The support needs and effectiveness of interventions for adult victims and survivors of child sexual abuse

Request for proposals to produce a literature review

Deadline for receipt of proposals: Friday 26th September

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# About the CSA Centre

The CSA Centre’s overall aim is to reduce the impact of child sexual abuse through improved prevention and better response, so that children can live free from the threat and harm of sexual abuse.

We are a multi-disciplinary team, funded primarily by the Home Office and hosted by Barnardo’s, working closely with key partners from academic institutions, local authorities, health, education, police and the voluntary sector. We aim to:

* increase the priority given to child sexual abuse, by improving understanding of its scale and nature
* improve identification of and response to all children and young people who have experienced sexual abuse
* enable more effective disruption and prevention of child sexual abuse, through better understanding of sexually abusive behaviour / perpetration.

We seek to bring about these changes by:

* producing and sharing information about the scale and nature and response to child sexual abuse
* addressing gaps in knowledge through sharing research and evidence
* providing training and support for professionals and researchers working in the field
* engaging with and influencing policy.

As a thought leader in child sexual abuse, we are grounded in both evidence and insights from those working in practice. We annually collate the latest evidence on the scale and nature of child sexual abuse in England and Wales, produce and commission research to fill knowledge gaps, create guidance and resources and deliver training to inform those working with children to better intervene, protect and respond to children and victims and survivors when there are concerns of child sexual abuse.

For more information on our work, please visit our website: [www.csacentre.org.uk](http://www.csacentre.org.uk/)

# About the Improving Response to Adult Victims and Survivors Programme

In April 2025, the Home Office published its ‘[Tackling child sexual abuse: progress update](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/tackling-child-sexual-abuse-progress-update)’. As part of this, it acknowledged the challenges around the provision of and access to support for adult victims and survivors of child sexual abuse and announced additional funding for the CSA Centre to work with service providers and victims and survivors “to develop a framework to support local leaders and commissioners to develop more holistic and joined-up provision for adult survivors across England and Wales.” The CSA Centre plans to build on this opportunity to launch a wider programme of work, focusing on improving the response to adult victims and survivors of child sexual abuse.

The aim of this programme of work is to improve the response to adult victims and survivors of child sexual abuse through enabling:

* generalist services to provide a more trauma-informed response to adult victims and survivors
* specialist services to define their service provision and how this meets the needs of adult victims and survivors to support future service development and resourcing
* funders and commissioners to commission holistic, trauma-informed and joined-up provision to meet the needs of adult victims and survivors
* adult victims and survivors to understand what support options there are for them and access appropriate support.

In 2025 – 2026, we plan to:

* develop a framework that supports more holistic, trauma-informed and joined-up provision for adult victims and survivors across England and Wales
* collate and provide easy access to existing self-help resources for adult victims and survivors
* carry out a literature scoping to provide an overview of research into service provision and the needs of adult victims and survivors.

# Project overview: literature review

The CSA Centre is now inviting proposals to undertake a literature review that synthesises current knowledge about the support needs of adult victims and survivors of child sexual abuse and the value/effectiveness of interventions and services provided to them.

While there is a growing body of research, the evidence is fragmented. This review will provide a consolidated, policy- and practice-relevant resource to inform commissioning, service improvement, and future research priorities. As such, the commissioned review will:

* Identify and describe the formal and informal support needs of adult victims and survivors.
* Assess the available evidence on the effectiveness and value of interventions designed to support this group.
* Explore the literature in relation to protected characteristics and other factors (e.g. sex, age, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, type of abuse) where evidence permits.
* Highlight evidence gaps and propose areas for future research.

# Specification

The individual, team or organisation must have a sound knowledge of the existing literature alongside a strong knowledge of child sexual abuse.

Crucially, the chosen provider must have relevant experience of writing in a succinct, accessible format appropriate for a wide range of professionals working with adults, including survivors of child sexual abuse. **To demonstrate this, we require at least one piece of relevant written (and if necessary, anonymised) work to be included in the response to this tender.**

The contractor will:

1. Conduct a systematic and rigorous search of academic literature, grey literature, and evaluation studies from approximately the last 10–15 years.
2. Apply robust screening and inclusion criteria relevant to the scope.
3. Extract and synthesise evidence using established review methods.
4. Provide a written synthesis of findings, including thematic analysis and evidence tables.
5. Deliver a final report (maximum 10,000 words excluding references) supported by an executive summary and accessible key messages for stakeholders.

At this stage, we do not intend to publish this report but will be using it to inform our work and sharing it with key stakeholders.

In submitting your proposal, please demonstrate:

* experience of conducting literature reviews or rapid evidence assessments in the fields of sexual abuse, trauma, or related fields
* relevant subject knowledge on adult victims and survivors’ needs and intervention evaluation
* strong research methodology and analysis skills
* capacity to deliver high-quality, stakeholder-ready reports to tight timescales.

We are keen that there is a strong focus throughout the drafting process on collaboration between the CSA Centre and the chosen provider.

**The work will involve:**

* collaborating with members of the CSA Centre team who will:
	+ highlight the key information and topics to cover
	+ support the development of the report – in relation to content, style and tone
	+ review drafts of the report as part of the review process (see below)
* responding to feedback from the CSA Centre and an agreed group of external reviewers throughout the development process.

## The review process

The CSA Centre will carry out an extensive review process with the report undergoing three rounds of review. The process includes two rounds of internal review by CSA Centre staff (including the copy editor), and a round of external review undertaken by up to five professionals identified by the CSA Centre and who have relevant experience.

The first internal review stage (1) will take place after the first draft has been submitted. Once the report has been revised in response to internal feedback, it will be sent out by the CSA Centre for external review (2). Internal reviewers will then conduct a final review once all feedback has been incorporated (3).

The review framework will need to be considered in the planning process and timescales.

## Use of Artificial Intelligence tools

We recognise the potential for Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools to enhance efficiency and quality in literature reviews. We welcome proposals that incorporate AI responsibly and ethically, for example in literature searching, screening, data extraction, or preliminary synthesis.

Bidders proposing to use AI must:

* Detail their expertise in applying AI methods to evidence reviews, including training or prior experience.
* Demonstrate compliance with data protection legislation (e.g. UK GDPR) and relevant AI governance frameworks.
* Explain how data will be handled when processed through AI tools, including security measures, storage and any cloud use.
* Describe the specific AI tools that will be used, their purpose, and how they will be integrated into the workflow.
* Describe how the specific AI tools will be prompted and how the AI outputs will be assessed and reviewed by human(s).
* Outline potential limitations/risks and how these will be mitigated against, including hallucinations, AI bias and/or discriminatory outputs.
* Explain anticipated benefits, including efficiencies or enhanced comprehensiveness, of using AI tools.
* Provide details of any additional costs/licensing associated with AI tools.
* Provide assurance that no sensitive or confidential data will be shared with external systems without explicit permission.

## Timeline of activities

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Activity  | Proposed date |
| Deadline for proposals | 26th September 2025 |
| Interviews with candidates | 6th October – 10th October 2025 |
| Provider appointed | 10th October 2025 |
| First meeting with CSA Centre  | 13th October – 17th October 2025 |
| Submission of outline for review | 7th November 2025 |
| Submission of first draft  | 31st December 2025 |
| Submission of second draft | 6th February 2026 |
| Submission of final draft to go to external review | 20th February 2026 |
| Final revisions following external review | 23rd March – 4th April 2026 |
| Final report produced | 4th April 2026 |

# Budget

The CSA Centre has a maximum budget of £30,000 for this work, inclusive of VAT. As a not-for-profit organisation we need to ensure that everything we deliver is as cost-effective as possible, and value for money will be a key criterion in scoring these bids. Bids that are priced below this budget will therefore be considered favourably, and responses in excess of this budget will need to include a strong rationale for the additional expenditure.

Please supply a detailed budget breakdown including staffing rates, hours, and any additional costs such as software licensing (including AI tools, if applicable).

# Contracting authority

The contracting authority is Barnardo’s (Company Number: 61625 whose registered officer is Tanners Lane, Barkingside, Ilford, Essex, IG6 1QG).

Barnardo’s will be acting through the CSA Centre for this contract. There is a degree of separation between the two, which is essential for the CSA Centre’s credibility and independence.

The winning bidder will be requested to enter into an agreement in the form included in Appendix F. Bidders should feel free to provide any feedback to the CSA Centre at the time of bidding on any of the provisions within the draft agreement that may require negotiation.

# Proposal conditions

* Information provided by the CSA Centre is done so in good faith and was believed to be correct at the time of publication;
* Your proposal response must demonstrate how the specifications are to be met, this should be in the proposal form outlined in Appendix A, along with short CVs for all team members, and an example of succinct accessible written work;
* The CSA Centre may contact your referee to ensure you are able to complete the work to the CSA Centre’s standards;
* Proposal responses may be rejected if they have not been completed in line with instructions or contain omissions;
* You will not be able to amend proposal documents once they have been submitted. Please let us know as soon as it is practicable of any inconsistencies or omissions in your response;
* Proposal documentation will remain the property of the CSA Centre and will only be used for proposal purposes;
* The CSA Centre is subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FoI), which means any information submitted to the CSA Centre may be disclosed under these obligations; if you think any parts of your response are commercially sensitive, please mark them as so (NB – we may still need to disclose these under FoI requirements);
* You are responsible for all costs and expenses incurred in preparation of the proposal response;
* The request for proposals process and associated communications do not form any part of a contractual arrangement;
* All information provided to you by the CSA Centre must be treated as confidential unless it is already in the public domain;
* Independence is a key principle for the CSA Centre and you will be required to disclose if you have any business or personal relationships or affiliations with the CSA Centre, the Home Office, Barnardo’s or any of the CSA Centre’s other partners;
* The CSA Centre may ask for further information to be submitted within a reasonable timescale. These clarification requests should be submitted to the address listed below (under “Return of proposal instructions” section); the CSA Centre may also request interviews with key personnel and references.

# Proposal requirements

Proposal responses must:

* be received before the deadline;
* include Proposal form (see Appendix A);
* include a CV for each individual proposed to undertake work;
* include at least one example of succinct accessible written work;
* contact details for one reference[[1]](#footnote-2);
* be signed by an authorised individual;
* clearly outline anticipated risks and how the supplier plans to address these.

Proposal documentation must provide:

* clear answers, that focus only on the specific requirement being addressed;
* a sufficiently detailed level of information to demonstrate how the requirements would be delivered;
* honest answers;
* a well-structured response that is easy for the reviewers to navigate, with accurate references to additional information provided;
* a methodology that is clearly tailored to the requirements of the specification;
* clear consideration of risks and mitigations;
* a clear indication of experience;
* exact information about which individuals will deliver this work; and
* at least one example of published work, written by the lead applicant, that demonstrates ability to deliver this work.

## Assessment Criteria

Proposals will be assessed on:

* Understanding of requirements and context (20%)
* Subject expertise and track record (20%)
* Quality and appropriateness of methodology (20%)
* Feasibility of delivery within budget and timeframe (20%)
* Value for money (10%)
* Clarity and accessibility of previous work (10%)

## Return of proposal instructions

Deadline for return of proposals: Friday 26th September 2025

Email: diana.parkinson@csacentre.org.uk

Please also use this email address for requests for further information.

# Governance and ethics

This commission will be overseen by Dr Diana Parkinson (Principal Research and Evaluation Officer) and Nici Evans (Practice Improvement Advisor) at the CSA Centre.

# Payment and invoicing

We will agree a payment schedule with the appointed contractor.

Please address invoices to Louise Middleton at CSA Centre, Barnardo House, Tanners Lane, Barkingside IG61QG. Please ensure all invoices are sent as individual PDF documents to apinvoices@barnardos.org.uk and [Louise.Middleton@csacentre.org.uk](https://contentserver.barnardos.org.uk/otcsdav/nodes/488592030/Louise.Middleton%40csacentre.org.uk). Please note that Barnardo’s works to 30 days payment terms from when an invoice is submitted.

# Appendices

# Appendix A – Supplier response form

|  |
| --- |
| Supplier details |
| Supplier name |  |
| Company registration number or equivalent |  |
| Registered address |  |
| Website address |  |
| VAT registration number  |  |
| Date of VAT registration |  |
| Bank name |  |
| Bank account number |  |
| Bank sort code |  |
| Details of main contact |
| Name  |  |
| Job title |  |
| Business address  |  |
| Telephone number(s)  |  |
| Email address  |  |

|  |
| --- |
| Executive summary |
| **Keep to one side of A4.** This should provide the CSA Centre with a clear, concise and complete summary of your tender, highlighting key strengths, providing insight into the reasoning and rationale behind the response, demonstrating how the tender represents value for money to the CSA Centre. |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| A. Understanding of requirements and context |
| **Keep your response to a maximum of one side of A4.**Please demonstrate: * your understanding of the CSA Centre and its aims
* your understanding of child sexual abuse and the wider sector around child sexual abuse
* your commitment to work closely with the CSA Centre throughout the project.
 |
|  |
| B. Company experience |
| **Keep your response to a maximum of one side of A4.**Please demonstrate that:* you have sound knowledge of the support needs and interventions provided for adult victims and survivors of child sexual abuse
* you have relevant experience of carrying out literature reviews
* your experience is recent.
 |
|  |
| C. Capability and skills of the team |
| **Keep your response to a maximum of one side of A4.**Please demonstrate that you have the ability to write in a succinct, accessible format for a wide range of professionals working with children and families.  |
|  |
| D. Outlined approach to meeting objectives |
| **Keep your response to a maximum of one side of A4.**Please demonstrate: * how the aims and objectives will be met
* the rationale behind the chosen approach to writing the literature review
* how you will ensure the most up to date research and evidence is included in the review.

In addition, if you are submitting this proposal as a team, please ensure:* there is a named project manager
* the roles and responsibilities of the project team are clearly defined and, for each project team member, their specific aptitudes, attitudes and experiences are described
* you include a succinct outline of risks and mitigation.
 |
|  |
| E. Timescales |
| **Keep your response to a maximum of one side of A4.**Please set out clear timescales and indicate the actions required of the CSA Centre.Please demonstrate that the timescales proposed are realistic and achievable. |
|  |
| F. Budget/expenses and value for money |
| Please provide a clear breakdown of proposed activities, the day rate of members of your team, and the number of days required to complete each task.Please demonstrate the added value your company would bring. |
|

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Expected full cost of project |  |
| Day rate per role/blended day rate |  |
| Expenses incurred |  |
| Additional infrastructure charges |  |
| Discounts/rebates you have applied |  |
| Other charges, e.g. cancellation fees |  |

*Please add further detail if necessary:* |
| Declaration |
| I accept the CSA Centre’s terms and conditions | Yes / No*If No, please state which clauses you would wish to negotiate:* |
| The documentation submitted constitutes my full and final tender response | Yes / No |
| My tender shall remain open for acceptance for a period of 90 days after the deadline for receipt of tender responses | Yes / No |
| Name of authorised person |  |
| Signature |  |
| Date |  |

# Appendix B: Declaration of interests form

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name, role and organisation |  |
| Description of interest*(please refer to the list below)* | Relevant dates |
| *Please state “no interests to declare” if none applies to you* |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

Please state any interests relating to:

* employment[[2]](#footnote-3)
* consultancies or quasi-employment with outside organisations
* any involvement with Barnardo’s (see footnote)
* public, charitable or regulatory appointments, whether or not remunerated
* directorships, trusteeships or other position of responsibility in commercial, charitable, regulatory or other organisations, whether or not remunerated
* direct or indirect financial interests (in the order of £100k), including significant shareholdings, in organisations which may be affected by the work of the CSA Centre or which supply or propose to supply services to the CSA Centre
* the interests of close associates (for example family members) who hold employment, positions of responsibility or other interests in organisations which may be affected by the work of the CSA Centre.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Signed** | **Date** |
|  |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Approved (CSA Centre Director)** | **Date** |
|  |  |

# Appendix C: Whistleblowing procedure

***How to raise a concern***

In the first instance you should raise your concern with the Assistant Director – Business Support or your main contact at the CSA Centre. You can do this verbally or in writing. If you are unsure about raising a concern because you don’t know if it is relevant, or whether it falls within this policy, you are encouraged to come forward so that the matter can be discussed and advice given.

***How the CSA Centre will respond***

On receiving your concern we will contact you, usually within five working days of receipt, giving you:

* confirmation that the concern has been received and will be investigated
* the name of the person who will investigate it
* a named point of contact during the investigation
* temporary alternative working arrangements (if applicable).

***How we will investigate***

1. The investigator will contact you to discuss your concern in more detail. If necessary, the investigator will meet with you to find out all the facts and check any details. You may be asked to give a statement. Once the investigator clarifies your concern, if he/she believes the concerns fall outside this policy you will be advised of the alternative route to follow.
2. The investigator will take reasonable steps to investigate the concern as quickly as possible, depending on the circumstances of the case. We will keep you informed as to the likely duration of the investigation.
3. Once the investigation is complete, we will contact you to confirm the outcome and any action planned. Because of confidentiality and data protection, we may not be able to give you full details of our findings, but we will discuss this with you fully and explain our decisions.

***How to appeal a decision***

1. If you do not think your concerns have been addressed, you may appeal the decision by writing to the Director of the CSA Centre within 10 working days of receipt of the outcome. You should state clearly and succinctly the reasons you are appealing and any alternative outcome you think is appropriate. The purpose of the appeal is to assess whether the conclusions and actions decided during the investigation were appropriate based on all the evidence available.
2. The Director will contact you to discuss your appeal, and will then decide whether any further investigation is needed as part of the appeal.
3. We will contact you to explain the outcome of the appeal and any new or changed actions. Because of confidentiality and data protection, we may not be able to give you full details of our findings, but we will discuss this with you fully and explain our decisions. This is the end of the process.

# Appendix D: Terms and conditions of contract

*The winning bidder will be requested to enter into a consultancy agreement as set out below. At the time of bidding, please use the Declaration section of the supplier response form (see Appendix 3) to provide feedback on any provisions within the agreement that may require negotiation.*

**Consultancy agreement**

I have pleasure in confirming the following terms and conditions under which you will provide 1) the consultancy services as described below and in the attached Schedule 1 (the ‘Initial Services’) and 2) any further services in accordance with clause below, to Barnardo’s (the ‘Company’):

**Initial Services**

1. This Agreement will commence as of [date] and you will complete the Initial Services by [date] or such later date as we may agree in writing.
2. During the consultancy you will give the Company advice and information, carry out studies and make reports as specified in Schedule 1 and in accordance with any reasonable instructions of the Company. The Company’s representative(s) for the purpose of giving any instructions and approvals under this Agreement shall be me and such other persons as I may nominate in writing.
3. In consideration of the Initial Services, the Company will pay you the Fees described in Schedule 1 (the ‘Fees’).

**Further Services**

1. Barnardo’s may wish to instruct you to carry out further services (“Further Services”). Any such request for Further Services will be made by Barnardo’s in writing by submitting to you a Further Services Order Form in the form set out in Schedule 2.
2. The Further Services Order Form will contain detail of the services requested, Fees and any applicable deadlines.
3. Acceptance by you of the Further Services Order Form shall be communicated in writing or by beginning the performance of the Further Services.
4. Further Services will be carried out pursuant to these same terms and conditions contained within this letter.

**Fees**

1. Where the Fees are quoted on a daily rate basis, a day shall mean up to 7 hours’ work. Any hours worked beyond 7 hours in a day shall be charged pro-rata to the Company.
2. All reasonable travel expenses, and any other expenses pre-agreed with the Company in writing, properly and necessarily incurred by you in the proper performance of the Services shall be reimbursed by the Company provided that all travel will be undertaken at the most economic rates reasonably available and in any event any item of expense which may exceed £200 will be agreed with the Company in advance.
3. You will raise invoices on the Company (and send them to the below address marked for my attention) showing the fees due and expenses claimed with documentary evidence of such expenses.
4. All sums due under this Agreement are exclusive of VAT which where applicable will be paid by the Company to you in addition to any amount or rate quoted.
5. You will be responsible for the payment of any income tax, insurance contributions or other taxes, revenues or duties arising as a result of the performance of the Services or otherwise under this Agreement. For the avoidance of doubt neither you nor any person engaged by you in the performance of the Services will be an employee of the Company in performing the Services.

**Confidentiality**

1. You will promptly communicate in confidence to the Company all ideas generated, work done, results produced and inventions made in the performance of the Services (‘Results’). You will not, without the written consent of the Company, use or disclose to any other person or organisation either during or after termination of this Agreement any confidential information of the Company that may come into your possession. For this purpose all Results shall be treated as the confidential information of the Company. You will in any event enter into the non-disclosure agreement annexed to this Agreement as Appendix 1.
2. On any termination of this Agreement you will return to the Company all documents, records (on any media) and other property belonging to the Company that are in your possession and are capable of delivery and you will retain no copies thereof in any form.
3. You undertake that all copyright, design right, rights to apply for patents, patents and other intellectual property in the Results shall belong to the Company. In consideration of the fees payable under this Agreement, you agree on demand to assign forthwith to the Company all intellectual property in the Results at any time after their coming into existence. At the Company’s request and expense (but without further payment to you) you will use all reasonable endeavours to enable the Company at its discretion to make formal application anywhere in the world to obtain and maintain intellectual property in the Results.
4. Without prejudice to any other right or remedy, if you commit any material breach of, or fail to comply with, any of your obligations under this Agreement, become bankrupt or any judgment is made against you and remains unsatisfied for 7 days, the Company shall be entitled to terminate this Agreement forthwith on written notice to you.

**Termination**

1. Either party may terminate this Agreement and your services by giving no less than one months’ notice in writing to the other.
2. If you are, or become, unavailable to work on the Services, this Agreement may be terminated by either Party giving written notice to the other Party such notice to take effect either forthwith or as specified in the notice.
3. Neither Party shall be liable to the other Party in contract, tort, negligence, breach of statutory duty or otherwise for any loss, damage, costs or expenses of any nature whatsoever incurred or suffered by that other Party of an indirect or consequential nature including without limitation any economic loss or other loss of turnover, profits, business or goodwill.
4. This Agreement is personal to you and may not be assigned by you. This Agreement does not give you any authority to act as agent of the Company. Nor can any part of the agreement, duties or obligations be sub-contracted.
5. For the purpose of ensuring compliance with your obligations under this Agreement the Company shall have access to and the right to inspect any work being carried out by you under this Agreement.
6. This Agreement is made under English law and the parties submit to the non-exclusive jurisdiction of the English courts.
7. This agreement does not create any right enforceable by any person not a party to it.

###

**Schedule 1 – Initial Services**

To write a literature review that:

* Identifies and describes the formal and informal support needs of adult victims and survivors.
* Assesses the available evidence on the effectiveness and value of interventions designed to support this group.
* Explores the literature in relation to protected characteristics and other factors (e.g. sex, age, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, type of abuse) where evidence *permits.*
* Highlights evidence gaps and propose areas for future research.

To do this, the contractor will:

1. Conduct a systematic and rigorous search of academic literature, grey literature, and evaluation studies from approximately the last 10–15 years.
2. Apply robust screening and inclusion criteria relevant to the scope.
3. Extract and synthesise evidence using established review methods.
4. Provide a written synthesis of findings, including thematic analysis and evidence tables.
5. Deliver a final report (maximum 10,000 words excluding references) supported by an executive summary and accessible key messages for stakeholders.

**Outputs**

A final report (maximum 10,000 words excluding references) supported by an executive summary and accessible key messages for stakeholders. This will also involve producing:

* A draft outline for review
* First draft for review
* Revised second draft for review
* Final draft following external review

**Fees**

*[fees to be paid for those services] [VAT included/No VAT to be charged]*

To be invoiced upon completion and acceptance of the outputs.

1. . Please ensure your referee is happy for the CSA Centre to contact them prior to any work taking place. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Staff working at the CSA Centre are employees of Barnardo’s and this does not need a specific declaration. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)