Australian Government

Department of Social Services

Perth Consultation Summary

Fourth Action Plan of the *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022*

Summary of Consultation - 21 August 2018

ThinkPlace

The Department of Social Services acknowledges the traditional owners of country throughout Australia, and their continuing connection to land, water and community.

We pay our respects to them and their cultures, and to Elders past, present and emerging.

About this document

This material was commissioned by the Commonwealth of Australia to assist in the collection of information from consultation sessions workshops around Australia. The purpose of this material is to summarise consultations held by the Department of Social Services as part of the development of the Fourth Action Plan in Perth, Western Australia. This session was facilitated by ThinkPlace.

The Department of Social Services thanks all participants of this discussion for their contributions as part of the development of the Fourth Action Plan. The views expressed in this material do not necessarily reflect those of the Commonwealth, or indicate a particular course of action.

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Participants of Perth workshop

Starick Domestic Violence Support Services Inc.	Ombudsman Office WA
NATSIWA	Metropolitan Migrant Resource Centre
Salvation Army	National Harmony Alliance
Health Department WA	Zonta Women's Refuge Association
Zonta Association	Women's Health and Family Services
Women's Council for Domestic and Family Violence Services WA	Salvation Army
Fremantle Migrant Centre WA	Department of Health
Stopping Family Violence Inc.	Department of Communities
Rise Network	Department of Justice
ISHAR	Department of Justice (Court and Tribunal services)
Zonta Women's Refuge Association	Department of Premier and Cabinet
Curtin University	Domestic Violence Legal Unit
Office Multicultural Interests	Aboriginal Family Law Services
Women's Community Health Network	WA Police
Mental Health Commission	WESNET
Women's Council for Domestic and Family Violence Services WA	Relationships Australia
Ruah Community Services	

Key themes

Key themes

Reducing violence against women and their children through prevention activities

- There are high quality family violence services already established.
- Educating students on Respectful Relationship has been a positive step in the prevention of domestic, family and sexual violence. It is a good start towards better awareness in young people considering their actions and behaviours.
- The National Campaign is positive at a national level, but there are also opportunities for state level prevention activities.
- Services are performing well at 'the pointy end'; but ~~we~~ momentum needs to be built so prevention becomes a broader community issue and responsibility.
- There are no public education campaigns addressing domestic and family violence in Western Australia, now that the previous 'Freedom from Fear' campaign no longer runs.
- It is difficult to get long-term funding for evidence-based programs to deliver local solutions.

Reducing sexual violence

- Greater awareness has seen in the drastic increase in reporting since 2010; meaning more people are seeking help.
- Build on the open discussion nationally about what is consent and rape culture especially on social media.
- There are useful tools available in schools (e.g. Blossom Guide).
- Lessons from campaigns like the anti-smoking campaign should be used examples of successes in raising community awareness and prevention.
- We need a state and national plan to address sexual violence with research into what drivers are enabling behaviours and to build capability to address them (e.g. upskill youth workers to interfere when they overhear negative conversations about women or girls).
- Respectful relationship education programs need to be embedded in schools consistently, starting with younger audiences and be age-appropriate. There is no compulsion currently for private or independent schools to deliver these programs.
- There is more hyper-sexualisation in the media and pornography is easily accessible through technology. There needs to be research around the underlying attitudes towards pornography and similarity in attitudes to domestic and family violence.
- Men's behaviour change programs need to address sexual violence more.
- The justice system needs to be more responsive and also more effective collaboration across services to deal with complexity.

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Key themes

Addressing the impact of violence on women from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

- Community-led solutions and engagement with Elders in the community instead of imposing programs that are not led by Aboriginal organisations that do not work in a local context.

- *'Nothing about our mob without our mob'.* Responses that are based on culture, and working with the capacity and approaches that already exist in the community (e.g. safe spaces for women).

- Acknowledging that violence is not part of Aboriginal culture, and the need to work with men to change behaviour to increase safety. The separation model will not necessarily work in some communities because the response needs to support both men to change their behaviour and women to respond to the violence they have experienced.

- There are high costs involved with service delivery in regional areas as the population is spread out. The solutions and thinking tend to be focused in metropolitan areas.

- Culturally appropriate solutions are needed to meet the needs of Indigenous communities as mainstream services are not always appropriate or comfortable for Indigenous people to use.

- There is a lack expertise and long-term staff within the workforce in regional and remote Western Australia.

- The intergenerational and historical trauma experienced by Indigenous people needs to be acknowledged.

- There is a lack of resourcing to deliver the Kimberley Plan.

- Tender processes favour larger, mainstream service organisations rather than using and building the capacity of local Indigenous organisations.

- Greater Indigenous representation is needed at consultations to lead the discussions on Aboriginal women experiencing violence.

- Processes need to focus on developing trust, rather than imposing programs on Indigenous communities – look at the 'how' rather than the end product when looking at what is working well.

- Need greater research around domestic, family and sexual violence responses in Indigenous communities.

Key themes

Addressing the impact of violence on women from culturally and linguistically diverse communities (CALD)

- There are strong existing community engagement models that can be drawn upon to address violence against CALD women (e.g. the national stance on female genital mutilation and human trafficking).

- Services need to understand the perspective of CALD women and their lived experiences of violence, noting it is often within a different context to western experiences.

- Conversations and community education are helping in CALD communities.

- Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS)'s evidence-based approach and having a national plan to address impact of violence is seen as a positive contribution to addressing violence against CALD women.

- Research shows the prevalence of violence against women is low in CALD communities; however this is likely because women are not reporting.

- A greater understanding is needed around the reporting of violence experienced by CALD women (e.g. how the data is collected, is the terminology appropriate to their culture, are interpreters used, and why there was a low response rate from CALD cohort in the Women's Safety Survey).

- Mainstream services for CALD women have a western feminist lens which is largely focused around the individual. However, there are issues with how this is delivered in collectivist identity culture more built around family and community.

- There is significant diversity within the umbrella term of CALD. Data needs to be disaggregated (e.g. by ethnicity and visa status).

- Workforce capability need to be built around capability to assist CALD women, including cultural sensitivity.

- We need to collaborate with leaders within communities to enable the change within CALD communities.

- The mainstream 'separation model' of resolving domestic and family violence will not always work, due to cultural approaches of relationships (e.g. removal of perpetrator).

- The lack of education or having their skills not recognised can be a barrier to independence for CALD women.

Key themes

Technology-facilitated abuse

- There has been a substantial increase in technology facilitated abuse.
- Mobile phone program delivered by WESNET provides a new phone and education around avoiding technology facilitated abuse.
- Education is provided in the form of online information and support, including e-safety training for workers to respond appropriately.
- The introduction of the Intimate Images Bill in Western Australia has provided more opportunities for addressing non-consensual image sharing.
- Consideration should be continuously given to how laws can address behaviours surrounding technology facilitated abuse, rather than requiring constant change to keep up with technology.
- There is inconsistent legislation across jurisdictions.
- Magistrates and courts need training on the laws around technology-facilitated abuse and to focus on behaviour rather than the medium.
- Police and courts sometimes dismiss technology-facilitated abuse because of requirements regarding evidence.
- Negative responses in society and media need to challenges, as they can often blame the victim or the technology – it is the abuser that should be blamed.

Adequate crisis accommodation

- A number of services are forming partnerships despite there being tough competition for limited funding.
- Information sharing amongst refuges allow for transfer of women.
- Expand the Safe at Home Programs as an extension of the refuge program across the state.
- There is a need for comprehensive support, wrap around services and adequate funding.
- Outreach support for women are not adequate to support their transition into community.
- There are barriers for CALD women or young people in refuges to be able to transition to housing due to affordability.
- Rapid rehousing for women that are in refuges is needed to better free up the limited beds available in order to better support victims at crisis.
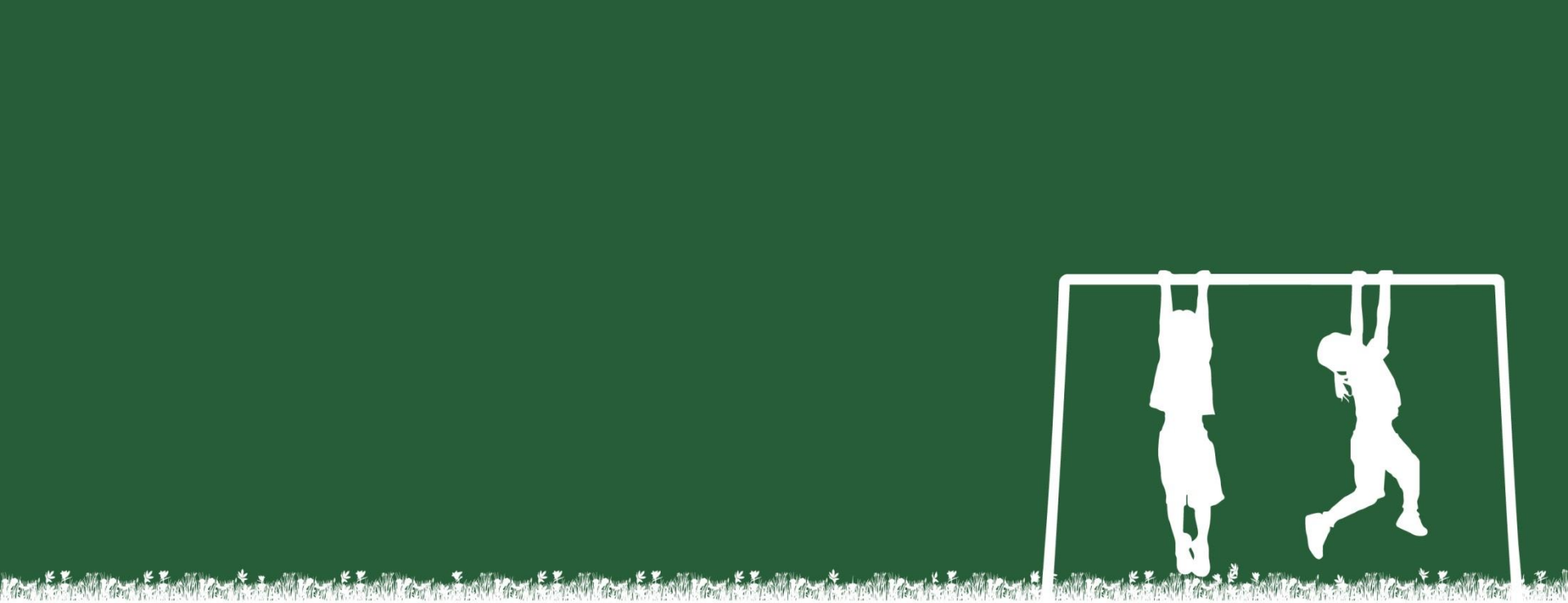
Key themes

Access to Justice

- Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) between family court and state practices (e.g. child protection and database from magistrate court to share information to inform earlier decisions on child safety).

- The Family Advocacy and Support Service model, from the Third Action Plan, established an integrated service with a social worker working alongside lawyers in five regional areas.

- The Family Violence Service model, as it is currently, provides legal support for people coming to the courts.

- We need an injection of funding, instead of shifting it from existing services that keep women safe, into accommodation options for men who use violence.

- Need nuanced implementation and application of domestic and family violence legislation.

- There are varied and inconsistent responses from magistrates based on their understanding of the impact of domestic and family violence on families.

- We need education and training across the board for understanding of the impact of domestic and family violence, awareness of resources and consistent language used by all frontline workers.

- Lawyers need Perpetrator Accountability program training.

- Perpetrators need to be visible. With the sharing of information between courts, both the victim and perpetrator can be tracked.

Workforce Capability

- Keeping Kids Safe Program to continue as personal development opportunities for Child Advocates to work well with child-centred approach.

- Training needs to be affordable and accessible. How might we conduct placed-based training?

- There is a lack of collaboration with people in communities e.g. hairdressers, vets, childcare workers, doctors and lawyers because they are not trained to recognise and respond to domestic and family violence.

- All organisations need to be competent in addressing domestic and family violence.

- Training should be incorporated into university courses.

- DV Alert is not accessible for people rural or remote. We need to train the trainers training for rural or remote services.

- It is crucial to build local capacity within communities so that it is sustainable.

Big Shifts

What are the big shifts we want to see in this space?

Big shifts

FROM	TO
"Family Violence" and a challenge for the sector	National Emergency for the whole Australian community
Good practice that doesn't get properly evaluated to establish evidence base	Evidence driving change
A criminal justice system that traumatises victims	A system that achieves true justice
Funding linked to service delivery	Results based funding; KPIs for state and territory to reduce violence tied to funding
Social acceptance that domestic, family and sexual violence are things that happens	Cultural change at societal level, treating people with respect, dignity, love
MOUs and legislations inhibiting collaboration	Information sharing protocols between service providers
Domestic, family and sexual violence communicated only solely a bad news story	Positive survivor stories of responses from police, family and friends
Domestic and family violence as a women's issue	Domestic violence advocacy as a community issue
Top down decisions about 'what' to do at local level	Creative responses through partnerships without increase funding
Adult focus	Children having a voice with heard and informed decisions having impact on their lives
Poor data hygiene	Consistent collection of disaggregated data by police, helplines to tailor response for communities

Big shifts

FROM	TO
The lens of the sector defining the problem and solutions	Widening consultation to involve people ~~who see things that we are not~~
State or federal government issue	Local government investing and committing to strategies
Perpetrators experience trauma or abuse in life more likely to use violence	Greater resources to addressing toxic male sentiments and activities earlier in life (e.g. Minister of Men's Health)
Services provided to Indigenous communities by mainstream organisations	Indigenous-controlled services are recognised and preferred providers for Indigenous communities
Short term funding cycles	Funding models patient to see long-term change

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