

# CSEFA HUB AND SPOKE EVALUATION

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END OF PHASE ONE REPORT  
2013 - 14

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## **Section 1: Introduction and Background**

The overall aim of this research is to provide knowledge about the potential of the 'Hub and Spoke' model of service development to trigger cultural and systemic change in the way that services supporting children and young people respond to child sexual exploitation (see 1.2.2 below).

### **1.1 The aims of this report**

This report presents findings from the evaluation of phase one of the Hub and Spoke development programme, in order that the learning can be used by participating services to inform the second phase of service development. Its aims are to:

- Summarise phase one Hub and Spoke development activities between October 2013 and September 2014, in the three phase one sites of Service 1, 2 and 3.
- Report to CSEFA funders on the progress of service development, and what we have learned from the evaluation about the effectiveness of the Hub and Spoke model in achieving strategic objectives. This learning may also help CSEFA members in future funding decisions.
- Inform the Expert Reference Group and the Research and Evaluation Advisory Group of progress and learning in order that they might continue to provide an effective steer for the evaluation project and overall strategy.
- Describe some early messages that might be useful for policy makers addressing the area of CSE.

### **1.2 Introduction and background to CSEFA strategy**

#### ***1.2.1 Background to Child Sexual Exploitation***

Young people from any background can experience child sexual exploitation (CSE). However, for some young people a combination of disadvantage and background vulnerability factors can increase their risk of being pulled into exploitative contexts, where sexual activity is exchanged for gifts, affection or attention, alcohol or drugs, a bed for the night or other 'returns' (as defined in guidance produced by the Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF, 2009:9)). Research demonstrates that young people at heightened risk include those who are in care, those who have experienced prior abuse, witnessed or experienced domestic violence, experienced bereavement, are excluded from school or have learning difficulties (Scott and Skidmore, 2006; Berelowitz *et al.* 2013). Young people who have been the victims of crime or are involved in offending themselves are also more vulnerable, as are those who regularly go missing from where they live (Berelowitz *et al.*, 2012). Although both males and females can be affected by child sexual exploitation, research identifies that a significantly higher proportion of victims are female. Despite receiving increased attention within public policy and a heightened media profile (due to a string of complex police investigations, and high profile cases across the country) CSE continues to be under-reported and remains unchallenged in many areas of the UK. Practitioners in services encountering these young people may be ill equipped or feel unsupported in both identifying and responding to the indicators of child sexual exploitation. Sometimes assumptions about adolescent

behaviour, and a perception that young people become involved in sexual exploitation through their own choice, can also obscure and prevent services from responding to these issues appropriately (see Pearce's social model of consent in Melrose and Pearce, 2013). This can result in young people becoming marginalised from mainstream services and not being offered the support they need.<sup>1</sup>

### **1.2.2 The Child Sexual Exploitation Funders' Alliance (CSEFA)**

Statutory sector responses to CSE are improving although they are still inadequate; research in 2011 found that less than a quarter of local authorities in England had appropriate arrangements in place to respond to this issue (Jago et al, 2011; Berelowitz *et al.*, 2013). The current economic climate and the cuts imposed on local authorities have impacted on local authority services for young people. Voluntary sector provision has largely been developing with the support of charitable / independent funders, and these services work in a child-centred and holistic way with young people who are often highly marginalised from mainstream services as a result of their multiple disadvantages. Research shows that voluntary sector services can be very effective in engaging young people. Also, multi-agency co-located teams provide examples of best practice through responding holistically to needs and facilitating better information sharing and partnership working (DCSF, 2009; Jago *et al.*, 2011; CEOP, 2011; Berelowitz *et al.*, 2013).

Aiming to create a coordinated approach to funding in light of austerity, a group of charitable funders have created an alliance – the Child Sexual Exploitation Funders' Alliance (CSEFA) – in order to bring about a step change in how CSE is responded to. The CSEFA has identified one particular model of CSE service which shows the potential for extending the geographical coverage of specialist service responses to CSE with minimal resource implications. This model is known as the 'Hub and Spoke' and has been pioneered by Service 1 (see 1.3.3 and Case Study 1 for more details). Its aim is to extend the reach and share the expertise of established specialist services, by using existing infrastructure and resources to expand the service into new areas. The CSEFA are planning to fund the development of sixteen Hub and Spoke services across England over a three year period. Three services are being funded in phase one, five in phase two and a further eight services in the final phase of the programme.

By extending national coverage and funding service development in this way the CSEFA's aim is to help position CSE as an integral part of mainstream safeguarding activity. The strategy was developed by Professor Jenny Pearce in consultation with colleagues from the International Centre and representatives of the wider CSE network. Approved by a CSEFA steering committee, the strategy comprises three key programmes of work:

- The development of a Hub and Spoke model of specialist service provision
- The promotion of the meaningful involvement of children and young people in decision making and the development of good practice in CSE practice intervention
- The creation of a Knowledge Hub on CSE to pool and share knowledge about CSE and the evidence base for good practice.

These three components are inter-dependent and are being developed concurrently.

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<sup>1</sup> . Literature reviews and evidence from practice are available from a variety of sources including [www.beds.ac.uk/ic](http://www.beds.ac.uk/ic), <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform>; <http://www.barnardos.org.uk>; <http://www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk>; <http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk> and <http://www.nwgnetwork.org/>

The CSEFA has been keen to ensure that services learn from each other as the programme of development unfolds so that services in phases two and three build upon and make best use of prior experiences. The development of Hub and Spoke services in multiple local authority areas also provides an important opportunity to understand how the establishment of specialist CSE responses might need to vary according to a range of factors influencing development at a local level. The CSEFA has therefore commissioned this evaluation, in order to maximise the knowledge that might be consolidated through this programme of service development about what approach works best in which circumstances.

## **1.3 Evaluation – aims, objectives and approach**

### **1.31 *The research team***

‘The International Centre: Researching child sexual exploitation, violence and trafficking’ is based at the University of Bedfordshire. Professor Jenny Pearce is Director of the Centre which was awarded the Queens Anniversary Prize in 2013 for its applied research on CSE. As the UK’s leading centre of research into child sexual exploitation, staff have extensive experience of producing research with young people who are often marginalised from mainstream services through their experiences or vulnerabilities. It has been commissioned to deliver this evaluation over a period of four years and the research is being managed and undertaken by a team of experienced evaluators under the supervision of Principal Investigator Julie Harris (see appendix one). The team has expertise in child sexual exploitation, realist research methodology (see 1.3.3 below) and child participation.

### **1.32 *Aims and objectives of the evaluation***

The evaluation is following the progress of the sixteen Hub and Spoke services as they develop over the three years. The overall aim of the research is to provide knowledge about the potential of this model to trigger cultural and systemic change in the way that Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) and services supporting children respond to child sexual exploitation. The evaluation is being careful not to replicate existing arrangements for evaluating the effectiveness of interventions in improving outcomes for young people. Rather, the research is focussed on the development of the Hub and Spoke approach and the changes that come about at local level through its implementation. Specifically, the evaluation is considering the impact of the model on:

- a) Safeguarding young people from sexual exploitation through service delivery
- b) Supporting and equipping Spoke workers to work effectively in host agencies
- c) Promoting stable CSE policy frameworks in new areas by raising awareness, developing procedures and advancing
- d) g cultures of support from policy makers responsible for CSE.

Specifically the evaluation seeks to determine:

1. What the impact of this model is on increasing the awareness, identification and response to CSE amongst key agencies working with children and young people.

2. How effective the Hub and Spoke model is in promoting effective CSE policy frameworks and the development of effective procedures and protocols that support cross agency responses.
3. The local conditions and arrangements that best determine and support the development of sustainable and effective Spoke services.
4. The effectiveness of Hub services in supporting Spoke staff who are working within host agencies and over geographical distances.
5. The success of the Hub and Spoke model in engaging with and supporting young people at risk of or affected by CSE in new areas.

### **1.3.3 The research approach**

In order to address the variety and complexity of arrangements between Hub and Spoke locations, the evaluation is using a 'realist evaluation' approach, developed by evaluation researchers Pawson and Tilley (1997). This approach aims to identify 'what works for whom, in what circumstances, and why?' It thus aims to make recommendations about the local contexts in which a Hub and Spoke model is most and least likely to be effective. This is a *formative* evaluation, feeding findings into the ongoing development and delivery of the Hub and Spoke strategy. However, the intention is also to gather evaluation data on project outcomes over the full sixteen services. Therefore the research will also provide a *summative* appraisal of the combined outcomes footprint of the project and its contribution to the success of the overall CSEFA strategy. Mixed methods are being used to collect a variety of quantitative and qualitative data from three main groups of stakeholders, including Hub and Spoke staff, relevant professionals who work alongside Hub and Spoke workers in the regions, and young people who receive support from these services. These include:

- a) Literature review of Hub and Spoke models in use in a variety of fields
- b) Interviews and focus groups with key stakeholders
- c) Local document / policy review
- d) Individual case studies
- e) Outputs and outcomes monitoring.

The current research design is to visit each site twice, following an initial meeting at each site to introduce the research team and plan the first fieldwork visit. The first fieldwork visit involves interviews and focus groups with Hub and Spoke workers, host organisations, and relevant stakeholders from police, health, LSCB, etc, as well as young people and parents/carers, as appropriate. Relevant documentation demonstrating local policy and procedures and other information relating to CSE in that locality is also gathered. A second visit to each site will then take place to review how the initiative has developed. As well as interviews and focus groups the research team will also undertake individual case studies to understand the effectiveness of Spoke services for individual young people. Between fieldwork visits and for the duration of their funding, each site will collect quantitative data (numbers of young people worked with, number of training events run, etc).

In addition, and following recent approval of specific funding, work is being developed to consolidate the focus on youth participation methods and outcomes (see sections 2.4. and 3.3 below for more information).

To date, the first round of data collection and research activities have been undertaken for the first three Hubs and Spokes as follows:

**Service 1:**

- Interviews carried out with 21 professionals, 5 parents and foster carers and 6 young people.
- Interviews transcribed and first stage data analysis completed.
- Relevant document collation and review.
- Quantitative data collection regarding activities and outputs in phase one.

**Service 2:**

- Interviews carried out with 16 professionals.
- Interviews transcribed and first stage data analysis completed.
- Relevant document collation and review.
- Quantitative data collection regarding activities and outputs in phase one.

**Service 3:**

- Interviews carried out with 15 professionals.
- Focus group carried out with 7 young people.
- Data from interviews and focus group transcribed and first stage data analysis completed.
- Relevant document collation and review.
- Quantitative data collection regarding activities and outputs in phase one.

N.B. The research team have taken advice from the Hub service with regard to the involvement of parents /carers and young people in the first fieldwork stage. In some sites it was felt that the work was in too early development and in these cases their views will be sought in the return visit.

***Ethical considerations***

In this sensitive and complex area, the research team have paid particular attention to ethical issues and ethical ways of working. Prior to the research starting, ethics approval for the project was secured from the University of Bedfordshire, Barnardo's, and the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS). In addition a detailed protocol was devised for securing consent from potential participants, and managing any issues that arose in the research. See section 2.5 for further details of how this has worked in practice. The ethical protocol for this research is available from the website.



## **Section 2: Phase one findings and emerging themes**

### **2.1 Hub and Spoke models: Summary of findings from a rapid review of the literature**

A review of the literature surrounding the effectiveness of Hub and Spoke models of service development and delivery within the health and social care sectors was externally commissioned from Social Care Research Associates by the University of Bedfordshire and completed in August 2014. In line with the realist evaluation approach this sought to identify any prior lessons from research about the effectiveness of Hub and Spoke models in order to inform the process of developing theories about what works as we move into the second year of the evaluation (see 3.2 below). Key messages from the review are presented below and the full report is available to access at the International Centre website.

The review found that there is no agreed definition of Hub and Spoke provision. A variety of terms are used to describe Hub and Spoke or variations of Hub and Spoke models of service delivery, including clusters, networks and satellites.

The review identifies 10 models of Hub and Spoke provision including:

1. Multiple Hubs
2. Hub with satellite sites
3. Hub and Spokes, sometimes called a cluster
4. Hub provides one stop shop facility
5. Hub provides central specialised care and Spokes provide core services
6. Hub is strategic centre with strategic lead
7. Hub provides core leadership
8. Virtual hub
9. Networks of services formally or informally
10. Hub acts as emergency or crisis response team.

Hub and Spoke models were identified in the following areas: healthcare (14), children's centres (5) and youth services, specifically Connexions (1).

Different agendas have driven the development of Hub and Spoke models in different sectors. In both mental and physical health services, a deliberate choice has been made to set up Hub and Spoke models of service delivery. In comparison children's centres and initiatives for young people have tended to develop more organically over time, responding to changes in funding streams, local agendas and the changing needs of the service user group.

Assessing the impact of Hub and Spoke service provision is hampered by lack of evidence about effectiveness. Many of the evaluations of children's and young people's services assess pilot programs or large-scale initiatives where Hub and Spoke models have been identified, but they are only moderately appraised as a bi-product of the wider evaluation. This makes it difficult to untangle which successes or challenges can be attributed to the Hub and Spoke model itself.

Where evidence exists, evaluations of healthcare provide the best data on the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of Hub and Spoke models of service provision, demonstrating that Hub and Spoke models are more likely to:

- Increase numbers of people accessing and engaging in treatment
- Get patients into treatment faster
- Be more cost effective.

The deliberate decision to set up Hub and Spoke provision appears to impact positively on outcomes for services users.

A series of contextual factors determine the design and delivery as well as the success of the model. These cohere around macro level themes such as policy context and commissioning, funding, changes in strategy and leadership, through to operational and service delivery factors and down to micro layers regarding service user expectations and experiences.

The views of service users and carers are not routinely included in evaluations of Hub and Spoke. What little exists suggests that this is an acceptable and accessible model of delivery but more research is required to understand what works best from the perspectives of service users themselves.

By drawing on these emerging themes, some recommendations for existing and future models of Hub and Spoke delivery are offered as follows:

- Changes and cuts to funding can adversely affect the continuity and consistency in the role of the Hub and the Spokes. Contingency planning around different management structures and operational procedures may help reduce the impact on vulnerable service users requiring specialist support.
- It is important to formalise systems for managing data and information sharing between the Hub and Spokes. Consider the bi-directional flow of information, the practical issues of accessing databases and the cultural diversity of multi-agency working. Ensure procedures for information sharing are underpinned by policy.
- The Hub and Spoke model appears to adapt well to services attempting to extend reach across marginalised groups as well as geographical areas. Be mindful of Spokes feeling isolated and/or excluded from the central Hub and build in support structures for workers.
- An evaluation of a telestroke service provided a valuable insight into the role that technology can play in sharing expertise and specialist knowledge remotely between Hub and Spokes. Think about the role of technology such as videoconferencing to access expert advice (as well as support) in the Spokes.
- In Hub and Spoke models using multi-agency collaborations, consider the impact on voluntary and community sector identities and profiles. Consider how the Hub may overshadow the Spokes' identity for example as a specialist organisation. Build in early discussions about branding, publicity and the profiles of the Hub and Spokes.
- Embed service user participation into the design, delivery and monitoring of services. Be creative but realistic about how and when service user involvement will be most effective to ensure it is meaningful. Explore partnering with an external agency with a track record of expertise in this field.



## 2.2 The CSEFA Hub and Spoke model of service development

A key feature of the strategy is to identify centres of expertise in CSE which can share specialist knowledge and practice with neighbouring areas that are not currently addressing these issues. The CSEFA have also endeavoured to identify Hub services that reflect geographical coverage across England and different approaches and populations, in order to maximise learning from the accompanying evaluation. Whilst the funding is available to the voluntary sector only, Hubs can be voluntary agencies acting alone or in voluntary-statutory partnerships. Ideally, services incorporate in some way the multi-agency expertise of professionals working together to combat CSE.

The Hub and Spoke model aims to strategically extend the capacity and reach of established specialist CSE exploitation services (the Hubs), by employing, training and supporting workers who are based in a series of new regional locations around the original service (the Spokes). These may be within geographical districts within the same local authority area or further afield in neighbouring local authorities.

The Hub represents a central location which provides infrastructure and resources including staff support, training and supervision to the Spoke workers. The Hub and Spoke model allows for some flexibility in the structure and composition of the Hub and in the nature of the work it undertakes. However Hubs are required to: a) be flexible in service delivery b) be able to fundraise to meet new demands and c) adapt to meet the changing needs of children and young people. In general they are expected to work with young women and/or young men at risk of CSE and might provide a variety of different programmes and interventions to meet local needs. Supported by the Hubs, the Spoke role is to:

1. Provide direct support to young people affected by CSE and advice to other professionals working with them.
2. Develop strategic influence at local level.
3. Increase the awareness of CSE and its signs amongst key agencies and practitioners.

### 2.2.1 Three case studies

In the first year of the evaluation, fieldwork visits to each of the three Hubs and associated Spoke sites were undertaken (see page 6, 1.3.3). Interviews were carried out with a range of service providers and local authority stakeholders within each area to build up a picture of the key contexts into which the Hub and Spoke model is being introduced. An overview of each Hub and Spoke service is provided below and these show how a number of variables are determining service development in each site. More detailed findings from the research are presented in the following section.

**CASE STUDY 1: SERVICE 1 (funded by Comic Relief, Northern Rock and Bromley Trust<sup>2</sup>)**

Service 1 was the originator of the application of a Hub and Spoke model to develop specialist CSE services. The Hub is a well-established service and the Spokes have now been in place for more than two years. The focus of the research in this site has therefore been to undertake a retrospective analysis of how the model has been implemented across several local authority areas and to identify the successes and challenges involved.

**Geography and demographics:** The Service 1 Hub and Spoke project encompasses a hub service located in a large industrial town in the north of England and establishing new spoke services in five neighbouring local authority areas. There are significant pockets of deprivation in many of these areas.

**One local authority or more?:** The service covers the five unitary authorities where the Spokes are located and two police authorities.

**Key policy drivers:** Service 1 is a key policy driver in the area, having established the first Hub and Spoke model in the country in relation to CSE. Local police have also been proactive in gathering intelligence on CSE. A key policy driver for three of the Spokes is the Vulnerable, Exploited, Missing, Trafficked group – known as the VEMT. In the area covered by the other two Spokes there is a Missing and Exploited Group (MEG), which has a similar remit. These groups sit under a specific LSCB CSE sub group. These groups focus on sharing individual case information among statutory, voluntary and police services, and some have an additional strategic focus, often with a different membership.

**Types of CSE locally:** CSE in the area was initially seen through exploitation on the streets. It is now more focussed on behind closed doors activity and party scenes. Issues of internet exploitation and the 'boyfriend' model are also common.

**Number and location of Spokes:** There are five Spoke workers, all female. Four of the five Spokes are co-located with local authority departments, mainly in Children's Services. The other Spoke worker is based in a shared building with other voluntary sector agencies.

**Balance of work:** The Spoke workers are mostly focused on direct case work with young people. They also deliver training, and some of the more experienced workers have contributed to strategic development with their local LSCBs. Each Spoke worker carries between 10 and 14 cases, mostly high risk cases but also some medium risk. The team manager who is responsible for managing the Spokes is based part of the week at the Hub, and another part of the week at the Spokes; they are also mainly responsible for policy work.

**Referral pathways:** At the start of the project, referrals were made to the Hub in the first instance. However, this has changed recently for most of the Spokes, and referrals are now being processed by local authority project leads, as hosts of the Spokes.

**Management and support locations:** One team leader supports all the Spoke workers. Hub support is also provided through regular Wednesday meetings that alternate between a monthly staff meeting, a monthly practitioners meeting, and a monthly clinical supervision session. There

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<sup>2</sup> Funding from CSEFA members only is described here although other organisations (for example – local authorities, police authorities or other charities) may also provide a funding stream to the service.

are also several forms of informal support including telephone contact, team events such as lunches and breakfasts, and training sessions.

**Young people's participation:** Some individual young people involved in the Hub contribute to events and training aimed at informing local and/or national policy. The Hub also runs a number of groups for young people (such as a music group) but these are primarily group work and not aimed at broader participation in the service. This group is only currently open to young people in Service 1, and not those living in Spoke areas. This is because of a concern that bringing young people together from different areas could lead to young people being introduced to others who could exploit them. The individual Spokes have not as yet developed young people's participatory groups, although these are planned. Understanding of these models and processes of child participation will increase following the newly funded focus on child participation.

**Involvement of parents and carers:** Service 1 works with individual parents and carers where such work is likely to benefit the young person and help to keep them safe. This is decided on a case by case basis. Service 1 is also involved in piloting a Department for Education funded project called FCASE – Families and Communities Against Sexual Exploitation. This is a preventative programme, and has led to discussions amongst staff about how to work effectively with parents and carers locally.

### ***CASE STUDY 2: SERVICE 2 (funded by Henry Smith Charity, Comic Relief and the Bromley Trust)***

The project is a specialist CSE service established in 2010 by a national charity. The Spoke workers were recruited in November 2013 when the Hub and Spoke development began. This example represents a different model of Hub and Spoke where the hub provides managerial and strategic co-ordination and support to the Spokes rather than delivering a direct service in its own right.

**Geography and demographics:** The Service 2 Hub and Spoke project covers a wide geographical area on the south coast. It includes some large towns and also some large rural areas. Several of the areas have significant pockets of deprivation.

**One Local Authority or more?** The Service 2 Hub and Spoke development is contained within one local authority area. However, several services involved with Hub and Spoke (such as the police) span more than one authority area. The two neighbouring police authorities are increasingly working together to co-ordinate activities around CSE.

**Key policy drivers:** The LSCB locally is very proactive in relation to CSE. The Chair and Business Manager recognise the importance of addressing CSE locally and are supporting a number of initiatives to address it, including the Hub and Spoke work. The LSCB has a Sub-Committee on CSE which a representative from the Hub and Spoke project attends. The police are also very proactive in developing policy and strategies around CSE – they are developing policies on CSE which cover a wide area. This 'top down' policy driver is matched by 'bottom up' policy drivers, in particular the service itself, and the youth workers and teachers they are in contact with. There is a co-ordinating body on CSE locally, the Missing and CSE Meeting, comprising Hub and Spoke workers, police, Children's Services, LSCB, etc.

**Types of CSE locally:** The majority of CSE locally was described in two ways – first, internet and mobile based, where young people are persuaded to send sexually explicit pictures of themselves; and second, ‘boyfriend’ type, where young people believe themselves to be in a relationship with a new partner, who then exploits them. Mostly the latter form involves individuals, but some groups of perpetrators who are connected to each other are also involved. Their work currently focuses on young women experiencing CSE, and there is a recognition that work with young men is a key area for development.

**Number and location of Spokes:** The service offices provide the Hub for the project. There are three female Spoke workers. They are each hosted by a statutory children’s service (mainly youth support teams and targeted youth support) but are not part of the host teams and aim to preserve their independence. An additional Spoke worker has recently been appointed to extend the work into a neighbouring Local Authority based with the police – this new site is going to be incorporated into the next round of fieldwork.

**Balance of the work (caseload, training, etc):** The three Spoke workers are each developing a caseload of 6-10 young people, and have started running group-work sessions for young people affected by CSE. In addition they are developing local links and providing training and consultancy to schools, health workers, youth justice etc.

**Referral pathways:** Referrals to Spoke workers are generally made in three ways: First, referrals are made through the host agencies that the Spoke workers are co-located with. Second, referrals are made through Missing meetings, and those held with police. Third, referrals are made to the Spoke workers directly from schools and youth work settings, often as a result of running a briefing session or training event. These cases are discussed at fortnightly team meetings of the Hub and Spoke workers, to agree which to take on. These then become part of the individual Spoke worker’s caseload.

**Management and support locations:** The three Spoke workers have fairly independent remits within their geographical areas. They meet fortnightly to co-ordinate and plan. In addition they have external clinical supervision and regular contact with their host manager (mainly in Youth Support Teams), although the latter have no line management responsibility. The Hub worker responsible for managing the three workers is currently on maternity leave, and one of the Spoke workers has taken on this co-ordination role whilst maintaining a small caseload and Spoke worker responsibilities.

**Young people’s participation work:** There is not enough capacity for Service 2 to provide ways for young people to participate in training or strategic direction for the project. However, young people have been involved in the development of promotional materials and involved in their night-time economy work. They hope to develop this area of their work, including getting young people involved in contributing to the production of materials for young people, and to training events for parents/carers and practitioners.

**Involvement of parents and carers:** Service 2 does not currently involve parents or carers directly in its work. At the time of the interviews, there were no plans to do so – it was considered too resource intensive to do such work, and also the organisation’s ethos is to focus solely on young people and their needs. However, they do engage with parents (with the young people’s permission) to ensure that intelligence is shared. Staff consider that there could be a conflict of interest in working with parents/carers, as many young people come to the service because their information is kept confidential unless there is a safeguarding issue.

**CASE STUDY 3: SERVICE 3 (funded by Big Lottery and Northern Rock Foundation)**

Service 3 is a well-established, centrally located specialist service that supports vulnerable young people. The Hub and Spoke development was initiated at the end of 2013 with the recruitment of three Spoke workers.

**Geography and demographics:** The Service 3 Hub and Spoke project currently covers a significant geographical area in the North East of England. Some of these areas are characterised by higher than average levels of deprivation for the UK.

**One local authority or more?** This Hub and Spoke development covers the area where the Hub service is based, and extends Spoke services into the neighbouring Metropolitan Boroughs. All Boroughs come within the jurisdiction of one large Police Force.

**Number and location of Spokes:** The Hub is based in a city centre and provides targeted support to young people who go missing or are at risk of sexual exploitation. It comprises a manager, a senior practitioner, two project workers and a participation worker. There are three Spoke workers. In one city the Spoke worker is located within a voluntary service providing support with alcohol and substance misuse. In another area the Spoke worker is located in a multi-agency resource centre addressing similar issues and in the last location the Spoke worker is hosted by the Connexions service.

**Types of CSE locally:** Patterns of CSE are seen to be linked closely with key areas of deprivation in the community. The types of CSE in evidence include online abuse in addition to boyfriend and party models where exploitation takes place predominantly in private houses, although there is some targeting of young people in local hotspots such as skate parks. In some areas there are strong links between CSE and substance misuse.

**Key policy drivers:** Multi-disciplinary operational groups for tackling CSE take a similar form in each Borough although titles vary (for example, Missing Exploited Trafficked (MEG), Sexually Exploited, and Missing (SEAM) and these are driven by more strategic CSE safeguarding groups as part of the LSCB. The Police and Children's Social Care are seen to be the key drivers of the work.

**Balance of the work (caseload, training, etc.):** Each Spoke worker carries a caseload of up to ten young people but the balance varies between a strong focus on Looked After Children (LAC) to more attention given to preventative work. The Spoke workers also undertake awareness raising and training in order that local agencies can identify the indicators of CSE and also provide advice and consultancy. In addition the Service 3 Spokes undertake return interviews with young people who have been missing and this extends their reach towards young people who are not known to children's social care.

**Referral pathways:** The referral route is important in determining the make-up of Spoke caseloads. Whilst all the workers encourage referrals from a range of agencies the most regular referrers are the Police and Social Care. However, undertaking return interviews with young people who go missing provides an important mechanism for undertaking lower level preventative work, often with the younger age group. In one city, for example, the return interview delivery is targeted towards those young people not open to children's social care and this generates a large number of referrals to Service 3.



**Management and support:** The Spoke workers attend a weekly team meeting at the Hub and participate in monthly supervision with the senior practitioner. This is in addition to more informal and *ad hoc* support mechanisms such as regular phone calls. Spoke workers described how location within other agencies and teams could lead to a sense of isolation, and it was important to develop avenues for peer support from Hub and Spoke colleagues who understood the stresses and complexities of CSE work.

**Young people's participation:** Young people's participation is evident through group work in the Hub in Service 3 which provides a mechanism for involving young people in service issues and policy work, whilst also providing a means of maintaining contact and ongoing support. It has yet to be determined how participative mechanisms might translate into the work of the Spokes.

**Involvement of parents and carers:** There are no formal mechanisms for involving parents and carers in the service and Service 3 is careful not to compromise its relationships with young people. However, instances were described where staff were able to support parents by signposting or contacting agencies on their behalf so that they received the appropriate support.

### 2.2.2 Overview of phase one Hub and Spoke service activities

This section details the quantitative data, primarily outputs, for each of the three sites involved in the first year of Hub and Spoke development. At the end of phase one, each Hub and Spoke was asked to provide the data collected regarding their key activities for each site. The data returned in its current form should not be seen as directly comparable. For example, each Hub and Spoke development has a different reporting / data collection period (for example financial year, from start of project to current date), and has different targets that they are reporting about.

In phase two the data provided for this year will be used to develop a standard template for data collection and reporting. This will be produced in consultation with the CSEFA so that data collection regarding the outcomes looked for from the Hub and Spoke strategy is consistent across the sites for the remainder of the evaluation. This will include the numbers of young people worked with, the source of referrals, characteristics of the service user group including gender and ethnicity, and the training and consultancy sessions delivered at each Spoke site.

#### Data for Service 1

*Note: data reported is for period April 1<sup>st</sup> 2013 – March 31<sup>st</sup> 2014*

Project	Number of service users	Individuals attending training	Support and consultancy
<b>SERVICE 1 Hub</b>	73	700	20
<b>Service 1 SPOKES</b>			
1	26	150	15
2	18	156	10
3	25	146	19
4	20	167	40
5	32	180	15
<b>Spoke totals</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>799</b>	<b>99</b>

This data shows that over the last year 121 young people have received direct casework support from the Service 1 Spoke workers, in addition to those that have been supported by the central



Hub. In total, 799 professionals from a range of agencies have been trained to spot the indicators and respond to CSE across the five new Spoke areas.

### Data for Service 2

Note: data reported is for period August 1<sup>st</sup> 2013 – September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2014

	Spoke 1	Spoke 2	Spoke 3	Countywide	Total
Number of young people attending group work	109	16	38	95 (provided by 1 Spoke with focus on LGBT)	258
Number of young people receiving individual casework	15	9	14		38 (Note: 35 female 3 male)
Number of cases supported through consultation	20	15	17		52
Number of professionals trained	822	457	311	887 (LSCB – provided by all Spokes)	2477

As this shows, the Spokes have provided direct support to 296 young people through individual work and group work whilst just under 2,500 professionals have received CSE training. Numbers are given for the Spokes' work only as the Hub in Service 2 does not provide direct services to young people.

### Data for Service 3

Note: data reported is for period December 2013 – end July 2014

	Service 3 Hub	Spokes	Total
Number of young people worked with	41	38	79
<b>Age</b>			
11	1	0	1
12	4	2	6
13	12	5	17
14	7	8	15
15	10	12	22
16	3	7	10
17	4	4	8
<b>Gender</b>			
Female	33	34	67
Male	8	4	12
<b>Referral route</b>			
Return Interview	16	5	21
Social care	12	25	37
School	5	2	7
Health	1	1	2
YOT	0	1	1
Other	7	4	11

<b>Training events</b>	1	16	17
<b>Practitioners</b>	15	432	447
<b>Consultancy sessions</b>	4	88	92

This is a good example of the kind of breakdown that will be valuable for the evaluation across all the Hubs and Spokes as they develop. The data collection template that will be introduced in phase two will enable the impact of the Spoke services to be described more distinctly and will also provide important information about the young people using services including age, gender and ethnicity.

Overall the data from all three Hub and Spokes shows that 455 young people have received a specialist CSE intervention through the development of a Spoke service (i.e. in addition to those receiving support from the established Hub) in the first phase of the project. Of those, 197 have received individual casework and 258 have participated in group work sessions. Two sites have provided a gender breakdown for the direct casework and this shows that the weight of individual work is being undertaken with young women, who represent 91 per cent of cases in these Spoke services.

In addition the Spoke services have trained a total of 3708 professionals from the range of relevant agencies and provided consultancy on 239 cases.

## 2.3 Emerging themes - what have we learned?

The following section provides a brief summary of the key themes that have arisen through our interviews with key stakeholders and which will form the basis for more inquiry and exploration as we move into the second year of the evaluation. These are divided into four key headings that describe the contexts in which stakeholders are delivering or receiving services.

### 2.3.1 *The importance of local strategy*

All of the current local authority areas where Hub and Spoke developments are taking place have a structure in place for tackling child sexual exploitation. Local strategy is driven by the appropriate LSCB body – usually a multi-disciplinary sub-group that is focussed on CSE. This is supported by operational groups that vary in title but fulfil a similar function in monitoring individual cases of young people who are at risk through going missing, child trafficking or sexual exploitation.

The fact that the Hub and Spoke development is delivered by voluntary sector organisations means it is vital that they are represented appropriately within these local structures. This seems to work well where a manager from the Hub service can input into local strategy development, procedures and protocols through the CSE sub group, whilst the Spoke workers attend operational meetings as a primary resource for providing direct intervention in individual cases.

It seems likely that representation of the Hub service on LSCB sub-groups helps to ensure that developments are communicated on a regional basis i.e. across local authorities as well as within them, and may facilitate learning across the region, thus minimising the need to reinvent the wheel. This will be explored further as more Hub and Spoke services join the programme of development.

Discussion of Hub and Spoke development at strategic level may help to ensure that an appropriate host organisation is found for the Spoke that will help the development of effective referral pathways, so that the Spoke service is properly integrated into the local service landscape.

The role of the Hub service in local strategic development will be explored and tested further in phase two of the evaluation, with a view to understanding how the profile of the Hub service can assist in this and how Hub services may be able to support a more co-ordinated approach to CSE at regional level.

### ***2.3.2 Operational issues***

The first phase of Hub and Spoke service development has shown that the location of the Spoke worker is a vital factor in ensuring both their visibility to other professionals but also to young people. However, these do not necessarily go hand in hand. For example, the location of a Spoke worker placed in a duty and assessment team may increase identification of CSE and referral flow, but at the same time reduce the range of potential sources of referral and indeed, reduce accessibility to the service for young people. This might be because they are discouraged from seeking support from a building with a statutory badge on it, or they might be put off by bureaucratic security procedures or an unwelcoming environment. In phase two the evaluation will explore the most effective mechanisms for overcoming these kinds of issues and for developing young people's engagement in these circumstances (2.3.4 below).

The first year of development has shown how the location of a Spoke worker directly impacts on the types of referrals they receive and the nature of intervention they provide. These may range from working with young people coming to the attention of Children's Social Care through the frontline duty team, to working predominantly with children who are already looked after or supporting those who have hitherto had no contact with statutory agencies. Examples of the latter are provided in

Service 3 where the Spoke workers come to know about young people through undertaking return interviews when young people have been missing. These factors can also affect the balance of the work, and whether the Spoke worker predominantly supports young people who are being exploited and at very high risk, or whether they target timely preventative work at young people who might be diverted from becoming involved in exploitation.

Funding streams for services also seem to be connected to the size and the balance of caseload that Spokes are working with. It seems likely, for example, that partial funding from a statutory service may be a factor in determining this. Given the small number of Hub and Spokes to date, it is too early to describe definitive findings in this respect given but the evaluation team will explore and identify any patterns relating to this as the programme develops.

### ***2.3.3 Considerations for supporting Spoke workers***

Funding streams and the location of the Spoke worker are also important factors in determining arrangements for their management, support and supervision. Where the host agency does provide some casework supervision (for example, if the Spoke is located in a Children's Social Care team) then this might help integration of the Spoke worker and reduce feelings of isolation. However, there can be other issues for Spoke workers regarding the importance of maintaining their sense of identity and association with the Hub and, importantly, their independence from statutory services. A number of issues have been raised in phase one about the complex identity of

Spoke workers and these will be explored as different scenarios emerge amongst the additional five services in phase two.

The value of regular contact with the Hub service has featured as a strong theme in the first phase and Spoke workers have described the importance of a range of opportunities, both formal and informal, for contact with managers and colleagues. These include clinical supervision, team meetings and team development days, support with events such as training from Hub colleagues, scheduled and unprompted phone calls and social events such as team breakfasts or lunchtime get-togethers.

The first phase of evaluation has also told us something about the role that Spoke workers might play within their host localities in addition to the defined activities of casework, training and consultancy. These include acting as an effective conduit to the national CSE agenda in disseminating policy developments or new research, and in modelling approaches to casework for professionals in other agencies. Effective mechanisms for engaging other professionals and embedding service responses to CSE amongst a range of relevant agencies will be explored in the next stage of the evaluation.

### ***2.3.4 Considerations for engaging with young people***

The Spoke workers described an array of creative methods that they use to engage young people on both individual levels and through group work, including arts and music based activities. Where host organisations did not provide suitable environments for the direct work, Spoke workers found alternative venues in the community and several carried a range of materials, tools and resources around with them in their car in order to make the most of opportunities as they arose to engage and interact with young people.

Spoke workers also displayed flexibility and perseverance with young people and used various techniques to communicate and engage with them. The young people that we spoke to described the qualities that they thought a good CSE worker needed and these included: being reliable, not judging them, keeping what they say confidential, being trustworthy, being flexible, showing interest in them, respecting them for who they are and being able to have a laugh.

In the next phase of the evaluation we will explore the range of mechanisms that either assist or create barriers to effective engagement with and intervention for young people.

## **2.4 Reflections: opportunities and challenges**

A paucity of comparative evaluation across specialist CSE services in the UK<sup>3</sup> and the current profile of child sexual exploitation as an issue of increased public concern mean that this research offers a timely opportunity to develop learning about the effectiveness of specialist provision in tackling the problem in local authorities across England. The literature review also identified the dearth of knowledge about Hub and Spoke models of development and delivery. Given the increased application of this approach in the fields of health and social care, this evaluation fills an important gap in our understanding of the effectiveness of Hub and Spoke within different local contexts. This is particularly pertinent in the current climate of cuts to public funding given the

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<sup>3</sup> Scott and Skidmore's evaluation (2006) of ten Barnardo's CSE services has been the only of its kind to date.

potential that Hub and Spoke offers for expanding service provision without an additional burden of high administrative and overhead costs.

An evaluation of this scale also presents a prime opportunity to understand the ways in which services should reach out and engage with young people. Understanding the context in which individuals access and use services, and their expectations of them, is fundamental to assessing their overall effectiveness and impact. Further, the formative aspect of this research offers an invaluable opportunity to enhance learning about young people's participation in services at individual level (for example, through involvement in their own support planning) but also through more formal, structured and collective mechanisms for contributing to local policy and service development such as group work. An additional focus on young people's participation will therefore be developed as we move into phase two of the study (see below 3.3) in order that Hub and Spoke services can learn from each other about the mechanisms that work best for developing participation in a variety of contexts for both Hubs and Spokes.

Alongside the opportunities, there are a number of challenges for an evaluation of this breadth and duration and these include the multiple service sites, the variation in models of practice intervention, the length of interventions and the likely time over which outcomes might be achieved, alongside the comparatively short term nature of the research. These, combined with the multiple objectives of the pilot programme (i.e. to develop strategic influence, raise awareness and identification of CSE and to provide direct support and intervention for individual young people), mean that a complex set of outcomes might be looked for both within and across the various Hub and Spoke services.

Even in the first year of evaluation it is apparent that whilst the common Hub and Spoke principles are being implemented at each site, in reality, service development is taking shape very differently in each locality. This is influenced by a range of variable factors including:

- the existing local networks and relationships;
- service structures, procedures and protocols;
- local demographics;
- models of sexual exploitation that are prevalent in local areas;
- the availability of resources;
- the physical setting of services;
- levels of commitment to and engagement of various participants and stakeholders in the Hub and Spoke programme.

Given this complexity a theory driven, realist approach to the evaluation has informed the research design, in order that these factors are thoroughly explored and accounted for in developing and testing theories about what works best, for whom, and in which circumstances.

One of the issues that has arisen in the early parts of the evaluation is the notion of 'reach' into different communities. Some themes have emerged quite strongly in the research so far, including issues of gender (of young people and of workers), and the needs of LGBT young people. Issues of location, place and urban/rural locations have also emerged. In the next stages of the research, we plan to focus more on issues of ethnicity (of young people, and of perpetrators), and disability, both of which need further exploration. This is the benefit of undertaking a national project across a diverse range of locations.

A key area that we have been reflecting on is which professionals we should include in the research. The balance is between engaging with a wide range of stakeholders in the 'CSE world' locally (in order to get a broad range of views on CSE and the role of Hub and Spoke locally), with focussing more specifically on those directly engaged with the Hub and Spoke model in an area. It is essentially a 'depth versus breadth' issue, and also has implications for staff time and fieldwork costs.

Finally in this section, it was stated earlier in this report that the ethical treatment of all those involved in the evaluation is paramount. So far, this has worked well – we have secured ethics approval from some of the key organisations (University of Bedfordshire, ADCS, Barnardo's), and the individual local authorities involved have not requested separate approval through their own ethics bodies. However, given variation in local authority procedures for seeking ethical approval for research, this could change for the next five sites. In addition, our protocol for securing consent and dealing with confidentiality / safeguarding (as well as a wide range of other issues) has worked well to date. This protocol is available from the authors. However, issues and dilemmas are likely to arise in this respect, and we will revise and update our procedures as appropriate.

## **Section 3: Moving into phase two**

### **3.1 Phase one sites – next steps**

The research team will undertake a number of activities in relation to the three phase one sites during the next 6-9 months. This includes:

- More detailed analysis of the interviews and focus groups undertaken in the first visit
- Agreement about quantitative information to collect from them during year two, including a pro-forma which specifies the format for this
- Identification and selection of individual case studies for analysis in order to understand how young people access and benefit from the support offered by services
- Review and analysis of local policy documents, materials, and information
- Agreement about the timing and format of a second visit to each site
- Planning and organising a one day event for phase one projects to meet with phase two projects, to share learning and ideas
- The production of a regular newsletter for circulation to all phase one and phase two projects, in order to encourage sharing of good practice and an ongoing cycle of communication.

### **3.2 Phase two sites – next steps**

Five new projects have been agreed for phase two. Details of these will be provided once funding for all the sites has been confirmed.

During the next few months, the research team will undertake an initial site visit to each of these organisations, to introduce ourselves and to agree next steps in the evaluation. This will include the



dates for the first round of data collection, the range of data to be collected (and from whom) and the possibilities for involving young people, and parents/carers in the fieldwork.

A number of key questions will form a particular focus for phase two, having emerged both from the literature review and the first round of data collection. These include, among others:

- What is the role of the Hub in a Hub and Spoke service? How do Hubs balance the provision of services (if they do) with support and direction for the Spokes?
- What factors influence Spoke workload, in terms of casework, training, and consultancy? How do Hubs, Spoke workers, and host organisations negotiate this?
- Do Spokes function reasonably autonomously in their geographical area, in terms of developing relationships and services, or does the work and services provided by Spokes overlap? What is the relationship between Spokes?
- What backgrounds and expertise make for effective Hub and Spoke workers? How are they best supported in their work with vulnerable young people?
- How are Spoke workers' identities as voluntary sector workers maintained and/or changed, particularly when hosted or funded by statutory services?
- How do Hub and Spoke workers conceptualise 'reach' into different communities? How is this most effectively achieved?
- How do Hubs and Spokes conceptualise and implement young people's active participation in services?
- What facilitates Spoke workers to have strategic influence in their area? How can this be sustained beyond the funding period for the Hub and Spoke project?

### **3.3 Developing young people's participation in services**

One of the key aims of the CSEFA strategy is to investigate and support ways for young people to be actively involved in CSE services. This ambition is embedded into the evaluation, and during the course of the research we will explore such issues as:

- How do Hub and Spoke services view and conceptualise 'participation'? What is agreed, what is contested?
- What are Hub and Spoke services doing to actively engage young people in informing and shaping the services that are provided?
- What examples of good practice and effective working are there?
- What is challenging about young people's participation in CSE services?
- How can learning about participation best be shared and disseminated?

The evaluation includes some dedicated staff time to investigate these issues further, and this work will run alongside the evaluation of the Hub and Spoke model. At the end of the evaluation, we will be able to make specific recommendations about how to most effectively enable young people to participate in CSE services.

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## Appendix One: The International Centre: Researching child sexual exploitation, violence and trafficking

The 'International Centre' is based at the University of Bedfordshire and is led by Professor Jenny Pearce. As the UK's leading centre of research into child sexual exploitation, staff have extensive experience of producing research with young people who are often marginalised from mainstream services through their experiences or vulnerabilities. In 2013, the International Centre was awarded the Queen's Anniversary Prize for Higher and Further Education for its pioneering research into child sexual exploitation.

### *The Hub and Spoke Research Team*

**Dr Kate D'Arcy** is acting Principal Lecturer in Applied Social Studies and also manages the 'Families and Communities against Sexual Exploitation' (FCASE) evaluation project commissioned by Barnardo's. Kate will be joining the research team in phase 2 on a part-time basis (1 day per week) and developing a specific focus on young people's participation.

**Dr Sukhwant Dhaliwal** is a Research Fellow within the International Centre with extensive experience of working in the voluntary sector as well as in academia. The evaluation team has benefited from Sukhwant's expertise in phase 1 of the research, particularly regarding issues of equality and access to services for women experiencing sexual violence.

**Julie Harris** is a Principal Research Fellow within the International Centre and the Principal Investigator and full time manager of this research. She joined the University in 2013 from Barnardo's where she led the organisation's strategy for research and evaluation.

**Dr Debi Roker** has recently joined the International Centre as Senior Research Fellow and is working on this evaluation 2.5 days a week. Following a two-year post-doctoral position at the University of Sheffield, Debi spent 18 years undertaking and managing applied research in a national young people's charity. She is also registered with the HCPC as a Social Worker, and as a Chartered Health Psychologist.

**Dr Lucie Shuker** is a Research Fellow with the International Centre and will be joining the evaluation team on a part-time basis in phase 2 (1 day per week). She recently completed a two-year realist evaluation of the Barnardo's 'Safe Accommodation Project' which supported sexually exploited and trafficked young people through specialist foster care. Lucie also worked on the Office of the Children's Commissioner for England research project exploring gang-associated sexual exploitation and violence.

**Dr Camille Warrington** is the Young People's Participation Development Officer within the International Centre where she manages a number of young people's advisory and consultation groups relating to departmental research interests. Camille will be joining phase 2 of the research for 1 day a week and developing a specific focus on young people's participation.

For more information about the International Centre and its work staff please go to the website <https://www.beds.ac.uk/ic>

## Appendix Two: Hub and Spoke Phase 2 - Activities and Timescales

	2014			2015								
	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept
<b>Phase 1 services</b>	Further data analysis of interviews and focus groups											
	Review and analysis of local policy documents, materials, and information											
	Planning for second fieldwork visit											
				Second fieldwork visits								
				Individual case study analysis								
<b>Phase 2 services</b>	Preliminary site visits											
				First fieldwork visit to each phase 2 project								
<b>Phase 1 &amp; 2 services</b>			Knowledge Exchange Event									
	Newsletter produced											
	Pro forma for data collection developed and agreed			Consistent quantitative data collection across all sites								
	Participation work scoped			Participation focus incorporated into fieldwork								
				Ongoing data analysis from all sites								
				Preparation of phase 2 report								



Website: [www.beds.ac.uk/ic](http://www.beds.ac.uk/ic)

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