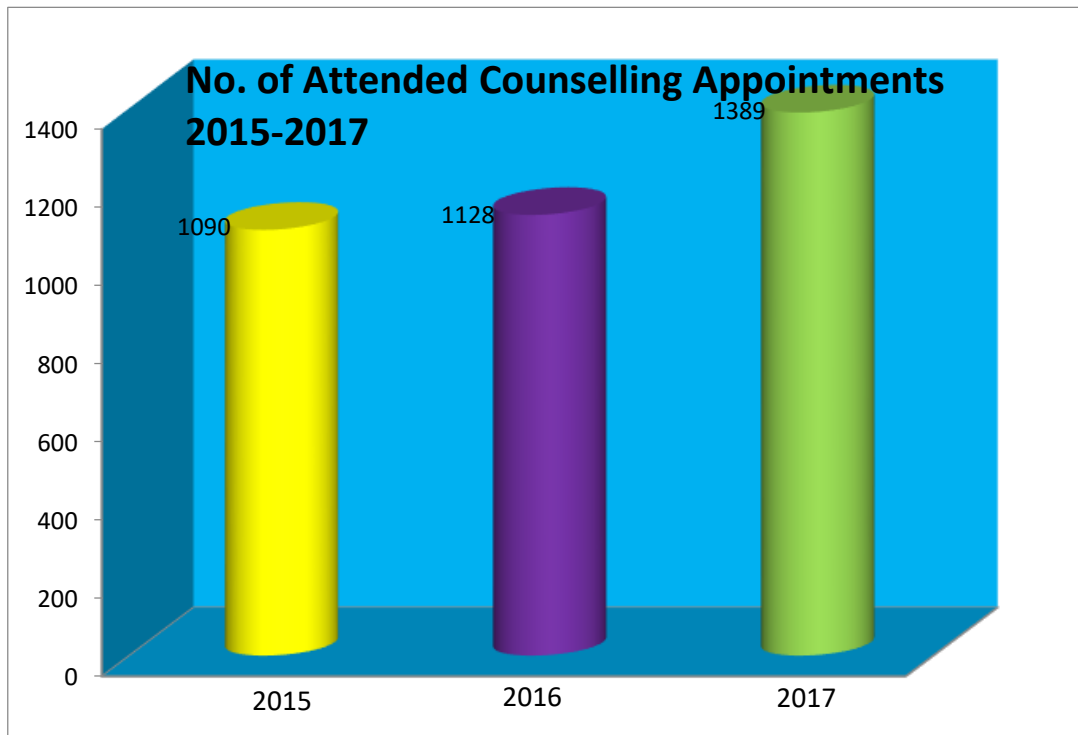


Figure 4.2

There has been a 23 % increase in the number of attended counselling appointments in 2017

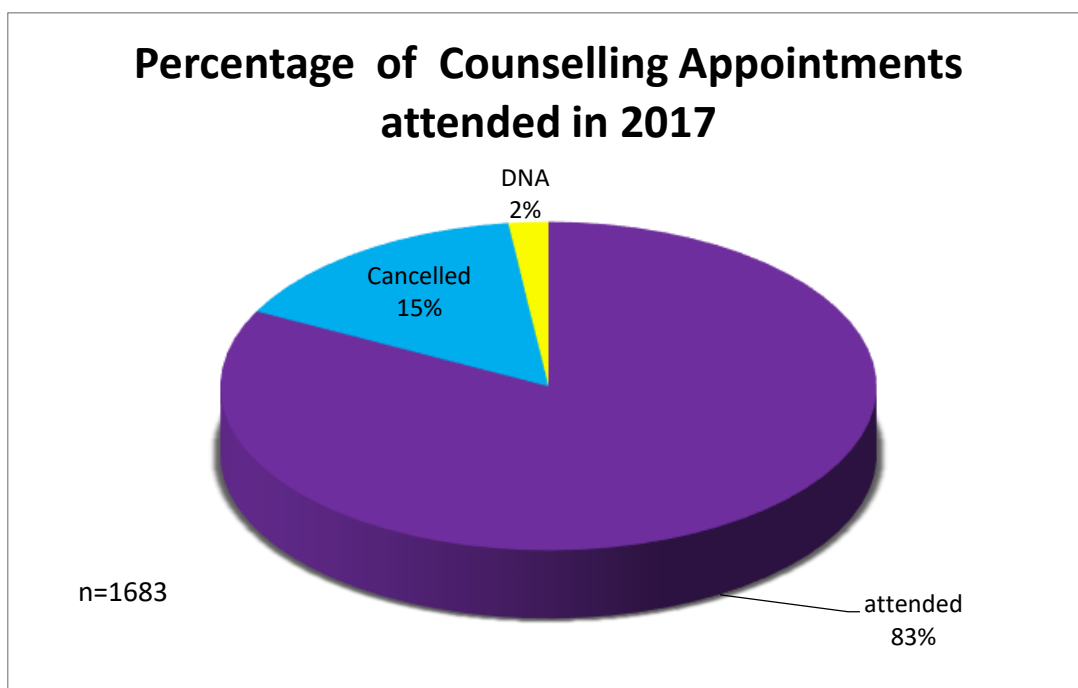


Figure 4.3

The Percentage of attended appointments remains similar to previous years.

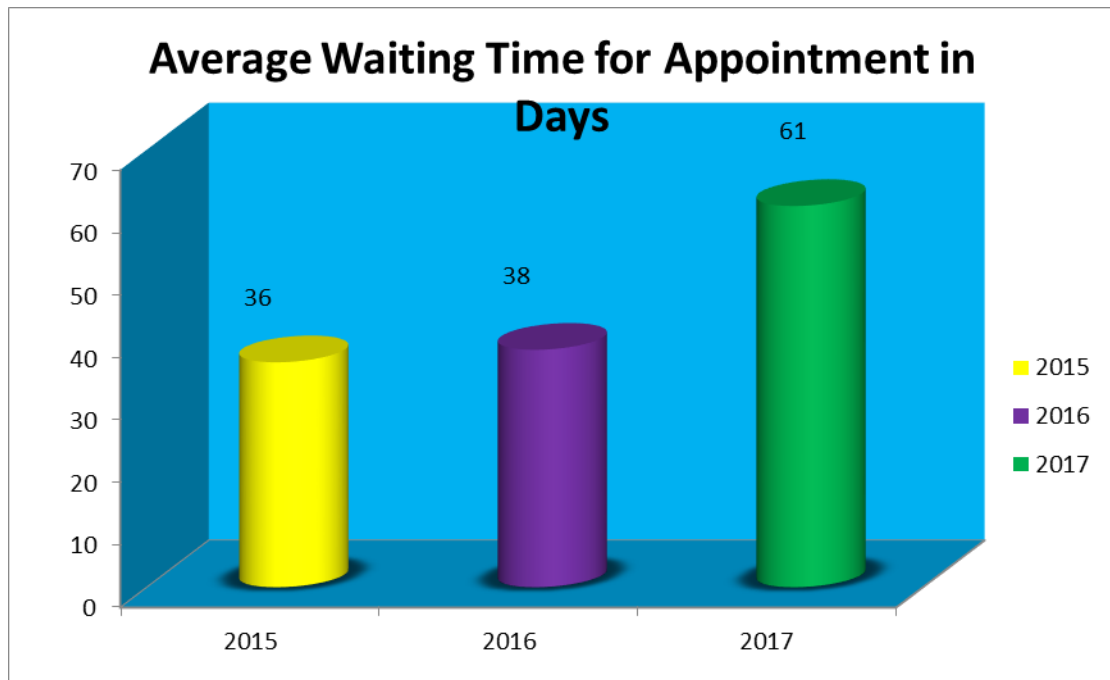


Figure 4.4

There has been a significant increase in waiting times for appointments in 2017, with clients now waiting for almost 9 weeks on average for their first appointment, compared with 2016 when they waited just over 5 weeks on average.

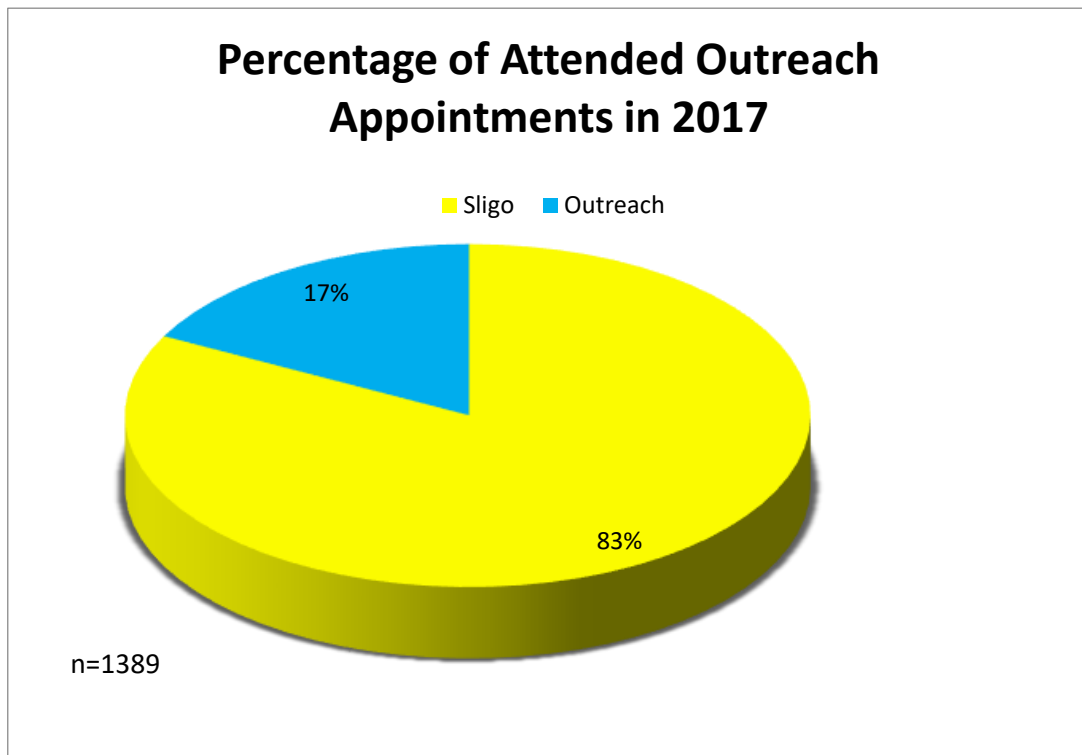


Figure 4.5

The proportion of appointments attended in our outreach centres have remained the same in 2017

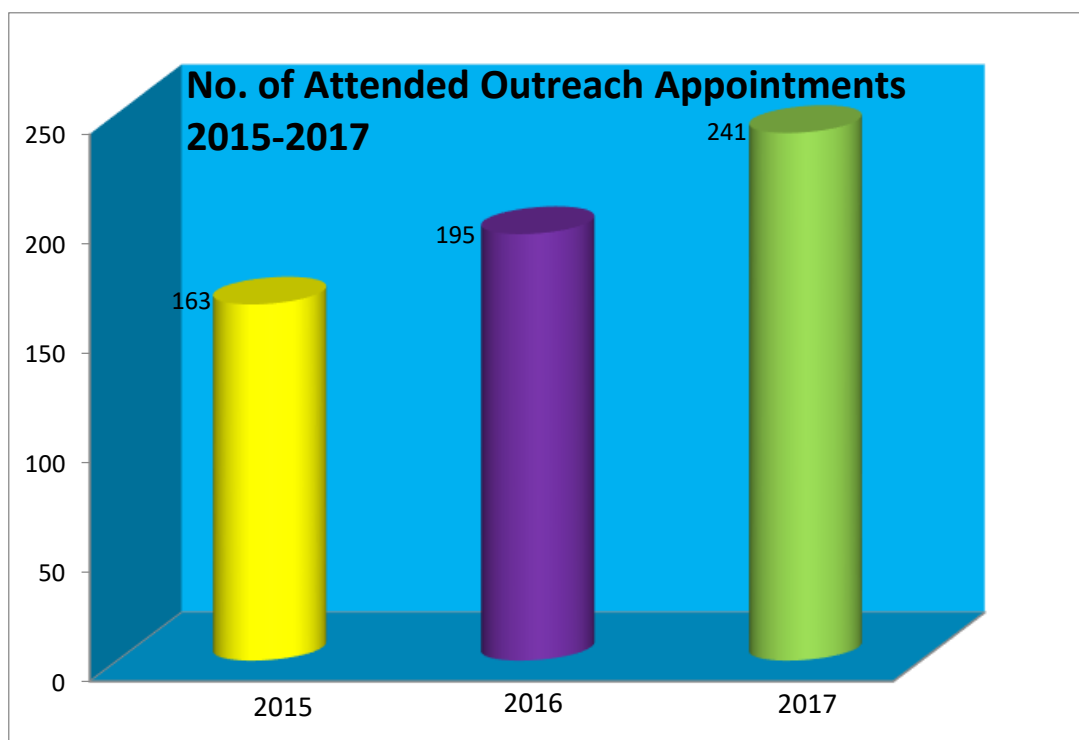


Figure 4.6

There has been a significant increase in the number of counselling sessions from 2016-2017 as we have increased the number and geographical spread of our outreach clinics.

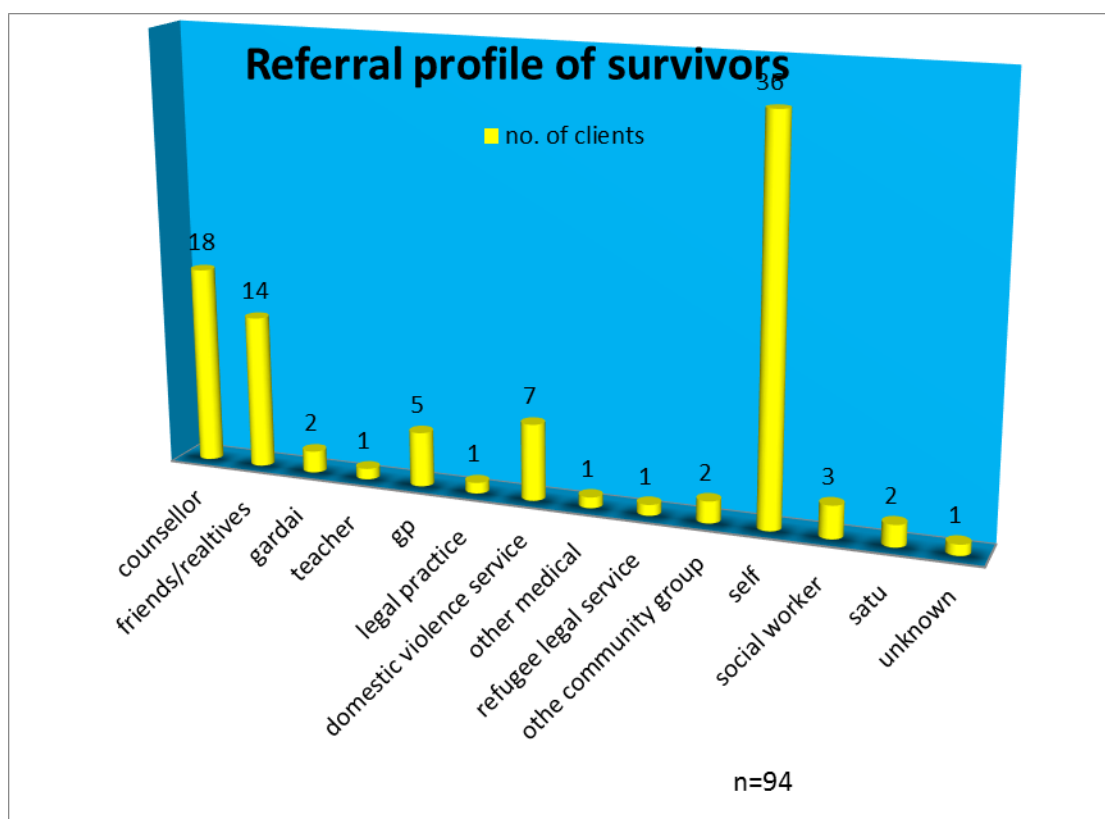


Figure 4.7

The referral pattern to our service remains similar to previous years.

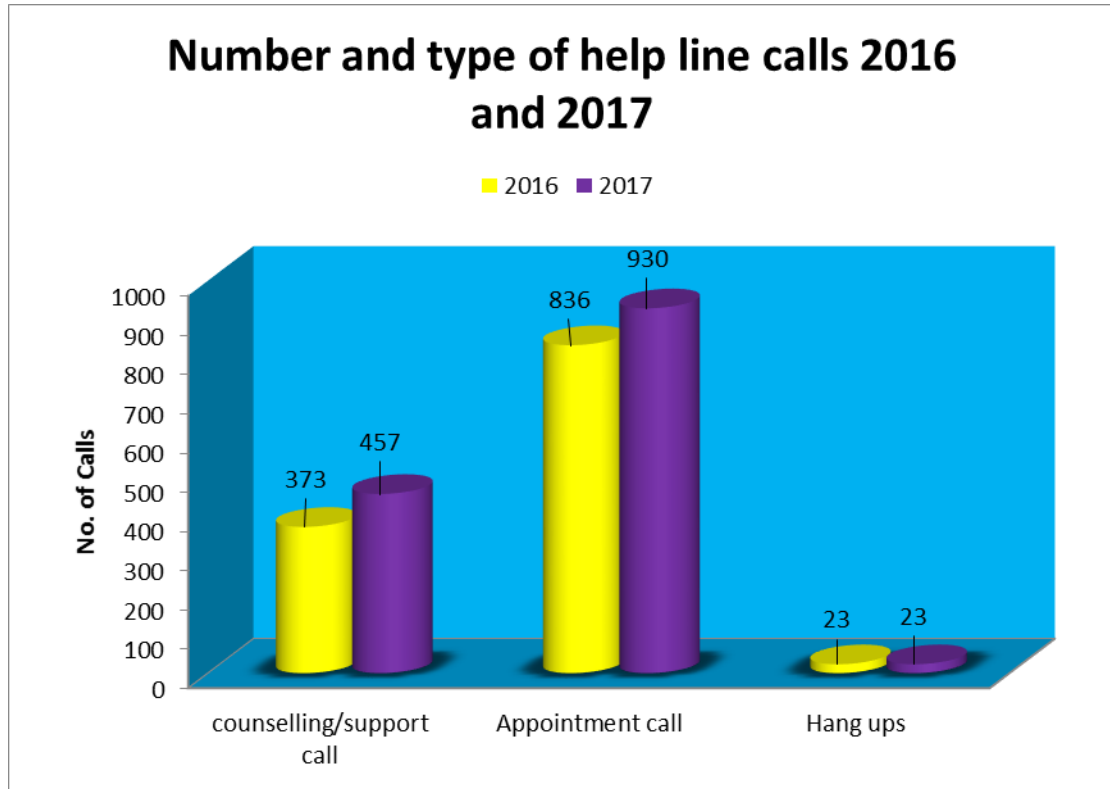


Figure 4.8

We have had increases in counselling and appointment calls and decreases in advocacy calls and hang ups.

Appendix 1.

Figure 1.1 Percentage of Survivors and Supporters

Figure 1.2 Gender Breakdown of Clients

Figure 1.3 Percentage of Clients seen by Staff/Volunteers

Figure 2.1 Legal Status of Survivors

Figure 2.2 Country of Origin of Survivors

Figure 2.3 Age Profile of Survivors

Figure 2.4 Sexual Orientation of Survivors

Figure 2.5 Percentage of Survivors with Disability

Figure 2.6 Residence Area of Survivors

Figure 2.7 Educational Level of Survivors

Figure 2.8 Housing Type for Survivors

Figure 2.9 Percentage of Survivors Reporting to Authorities

Figure 3.1 Type of Sexual Violence Experienced

Figure 3.2 Percentage of Survivors who Experienced more than one form of Violence

Figure 3.3 Gender of Perpetrator

Figure 4.1 No. of Face to Face Clients

Figure 4.2 No. of Attended Counselling Sessions

Figure 4.3 Percentage of Attended Appointments

Figure 4.4 Waiting Times for Appointments

Figure 4.5 Percentage of attended appointments in outreach centres.

Figure 4.6 No. of attended appointments in outreach centres.

Figure 4.7 Referral Profile of Survivors

Figure 4.8 Number and Type of Help Line Calls 2015 and 2016

Figure 4.9 Average waiting time for appointment in days

