

CASE STUDY

Organisation's name: A Mile in Her Shoes

Job title of employee: Chair

Organisation's Aim: A Mile in Her Shoes is a women-only service that provides access to free running, fitness and wellbeing activities to address the physical and mental health needs of women who are at risk of or are recovering from homelessness and other related issues. It works to identify and remove any barriers to running, enabling participants to access the same mental, physical, health and social benefits from running as any other woman.

Borough where organisation is located: Islington

I found out about Ascent through the joint event Women's Resource Centre, Homeless Link and Shelter held in March 2018, *Spotlight on Supporting Homeless Women with Multiple Needs*.

Since then I've attended *Train the Trainer* in October 2018. The training session was very accessible, straightforward, and was tailored to organisations working with women experiencing violence and abuse. We're not a specialist training organisation but we do deliver training, so this session will directly impact our service delivery by helping us to develop our own training, content and delivery.

I think the Ascent project can help bring awareness to how homelessness and domestic and/or sexual abuse overlap, and encourage organisations to think more about the interconnections. It's also really valuable for organisations like A Mile in Her Shoes that work primarily from a homelessness viewpoint to be able to build connections within the women's sector. Homelessness organisations, on the whole, don't have enough gender-focused support or trauma-informed services. Working with organisations in the women's sector through the Ascent project enables homelessness organisations to get better insights into working with women and to improve their practice.

As a result of the *Spotlight on Supporting Homeless Women with Multiple Needs* event, we're working with an organisation I met there and we've broadened our approach to work with women for whom homelessness is not a central factor of their experience. The learning from the event has extended our thinking, opened our eyes, and shaped our organisational strategy.

This is really important as we're not sector experts and are really, really small. We're a micro-charity that has no paid staff. This makes it difficult to identify who can attend training sessions. Accessing training for free is so important: although there are places where training sessions or development programmes can be accessed using bursaries, it just isn't possible to attend when we have such a limited budget.

It would be really good to have more options for how to access training. For instance, we'd really appreciate being able to access webinars as we all have full-time jobs or other commitments that can make physically attending events difficult. It would also be really good for Ascent to look at how

VAWG awareness can be embedded in the work of organisations like ours that focus on women's health and wellbeing in a more general sense.

The Ascent partners are open to using webinars to deliver training, but currently do not have the capacity or resource to do so. Sector Conversations are available and the partnership will look into ways of publicising these more widely.

Regarding embedding VAWG awareness in the work of organisations that work with women's general health and wellbeing, the case study was informed of the range of training courses the Ascent partners offer, which can be tailored to the needs of organisations that may encounter VAWG but do not work specifically on VAWG. One to one sessions are also available and can allow specific organisational needs to be addressed.