Exploring media advocacy with survivors of honour-based abuse and forced marriage in the UK

Project report

Dr Lauren Eglen

Dr Helen McCabe

Maria Fsadni

August 2024

Authorship and acknowledgements

This report was funded by the University of Nottingham Arts and Humanities Research Council Impact Accelerator Account. Project ID 24822689.
This report would not have been possible without the input, support and expertise provided by members of Karma Nirvana's Survivor Ambassador Panel. We deeply appreciate your trust, confidence and collaboration throughout this project.
We would also like to thank the journalists who kindly responded to our request to interview and who generously gave their time, insights and guidance to inform this project.

The project team

Lauren Eglen, Senior Research Fellow in Gender Justice, Rights Lab, University of Nottingham

Maria Fsadni, Research Consultant specialising in media, charity communications and working with survivor activists

Helen McCabe, Associate Professor in Political Theory, University of Nottingham

Survivor Ambassador Panel, Karma Nirvana

Content notice

This report deals with the topic of honour-based abuse and forced marriage and includes references to abuses experienced by people within this framework. The report describes types and patterns of behaviour that occur within honour-based abuse and forced marriage in general terms throughout the text and outlines potential challenges and risks related to engaging in public advocacy as a survivor. These risks include references to physical, emotional and mental distress and abuse and mental health.

Table of Contents

Authorship and acknowledgements 1
The project team.. 1
Content notice...1

1.Introduction...3
1.1. About the study..3
1.2. Methodology...5
1.3. Defining honour-based abuse and forced marriage...6
1.4. Note on language..7

2. Survivor perspectives on advocacy..8
2.1. What is advocacy..8
2.2. Why undertake advocacy?..9
2.3. Advocacy experiences..9

3. Key issues regarding survivor media engagement...............................12
3.1. What sparks an interest in HBA?...12
3.2. Knowledge...14
3.3. Safeguarding...16
3.4. Aftercare and support...22
3.5. Controlling the narrative..23
3.6. Expenses and compensation..26

4. Conclusion and recommendations...29

Appendices
Appendix 1: Interview framework for media professionals...31
Appendix 2: Honour-based abuse and forced marriage: media engagement toolkit...32
Appendix 3: Media map...47
Appendix 4: Anonymity information...50
Appendix 5: Other tools and guides...53
Appendix 6: Many ways to share..54

1. Introduction

1.1. About the study

The UK government has taken steps to combat honour-based abuse (HBA) and forced marriage (FM) in the last twenty-five years, including through the passing of several pieces of key legislation. In 2014 forced marriage was criminalised in England and Wales under the Anti-social behaviour, Crime and Policing Act; in 2022 it became illegal to carry out, offer, or aid and abet virginity testing and hymenoplasty in any part of the UK under the Health and Care Act; and in February 2023, the Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act came into force raising the legal age of marriage to eighteen years old.

Yet, despite advances in law and policy responses to forms of HBA and FM, it continues to be a misunderstood and under-identified form of VAWG. Policy and practice aimed at combatting HBA and FM continues to be based on a "distorted lens of race, culture, or religion rather than structural gender inequalities."[1] There remains an assumption among some service providers that HBA only occurs in certain communities and that it is a cultural, traditional, or religious problem. Yet HBA is not sanctioned by any major religion, and crimes and harms cut across all cultures, nationalities, faith groups and communities. These pre-conceived ideas about the roots of HBA continue to shape responses, with statutory agencies not always responding appropriately, which has shaped current under-reporting, under- and misidentification, and a lack of confidence among those who have experienced HBA in service providers.

These existing perceptions that permeate law, police, and practice responses exacerbate the hidden nature of HBA and fail to tackle the root cause of these issues—patriarchal beliefs, values, and attitudes that devalue women and girls. It has led to a situation in which the gendered nature of HBA as a form of VAWG has received inefficient attention.

To combat the lack of understanding and mis-conceived ideas about what HBA is, what it looks like, who it happens to, and the kinds of interventions needed, HBA and VAWG organisations have carried out advocacy and lobbying campaigns, as well as service provider training to improve service provision. There has increasingly been a call for greater inclusion of the perspective and expertise of those with lived experience of HBA and forced marriage in efforts to address this type of VAWG in the UK. This has included survivors giving testimony in parliament, speaking at national VAWG conferences, giving lectures and public talks on HBA, and engaging with the media to raise awareness and campaign.

[1] Karma Nirvana, "Call for Evidence on Honour Based Abuse Karma Nirvana Written Evidence (2023), 5.

Survivor advocates have an important role in efforts to combat HBA and forced marriage. They can speak to the nuances and particularities of these harms and crimes as they have experienced them. It has been argued by survivors of exploitation and feminist theorists alike that lived experience shapes the way we see the world and the knowledge we produce (Collins, 2000). As such, those who have experienced HBA and forced marriage will have additional and particular knowledge that comes from lived experience that cannot be obtained by those who have not experienced such abuse (Dang, 2020). Survivor perspectives can offer insights into dynamics of HBA and forced marriage, including root causes and triggers of abuse, social determinants, how abuse manifests, the efficacy of existing service provision programming and areas for intervention and improvement.

However, while there is growing recognition that those with lived experience should be leading campaigns, survivors are often expected to tell their stories and advocate in public and policy settings and at media and public events, without having had any training or support to do so. This can be exploitative in many ways, including leading to re-traumatisation and putting survivors at risk of physical, emotional, and psychological harm.

With survivors, this project sought to co-develop tools to support survivors of HBA and forced marriage to engage safely and ethically with advocacy, and for third-sector organisations to support and enable that engagement. As a pilot project, we sought to understand the kinds of advocacy opportunities survivors engage with, and the training and support needed to build their capacity for advocacy and leadership in local and national campaigns. Our project had a particular focus on understanding the kinds of tools and training needed for survivors to engage safely and effectively with the media in efforts to raise awareness, combat stereotypes and misinformation, and campaign against HBA and forced marriage in the UK. We were also interested in understanding why and how different media outlets seek to engage with survivors of HBA and forced marriage in their news coverage and address survivor concerns regarding media engagement.

1.2. Methodology

This project adopted a participatory qualitative approach to achieve its aims, combining participatory focus groups with people who had experienced HBA, and semi-structured interviews with professionals from a range of media outlets.

Between March and June 2024, we conducted participatory workshops with eight survivor participants who all identified as having experienced HBA. Participants were invited from Karma Nirvana's Survivor Ambassador Panel (SAP) and then selected by Karma Nirvana staff for suitability for the project. As part of this project, we were interested in hearing from those with more experience of advocacy work and media engagement, as well as those who had not yet undertaken advocacy activities, or had little experience. As such, four SAP members considered to have extensive advocacy and engagement experience, and four who had only recently begun their advocacy journey with Karma Nirvana, were selected to participate.

A total of five workshops addressed:
1. Introduction to the project
2. What is advocacy and your key concerns for media engagement?
3. Media perspectives
4. Defining boundaries
5. Co-development of advocacy tools

Participatory workshops allowed for survivor perspectives to be integrated at each stage of the project, ensuring that questions put to the media were survivor-informed, and the co-development of advocacy tools based on survivor-led feedback of what would have been, and would be, helpful for future media advocacy activities.
In the first two participatory workshops, we discussed with participants what advocacy means to survivors, their motivations for undertaking advocacy, experiences of advocacy, positive and negative experiences of media engagement, and their key concerns regarding media advocacy. Participant reflections on these questions are discussed in Section 3 of this report.

Issues raised by survivor participants in these workshops informed the development of an interview framework for media professionals (Appendix 1). A total of fifteen pre-determined open questions were identified and put to media professionals in semi-structured interviews. Semi-structured interviews were chosen because the open questions provide structure for discussion while leaving flexibility and opportunities for the interviewer to further explore themes and responses that arise during the interview to gain more in-depth insights into journalistic perspectives on lived experience inclusion in HBA reporting.

The project team conducted semi-structured interviews with a total of nine professionals from the media, including journalists, editors, and producers from a broad range of media outlets: TV and documentary film makers; journalists working for national and global news outlets; and TV and radio producers. Of the nine professionals interviewed, five described HBA or sexual abuse as being a specific focus of their work, either previously or currently. Two professionals had previously reported on HBA issues previously as part of a 24-hour news cycle, but not as a focus, and two had not reported on either of these issues and were working in mainstream independent TV and documentary production companies.

Interviews were conducted over the phone and in-person where possible. To facilitate full and frank conversations anonymity was agreed with media professionals and all quotes have been anonymised. Interviews were then thematically analysed to draw out the key points and trends across types of media outlet regarding survivor engagement. Key findings from media interviews were subsequently presented to survivor participants in the third participatory workshop in which additional questions for further investigation and qualification were developed and put to media professionals in follow-up interviews.

A review of existing ethical codes from Ofcom, the BBC, and the National Union of Journalists in the UK was also conducted to determine current standards and protocols for survivor interview and engagement.

1.3. Defining honour-based abuse and forced marriage

There is currently no statutory definition of honour-based abuse in the UK. Throughout this study and report we use the following definition:

> *Any incident or pattern of controlling; coercive; manipulative; intimidating; or threatening behaviour, violence, or abuse perpetrated by one of more family, extended family, and/or community members, and/ or current/former intimate partners in response to perceived or alleged transgressions of accepted behaviours. While most often perpetrated against women and girls, anyone can experience honour-based abuse regardless of age, ethnicity, sexuality, religion, or gender, including men and boys.*
>
> *It can encompass but is not limited to: psychological, emotional, physical, sexual, spiritual and faith-related, economic, financial, and hate-aggravated abuse; forced marriage; female genital mutilation; abduction; isolation; threats; murder; and other acts of domestic abuse.*
>
> *People living in the context of an honour dynamic face additional barriers to their ability to speak out against and report abuse for fear of repercussions including further and more severe abuse; shame; stigma; and being shunned/ostracised.*[2]

[2] This definition was created by Karma Nirvana's Survivor Ambassador Panel supported by Dr Lauren Eglen, Rights Lab, University of Nottingham. It was launched by Karma Nirvana on the National Day of Memory, 14th July 2023.

Forced marriage is defined as a marriage in which one and/or both parties have not expressed free and informed consent to the union, as set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the UN Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages (1964).

Note: The scope of this pilot study is limited, and findings are not meant to be representative of survivors' experiences of media engagement, nor media professionals' opinions of survivor engagement. Rather, the purpose of this study is to begin to understand the key issues and concerns that arise when survivors of HBA and forced marriage engage with the media and the kinds of tools and support they might need for the development of future larger-scale research.

1.4. Note on language

The terms used to describe people who have experienced different forms of VAWG vary between different organisations and individuals. While the law tends to identify those who have been subjected to a crime as 'victims', this language has been criticised by people who have experienced VAWG as disempowering, stereotyping, and removing agency from decision making.

The terms 'survivor' is preferred by many, though there are those who do not identify with the idea that they have yet 'survived' their experience. Members of Karma Nirvana's SAP, however, identify as survivors of HBA. As such, we employ the term 'survivor(s)' throughout this report. 'Victim' is only used when this is the term used by the person who has experienced HBA, as a direct quote from media interviews.

2. Survivor perspectives on advocacy

2.1. What is advocacy?

"Advocacy is trying to do the work of change the status quo and how those ideas are embedded can be a struggle." – Survivor participant

In the first two workshops with survivor participants from Karma Nirvana's SAP, we discussed what advocacy meant to survivors and why they wanted to become advocates against HBA.

When talking about what constitutes advocacy, SAP members highlighted a range of activities, including advocating for other people in their everyday lives, in professional advocate positions, and activities they undertake as survivors of HBA to raise awareness and contribute to national HBA campaigns.

One survivor gave an example of speaking out on behalf of a colleague at work who it was discovered was not earning the same amount as other people at the same level. In this way, they suggested that advocacy is carried out not only on a systemic level against social issues such as HBA, but also something people carry into their everyday lives. In advocating for people on a daily basis, survivors suggested that it was their desire to intervene when seeing an injustice take place that motivated their advocacy and day to day acts contributed to their skills and knowledge of what advocacy is and what it means to be an advocate into higher-level advocacy contexts in their work to combat HBA.

Others had experience of being professional advocates working on issues of women's rights such as VAWG and domestic abuse as part of their jobs. One participant suggested that their journey into such a role started with themselves as a service user, "when I was reconciling myself with HBA." They suggested that it was the satisfaction of helping people navigate a system that is in many ways impenetrable, driven by their own lived experience and wanting to support people, that led them to become an independent domestic violence advisor (IDVA) and support people in accessing essential services, for example accommodation.

In 2023, Karma Nirvana launched their campaign for a UK statutory definition of HBA. The definition was developed in consultation with members of KN's SAP, some of whom were also participants in this project. Participants stated that they considered their work on the definition as part of their advocacy work for KN, as well as their work on other KN campaigns, for example to raise the legal age of marriage to eighteen years, and to criminalise virginity testing and hymenoplasty. They also felt that engaging in conversations on social media constituted advocacy, averring that advocacy is raising awareness of issues for groups and individuals; being someone else's voices as well as giving other people a voice and a platform.

2.2. Why undertake advocacy?

SAP members reported feeling a moral obligation to be involved in advocating against HBA and stated that if they could stop HBA and FM from happening to other people, they would be saving lives. They also spoke about a motivation for wanting to combat injustice when they saw it happening.

Some also mentioned that, while services exist, information on how to access and navigate services is not so easily obtained. Moreover, it was mentioned that even when specialist services do exist, sometimes the people working there are not fully informed and aware of the nuanced contours of HBA which can lead to giving those at risk of experiencing HBA and FM the wrong kind of advice and support that could put them at more risk. As people with lived experience and knowledge about HBA and how it manifests/what it involves, members of SAP reported that they felt they could, and sometimes had to, educate individual service providers on the best course of action to ensure people's safety. They did so not only on behalf of other people in their professional capacities, for example some SAP members are trained social workers, teachers, and independent domestic violence advocates (IDVAs), but also recalled instances in which they had to advocate for themselves and educate their own social workers about HBA. Members of SAP also highlighted the need to challenge patterns of behaviour that get passed on through generations and how this doesn't change without action by people from, and within, affected communities, including those who have experienced abuse.

2.3. Advocacy experiences

2.3.1. As survivors, advocates, and VAWG sector professionals

In our discussion about their advocacy experiences beyond media advocacy, members of SAP recalled that they had both positive and negative experiences of advocating against HBA and for people. Negative experiences included trying to combat ideas and viewpoints about how to support survivors of HBA as a form of domestic abuse. SAP members advised that they had experienced a lack of understanding among service providers of the nuances of HBA and the need to adapt approaches and processes to ensure safety and wellbeing. For example while a survivor of other forms of domestic abuse might be safely placed in shelter or accommodation in the same town or city where abuse occurred, for survivors of HBA, it is most often their families that have perpetrated the abuse, and this abuse is more often than not supported by members of their communities. Unlike other survivors of domestic abuse, survivors of HBA often become ostracised from their families and communities and it can be dangerous for them to remain in the same locale as where abuse happened. When arranging for safe accommodation, it is therefore important in HBA cases for that to be in a different location.

Moreover, mediation is often seen as a potential step to be taken in some domestic abuse contexts in which police and or social workers will try to speak to parents or families regarding abuse. This is extremely dangerous in contexts of HBA and can lead to further and/or increased violence. SAP members averred frustration at having to explain the nuanced support needs of those who have experienced HBA to service providers as part of their professional advocacy roles. This frustration was compounded by reports of not having their expertise taken seriously as survivors of HBA as well as advocates and, in some instances, as service providers themselves. Some participants recalled instances in which, in their professional capacity, they were dismissed when faced with a case that they identified as HBA that other colleagues did not recognise. Some related how their presentation as an expert on HBA led to their being questioned as to *how* they knew what it was. This made them feel that they were being asked to disclose their survivor status. Survivors should not *have* to disclose their status, and they were struck by the fact that other experts were not challenged as to "how" they came by their knowledge and expertise.

Several members of the SAP also reported feeling that their expertise was undermined and dismissed by others as volunteer advocates working on behalf of KN to bring about social and institutional change. While they acknowledged that, like all people with lived experience, each one of them has different experiences and to an extent is an expert only of their own experience, they felt they also knew more about HBA and had professional VAWG sector experience that was being disregarded. That is, the fact that they had lived experience was being used to diminish their overall expertise: recognition of their particular knowledge somehow came at the expense of recognition of their more general knowledge. Not being valued as an expert was also reflected in discussions about the necessity of compensation for survivors and people with lived experience, particularly in a situation where something is being done for profit and other expert speakers would expect a fee (or at least to have their expenses paid), for example as an expert talking head on a documentary. People need to be paid adequately and given the necessary wrap around support because it can be extremely difficult to speak about experiences of HBA or engage in advocacy on this topic which necessarily reawakens memories past trauma and abuse.

2.3.2. Media experiences

Members of SAP acknowledged that while they had a wealth of experience advocating on behalf of other people, it was much more difficult to advocate for themselves. One SAP participant explained that "The word advocacy to me is to support someone else... If it's something for me [I think] 'I'll do it later'. It's easier if there's someone supporting you." The challenge of self-advocacy was particularly acute in examples SAP members shared in which they had not been properly informed about the journalistic process, the angle of the story, or what the media interview would involve.

Some reported negative experiences of previous media engagements, including around issues of safeguarding and anonymity. This included an incident in which, due to a lack of sufficient anonymity, someone was identified by their work colleagues after their media interview aired. Participants also recalled instances in which they were uncomfortable with the questions they were asked and with approaches to corroborating evidence, that included intentions to reach out to perpetrators, which were inappropriate and unsafe. Some SAP participants also mentioned situations in which they felt final reporting was not reflective of their lived experience, where readback rights had been promised but not delivered, and instances in which their story was used to uphold cultural and religious stereotypes that they were not happy with.

Despite these issues, participants did give some examples of media interviews they had that felt safe, respectful, and personally rewarding. Practices identified in these examples included having well considered anonymity measures in place, such as the use of voice overs, wigs and choosing neutral settings for interviews to take place.

Others said they felt personally rewarded by how their experiences had been reported. These examples included processes where journalists had consulted survivors on the angle of reporting to ensure sensitivity and accuracy of the presented story, and where readback rights had been granted.

Consequently, SAP members felt it was important to feel 'in control' of their experience and the way their experience is portrayed and contextualised. Avoiding stereotypes and sensationalism came out as a key concern about how HBA is reported and is addressed in section 4 of this report.

The need for aftercare from journalists, readback rights and viewings with sign off by survivors were particularly emphasised. Having all the information up front and being clear at the beginning about personal boundaries were also highlighted.

3. Key issues regarding survivor media engagement

3.1. What sparks an interest in HBA?

There are several reasons why survivors of HBA might be approached by the media for interview and why they might want to take up that opportunity. When asked what would prompt an interest in HBA, most of the journalists interviewed said interest might be sparked by police incident reports, from new charity research and campaigns, and from news reported by other media channels, whether local or national. In these cases, different media would look for a new angle to differentiate their story from previous reporting.

Journalists working in faster-paced news environments such as TV, radio and online news, reported that they would have to explain "why report this now" and stories would need to follow a recent development. For feature journalists interviewed, it was less important for the HBA to have occurred recently, rather they would look for if and how the story would be 'topical' and aim to provide a new angle or explore the issue in more depth than had previously been covered. For example, Interview I suggested that "there's no real template for how I choose my stories," but that "my usual criteria is something that feels important, that has something riding on it, [that has] not been widely covered by other media and has some visual element."[3]

Media professionals highlighted the role that people with lived experience play in generating stories. Interview G reported that sometimes it might be that "a young woman has come out and wants to share her specific story and wants to talk about her area."[4] It is therefore not always the case that if someone with lived experience wants to use the media to advocate about HBA, whether that be through sharing parts of their own experience that they are comfortable with and safe to do so, or whether that be commenting on recent reports on HBA campaigning more broadly, that they have to wait for journalists to approach them. Interview G noted that, for longer form pieces, 'At the end of the day, [for] these types of stories, there's always interest."[5]

3.1.1. The media and social change

While suggesting that combatting HBA as a structural issue was one of people's motivations for becoming advocates, survivor participants expressed uncertainty about the specific relationship between the media, advocacy, and social change. Subsequently, we asked media professionals for their reflections on this relationship. A journalist with a wealth of experience covering HBA topics suggested that testimonies from those with lived experience can sometimes embolden UK politicians and service providers to make changes that would otherwise have been considered too controversial.

[3] Maria Fsadni interview with Interview I, 15th March 2024, Whatsapp.
[4] Maria Fsadni interview with Interview G, 18th March 2024, Whatsapp.
[5] Interview G.

They gave the example of "For many years the authorities didn't want to intervene in FGM/C. But enough women affected spoke up and said, 'It's not racist to intervene. You wouldn't let it happen to a white British girl, why are you turning a blind eye when it happens to a Black British girl?" The authorities began to see they wouldn't face a backlash if they intervened."[6]

Another said the role of journalists is to shed light on issues that are either not being addressed, or that people are actively covering up: "I guess one of the main functions of journalism is to try and expose wrongdoing and in the hope that policy makers might change the situation."[7]

However, while the media might have the power to raise awareness about social issues, media professionals we interviewed stressed that it is important not to mistake the media as being allies in charity campaign work. They emphasised a necessary tension between using campaigners as a source of information, while also maintaining their journalistic independence: "It's a little hard in journalism, we are independent watchdogs; we're not advocates or collaborators, and once you get into that area... it's very tricky."[8]

3.1.2. Why personal testimony is important

We asked journalists why it is important to interview survivors as opposed to relying solely on other information and data. The consensus was that hearing from real people allows audiences to connect with the issue personally and feel there is something at stake. Showing real people was seen as the 'heart' of a story. Interview 'I' emphasised that, "in an ideal world it helps them [the reader] to empathise, to put them in the shoes of the person and gain a deeper understanding of the context that led to that person's experience in practice." The role of first-hand accounts in news stories to foster empathy among an audience was also stressed by Interview A who suggested that "broadcasters and print media look for human interest and want personal accounts to create empathy so it's not just a dry report. The audience can have a deeper engagement with the story and people will want to read it." Some journalists went so far as to suggest that without personal testimony, the media would not have a story which should reassure interviewees that they have power to negotiate interviews on their own terms. Interview A advised that survivors should "remember, this is your experience. People feel the power is on one side, but it's not. The journalists need you more than you need them."[9]

---

[6] Survivor participant.
[7] Interview I.
[8] Maria Fsadni interview with Interview D, 29th April 2024, GoogleMeet
[9] Maria Fsadni interview with Interview A, 25th March 2024, GoogleMeet.

As well as testimony used as the backbone of a news piece, three journalists explained the role of first-hand accounts of HBA in helping them to better understand the issue as they investigate. As such, two media professionals interviewed said they may talk to survivors as part of their background research. They might conduct interviews that are never intended to be shared as part of the story or in public; but rather seek to ensure news stories are developed from an informed position. Interview F suggested that offering background research interviews could be a way for people with lived experience to engage in media advocacy without having to share their experiences publicly: "even just background research calls can be really helpful, it's that really qualitative information which informs the piece".[10]

Lived experience inclusion in background research and in published stories is particularly important for the unique perspectives and experiential knowledge survivors of HBA have. A survivor participant from this project argued that "you have this knowledge and its very specific and it far surpasses the knowledge people in this sector have on this issue." As well as fostering empathy, the inclusion of survivor voice in media stories and background research ensures that the information published and consumed by the reading public is reflective of people's lived experience. Survivors are able to provide specific information about what HBA is, and the current efficacy of service provision based on their own experience of HBA and seeking assistance from support services. They are able to speak to what works well and areas for intervention in service provision, and where there are repeated systematic failures that need to be addressed.

3.2. Knowledge

"Not being given what questions were going to be asked [...] what their purpose was and what their motivations were."- Survivor participant

The importance of being given all the information about the media opportunity and interview process upfront before agreeing to and engaging with the media was mentioned by survivor participants as a key concern. Receiving questions prior to the interview was raised as a particularly important practice. Survivors felt that it was important to trust the person they are engaging with, to have all the information about what is going to happen and what they are there for.

[10] Maria Fsadni interview with Interview F, 19th April 2024,

Survivor participants reported previous negative experiences of giving media interviews in which they were unaware of questions to be asked and the 'angle' that the journalist was wanting to take with the story, resulting in them feeling uncomfortable, unsafe, and unprepared. The lack of information and subsequent dissatisfaction with how interviews were carried out and the angles of stories published, left some participants regretting their decisions to engage with the media.

We asked media professionals how open they would be in sharing the questions they intend to ask survivors in advance to prevent survivors being caught off-guard, allow them to process their answers and push-back or self-advocate as needed.

One documentary film maker said this should be possible as a wellbeing measure, however it was partly down to the individuals running the programme: "If it's a vulnerable contributor speaking on distressing subject matter, I'd say they should absolutely be given the opportunity to review interview questions in advance. However, this isn't gospel and will vary by who's running the programme." [11]

However, another journalist interviewed said that British journalists are "particularly allergic" to being asked to share interview questions in advance. Rather, they suggested that survivors should "ask what they [the journalist] wants to know."[12] In doing so, survivors will be able to gauge the kind of information they will be asked to share, as well as be able to get a sense of their aims and reasoning for wanting to interview someone with lived experience of HBA.

Media professionals suggested that charities had a role to play as a 'buffer' between the journalist and the survivor to ensure that appropriate and acceptable questions were asked to ensure the wellbeing of interviewees. "Obviously your communications officer would need to have a very frank and straight forward discussion with the reporter and make sure they understand that they're dealing with someone potentially traumatised, and its potentially upsetting for them to talk about it so to approach the interview with sensitivity."[13]

---

[11] Maria Fsadni interview with Interview C, 5th March 2024, and 14th March 2024, Whatsapp.

[12] Interview A.

[13] Interview A.

3.3. Safeguarding

3.3.1 Anonymity

"I didn't realise my voice was so recognisable." – Survivor participant

SAP members stated that safeguarding and anonymity were important considerations when deciding whether to undertake advocacy with the media. Several members reported that they previously had negative experiences in which they had been identifiable through their voices and/or appearance and emphasised the particular dangers of this among those who have experienced HBA and FM (i.e. the ongoing nature of abuse and often community level complicity, even support, for that abuse that can lead to entire communities ostracising people, and being found by perpetrators, which can be severe). One participant, who was identified by a work colleague after giving a radio interview about HBA claimed that she "didn't realise my voice was so recognisable." Her experience emphasises the importance of considering all the ways in which a person can be identified that goes beyond obscuring someone's face and not using their name. For example, someone's voice, birthmarks, tattoos, gait, and the way they hold themselves can all be identifying features. Survivors who decide that they want to engage in media advocacy anonymously also need to be aware of their potentially identifying features and can work with media professionals to ensure their complete anonymity and, ultimately, their safety (see Appendix 4).

It was also emphasised that different people will have different safeguarding risks and needs at different stages of their journey. SAP members explained how boundaries regarding safeguarding issues like anonymity are continually shifting. It is important that survivors know what their boundaries are: what they are, and are not, willing to share; how much they are willing to share; and the level of anonymity needed to stay safe. However, survivor participants pointed to the complexity and shifting nature of boundaries based on continually changing circumstances and contexts in people's lives. As a result, people will be willing to share different aspects of their experience and engage in different activities at different stages of their journey. Survivor participants therefore suggested that it was important for survivors to look at their own boundaries in terms of where they are, where they want to go, and what they're happy with and make sure this is discussed up front prior to any engagement they might be considering. With survivors, as part of this project, we co-created a toolkit (Appendix 2) for people with lived experience to decide if and how they might want to engage with the media and how to do so in a way that aligns with their boundaries and values.

The safety of survivors was cited as a key priority by journalists interviewed for this study and several advised that survivors be up front about the level of anonymity they need. Interview H suggested that "The interviewee is the boss in this situation, they have something the journalist wants. So, it's worth saying, these are my limits and to set boundaries."[14]

---

[14] Maria Fsadni interview with Interview H, 10th May 2024, in person.

While journalists emphasised that having an identifiable interviewee allows an audience to connect and empathise more with a story, they also recognised the necessity of anonymity in situations where the safety of a source requires it. Some journalists felt survivors shouldn't have to explain their wish to remain anonymous, others said they would need to justify anonymity to their editor and would also need to explain it briefly in their piece why they were withholding information. Interview J explained that "editors want interviewees to be named unless it could jeopardise their safety or there's some other strong reason not to identify them. If we hide someone's name, we have to explain clearly to readers why they've requested [15] anonymity." Therefore, survivors dealing directly with journalists need to be prepared that they could be asked questions about their choice to remain anonymous.

One multi-media journalist frequently referenced the BBC's Editorial guidelines, which set the standards for the BBC by its Board and reflect the requirements of Ofcom regulations. Within the guidelines, the different levels of anonymity a survivor can receive are clearly laid out along with a rationale for how journalists may look at and approach these measures.[16] The guidelines stipulate that journalists need to understand why anonymity is being requested as granting it means audiences cannot connect or consider the value of source material themselves. They explain why it is difficult to achieve full anonymity and how journalists can use best practice to ensure that any promise of anonymity is fully honoured. There are several methods recommended to ensure that anonymous interviewees are not identified inadvertently or through processes that are deliberately intended to reverse digital methods of anonymisation. For example, when disguising a voice, recording a voice over by another person or actor is usually more effective than manipulation of voice pitch or a technically induced distortion as both can be reversed. This suggests that, at least in certain media contexts, issues of anonymity have been well thought through and procedures are in place to ensure the safety of those engaging in media interviews.

[15] Maria Fsadni interview with Interview J, 18th April 2024, GoogleMeet.

[16] BBC Editorial Guidelines, "Guidance: Anonymity," https://www.bbc.com/editorialguidelines/guidance/anonymity/.

3.3.2. Enforcing boundaries and the need for training

Do not just see them [the interviewee] as a victim or survivor. They are the ones who are the boss" - Interview H.

While it is important for people with lived experience to know their boundaries (what they are and are not willing to share, with whom, in what contexts, and when), it can be difficult to enforce them. Survivor participants noted that sometimes you might not know you have a particular boundary until you've found yourself in a difficult situation — until it has been crossed. Participants suggested that when it came to enforcing boundaries, to an extent "you have to have the confidence to say in the moment that 'no, I'm not happy to answer that question'."[17] It was, however, recognised that this can be hard to do and sometimes people can get carried away in an interview or other advocacy setting. It was suggested that it would be useful to have media training prior to any media engagement, including to build people's confidence and about enforcing their own boundaries.

It is also important for journalists to respect people's boundaries and be able to adapt to safeguarding requests where possible. Journalists have a difficult balance to strike between uncovering the truth while not doing harm to those at risk. This can be difficult, particularly when asking questions that can bring up memories of past traumatic experiences and when answering certain questions could have safeguarding consequences. Many of the journalists we spoke to have developed methods for gathering story content that are trauma-informed and reduce safety risks. We asked media professionals whether they had any experience of safeguarding training or if there are any safeguarding guidelines and procedures that they follow.

Online and print journalists interviewed were less likely to have received any specific or formal training in safeguarding sources, though all were highly experienced in working with anonymous sources. Interview J averred that "I did a journalism course at the start of my career, and we didn't do anything like this, nobody talked to you about safeguarding. I felt my way on the job."[18] Similarly, Interview I stated that "safeguarding is not a term I've ever heard in the context of journalism, and I know journalistic organisations that have resources for people who cover these types of things. It comes down to basic rules of human decency—if it feels right, it probably is, if it doesn't, it probably isn't."[19]

[17] Survivor participant.
[18] Interview J.
[19] Interview I.

This contrasts with broadcast media where in-house measures are applied to look after contributors in line with Ofcom regulations. However, those who had received specific training in safeguarding, wellbeing or specialised trauma-informed interview techniques had typically sought out such training themselves. For example, interview G stated that for a documentary piece they covered on sexual abuse, "I ensured that my team and I all received safeguarding, trauma and child protection training before we interviewed anyone." This in-house training extended to ensuring that questions and the interview approach were trauma-informed and age appropriate:

"What I could ask the girls under 16 for radio, was a lot more generic. For example, I'd ask 'how are you finding living here, what do you hope to do when you are older, what subjects do you like at school?' I asked nothing about what happened to them."[20]

Interviews with media professionals suggest that those engaging with and interviewing people with experience of VAWG, including HBA and forced marriage, overall do not typically receive training on how to prevent re-traumatisation and ensure the safety and wellbeing of their sources. We asked three journalists if more guidelines or added training and guides may be useful. Two did not think that experienced journalists would read guidelines, suggesting instead that "it would be better to do it at the student level than at the newsroom level."20 Interview J cited the lack of time as a key reason as to why training might not be as effective among seasoned journalists, because "journalism involves constant deadlines so you don't have much time."[21]

However, Interview G said written guidelines would be useful in a situation where the journalists are reaching out to an organisation, such as a charity to talk to a survivor: "You can say, look this is the best way going about this type of interview".[22] They stipulated brevity would be key to success, so that safeguarding points could "be easier for people to read and glance at instead of sifting through paragraphs."[23] Interview G also argued that sending guidelines in advance of interest in a story would likely mean they are ignored, therefore the best time to share brief safeguarding guidelines with a journalist would be at the point when they are reaching out to a charity to speak to a survivor interviewee.[24]

While some journalists have developed trauma-informed interview and safeguarding methods, survivors of HBA need to be aware that these methods are not used by everyone and safeguarding training is not widespread in the media industry. Findings suggest that relevant training could spread more positive behaviours and learning across the industry, however it would need to be sensitive to the needs and realities of survivors and journalists navigating complex and changing situations.

[20] Interview G.
[21] Interview J.
[22] Interview J.
[23] Interview G.
[24] Interview G.

3.3.3. Wellbeing

The context in which advocacy activity occurs was reported by survivors to have an impact on what someone might be willing to share. As noted above, giving a media interview as a survivor advocate carries risks. As well as ensuring the physical safety of survivors when interviewed, it is important to consider people's mental and emotional wellbeing. Asking questions about someone's experience of HBA, and other forms of VAWG, can be re-traumatising, especially when not approached in a trauma-informed and sensitive way. Moreover, the public nature of published stories, even when anonymised, can bring up additional wellbeing considerations. Survivors reported feeling a lack of control over their experience once it was shared publicly and how it might be disseminated beyond the specific opportunity in which they shared it. For example, the way in which news stories from one outlet can be picked up by others means that it is not possible to know who is engaging with the story. This can cause feelings anxiety and other emotional and mental health repercussions among survivors. It is therefore important that people with lived experience feel safe, supported, and ready before engaging with the media, and that they are informed about the different ways their experience might be shared beyond the immediate reporting that is published from their interview. This is also the above discussions around safeguarding and anonymity are so important.

We asked media professionals about how they consider the wellbeing of survivor interviewees in their work. As with safeguarding, there was a significant gap between what different outlets and individuals can offer to ensure the wellbeing of participants. Ofcom regulations mean that processes for assessing and looking after the wellbeing of contributors is much more rigorous in broadcast journalism than in online and news. However, there were no hard or fast rules. Many answers across the spectrum were premised with the phrase 'it depends' as journalists often had to feel their way through ethics as their stories developed.

Due to Ofcom regulations, UK broadcast media companies have much more formalised processes for handling and assessing the wellbeing of contributors, particularly those who they are planning to work with over a long period of time. For example, in 2020, Ofcom introduced a new requirement for broadcasters to take due care over the welfare of people who might be at risk of significant harm as a result of taking part in a programme. This includes situations in which a programme is likely to attract a high level of media or social media interest; the programme features conflict or emotionally challenging situations; or it requires a person to disclose life-changing or private aspects of their lives. Under new fairness provisions, people taking part in programmes must also be informed about any potential welfare risks that might be expected to arise from their participation, and any steps the broadcaster or programme-maker intends to take to mitigate these.[25]

[25] Ofcom, "New protections for people taking part in TV and radio shows, (18 December, 2020), https://www.ofcom.org.uk/tv-radio-and-on-demand/broadcast-standards/new-protections-for-people-taking-part-in-tv-and-radio-shows/.

For documentary programmes and series, production managers work to ensure that processes are in place to manage and monitor contributors, ensuring they disclose any concerns around their wellbeing from the outset. Interview C clarified that "during the casting process, contributors are encouraged to self-disclose any mental health concerns. This is usually in conversation with their point of contact, or through a self-declaration form. From that point, we can investigate ways of mitigating any risk or potential harm."[26]

Psychological tests are also available, but are not mandatory, so that production teams can assess whether taking part in a documentary could cause serious harm to the wellbeing of an individual. These are done by qualified psychologists who specialise in working for television, but who are not directly involved in the production. Their role is to talk the potential contributor through what may happen with the production, what issues may arise and how the contributor feels about that. If the contributor comes to a decision with the psychologist that the programme is not right for them, the process is stopped.

Once contributors are selected, companies and channels creating larger documentaries can also hire editorial teams whose job is to reach out to contributors, build relationships with them over weeks and months and ensure they only usually have that one first port of contact. It is during this 'trust building stage' that survivor contributors have the best opportunity to advocate for the things that will support their wellbeing, negotiate those terms and gauge whether the piece is the right one for them to be taking part in.

Production teams are sometimes also expected to keep welfare logs if they are working with a contributor for a long period of time who they identify to be 'at-risk'. Interview C explained how "production managers are responsible for creating a contributor specific risk assessment when dealing with large numbers of contributors or even one vulnerable contributor. This won't be seen by contributors, but it deals with what our responsibilities are in mitigating risk. I.e., are psychological tests needed? Has the contributor been provided with a point of contact? Have we warned about potentially hostile social media and what they can do about it? Are we monitoring for signs of stress or anxiety during filming?"[27]One editorial journalist told us that if documentary contributors are working with a good production company and editorial person, they should expect the team to be very responsive should their mental health decline during film making:

[26] Interview C.
[27] Interview C.

“I would say if you’ve decided to tell your story and it gets a few months in and you’re really struggling with it, they can always pause it and reassess their schedule. Don’t be afraid to tell the production team you’re struggling more than you thought, topics can be harder than you thought. You can tell the production team, 'we need to pause this while I take a bit of time to process it’.”[28]

However, broadcast journalists suggested that this provision would not necessarily be offered in ‘fast news’ contexts such as television and radio. One journalist pointed out that interviewees cannot expect the same level of care as they might with documentary film makers due to time constraints from the 24-hour news cycle, lower budgets, smaller teams and more traditional journalistic work cultures: “There is less time to build relationships when you work for TV news. I came from a background of working with at-risk people and realised we didn’t have a safeguarding policy or aftercare so being new to the role I began writing one. The editor told me not to use it, and that we didn’t need one. I still don’t know why she told me nxot to do that.”[29]

3.4. Aftercare and support

The importance of aftercare when engaging in any form of advocacy was stressed by survivor participants, including after engaging with the media. This is particularly the case when being asked to talk about their own experiences which can cause people to become more reflective and risks a re-visitation of trauma. It was noted that a lot of the advocacy SAP members have done has been with Karma Nirvana, whom they trust and know provide aftercare and support. In their experiences with the media, survivor participants reported that there was no aftercare or support provision offered. In 2021 Ofcom updated section sever of the Broadcast Code to include a provision requiring broadcasters to take due care over the welfare of a participant who might be at risk of significant harm as a result of taking part in a programme. The organisation specified that this included situations in which the programme requires people to discuss, reveal, or engage with sensitive, life changing or private aspects of their lives. However, while broadcasters may have a duty of care under new Ofcom rules, this is not the case for all media professionals working at different outlets not regulated by Ofcom. For example, one journalist stated that in the wider 24/7 print and online media practices, journalists will often have to move very quickly onto the next story and aftercare was low on the list of priorities.

Aftercare has been given much more focus in recent years within documentary and broadcast film making. Broadcast journalists in this area showed a high awareness of the mental health risks associated with backlash on channels such as social media.

---

[28] Maria Fsadni interview with Interview B, 4th April 2024, GoogleMeet.

[29] Interview F.

For example, Interview C reported that “contributors will always get a ‘check-in’ from someone on the production after the programme has gone out. This will almost always be someone they know. Even though that person [the broadcast journalist] might have long since left the production company, we take this sort of thing seriously and we expect to do bits like this even after we’ve finished.” [30]

Despite having better provision, it was highlighted by Interview F, a journalist working for documentary and TV news, that the quality of aftercare often depends on the individual in the editorial team taking an interest in this area. They said, “I’m big on aftercare, others not so much. It’s worth survivors asking, what aftercare do you offer? Are there things available to me? Don’t suffer in silence.” [31]

Editorial journalists warned that sometimes the person who the contributor has built up the relationship with is freelance and may move on by the time aftercare is needed, so it is best to be clear in asking if participants want the same person throughout and getting agreements in writing in the early stages of production.

3.5. Controlling the narrative

“Some media want to sensationalise things just to draw attention.” – Survivor participant

3.5.1. Readback and viewing rights

The issue of being in control of the stories and the kind of narratives being told was also highlighted as a concern by survivor participants when engaging in media advocacy about HBA.

Some survivors shared negative experiences in which they were unaware of how their interview was going to be used, where it was going to feature, and how big the story was going to be. The word ‘sensationalise’ came up frequently in discussions of how personal experiences of HBA were being written about and presented in the media. It was agreed that being able to sign off on stories before they were published was important to feeling in control of their own story, how it was being told, and with the content and context within which it was being placed.

When we raised the issue of readback and viewing rights – in which people can read or view their interviews in the context of the final story – to media professionals, there were a range of responses.

---

[30] Interview C.

[31] Interview F.

Interview D, a journalist working in a newsroom, stated that readback rights go against some newsroom and editorial codes, advising that "sometimes I will check quotes or factual things if it's for a longer magazine piece, but our job is to synthesise, analyse and present in a way that we feel is fair and public will understand. It's not going to be in their control."[32]

Others suggested that they would only allow people to review the story prior to publication to check for accuracy and ensure safety, but that this would not be something openly advertised. For example, Interview J advised that "journalists should allow you to check direct quotes. Not indirect quotes, but at least direct quotes."[33] They went on to say that if they felt an interviewee might have shared too much sensitive information, or if they may have revealed personal details that could lead to identification or safeguarding issues, they would go back and double check whether to publish those details with them, or even simply leave those details out:

> So, in cases like that I will check with them before publishing those details, but many journalists really won't have the time to do that. Some might also be reluctant to omit details that they think make for a stronger story.[34]

However other journalists interviewed as part of this study suggested that they would allow readback rights in circumstances in which the information shared was particularly sensitive. Time constraints played a role in decision making about whether journalists could promise someone readback or viewing rights.

One journalist working in pre-recorded TV news and documentaries said that "typically, we don't give contributors editorial control or reviewing rights over their material. This is mainly because television turnaround is so tight at the point, we've got to deliver it to the channel."[35] This was supported by Interview B who suggested that viewing rights are "quite a rare thing to have."[36] However, Interview C suggested that survivors should always flag as early as possible if they have said something they are now concerned about and retract statements if there are safety risks before pieces are released into the public:

> If the contributor walks away from an interview and thinks 'oh, I said or implied x, y, z and I'm worried about it' they should absolutely share that with their point of contact. Every production wants to do the best job they can and know the contributors are proud of their interview come broadcast. And if it's something is safety related, the production company has as much reason to take that seriously as the contributor, so it's always worth letting them know any concerns.[37]

[32] Interview D.
[33] Interview J.
[34] Interview J.
[35] Interview C.
[36] Interview B.
[37] Interview C.

It is understandable how a lack of ability to review how their experience is being presented in the context of a story can make people with lived experience of HBA anxious. As a form of VAWG that is continually misunderstood and misrepresented as a religious and/or cultural issue that only happens in certain communities, how HBA, and their experience, is going to be presented is a key concern.

As a result, survivor participants reported being anxious about engaging with the media because there is no way to control how a story might be used or what it could explode into after publication. They suggested that knowing the motivation or angle of the media professional was important to combat this issue and ensure that their participation would not be used as part of stories upholding stereotypes.

We asked media professionals how people with lived experience can ensure that the angle being taken aligns with their values and experience. Several recommended that before survivors agree to any interviews, they should look at the stories the journalist has produced previously to see if they have covered similar issues, what angle has been taken when they have done so, and if this aligns with survivors' views of how HBA should be reported.

While this can give people a sense of what kind of 'take' a particular journalist might have on certain issues, it was also pointed out that angles of stories evolve as evidence is gathered. This can make it difficult to brief interviewees about what their story will involve and how it will be told. Interview J noted that "It's tricky because the news cycle doesn't allow us the time to interview, go back to interviewees and check they're okay with the angle. And if you're researching, your angle will evolve."[38]

It was advised that survivors "should be very honest and up front with the journalist and make clear what their concerns are and whether they can accommodate them." If a journalist or other media professional is unable to suitably address survivor concerns, it is important that people with lived experience know that they can say no and suggest the media outlet finds someone else."[39]

One particular issue survivor participants highlighted was the use of misleading or sensationalised headlines. Journalists advised that they were rarely in control of headlines or how information would be fully presented:

[38] Interview J.

[39] Interview J.

> People complain about headlines, but journalists don't write their own headlines. Sub-editors and specialists in search engine optimisation write them. So, we may suggest a headline, but we have very little control. Editors and SEO specialists will use terms that the interviewee may not like, but that are in common use so that readers can find the story in an online search. Headlines also needs to be "clicky". There's no point writing a story no one will click on because the headline is boring.[40]

It is rarely ever possible to fully know a person's lived experience will be represented in the media, particularly in news media, due to tight turnarounds, evolving evidence, and a lack of control over how information is presented. People we interviewed from broadcast news did advise that on news channels and for shorter pieces in which live interviews are used, pre-interviews can sometimes be a useful moment for interviewees to find out more about what a show's host wishes to talk about. Interview G suggested that if it is a live story and they are a guest on a show "usually [when you] pre-interview someone, you'll just ask them a few questions to get their thoughts on a story, chat for 10 minutes, find out their perspective, what they think, and potential questions we might ask, so they're aware of what's going on."[41]

However, despite this opportunity to gauge what questions might be asked and the direction of the story pre-interview, some survivors in this project said that they would be reluctant to take part in a live interview for fear of being identified. Journalists also urged survivor interviewees not to say anything they did not agree with in interviews. One journalist described a situation where an independent production company was asking contributors to say 'snap lines' that could be used in trailers and advertising. However, as stated, survivors advised that it can be difficult to assert boundaries in media contexts and that tailored media training may be a way to overcome some of these barriers, improving awareness and the ability to asset oneself in an interview context.

3.6. Expenses and compensation

"I think people need to be paid adequately and given the wrap around support if you like, because it can be extremely difficult." – Survivor participant

While there is increasing recognition of the expertise of people with lived experience of HBA in advocacy settings, adequate compensation for their time and work remains an issue to be addressed. This is particularly acute in contexts in which people with lived experience are being asked to speak as experts on HBA and some survivor participants advised that, especially when it has to do with the media or anything 'for-profit', "it can sometimes feel a bit like there's a 'roll in the brown person, let's roll them out'," aspect to engagement. They suggested that "if an organisation is going to do well out of you then it's only fair that the person is to be recompensed."[42]

---

[40] Interview J.
[41] Interview G.
[42] Survivor participant.

When it comes to media advocacy and engagement, the question of if and under what circumstances someone might receive payment for interview is complex. It is unusual for sources to receive payment for their interview, and it is generally seen as unethical and impacting the credibility of source information. Interview H suggested that "if someone is automatically offering to pay you for your personal experiences, it's usually a bit of a red flag."[43] Media professionals advised that payment of sources could also impact case outcomes in cases of active criminal proceedings. Ofcom's Broadcast Code states that where there is an active criminal case "only actual expenses or loss of earnings incurred during making of programme can be reimbursed". In the UK, no payment or promise of payment may be made to any witness or person who might reasonably be expected to be called as a witness in an active criminal case. It's the same rule if criminal proceedings are likely to happen in future unless the story is strongly in public interest and potential witnesses might not disclose information otherwise.

While it is unlikely that people would receive payment for interview, most journalists and outlets will see it as perfectly reasonable for interviewees to ask for expenses theyincur to be paid if travel and subsistence is necessary, though depending on the budget, media outlets may not always be able to do so. If it's a large outfit such as a TV or documentary production company, then they may be able to cover loss of earnings for the time that contributors spend filming with them. Interview C advised that:

> It's not required for a production company to cover travel expenses, but a contributor should always ask because, frankly, it's the least that can be done for them. If the contributor needs to be on location all day, it really is expected for the location team to buy their lunch and a coffee.[44]

There are some instances in which people with lived experience can expect to be paid for their involvement in media advocacy. When asked, media professionals advised that experts for TV documentaries do sometimes get paid, though not always. In this context, experts in a subject area are paid not only for giving an interview as part of the documentary but also for their role in fact-checking. Interview F reported that:

> We will pay people if they are experts, though it's hard if you're talking to someone about personal experiences - you wouldn't call them an expert necessarily. Some experts don't ask for fees, it really varies- about £200 for their time, expect them to engage with me throughout, fact-check, read documents, I would expect more from them than simply appearing on screen. [45]

---

[43] Interview H.
[44] Interview C.
[45] Interview F.

Interview F's comments raise questions about who is considered an expert and in what contexts. It suggests that more work needs to be done around acknowledgement of experiential knowledge production and survivor expertise in the media space.

Journalists we interviewed also suggested that often, it is assumed if a media engagement has been arranged via a charity or on behalf of a charity or NGO, that they will be covering lived experience expenses. Interview A stated that most often, "we assume that the NGO is looking after them." They suggested that "this is a question for further study or thought. Whether NGOs have a responsibility to compensate people for their time, because broadcasters won't." [46]

Therefore, it is unlikely that people with lived experience will be paid by the media for giving an interview based on their lived experience, however they may do so if being engaged as a subject expert in documentary film and television. In light of this lack of reimbursement, Interview F suggested that "it is important people are fully informed, they need to be getting something out of it personally, this is a platform, they need something out of for them." [47]

---

[46] Interview A.
[47] Interview F.

4. Conclusion and recommendations

Survivor inclusion in public advocacy against honour-based abuse and forced marriage has become increasingly prioritised within the broader VAWG sector, as has the recognition of the expertise of those with lived experience. Survivors can give insights into the nuanced nature and dynamics of HBA that can help to combat assumptions about race, religion and culture that continue to impact on the efficacy of service provision for those impacted, as well as prevention and intervention efforts. However, people with lived experience do not often receive advocacy training prior to speaking about their own experience, or HBA more broadly, nor do they often receive aftercare and support after doing so.

Engagement with survivors of HBA from Karma Nirvana's SAP, as well as with professionals from different media platforms, has revealed several key issues and recommendations to be addressed regarding survivor engagement in media advocacy:

1. The need for co-production of media engagement tools with survivors of HBA and FM and media industry experts to promote knowledge about media advocacy, including the journalistic process, safeguarding and support available.

2. The need for clear communication between survivors engaging in media advocacy and media professionals to understand safeguarding needs and requirements.

3. Best practice should be shared more widely within the VAWG sector, and among media professionals to support both survivors and journalists in delivering positive experiences of media advocacy.

4. Survivors and those working to support them need to be better-informed about what support is available; what they can reasonably expect and ask for; what the relevant industry or professional standards are (where relevant); and be empowered to say "no" if their needs are not met.

5. A need for after care and support are evident across the media sector. Survivors should be fully informed about the kinds of aftercare and support available from media outlets as well as where this is lacking.

6. NGOs and charities working to support survivors of HBA and FM should be adequately trained and resourced to be able to provide aftercare where this is not provided by media outlets.

7. Survivor advocates would benefit from the development of peer support networks and peer to peer learning based on people's previous media experiences.

8. The media sector would benefit from the development and implementation of safeguarding and anonymity training to equip them with the knowledge and skills to interview sources with their safety and wellbeing in mind. This training should be co-developed with experienced journalists, media therapists, survivors and NGOs.

9. HBA and FM specific training and a short information sheet should be developed for media professionals who want to report on this subject to be received at the point of contacting NGO's to set up interviews with survivors. This resource should be developed by NGOs and survivors in consultation with friendly journalist allies to ensure the information is useable and can be adopted.

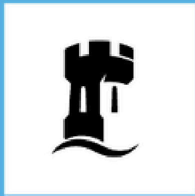
SAP members rightly pointed out that advocacy does not need to mean talking about your own experience (it can be about speaking up for others); and it does not need to mean engaging with the media at all. It is important that survivors know this and are empowered both to engage if they want to and to say "no" if the opportunity presented is not right for them at the time, does not align with their values, and/or does not meet their safeguarding needs. Survivors should never feel pressured into talking about their lived experience of HBA until they want to and under conditions that are safe and ethical to do so. Should someone decide they are ready to share information about their experience with the media, they should be supported to do so. Moreover, people with lived experience should feel empowered to stop an advocacy engagement at any point, and to choose how, when, what, and with whom they do or do not share. Similarly, their expertise on HBA and their own lived experience should not be disregarded. But neither should their position as survivors be the sum of their experience or their identity. People with lived experience have a vital role in advocacy against HBA and FM and their voices should be included as experts and as advocates for change. However, support and resources are required to ensure that their inclusion is carried out in a safe, participatory, and ethical manner. This project has demonstrated that ways of co-creating and implementing support and resources to engage people with lived experience ethically in advocacy activities, in both the broader VAWG sector and specifically around media advocacy, should be a priority topic for further study among academics, survivors, the VAWG sector, and the media.

Appendix 1: Interview framework: media professionals

Questions for media professionals

1. What sort of news hooks or moments would spark an interest in covering an honour-based abuse or forced marriage story in the UK?
2. How would the decision to cover HBA/FM get made? E.g. would you pitch it to your editor/ producer and get the green light?
3. Once a decision is made, where would you immediately go to look for an HBA/ FM story?
4. How much time would you have to research a story like HBA/FM end to end before you'd have to print/ publish/ produce? (degree of urgency)
5. How many people are involved with researching, producing, interviewing, and editing any given piece? Would survivors or media officers likely be dealing with the same person throughout? And how much control would that person they're dealing with have?
6. Why is covering someone who has lived experience so important to communicate about an issue? Journalistically, what does it add that facts, stats, and experts cannot?
7. What makes an ideal interviewee/subject for the kind of pieces you do? E.g. ready and available, charismatic on camera, to the point/ open.
8. Does it matter if the survivor has given interviews, been filmed, or had their images taken for this before?
9. How important is it that a survivor of HBA/FM being interviewed has experienced the abuse recently?
10. What approach do you take when you're interviewing someone with this sort of background?
11. How long do you usually have on average to get to know them and gather the content? And how much of that time is likely to get used in the finished product?
12. What kind of safeguarding practices or policies are in place at your outlet for yourself or interviewees when you are covering this kind of story? Whether that is in their capacity as an expert or a case study?

Appendix 2: Honour-based abuse and forced marriage: media engagement toolkit



University of
Nottingham
Rights Lab

Honour Based Abuse and Forced Marriage: Media Engagement Toolkit

Contents

Part 1: Do I want to engage?

- Deciding on engaging
- Safety
- Boundaries and values
- Resources
- Privacy

Part 2: Practical steps to engagement

- What to do when a journalist contacts you
- Understanding media timelines and angle
- Communicating your boundaries
- Getting support from media outlets
- What corroboration means and questions you can ask

Authorship and acknowledgements

This toolkit has been prepared as part of the project: Survivor-led Advocacy Training for Survivors of Forced and Child Marriage; with funding from the University of Nottingham's Impact Accelerator Account.

This toolkit would not have been possible without the input, support and expertise of lived experience experts from Karma Nirvana's Survivor Ambassador Panel. We deeply appreciate your trust, confidence, and collaboration.

The project team

Lauren Eglen, Research Fellow in Modern Slavery, Gender and Feminist Approaches, Rights Lab, University of Nottingham

Maria Fsadni, Research Consultant specialising in media, charity communications and working with survivor activists

Helen McCabe, Associate Professor in Political Theory, University of Nottingham

Survivor Ambassador Panel, Karma Nirvana

Part 1: Do I want to engage?

As a survivor advocate you might want to engage with the media to talk about different components of honour-based abuse (HBA): to inform the public about what HBA is; to give people a better idea of who it happens to and why; to combat stereotypes and assumptions; or to advocate on a particular issue (for example the need for a statutory definition or specialist service provision). Representatives from the media and journalists might also reach out to you for commentary on a recent incident or current HBA-related campaign.

This resource has been developed to support you in your decision regarding if and how you might want to engage in media interviews and/or other activities with the media. These questions might help you decide if the invitation for engagement you have received is something that you want to do, as well as help you think through the circumstances and conditions under which you would like to talk to the media about HBA.

This resource has been produced in collaboration with lived experience experts from Karma Nirvana's Survivor Ambassador Panel.

There are a range of different types of media formats you might want to use to carry out your HBA advocacy. This can include 1:1 interviews with journalists from newspapers, magazines, television and/or radio news; writing your own opinion pieces or commentary; or being approached to be part of documentaries on HBA.

To help you work through different types of media, including how they operate and the potential pros and cons of engagement, you might like to consult the 'Media Map' in Appendix 1.

Guiding Principles

This is your decision: just because you have agreed to do something in the first instance, does not mean you have to follow through if you change your mind. Step back at any time if it feels too much.

Safety is key: ensure that the opportunity feels safe and that you are in a physical, emotional, and mental environment to engage and share.

Get support: you don't have to engage with the media alone. HBA organisations and their media officers can help you in your decision to engage and provide support through the process.

Something to consider:

Once your story is published – in whatever format – it will likely exist online for the foreseeable future. There is also the possibility that the story, and your experience, will be picked up by other news outlets and shared via social media. Once your story is out there, you might have little control over how it is disseminated, who reads it, and who comments on it.

It is vital that you only share information you are comfortable sharing and that is safe to share should the piece be disseminated beyond the initial opportunity presented to you.

In what capacity might I engage?

1 As a **survivor**

You may be asked to draw on your own experience of HBA. This could be reflecting on your own experience to provide comment on a recent case of HBA in the news, or it could even be a request for you to talk about your experience in more depth as an example of HBA and its impact.

2 As an **advocate**

For an organisation, such as a charity, who may wish to name you as an ambassador for their organisation on their website or at events. You might be called upon to speak to the media to promote their fundraising or policy campaign work.

3 As an **expert**

You might be invited to speak to the media about what HBA is: what it looks like, who it happens to, where it happens and its features. This may or may not include drawing from your own lived experience, commenting on potential changes in UK law and services, or new data and research emerging on the subject.

Making an informed decision

Each opportunity to engage with the media will be different and you might find it helpful to consult this checklist for each offer that comes your way.

To help you decide if you want to take up a particular media opportunity, this resource offers questions for self-reflection to ensure that you are in the right physical, emotional, and mental environment for engagement, as well as having adequate resources to engage. These questions will also help you work out how you might want to engage – the kind of opportunities you want to say yes to, the kind of information you are willing to share, and issues of privacy.

This will include questions on:

- Safety considerations
- Boundaries and values
- Resources required
- Privacy

If, after answering questions in Part 1 you feel like you want to take part in media advocacy, Part 2 will give you some practical advice to help you understand the media opportunity and decide if it is the right fit for you. It includes some questions you can ask journalists to make sure the opportunity is in line with your values and boundaries.

Safety

Your physical, emotional, and mental safety and wellbeing is the most important priority when deciding whether to participate in media advocacy. The following questions should help you reflect on if you feel safe to take part in your media opportunity.

1. Am I in a physically safe environment to take part in this engagement?
2. Would my decision to take part put me at risk of harm? Are there ongoing risks from current or previous perpetrators? (Perpetrators could be family members, partners/ex-partners, and community members).
3. Am I in a good mental and emotional place to engage with the media?
4. Does the opportunity require me to talk about my own experience, and how might talking about that impact me during and after interview?
5. Have I given myself enough time to think about the physical, mental, and/or emotional repercussions that might arise from engaging with the media?
6. How can I and others mitigate the potential risks of engaging?
7. How will I and others remember the safety measures I want in place?

Boundaries and values

It can be challenging to work out what we feel safe and comfortable sharing, with whom and in what way, and this can change over time, in different contexts, and depending on personal circumstances. To limit the possibility of finding yourself in a situation you are uncomfortable with, it is important to think through your boundaries and core values before deciding if any engagement with the media should take place.

The following questions might help you reflect on what your boundaries and values for engaging with the media might be:

1. What are my reasons for wanting to engage with the media? Do I really want to engage, or am I feeling like I "should" do so?
2. In what capacity am I willing to engage with the media? As a survivor? As a subject expert? As an organisational representative?
3. Am I prepared to share my experience with others? What parts of my experience am I willing to share?
4. What would I not be comfortable sharing?
5. Do I want to be identifiable? Do I want to remain anonymous? Are there parts of my experience that would reveal my identity even if I was anonymous?
6. In what formats am I willing to share my experience? Print, video, or audio?

7. What are my core values in talking to the media? What key messages do I want to get across and do I feel clear about the potential limitations of using the media?
8. Is media engagement right for me and are there other ways I might want to advocate, or share lived experience perspectives?
9. Who am I comfortable being interviewed by?
10. How much time am I willing to give to media advocacy?
11. What measures need to be in place for me to be comfortable engaging in media advocacy or giving a media interview? What assurances do I need?
12. How will I ensure my personal boundaries are upheld?
13. Are there any potential legal consequences I need to think about?

It is important to remember that your boundaries and values can and will shift over time and depend on the context you are in, as well as the context of the media opportunity. For example, you might be willing to share more details of your experience in certain situations and for certain audiences but want to limit the amount you share or how you share it in other situations. You might want to use these questions to reflect on your boundaries at regular intervals.

Resources

1. What support network have I got around me?
2. Do I have someone to talk to about media advocacy?
3. Do I have someone to talk through this opportunity with?
4. What resources do I need for support post-interview, and do I have access to them?
5. What resources can I consult before deciding whether media advocacy is right for me?
6. What safeguarding measures might I need, and do I have access to them?

Privacy

1. Do I feel safe to give an interview? Does the opportunity feel safe?
2. What level of anonymity do I need?
3. Am I comfortable with other people reading or hearing about my experiences?
4. Have I considered how engagement might impact me and the people in my life?
5. Once a news story is published it can be picked up by other news outlets and on social media. Am I comfortable with the possible dissemination of my experience beyond the proposed opportunity?

Part 2: Practical steps to engagement

After answering questions in Part 1, you may feel media advocacy is not right thing for you at this time. That's totally okay! Your physical safety and emotional wellbeing should always come first and you should never feel pressured to share any experiences unless you really want to.

If you feel you want to share your experiences but don't wish to do so through the media, there are many other ways to achieve social change with lived expertise.

See 'Many ways to share' in the Appendix 4 for more ideas.

If you do decide you want to take part in media advocacy, Part 2 provides some questions that you will want answered, as well as information and assurances you can ask for upfront. These will help you decide whether a media opportunity is the right one for you.

Advocating for yourself and asking these questions can feel difficult or a bit intimidating, and some journalists may be pushy. We would advise you work with a trustworthy charity such as Karma Nirvana who have safeguarding experience to support you through this process. They might ask these questions on your behalf, have prior relationships with trusted journalists, and be able to chase outlets on any promises made.

This section will include:

- What to do when a journalist contacts you.
- Understanding media timelines and angle.
- Communicating your boundaries and getting agreements up front.
- Getting support from media outlets.
- What corroboration means and questions you can ask about it.

What to do when a journalist contacts you

Journalists may approach you directly to speak about honour-based abuse. They may contact you through social media, through a mutual contact or at a place where you are receiving support. Here are easy steps to help you manage this.

1. Do not start answering questions right away, even if they are in a rush. Thank them for the opportunity and say you need to be allowed time to decide.

2. Get their contact details and ask them when they need to hear back from you.

3. Use the questions in Part 2 or say you would like interviews to be arranged by a charity like Karma Nirvana who can ask these questions on your behalf.

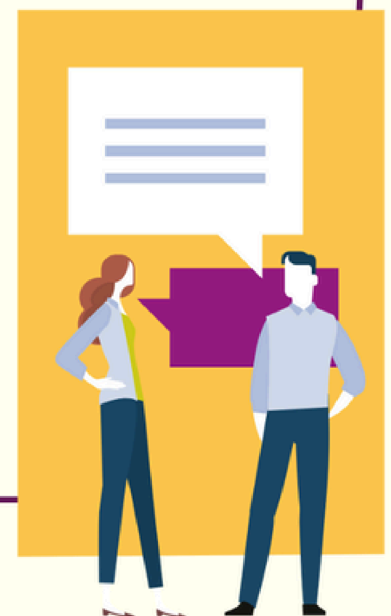
4. Ask them to follow up the request by email so you have it in writing.

If a charity contacts you for a media interview

1. Say you will need time to decide and thank them for the opportunity. Even if a charity is helping you, you should never feel pressure to take part.

2. The charity person who is in contact with the media can ask the questions in Part 2 on your behalf. This way you can make an informed choice.

3. Check your values align the charity's by asking the following questions:
   - How does the charity talk about honour-based abuse and those impacted?
   - In what capacity would I be interviewed?
     - As a survivor with experience, as someone the charity supports, as an expert or a campaigner?
   - Does the charity have key messages they want me to use?
   - Can I shape this opportunity and say things I wish to mention?
   - What topics or words does the charity want me to avoid using?



Understanding media timelines and angle

These questions will help you understand the journalist's timeline and angle:

1. When is your deadline?
2. Why are you covering this story now? E.g. a new police report or charity data?
3. What is it that you wish to know by interviewing me? What sort of questions would you be asking?
4. What does this interview involve, how long would it last?
5. Are you looking for a few quotes or to create an in-depth account?
6. Who else are you interviewing?
7. When do you expect the piece to go out?

If this is for a TV, or radio story:

1. Will it be a 'live' interview or a 'pre-recorded' interview? If it's a live interview, you can request to do a pre-recorded interview if that feels more comfortable
2. What is the name of the presenter or person interviewing me? Can I have a pre-interview* with them so we can get to know each other beforehand?

*a pre-interview happens before any on-camera or recorded interview and gives you time to get to know the person who will be interviewing you. It's also a good opportunity to mention any topics you'd like to discuss. It can help set the tone for the interview, and hopefully take some of the nerves out of the process too!

Top Tip

Google search what the journalist has covered before. Do you like the way they have reported sensitive issues in the past?

If the piece is behind a paywall, you can ask for a few examples of their previous work to give you an idea.

Communicating your boundaries up front

Your boundaries and safety should be the top priority. It is best to communicate any boundaries and concerns you have from the start so that the journalist or charity know the conditions under which you would be willing to engage.

The journalist may not be able to meet all of your conditions for participation, or they might say that they cannot promise you what you're asking for. This could be for a number of reasons, including newsroom codes, time pressures or what they require for this particular piece.

Whatever the reason, only agree to do an interview if you feel safe and comfortable. You can stop the process at any time if it doesn't feel right anymore. To communicate you boundaries you might want to ask:

1. If you do not want to be identified: I would like to remain anonymous. How would we work to ensure my identity stays hidden? (See Anonymity information in Appendix 2).
2. I would feel safer doing my interview in a certain location and/or time. Would this work for you?
3. I would be more comfortable talking to a female interviewer, is this something that can be arranged?
4. I am happy to talk about some areas, but do not want to go into certain details – is that still going to work for you?
5. I would like to see the questions I'll be asked in advance – is that something you can do?
6. I would like readback rights* or a viewing** before the piece goes out with the ability to suggest edits for my safety and wellbeing. Is that possible for you to guarantee?

There may be certain words you would prefer the journalist to use to describe you or your experience. For example, you may wish them to use the word 'survivor' or 'victim'. It is worth talking to them and asking if they can accommodate or add some nuance.

Top Tip

Get everything you agree in writing before agreeing to interview.
A trustworthy charity can help you advocate for the things you need and can also chase media outlets for anything they have promised.

*Readback rights are when you can read the areas of an article where you are mentioned and quoted before the piece is published. Some journalists allow this to check for accuracy or if its the only way an at-risk interviewee feels comfortable enough.

**A viewing is similar to readback rights, only for TV and documentaries.

Getting support from media outlets

In some cases, media outlets offer support to their interviewees. This depends on the size and type of media outlet as well as their deadline, budget and team resources. You might want to ask:

1. If you need to travel for the interview: Could you cover my expenses? E.g. travel, accommodation, food.
2. If taking part in interviews affects wages: Could you cover loss of earnings?
3. Is there a safeguarding point of contact at your outlet who I can connect with if any concerns come up? If not, can you talk me through how you will manage risks?

TV and Radio support

You are more likely to get a higher level of support if you are working with UK TV or radio journalists, particularly if you are part of a longer piece, such as a documentary. Due to Ofcom regulations, some independent film companies and channels have editorial teams to support you as a contributor through the process. To find out what support is available you can ask:

1. Are you Ofcom regulated? If not, are you signed up with another regulator?
2. Do you have a therapist on your team who I could talk to should I need one?
3. What support do you offer contributors pre and post-transmission?
4. What aftercare is there for me once a piece has gone out?
5. Can I have support and advice on how to deal with social media after transmission?
6. Have you covered a story about honour-based abuse, or gender-based abuse before? How did you do that manage that safely?
7. Do you have an editorial team who will work with me through the process? If they are freelancers, how will you ensure what we agree now will be delivered if they move on?

Corroboration

It's less likely you will need to use this section, but if you are working with a TV news channel, documentary film makers or an investigative journalist, they may need to corroborate evidence.

Corroborating evidence is when journalists are fact-checking what they hear from their sources with different types of evidence. This ensures that their work is fully researched and as accurate as possible.

If you are taking part in a documentary, or a journalist is doing an investigative piece, here are a few questions you can ask to understand if this will be part of the process. You can then decide if this is the right opportunity for you, your safety and wellbeing.

1. Will you be needing to corroborate evidence to support what I am saying about my personal experiences?
2. If so, how will you work with me to do this?
3. What kind of questions or evidence would you need to ask me?
4. What kind of material evidence might you need from me? E.g. police reports, messages.
5. Would you need to talk to, or contact other people and if so, how would you work with me to agree this in advance, ensure I am safe, and my wellbeing is priority?
6. If you choose to be anonymous: how will you gather evidence without revealing my identity?

We advise you work with a charity like Karma Nirvana who have safeguarding experience and capacity to support you through this process.

Appendix 1: Media Map

General features of the media

No two journalists work in the same way and every piece is different. However, there are broad characteristics that will shape your experience of working with the media if you chose to be interviewed about honour-based abuse.
The amount of time journalists have to create their story has a big impact on how they will work with interviewees and the type of piece they will create.
We have therefore divided media opportunities up into categories: 'faster' and 'slower' news.

Please bear in mind:

- This Media Map will give you a very general idea of the 'media landscape'. Always deal with every media opportunity with fresh eyes and, if you can, with the support of a trustworthy charity that has safeguarding experience such as Karma Nirvana.
- Always assume that pieces will be available online, and journalists often use social media to promote their work. Other media outlets may reprint or repurpose the information.

Key terms

- Faster news: 'stories' or pieces which cover an event that has happened within the last 24 hours. Faster news is reactive and usually quite short – delivering only top-line key information.
- Slower news: 'stories' or pieces which often have a more in-depth look into an event, a trend, an individual or perhaps a line of argument. These could look like a feature piece in a magazine, a radio documentary about an inspiring or controversial individual, or a comment or opinion piece that is released a couple of days after a news story.
- Readback rights: this is when a journalist agrees to let you read an article or see a piece where you are mentioned and quoted before it is published. In a few cases, you may be able to suggest edits.
- A viewing: this is when a TV news or documentary programme allows you to watch a program before it airs.
- Aftercare: this is typically when a TV or radio 'editorial' person supports the 'contributor' or interviewee to manage their online interactions and emotions in preparation of and after their interview airs.
- Corroborate evidence: Corroborating evidence is when journalists are fact-checking what they hear from their sources against other types of evidence.

Media Map

Faster News: 24-hour news

<table>
<tr><th></th><th>Characteristics</th><th>Pros</th><th>Cons</th></tr>
<tr><td>Newspaper and online news</td><td>Journalists have a few hours to research and write their pieces.

• Fast-paced.
• Reactive news - responds immediately to something that has happened in the last 24 hours.
• Short, punchy pieces that can be read within a few minutes.
• Shorter word counts (200-400 words).
• Other media outlets are more likely to pick up the story and run with it.</td><td>• Working with news gives you an opportunity to shape early narratives about an event.
• Fewer photos, if any, are needed.
• Less likely to require travel; so interviews can often be done remotely from a safe place.
• If anonymisation is agreed, it is easier to achieve in a short written piece than in other mediums.
• Some news journalists may do follow up feature pieces later.
• More often, interviewees are dealing with the same person from beginning to end.</td><td>• Pieces only cover top-line information on a topic due to small word counts.
• Pieces are often dropped last minute or rescheduled depending on what else comes up that day.
• Headlines are written and decided by someone else.
• Readback rights are harder to negotiate due to lack of time and last minute edits before publication.
• Some newsroom codes don't allow readback rights, especially in a 24-hour news piece.
• More often, little to no aftercare is offered.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Broadcast news TV and radio</td><td>Journalists have just a few hours to research and record their pieces.

• Fast-paced.
• Reactive news - responds to an event that has just happened in the last 24 hours.
• Short, punchy pieces.
• Live and pre-recorded interviews.
• Smaller teams involved.
• Often just one or two sentences get used from interviews, so make them count!
• Other media outlets are more likely to pick up the story and run with it.
• Some outlets may ask you to come into a studio or filming location, others will be happy for you to record from a remote location. It's worth asking for whatever suits you.</td><td>• Opportunity to shape and frame the narrative about an event early on.
• Anonymisation techniques are available, though it requires more thought to avoid identification.
• Ofcom regulate UK broadcasting companies so they may have more safeguarding awareness than print news.
• Some minimal aftercare might be available for survivors on request, depending on the outlet.
• Some interviews can be done from home or a safe place of your choice.
• You can request a pre-interview to set the tone and feel more comfortable.
• News journalists often wear many hats so they may follow up with offshoot feature pieces.</td><td>• Pieces often get dropped last minute or rescheduled depending on what other 'breaking news' comes up that day.
• Travel may be required but interviewees can request expenses to be paid before agreeing to take part.
• Not much time to make a decision and little to no time to get to know the news journalist before agreeing to take part.
• The person you set up the interview with may be different to whoever interviews you and the information you provide the initial person may need to be repeated.
• Viewing or readback rights only possible for pre-recorded interviews and are very unlikely to be granted due to last minute editing before transmission.</td></tr>
</table>

Media Map

Slower news: a more in-depth look

	Characteristics	Pros	Cons
Feature pieces Print and online: magazines, newspaper features, Sunday paper supplements, online	'Newsy' topics are covered in a more in-depth way for feature pieces. • A few days to a few weeks to produce a story depending on the outlet. • Often more reliant on photos, infographics and images. • More 'human interest' so survivors may be asked more questions or to go into more depth about their lives. • More of what you say may be featured due to longer word count. • More about you and your life is likely to be included. • Pieces are more likely to be a one-off as they are often exclusive.	• Slower news means more time for building relationships and negotiating with journalists. • More likely to get readback rights agreed as journalists have more time to produce feature pieces. • More in-depth look at the subject due to larger word count so potentially more wriggle room for nuance than news stories offer. • More analysis, often a different kind of readership who are more interested in the specific subject. • Can be a good way to promote services and talk about solutions to problems. • Features allow audiences to feel more connected with others and are more likely to feel convinced.	• Usually feature pieces attract smaller audiences - though not always! • If its a feature as part of a 24-hour news cycle it may still have a tight deadline on the heels of news, so always check time frame. • Environmental images or B-roll film footage may be required to 'build a picture' of who an interviewee is - careful management required if anonymisation has been promised to avoid identification. • There may be long delays before publishing. Journalist won't always know or be able to control when feature pieces come out.
Comment pieces Print and online: newspapers, magazines and online	Comment pieces are argumentative opinion pieces. • Punchy writing and tone. • More in-depth arguments. • 24 hours to a few weeks to produce. • Comment pieces need to be written in a certain way to fit the editorial style of the publication. They are therefore sometimes written by a 'ghost writer' and signed-off by the 'author'.	• Comment pieces position the speaker as the 'expert' on a subject. They can help build personal credibility on an issue. • Depending on editorial slant, comment pieces can be more nuanced and in-depth or focus on 'myth-busting' misconceptions. • Readback rights are almost guaranteed as you would be the author, though expect a few last minute edits!	• Comment pieces are not usually as well read, or seen as being as impactful or influential in shaping media and public narratives on topics as other forms of media outreach. • Not always considered an effective way to convince audiences. • Not usually possible to write comment pieces anonymously, unless its a self-published blog.

Media Map

Slower news: a more in-depth look

	Characteristics	Pros	Cons
Documentaries for radio TV and streaming services	Slower process- planning, recording and transmission can take weeks, months or years end-to-end. • Visual, audible medium so expect lots of recording time. • Productions have bigger budgets, more time and larger teams. • Your experiences will sometimes be given a 'narrative' or loosely scripted into a 'beginning, middle and end'. • More potential for exploration and analysis due to length of piece, provided its interesting to the audience. • Corroboration of evidence is often necessary.	• Stronger safeguarding and mental health practices due to UK Ofcom regulation in the UK, more time and staff allocated to this work. • More scope to talk about subjects that 'news' agenda might not cover. • One or two people assigned to contact interviewees throughout process. • Can invest months or years to build relationships, trust and consent. • 'Duty of care' calls pre and post transmission. • Aftercare support is often available when requested. • Potentially more scope for producers to share the angle with survivors. • In exceptional cases, you can have a 'viewing' before pieces air.	• Interviewees can get a lot of attention online. • Survivors need to negotiate what they want from the beginning. • High input of time and emotional energy for survivors. • Your main point of contact may not be hired from start to finish, so negotiate and lock agreements in that you will be dealing with the same person throughout. • May be long delays before a piece is aired - one week to an entire year after filming. • If someone is accused of wrongdoing and that person is identifiable in the programme, the programme team need to contact them for a right to respond. This is something you may wish to discuss beforehand.
Investigative research Print, online, TV and radio	Slower process- could take weeks, months or years for journalists to complete research and publish. • Purpose is to uncover deliberately hidden or concealed wrongdoing or negligence. • Corroboration of evidence is necessary to ensure everything the journalist claims is proven. Highly skilled and dedicated journalists are needed to do this well.	• Investigations offer scope to look into subjects that 'news' agenda might not cover and where there is not a lot of public information available. • Survivors can offer 'background information' if you don't wish to feature. • Investigative piece may uncover stories that people have deliberately hidden or ignored. • Corroboration and fact-finding helps to reveal and prove 'the truth'. • If story is significant it can get picked up and used by other outlets.	• Not possible to know about 'angle' up front because the purpose of investigation is to uncover things we wouldn't be able know otherwise. • Pieces can be high- risk to research and publish for the journalist and interviewees. • When someone wishes to be anonymous careful corroboration techniques are needed to avoid identification. • If someone is accused of wrongdoing and that person is identifiable, the journalist needs to contact them for a right to respond - this is something you may wish to discuss beforehand.

Appendix 4: Anonymity information

Your safety is key and must always come first. This guide covers things you can ask journalists for to keep your identity hidden within their articles and programmes, known as anonymisation. Ensuring safety is complex and goes beyond anonymisation, and even those choosing to be identified will still require safety measures. We recommend working with a trusted organisation with safeguarding experience, if you can, to help you navigate and make the experience as safe as possible for you and anyone else involved.

Some survivors feel safe enough to be identified and choose to be named in interviews, while others do not. As well as being a way to stay safe, anonymisation is also a line of defence to protect you from legal action in liable courts. There are many reasons why someone might not wish to be identified.

Whatever decision you make, and whatever your reason is, this is your experience, and you have every right to choose to remain anonymous if you wish to speak publicly.

Careful consideration needs to go into anonymisation with journalists, because disguising someone's identity completely can be difficult to achieve. We recommend working with a trustworthy charity organisation who have safeguarding resources to act as an intermediary.

If you wish to hide your identity, here are a few things to consider:

Pseudonym: You may wish to use a pseudonym, otherwise called a fake name, rather than use your real name.

Minimum personal details: If you wish to remain anonymous the journalist will still need a few details to describe who you are to their readers, listeners, or viewers. The fewer personal details are included, the less likely you will be identified. E.g. '28-year-old mother in the Northwest' is a phrase that keeps details to a minimal, whereas the phrase '28-year-old accountant, who recently moved to Stockport with her two children' reveals your job, your recent activity, the number of children you have and specific location so it will be easier to identify you.

Avoid jigsaw identification: If you have done media interviews before, or may intend to do more anonymously in future, ask the journalist to copy the anonymised minimal personal details that are already in the public domain and avoid adding any new information that might lead to identification.

Readback rights: You can also ask for read-back rights to see how they describe you to screen out identifying details that may come up in your quotes or in areas where they have chosen to elaborate in such a way that might reveal your identity.

Photographing you: Silhouette photography is when light is shone behind the person's head so their face cannot be seen. Blurring your face thoroughly in images is another way to anonymise.

A third option is pixilation of your face, however with the right technology and effort pixilation can be reversed, so this is less secure than the other two options.
Bear in mind also that someone might still be able to identify you if you are wearing distinctive jewellery, clothes or have other personal markings pictured such as tattoos. Careful consideration needs to go into this with the journalist and charity intermediary or safeguarding officer.

Audio: You can ask for your voice to be disguised with a 'voice over' or have your voice technically distorted with voice pitch. Though voice over will mean the interview is less impactful for an audience, it is usually more effective than technically induced distortion because it isn't reversible.

Photography and filming of your location: Journalists may want to capture you in your day-to-day environment, where you are living, spend personal time or in your area of employment. This is to build a picture of who you are and allow the audience to feel a personal connection.

You need to consider where you will be photographed very carefully to ensure that images and film clips are not taken in places which would allow someone to identify who you are and your location. Image geotags and metadata identifying location should also be removed, as these are all identifying markers. We advise working with a charity intermediary safeguarding officer, if you can, to help set boundaries with the journalist.

Filming you: As well as applying the measures mentioned in photography and audio, filming you presents a few other risks to identification. The way someone gestures or walks, the location in which the filming is taking place, any jewellery or distinctive markings such as a tattoo or birthmark – all these things may be particularly distinctive to you and can all reveal identity.

- To anonymise you in film you can agree to the following measures to keep your identity safe.
- Filming in another location where you do not work, live or spend personal time.
- Wearing a wig during interview and any filming or photography.
- Avoiding film clips of your gait – the way you walk.
- Not showing any distinctive personal physical features, clothes, jewellery or belongings.

Background information interview: in cases where you have reason to trust the journalist, want to help them but feel unable to provide an anonymised interview, you may wish to offer them a 'background information' instead. A background information interview is where the interviewee shares information about personal experiences and knowledge without being featured in any media work.

This allows the journalist to research and investigate the subject. It is usually more relevant to investigative journalists and documentary film makers.

Communicating whether you would like to be identified or not I would like my identity to be:

- [ ] Fully anonymised
- [ ] I am happy to share my first name / second name / occupation / age / region. (circle all that apply, cross out any that do not apply)

Right now, I feel I can offer journalists:

- [ ] Background interview only
- [ ] Short quotes only
- [ ] Pre-recorded Radio interviews
- [ ] Live radio interviews
- [ ] Pre-recorded TV interviews
- [ ] Live TV interviews
- [ ] Longer documentaries

Appendix 5: Other tools and guides

There are other resources and guides that are developed for survivor who are considering sharing your experience. These tools are not specific to honour-based abuse survivors but you may still find them useful.

- Women's Aid Women’s Aid created their own guide, Break the Silence, for women who have experienced domestic abuse and wish to share their experience. Find this and more on their website: Survivor Voices: Experts by Experience.

- Survivor Alliance Survivors Alliance is an international, US-based not-for-profit, made of, by, and for survivors of slavery and human trafficking.

- Survivor Leadership Resources 6 C’s of becoming an advocate Transforming Trauma into Treasured knowledge

Appendix 6: Many ways to share

Not everyone wants to share their lived experience publicly, but they may wish to do so in other ways. There are many ways to achieve social change without having to talk to the media. Here are a few ideas.

Karma Nirvana run a survivor advisory panel to enable survivors to come together in a safe space to share their experiences, reduce isolation and develop a community. Panel members also can also get involved in the charity's work to help raise awareness of HBA, and shape policy and practice.

- Learn more and join the Survivor Ambassador Panel!

The Domestic Abuse Commissioner website has lots of resources to help you access meaningful ways to bring about change.
Here are a few links you can look at.

- VOICES Newsletter sign up: polls, focus groups, DAC review (March issue)
- VOICES page – stay connected to policy and influence change
- Lived Experience Matters

Survivor Voices is a survivor-led organisation that harnesses the expertise of people affected by abuse in order to transform society's response.

- Changemakers for those ready to use experience in research and education
- Researcher Community read guidelines
- Survivor Writer group (November – next intake)