

2010 Knowledge Transfer Scheme

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Title of research project: Improving health outcomes for those with Troubles-Related chronic and severe trauma disorders through service development by transferring NICCT research and practice-based knowledge to the new Victims and Survivors Service & DHSSPSNI

Abstract: The problem: The Troubles had a serious impact on the mental health of the adult population of Northern Ireland, 40% of whom have had one or more traumatic experiences linked to the conflict. The University of Ulster and the NICTT research partnership produced 4 major reports and one peer reviewed paper (plus another relevant peer reviewed paper on NICTT's RCT) examining the issue and presented recommendations for service improvement. The conclusion of this research, and NICTT's therapy programme, is that there remains a major conflict-related mental health legacy of the Troubles. It is estimated that there are close to 20,000 people with chronic Troubles-related PTSD that requires effective trauma-focussed interventions, and that there are a further 20,000 people with mood and other anxiety related disorders and substance abuse disorders which are associated with their experiences of the conflict. NICTT's RCT demonstrates that trauma-focused CBT is associated with statistically and clinically significant mental health benefits which are sustained over time. The knowledge gained from these studies has not been transferred into policies and services. Effective trauma-focussed CBT interventions are not routinely provided within existing statutory and voluntary mental health services. This has meant that known effective therapeutic services are not yet universally and readily available to the public, and to some extent accessing such services remains dependent upon where a person lives and the clinical interest and competence of practitioners within local teams and services.

Knowledge Transfer (KT) objectives and target community: The target community is the Victims & Survivors Service, a key component of the OFMDFM's 10-year strategy for victims and survivors. It is a focal point for the development of regional trauma-focused services for those who continue to suffer as a consequence of their exposure to Troubles related violence. The KT is initially aimed at the VSS and those sectors through which it seeks ultimately to improve health outcomes for those affected by violence. The KT will assist the VSS to (1) disseminate and incorporate the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the UU-NICTT research; (2) develop clinical governance arrangements for internal and contracted therapeutic services; (3) develop its data capture arrangements and (4) develop a needs-led, trauma-focussed and evidence-based specification for

workforce development and service commissioning. The Impact: The knowledge transfer will contribute to the health and wellbeing improvement of a substantial number of people who remain affected by the Troubles, by enabling the VSS to put in place evidence-based services within the statutory and voluntary sectors