

Speaker Name	Statement
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National Ugly Mugs

Fighting stigma, saving lives

Most sex workers
are HIV positive

Most sex workers are
addicted to drugs or
alcohol

Most sex workers are
coerced/trafficked



Being a sex
worker is illegal

Sex workers do not look
after their sexual health

Challenging stereotypes

Street– 10%-20%

- 90-95% problematic drug and alcohol use
- 80-85% experience violence
- Mostly female
- Some low-level control – partners may be seen as “pimps”

Brothel, sauna and parlour– 30-35%

- Less violence
- High proportion of migrants
- Mostly female or trans female
- Low levels of exploitation, trafficking and violence

Private / independent– 50%

- Diverse in gender identity and ethnicity
- Working within the law

80,000 Sex Workers in the UK

- Launched in July 2012
- Founded by the UK Network of Sex Work Projects
- Funded by Home Office 2012-2013.
- Based on informal “ugly mugs” schemes
- Supported by NCA, NPCC and Home Office.



National Ugly Mugs

10,000 – 15,000 sex workers benefit from NUM

- 3000 Individual members
- 300 Organisations
- 100 Escort sites/establishments

Reports

- 2100+ incidents since July 2012, 500+ London
- 15% rapes
- 30% sexual violence

NUM's Reach

- NUM has led to the apprehension and conviction of more than 40 serious offenders who targeted sex workers
- Many of them were serial offenders
- They are now serving a combined total of more than 200 years in prison

Without NUM, police would have known nothing about their crimes.

Convictions

Safety

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graph TD; A[Safety] --> B[96% felt safer as a direct result of NUM.]; A --> C[78% felt that offenders were less likely to target them now that NUM exists.]
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NUM's Impact

1. Reporting and Recording System

A mechanism for members to report incidents via the website, the phone app or to the National Ugly Mugs Team.

2. Production & Circulation of Alerts

NUM produces sanitized alerts to warn sex workers and support services of dangerous individuals.

The alerts can be received via:

- Email/SMS
- Website
- App

Incident/Attack

With victim consent, intelligence is shared anonymously with the Serious Crimes Analysis Section

3. Sharing information with the police and Serious Crimes Analysis Section

NUM: How it works

Up to 15% SWISH service users identify as transgender

Many are migrant workers who haven't had lower surgery

May advertise as either TS or TV

Can enter industry to fund sex re-assignment surgery

Often report feel empowered and valued, offering a specialised service – many of their clients identify as straight men

Access regular sexual health screenings.

Barriers to accessing clinics: binary gendered waiting areas, inappropriate procedures being offered

Trans Sex Workers

- At SWISH 50% of service users are male escorts
- 70% identify as gay or bisexual
- Overlooked in media campaigns when sex work is talked about as gender based violence.
- Can a male sex worker be a victim, and a female feel empowered?
- Male sex workers may work in brothels, but usually online
- Exchanging sex for drugs, favours, or a bed
- Taking drugs/engaging in chemsex can lead to feeling disempowered.

Male Escorts

- Sex Workers given a lifetime ban on donating blood at the same time as other “high risk” groups
- Clients of sex workers have a 5 year ban
- Indoor sex workers often seen as at low risk of HIV
- Stigmatising - suggests sex workers are not in control of looking after sexual health

Blood Donations

**Fear of being judged
for their work, and
concerns around
being asked to exit**

**Pressures of daily
life/demands of
clients may
override health
care**

**Immigration status
& experiences in
country of origin.**

**Disclosure of sex
work and HIV status.**

**Concerns about lack
of understanding
around the realities
of sex work.**

**Trafficking –
8.7% migrant
females have
been
trafficked
(ACPO report)**

**Fear of being
judged by
practitioners**

Barriers

- “I know you won’t report to the police and even if you do they won’t believe you because you’re a whore”
- “You can’t be raped – you’re a sex worker”
- “What you did wasn’t rape, it was prostitution”

Sexual Violence

- Clients calling THT Direct helpline demonstrates misconception that many female sex workers are HIV+
- Many sex workers already set their own boundaries and insist upon protection
- If clients say they are on PrEP, sex workers may feel pressured into participating in bareback sex
- Can lead to increase competition – lowering of prices, as clients threaten to take their business elsewhere – a “buyer’s market”
- Reconfiguration of power and expectations

Sex Work & PrEP

Training on what to do if a sex worker discloses criminal activity

You can use NUM to send out pleas for information to aid investigations or to help locate missing persons

Link to your specialist service on our website

You can offer an integrated model of working

Intermediary between sex workers, local projects, the NHS, and the police.

More referrals – support setting up a fast track service.

Empowered sex workers they are more likely to access sexual health support services

Signing Up To NUM

NHS working with Charity Sector

The Integrated Model of Working

- NUM reports
- Counsellor
- Access to key worker
- Peer support groups
- Dentist
- Sexual Health Screening
- Treatment for HIV





Any questions?
