



Broken Rainbow Disappointed as LGBT People Experiencing Domestic Violence Ignored Under New Conservative Plans

Formed in 2004, Broken Rainbow runs the only UK LGBT Domestic Violence helpline staffed by LGBT people for LGBT people. During the festive period, calls to all domestic violence helplines increase as the stresses and strains and broken promises of a new year and new start all fall down. This year, especially, there are the added pressures brought on by redundancies, financial uncertainty and the house price slump.

Last week David Cameron promised to spend an extra £2.6m to help women experiencing rape, domestic violence, forced marriages and trafficking, omitting the 1 in 4 LGBT people experiencing domestic violence in the UK. In an interview with BBC's Woman's Hour, he pledged a cross-departmental strategy on tackling violence against women. The current Home Secretary Jacqui Smith has said she will launch a consultation on improving the safety of women, "in their homes, at work and in public."

Jo Barringer, Chair of Trustees of Broken Rainbow, said, "It is surprising and disappointing that lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans people have been so obviously omitted in the Conservative Party plans. It is even more surprising as the Conservatives have many gay, lesbian and bisexual MPs. However, even with the current Home Secretary, Jacqui Smith, we are seeing a blinkered descriptive of those suffering from domestic violence. Domestic violence is not just a women's issue; it is an issue suffered by all, regardless of race, religion, gender and sexuality, etc. It is a human condition."

Interim CEO of Broken Rainbow, Rita Hirani, added, "With no specialised LGBT refuges and a lack of training for services dealing with domestic violence survivors and perpetrators has meant that our community is in a void, where those meant to help us do not even have the training to tell common assault from instances of domestic violence. As such the LGBT community is perpetually being held back from moving forward and this is borne out in statistics."

With very few provisions in place to help LGBT people experiencing domestic violence and abuse, under reporting is rife which is leading to a lack of improvement in repeat instances of domestic violence incidents.

Broken Rainbow calls for thought to be put into more inclusive public statements from the Government and Opposition parties, and also increased support and funding for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities regarding domestic violence and abuse.

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Editor's notes:

Broken Rainbow is a registered charity, number 1103624.

Broken Rainbow's helpline is 08452 60 44 60

www.broken-rainbow.org.uk

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They work in partnership with London Lesbian and Gay Switchboard.

Research: Count Me In Too survey, Dr Kath Browne http://www.spectrum-lgbt.org/downloads/CMIT/CMIT_DV_Report_final_Dec07.pdf

Comparing domestic violence in same sex relationships, Dr Catherine Donovan, M Hester, J Holmes and M Mc Carry: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/sps/downloads/FPCW/cohsarfinalreport.pdf>