Why and how this guide was developed

About why this guide was created and the available evidence.

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With the increased focus on sexism in policing, there is a need to develop solutions quickly. This increases the risk of rushing to common-sense approaches without considering the assumptions behind their expected effectiveness.

Behaviour change work conducted prior to this guide (College of Policing, 2023) revealed that forces were using communications to respond to sexism in a variety of ways, which were not necessarily based on an analysis of the relevant evidence.

This guide draws on available evidence to help campaign developers make informed decisions about what is likely to work. Numerous sources and tools were used to identify principles that could assist with the development of communications to combat sexism. These included the following.

Keyword searches

We used keyword searches of **Google Scholar** and **PubMed** (the US National Institutes of Health's primary database of health-related scientific literature) to identify and evaluate research articles in detail. We collated and organised the material using a behavioural science framework known as the Behaviour Change Wheel (Michie, van Stralen and West, 2011), which helps to classify behavioural influences, intervention content and delivery.

New-generation artificial intelligence (AI) tools

We used **ChatGPT** and **Elicit**, a science-based generative AI tool, to propose preliminary answers to important questions relating to the best ways of using communications to tackle sexist behaviour in police forces, in wider organisations and more generally. This generated themes from research and citations to potentially relevant articles, which were then reviewed.

Online workshops with officers and staff

The guide was developed with officers and staff in Norfolk Constabulary and Suffolk Constabulary, so that it would be actionable and would build on the extensive experience that already exists. The workshops aimed to gather views on what kinds of behaviours were considered unacceptable and the broad sentiment towards them.

The workshops also tested messaging principles to help understand how they were likely to be received, how acceptable they were deemed to be, and who would be perceived as credible sources of the messaging (for example, chief officers or people who have been targets of sexist behaviour).

Online workshop with communications experts

We conducted a workshop with members of communications teams from Norfolk Constabulary, Suffolk Constabulary and the College of Policing.

Peer review

The guide was reviewed by behavioural science experts.

Using these sources of evidence, we identified seven priority areas of guidance, each of which could be treated as stand-alone and could be applied to the development of a communications campaign.

References

- College of Policing. (2023). **Tackling sexism and misogyny in policing** [internet]. [Accessed 1 November 2023]
- Michie S, van Stralen MM and West R. (2011). **The behaviour change wheel: A new method for characterising and designing behaviour change interventions**. Implementation Science, 6, pp 1–12. [Accessed 10 November 2023]

Tags

Violence against women and girls