

## Introduction from Assistant Chief Constable Paul Bartolomeo.

Welcome to our first Operation Cavell newsletter for partners within the health sector in Hampshire and on the Isle of Wight.

Like police, frontline workers in the NHS, ambulance service, and mental health facilities place themselves in stressful situations with some of the most vulnerable members of society. In order to best provide a service to the public, they need to be empowered to go to work without fear of violence. However, when things go wrong and they are assaulted or abused, Operation Cavell is our response to ensure that your workforce receives the appropriate level of response.



It's also important to stress that our response also recognises the needs of suspects who suffer with mental health conditions. We will fairly, but objectively assess their needs and vulnerabilities whilst ensuring any investigation is reflective of the allegation made against them.

You may already be familiar with Operation Cavell as it is a work in progress with all of our health partners in Hampshire and on the Isle of Wight. However, this newsletter is an opportunity to update you on our progress and to provide you with resources to help you to support your workforce. We are working towards a joint service level agreement (SLA) with all partners as signatories, which will provide an opportunity to update the public on our work and response towards assaults on emergency workers across Hampshire and on the Isle of Wight.

To give you some context in 2022 there were 614 crimes against frontline workers at the main NHS trust sites reported to us. In addition 254 reports were made during this period relating to our colleagues at South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS). When looking at individual crime types, the highest proportion (389) related to assaults occasioning actual bodily harm, or common assault. I'm pleased to say the numbers for serious violence (7) and hate crimes (43) represent a very small proportion of the reports that we received. As you may expect due to the size of the organisations 41% of the reports we received in 2022 related to UHS, and 30.6% to SCAS. Whilst there is still work to do to improve Operation Cavell processes, and it's also important to remember that not every report will lead to a criminal outcome, more than half of the reports from NHS trust sites (384) and SCAS (174) led to formal action being taken in 2022.

We know that some people on the frontline feel that being assaulted is 'part of the job'. It isn't, and it never should be. Our primary focus under Operation Cavell is to investigate assaults and hate crime against emergency and frontline workers, but the key is to ensure that any incidents involving your staff are reported to us. This means that we can identify trends and allocate resources such as support from our

Neighbourhood Policing Teams to address problems that are identified to us. Not every crime will result in an immediate response, but every crime reported will be recorded and reviewed. Nor will every crime result in a conviction, but there are a wide variety of outcomes outside of the court system that can be used effectively, with the aim of reducing repeat offending and making reparation to the victim. We are also supportive of Restorative Justice where both victims and offenders agree an outcome, and we work with local providers to deliver this service.

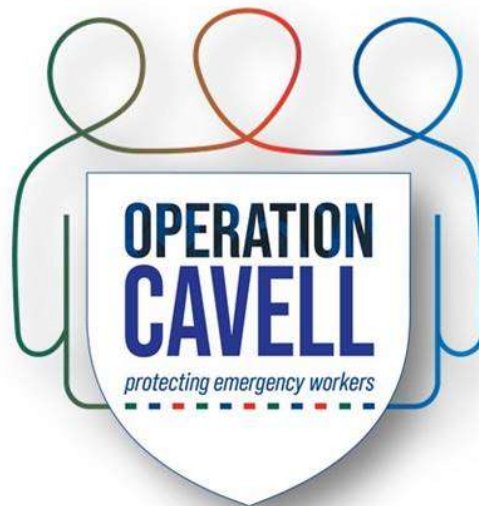
We know that there are challenges, but ultimately our commitment to your workforce is that we will hold people accountable for their actions and will identify learning from incidents so that we can prevent assaults and other crimes against frontline workers.

Thank you for your support as our partners within Operation Cavell.

**Assistant Chief Constable Paul Bartolomeo**

## What is Operation Cavell?

Operation Cavell was introduced by police forces across the UK prior to the introduction of the Assault Emergency Worker offence 2018 and the National Joint Agreement on Offences Against Emergency Workers 2020. The legislation provides clear direction on the definition of an Emergency Worker which is much wider in scope than might previously have been considered. The Joint Agreement provides a broad framework to ensure the more effective investigation and prosecution of cases where emergency workers are victims of a crime while undertaking their duties.



Operation Cavell is Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary's operational response to the national Joint Agreement and will seek to incorporate best practise within all NHS Trusts and relevant partner organisations for the identified categories of emergency workers. We recognise that some of these cases may involve vulnerable individuals, but abuse and assaults involving emergency workers should not be tolerated or be seen as part of the job. We have made a commitment to encourage reporting to allow us to investigate and secure an appropriate outcome wherever possible.

## Our objectives

Not all Operation Cavell reports will lead to a conviction, there may be a variety of out of court disposals that can be utilised depending on the circumstances. However, in supporting your workforce we also want to:

- Ensure that Operation Cavell incidents are investigated proportionately by our specialist teams.
- Identify repeat or high demand service users that have posed a risk to your staff, so that appropriate joint plans can be developed with relevant NHS partners. We will seek to make appropriate multi-agency referrals where necessary and our work will be enabled by formal Information Sharing Agreements to support prompt and GDPR compliant sharing of information
- Identify emerging issues and trends across NHS settings and have joint operational plans in place to reduce threat, risk and harm.
- Identify factors leading to repeat victimisation and develop joint operational plans to reduce this risk.
- Adopt intelligence led patrol plans to include NHS crime hotspots to increase visibility and prevent offending.
- Support initiatives with NHS Trusts focused on raising awareness of and reducing hate crime.
- Support NHS Trusts to understand 'staff satisfaction' for each crime reported to police.



## Outcomes

It's important that crimes against emergency workers are reported to us so that we can build a comprehensive picture of what is happening in healthcare settings, identify trends and repeat offenders, and work with our partners on appropriate solutions to support our colleagues that work within the sector. The purpose is not to criminalise individuals who are vulnerable, we want to stress that people should take responsibility for their actions. Where necessary we will always pursue a criminal investigation, but there are a range of options we can utilise at the conclusion of these investigations to ensure that we balance the safety of emergency workers against the needs of vulnerable individuals.

Criminal outcomes are not necessarily a negative thing – they demonstrate a greater confidence in coming forward to report crimes to us – which we welcome – and that as a result we have managed to conduct thorough investigations and dealt with them accordingly and appropriately. Whether that be through the criminal justice system and court proceedings or by utilising out-of-court disposals such as cautions.

Out of court disposals are a way of police tackling some crime types or first-time offenders without needing to take the matter to court. This can include the issuing of conditional

cautions and community resolution orders – and can represent an effective response to offending that focuses on the needs of the victim.

- Community resolution orders are aimed at low-level crimes committed primarily by first time offenders. By encouraging offenders to face up to the impact of their behaviour and make good any harm caused, the likelihood of re-offending can be reduced. It is important to remember that these orders are a private agreement between the offender and the victim, or the offender and the state relating to the specifics of the offence and the impact on the victim. The agreement could include a written or verbal apology, or compensation depending on the circumstances.
- Cautions can provide a robust and effective alternative to prosecution. In the vast majority of cases where a caution is used, specific conditions will be applied relating to the offence. They can be given to offenders aged 18 or over. When an offender is given a Conditional Caution for an offence, criminal proceedings are halted whilst the offender is given the opportunity to comply with the conditions. If the conditions are complied with the matter is finalised. If there is no reasonable excuse for non-compliance, the expectation is that a prosecution will be sought for the original offence. There are a range of reparative, rehabilitative and punitive conditions available.

## In The News

It's important that we highlight to the public the consequences of crimes against emergency workers. It sends a message that these types of incidents, such as assaults, won't be tolerated and will be investigated thoroughly. Media coverage focusing on the impact on victims is particularly emotive and can have a strong impact on the audience.

Here are two recent examples that you can signpost to when highlighting Operation Cavell to your staff or local communities.

### **Ambulance driver recalls meat cleaver attack as Portsmouth man jailed - BBC News**

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/uk-england-hampshire-64433738>

### **Isle of Wight NHS worker thanks rescuers after Newport car park attack – Isle of Wight County Press**

[Isle of Wight NHS worker thanks rescuers after Newport car park attack | Isle of Wight County Press](#)



Ambulance driver recalls meat cleaver attack as Portsmouth man jailed

## Resources

Whilst we plan to highlight the Joint Service Level Agreement (SLA) to the public across Hampshire and on the Isle of Wight, individual NHS trusts and organisations can action both internal and external communications to talk about their Operation Cavell commitments to local audiences. You can use information within this newsletter to create internal messages for your staff.

To help you to do so we have collated a number of resources that you can utilise. Artwork files can be requested, but we would like to maintain a level of consistency with the approach towards branding. On this basis we have chosen not to include individual organisation logos or brands below the NHS graphic and Operation Cavell logo. We have also chosen not to include the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Constabulary branding beyond the call to action paragraph. This is to ensure that the widest audience possible engages with the messaging and does not erroneously perceive that we are criminalising vulnerable people within a healthcare setting.

The following link will allow you to download posters specifically intended for internal use or public facing areas within your estate. The link also includes digital assets for your intranet and social media channels, the Operation Cavell logo, an outlook template, and other useful files. If you have any questions about these materials please e-mail [corporate.comms@hampshire.police.uk](mailto:corporate.comms@hampshire.police.uk) marking it for the attention of Jim Pusey.

Link to assets:

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1FFXqyujSmlb\\_F8xcAbo0nZUljpvsJADr?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1FFXqyujSmlb_F8xcAbo0nZUljpvsJADr?usp=sharing)