

# Sexual offence interviewing: Towards victim-survivor well-being and justice

**Social Equity Research  
Centre researcher**

Dr Gemma Hamilton

**Funding body**

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**Every year, thousands of Australians report sexual violence to police. Yet too often, the process of reporting — especially the police interview process — leaves victim-survivors retraumatised and unsupported. Many never see their case proceed. Most never see justice.**

Led by Dr Gemma Hamilton through the Social Equity Research Centre, this Australian Research Council-funded Discovery Early Career Researcher Award (DECRA) Fellowship, asks a long-overdue question: What if police interviews were built around the well-being of the people who have already been harmed by sexual violence?

**Drawing on lived experience, criminology and forensic psychology, Dr Hamilton is exploring how police can interview victim-survivors of sexual violence in ways that promote healing, improve evidence quality and support better justice outcomes.**



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Only one year in, this work is already creating an impact. Findings have been cited in the Australian Law Reform Commission's landmark 2025 report *SAFE, INFORMED, SUPPORTED*, shaping national conversations on justice reform. Police trainers from Australia are using Dr Hamilton's research to revise training programs through a trauma-informed lens.

**“We’re keen to get this right. Thank you for doing the research.”**

Trainer, Specialist Investigations Team

The project has been shared through national and international conferences, featured on the Police Science Dr. podcast, and an invited blog for the Australian and New Zealand Society of Criminology — reaching police, policymakers, and researchers around the world.

This research is about dignity. It's about shifting investigative interviewing away from control and towards care, so victim-survivors are not just heard, but respected, believed and supported in their pursuit of justice.

What's next? A global audience of investigative practitioners hear directly from victim-survivors in a panel hosted through the **International Investigative Interviewing Research Group (iIIRG)**. New workshops at RMIT will help ensure that university responses to sexual violence reflect best practice.