



Government
of South Australia

Office for Women

Domestic Violence Roundtable

5 October 2018

Whyalla

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



Contents

| | |
|---|----------|
| Introduction | 2 |
| Election Commitments Feedback | 2 |
| Protection | 2 |
| Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme | 2 |
| Reviewing Police guidelines re responding to Intervention Order (IO) breaches & Tougher penalties for IO breaches/ Keeping Victims Informed | 2 |
| Infrastructure and Support | 2 |
| A funded peak body for DV services | 3 |
| No interest loans for women's shelters | 3 |
| Improving communications (data sharing) | 3 |
| Personal Protection App | 3 |
| Service Responses | 4 |
| Safety hubs | 4 |
| Crisis Accommodation | 4 |
| 24/7 Crisis hotline | 4 |
| More targeted rehabilitation for DV perpetrators | 5 |
| Other | 5 |
| Survey | 5 |



Introduction

On 5 October 2018 the South Australian Government held a roundtable for those working in the domestic, family and sexual violence sector in the Whyalla 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 Whyalla 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 no specific feedback received on this commitment.

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

Breaches must be considered in detail by the Courts. There needs to be support for women in reporting breaches, as this is a key site for re-traumatisation (with consideration to be given to the role of agencies in reporting breaches on her behalf).

The negative use of technology must be considered in terms of IOs.

There was support for keeping victims informed re the perpetrator, but the onus should not be on the victim to seek information.

Agencies involved in supporting victims need some knowledge of bail conditions and those conditions should be made according to risk.

There must be mechanisms in place to ensure perpetrators are not bailed to the same community as the victim if possible, especially without oversight of the perpetrator by relevant agencies.

Support for women going through court processes is needed due to the length proceedings can take. In turn, IOs could be more detailed/personalised, and should take in to account the safety of any children.

There was agreement from attendees that there is too much reliance on good behaviour bonds for perpetrators.

In addition, attendees agreed that there is a need for clear processes in terms of informing victims, which services must also have information about.

Infrastructure and Support

A funded peak body for DV services

There was support for this commitment. Attendees were keen for there to be ongoing communication with the Coalition across the State, for the sector and the broader community. The Peak needs to have clear work role in terms of sharing information and taking action on key issues (which might include legislative change, identification of service gaps/improvements etc).

Attendees were interested in the Coalition giving consideration to work which could be done at the National level.

No interest loans for women's shelters

There was a need for further detail expressed by attendees, particularly in relation to how loans would be paid back, how they could be utilised if services don't own the properties being upgraded, and whether there would be issues with Capital Gains.

Improving communications (data sharing)

Much of the discussion focused on current information sharing practices, including the Family Safety Framework (FSF), and how confidentiality can be maintained, particularly in small communities.

There is a need for clear and streamlined data sharing between government and non-government agencies.

Personal Protection App

There was support for the app, as it allows for ongoing engagement with the people using it. There was a suggestion that the use of the app be embedded in risk and safety planning.

Service Responses

Safety hubs

Attendees developed three options for potential models for Safety Hubs in the area, which are outlined below.

Proposed model: Assertive outreach by a range of services who remain in their current locations (ie services are not co-located), but facilitate a 'no wrong door' approach by identifying participating services (perhaps with a sticker or some other mechanism).

Proposed model: Physical co-location of relevant services, including domestic violence services, SAPOL, financial counsellors, legal services, cultural services, child protection, sexual health and so on.

Proposed model: An existing community location could be utilised (non-DV fronted), where volunteers could be based. Volunteers would facilitate referrals to a wide range of services, overseen by a Volunteer Coordinator. As well as referrals, could be a site of information provision on a range of issues.

Crisis Accommodation

Attendees agreed that this commitment provides an opportunity to consider utilising some funding for perpetrator support attached to perpetrator accommodation (as well as whole of family support should it be needed). As accommodation of this nature tends to be high visibility, it might be better for use as perpetrator accommodation, but must have onsite workers/support (using for perpetrators would be useful for bail as well as ensuring women and children can stay in their homes). Perpetrator accommodation would assist with issues related to homelessness and help to prevent perpetrators manipulating housing/homelessness system and avoiding behaviour change programs. Accommodation could form part of an overall service package which would include change programs as well as pathways to education and employment.

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).

Motels are not safe for women or their children.

Safety planning must be paramount, with accommodation needs part of the plan.

There must be services associated with the accommodation, and accommodation is needed in outlying areas as well as larger regional centre/s to maintain community connections. There must also be a range of sizes offered (ie some with a number of bedrooms, some with only one).

24/7 Crisis hotline

No specific feedback was received on this commitment.

More targeted rehabilitation for DV perpetrators

Men's support workers are needed across all regions to help prevent re-offending, remove stigma and enable one on one support.

There is a need to ensure that responses to perpetrators, particularly in community settings, are consistent and that interventions are made as early as possible.

There needs to be pathways for perpetrators to seek help themselves, as voluntary programs may be more effective than those mandated by a court.

There should be a range of options available, including community support activities, such as men's sheds and other group activities, as well as allowing for friends and family to play a role in helping the perpetrator.

In relation to justice/courts, there was agreement that perpetrator programs cannot only be associated with convictions – interventions need to be done at bail, although earlier than that would be preferable (particularly for cases where charges don't eventuate).

Drug and alcohol abuse is flagged as an issue for Whyalla, and there was discussion about linking perpetrator programs with drug and alcohol programs.

Longer, evaluated programs for perpetrators are needed.

Other

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

These included:

A website summarising the services available in the region, as well as information relating to determining your level of risk, would be useful.

Use of technology in service provision – attendees identified the need for greater ability to use things like Skype in regional areas.

Information sharing guidelines vs privacy legislation – there are some issues for services which receive both State and Federal funding. May therefore be useful to provide clarification on the ISGs and how they work to services.

There is a need for safe spaces for LGBTIQ people dealing with violence, as well as support services for male victims of violence.

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.

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

Outreach capability as part of the Safety Hub model was reiterated by one respondent, as was the need for the location to be in an area of high need.

