



Tackling Serious Violence: A Health Perspective / Rapid Read

WHAT IS 'TACKLING SERIOUS VIOLENCE'?

Tackling Serious Violence (TSV) involves a multi-agency approach, involving a range of partners across different sectors.

The Government's [Serious Violence Strategy](#) sets out such a multi-agency approach, stressing the importance of early intervention to tackle root causes. It is framed on four key themes:

- tackling county lines and misuse of drugs
- early intervention and prevention
- supporting communities and partnerships
- an effective law enforcement and criminal justice response

This Strategy represents a step-change in the way we think and respond to serious violence, establishing a new balance between prevention, earlier intervention and law enforcement.

DEFINITIONS OF VIOLENCE

The WHO defines violence as 'the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation'.

In its [World Report on Violence and Health](#), the WHO also presents a typology of violence, which distinguishes between four modes in which it is inflicted: physical, sexual, psychological, and deprivation or neglect.

INDICATORS OF SERIOUS VIOLENCE

Indicators of serious violence are very varied, and can include:

- children and young people missing from education, or who have been permanently excluded from education
- deprivation and inequalities of resource and access
- alcohol and substance misuse
- adverse childhood experience (abuse, neglect and familial dysfunction), which can lead to violence
- repeated admissions to hospital with serious injuries
- victims becoming perpetrators
- drug-running and county lines activity, including child criminal exploitation and abuse
- gang cultures

TACKLING SERIOUS VIOLENCE: THE NHS, HEALTH, AND SAFEGUARDING

The NHS and wider health system are addressing serious violence in the following ways:

Treatment: ensuring the best care for victims of trauma, as well as the rehabilitation of Perpetrators, including on-going trauma-informed support for the young person, their family, carers and friends

Education: a better understanding of ourselves and the role we have within the health space and in partnership with others, and being part of the movement to address serious Violence. Supporting and encouraging all children to complete their education, and remain in further education, training or employment

Data Collection: data sharing and collection, and health-related intelligence, in relation to serious violence, including the narrative of early intervention and prevention

Advocacy: encouraging the role of peer advocacy services and social prescribing to work collaboratively with young people; linking with Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) and Violence Reduction Units/Networks, with governmental oversight ensuring robust positions on violence reduction, including domestic abuse and violence; child exploitation; sexual assault; and serious youth violence

NHSE/I SUPPORT FOR TACKLING SERIOUS VIOLENCE

The TSV Clinical Reference Group formed in October 2020, out of learning from the [Summit on Hidden Harms](#). It is time-limited to March 2022, and aims to:

- tackle serious violence, in all its nuanced forms, including modern slavery and human trafficking
- improve collaborative data sharing, person-identifiable data between services, and aggregated data between trusted partners, with a robust data-sharing agreement

WHERE TO FIND OUT MORE

Lancashire Violence Reduction Unit's [Little Book of Violence Reduction](#) is a useful easy read, defining violence, and exploring the principles of violence reduction.

Lancashire's [Trauma Informed Organisational Development Framework](#) is an invaluable self-assessment toolkit for local team leaders.

The Department of Health and Social Care has [this useful guidance on County Lines](#) as part of 'All Our Health'.



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