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### **Abstract for TriAD**

Trauma-informed workforce development is an international aspiration aligning with best-practice approaches that recognises trauma evident within communities. The distress experienced by people with dementia, those on the diagnosis pathway and their carers/families cannot be underestimated. The life-alternating nature of this disease is a source of acute psychological distress that can overwhelm an individual's ability to cope and be a source of trauma. The pandemic restrictions exacerbated distress, and this was reflected in a 30% increase in calls to the UK's only 24-hour dementia helpline (Alzheimer Scotland). This helpline is an essential first-level resource for in-the-moment information and as a result, it is vital to manage these calls sensitively to ensure the exchange between those offering information (volunteer call-handlers) and those accessing this resource does not trigger psychological distress. This study aimed to explore the extent to which trauma-informed principles were evident within call-handler responses to those accessing the helpline.

A sample of two hundred anonymised call-logs during a one-year period were analysed (April 2020 to April 2021 during the covid-19 pandemic). Trauma-informed principles of safety, trustworthiness, choice, collaboration and empowerment were used as the A priori themes applied to a framework analysis.

The most frequent category of caller was 'carer/friend/family' and the most common reason for the call was 'emotional support' followed by 'carer stress'. Collaboration was the most frequently reported theme followed by safety and empowerment. Empowerment was on average the strongest theme across all call-handler responses, followed closely with collaboration and then safety.

Understanding the helpline responses using a trauma-informed lens provided an invaluable contextualisation of the data. It is an essential paradigm shift that can re-dress the balance of power, provide safety in an environment of distress, empowering individuals to lead on their care and promote a person to live well with dementia.