The London Rape Review
A review of cases from 2016

MOPAC Evidence & Insight

Justice Matters

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MAYOR OF LONDON

OFFICE FOR POLICING AND CRIME

Background and Methodology

MPS Rape Reviews 2005 – 2012

- Annual reviews resulting in 8 years of data from rape cases (4,550 cases).
- Established a history of learning on victim vulnerabilities, attrition and investigation.

Current MOPAC London Rape Review

- Revisits and updates the methodology
- Identify predictors of rape case attrition
- Uncover new avenues for research
- Collaboration with University of West London

Aim: to develop a comprehensive picture of reported rape in London and develop insights about the nature of reported rape in London.

Disadvantages and shortcomings

- Police system (CRIS) not designed as a research tool
- Ideally we would want to include: SOIT Logs; SOIT interviews; CPS data; Victim/survivor focus groups

146 variables coded across five broad areas:
- Victim Characteristics
- Perpetrator Characteristics
- Offence Circumstances
- Procedural Characteristics
- Case Outcome

Coding of all rape allegations made to the MPS in April 2016 (a sample size of 501).

Some basics - victim, suspect and case characteristics

Victim / Survivors
- 89% female
- 67% were under 30 (i.e., 31% under 18; 36% between 18-29)
- Small increase in male reporting
- Demographic profile broadly consistent across previous reviews

Suspects
- Slightly older age profile (i.e., 54% over 30)
- 29% had a prior police record (rising to 49% in cases that overlap with domestic abuse)
- 7% of suspects were a complete stranger
- 34% suspect acquaintance or friend
- 35% the suspect was intimate partner

Offence Circumstances
- 56% occurred in private/domestic setting
- 28% overlap with Domestic Abuse *(17% reported in response to DASH)*
- 23% of victims/survivors were recorded as having an injury
- 2% of cases a weapon was used

Reporting
- 29% reported on the same day
- 16% between 1-7 days after offence
- 12% between 1 week – 1 month
- 17% between 1month – 1 year
- 27% reported more than one year after
- 42% reported by a third party of some kind

Victims present with many needs – how best to address these

- **95%** of victims had at least one type of 'need';
- Over **one third** had two needs, and **one in five** had three or more needs.

Need	2007	2010	2011	2012	2016
Age under 18 years old	31%	35%	34%	34%	**31%**
Mental health issue	14%	14%	17%	18%	**41%**
Consumed alcohol and / or drugs prior to the offence	35%	35%	38%	32%	**27%**
Were / had been in an intimate relationship with the perpetrator	35%	28%	32%	27%	**35%**

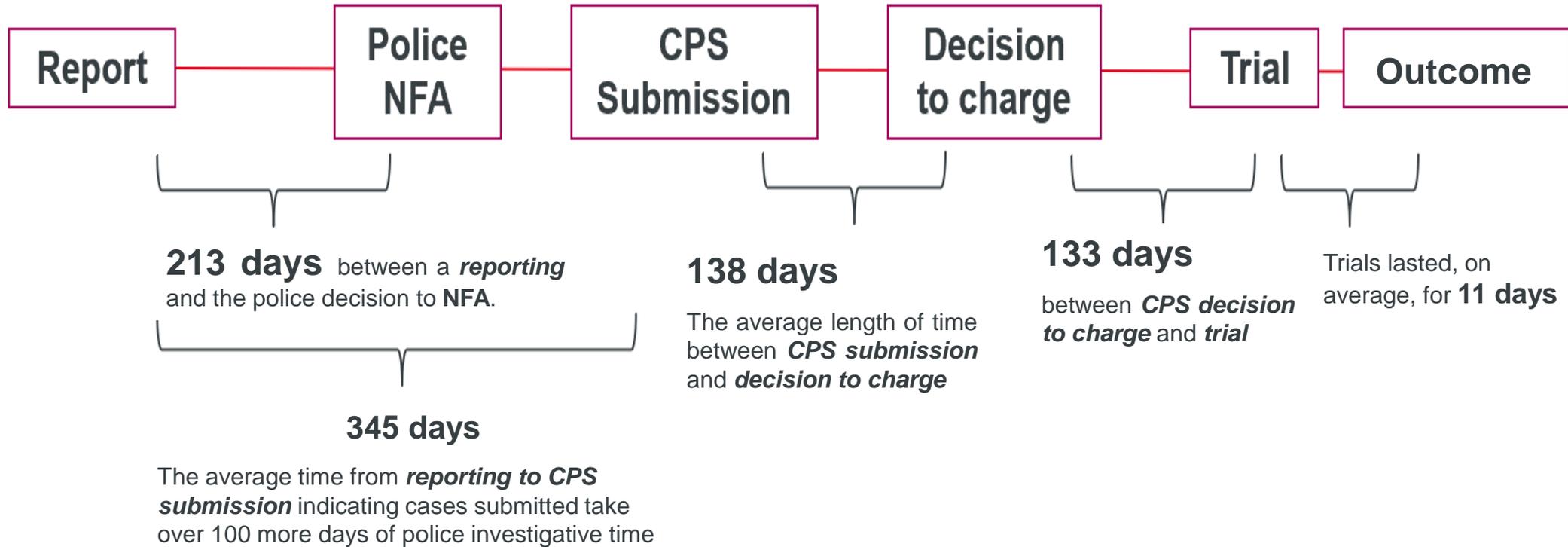**Other needs less prevalent within the data:**

- Victim is a missing person/homeless (n=37, 7%)
- Victim is a sex worker (n=14, 3%)
- Victim is an asylum seeker (n=9, 2%)
- Victim requires interpreter (n=47, 9%)

Far more mental health issues identified in the 2016 victim/survivor group…

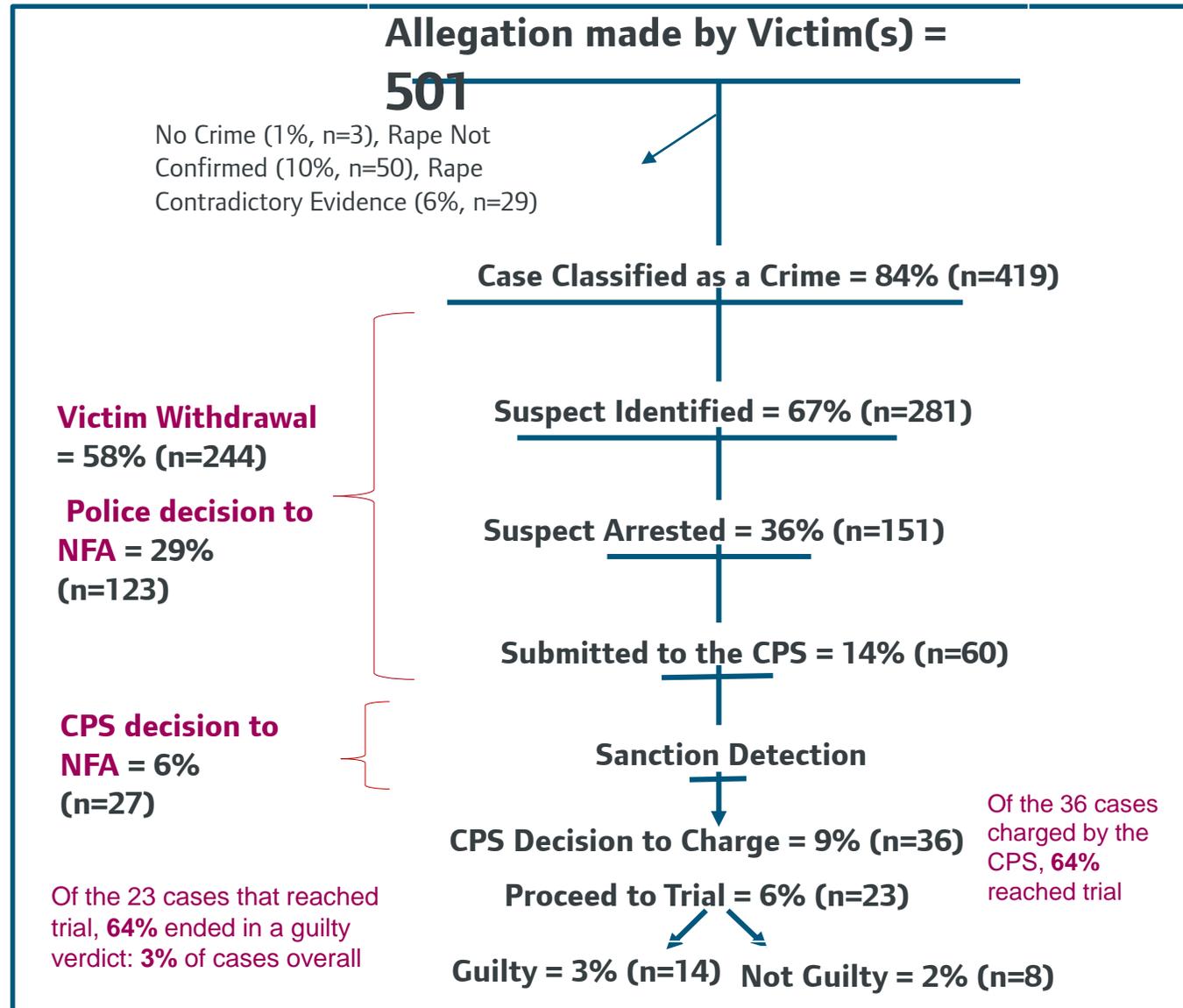Victims with mental health issues were *significantly* more likely to:

- have been **victimised in the preceding 12 months** (36% vs 23%)
- have been a previous **victim of sexual assault or domestic abuse** (38% vs 25%)
- have a prior police record (25% vs 9%)

Timeliness of case progression

213 days between a *reporting* and the police decision to **NFA**.

138 days

The average length of time between *CPS submission* and *decision to charge*

133 days

between *CPS decision to charge* and *trial*

Trials lasted, on average, for **11 days**

345 days

The average time from *reporting to CPS submission* indicating cases submitted take over 100 more days of police investigative time

On average, there was *18 months* from initial reporting to trial outcome.
There was no relationship between case characteristics and timeliness of case progression.

A focus upon attrition – the majority of cases end during investigation

Allegation made by Victim(s) = 501

No Crime (1%, n=3), Rape Not Confirmed (10%, n=50), Rape Contradictory Evidence (6%, n=29)

Case Classified as a Crime = 84% (n=419)

Victim Withdrawal = 58% (n=244)

Suspect Identified = 67% (n=281)

Police decision to NFA = 29% (n=123)

Suspect Arrested = 36% (n=151)

Submitted to the CPS = 14% (n=60)

CPS decision to NFA = 6% (n=27)

Sanction Detection

CPS Decision to Charge = 9% (n=36)

Of the 36 cases charged by the CPS, **64%** reached trial

Proceed to Trial = 6% (n=23)

Of the 23 cases that reached trial, **64%** ended in a guilty verdict: **3%** of cases overall

Guilty = 3% (n=14)   **Not Guilty = 2% (n=8)**

Victim withdrawal was the most likely outcome observed

Victim withdrawal tended to happen *early* in the process

- Of those who withdrew:
  - 18% did so within 30 days of reporting,
  - 49% within 90 days
  - 77% within 180 days
- All but 8 cases withdrew during the police investigation stage

Reasons for withdrawal were complex and often interrelated

- Stress and trauma caused or exacerbated by the investigation
- A desire to move on from what happened
- Concern for their own safety, or for the perpetrator's own situation
- The act of reporting *in and of itself* being enough
- Not having wanted to report the rape in the first place

'*I did not expect the process to be so intense... I would rather close the case and move on*

'[viw] *does not want the suspect to go to prison - just to realise the seriousness of this*

'[viw] *said she could not cope with* things*, …she needed to be strong for her son,….*'

Can we explore attrition in more detail?

Statistical analysis enables us to explore the predictors of certain specific outcomes (where numbers allow)… Two outcomes were further investigated in this manner:

- **Victim Withdrawal (244 cases)**

- **Police No Further Action (NFA) (123 cases)**

Unable to look at other outcomes – as numbers were too small for analysis

The strongest predictors of both victim withdrawal and police NFA were *procedural characteristics*.

What makes attrition more or less likely...

Victims are more likely to withdraw when:

- Multiple OICs (x8)

- Reported via the DASH (x3 more)

Victims are less likely to withdraw when:

- Participated in video recorded interview (x6 times)

- Suspect was family member (x4 times)

- Early evidence kit used (X2 times)

Police NFA was less likely when:

- Victim was under 18 (x3 times)

- Suspect involved in another rape (x8 times)

- Sought CPS advice (x10)

Police NFA was more likely when:

- Evidence casts doubt (x7 times)

- Inconsistent victim account (x7 times)

- no forensic opportunities (x5 times)