



MEETING COMMUNIQUÉ

Tuesday, 17 May 2016
Brisbane

On Tuesday, 17 May 2016, the Domestic and Family Violence Implementation Council (Council) held its fourth meeting.

The meeting focused on **service responses** to people affected by domestic and family violence, one of the three key themes of the *Not Now, Not Ever* report.

The Director-General of the Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services delivered a presentation to Council on work being undertaken to implement recommendations of the *Not Now, Not Ever* report in accordance with the framework set out in Queensland's Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy. This work is focused on **re-engineering the domestic and family violence service system** across the continuum of the service response: prevention, early intervention, crisis response and recovery.

Key actions discussed included:

- Development of a **funding and investment model** as a foundation to guide future long-term investment in domestic and family violence services.
- Delivery of **new and enhanced services** such as the two new 72 hour **crisis shelters** in Brisbane and Townsville which assisted over 1100 people between December 2015 and April 2016.
- Development of a state-wide network of **perpetrator programs**, informed by evaluations and findings from existing perpetrator initiatives in Queensland.
- Delivery of **integrated service response trials** in three pilot locations: urban (Logan/Beenleigh), regional (Mount Isa) and a discrete Indigenous community (location still to be determined). The trials will be developed through a co-design process with the sector and will build on existing integrated response models operating in Queensland.

Following the presentation, Council engaged in a **round table discussion** with representatives of key domestic and family violence services involved in the current domestic and family violence reform process. Organisations represented were the **Domestic Violence Prevention Centre Gold Coast Inc., DV Connect, Save the Children**, the **Ipswich Domestic Violence Action Centre** and **YFS Ltd.**

Council heard about the Domestic Violence Prevention Centre Gold's Coast's involvement with the **trial of the specialist domestic and family violence court** at Southport. The trial was reported to be adopting innovative approaches which enable better risk assessment and ensure that perpetrators, rather than victims, are central to the court process.

DV Connect advised of the **variations in services** required to support persons affected by domestic and family violence across the state. It was noted that many victims and perpetrators did not fit the common understandings of those roles and, as a result, may not access available services. The importance of breaking the stereotypes associated with domestic and family violence was stressed.

There was further discussion regarding the two new **crisis shelters** which commenced operation in December 2015. Council particularly noted the expeditious establishment of these shelters had been made possible through close cooperation and collaboration between government agencies and the sector.

In relation to the Brisbane shelter (managed by Save the Children with outreach services provided by **Micah Projects**), Council noted that information collected to date indicated a **significant decrease in the number of women returning to violent situations**, in comparison with women temporarily accommodated in motels. Council also heard that Micah Projects has been working closely with police to provide **mobile services** to women in the community, which has enabled timely crisis responses to support the needs of many victims.

Further information was provided about the experience of the Ipswich Domestic Violence Action Centre in addressing domestic and family violence accommodation needs in the Ipswich area. The importance of government and non-government agencies **understanding each other's roles** was emphasised as critical to delivering effective integrated services to support victims' needs.

The delivery of **perpetrators programs** was discussed, noting YFS Ltd's experience in delivering these programs. It was noted that such programs would benefit from robust evaluations and the benefits may be enhanced by increasing the duration of courses.

Overall, Council noted the positive feedback on some of the measures implemented to date, and the **collaborative nature** of the implementation of the service delivery recommendations of the *Not Now, Not Ever* report. However, implementation work is ongoing and further measures, such as implementation of the **common risk assessment framework**, are still required to improve integration and consistency of service responses.