UNSW SYDNEY

Gendered Violence Research Network

Safe at Home Operational Framework

Prepared for Department of Social Services

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For further information:

Jan Breckenridge:
Professor and Co-Convenor
Gendered Violence Research Network
School of Social Sciences
UNSW Sydney 2052
j.breckenridge@unsw.edu.au

www.arts.unsw.edu.au/our-research/research-centres-institutes/gendered-violence-research-network

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This document has been prepared for the sole purpose of our services provided to Department of Social Services.

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Abbreviations

CALD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse
DFV	Domestic and Family Violence
DSS	Commonwealth Department of Social Services
GVRN	Gendered Violence Research Network
IPV	Intimate Partner Violence
KWSITH	Keeping Women Safe in Their Homes
PSS	Personal Safety Survey
SAH	Safe at Home
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UNSW, Sydney	University of New South Wales, Sydney

Acknowledgements

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

The Gendered Violence Research Network acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's First Nations and Traditional Owners and continuing custodians of Country. We acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded and recognise the right to self-determination and continuing connection to land, waters, and culture. We acknowledge and celebrate the inherent strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities.

We acknowledge the work of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls in the *Wiyi Yani U Thangani Report*[1] guided by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People[2]. The Gendered Violence Research Network acknowledges that family violence, substance misuse, domestic and family violence, and abuse disproportionately impact Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls and trap families and communities in cycles of crisis. We recognise that adequate supports and responses to trauma developed with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities are critical to keeping Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities safe.

Acknowledgement of Lived Experience

In this Operational Framework, we draw on research relating to experiences of violence and abuse. It is important to remember that there is a real person affected by each act of violence represented in the data. The ripple effect of domestic and family violence may spread to their families, friends, and workplaces. Stories of survival, hope and resistance sit alongside stories of victimisation.

Contributors

The National Audit and Operational Framework for KWSITH/Safe at Home Programs has been led by Professor Jan Breckenridge with support from Professor kylie valentine and Dr Kyllie Cripps. The project has been managed by Mailin Suchting.

Research and writing of the Operational Framework has been undertaken by Professor Jan Breckenridge, Dr Melanie Burton, Natasha Dubler, Mailin Suchting and Dr Tyson Whitten in collaboration with the Family Safety Implementation Branch, Department of Social Services, and the Safe at Home Operational Framework Working Group and select service providers.

About this Operational Framework

Background

In 2017, the Commonwealth Department of Social Services commissioned the Gendered Violence Research Network at UNSW, Sydney, to undertake a national Audit and evaluation of the services funded by the Commonwealth Keeping Women Safe in Their Homes (KWSITH) initiative, and the existing Safe at Home responses provided by states and territories. Safe at Home responses are provided in all Australian jurisdictions to assist women and their children to remain safely in their home and community, or a home or community of their choice, after leaving a violent relationship.

The project focused on Safe at Home responses funded by the Commonwealth Government through the KWSITH funding program, and/or various Safe at Home funding made available to services by states and territories.

Phase One involved a desktop audit of KWSITH/Safe at Home responses including an examination of monitoring and outcome data collection processes across all jurisdictions.

Phase Two involved collecting data from each jurisdiction to assess outcomes in order to determine the effectiveness of the KWSITH/Safe at Home responses as well as to ascertain factors that appear to influence outcomes and future service delivery options. In each jurisdiction the examination found evidence of the effectiveness of the Safe at Home response provided to keep women and children safely in their home or community. The KWISTH/Safe at Home Audit represents the most significant effort to conduct research into the effectiveness and appropriateness of SAH responses in Australia. However, it should be noted that the eight jurisdictional case studies do not allow for a comparative analysis of SAH responses because of the varying availability of appropriate and comparable data across jurisdictions.

Phase Three of the Audit involves preparing an Operational Framework (this Report) that includes practice principles to underpin consistent best practice approaches across Australia in the future. The National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children Senior Officials Implementation Executive Group (ImpEG) established a Safe at Home Operational Framework Working Group (the Working Group) with members from each state and territory. This was an important component of the development of the Operational Framework with the group providing expert conceptual and operational advice.

Purpose

This Operational Framework focuses on ensuring quality by providing a flexible and inclusive framework for Safe at Home service development, planning and service delivery across different jurisdictions and service sectors. It is also a tool to educate and inform government, relevant agencies and the wider community about the policies and practices of organisations.

This Operational Framework is intended to enhance the design and implementation of Safe at Home responses, which support women experiencing violence to remain in their home, or in a home of their choosing, where it is appropriate to do so.

This Operational Framework will:

- provide evidence to reinforce the importance of supporting women experiencing violence or escaping abusive partners to remain safely housed in their communities
- outline best practice principles and elements of Safe at Home responses

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- provide guidance for policy makers and practitioners on the implementation and delivery of Safe at Home responses
- offer advice on making Safe at Home responses accessible for diverse groups including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, women with disability, Older women, and women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- promote consistency in Safe at Home responses across providers and jurisdictions
- support Safe at Home responses in order to sustain a culture of critical reflection and evaluation.

Who should use this Operational Framework?

This Operational Framework is an up-to-date guide for policy makers, Safe at Home practitioners and other affiliated service organisations which will contribute to ensuring high-quality and consistent service provision that emphasises the specialist nature of the work delivered by Safe at Home responses. The Operational Framework was collaboratively designed through consultation with stakeholders, policy makers and practitioners. The Operational Framework can be used:

- to provide strong understanding of how Safe at Home responses work and to collaborate with different services in their local areas
- to contribute to quality improvement, allowing organisations implementing Safe at Home responses to assess their progress against the Operational Framework, identify areas for improvement and make action plans to address any gaps
- to encourage critical reflection in strategic planning processes and professional development activities
- as a guide to orient new staff or students to both the sector and their role when offering Safe at Home responses
- to contribute to the documentation of Safe at Home organisational purpose
- to contribute to the variety of supports and interventions that can be provided to clients
- to share with practitioners from other services who support mutual clients, so that professionals working with the clients can better understand the role and philosophy of the Safe at Home response
- as part of future tendering processes to assist organisations to understand what a Safe at Home response would require and how it should/could be operationalised
- to emphasise the value of organisational investment in staff and external partnerships. This investment is an essential part of capacity building in the domestic and family violence sector and will support high-quality service provision.

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Structure of this Operational Framework

The Operational Framework has been structured as follows:

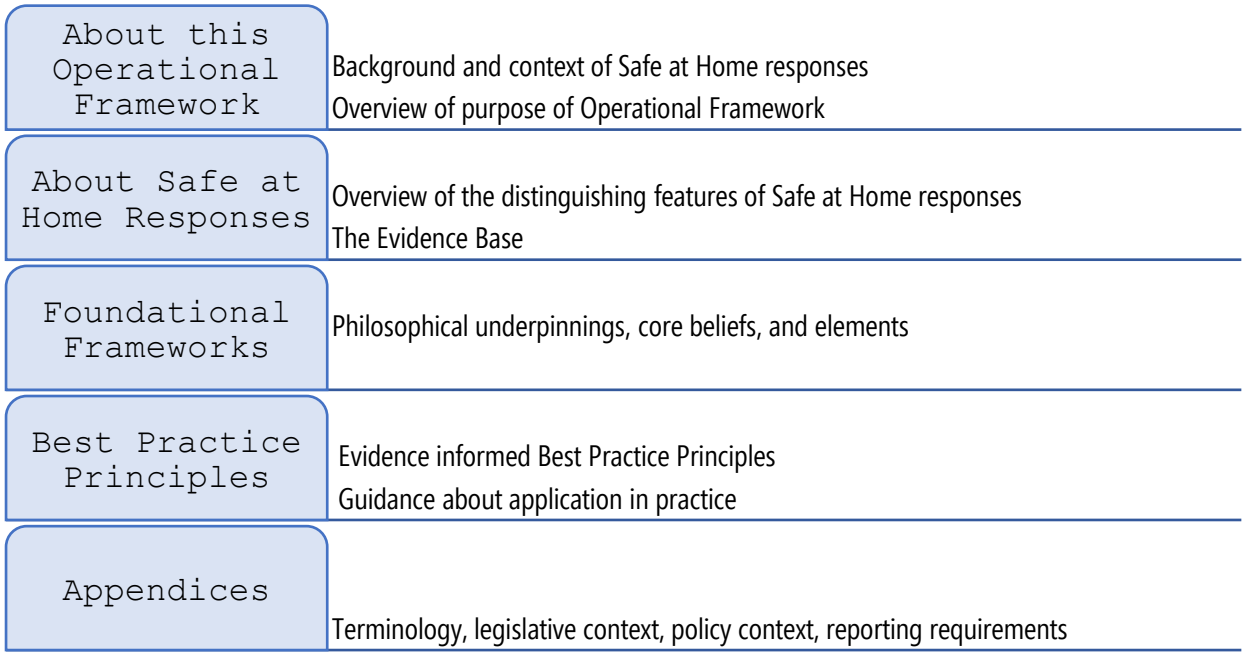

Diagram One: Structure and content of this Operational Framework

Language used in this Operational Framework

Choices regarding language in the field of domestic and family violence are always contested, and preferences around terms used have changed over time, reflecting various priorities. We recognise that organisations may have particular preferences around the terminology they employ for a range of reasons, and clients of domestic and family violence services may also have views. Terms that resonate with some individuals will be alienating for others. Organisations will need to regularly revisit the language that they use, to see whether the terms continue to work well for their clients and reflect their experiences. Terminology is explained in detail in Appendix 1.

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About Safe at Home responses

Safe at Home responses do not, and are not intended to, replace the need for refuges and Specialist Homelessness Services. Instead, they are one option in a suite of interventions that women may choose from according to their circumstances. In 2015, funding was released by the Commonwealth Department of Social Services (DSS) over three years for Keeping Women Safe in their Homes (KWSITH). This funding has subsequently been renewed. KWSITH responses are consistent with existing Safe at Home goals and also aim to support women and children to remain in their home or a home of their choice, where it is safe and appropriate to do so.

Definition

Safe at Home responses are broadly defined as:

> *interventions, strategies or programs that aim to support women and children who have experienced domestic and family violence to remain safely in their home or home of their choice, community or community of their choice where it is safe to do so. The term 'response' has been deliberately chosen as it encompasses the range of possible ways in which Safe at Home is being delivered.*

Safe at Home responses intend, specifically, to reduce the risk of the perpetrator being present and using further violence and abuse, by addressing safety issues experienced by women and children affected by domestic and family violence through a range of innovative initiatives, tools and technology.

A Safe at Home response should:

- receive **specific funding** contributing to one or more components of the Safe at Home response
- **ensure domestic and family violence services are offered** to the client as part of or in addition to the response
- **provide access to housing support** to prevent women entering or remaining in specialist homelessness or supported accommodation
- ensure women remain safely in independent accommodation of their choice
- **focus on women's safety** as part of or in addition to the response—criminal justice strategies, consistent risk assessment processes and safety planning, security upgrades and innovative technologies used to increase safety and reduce risk
- **encourage local partnerships** and provide strong service coordination
- **work alongside perpetrator interventions** as part of a holistic response to support victim/survivor safety
- **listen and respond to the needs of children,** including their needs for physical safety, emotional wellbeing, relationship support and trauma-informed recovery services
- **provide cultural safety and cultural authority** and address intersectional and specific needs of different population groups.

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The evidence base

There is no one definition of domestic and family violence (DFV) or agreed use of terminology in Australia. Research may refer to 'domestic violence' (DV), 'family violence' (FV), 'domestic and family violence', 'intimate partner violence' (IPV) or 'violence against women' (VAW) without adequately defining the differences between these terms or the context of their use.

National and global policy documents also prefer different terms. For example, the *National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children (2010-2022)*[3] (the National Plan) prefers the term 'domestic violence', defined as 'acts of violence that occur between people who have, or have had, an intimate relationship'.[4]

The term 'family violence'[4] is used by some Australian jurisdictions (Victoria and Tasmania) to forefront the effects of violence on children within the family. In Australia, First Nations communities generally prefer the term 'family violence' to 'domestic violence', premised on a culturally distinct definition of 'family' and an assumption that there is a need to address simultaneously a range of forms of violence in addition to spousal violence. Family violence encompasses the range of violence that takes place in Indigenous communities including the physical, emotional, sexual, social, spiritual, cultural, psychological, and economic abuses that may be perpetrated within a family.

The broad range of definitions that exist, and the slippage between them, limit the comparability of evidence and what we know about violence and abuse perpetrated in contexts other than intimate partnerships.[5] Definitions in each state and territory are determined by jurisdictional legislation and policy and may influence client eligibility for a Safe at Home response.

This Operational Framework will refer to the broader term domestic and family violence as the term preferred by most Australian jurisdictions and the research literature.

Current evidence on prevalence

The most recent findings from the 2016 Australian Personal Safety Survey (PSS), which is the largest national population-based survey of physical assault and physical threat and sexual assault and sexual threat, substantiate the high prevalence of intimate partner violence. Key findings include:

- Approximately 1 in 4 women (23% or 2.2 million) experienced violence by an intimate partner, compared to 1 in 13 men (7.8% or 703,700).[6]
- There is an equally alarming rate of lethality, confirmed in separate studies of women and men killed by their partners:
    - 1 woman is killed every 9 days by a partner
    - 1 man is killed every 29 days by a partner.[7]
- In addition to physical and sexual violence and threat, 1 in 4 Australian women and 1 in 6 Australian men reported experiencing emotional abuse by a current or former partner.[6]

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Prevalence in specific population groups

Prevalence for specific population groups is not always reported in surveys and survey questions may not adequately capture specific cultural and social contexts.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

The prevalence of family violence in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities was reported by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) in 2019 in the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS) finding:

- Approximately 1 in 10 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women experienced domestic and family violence (based on their most recent experience of physical violence by a family member or partner) in the 12 months prior to the survey.[8in, 9]

In addition, 3 in 5 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women have experienced physical or sexual violence perpetrated by a male intimate partner.

It is likely that the prevalence of family violence is underestimated in the NATSISS[8] given its focus on physical violence. The NATSISS does not include the relational contexts and experiences of abuse included in definitions of lateral violence.

Culturally and linguistically diverse communities

Recent analysis of the 2016 PSS by the Australian Bureau of Statistics found women who were born overseas in countries where the main language spoken is not English were less likely to report experiencing partner violence in the last two years (1.7%) than women who were born in Australia (3.1%) and women who were born overseas where the main language spoken was English (2.9%).[10]

These findings seemingly suggest that women born in Australia or born overseas with English as their first language, are more likely to experience intimate partner violence. Yet it is reasonable to hypothesise that women who were born overseas and for whom English is not their first language are less likely to be included in the PSS as the survey is primarily completed in English.

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare[7] identified further vulnerabilities that may affect disclosure, noting refugees and immigrants on temporary visas may face additional complexities as their temporary migrant status may be used by perpetrators to control/coerce them or their family members and prevent disclosure. Very often women may be financially sponsored for the spousal visa, making them dependent on their male partner and making disclosure or leaving the relationship unlikely.

Older people

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare in their Report *Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia: Continuing the national story*[7] found: In 2017-18, more than 10,900 calls were made to elder abuse helplines across Australia.

Helplines in 5 states (NSW, Victoria, Qld, WA, SA) collected data about the relationships between victims and perpetrators, finding:

- The majority of elder abuse cases reported occurred within a domestic or family relationship (ranging from 70%-86%).
- The most commonly reported relationship was an adult child perpetrating abuse against their parent.

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- Female victims outnumbered male victims in each state, ranging from 66 per cent to 74 per cent.

For women aged over 65 hospitalised for assault injuries, the perpetrator was most likely a family member other than a spouse or domestic partner.

Disability

In 2020, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare released an analysis of the disability data collected in the 2016 PSS:[11]

- Adults with disability were 1.8 times more likely to experience violence than those without disability.
- 20.8 per cent of adults with disabilities experienced intimate partner violence.
- Women with disabilities reported higher rates of intimate partner violence than men with disabilities.

People from LGBTIQ communities

Until recently, domestic and family violence within LGBTIQ relationships was largely unacknowledged and has been absent from governmental policy and practice responses to domestic and family violence, which have largely occurred within a heterosexual framework.[12, 13] There has also been a lack of acknowledgement of domestic and family violence within LGBTIQ communities.

There is little population-wide data available on the prevalence of domestic and family violence in LGBTIQ communities; however, the research that does exist indicates that domestic and family violence occurs in the LGBTIQ communities at similar rates to that observed within heterosexual communities.

The Australian Research Centre for Health and Sexuality (ARCHS)[14] conducted a national demographic and health and wellbeing survey of 5476 LGBTIQ people and found:

- Around 28 per cent of male-identifying respondents and 41 per cent of female-identifying respondents reported having been in a relationship where a partner was abusive.

A smaller study of 390 LGBTIQ respondents in Victoria, also conducted by ARCHS,[15] found:

- Just under a third of participants had been involved in a same-sex relationship where they experienced domestic and family violence.
- Almost 80 per cent (78%) of the abuse was psychological and approximately 60 per cent (58%) involved physical abuse.
- Lesbian women were more likely than gay men to report having been in a domestic and family violence same-sex relationship (41% and 28% respectively).

While some experiences of domestic and family violence within LGBTIQ relationships are similar to those within heterosexual relationships, others are more specific. For example, an LGBTIQ partner may use their partner's sexuality or identity as a form of control by limiting their access to friends and family, or by threatening to tell their partner's employer, parent, children, landlord or friends about their same-sex relationship or trans identity[13]. This can result in the fear of loss of children, employment, relationships, or housing.

Impacts of Domestic and Family Violence addressed by Safe at Home responses

Research has for some time reported the potential for an abusive and violent relationship to result in poverty and homelessness during the relationship, at the time of separation and sometimes long after the relationship has ended.[16] The fear of possible homelessness and ongoing economic insecurity can be a barrier to leaving a violent relationship and can mean that a woman may feel the only way to survive is to return to the abusive relationship. The following broader impacts are addressed by Safe at Home responses.

Safety

While for some women the violence and abuse may stop after the relationship ends, for others, the violence and abuse may continue and jeopardise women and children's ongoing safety. The National Audit found that, in the context of Safe at Home, safety refers to more than being physically safe; it refers to a reduction or cessation of violence and abuse or threats of violence and abuse. The following research studies establish the ongoing risk that many women experience after leaving a violent relationship:

- One study[17] examining all Protection Orders granted in NSW found the breach rate was highest for final orders, which are longer in duration (20% of orders breached), compared to interim orders (9% of orders breached) and provisional orders (5% of orders breached).
- Another study[18] on post-separation experiences undertaken by the Australian Institute of Family Studies in 2017 found that 3 in 10 women in the study reported experiencing violence and/or abuse during the post-separation period.

Financial insecurity

The most recent analysis of data on the effects of domestic and family violence on financial and economic insecurity provided by the AIHW[7] found that in 2017-18:

- 16,500 people received a Centrelink crisis payment on the grounds of family and domestic violence (14,900 women and 1600 men).
- Almost 9 in 10 (89% or 14,700) people who received a crisis payment on the grounds of domestic violence had left their home.
- Of the people who presented to Specialist Homelessness Services agencies in 2017-18, more than 121,000 people were assisted due to family or domestic violence. Of these, 78 per cent were women and 22 per cent were men.

Homelessness

The connection between homelessness and domestic and family violence is undeniable, with domestic and family violence recognised as a major factor in contributing to homelessness in Australia. Domestic and family violence is the main reason women and their children leave their homes, and women who experience domestic and family violence are at a higher risk of homelessness and financial insecurity.

- In 2019-20, 119,200 clients (41%) who received assistance from Specialist Homelessness Services had experienced domestic and family violence.[19] Of the adults, 90 per cent were women.

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- Of Specialist Homelessness Service clients who had experienced domestic and family violence, 69 per cent identified that domestic and family violence was the main reason for accessing services, and 8 per cent identified housing crisis as the main reason.[19]
- Almost 170,900 Specialist Homelessness Service clients (59%) identified a need for accommodation services in 2019-20. Of these, Of these, 16 per cent were referred to another agency for accommodation provision, while 34 per cent were neither provided nor referred for assistance.[19]

The lack of availability of Specialist Homelessness Services (including refuges) for women and children who experience domestic and family violence led to policy reform and the development of Safe at Home responses in all jurisdictions.

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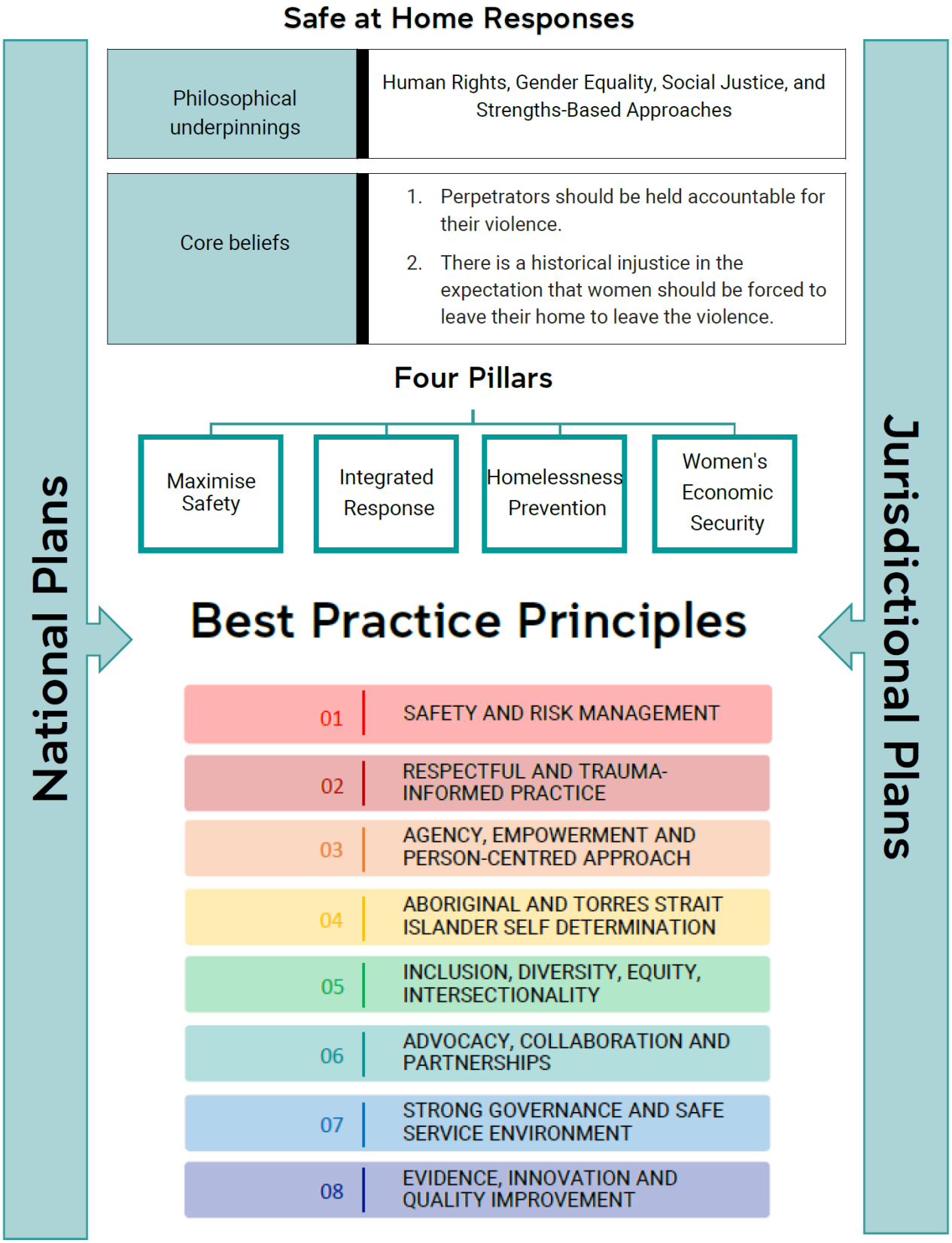
Foundation of Safe at Home responses



Core beliefs and philosophical underpinnings

Safe at Home responses have been premised on two core beliefs:

- Perpetrators should be held accountable for their violence.
- There is an historical injustice in the expectation that women should be forced to leave their home or community to leave the violence.

Safe at Home practitioners are supported by a shared philosophical understanding of the drivers, impacts and effects of domestic and family violence, and the best ways to provide safety to clients, including:

Human Rights	Domestic and family violence is a violation of human rights, and the Australian Human Rights Commission[20] outlines a number of principles informing a rights-based approach that can be applied to Safe at Home responses.
Gender equality	Gender inequalities are an underlying driver for gendered violence, which is an expression of power and control over individuals or groups because of their gender. Safe at Home responses recognise women and children are disproportionately affected by gendered violence.
Social justice	Experiences of domestic and family violence can be compounded by inequitable systems and services, resulting in continuing disadvantage. Safe at Home responses challenge the socially unjust expectation that women and children should leave a home or a community because of perpetrator violence.
Strengths-based	Promotes the opportunity for individuals to be co-producers of services and support rather than solely consumers of those services.

More detail on these philosophies can be found at Appendix 5.

The Safe at Home pillars and meta-evaluation

In 2015 Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) funded a national mapping and meta-evaluation of effective Safe at Home responses, which was led by University of New South Wales (UNSW), Sydney.[21]

An important component of the meta-evaluation project was the conceptual development of the four pillars of Safe at Home responses, identified in the synthesis of the literature, which we have updated using data from the current Audit. In line with Working Group discussions, we have revised them as follows:

1. **A focus on maximising women's safety**—using a combination of criminal justice responses and technology options such: as protection orders, legal provisions to exclude the perpetrator from the home (both of which protect victims from post-separation violence), proactive policing to support women and children, safety/duress alarms, CCTV for home security and other home security upgrades, and personal technology advice and security sweeps. Safety planning and consistent risk assessment must be a central feature of Safe at Home responses. Working alongside perpetrator interventions as part of a holistic response can support victim/survivor safety.

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2. **A coordinated or integrated response—**involving partnerships between local services to best address an individual client's needs. This may include, but is not limited to, referral for counselling, medical and health care, services for children, court support and police response to perpetrators. Strong service coordination is required to properly address the needs of children and different population groups.

3. **Safe at Home as a homelessness prevention strategy**—ensuring women are informed about their housing options before the time of crisis and at separation and providing support for women to maintain their housing afterwards or seek alternative accommodation of their choice in the community of their choice. These programs are housing focused but are not housing constrained.

4. **Enhancing women's economic security**—including assistance to maintain or enter employment or further study and increase financial literacy. Financial management strategies and advice may allow women and their children to remain independent and separate from the perpetrator. The use of brokerage funds to enhance financial security is also important.

Implementation of the Safe at Home pillars

The meta-evaluation[21] confirmed the centrality of an integrated approach to a Safe at Home response, either at the sector or local agency level, as women's needs after leaving a violent relationship frequently required a coordinated approach facilitated by interagency collaboration and partnerships.

However, while maximising women's safety and homelessness prevention were also universally noted, one or the other was generally reflected as the predominant pillar in the evaluated Safe at Home responses, as follows:

- Integrated criminal justice strategies focusing on safety by managing perpetrator risk via protection orders and ouster/exclusion provisions. Maintaining independent housing may or may not be an explicit goal in this type of Safe at Home response. Rather, women's safety was the primary focus and was addressed by managing perpetrator risk and potentially excluding the perpetrator from the home by using criminal justice strategies—primarily protection orders and ouster/exclusion provisions. These Safe at Home strategies may be understood as contributing to crime prevention and ensuring perpetrator accountability. Other identified integrated criminal justice strategies include safety alarms and security upgrades.

- Safe at Home programs focusing explicitly on women staying in accommodation with or without protection orders and ouster/exclusion provisions to address safety concerns. These programs focussed on women and their children and usually provided case-management to assess risk, manage safety planning and consider women's needs over time. A tendency was noted for these to be called 'stay at home' schemes which reflects the primary aim of remaining in independent accommodation. These programs are housing-focused, but do not necessarily have a narrow definition of housing needs.

The important overarching finding of the meta-evaluation was that Safe at Home responses varied significantly between jurisdictions and were dependent on the policy context and domestic and family violence service structure in a particular state or territory.

It is this finding, combined with the considerable Commonwealth investment made through KWSITH funding, that underpinned the rationale for a Safe at Home response Operational Framework.

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Mapping the service system

Phase Two of the National Audit and evaluation involved collecting data from each jurisdiction to assess outcomes in order to determine the effectiveness of their KWSITH/Safe at Home response as well as to ascertain factors that appear to influence outcomes and future service delivery options. The findings from Phase Two provide evidence confirming the effectiveness of Safe at Home responses in supporting women and children to remain safe and in their home in each jurisdiction. An overall general trend across all data was that services focusing on financial independence, housing stability, material aid (brokerage and employment), and safety consistently produced positive client outcomes.

There are, however, numerous factors, including funding availability, policy requirements and client choice, that determine which Safe at Home response elements are prioritised within a given jurisdiction or service.

Jurisdictional representatives participating in both Phase One and Phase Three of this project have nominated key elements of a Safe at Home response in their jurisdiction within the four pillars of Safe at Home (see *Table 1. Elements of Safe at Home Response*). While the identified Safe at Home response may offer these elements, not all clients have access to these or require them.

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Elements of Safe at Home responses as at January 2021

Table 1: Program elements of Safe at Home Response

Four Pillars of SAFE AT HOME Responses	SAFE AT HOME/KWSITH Response Elements	Specific Provisions/Responses	Jurisdictions with Responses							
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Maximising Women's Safety	Protection orders/legal provisions	*Mandatory Protection Order*								
		Mandatory Exclusion Order							X	
	Domestic and Family Violence risk assessment	*Common risk assessment tool*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
		Ongoing risk assessment provided		X	X	X	X	X		X
		Safety planning	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Proactive policing		X	X		X	X	X	X	X
	Provision of technology upgrades/cyber security	*Personal safety devices*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
		Security cameras	X	X		X			X	
		Cyber sweeps		X[a]	X	X	X		X	X
		Training about cyber security and use of technology	X	X[b]	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Home security upgrades	*Locks/window security*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
		Other	X	X			X	X	X	X
		Brokerage	X	X	X	X	X		X[c]	X
Integrated Response	Domestic and family violence service provision	*Situated within a domestic and family violence specific service*	X	X[d]			X			
		Coordinated as an independent program or response	X	X	X		X	X	X	
		domestic and family violence related support provided internally or via external referral	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Case Management	*Case coordination*	X	X	X	X				X
		Ongoing case management	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
		Wrap-around support	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	Partnerships	*Police*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
		Other agencies	X	X	X	X	X	X		X

[a] Availability varies between service providers and is not consistent across the state.
[b] Availability varies between service providers and is not consistent across the state.
[c] Client must be receiving case management support from a specialist family violence agency or related agency (such as a housing service or Child Protection).
[d] Response is an independent program that may be located in a range of services (not only domestic and family violence specific).

	Other support provided	*Court support, mental and physical health services*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	Meetings to manage risk	*Interagency partners*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
	Specific services provided for children	*Groups for children, Child Protection, education for children about technology*	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Homelessness Prevention	Housing support provided as part of response		X	X	X	X	X	X		
	Referral to local housing providers		X	X		X	X	X	X	
	Advocacy with tenants' services		X	X[e]		X	X	X	X	
	Advocacy with private real estate		X	X		X				
	Support with property settlement		X	X[f]	X	X				
Enhancing Women's Economic Security	Education or employment support		X	X	X	X	X			
	Referral for financial counselling		X	X		X		X		X
	Brokerage (other than security upgrades)		X	X		X				
	Advocacy with financial institutions		X							

[e] Availability varies between service providers and is not consistent across the state.
[f] Availability varies between service providers and is not consistent across the state.

Jurisdictional approaches

Shared elements

Program elements implemented across **all** jurisdictions documented in Table 1 include:

- common risk assessment tool (within each jurisdiction)
- safety planning
- provision of a range of technology responses, specifically access to personal safety devices and training about cyber security and use of technology
- provision of home security upgrades such as locks and window security
- provision of specialised domestic and family violence support whether provided internally or via external referral
- provision of wrap-around case management support for domestic and family violence
- partnerships with the Police.

The shared elements in Table 1 highlight that jurisdictional commitment to safety for clients and their children is a key priority of a Safe at Home response. It is important to recognise, however, that some women and children will continue to face ongoing threats and violence from the perpetrator to undermine their efforts to leave the relationship and remain separately housed.

The findings from Phase Two of the research suggest that ongoing violence and harassment may compromise achieving Safe at Home service goals and/or the length of time taken to achieve these goals. This does not mean the Safe at Home response has not been as effective as it could be for that individual client. It can mean that the perpetrator has not been held accountable for this behaviour by the criminal justice system. At all times the perpetrator must be acknowledged as responsible for their behaviour and for deliberately choosing to undermine services provided to Safe at Home clients.

Diverse approaches

Table 1 categorises program elements under each Safe at Home pillar demonstrating that jurisdictions implement some, but not all, program elements. This reflects the flexibility of Safe at Home responses and each jurisdiction's policy and other strategic priorities.

Maximising women's safety

Safe at Home responses focus explicitly on supporting women and their children to stay safely in a home or community of their choice. Phase Two project findings suggest pre-existing demographic factors, specifically level of socio-economic disadvantage or social exclusion, disability status, employment status, and housing stability at the time of the DFV, are some of the strongest determinants of improved safety at case closure and achievement of service goals.

Table 1 notes that, while program elements provided by Safe at Home responses in each jurisdiction are centred on women and their children, the emphasis of the strategies to support safety are varied and can differ in implementation.

The 2015 meta-evaluation[21] noted that, in some jurisdictions, exclusion provisions were rarely given, and that protection orders required evidence of serious physical violence and threat, limiting the protection offered to

women and children via this option. As a result, and as noted in Table 1, ouster/exclusion provisions are now mandatory in one jurisdiction only, although client and worker interviews suggest that protection orders are still sought for many women and contribute to effectively addressing safety concerns.

To maximise women's safety, Safe at Home responses also assess risk, manage safety planning, and provide safety upgrades and technology options, taking into consideration women's domestic and family violence risks and their needs over time.

All jurisdictions implement common domestic and family violence risk assessment frameworks, to be used by all workers across agencies that provide Safe at Home, to work towards a consistent approach to identifying and managing risk at the commencement of the Safe at Home response. In most but not all jurisdictions, risk assessments tend to be dynamic and ongoing and are used by service providers to map patterns of abuse and to systematically assess the likelihood of re-assault or that the violence will escalate in frequency and/or severity.

Risk assessments are undertaken in partnership with women and other agencies collaborating with the Safe at Home response to maximise safety. In some cases, this includes the assessment of the risk of ongoing violence posed by the perpetrator. Risk assessment is central to the development of safety planning in the Safe at Home response and is offered by all jurisdictions. Safety planning involves the provision and implementation of individual and home safety plans for clients and may involve other agencies in the development and implementation of the plans.

Safety planning is fundamental to identifying a client's need for technology options and home security upgrades. Technology options and home safety upgrades are a core component of Safe at Home responses and are recognised as contributing to integrated criminal justice strategies. Women are able to be provided with personal safety alarms in all, and safety cameras in some, jurisdictions. Less common is the provision of cyber security sweeps, an area identified for future provision in some jurisdictions. In all jurisdictions, Safe at Home responses provide home security upgrades to clients, including locks, window security, new doors, and security lighting.

Brokerage funds are available for technology options and security upgrades in all but one jurisdiction. Interviews with service providers and clients confirm the importance of brokerage to help maintain safe and independent housing for women.

> *Lots of strengths [to the Safe at Home response] associated with brokerage—even if they're staying in their own home, and they have to upgrade—fix locks, windows, home repairs as well, holes in walls, cars that have been smashed.*
>
> Service Provider Interview

Interviews also confirmed that more brokerage funding would be helpful and allow for a greater range of upgrades and technology to be available to clients.

Integrated response

Responding to women's needs after they have left a domestic and family violence relationship requires a coordinated approach to best address the multiple needs that women and children may have after leaving a violent and abusive relationship. Integrated service provision can be achieved by collaboration between government departments (Commonwealth and state and territory departments or within jurisdictions), the domestic and family violence sector and/or related services at the local geographic level. Integration may be achieved in various ways, from loose partnerships through to formal Memorandums of Agreement, shared protocols and guidelines.

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Phase Two results confirm that a key factor driving service success was the availability of integrated and collaborative service responses.

Key agencies involved in an integrated and coordinated Safe at Home response include the police, child protection services, legal services, the courts, corrections, Specialist Homelessness Services, health, mental health and Aboriginal Health services, non-government organisations, technology and security providers. In certain jurisdictions, Safe at Home service providers (managers and staff) participate in interagency meetings to manage risk prevention and support, particularly for high-risk clients.

Table 1 confirms that productive relationships with local police, domestic and family violence related support provided internally or via external referral, and wrap around supports and services are considered central to Safe at Home service success in all jurisdictions.

Where Safe at Home responses are provided within a domestic and family violence specific service, clients are provided with case coordination, case management, and wrap-around support (including court support and referrals to mental and physical health services where required). Where Safe at Home responses are coordinated as independent programs or responses, they are integrated within host or auspice organisations where wrap-around services may still be provided with additional referral to external organisations addressing clients' multiple needs.

Table 1 confirms that, in all jurisdictions, domestic and family violence related support is provided internally or via external referral, and wrap-around support is also universally provided to Safe at Home clients and is a critical component of service success.

> *We work in one of the multidisciplinary centres in our region, which is really good. We have a lot of other services around us. We have a lot of contact with Child Protection. The police are also in that building along with the sexual assault unit, child protection unit and some of the doctors and things like that, which is really good because obviously it's a collaborative approach in terms of supporting clients.*
>
> Worker Interview

Strong service coordination is also required to properly address the needs of children. Services provided include groups for children, referrals to child protection and education for children about the use of technology. However, children are not recorded as clients in all Safe at Home responses.

Homelessness prevention

One of the most consistent findings from Phase Two of the Audit was that Safe at Home clients who had stable housing and were financially independent or engaged in services that facilitated financial independence and housing stability, had the best outcomes.

In some jurisdictions Safe at Home responses may be oriented as homelessness prevention strategies, enabling women experiencing domestic and family violence and their children to choose to remain in their own home or a home of their choice—one of the strategic imperatives of the Safe at Home purpose. Homelessness and financial insecurity are acknowledged as reasons why women stay with an abusive perpetrator or return to the relationship. Ensuring women and children have the choice to remain in their home and community is critical to their wellbeing and Safe at Home responses provide an alternative to Specialist Homelessness Services (including refuges) that struggle to respond to requests for housing from women and children affected by domestic and family violence.

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Safe at Home responses also provide an opportunity for some women and children to stay in their community, which is crucial for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. Staying within community or close to family friends and other networks enables existing support to be leveraged alongside the Safe at Home response and maximises the effectiveness of the support offered to women and children.

In addition to risk assessment, safety planning, security modifications and equipment, court support and casework and advocacy that help women remain safe in their homes, service providers across jurisdictions ensure women are informed about their housing options before the time of crisis and at separation. Table 1 highlights that, in most jurisdictions, specific housing support and advice is provided for women to maintain their housing afterwards or seek alternative accommodation of their choice in the community of their choice, via the provision of housing support, referrals to accommodation services and advocacy with tenants' services and private real estate agents.

> *I find that the feedback that I get is terrific. Without the service, they would have had to go to a refuge, or leave, or go into other people's homes, for safety; and they have been able to stay home, and make sure that the perpetrator was made accountable.*
>
> Service Provider Interview

Enhancing women's economic security

Enhancing women's economic security is a growing area of the Safe at Home practice response that recognises the importance of women being able to mitigate post-separation poverty. Economic security is core to Safe at Home responses, for women to remain in their homes, or accommodation of their choice, as they will be less likely to be able to retain their housing and financial independence without economic security. Where included as part of a Safe at Home response, strategies to enhance women's economic security include referrals for financial counselling, advocacy with financial institutions and assistance to facilitate women's retraining or further education or assisting women to return to the workforce.

Table 1 above demonstrates that currently Safe at Home responses do not consistently provide services aimed at enhancing women's financial wellbeing, although referrals to financial counsellors were noted in most jurisdictions, followed by education and employment support. Interviews with both client and workers emphasised the importance of financial security and the need to work with clients towards this as part of the Safe at Home response. Clients in particular noted the value of these strategies and their centrality to the Safe at Home response.

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Best Practice Principles

These Best Practice Principles have been developed to guide the implementation of Safe at Home responses across all jurisdictions. These principles are based on evidence from Phase One and Phase Two of the National Audit. They provide consistency for practice and service delivery while accommodating the flexible implementation of Safe at Home responses across jurisdictions. In some instances, these principles provide guidance for the host/auspice agency in which the Safe at Home response is located as well as for workers and managers directly providing services and for Commonwealth, state and territory funding bodies.

The eight Best Practice Principles for Safe at Home responses below have been co-designed with representatives from each jurisdiction.

01. Safety and risk management

> *They've got their priorities right. The safety is the main concern and then you try and heal and go through it and it's a bit of a mess at the start. Everything's going on, but they've definitely got the priorities right with making sure everything's safe.*
>
> Client Interview

Why are safety and risk important for Safe at Home responses?

Safe at Home responses aim to maximise women's safety by using a combination of integrated criminal justice strategies, risk assessment practices and the provision of technology options. Integrated criminal justice strategies focus on safety by managing perpetrator risk via protection orders, ouster/exclusion provisions, proactive policing and select technology options such as CCTV cameras and personal safety devices, both of which can detect and provide evidence of breaches of protection orders. Risk assessment practices must use the common risk assessment tool of each respective jurisdiction and this needs to be a dynamic and ongoing process with victim-survivors.

In the context of Safe at Home, safety refers to more than being physically safe; it refers to a reduction or cessation of violence and abuse or threats of violence and abuse. 'Feeling' safe from violence or the threat of it (violence could be psychological, verbal, physical, sexual, reproductive control, social, financial, property damage, stalking, image-based or technological abuse) is an important component of client and staff wellbeing.

Increasingly, Safe at Home responses have moved beyond home security upgrades (locks and window security) to include more sophisticated technology options (personal duress alarms and security cameras) and supporting cyber safety and security.

> Phase Two confirmed that technology responses (such as personal duress alarms and security cameras) were considered a key element of Safe at Home responses and a key factor driving service success in all jurisdictions.

While technology can contribute to the effectiveness of the Safe at Home response, it is important to ensure comprehensive, ongoing training in its use for both clients and workers, and to ensure strong partnerships with technology providers. There are sometimes technology malfunctions or complications that can place clients at additional risk; for example, participants described issues where technology options do not guarantee functionality. There can also be delays in installation and poor understanding of the domestic and family violence context by technology providers. It is also important to recognise that some client groups or individuals may be unfamiliar with or unable to use technology options or may experience limitations with access to internet services and ongoing costs.

Safety should encompass cultural safety, accessibility and non-discriminatory practice for people who are more likely to experience discrimination and inequality in Australia. Safe at Home responses have the responsibility to ensure that priority is given to people in the most marginalised or vulnerable situations who face the biggest barriers to realising their rights.

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In Phase Two, where data was available, results indicate that services are being accessed by priority groups but that these groups often face barriers to service success. These barriers likely include the more complex nature of the violence they experience. For many individuals from these priority groups, domestic and family violence is perpetrated outside of intimate partner violence which may limit their entry into available programs.

Cultural safety recognises, respects and nurtures the unique cultural identity of a person and safely meets their needs, expectations and rights. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities this means feeling safe and secure in identity, culture and community. Safety and cultural safety are important concepts for both clients and staff.

I think what makes the program within our model of care effective is being able to address safety at all those multiple dimensions [physical, emotional, spiritual and cultural]. In our Balaang healing framework safety is one of the things we look at from a cultural perspective... Also looking at all of those really important measures of people's wellbeing and health around control and self-determination and stuff like that as well.

Service Provider Interview

Safety requires ongoing assessment of risk of perpetrator violence and abuse. However, managing risk of perpetrator violence and abuse with clients of Safe at Home responses is complex and requires collaboration and partnership with Police and other organisations providing services to perpetrators or where child protection matters are involved. The provisions to exclude the perpetrator from the home are mandatory in one jurisdiction only. However, a number of women receiving Safe at Home responses in all jurisdictions have protection orders in place with fewer achieving an exclusion provision on their order. These criminal justice strategies may be understood as contributing to crime prevention and ensuring perpetrator accountability.

An effective and safe integrated response to domestic and family violence requires strong partnerships between organisations. Examples include partnerships between Safe at Home Responses and refuges to streamline pathways to safe housing. Each jurisdiction has different safety and risk protocols, and Safe at Home responses need to work within these coordinated arrangements to identify where additional information and services may be required to support safety. Risk management is most effective when shared with appropriate services in the local area to ensure safety of women and children.

Children are considered clients of Safe at Home services in some jurisdictions. In others, children may be offered or referred to services. Safe at Home responses should respond to the safety of women and their children through integrated partnerships aimed at minimising the disruption to safe and protective family and community relationships.

Often the child is really concerned about maybe a window that we make sure that we secure, either with a security screen or a lock so they can feel safer whilst they're sleeping at night.

Service Provider Interview

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All organisations need to be aware of legislation, policies and protocols around information sharing and risk management and ensure their policies and procedures are consistent with the *National Privacy Act 1988* and related information-sharing provisions in domestic and family violence and associated legislation. Agreed information-sharing legislative guidelines and/or protocols between organisations can also greatly assist in ensuring the safety of clients (see Appendices 1-3). Separately, it is also important to ensure compliance with any relevant state/territory legislation and any state/territory child protection legislation.

The safety and wellbeing of staff is an essential consideration in any workplace, but there are particular risks associated with Safe at Home responses. Organisations and managers must consider both the physical and the psychological safety of staff and have policies and procedures in place to minimise risk but also to respond to incidents that may arise.

In practice:

Safe at Home responses

- ensure the jurisdiction's risk assessment tool is appropriate for all clients
- implement their jurisdiction's risk assessment tool in a dynamic and ongoing way with clients including by collaborating with other services to reduce duplicated efforts in re-doing risk assessments to avoid re-traumatisation
- prioritise risk management and safety planning for women and children which is developed with every client and is inclusive of family and relevant community members and collaborates with difference services in the local area
- ensure service eligibility criteria are inclusive of all experiences of domestic and family violence
- maintain a focus in program redesign on delivering technology supports to women
- ensure technology options are available to women with a range of needs.

Safe at Home partnerships

- are strong and connected to local organisations
- ensure information shared is compliant with National Privacy Act 1988 and related information-sharing provisions in domestic and family violence and associated legislation
- ensure compliance with any relevant state/territory legislation and any state/territory child protection legislation
- ensure strong relationships with technology providers to identify new developments in technology for use in Safe at Home responses
- identify and coordinate arrangements where additional information and services may be required to support safety.

Safe at Home workforce

- is provided with strategies to address staff risk from perpetrator violence to ensure the safety and wellbeing of staff is carefully considered
- is provided with comprehensive professional development in the use of technology options
- is provided with ongoing professional development about new technologies, their application in specific contexts and environments and what is involved with initialisation and maintenance.

> *When we're looking at an assessment around her safety, it's not just her physical safety but also emotionally how safe does she feel… That's a really hard thing to measure and that's a really hard thing to actually apply practical things to.*
>
> Service Provider Interview

02. Respectful and trauma-informed practice

There is now a community and professional expectation that organisations responding to domestic and family violence prioritise a whole-of-organisation, respectful and trauma-informed approach. This includes ensuring staff are skilled and able to provide a trauma-informed practice response.

Why is a respectful and trauma-informed approach important in Safe at Home responses?

A trauma informed approach for Safe at Home responses recognises that there is the possibility of traumatic experience and its effects in the lives of clients accessing services. This possibility is considered as expected rather than an exception. A trauma-informed approach emphasises the use of a *'trauma lens'* to understand the presentation of the client and shifts the worker's focus from *'what is wrong with the person'* to *'what has happened to the person'*. It also involves an understanding of the symptoms of the client as their best attempts to cope with the trauma rather than viewing them as evidence of individual psychopathology.

There are a number of components to a trauma-informed approach for Safe at Home responses.

To embed trauma-informed practice, it is important that services delivering Safe at Home responses have a sound understanding of the prevalence and nature of trauma arising from interpersonal violence and its impacts on other areas of life and functioning for adults, young people and children. Services should recognise and respond to the lived social and cultural contexts of clients and recognise the diverse and intersecting life experiences of clients which shape their needs as well as their recovery and healing pathways.

Safe at Home responses also need to ensure that their practices avoid inadvertent re-traumatisation of people presenting for support. Clients should be offered seamless services that share information, ensuring they do not have to repeat their stories a number of times to different organisations.

Adopting respectful service cultures that are inclusive of practices that empower clients in their recovery by emphasising autonomy, collaboration and strength-based approaches is important. Organisational, operational and direct service-provision practices and procedures need to promote the physical, psychological and emotional safety of clients and staff and the strong relationships between staff, clients and different services in the local area.

> *I felt really quite alone before I engaged with the service because I felt like nobody understood how dangerous he was because he was very good at putting up a front… And coming here and having someone actually understand and realise how dangerous and scary he is made me feel a lot better.*
>
> Client interview

Trauma-informed organisations also emphasise staff wellbeing as an important occupational health and safety issue. Continuously responding to domestic and family violence issues and working within the context of structural oppression and social injustice can result in vicarious trauma, distress, dissatisfaction, hopelessness, ethical dilemmas, and mental or physical health problems for Safe at Home practitioners. Organisations should develop strategies to mitigate the risk of vicarious trauma, including but not limited to regular supervision and consultation on specialist issues and supporting professional development opportunities.

In practice:

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Safe at Home responses

- are aware of the prevalence and understand the nature of trauma arising from interpersonal violence and its impacts on other areas of life and functioning for adults, young people and children affected by domestic and family violence
- adopt respectful service cultures that include empowering practices for staff and clients
- respect the rights of women to decide which Safe at Home supports are appropriate or suitable
- recognise and respond to the lived, social and cultural contexts of clients
- recognise the diverse and intersecting life experiences of clients
- develop organisational processes that avoid inadvertent re-traumatisation of clients
- design strategies to mitigate the risk of vicarious trauma of staff such as regular supervision, consultation on specialist issues and professional development opportunities.

Safe at Home partnerships

- provide clear information about services provided by different services in their local area.

Safe at Home workforce

- ensures a balanced workload that includes both direct client work as well as a small component of advocacy and/or community education related to domestic and family violence
- emphasises safety and trustworthiness, including the physical, emotional and cultural safety of those using the service
- ensures clients are offered an opportunity for choice, collaboration and connection that fosters a sense of self efficacy, self-determination, dignity and personal control
- engages positively with clients, identifying strengths and developing resilience
- emphasises staff wellbeing as an important occupational health and safety issue.

Overall, the results from Phase Two indicate that the services improved the wellbeing of women including women from diverse groups.

03. Person-centred approach, client agency and empowerment

Phase Two results show that in most jurisdictions key factors driving service success were considered to be:

- a close relationship between the service provider and client
- the availability of integrated and collaborative service responses.

Why are person-centred approaches important in Safe at Home responses?

Domestic and family violence is inherently disempowering. In addition, there may be structural impositions such as family law proceedings and child protection matters that mediate women's capacity to make independent choices for themselves and their children. Support should focus on achieving the client's aspirations and be tailored to their needs and unique circumstances.

Clients of Safe at Home responses need to make complex decisions regarding such issues as staying in the family home or community, safety planning and whether or not to use technology options. Clients need to be provided with appropriate information and supported in whatever decisions they make—moving forward on their own terms. This is a person-centred approach in this service context.

> *I was always a part of that [decision-making process]. I was consulted first if I wanted to go ahead or not. Eventually it was my decision to do it or not.*
>
> Client Interview

Safe at Home responses support clients to build agency and regain control over their lives, contributing to experiences of empowerment. One good example of this approach is when a service focuses on the goal of economic security by supporting retraining, further education and/or entering the workforce. A person-centred approach requires a dynamic and collaborative process of engagement with the client and ongoing transparency about organisational processes. In some instances, the involvement of family and community may also be required.

Children are considered clients of Safe at Home responses in some jurisdictions. In others, children may be referred to other services. In most jurisdictions Safe at Home responses are mandatory reporters of suspected or known incidences of child abuse and neglect. Safe at Home responses should respond to concerns about child wellbeing in a way that is dignified and respectful and ensures the safety of children and families. See Appendix 4 for legal obligations and reporting requirements for Safe at Home responses.

> *When we're working with people, we are trying to encourage them to take the steps.*
>
> Service Provider Interview

This principle is also an important part of a trauma-informed approach through acknowledging a person's inherent strengths, autonomy and dignity and maximising their choices and control over their lives (see Principle 2).

In Practice:

Safe at Home responses

- ensure genuine engagement with the client as a person, taking into account their life experience, age, gender, culture, heritage, language, beliefs and identity
- emphasise the value of a close relationship between the service provider and client where clients are acknowledged as the experts in their lives and work in partnership to make decisions which affect their lives

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- include consideration of needs of children in decision-making about their life, including consulting children about their safety and risk concerns in an age-appropriate way
- provide information about options and potential consequences of possible decisions in relation to safety and housing to enable informed decision-making
- offer choices and flexible services and support including referrals to different services in their local area to suit the person's wishes and priorities
- involve the client's support networks (family and community) as appropriate
- provide clear information about organisational processes and options.

I have more confidence in my home. I can do things by myself; I can help my kids whatever they need now. I don't need any permission from anyone, I'm so happy my kids are safe. I'm feeling so strong.

Client Interview

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04. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self-determination

Why is Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self-determination important in Safe at Home responses?

The right to self-determination is based on the acknowledgment that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are Australia's First Peoples.[g] A key principle of the Fourth Action Plan of the *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and Their Children* is that the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples must inform responses to the family and sexual violence experienced in their communities.

There is considerable evidence to suggest that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women are more likely to experience family violence compared to non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. The term 'family violence' is preferred by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and includes the spectrum of violence that may be perpetrated within a family, including physical, emotional, sexual, social, financial, spiritual, and cultural abuses.

Further, *The National Agreement on Closing the Gap* acknowledges that when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a genuine say in the design and delivery of services that affect them, better life outcomes are achieved. It recognises that structural change in the way governments work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is needed to close the gap.

We acknowledge the work of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and girls in the *Wiyi Yani U Thangani Report* and the key thematic areas that emerged. This report highlights the importance of early intervention, prevention and holistic wrap-around services and supports, including safe houses, and the need to establish similar holistic safe houses for children and young people.

It is the responsibility of Safe at Home responses to provide choice, and to genuinely hear the voices of Aboriginal women, understanding their experiences of violence and supporting them in the choices they wish to make in accessing services. Responses should also promote service access, culturally safe responses and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander understandings of family violence.

Safe at Home responses should embed high-quality, meaningful approaches to promote cultural safety, and recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's strength in their identity as a critical protective factor is essential in service delivery. Ensuring cultural safety also requires Safe at Home responses to be aware of the different service needs and to have culturally appropriate strategies in place to achieve service outcomes. In many instances this occurs most effectively in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander services.

> Women who identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander in Phase Two of the project were one and a half times more likely to have a *slightly lower likelihood of, and/or later successful service completion* compared to non-Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander women.

Cultural safety was first defined by Dr Irihapeti Ramsden and Maori nurses in the 1990s: 'it's an environment that is safe for people—where there is no assault, challenge or denial of their identity, or

[g] Mabo v Queensland (No 2) ("Mabo case") [1992] HCA 23; (1992) 175 CLR 1 (3 June 1992) (austlii.edu.au) (accessed 8 March 2021).

who they are and what they need. It is about shared respect, shared meaning, shared knowledge and experience, of learning, living and working together with dignity and truly listening'.[22]

Cultural safety is met through actions which recognise, respect and nurture the unique and connected context of the client in their community and offer the right range of services to meet their needs.

I think the best thing was the sense of community, women community. I thought that was the best. There were so many different programs. They showed me that I wasn't alone in that situation. The healing programs. I got to connect with my family again, being Koori.

Client Interview

Phase Two research findings (to date) found Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women/clients:

- received significantly more services compared to non-Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander women
- were significantly less likely to be referred to other services
- attended services and reported significantly higher levels of domestic and family violence incidents
- were just as likely to re-engage with a Safe at Home service as non-Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander clients.

Importantly, in relation to improvement in overall wellbeing, improvement in risk assessment, safety status at case closure and the number of service goals achieved, women who identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander had similar outcomes to non-Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander women. This overall finding demonstrates the effectiveness of Safe at Home responses for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients, albeit with different service elements and mode of delivery.

You will know that this principle is working well when:

Safe at Home responses:

- understand and respect the lived experience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- promote service access and culturally safe responses to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients
- incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander understandings of family violence
- are aligned with the Warawarni-gu-Guma-Statement made at the ANROWS 2nd National Research Conference on Violence against Women, 2018, which demonstrates leadership and goals of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in relation to responses to family violence
- are informed by Wiyi-Yani-U-Thangani (Women's Voices)[1]

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- ensure sufficient provision of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander designed and managed safe houses, transitional housing and safe and affordable long-term housing across urban, regional and remote areas
- ensure workforce development strategies involve local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in development and address the intersection between family violence and the historic and ongoing impacts of colonisation on Aboriginal families and communities
- establish coordinated responses and referral pathways with Aboriginal services as an essential part of Safe at Home responses tailored through partnership and collaboration with Aboriginal services
- seek guidance from Aboriginal organisations regularly to ensure culturally safe services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients
- implement professional development for all staff that includes content about cultural safety co-developed with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and provides clear direction about expectations in practice.

> *We've got a big Aboriginal community in the area and that's something that is on our agenda is to reach out to that Aboriginal community, and the [local] Aboriginal Medical Centre, and try and make connections there, and let them know about our services. And also find out what services they have which might benefit our clients.*
>
> Service Provider Interview

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05. Inclusion, diversity, equity, intersectionality

Why are inclusion, diversity, equity and intersectionality important in Safe at Home responses?

While gender inequality is proposed as a main driver of domestic and family violence, it is important that services offering Safe at Home responses recognise how other kinds of discrimination may intersect with gender inequality.

Clients may experience discrimination on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, language, religion, class, socio-economic status, geographic location, gender identity, ability and/or age, or intersections of these. Clients may also identify or be identified with more than one population group. The consequence of intersecting forms of discrimination is to disproportionately disadvantage and marginalise some women affected by domestic and family violence, contributing to different service needs and outcomes. In addition, some clients may also experience inequitable access to systems and services adding to existing disadvantage in areas such as housing, financial security, education outcomes, mental and physical health, and overall social wellbeing.

Services must be able to adopt an intersectional approach to respond effectively to the many and intersecting needs and experiences of diverse groups, including those who may be at greater risk of domestic and family violence: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, women with disability, older women and clients from LGBTIQ communities.

> *We're working with women from very, very diverse cultural backgrounds and the approaches need to be different. I think we need to make ourselves a bit more knowledgeable about different cultures, listen more to the clients, and this is time consuming, but I think it is worth it in the end.*
>
> Service Provider Interview

Encouraging diversity of staff and clients and creating an inclusive service environment recognises and acknowledges the richness that comes from different life experiences. Clients and staff should feel valued and respected, have access to opportunities and resources, and be able to contribute their perspectives and talents to improve their organisation. Services should ensure they are accessible to a diverse range of clients.

Where data was available from Phase Two of the research, it indicates that Safe at Home responses are being accessed by priority groups but that these groups often face barriers to service success.

With the exception of older women, analyses indicate that women from diverse groups:

- were more likely to ***not*** have their needs and goals met
- took ***more days on average*** to achieve a successful service completion.

Phase Two interviews with clients and service providers identified service challenges in responding to non-Intimate Partner Violence.

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The research data confirm that women from different population groups do access Safe at Home responses but that they are sometimes offered a more generic service response. Phase Two data show that women from diverse population groups are offered:

- fewer referrals because of the reduced number of available specialised services
- generic safety planning and risk assessment protocols that do not always accommodate different perpetrator relationships (family members and carers).

The data also shows that women from diverse population groups require:

- more careful matching of technology options to their capability and other contextual factors in their lives
- longer to engage and one or more re-engagements with the Safe at Home response to achieve service goals.

Tailoring of responses to specific population groups should ensure greater accessibility and effectiveness of the Safe at Home response.

Interviews with clients and service providers suggest the following strategies may increase access for priority population groups:

- access to translation and interpreter services
- referrals to specialist medical centres and community programs specific to that population group
- referrals to specialist services such as migrant women's support services or disability services
- different service options—Saturday sessions, culturally appropriate service option/groups.

In practice:

Safe at Home responses

- demonstrate support for principles of equity and fairness of opportunity and access in policies
- have embedded the concept of intersectionality in policies and procedures
- actively work to eliminate barriers to service provision
- seek the input of diverse groups into service planning, delivery, and evaluation
- prioritise diversity and intersectionality training for all staff
- are respectful of the decision-making of people affected by domestic, and family violence
- genuinely consult with clients, communities, and partners/collaborators about their needs
- recognise that people from diverse communities may understand domestic and family violence differently to legal and policy definitions

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- do not stereotype individuals based on their identity/ies but seek to understand the worldview of each client and the complexity of their experience of domestic and family violence
- tailor services to client need considering their preferences and perspectives
- critically reflect on their practice when working with individuals from multiple marginalised communities.
- tailor services to respond to clients living in regional and remote areas
- seek feedback from clients about their experiences in the service to improve practice
- seek out experts in partner agencies that serve specific communities to increase their understanding of the background of the clients they are working with.

When a client is more remote, the trades take longer and they're more expensive. I would like to see an increased budget for clients who are living in rural or remote places. I think that they should all be equitable with what they're able to get from us, no matter where they live in the state.

Service Provider Interview

06. Collaboration, partnerships and advocacy

Why are collaboration, partnerships and advocacy important in Safe at Home responses?

Integrated service provision is one of the four pillars of a Safe at Home response. Integration[23] is a term that is often used interchangeably with collaboration, coordinated response, multi-agency and interagency partnerships to describe relationships between service providers. Safe at Home partners typically include Police, Justice, Health, Housing and other departments which are involved in Safe at Home responses.

Phase Two found that in most jurisdictions a close relationship between the service provider and client and the availability of integrated and collaborative service responses were considered to be key factors driving service success.

Integrated partnerships and collaboration are central to Safe at Home responses. The research undertaken in Phase Two of this project demonstrates that clients frequently received two or more referrals to best address the multiple needs that women and children may have after leaving a violent relationship.

The most common referrals to external services across jurisdictions were to legal services, counselling, housing/accommodation, and financial services or counselling. Many clients received services from within the Safe at Home program or auspice agency. However, the majority of clients received external referrals, and the nature of the referral was determined by the availability of a service in the local geographic area.

Across government departments and/or geographical areas, models of collaboration and partnerships vary considerably, ranging from loose networks of interagency update meetings, to streamlined referral systems or single integrated systems across a range of services. These can be informal local partnerships or may involve formal service agreements between organisations, including government departments, involving Memorandums of Understanding and the explicit sharing of client information, service provision principles and approaches.

[Our stakeholder organisation] has some very robust relationships with the government, as well as the [service providers]…it really helps me see the bigger picture and how [service providers and funders] fit into the bigger picture. And we do a lot of advocacy around that.

Stakeholder Interview

The National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children[3] describes partnerships and collaboration as fundamental to seamless service provision. Service integration and collaboration are also recognised as essential components of trauma-informed models of care (Principle 2 & Pillars of Safe at Home Responses).

In recent years there has been increased recognition of the value to clients of collaboration and partnerships within and between service systems. Achieving a seamless service system is complex and requires commitment and involvement of government departments at State/Territory and Commonwealth levels.

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Ensuring good collaborative practice between Safe at Home partners requires advocacy from services and workers on behalf of or with clients and benefits from the direct engagement with jurisdictional partners across government. Phase Two research suggests that this type of advocacy is highly valued by clients and provides evidence of responsive and respectful services provided in a timely way.

While it is valued by clients, service providers reported this type of advocacy was time-consuming and often not able to be prioritised given the pressure of their client loads.

> *You know, as a worker, I don't have time to create new networks and form… even maintain ones with Housing, Police. And there was a lot of expectations at the beginning that it was going to be a lot of information flowing from say Police… [but] it wasn't up to the worker to do that, that type of linking, and that type of networking. It had to be from a… Especially when you're talking to Police. That has to come from above.*
>
> Service Provider Interview

Multiple interventions by a range of community-based services are often needed to better ensure immediate and appropriate services for Safe at Home clients. Where multiple organisations are involved, clients may benefit from advocacy provided by the Safe at Home worker to access the range of services required or to navigate complex systems. Effective collaboration and service partnerships recognise the complex relationship between trauma, mental health, legal systems, child protection, housing providers and financial institutions and other issues associated with domestic and family violence.

> *The fact with our team [is] on the Family Safety Framework meetings—so we actually engage with police quite a lot. We also engage with DV services, Child Protection, Health, Education and also Corrections as well. They all sit in on the meetings. We are able to engage with a lot of different services and see how they might actually respond differently to risk and how they might perceive things.*
>
> Service Provider Interview

In practice:

Safe at Home responses:

- prioritise the view of clients when planning or making changes to service delivery
- implement changes recommended by clients, where these are feasible and clinically sound
- advocate on a systems level when clients provide feedback regarding negative experiences with other services
- advocate for specific services with and on behalf of clients to achieve their desired outcomes
- seek client input into other services that the organisation could/should offer
- incorporate client satisfaction measures into their practice, routinely asking clients what could improve services

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- offer to share feedback to interagency partners when clients have had poor experiences, with a view to improving future service provision
- routinely ask clients to fill out a client satisfaction survey and collate and publish the data.

Safe at Home workforce

- advocates for systemic reforms and social change aimed at both preventing and improving outcomes for victim-survivors of sexual violence
- commits resources to systems and individual/client advocacy
- has policies and procedures in place which support practitioners in their advocacy work
- provides practitioners with opportunities for professional development in advocacy
- can quantify and describe its advocacy work, both at the individual and systemic levels
- supports practitioners putting counselling work on hold and taking on primarily an advocacy role when this is more appropriate (e.g., in the case of acute mental ill-health) and the client is able to resume counselling as soon as this is clinically indicated
- takes on an advocacy role, with the written consent of their clients, or alternatively supports clients to advocate for themselves, where appropriate
- has knowledge of external advocacy services that may be of benefit to client groups
- recognises that strong interagency relationships improve outcomes for victim-survivors
- develops and ensures the currency of interagency guidelines with relevant service partners
- regards staff attending and participating in interagency forums or similar events as core business
- proactively engages with interagency partners following situations where interagency practice has broken down, to avoid future issues
- communicates any changes to interagency guidelines to all staff in a timely fashion
- has developed protocols for working with partner agencies
- seeks feedback from clients about their experiences of agencies working collaboratively
- has developed models for collaborative work and evaluates the effectiveness of the models.

> *I think those [Safe at Home service provider] meetings are really effective because it gives us an opportunity to come together and share. We may be having some issues or there may be some concerns around legality and often, we share similar issues... I think that that's really crucial.*
>
> Service Provider Interview

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07. Strong governance and safe service environment

Why are strong governance and a safe service environment important for Safe at Home responses?

Good governance is participatory, consensus-oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable, and inclusive. Safe at Home responses provide strong governance when leadership values accountability to clients, staff and funding bodies.

Safe at Home service responses are informed by multiple policy and legislative arrangements in their jurisdictions as well as national plans and agreements such as the *National Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women and their Children*[3] and the *National Housing and Homelessness Agreement*.[24] Appendices 2 and 3 provide detailed overviews of relevant legislation and policies which frame Safe at Home responses.

> An important overarching finding from Phase One is that Safe at Home responses varied significantly between jurisdictions and were dependent on the policy context and domestic and family violence service structure in a particular state and territory.

Good governance requires organisations to be aware of their statutory responsibilities and to develop organisational policies and guidelines that direct implementation of these responsibilities. It also ensures that the right tools are in place to guide service planning, evaluation and data collection related to service provision and the client demographics that are critical to these processes. Staff, client and stakeholder input is required when undertaking these processes.

Safe at Home responses should identify their primary governance arrangements, so they are informed by a transparent governance framework that includes a strategic plan, organisational purpose including eligibility criteria, code of conduct for staff and clients, complaint management process and work health and safety requirements. The governance framework may be provided by the host/auspice organisation or specific to a jurisdictional Safe at Home program.

Governance arrangements should be regularly reviewed. This may include review of eligibility criteria and related response guidelines.

> *One of the learnings certainly would have been to invest a lot more time at the front end to be able to have a much greater understanding of the level of administration involved, the processes involved.*
>
> Stakeholder Interview

An organisation that is stable and culturally safe prioritises reliability, predictability and fairness. This promotes trust between staff, management and clients which flows on to staff wellbeing and retention, effective relationships between clients and staff, reduced costs related to rehiring and retraining and overall financial efficiency.

In practice:

Safe at Home responses

- have a strategic plan, organisational purpose including eligibility criteria, code of conduct for staff and clients, complaint management process and work health and safety requirements, developed with input from staff and management
- have effective policies and practices in place to ensure good governance
- manage funds efficiently to maximise benefit to clients
- manage risk at all levels including governance, human resource functions, financial management, information technology systems and direct services
- demonstrate responsiveness and compliance with relevant legislation, regulations and codes of professional practice
- consider the application of the Child Safe Organisations (National Principles)
- clearly articulate delegations of authority
- demonstrate accountability to clients, community and funding bodies through annual reporting, web presence and collecting and publishing appropriate data.

Safe at Home workforce

- understands and champions the organisational vision
- has high staff retention rates and low service costs on rehiring.

Safe service environment

- policies and procedures consistent with child protection laws and regulations in its state/territory are in place
- policies and procedures consistent with any child protection interagency guidelines in its state/territory are in place
- networking and referral links are maintained with a broad range of agencies that may be able to support clients to establish safety, stability, and functional family life
- privacy and confidentiality policies are in place which explicitly address child protection exclusions
- policies are consistent with the relevant state's or territory's records and information/privacy legislation, as well as mandatory reporting and first disclosure obligations
- policies and procedures are in place to protect client information, including procedures for dealing with breaches of client information
- written and verbal information is provided to all clients regarding confidentiality as applicable to them. This information explicitly identifies exceptions to confidentiality

- steps have been taken to ensure that its policies and practices around information sharing are consistent with the *National Privacy Act 1988*, state/territory health records legislation, and state/territory child protection related legislation
- policies and procedures are in place for managing client requests to access their own files
- mechanisms for culturally safe line management supervision are in place
- safe relationships between staff and clients are valued
- client feelings of safety are valued and prioritised.

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08. Evidence, innovation and quality improvement

Why are evidence, innovation and quality improvement important for Safe at Home responses?

Evidence based practice is a process in which the practitioner combines well researched interventions with clinical experience and ethics and client preferences and culture to guide and inform service delivery. Safe at Home policy development and service delivery should be based on evidence which confirms that interventions are necessary, appropriate, sensitive to critical concerns and actually work to achieve the intended outcomes. Aspiring to best practice suggests an approach to decision-making and client response which is transparent and accountable and based on the careful consideration of the most compelling evidence about the effectiveness of particular responses and for which population groups they are effective. While each jurisdiction collects data to contribute to evaluation and knowing 'what works' in a Safe at Home response, the extent and content of data varied. Inconsistent record keeping protocols and outcome measures across response organisations greatly limit the ability to generalise program effectiveness across jurisdictions.

Safe at Home responses may be required to enter data into both Commonwealth and State/Territory portals as well as reporting separately for auspice/host organisations.

> Phase Two of the research found that Safe at Home service providers in each jurisdiction identified duplicative reporting and administrative processes to be onerous and insufficient to capture client outcomes.

Safe at Home responses have funding relationships and data collection responsibilities with both State/Territory and Commonwealth jurisdictions. Service providers are required to adhere to consistent screening, evaluation and reporting protocols with a policy goal of better assessment of service effectiveness. Host/auspice organisations should consider data arrangements and provide advice to government about existing State/Territory and Commonwealth data collection to also meet their organisational reporting requirements.

> *I think the reporting, to be honest, for that component is a bit onerous, having two reporting channels and that the one for the text reporting is not really meaningful to us as a service. So, but you know, time-consuming and all that… The other thing is that the reporting within that is unreliable and doesn't actually reflect our numbers or the work that we do.*
>
> Service Provider Interview

Quality improvement is demonstrated by collection of accurate data and streamlined reporting which enables effective and efficient service responses and continuity of care to women and children wanting to remain safely in a home and/or community of their choice.

Fostering an organisational culture that values streamlined, and consistent data entry, ongoing learning and service evaluation provides the context within which innovation and professional development can flourish.

Innovation requires creative thinking and reflective practice, evaluation and review, comprehensive knowledge of the current evidence base, and the capacity and organisational support to translate this knowledge into practice. Safe at Home responses are the direct result of creative thinking and innovation in that they challenge the long-held assumption that women and children should leave the family home to

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leave the violent or abusive relationship. Safe at Home responses also directly address the lack of Specialist Homelessness Services including refuges, shelters and safe houses.

Professional development can and should involve regular supervision, specialist clinical consultation and review of services, support for conference attendance and further studies, and appropriately targeted training.

> *Before the days of COVID-19, we would have quarterly forums which would each last for a day, where we'd bring people together and we'd talk about best practice, and we'd do some training and workshops. And we do consultancy on project development, things like that.*
>
> Stakeholder Interview

In practice:

Safe at Home responses

- demonstrate practice leadership by showcasing and sharing innovative strategies and program elements with integrated service partnerships
- ensure respectful and effective collaborative relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations are established and maintained
- promote innovative ideas and test them against evidence
- adhere to relevant ethical standards in engagement of clients and staff for research purposes
- confirm all data are coherent and jurisdictional and Commonwealth expectations are coordinated with those of host/auspice agencies
- embed or strengthen systems to incorporate feedback from clients to ensure lived experience contributes to the improvement of responses
- ensure data collection is directly relevant to practice and policy contexts
- manage data to provide a complete picture of the work of the agencies and thereby inform program or response redesign.

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Safe at Home workforce

- has the capabilities to deliver an effective service as follows:[25]
    - locate and use the right information at the right time
    - provide effective and respectful engagement with those accessing services
    - identify and assess domestic, family, and domestic and family violence risk
    - manage risk and prioritise safety
    - provide integrated services and collaborate with other professionals
    - reflect, learn and advocate
    - manage self
- is familiar with and adheres to relevant legislation and policy
- establishes and maintains processes to ensure ongoing collaboration with interagency partners that gives priority to the needs of clients
- engages in community education and prevention activities (where funded to do so) that are developed and conducted in partnership with communities and government and non-government agencies, ensuring that culturally appropriate protocols for the relevant community are observed
- participates in flexible and tailored service delivery work related to safety, protection and ongoing care and support of clients. This is of particular importance if it concerns clients with special needs, such as a physical or intellectual disability or mental health concerns
- participates in relevant local initiatives, committees and interagency networks that relate to the needs of clients.

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Appendix 1: Terminology

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are the first inhabitants of Australia. The definition accepted by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the Federal Government defines an Aboriginal person as someone who:

- is of Aboriginal descent
- identifies as an Aboriginal person

and

- is accepted as an Aboriginal person by the community in which he or she lives.[26]

Aboriginal peoples comprise diverse Aboriginal nations, each with its own language and traditions, and have historically lived on mainland Australia, Tasmania or on many of the continent's offshore islands. Torres Strait Islander peoples come from the islands of the Torres Strait, between the tip of Cape York in Queensland and Papua New Guinea.[26]

CALD: The term 'culturally and linguistically diverse' with the associated acronym 'CALD' is currently used within Australian government, the private sector, and in research and academic institutions to describe populations other than the Anglo-Celtic majority. Some commentators view the term as increasingly problematic.[27, 28]

Coercive control: Coercive control is a course of conduct aimed at dominating and controlling another (usually an intimate partner, but can be other family members) and is almost exclusively perpetrated by men against women.[29]

Disability: Article 1 of the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities[30] defines disability to include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder the person's full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. People with Disability Australia (PWDA)[31] extend the UN definition of disability as follows: 'The result of the interaction between people living with impairments and an environment filled with physical, attitudinal, communication and social barriers. It therefore carries the implication that the physical, attitudinal, communication and social environment must change to enable people living with impairments to participate in society on an equal basis with others'.[32]

Domestic and Family Violence: It is acknowledged that there is no universal definition for 'domestic and family violence'. The use of term 'domestic and family violence' is used in this report as an umbrella term under which 'family violence', 'domestic violence' and 'intimate partner violence' may fall. The distinction between each subsequent term accounts for the context of abuse or violent acts. In Australia domestic and family violence is primarily a gender-based form of violence which affects women at higher rates.

The United Nations favours the term 'domestic abuse' to describe 'a pattern of behaviour in any relationship that is used to gain or maintain power and control over an intimate partner', further expanding the client type to include a child or other relative, or any other household member'.[33]

The Australian Bureau of Statistics[34] defines domestic and family violence as covering a wide range of abusive behaviours including:

- physical and sexual violence or abuse

- emotional and psychological abuse
- verbal abuse and intimidation
- economic abuse
- social deprivation and controlling behaviours
- damage of personal property
- abuse of power.

There is growing recognition of violence and abuse outside of the existing definitions including but not limited to spiritual abuse, technology facilitated domestic and family violence and abuse and abuse of pets and animals.

Domestic and family violence occurs in the following types of relationships:

- intimate partner relationships
- other family and co-habitation relationships
- carer relationships
- cultural and kinship relationships
- foster care relationships
- blood relatives who do not co-habit, such as elder abuse.

Economic abuse: A pattern of control, exploitation or sabotage of money, finances or economic resources which affects an individual's capacity to acquire, use and maintain economic resources and threatens their economic security and self-sufficiency.

Economic hardship: While there is no agreed definition of economic hardship in the literature, it can include experiences of financial stress, unemployment, having to manage on a lower household income, and having to draw on savings or go into debt in order to cover ordinary living expenses.[35, 36] It should also be noted that the terms 'economic hardship' and 'financial hardship' are often used interchangeably.

Elder abuse: A single or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust which causes harm or distress to an older person. Elder abuse can take various forms including financial, physical, psychological or sexual abuse, and can also be the result of intentional or unintentional neglect.[37]

Family violence: The range of violence that takes place in Indigenous communities including the physical, emotional, sexual, social, spiritual, cultural, psychological, and economic abuses that may be perpetrated within a family. The term also recognises the broader impacts of violence on extended families, kinship networks and community relationships. It has also been used in the past decade to encompass acts of self-harm and suicide, and has become widely adopted as part of the shift towards addressing intra-familial violence in all its forms.[38, 39, 40 in 41]

Financial abuse: A pattern of control, exploitation or sabotage of money and finances affecting an individual's capacity to acquire, use and maintain financial resources and threatening their financial security and self-sufficiency.[42]

Financial hardship: Occurs when a person is unable to meet their existing financial obligations for a period of time. It may be caused by a number of factors, such as unforeseen weather events, a major change in circumstances, such as illness or injury, or a change in employment.[43]

Economic or financial insecurity: Occurs when a person has a lack of economic resources to meet their material needs so they can live with dignity. This can include a lack of access to appropriate and well-paid work, inadequate social protection, unreasonable costs of living and an incapacity to absorb financial

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shocks. Economic and financial insecurity is a gendered problem, as women typically experience poorer economic outcomes than men.[44]

First Nations: A term which recognises the peoples or nations of people who have lived in a particular geographic location from the beginning, prior to the settlement of other peoples or nations.[45] In Australia, this term is increasingly used to acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the sovereign people of this land, and equally recognises the various language groups as separate and unique sovereign nations.[46]

Housing Stability: An implicit understanding of housing stability is that it is the antithesis of homelessness, and indicators of housing instability include challenges such as difficulty paying rent, overcrowding, frequent relocation, staying with relatives, or spending the majority of income on housing [47, 48]. Housing instability is a risk factor for homelessness [49]; however, it is also often conceptualised in the literature as an extension of homelessness.

Intersectionality: The complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (such as racism, sexism and classism) combine, overlap or intersect.

Intimate partner violence: Violence and abuse perpetrated by a current or former intimate partner (cohabitating and dating) and includes any behaviour within an intimate relationship that causes physical, emotional, psychological or sexual harm to those in the relationship.[50]

Lateral violence: 'The way people in positions of powerlessness, covertly or overtly direct their dissatisfaction inward toward each other, toward themselves, and toward those less powerful than themselves.'[50]

Older person: There is no specific convention or guiding document that defines the term 'older person. The United Nations (UN) Department of Economic and Social Affairs—Ageing, defines a person as 'older' if they are aged 65 years and over[51]. This is consistent with the practice of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Safety: A term which is widely used but frequently poorly defined or not defined in the literature. It can refer to a reduction or cessation of violence and abuse or threats of violence and abuse. However, safety can refer to more than being physically safe. 'Feeling' safe from violence or the threat of it (violence could be psychological, verbal, physical, sexual, reproductive control, social, financial, property damage, stalking, image based or technological abuse) is an important component of wellbeing and can be supported by a number of intervention strategies. Definitions of safety should encompass cultural safety and accessibility and be non-discriminatory for people who are more likely to experience discrimination and inequality in Australia.

LGBTIQ+: A term used to refer to people who are from sexually or gender diverse communities and who may identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transexual, intersex or queer. There is a great deal of diversity within the LGBTIQ communities and a wide range of terms and language are used to describe 'biological sex, gender, sexuality and sexual practice.' [52]

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Appendix 2: Legislation relevant to Safe at Home responses

Jurisdiction	Legislation	Section	
Commonwealth	*Family Law Act 1975*	67Q	Meaning of recovery order
		68B	Injunctions
		Parenting Orders	Residence/supervised visitation
Western Australia	*Residential Tenancies Act 1987*	45	Securing premises
		59C	Recognition of certain persons as tenants
		71	Special provisions about terminating tenant's interest on grounds of family violence
		75 A	Termination of social housing tenancy agreement due to objectionable behaviour
	Restraining Orders Act 1997	11A	When violence restraining orders may be made
		13	Restraints on respondent
		30	Restraints that may be imposed (police order)
		34	Grounds for a misconduct restraining order
		36	Restraints on respondent
	Children and Community Services Act 2004	7	Best interests of child are paramount consideration
		8	Determining best interests of a child
		44	Application for Protection Order
New South Wales	*Residential Tenancies Act 2010*	71	Changes of locks and security devices
		79	Change of tenants after AVO (Apprehended Violence Order)
		15	Application for making domestic violence order by court

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	Crimes (Domestic and Personal Violence) Act 2007	13a	Information sharing
		16	Court may make apprehended domestic violence order
		17	Matters to be considered by court
		22	Interim Court Orders
		Part 7	Provisional Orders
		35	Prohibitions and restrictions imposed by AVO
Northern Territory	*Residential Tenancies Act 1999*	52	Tenant responsibility for security
		53	Must not alter locks
		50	Landlord must not change locks
	Domestic and Family Violence Act 2007	19	Matters to be considered in making DVO (Domestic Violence Order)
		20	Presumption in favour of protected person with child remaining at home
		22	Premises access order
		23	Order for replacement tenancy agreement
		84	Power to remove and detain
		124 & 125	Mandatory reporting of domestic or family violence
Australian Capital Territory	*Residential Tenancies Act 1997*	51	Damage, injury or intention to damage or injure (termination and possession order)
		54(5)	If the tenant, or a person living at the premises, is a protected person in relation to an interim or final order made under the Family Violence Act 2016 or the Personal Violence Act 2016, the tenant or person may change locks (at his or her own cost) without the agreement of the other party.
	Family Violence Act 2016	16	Who may apply for protection orders
		39	Exclusion conditions
	Personal Violence Act 2016	12	Who may apply for personal protection orders
		31	Exclusion conditions
	Crimes Act 1900	35	Stalking
South Australia	*Residential Tenancies Act 1995*	66	Security of premises
		89A	Termination based on domestic abuse

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		105UA	Termination based on abuse of rooming house resident
	Intervention Orders (Prevention of Abuse) Act 2009	6	Grounds for issuing an Intervention Order
		12	Terms of Intervention Order
		18	Interim Intervention Order
		32	Landlord not to allow access to excluded defendant
Queensland	*Residential Tenancies and Rooming Accommodation Act 2008*	211	Changing locks
		213(c)	Orders to tribunal
		245	Injury to domestic associate—change of legal tenant
		321	Application by tenant's domestic associate for termination or damage injury
	Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012	63	Ouster condition
		64	Ouster condition relating to the aggrieved' s usual place of residence
		58/57	(Normal conditions imposed on restraining order)
Tasmania	*Residential Tenancies Act 1997*	57	Locks and security devices
		37	Termination of agreement (da)
	Family Violence Act 2004	14	Police FVO (Family Violence Order)
		16	FVO
		17	Issue of replacement residential tenancy agreement
Victoria	*Residential Tenancies Act 1997*	70	Locks
		70A	Locks for rented premises the subject of an intervention order
		233A	Application for termination of new tenancy agreement because of family violence or personal violence
		233B	Tribunal orders
	Family Violence Protection Act 2008	81	Conditions to be included in family violence intervention order
		82	Exclusion of respondent from residence

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Appendix 3: Policies relevant to Safe at Home responses

National Plans of Action

International Conventions and Declarations underpin the National Plans of Action set by the Australian Government. In relation to domestic and family violence these include, but are not limited to:

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights[53]
- The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Violence Against Women[54]
- The Convention on the Rights of the Child[55]

The Commonwealth Government is responsible for developing National Plans of Action and White Papers on key social issues. National Plans for specific population groups may make mention of particular issues of concern for that cohort and related recommendations to address these concerns. The two Commonwealth initiatives that directly shape Safe at Home responses are:

- The *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children—2010-2022*[3]
- *National Housing and Homelessness Agreement* (NHHA)[24]

Violence against women and their children

The 2009 Report, *Time for Action: The National Council's Plan for Australia to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children, 2009-2021*[56] was the first time a Commonwealth policy initiative explicitly supported the development of Safe at Home responses. 'Time for Action' recommended the development of integrated service systems and encouraged jurisdictional responses to provide the necessary support to exclude the perpetrator while securing women and children's safety to remain in or return to their home.

The *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children—2010-2022 (the National Plan)*[3] was a recommendation of the National Council and endorsed in 2011 by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) to ensure cooperation between all levels of government.

National Outcome 4 of the National Plan aims to 'increase in the access to, and responsiveness of, services for victims of domestic and family violence and sexual assault' and Strategy 4.3 identifies the priority of Safe at Home responses to 'improve and expand cross-agency support for women and children to remain safely in their homes and communities while the perpetrator is removed'.

A key action to address this priority linked Safe at Home responses to improved housing options was to 'support mainstream services to identify and respond to needs—Implement homelessness services under the National Homelessness Partnership Agreement to improve housing options for women victims of violence'.

Safe at Home responses are next noted in the Third Action Plan (2016-2020)[4], National Priority Area 3, Action 3.3 recommending that accommodation options and supports for women and their children escaping violence be strengthened.

The Fourth Action Plan (2019-2022)[57] specified the 'Keeping Women Safe in Their Homes' (KWSITH) funding program committed support to providing safe spaces for women and children affected by

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domestic and family violence and identified KWSITH as a key initiative of the Commonwealth government's commitment to women and children affected by domestic and family violence.

Homelessness

While state and territory governments have primary responsibility for housing and homelessness, in 2020-21 the Commonwealth Government will invest around $8.2 billion in housing and homelessness. This investment includes around $1.6 billion through the National Housing and Homelessness Agreement (NHHA). The NHHA requires states to publish their homelessness strategies which must address a range of priority cohorts listed in the NHHA, and outline reforms or initiatives which contribute to a reduction in the incidence of homelessness. The NHHA priority homelessness cohorts include women and children affected by family and domestic violence.

The Commonwealth Government has committed $78 million for safe places for women and children experiencing domestic and family violence. This includes $60 million for a grants program for eligible organisations to provide new or expanded emergency accommodation. This program could build about 700 new safe places and assist about 6,000 women and children escaping domestic and family violence per year. It also includes $18 million to continue supporting states and territories through the KWSITH program, which provides security upgrades and safety planning.[58]

Each jurisdiction has a range of key strategic policies and frameworks that have influenced the development of KWSITH/Safe at Home responses across Australia. These policies are current and historical and provide context for the responses offered nationally as well as in each jurisdiction.

State and territory governments have primary responsibility for both Domestic and Family Violence and Homelessness policy and service provision in Australia. Each jurisdiction will have its own plan, policy, and reporting requirements for particular portfolio areas.

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Relevant policies summary table

Jurisdiction	Relevant Policies	Year	Aims/Scope
National	*National Housing and Homelessness Agreement (NHHA)*	2018	Replacing the National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness, the NHHA provides funding to states and territories to improve Australians' access to secure and affordable housing. State and territory governments must have their own housing and homelessness strategies which address the priority policy areas and priority cohorts, including women and children affected by domestic and family violence.
	National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and Children 2010-2022	2011	Developed by the Commonwealth, state and territory governments, the National Plan seeks to reduce violence against women and their children through the implementation of four 3-year action plans over the course of 12 years. Goals include developing a coordinated response to domestic and family violence, as well as funding and supporting programs targeted at helping women/children to stay safely in their homes.
	The National Partnership Agreement on Homelessness (NPAH)	2009	An agreement between the Commonwealth, and state and territory governments aimed at addressing homelessness. Priorities include assisting women/children experiencing domestic and family violence to remain safely in their homes. The NPAH has been renewed several times since it first commenced in 2009, and as of 2017, a Transitional NPAH providing for interim funding of homelessness services has been in place.
Australian Capital Territory	*ACT Housing Strategy*	2018	The Strategy aims to promote a housing market that meets the diverse and changing needs of the community. Domestic and family violence is recognised as a key driver affecting homelessness, and the Strategy prioritises assistance for women and children escaping domestic and family violence.
	2016 ACT Government Response to Family Violence	2016	Outlined the territory's future directions and principles for addressing family

			violence. Five key themes were outlined, representing a cohesive and integrated service system: (1) leadership and cultural change; (2) prevention and early intervention; (3) information sharing; (4) collaboration and integration; and (5) transparency and accountability.
	2nd Implementation Plan 2015-2017 of the Act Prevention of Violence Against Women and Children Strategy 2011-2017	2015	Continued the Our Responsibility Strategy—outlining and shaping the ACT's actions for reducing violence against women and children.
	ACT Prevention of Violence Against Women and Children Strategy 2011-2017—Our Responsibility: Ending Violence Against Women and Children	2011	This strategy builds on the National Plan1 by outlining the ACT's plan for reducing violence against women and children.
	ACT Women's Plan 2010-2015	2010	The ACT government's plan for improving the status of women and girls. Its aims include addressing violence against women and their children through prevention and support. In 2016, a new Women's Plan (ACT Women's Plan 2016-26) was introduced. The new 10-year plan builds on the work of the previous plan through its commitment to reducing violence against women and girls and increasing their personal safety.
Northern Territory	*A Home for All Territorians: Northern Territory Housing Strategy 2020-2025*	2020	Presented to outline the Northern Territory Government's commitment to providing housing options and creating pathways to respond to the diverse needs of families and individuals spanning urban, regional, and remote parts of the Northern Territory.
	Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Reduction Framework 2018-2028—Safe, Respected and Free from Violence	2018	This 10-year plan builds on the NT government's Domestic and Family Violence Reduction Strategy (see below) by discussing a range of avenues through which domestic and family violence will be prevented and addressed. Action Plan 1: Changing Attitudes, Intervening Earlier and Responding Better (2018-2021)' focused on the first phase of implementation of Safe, Respected and Free from Violence, describing how the government will implement actions under five key outcomes.
	Pathways out of Homelessness: Northern	2018	The Strategy is the first system-wide strategy aimed at addressing

	Territory Homelessness Strategy 2018-2023		homelessness in the NT, focusing on prevention and early intervention. People experiencing domestic, family and sexual violence are identified as a priority group under the Strategy.
	Policy Framework for Northern Territory Women 2015-2020	2015	This framework outlines the NT Office of Women's Policy's strategy for improving the status of women. The framework discusses how violence against women can be addressed through primary prevention strategies and improved support for survivors.
	Domestic and Family Violence Reduction Strategy 2014-2017: Safety is Everyone's Right	2014	The NT Government's strategy for developing an integrated service response to domestic and family violence. The Strategy is focused on five key areas: (1) prevention; (2) early intervention; (3) protection (safety for victims); (4) rebuilding the lives of victims and their children; and (5) accountability and positive change for perpetrators.
	Building on our Strengths: A Framework for Action for Women in the Northern Territory 2008-2012	2008	A 4-year plan for improving the lives of women in the NT. Its aims include increasing the safety of women and reducing violence against them.
Queensland	*Third Action Plan of the Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2019-20 to 2021-22*	2019	Sets out the actions for the next three years under the three foundational elements for reform, as outlined in the Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2016-2026: changing community attitudes and behaviours; integrating service responses; and strengthening justice system responses.
	Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2027	2017	10-year framework driving key reforms and targeted investment across the housing continuum.
	Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy: 2016-2026	2016	This 10-year plan outlines how the Queensland Government aims to address domestic and family violence by focusing on the areas of prevention, early intervention, crisis response, and recovery.
	Second Action Plan 2016-2019	2016	Sets out the government's actions, stating that the next three years would see enhanced action through new signature initiatives forming the foundation for transformation. Includes: 'Roll[ing] out the "Keeping Women Safe at Home" project to trial new technology

			to enable women to stay safely in their homes'.
	Queensland Violence against Women Prevention Plan 2016-22	2016	Designed to address the gendered nature of violence against women and represented the final piece of the Queensland policy framework to address violence against women and children in Queensland. The Plan included primary, secondary and tertiary prevention action on all forms of violence against women, including domestic and family violence, in the priorities of safety, respect and justice.
	Not Now, Not Ever: Putting an End to Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland	2015	The report makes 140 recommendations establishing the vision and direction for Queensland's strategy to end domestic and family violence.
	For Our Sons and Daughters—A Queensland Government Strategy to Reduce Domestic and Family Violence 2009-2014	2009	The Queensland Government's strategy for reducing domestic and family violence. This strategy is focused on five reform areas: (1) prevention; (2) early identification and intervention; (3) connected victim support services; (4) perpetrator accountability; and (5) system planning and coordination.
Victoria	*Free from Violence: Victoria's strategy to prevent family violence and all forms of violence against women*	2019	The Strategy forms part of the government's broader family violence system reform and aims to prevent family violence and violence against women. The Strategy also focuses on violence stemming from gender inequality and discrimination resulting in racism, ageism, ableism and heterosexism.
	The Family Violence Rolling Action Plan 2017-2020	2017	States that 'in an effort to prevent women, children and young people from experiencing homelessness or having difficulties accessing housing as a result of family violence we will expand Safe at Home responses through an expansion of both family violence case management and Flexible Support Packages.'
	Homes for Victorians: Affordability, access and choice	2017	The policy introduces initiatives and reforms to help ensure housing supply can meet demand and facilitate the supply of social housing and affordable housing. It aims to improve and extend housing services for women and children affected by family violence by introducing a Family Violence Housing Blitz.

	Ending Family Violence: Victoria's Plan for Change	2016	This 10-year plan represents the Victorian Government's commitment to implementing all the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Family Violence (Victoria). The plan places a priority on allowing and supporting women and children to remain safely in their homes where it is safe to do so.
	Royal Commission into Family Violence	2015	Recommendation 13 of the Royal Commission focused on the need to support victims to safely remain in, or return to, their homes and communities. Specifically, 'the Victorian Government give priority to supporting victims in safely remaining in, or returning to, their own homes and communities through the expansion of Safe at Home—type programs across Victoria'.
	Victoria's Action Plan to Address Violence Against Women and Children 2012-2015	2012	This action plan contains a range of strategies targeted at preventing and responding to violence against women and children. Safe at Home initiatives are included in the action plan.
	A Better Place—Victorian Homelessness 2020 Strategy	2010	The Victorian government's plan for addressing homelessness. Includes strategies targeted at reducing the risk of homelessness amongst women and children experiencing family violence.
	A Right to Respect: Victoria's Plan to Prevent Violence Against Women 2010-2020	2010	Developed by the Victorian government, this 10-year plan is focused on preventing violence against women through strategies such as building partnerships, strengthening community leadership, and changing social attitudes towards violence.
	A Fairer Victoria: Creating Opportunity and Addressing Disadvantage	2005	The Victorian Government's plan for addressing disadvantage and improving opportunities for Victorians. One aspect of this involves improving Victoria's response to family violence.
	Changing Lives: A New Approach to Family Violence in Victoria 2005	2005	This policy paper outlines the Victorian Government's plan for addressing family violence. Strategies include giving women and children more housing options and assisting them in staying in their homes where it is appropriate to do so.
	Women's Safety Strategy 2002	2002	Developed by the Victorian Government, this policy framework is focused on establishing a coordinated response to violence against women in Victoria.

New South Wales	*NSW Homelessness Strategy 2018-2023*	2018	The Strategy sets out the NSW Government's plan for a new approach to prevent and improve responses to homelessness. It identifies the provision of targeted support for high-risk groups, such as women and children leaving domestic and family violence, as a priority area.
	NSW Domestic and Family Violence Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy 2017-2021	2017	Developed as a commitment of the Blueprint for Reform, the Strategy aims to reduce domestic violence offending, protect children from harm, and support young people experiencing homelessness. The Strategy focuses on prevention and early intervention to address domestic and family violence.
	NSW Domestic and Family Violence Blueprint for Reform 2016-2021	2016	This 5-year plan for addressing domestic and family violence is focused on six action areas: (1) preventing domestic and family violence; (2) intervening early with vulnerable communities; (3) supporting victims; (4) holding perpetrators accountable; (5) delivering quality services; and (6) improving the system.
	It Stops Here: Standing Together to End Domestic and Family Violence in NSW	2014	This paper outlines the NSW Government's framework for addressing domestic and family violence. The expansion of the Staying Home, Leaving Violence program is discussed as part of the framework's strategy for improving service responses to domestic and family violence.
	Stop the Violence, End the Silence: NSW Domestic and Family Violence Action Plan	2010	Developed by the NSW Government, this action plan seeks to reduce domestic and family violence by focussing on five key areas: (1) prevention and early intervention; (2) protection, safety and justice; (3) provision of services and support; (4) building capacity; and (5) data collection and research. The action plan also emphasises the importance of helping women and children experiencing domestic and family violence to stay in their homes where it is safe to do so.
	A Way Home: Reducing Homelessness in NSW—NSW Homelessness Action Plan 2009-2014	2009	This policy paper outlines the NSW government's plan for addressing homelessness. It identifies the provision of safe, long-term accommodation and support for individuals experiencing

			domestic and family violence as a priority area.
Western Australia	*Path to Safety: Western Australia's strategy to reduce family and domestic violence 2020-2030*	2020	The Strategy will guide a whole-of-community approach to prevention and early intervention, victim safety and perpetrator accountability. The Strategy focuses on the unique needs of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people, people with disability, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, LGBTQ+ people and people in regional and remote areas.
	All Paths Lead to a Home: Western Australia's 10-Year Strategy on Homelessness 2020-2030	2020	The Strategy aims that all people have safe housing and are supported to achieve stable and independent lives. The Strategy is strongly connected to the 10-Year Strategy for Reducing Family and Domestic Violence. The Strategy recognises domestic and family violence as one of the main drivers of homelessness in WA.
	Freedom from Fear Action Plan 2015: Working towards the elimination of family and domestic violence in Western Australia	2015	An action plan targeted at improving the safety and women and children experiencing domestic and family violence in WA. The plan consists of five priority areas: (1) promoting understanding and awareness about family and domestic violence; (2) targeting communities and populations that are at greatest risk; (3) trialling and evaluating innovative approaches to perpetrator intervention; (4) promoting consistent quality practice in responding to men who use violence; and (5) increasing the capacity of the service system to stop perpetrators.
	Safer Families, Safer Communities Family Violence Kimberly Regional Plan 2015-2020 (the Kimberly Plan)	2015	Utilising a whole of community approach, the Kimberly Plan aimed to increase the health, safety and wellbeing of women, children and men living in the Kimberley region by working towards a reduction in family violence.
	Western Australia's Domestic Violence Prevention Strategy to 2022 (Prevention Strategy)	2012	This prevention strategy builds on the work of The Western Australia Strategic Plan for Domestic and Family Violence 2009-2013 (see below), by outlining WA's action plan for developing an integrated response to domestic violence.
	The Western Australia Strategic Plan for Family and Domestic Violence 2009-2013	2009	This policy paper outlines the WA Government's plan for reducing family and domestic violence by enhancing prevention and early intervention

			strategies, improving victim safety, and increasing perpetrator accountability.
South Australia	*Our Housing Future 2020-2030*	2020	The Strategy aims to redefine and reform the housing system in SA over the next 10 years by building a resilient, connected and sustainable housing system. The Strategy prioritises women and children experiencing domestic and family violence through a Safety First approach.
	Future Directions for Homelessness	2020	Future Directions for Homelessness outlines South Australia's transformation plan for the homelessness and domestic and family violence system, through an alliance model which will see SA Housing Authority and the service providers working together to deliver better outcomes.
	Committed to Safety: A framework for addressing domestic, family and sexual violence in South Australia	2019	The Framework is based on three pillars of response: primary prevention, service and support, and justice. The Framework aims to provide a safe and supportive community, where domestic, family and sexual violence is not tolerated in any form.
	A Right to Safety: South Australia's Women's Safety Strategy 2011-2022	2011	This strategy builds on the Women's Safety Strategy 2005 (see below) by outlining the SA government's action plan for tackling violence against women. The strategy focuses on four key areas: (1) prevention; (2) service provision; (3) protection; and (4) professional performance. It also recognises the importance of supporting women and children in remaining safely in their homes.
	The Women's Safety Strategy 2005	2005	Developed by the SA government, this plan is focused on addressing violence against women through targeted strategies and responses.
Tasmania	*Safe Homes, Families, Communities: Tasmania's action plan for family and sexual violence 2019-2022*	2019	The Action Plan includes the crisis and support services introduced under Safe Homes, Safe Families. It aims to improve the service system for adults and children who experience family and sexual violence, with a focus on prevention and early intervention, response and recovery, and strengthening the service system.
	Tasmania's Affordable Housing Action Plan 2019-2023	2019	The Action Plan aims to improve affordable housing and help those most in need into safe and secure

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			accommodation. Improved access to supported accommodation for people experiencing family violence is identified as a priority area.
	Tasmanian Women's Strategy 2018-2021	2018	Provides a framework for government, the private sector and the wider Tasmanian community to take significant action to achieve gender equality in Tasmania. Safety was included as one of four important priority areas for action in the Women's Strategy.
	Safe Homes, Safe Families: Tasmania's Family Violence Action Plan 2015-2020	2015	This action plan outlines the Tasmanian government's strategy for addressing family violence. The plan consists of strategies aimed at increasing perpetrator accountability, enhancing the safety of survivors, and changing social attitudes towards violence.
	Taking Action: Tasmania's Primary Prevention Strategy to Reduce Violence Against Women and Children 2012-2022	2012	Delivers a public health approach for the coordination of primary prevention initiatives to address violence against women and children across Tasmanian government and community service sectors. The Tasmanian government established four primary objectives for the Tasmanian primary prevention strategy that were in line with the National Plan. Followed by Tasmania Implementation Plan: Moving Ahead 2013-2016.
	Tasmanian Implementation Plan: Building a Strong Foundation 2010-2013	2010	Identified Tasmania's strategic actions for the long-term and prioritised actions that were required in the short-term, outlining how the Tasmanian government would achieve the agreed national priorities.
	Tasmanian Homelessness Plan 2010-2013: Coming in from the Cold	2010	This policy paper discusses Tasmania's strategy for addressing homelessness. The plan identifies individuals experiencing family violence as a priority group and discusses effective service responses for this group.
	Family Violence Act	2004	The Act was intended to facilitate an integrated criminal justice response to family violence, promoting the safety of those affected by family violence. The Act placed emphasis on both the safety of the victim and the criminality of family violence to enable direct action to prevent further family violence,

			primarily through the delivery of the 'Safe at Home framework.'
	Tasmania Together 2020 (State Plan)	2001	Promoted long-term social, economic, and environmental goals for Tasmania for a period of 20 years. Goal 2.1.5 stated that 'all Tasmanians should feel safe, and be safe, in the family environment.' Although Tasmania Together was disbanded in 2011, the State Plan was a key document in the development of Tasmania's Safe at Home approach.

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Appendix 4: Select legal obligations and reporting requirements for Safe at Home responses.

Reporting domestic and family violence

The majority of states and territories in Australia do not have mandatory reporting laws for domestic and family violence. The Northern Territory is the only jurisdiction in Australia which has mandatory reporting of domestic and family under law. Under section 124A of the *Domestic and Family Violence Act 2007*, all adults in the NT are required to report DFV to the police, including if someone is seriously hurt or in danger of being hurt.[59]

In the ACT, if DFV workers believe someone is at serious or imminent risk of being harmed they must consider informing the police provided they first consult the person who made a disclosure.[60]

Safe at Home practitioners should be cognisant of the fact that reporting domestic and family violence to police can have adverse effects on the safety and wellbeing of a victim-survivor and their family. Practitioners should further be mindful that victim-survivors may not wish to report to the police for reasons including a fear for safety, a desire to protect their children, a desire to protect the perpetrator or a mistrust of the police. Mandating or encouraging victim-survivors to report DFV to the police can be a significant barrier to victim-survivors seeking help and trusting services. Reporting should be in the best interests of the victim-survivor's safety, including the safety of their children and family.

Services should maintain appropriate records relating to disclosure of sexual, domestic, and family violence. These detailed records facilitate provision of service support including reporting to relevant authorities. They further support potential legal action including criminal charges or family law matters that a victim-survivor may pursue.

Reporting child abuse and neglect

Every state and territory in Australia have mandatory reporting laws regarding suspected or known instances of child abuse and neglect. In all but one jurisdiction (VIC) these laws apply to Safe at Home case managers and practitioners. Services and practitioners should be aware of the mandatory reporting legislation relevant to their jurisdiction, including where to report and how to do so in a dignified and respectful way for the victim-survivor. The following table covers the mandatory reporting requirements for child abuse and neglect relevant to Safe at Home practitioners and services.

In most jurisdictions a suspicion of child abuse or neglect requires one to report to relevant authorities (NSW, QLD, SA, TAS, WA). In the ACT and NT, mandatory reporters must believe 'on reasonable grounds' that a child has experienced or is experiencing abuse or neglect prior to reporting.

Reporting obligations further differ between states and territories according to the types of abuse and neglect which must be reported. All jurisdictions mandate the reporting of physical abuse and sexual abuse against children. NSW, NT, TAS and WA mandate reporting children who are exposed to family violence including physical violence. Mental, emotional and psychological abuse must also be reported in most jurisdictions (NSW, NT, SA, TAS, WA).

Reporting must take place at the first possible instance once services or practitioners find suspicion or reasonable grounds to believe child abuse and neglect may be occurring.

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Regardless of mandatory reporting requirements, Safe at Home services and practitioners have ethical responsibilities to the children and families with whom they work. Safe at Home practitioners should consider making a report to child protection if they believe it will or may prevent risk of harm to a child or children. Service organisations may additionally have internal policy frameworks which specify requirements for reporting suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect; case workers should be aware of any reporting requirements outlined by the specific service or organisation.

Organisations delivering Safe at Home responses should consider implementing the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (National Principles)[h]. The National Principles are aimed at making organisations safe for children.

Jurisdiction	Legal provision	Mandatory Reporting Requirements	Type of Abuse and Neglect which must be reported
Australian Capital Territory	Section 356 of the *Children and Young People Act 2008 (ACT)*	A belief, on reasonable grounds, that a child or young person has experienced or is experiencing sexual abuse or non-accidental physical injury.	• Physical abuse • Sexual abuse
New South Wales	Sections 23 and 27 of the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)*	Suspicion on reasonable grounds, obtained during the course of or from the person's work, that a child is at risk of significant harm because of the presence to a significant extent of circumstances of: neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, psychological abuse, risk of harm through exposure to domestic violence, and failure to engage with services after a pre-natal report.	• Physical abuse • Sexual abuse • Emotional/psychological abuse • Neglect • Exposure to domestic violence
Northern Territory	Sections 15, 16 and 26 of the *Care and Protection of Children Act 2007 (NT)*	Any person is required to report a belief on reasonable grounds that a child has suffered or is likely to suffer harm or exploitation.	• Physical abuse • Sexual abuse or other exploitation of the child • Emotional/psychological abuse • Neglect

[h] The National Principles were endorsed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) in early 2019. The National Principles give effect to the Royal Commission's recommendation related to the Child Safe Standards. The National Principles, as well as a number of resources to support organisations implement the National Principles, are available online, including at https://childsafe.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-02/National_Principles_for_Child_Safe_Organisations2019.pdf (accessed 31 March 2021).

			• Exposure to physical violence (e.g. a child witnessing violence between parents at home)
Queensland	Part 1AA, section 13E of the *Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld)*	A reasonable suspicion that a child has suffered, is suffering or is at an unacceptable risk of suffering, significant harm caused by physical or sexual abuse; and may not have a parent able and willing to protect the child from the harm.	• Physical abuse • Sexual abuse
South Australia	Sections 17, 18, 30 and 31 of the *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017 (SA)*	Reasonable grounds to suspect a child or young person is, or may be, at risk; and the suspicion was formed in the course of the person's employment.	• Physical abuse • Sexual abuse • Mental or emotional abuse • Neglect
Victoria	SaH practitioners in Victoria are not mandatory reporters	Nil	Nil
Tasmania	Sections 3, 4 and 14 of the *Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997 (Tas)*	Knowledge, or a belief or suspicion on reasonable grounds, that: a child has been or is being 'abused' or 'neglected' or is an affected child within the meaning of the *Family Violence Act 2004* (a child whose safety, psychological wellbeing or interests are affected or likely to be affected by family violence).	• Sexual abuse (any) • Physical abuse • Emotional/psychological abuse • Neglect • Exposure to family violence
Western Australia	Sections 5 and 160 of the *Family Court Act 1997 (WA)*	Reasonable grounds for suspecting that a child has been: abused, or is at risk of being abused; ill-treated, or is at risk of being ill-treated; or exposed or subjected to behaviour that psychologically harms the child.	• Physical abuse • Sexual abuse • Neglect • Psychological harm including (but not limited to) harm caused by being subjected or exposed to family violence

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Appendix 5: Foundational frameworks of Safe at Home responses

Human rights framework

Domestic and family violence is a violation of human rights and a rights based approach provides guidance about what should be done to achieve freedom and dignity for all. Human rights approaches are best tailored to specific organisational goals and the issues the organisation addresses are central to Safe at Home responses. The Australian Human Rights Commission[i] outlines a number of principles informing a rights based approach, which, when applied to Safe at Home responses, mean:

- Participation—clients have the right to participate in decisions that affect their service goals and outcomes including housing, safety, and financial security.
- Empowerment—clients need to be able to understand their rights, and to participate fully in the development of policy and practices which affect their lives.
- Non-discrimination and equality—all forms of discrimination in the realisation of rights must be prohibited, prevented, and eliminated. Safe at Home responses have the responsibility to ensure that priority is given to people in the most marginalised or vulnerable situations who face the biggest barriers to realising their rights.
- Accountability—Safe at Home responses must ensure they are compliant with and aware of relevant laws, policies, institutions, administrative procedures, and mechanisms of redress in order to secure human rights for clients.

Gender equality

Gender inequalities are an underlying driver for gendered violence, which is an expression of power and control over individuals or groups because of their gender. Domestic, family and sexual violence—including sexual harassment, sexual assault, stalking, intimate partner violence, and violence among household members, extended families and kinships—are all types of gendered violence.

Safe at Home responses recognise that women and children are disproportionately affected by gendered violence. It is however important to acknowledge that men, women, older people and youth can be victims and perpetrators and gendered violence can be experienced by lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people.

Social justice

Experiences of domestic and family violence can be compounded by inequitable systems and services, resulting in continuing disadvantage in areas such as financial security, education outcomes, mental and physical health, and overall social engagement. A social justice perspective promotes principles of equity and fairness of opportunity and access.[61] Safe at Home responses challenge the socially unjust expectation that women and children should leave a home or a community because of perpetrator violence.

[i] Human rights based approaches | Australian Human Rights Commission (accessed 8 March 2021).

Strengths-based approaches

A strengths-based approach is a collaborative process whereby Safe at Home clients are supported by services and staff to work together towards outcomes that draw on the person's strengths and assets. Working in a collaborative way promotes the opportunity for individuals to be co-producers of services and support rather than solely consumers of those services.

Strengths-based approaches value the capacity, skills, knowledge, connections and potential in individuals and communities to improve social networks and enhance wellbeing.

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