



INTEGRATED FAMILY VIOLENCE SERVICES

Women, Men and Children
Goulburn



We are committed to the principles of social justice and aim to ensure every individual is treated with dignity and respect regardless of their cultural background, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation or religion.



"Family Violence is not part of our culture"

A message from the Hume Dhelk Dja Regional Action Group

Submission Implementation Monitor 2020

The Goulburn Family Violence Executive is formed as part of Victoria's state-wide DHHS area-based Family Violence Regional Integration model. The Goulburn Executive also supports a Family Violence Operations Group that advises the Executive of strategic themes for consideration and acts like a community of practice for local practitioners.

The Goulburn geography covers 5 local government areas, namely Mitchell, Murrindindi, Strathbogie, Greater Shepparton and Moira. Our communities range from rural areas and small towns to regional cities and peri urban growth corridors. Our family violence services are usually delivered from our main centres, with outreach available. Our model of integration is mature and encompasses parts of the universal sector who also work closely with people who experience family violence. We apply a continuous improvement model to our approach, annually reviewing our strategic plan. We are waiting for the release of the state-wide Guidelines that support our Executive and the area based Principal Strategic Advisor. We will use this as an opportunity to reshape our membership and participation models.

In the Goulburn area we are driven to improve the lived experience of those who live with family violence. The Victorian Reform Agenda is warmly welcomed, and we are committed to maximising and embedding change. We appreciate that this is a generational systems journey that is both planned and strategic, and responsive and opportunistic. We work together to support each agency and authority to be a positive part of a whole of system client journey. We have been challenged by the pace and sometimes confusing requirements of reform and suggest benefits could be obtained through a more coordinated approach from central agencies. Perhaps this might also be enhanced by the adoption of outcome measures to check efficacy and effectiveness of the changes we are making. We are acutely interested in accessing real time and historical data and data projects to assist us to be strategic about how we service our communities and staff.

The Family Violence Reform in Victoria has improved the visibility, accessibility and breadth of secondary and tertiary services and started a strong community conversation about family violence and its drivers. We are grateful for this work and welcoming of increased evidence-based prevention work. We can see a day when family violence is a rarity, if not eliminated. In addition to our secondary and tertiary interventions, we are committed to supporting evidence-based prevention as we believe this will be 'the cure'.

We are concerned about our workforce, now and into the future. We ask that delivery against the 10 Year Action Plan remain of the highest priority. We need state-wide support to build a sustainable workforce, especially as our service system model has expanded.

Our specific responses to questions raised by the Implementation Monitors office are set out below. Also attached is a specific response to questions from Mitchell Shire.

<p>1 How the family violence service system, and users' experience of it, has changed since the Royal Commission.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the major changes you have seen in the family violence service system since the Royal Commission into Family Violence made its final report and recommendations in 2016? • How has the experience of accessing services and support changed since the Royal Commission for victim survivors, including children, and perpetrators of family violence? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Public awareness campaign, changes to the FV courts, FV info sharing scheme, Vic pol increase in resources and the Orange Doors. - More accessible and visible- reducing the wrong door. - Increased focus on family violence as a community issue (greater media and political coverage). - Stronger focus on perpetrator accountability. - Improved information sharing under the information sharing schemes (increased accountability by services to consider and share risk). - Increased funding to family violence services (although not all funding has been continued). - Greater access for victim survivors to support in areas where Orange Doors have been established. - Stronger support for vulnerable communities through focus on intersectionality in the MARAM. - Distinct collaboration toward wrap around services.
<p>2. Looking forward: what is still required in the family violence reforms.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the most critical changes to the family violence service system that still need to occur? • Are there any parts of the family violence reforms that have not yet progressed enough and require more attention? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Joint long-term work with universal services – with a focus on responding to trauma experienced by children. - Greater focus on children as per the VAGO recommendation. - More perpetrators and expansion of current ones, including longer term interventions to assist with the change process needed to ensure success interventions with a broader range of perpetrator interventions. - Long term recovery interventions for women and children. - Better coordination of communication between FSV, funding bodies and peak bodies - to ensure consistent and timely messages and responses.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there any improvements that could be made to the implementation approach of the family violence reforms? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stronger service integration between the services located within the Orange Door and local agreements with services for clearer referral pathways. - Still waiting for guidance for working with perpetrators in MARAM. - MARAM tool training yet to be rolled out to non-DHHS funded services. - Aspects of the reforms (Orange Door, information sharing laws) were rushed, training to direct line staff has been ad hoc.
<h3>3. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic</h3>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What has been the biggest impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on your organisation or sector? • How have the services that your organisation or sector provides had to change? • Has the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted any strengths or weaknesses in the family violence service system? • Are there any changes resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic that you think should be continued? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reduced face to face work with families, less sighting of children and less joint home visits with Child Protection. - No FV spikes as yet but the complexity and seriousness of FV has increased including adolescent FV. - The use of IT and virtual platforms to connect with families has been a real positive including more flexible working hours due to working from home. - Moved to telephone interventions focused on risk with perpetrators. No change to interventions with women. - Difficult to term actual incidences of violence as we had limited ability to connect with women whose partners are increasingly at home. Women reported that it was difficult to be able to get away from partners to be able to speak honestly - No face to contact client, delivery of services via phone and video conferencing, including court support. - Strengths: Flexibility and adaptability in clients and staff, increase access to criminal justice services for clients living in remote geographical regions, greater attendance at interagency meetings with reduced travel. - Weaknesses: Increased vicarious trauma for direct line staff operating at home, reduced access to clinical supervision and debriefing with colleagues. - Need to continue providing remote options for interagency meetings and for clients accessing the criminal justice system. - Minimal line of sight of children impacted by FV.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Minimal points – and opportunities to do so – for women and children to access supports and engage/alert family, friends, services.- Strength has been the mobility of organisations to continue to remain client focused via remote service.
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