

Collaborative and multi-agency partnerships are essential in preventing violence

A multi-agency approach to preventing serious violence across the North West of England

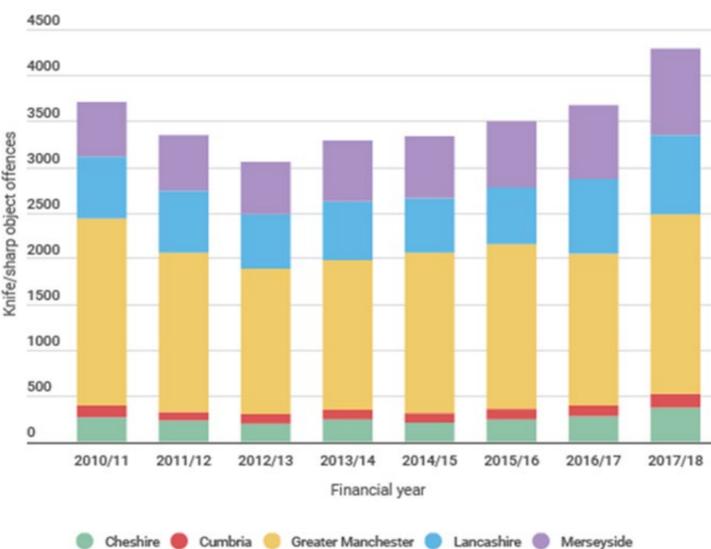
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Knife related violence

Knife related violence and other serious violence across England is an increasing concern, impacting particularly upon young people, men and deprived communities. Suggested influencing factors for knife related violence include high levels of poverty with violence symptomatic of deeper seated needs, adverse childhood experiences, funding cuts to youth services and other supportive public services, poor parenting, the 'fear' factor, i.e. carrying knives for protection, and cuts to policing. This increase is compounded by changes to police stop and search strategies.

Data from the Crime Survey for England and Wales shows that 6.2% of 10 to 15 year olds and 4.2% of 16 to 29 year olds know someone who has carried a knife for protection with smaller proportions (0.3% and 0.7%) reporting that they had themselves carried a knife. During 2017/18 there were 5,052 hospital admissions recorded in English hospitals due to an assault by a sharp object. This represented an increase of 14% when compared to 2016/17 and an increase of 39% since 2014/15.

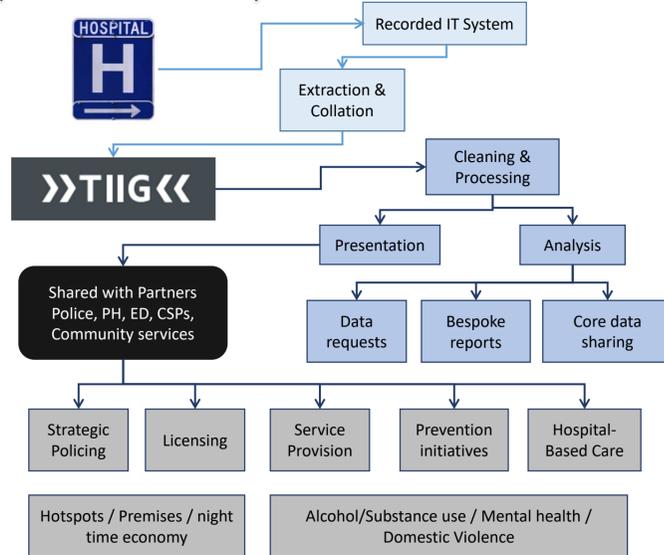
In the North West of England, knife violence has risen by 14% across the region between 2010/11 and 2017/18 with increases highest in Merseyside (56%) and Cheshire (40%).



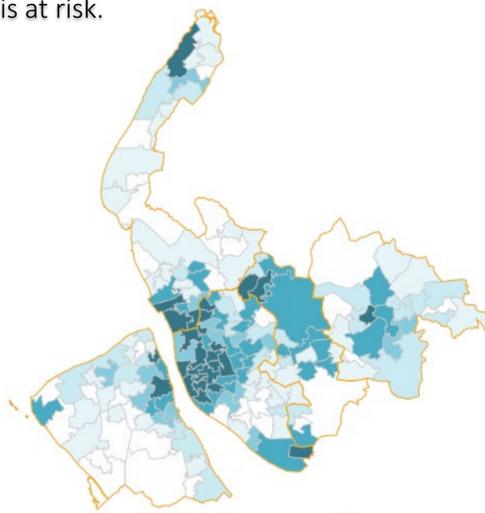
Collaborative and multiagency partnerships are essential in preventing violence, with data and intelligence sharing pivotal to this. In August 2019, the Home Office confirmed funding for the development of Violence Reduction Units. Merseyside Police have been allocated 3.4 million to work collaboratively with local government, health, community leaders and other key partners to identify drivers of serious violence and formulate an appropriate response.

TIIG

The Trauma and Injury Intelligence Group (TIIG) was established to develop an injury and violence surveillance system to enable systematic data collection and sharing across the North West of England. TIIG collect and report upon reliable injury information from emergency departments (EDs) and the North West Ambulance Service (NWAS). Non identifiable patient level data is shared with local partners on a monthly basis.



TIIG is an important data source due to estimates indicating that only half of violent incidents are reported to the police. However victims may present at health services. As police can be unaware of violent incidents which result in healthcare treatment (Quigg et al, 2017), ED and NWAS data can supplement other existing data sources to provide a true picture of the nature and extent of violence. This includes identifying at risk groups as well as serious violence hotspot locations. TIIG are working with Merseyside Police as part of the Violence Reduction Unit to develop a data repository, dashboard and area profile highlighting where serious violence is taking place and who is at risk.



Violence in Merseyside

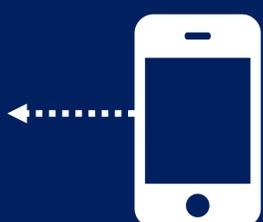
- Highest in Liverpool
- Men are disproportionately represented
- Highest in those aged between 25 and 29 years of age
- Highest during evenings and weekends
- Two-third of ambulance callouts resulted in the patient going to hospital

Violence Reduction Unit Next Steps

- Identify violence related data for inclusion in data hub.
- Produce a bespoke robust violence data repository and dashboard
- Provide a Merseyside Serious Violence Profile with recommendations

Potential Barriers

- Data quality:** TIIG relies on EDs to collect information relating to date/time of assault, weapon used and location of assaults. Data quality can be variable between EDs
- Governance:** TIIG will require access to datasets from external organisations and will need to develop GDPR compliant data sharing agreements
- Data linkage:** TIIG will need to explore the possibility of linking datasets to provide a comprehensive understanding of violence. However, this will require accessing personally identifiable information



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