



Government
of South Australia

Office for Women

Domestic Violence Roundtable

14 September 2018

Mount Gambier

Report prepared by the Office for Women for the Minister for Human Services and the Assistant Minister for Domestic and Family Violence Prevention



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Introduction

On 14 September 2018 the South Australian Government held a roundtable for those working in the domestic, family and sexual violence sector in the Limestone Coast area, to specifically discuss the 2018 election commitments made by the State Government.

This report provides an overview of:

- Points raised in relation to the Government's election commitments discussed under the groupings of Protection, Infrastructure and Support, and Service Responses; and
- Feedback received from a follow up survey sent to all those stakeholders who were invited.

The roundtable attendees were provided with a copy of the Government's commitments, as well as a summary document prepared by the Office for Women (OFW) providing a more detailed overview of the commitments.

Unlike the metropolitan roundtable, the Mount Gambier roundtable had a more focused, targeted approach in engaging attendees specifically on the ramifications of, and issues related to, election commitments in their specific locale.

Election Commitments Feedback

This section discusses specific issues raised under each of the election commitments based on the groupings of Protection, Infrastructure and Support, and Service Responses.

This feedback will be integral to the upcoming new Violence Against Women Policy Framework.

Protection

Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme

There was support for the scheme, but requests for more information about how the Scheme would work.

Reviewing Police guidelines re responding to Intervention Order (IO) breaches & Tougher penalties for IO breaches/ Keeping Victims Informed

Improvements to keeping victims informed are welcome, but the onus shouldn't be on victims to keep their details current.

The introduction of tougher penalties for breaches of IOs was generally supported, but attendees noted that it is important to ensure that there is consistency at the judicial level and that legal support services are not overwhelmed due to demand.

Infrastructure and Support

A funded peak body for DV services

There was support for this commitment. Attendees were very interested in how the Peak could communicate regularly with the broader women's sector, particularly in regional areas. Interest in the Peak holding events/forums (including in the regions) and developing training and Standards for the sector. Keen for the Peak to engage with the sector, with people who have lived experience and to feed information back to Government (perhaps utilising a policy officer).

No interest loans for women's shelters

Significant concerns about the proposed 'no interest loans for 'women's shelters', particularly relating to how they would be paid back and why grants could not be offered instead.

There were queries relating to whether the funding be utilised for social housing (making use of old public housing stock) focusing on areas in which there are gaps, such as accommodation for perpetrators.

Attendees agreed that the greatest need for services is staffing/case management rather than physical infrastructure, as well as support post-crisis for clients.

Improving communications (data sharing)

Feedback indicated that there was a need to improve data collection and information sharing, with a focus on improving understanding of what can be shared and by whom.

Databases are maintained by various organisations but they do not talk to one another, which needs to be addressed, as well as how other services/practitioners who are not engaged in existing mechanisms (particularly the FSF) – GPs, disability workers and housing officers were all provided as examples – can share information.

H2H is problematic and was not developed for DV.

Personal Protection App

Attendees suggested that further information is needed on the app and how it is filling a gap, particularly for people not engaged with services. There was agreement that the app needs to be part of a safety plan.

Service Responses

Safety hubs

Attendees provided suggestions on possible models for the Safety Hubs, which are outlined below:

Possible model: co-location of relevant services in Mount Gambier, including the Women's Information Service. Not a 'DV fronted' model. Would allow for coordinated outreach and

resource sharing. Could use health service as the location. Role of volunteers and other 'first responders' would be important and training would be needed.

Possible model: hub and spoke with assertive mobile outreach. Engagement with schools and other community organisations. Use of technology to ensure ongoing communication between services and communities.

Possible model: non-physical hub, rather outreach coordinator/s to work between services and across a large area, including Kingston, Naracoorte, Bordertown. Coordinator would need extensive local knowledge.

Crisis Accommodation

It was identified that crisis accommodation for women would not necessarily be useful in regional areas. Instead, more funding needed for services to case manage beyond immediate crisis (and services for men who experience violence).

Overall agreement that crisis accommodation is already available in Mount Gambier.

The commitment provides an opportunity to consider utilising some funding for perpetrator support attached to accommodation, particularly when intervention orders are in place.

Long term/stable housing is an ongoing issue, as are pets and the need for pet friendly accommodation (or options for foster pets as needed).

24/7 Crisis hotline

There was support for the Crisis Line, but need to ensure women are aware that it is available to them and that there's ongoing support for the women who need it.

More targeted rehabilitation for DV perpetrators

There was an identified need for greater resources to be targeted towards perpetrator intervention programs / early intervention within regional areas.

Opportunity for 'check in' to be mandated once Correction setting has been left and the perpetrator is back in the community.

Holistic wrap around responses to perpetrators are needed (including young people).

Other

Outside the above election commitments were a few remaining points raised by attendees.

These included:

DV Services need advice about engaging with the NDIS.

Interest in a Women's Information Service presence in Mount Gambier.

Family Safety Framework – lack of involvement of some key practitioners, including GPs, private medical workers, housing workers, disability support workers. May require an information campaign to ensure that workers who may be aware of DFV are able to refer to an agency involved in the FSF.

DFV Fact Sheets would be useful – particularly for migrant/CALD women.

Survey

A follow-up survey was conducted after the Roundtable to provide the opportunity to reaffirm that the key themes noted above were reflective of the discussions on the day.

Three responses were received. The responses indicated that the key themes were captured correctly.