

# DAWN Project Evaluation 2024

## Executive Summary



This evaluation was commissioned by the Worcester Community Trust and the DAWN Project as part of the reporting requirements for current funding. As performance reporting data is already shared with funders, the evaluation was to focus primarily on qualitative and primary data through direct engagement with service users and professionals.

The evaluation included primary data in the form of a Professional Stakeholder Survey (PSS) a Service User Survey (SUS) and direct engagement with staff and service users, and secondary data from the DAWN Project Worker Evaluation (PWE) survey results, service, and performance data. This summary is intended to provide a high-level overview of the overall findings, with the full report setting out the findings in detail and with discussion.

### Findings

The response to the surveys has been remarkable in terms of both the response rate and the richness of the detail provided, particularly as the only mandatory question regarded consent to quote in the final report.

The SUS received a response rate of 25% and the PSS 27%, with each respondent providing answers to almost all of the free text questions. This echoes the level of engagement with the PWE, which achieves a comparatively high response rate for the sector of 57%. The full responses where consent was given are included in Appendix 4 and 5 of the full report for the SUS and PSS respectively.

**The SUS** found that the average distance travelled to access services was 4.38 miles, however some respondents reported distances of over 10 and 20 miles. Fitting support in around working hours was shown to be the biggest barrier to accessing services, with childcare issues a close second and the majority of service users had a wait of less than six weeks before support began.

**“I always felt safe and respected to feel safe is paramount for me so I can relax and engage fully and successfully”**

A small number of respondents reported a negative or neutral response, demonstrating a number of cases where the service user had a negative experience, rather than an inconsistent quality of service delivery across different areas of the service. A desire for increased use of online and remote modes of delivery were felt in the findings and discussed further in the full report.

- 58% strongly agreed and a further 36% agreed that it was easy to get in touch with the service, with 4% responding neutrally and 2% disagree.
- 63% strongly agreed and a further 20% agreed that they were supported to identify what their needs were, with 4% responding neutrally and 1% disagreeing.
- 61% of respondents received one to one support only, 5% received group-based support and 34% received both modes of delivery. 95% stated that they had a choice, with 5% stating that they did not.

**100% of respondents agreed with the statement “I was treated with respect by all DAWN staff”**

The PSS was completed by a total of 15 different organisations. The

responses included repeated themes of excellent communication, confidence and trust in the service, acknowledgement of the skills and knowledge of all staff and the willingness to provide a bespoke service or go out of their way to meet client needs. There was also a consistent call for increased funding and provision to increase capacity and geographical coverage.

**100% of respondents agreed with the statement “When I refer or signpost victims and survivors to the DAWN Project, I am confident that they will receive appropriate support”**

- 85% strongly agreed and a further 10% agreed that the Project are proactive in working to resolve any issues which arise, with a further 5% responding neutrally.
- 75% strongly agreed and a further 10% agreed that the Project are effective referrers, providing all the information needed, with 10% stating this was not applicable, and 1% disagreeing with the statement.

**“Clients appear (and feel) supported in a complete way - from understanding their situation, overcoming it, learning techniques to ensure a different future”**

**Conclusion:** The DAWN Project is an excellent service which provides consistently high-quality support to service users. They are professional whilst maintaining an obvious empathy

and compassion for their service users. They are deservedly held in high regard by service users and professionals.

**The following suggestions are made regarding the potential direction for the DAWN Project, subject to sufficient funding:**

1. Whilst the DAWN Project is funded as a face-to-face service, without the flexibility of the additional delivery options, service users are disadvantaged when issues arise, for example around transport or parent/carer commitments. There is no choice for the service user in respect of this, as they can only achieve a brief intervention from West Mercia Women’s Aid via remote means. To address this issue, it is recommended that future commissioning acknowledges the disadvantage, particularly in relation to protected characteristics, and address as a priority.
2. The opening hours of the service could be adapted to allow for one day which finished later in the evening, to allow those who struggle to fit support around work commitments. This may be possible through existing staff resource but would ideally be subject to additional funding or resources in terms of session spaces.
3. DAWN Project workers could ensure that clients are reminded that they do not need to sign in to their appointments at DAWN, and to ignore any sign-in sheets in the community centre.
4. A review of the information needs of the Project and those of the main stakeholder organisations is suggested to ensure that the processes are as efficient and effective as possible.
5. Recognising that resources do not allow for this currently; it is suggested that a follow-up check is carried out with service users at 6 months and one year after support ends.