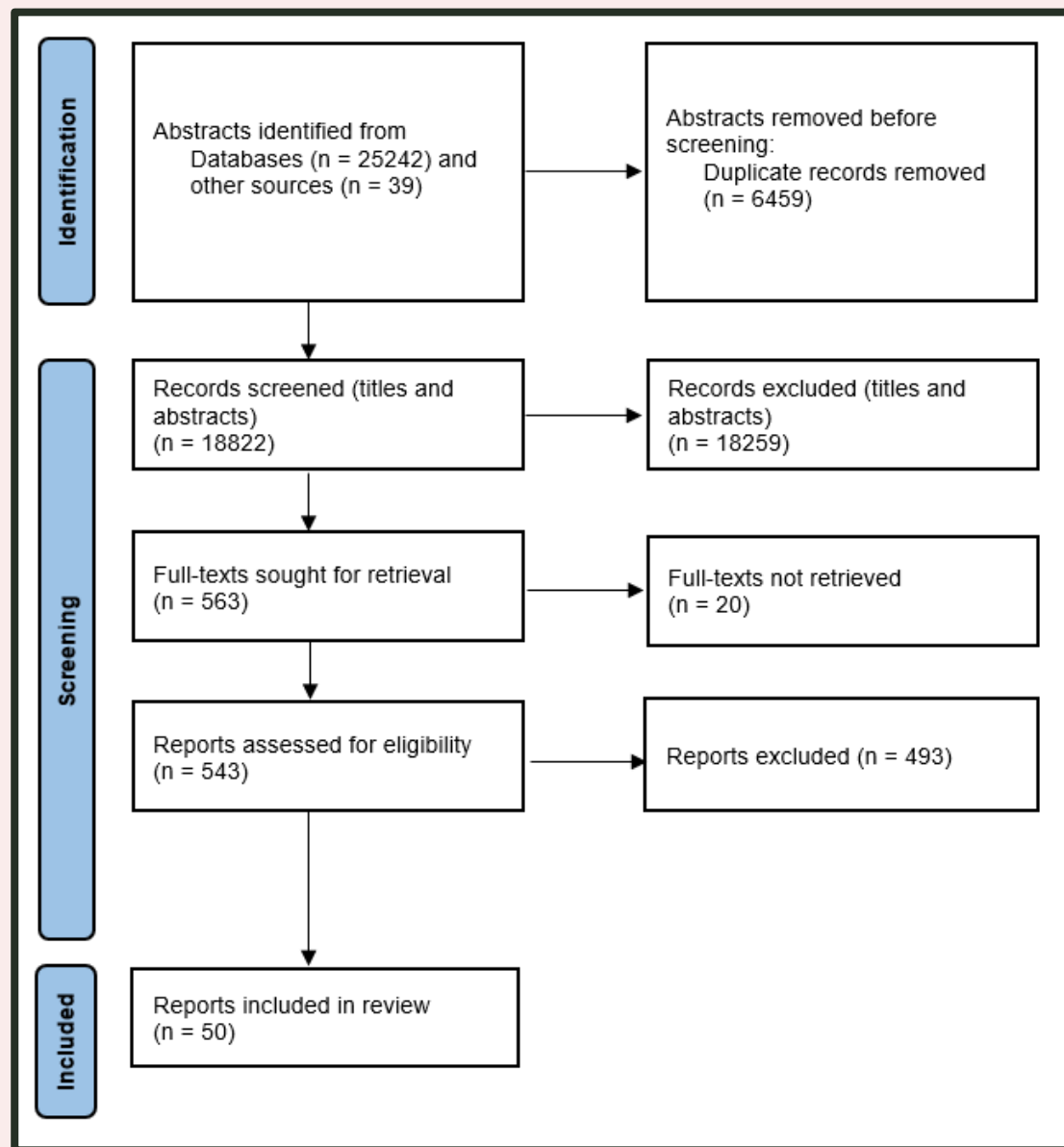


Lived Experience Perspectives on Re- Traumatisation

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Trauma-informed healthcare from the perspectives of women who have experienced sexual violence in adulthood

Peeren, Montgomery, Sweeney, Spaducci, Kaul, Smeeth & Oram
(2025, in press)



1

14 DATABASES (LATEST SEARCH 13TH FEBRUARY 2024)

2


QUALITATIVE OR MIXED METHODS

3

ONLY 2 STUDIES REPORTED ANY LIVED EXPERIENCE INVOLVEMENT

Theme 1: Name the violence.

- **Sexual violence was often hidden, minimised, or normalised.**
- **This meant that many survivors struggled to acknowledge what had happened to them.**
- **Survivors needed time, safety, and gentle support to help them reach this understanding.**
- **Being able to name the violence was an important step toward healing.**
- **Naming violence challenged internalised blame and broke through the silencing imposed on them.**




**Name the
violence**

**Make it
visible**

**Bear
witness**

Theme 2: Make sexual violence visible.

- **Sexual violence remained invisible in healthcare settings that:**
 - **lacked safety for disclosure**
 - **failed to recognise it as a health issue**
 - **imposed frameworks that overlooked survivors' own understandings and trauma context.**
- **Survivors needed:**
 - **space to disclose**
 - **validation of their experiences**
 - **responses that acknowledged trauma**
 - **Responses that recognised sexual violence as a gendered violation of human rights**



**Name the
violence**

**Make it
visible**

**Bear
witness**

Theme 3: Bear witness.

- **When consent was disregarded or responses dismissed distress, it could reproduce the violation, dehumanisation, and silencing of sexual violence.**
- **Survivors needed to be treated as whole people, with empathy, respect for autonomy, and dignity.**
- **Attuned, respectful care helped promote healing through rebuilding trust, restoring agency, and affirming survivors' worth and humanity.**

**Name the
violence**

**Make it
visible**

**Bear
witness**

Demonstrating trustworthiness was central to trauma-informed healthcare. Trust was earned by creating care environments and interactions that countered the harms of sexual violence:

- supporting survivors to name and make sense of the violence to counter blame and shame;
- hearing and believing survivors to challenge silencing and invisibility; and
- affirming dignity, agency and autonomy to address the dehumanising nature of sexual violence.

Trust-building could be undermined by system-level factors that de-prioritised relationships and/or disrupted consistency and accountability. Trust was also prevented and eroded by intersecting forms of oppression that shaped access, recognition, and experiences, compounding barriers and intensifying harm for marginalised survivors.



Trauma-informed healthcare from the perspectives of women who have experienced sexual violence in adulthood: a systematic review and meta-ethnography

Peeren, Montgomery, Sweeney, Spaducci, Kaul, Smeeth & Oram (2025, in press)

1

CARE PROVIDERS AND SERVICES ARE UNIQUELY PLACED TO PROMOTE HEALING

2

RE-TRAUMATISATION IS A SYSTEMIC PROBLEM

3

DEMONSTRATING TRUSTWORTHINESS IS KEY

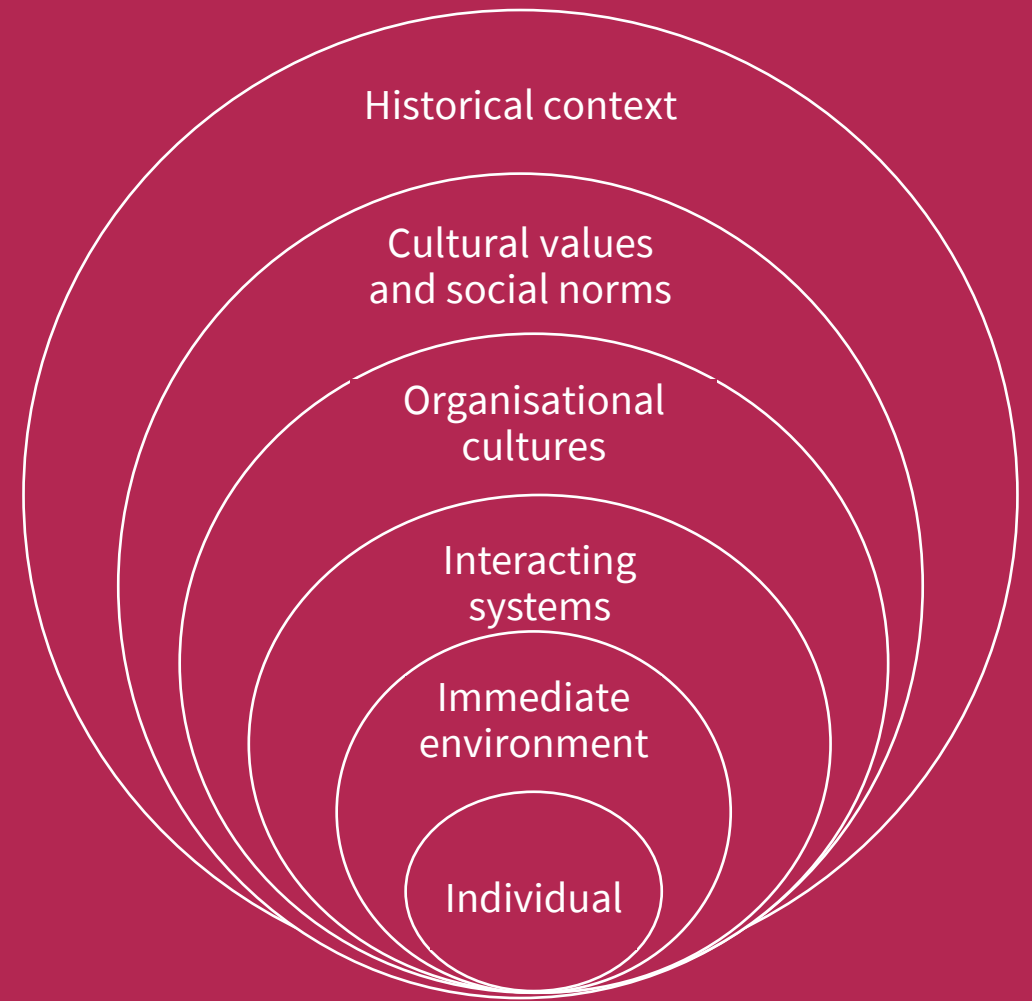
Justice as Healing: Human Rights and Trauma- Informed Approaches



Trauma Informed
Community of Action

“Because the violence at the source of trauma aims at domination and oppression ... the suffering of traumatised people is a matter not only of individual psychology but also, always, of social justice”

- Judith Herman (2023, p.1)



(Bronfenbrenner, 1978)

Principle 1:

People with lived experience of relevant trauma(s) and system(s) must be at the heart of trauma-informed approaches



Principle 2:

Equity and justice are foundational to preventing re-traumatisation and promoting healing



Principle 3:

Preventing re-traumatisation and promoting healing requires system-wide change





- Re-traumatisation cannot be addressed without also focusing on **healing**.
- It occurs at both individual and collective levels, requiring **system-wide** change through trauma-informed approaches.
- Prevention and repair start with building and demonstrating **trustworthiness**.

Thank you

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