



25 YEARS

No to Violence

Working together to end men's family violence

Victorian Listening Tour Report

Background

No To Violence undertook a grass-roots listening tour in areas of family violence high incidence across Victoria in September and October 2018.

The tour provided humbling and educative insights into specific issues at each stop and gave us an opportunity to identify common themes that emerged across state. As the largest peak body in Australia representing organisations and individuals working directly with men to end family violence, our priority is to ensure there is continued bipartisan rigour and support applied to policy commitments arising from the Royal Commission into Family Violence, backed up by solid funding to support men's family violence prevention and interventions in Victoria.

We would like to acknowledge the unprecedented commitment this government has given to ending family violence since the Royal Commission into Family Violence. Expanding the duration of Men's Behaviour Change programs and the revision of the Minimum Standards was particularly relevant to No To Violence and essential to ensure our services are in line with best practice. Expanding the range of interventions with men who use family violence is also well underway and welcome.

Increased integration through the Orange Door rollout and highly visible public awareness campaigns have been excellent moves in the right direction and we are excited to see more of these commitments honoured as we move forward. The implementation of Royal Commission recommendations has had a transformative impact in pushing a historically hidden issue into public view. Inspired by this, our tour intended to harness the energy of this moment to identify how new initiatives were impacting service providers on the ground through key areas across the state and where more attention may need to be focused as needs emerge.

Led by CEO, Jacqui Watt, No To Violence convened a series of 12 listening workshops and met with participants from a wide cross-section of each community in metropolitan and regional Victoria:

- Police
- Legal services
- CALD communities
- Health workers
- Frontline service providers
- Experts and community leaders from the family violence sector.

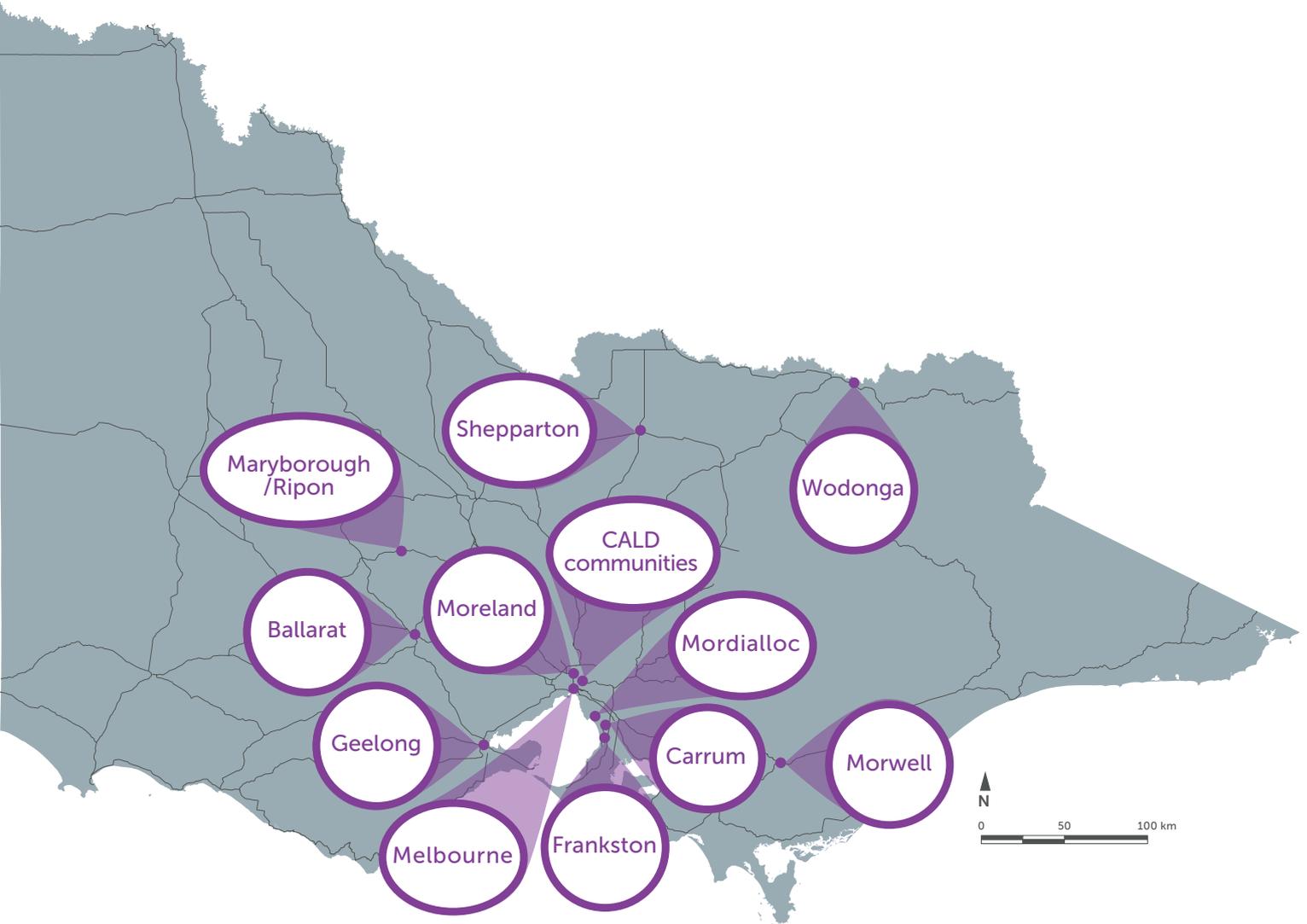
Local MPs and MLCs were also invited to attend to hear first-hand about the challenges, service gaps and collaborative innovations being trialled in engaging with men who use family violence.

No To Violence and our Victorian members work with hundreds of men each week from men who have chosen to use family violence in Victoria. Victoria Police respond to a family violence incident every seven minutes. Change and reform is coming, prevention-based work is underway, but the safety of women and children is still violated every day.

No To Violence is only one part of the sector, working alongside others supporting the work of women's and children's services. But the evidence shows that working directly with men to change their behaviour can contribute to the safety of women and children. Through our telephone referral service, we refer these men into behavioural change programs that have been shown to be effective in mitigating the very worst of the harm of family violence - hospital admissions and deaths.

This Listening Tour has proved an invaluable experience for No To Violence: it has identified a genuine appetite for collaboration amongst these key community service providers. It has highlighted the skills and expertise of these groups, who know their community best, and can readily identify opportunities for enhanced service delivery. And it has fostered in all of us a strong, shared expectation for services to continue to improve, resulting in real behavioural change. NTV is mindful that the Expert Advisory Committee on Perpetrator Interventions (EACPI) has submitted their final report to government. No To Violence commends this work and wishes to play its fullest part in implementing the recommendations.

Locations visited: September and October 2018



Methodology

Our objective for the Listening Tour was to listen closely to the needs of practitioners and service providers, identify priorities for those working with perpetrators, and report those to government.

We met with local organisations and MPs to hear first-hand about their priority areas for men's family violence services in relation to implementation of the findings of the Royal Commission including recommendations for dealing with diverse communities, as well as training and scaling up the workforce to meet the demand for services.

We travelled to and met with practitioners and service providers from the following communities:

- CALD communities – metro Melbourne
- Ballarat/Buninyong
- Carrum
- Geelong
- Frankston
- Maryborough/Ripon
- Melbourne
- Mordialloc
- Moreland/Northern Metropolitan
- Morwell
- Wodonga
- Shepparton

We designed and developed a workshop process to elicit open, safe communication amongst practitioners and providers within the communities, along with the available MPs for their electorates, and asked participants to identify:

- pressure points in the delivery of services and effective responses to the challenges of family violence;
- possible ways to intersect and integrate better across men's services and other services in the sector;
- the gaps in men's services across the range of family violence reform measures.

Trial case management linking men with services and counselling was successful. It needs to be reassessed for longer term.

– Moreland

Extensive notes and primary sources were amassed from each workshop and are available if required. No To Violence has distributed the notes and findings from each workshop to all participants, including MPs, as a record of currency and as a guide to assist them in identifying potential partnerships, collaborations and issues to be addressed.

When we started our Listening Tour, we were clear about our needs to continue to lead the largest peak body in Australia representing practitioners working with men to end family violence. We wanted to know how we can best support the range of practitioners in Victoria and understand the pressures and challenges they were facing as family violence reform is implemented across the State.

Since the Royal Commission in to Family Violence, public interest and demand for change in our community response to violence has never been stronger. Reform is under way, and the terrible harm and cost is starting to be addressed more determinedly than ever before. This will take at least 10 years of systemic reform and inter-generational change. Much of the effort and funds have rightly focused on supporting women and their families. An area that has received less attention is in addressing men's behavioural change and other interventions or approaches to engaging with men.

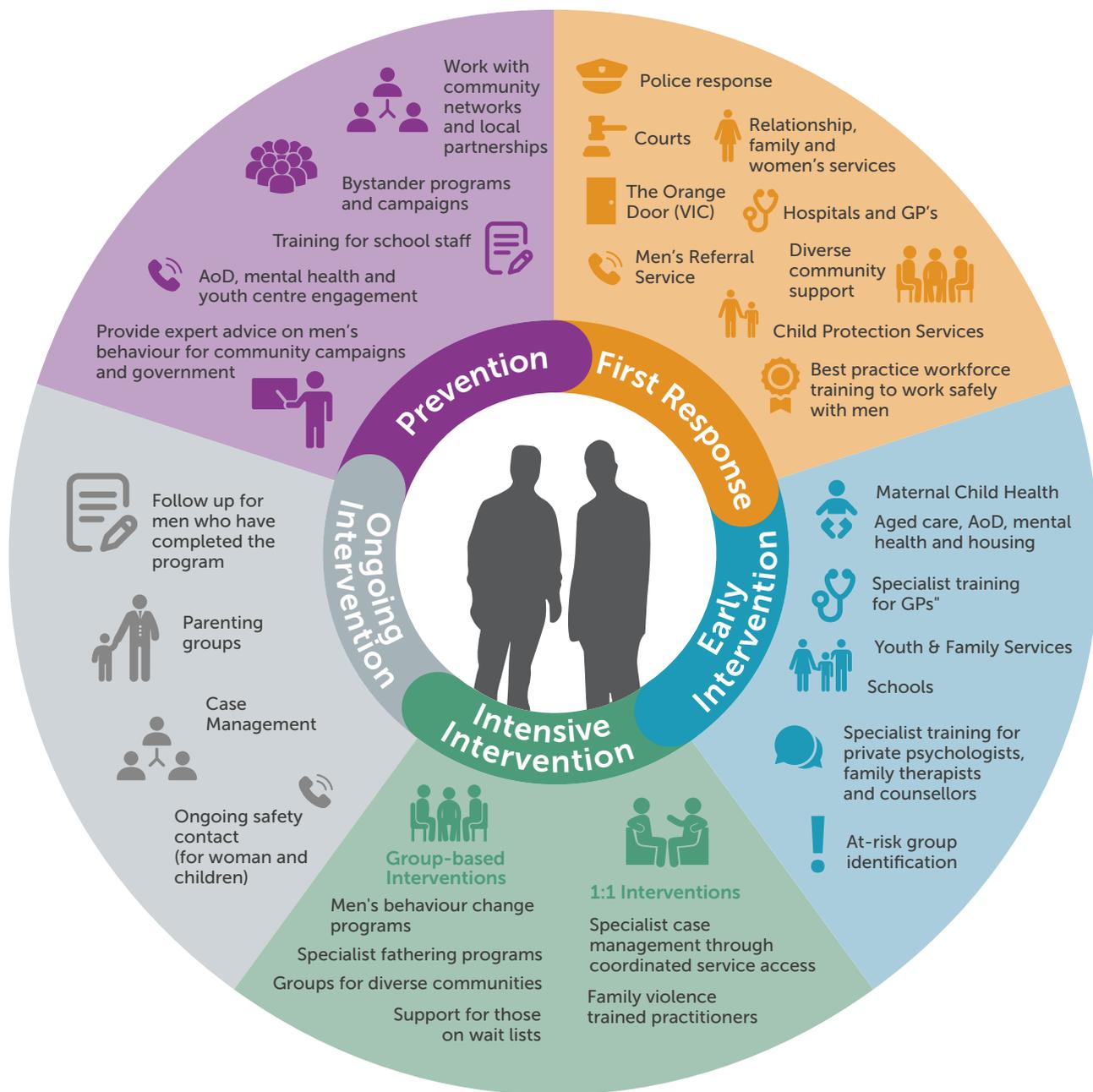
We knew there was a critical need for:

- Core funding to continue as demand for services rise. Continued standards for workforce training, capacity building and development for practitioners and workers in associated services;
- Innovative programs and suitably skilled staff for intervention and engagement with diverse communities;
- Practice based research to provide an evidence base for measuring the success of interventions, trial programs and innovative additional interventions.

At every one of the twelve stops on the tour, these needs have been reinforced as critical across the range of service providers and practitioners.

Further to these needs, local area learnings from both urban and regional Victoria were gained, along with insights from our CALD cohort regarding the progress, challenges and barriers to the implementation of Family Violence reform. These are outlined in our Executive Summary following.

With men's engagement, **you can't assume a one size fits all model.** We need wraparound services to keep them in view and make change possible. *– Mordialloc*



As a visual tool to keep the range of family violence reform involving engagement with men at top of mind, we developed a draft model, and sought input and feedback from all participants. Our aim in this was to develop a visual model of what is needed in the full suite of interventions and responses for engaging with men who use family violence.

Executive summary key findings

During the Tour we found that our regional, CALD and mainstream practitioners consistently identified common pressure points and areas that require strengthening, capacity building and a coordinated, collaborative approach amongst agencies to provide stronger links and connections between services and organisations.

Themes

1. Collaborative approaches to interventions and service delivery is urgently required
2. Increased workplace training and development is needed to ensure suitably skilled staff
3. Innovative programs to achieve wider community outreach are underway, but need to be evaluated
4. Practice based research and data is missing from the sector
5. Concern about implementing integration to ensure non-collusive men's engagement
6. Sustainable, assured funding flow for core activities

1. Collaborative approach to interventions and service delivery is urgently required

We need more collaboration like this. It's like speed-dating networking so people in the sector get to know more about the work of other service providers.

– Workshop participant from Frankston

We need to achieve a breakthrough from silos and lack of connections – by really helping people work well together in the men's space. With a properly funded, properly resourced team, No To Violence can facilitate the collaborative practice and the fostering of relationships in the sector and with government to optimise the successful implementation and outcomes of reform.

For some practitioners and organisations, the Listening Tour was the first time they had been able to meet to establish relationships, mostly due to workload pressure mentioned above. Already, some improved collaboration and projects are being worked up between No To Violence and the practitioners we met.

- Improving collaboration needs adequate resources and effective leadership. By facilitating, co-designing and seeking opportunities for effective partnerships, true collaboration can occur, including collaborations as a target for funding and for “stretch collaboration” to be a principle that guides where funding goes.
- Community engagement at earlier stages of intervention can help mitigate the risk of behaviours escalating. Every practitioner we met is seeking improved links and connections to community development organisations, to ensure that they have the training and expertise available to identify risky behaviours, to take an invitation approach to at risk men to join parenting programs, mentoring/ buddy programs for new arrivals, community activities, sporting clubs and other culturally safe places for at risk men to learn and observe how to make better choices.

We have an overwhelming incapacity to meet demand [from men]. **It's heartbreaking for practitioners** (not being able to respond on time or with adequate wrap around services).

– Participant from Wodonga workshop

2. Workplace training and development to ensure suitably skilled staff

- **A crucial need for appropriate training and uniform standards for ALL first responders** to ensure a consistent approach to engagement with men using violence. This includes police, maternal health clinics, community development workers, undergraduate psychology training, therapists, magistrates and other legal services, child, family and health workers.
- **Insufficient skilled workforce to meet demand** across all areas of intersection and services for men using violence, including upskilling of current staff across services in non-collusive practice.

We cannot possibly deliver services in 200 languages but what we can do is **to upskill the workforce with cultural competency** and go out and recruit more people who can speak more languages.

– Participant from our CALD workshop

3. Innovative programs are needed to achieve wider community outreach

- **Significant investment has been made in extending the length of the programs, but demand is increasing.** Numbers of men referred to men's behaviour change programs is rising. Resourcing is not adequately keeping pace with increased demand. Practitioners find it difficult to cope with overwhelming numbers in some areas. A participant in Wodonga said they had 25-30 referrals over a four-day week. Additionally, it is important to recognise individual needs for individual families and to respond to those needs appropriately. This requires adequate assessment and identification processes for the needs of each family and follow up case management needs as appropriate.
- **Big CALD gaps are evident, with a critical lack of culturally competent and culturally safe practitioners** to service diverse communities particularly for men who do not speak English. There are currently over 200 language groups in Victoria, and yet trial programs are currently only available in Vietnamese and Arabic languages. Delivering a wider range of CALD programs would improve grassroots response to the challenge.
- **Cultural differences pose significant challenges** – these communities need to be able to access mainstream delivery, but there is a lack of trained staff of appropriate cultural background to facilitate first responders and in other intervention spaces. This includes overcoming language and cultural barriers, while reiterating to responders across the community that culture is not an excuse for violence. As above, delivering a wider range of CALD programs would improve the grassroots response. We are working with InTouch on this issue.
- **'Beyond crisis' response is critical** including early interventions, therapeutic intervention and prevention work for at risk men, and is urgently sought to reduce the risk of violence and improve outcomes for women and children. Genuine community-wide attitudinal and behavioural change cannot be fully delivered unless we broaden our efforts beyond interventions 'after the fact'.

4. Practice based research and data is missing from the sector

- Victorian specific research in close collaboration with the sector to demonstrate strengths and successes of current reforms and practice innovations, with support to translate research into practice to share successes and avoid duplication.
- Current Australian research is mostly academic in nature, not practice based, where the rubber hits the road.

We have an **overwhelming incapacity to meet demand** [from men]. **It's heartbreaking for practitioners** (not being able to respond on time or with adequate wrap around services).

– Wodonga

5. Concern about implementing integration to ensure non-collusive men's engagement

I want to see a bucket load more of men's services to address this problem.

– Workshop participant from Gippsland

The swift rollout of the first Orange Door Safety Hubs has been a significant and welcome step in implementation of reform.

It is ambitious to expect a new system and system-wide coordinated response to be developed in the short-term considering the significance of the change and growth required in the range, quality and types of reforms required.

The swift implementation of Orange Door Hubs has meant that No to Violence has not been engaged adequately to deliver specialist training to Orange door staff on safely engaging with men in a non-collusive manner. To provide the best chances of safety for women and children, we need to ensure Orange Door is engaging in best practice when engaging with perpetrators of violence.

Gaps and concerns were raised about the implementation and operation of Orange Door hubs in their links and connections with men's specialist service practitioners.

A need for further training and practice leadership in identifying when, where and how the Orange Door refers and responds to men's services was a key issue. As referrals of incidences rise into the Orange Door, the need for improved awareness amongst the sector of men's engagement practice, including culturally competent services for diverse communities becomes more and more important.

Practitioners have been concerned that there is insufficient clarity amongst other organisations about the role and the value of men's work in the space, and how that interacts with other sector services.

Recruitment and retention of suitably qualified staff with best practice knowledge of men's services are often overlooked as practical concerns for the effective operations of organisations and again, skilled staff with consistent standards of practice are urgently required.

Key findings

There is a need for practice leadership to ensure staff are sufficiently trained and that there are systems in place to avoid burnout and high turnover.

Location of Hubs was noted as an issue. In many smaller communities within the hub catchment area, there is simply no public transport for women and children, which means that affected family members may not have equitable access to Orange Doors, putting increased pressure on smaller communities to find alternative interventions to keep women and children safe.

The need to communicate effectively and consistently was an acknowledged gap, with safety, privacy and confidentiality being cited as a driver, however, the key reason cited for improved communication and protocols was to ensure that services had consistent data sets for families affected by violence, including inputs from services engaging with men - to keep him in view.

We need to be brave enough to think differently and ask for what we really need. For example, the lack of emergency housing leads to homelessness for victims and/or perpetrators and increases the risk of violence. For men, this means they drop out of view, or continue to use family violence in the home. Perhaps the answer is to fund transitional housing for men and keep women and children safe in their existing home?

– Workshop participant

6. Sustainable, assured funding flow for core activities

Increased demand for men’s behavioural change programs puts increased pressure on resources to meet demand. We need strategies to deal with waiting lists. Funding is critical to address this challenge. **An expanded range of perpetrator interventions must continue to be funded to keep women and children safe.** Short-term funding for current innovative approaches and pilot programs (e.g. Health/Justice partnerships, CALD language programs, case management trials) is due to end in June 2019. There is a high risk that if programs cease, there will be a negative impact on both sustainable long-term practice of keeping women and children safer, and on skilled workforce stability.

Demand has increased through the roof since the Royal Commission. **Engagement has increased significantly since the Royal Commission.** Beforehand, men’s engagement was 18-25%. Post-Royal Commission, men’s engagement is 60%.

– Geelong

- **Funding for most trial programs ends in 2019**, which leaves communities, services and families with uncertainty about consistent delivery of interventions.
- **Long-term case management is insufficiently funded** for men (as per Recommendations 4 and 86 of Royal Commission). Current case management funding covers only 6 to 13 weeks for women and families affected by family violence, and funding of trial programs for 1:1 case management for men using violence is small (e.g. Ballarat CAFS are funded for only 10 men).

The more we can do to support the perpetrators with programs, the better off women and children will be.

– Workshop participant from Buninyong

Overarching recommendations

No to Violence identified key areas of focus to improve standards in workplace training, resourcing and service delivery:

- Greater funding to be committed and guaranteed over the longer term, to be directed at a sustainable integrated model, providing a seamless approach across services.
- No to Violence can provide practice leadership to ensure consistency, knowledge and expertise of best practice.
- Need for mainstream services to be upskilled to deal with CALD communities and to strengthen systems to deal with men from culturally diverse background.
- Incentives to collaboration to be encouraged. Funding should be geared towards facilitating collaboration between organisations in the community sector.
- Identification and response training to be applied across first responder and supporting services to ensure seamless and high-quality service and referrals throughout the sector.

Doing things differently

Focus on sustainable and realistic models of collaboration throughout the sector with high-quality practice leadership.

Upskilling health and community workers to identify and flag potential family violence situations.

Housing – Residential programs for men to coincide with MBCP's with a view to long-term, affordable housing.

Adolescent Violence – Address gaps in services for adolescents (12-18) and implement targeted early intervention services.

Train police in non-collusive practice and communication with perpetrators, so that we provide an optimal standard of communication across police and services.

Develop dedicated roles for people to provide practice leadership, manage collaboration and pathways between services.

Implement a suite of interventions based on need rather than a one-size, fits all model.

Funding to incentivise collaborative work between organisations.

To keep him in view, he needs a roof over his head and we can't lock everyone up. We need to implement residential programs for men, where they can still work and participate in the community, but with monitoring and programs.

– Shepparton

The courthouse doesn't have a safe space for victims, but right across the road in Community Health is a safe space with video conferencing. Instead of improving the courthouse and losing court services, **can't somebody at Justice just greenlight the video conferencing space?**

– Maryborough

Quick Wins

- ✓ Greenlight safe video conferencing space for the courthouse in Maryborough.
- ✓ Specialist men's respondent workers in rural court room settings such as Shepparton.
- ✓ Changing the name of Maternal and Child Health Services to Family Health Services to ensure men are actively encouraged to engage fully as parents from pregnancy.
- ✓ Additional training for Maternal and Child Health Nurses around identifying forced marriage.
- ✓ Increased staffing and supervisory support for hotspot areas such as Gateway Health in Wodonga, who are experiencing extremely high demand.
- ✓ Increasing staffing levels for specialist men's services in The Orange Doors, who are currently understaffed in men's specialist programs.
- ✓ Commitment to ongoing core funding and extension of boost funding for No To Violence for a period of four years to support long term planning.
- ✓ Full commitment and funding to the recommendations of the EACPI report and a reconstitution of the governance of EACPI to reflect a collaboration between government and NGO's.

What is needed

Consistent policies, protocols and procedures need to be embedded in each part of the system that interacts with perpetrators, ensuring that the message that family violence will not be tolerated continues to be reinforced, while still engaging effectively with men to keep them in view.

Cost: \$1,350,000 for:

- NTV to complete leadership team and expand staff capacity to support implementation of reform, workforce development, practice leadership and policy advice. Investment in Joining the Dots to create a coordinated, efficient and effective system that tilts towards the perpetrator is required at this stage of implementation

Cost: \$350,000.

- Investment in NTV to facilitate a collaborative practice framework for men's engagement to ensure each part of the system has a consistent, non-collusive approach.

Cost: \$1,000,000

Collaborative sector approach – NTV to be more closely involved in the establishment of future Orange Doors to involve sector stakeholders such as Primary Care Partnerships, Primary Health Networks, Community Health Services, local councils and service organisations No to Violence will work closely with local and regional integration structures to ensure that all local organisations are able to work towards Orange Door implementation. Training for all Orange Door staff delivered by specialist NGOs. NTV to deliver specialist training on identifying and responding to perpetrators of violence.

Cost \$350,000

To continue to support funding for additional enhanced programs to diverse communities, to ensure continuity beyond innovation trial periods.

Not Costed

Scoping Victorian specific research in close collaboration with the men's engagement sector to demonstrate strengths and successes of current reforms and practice innovations, with support to translate research into practice.

Cost: \$50,000

The establishment of a statewide coordinator to develop a practice framework for specialist case management.

Cost: \$150,000

Development of practice framework for specialist case management adolescent violence in the home.

Cost \$150,000

Expansion of the specialist men's case management service to all specialist men's services in Victoria additional 2000 places.

Cost: \$5,400,000

Increase of men behaviour change programs by 25%.

Cost: \$3,600,000

Waitlist management service and reports to government to be delivered by Men's Referral Service.

Cost: 1,200,000

What else is needed - improving practice and services to meet the demands of a diverse community

Cultural differences and the needs for victims and perpetrators from diverse communities require specific interventions and programs to address specific needs within these communities.

No To Violence recognises the specific needs of our diverse communities, to ensure the safety of women and children of all backgrounds, and including:

- Aboriginal people
- CALD people
- LGBTQI people
- Older people
- People with disabilities.

Recommendation 87 of the Royal Commission into Family Violence urges further interventions for perpetrators beyond the current men's behaviour change programs.

Research has shown that the strongest predictors for holding violence-supportive attitudes are men who have low levels of support for gender equity. These include condoning violence against women; men controlling decision-making and limiting women's independence; acceptance of rigid gender stereotypes and roles; and having peer relationships that focus on aggression and disrespect towards women. It is these beliefs that must be challenged and changed.

No To Violence welcomes the Victorian Government's additional funding to extend men's behavioural change programs from 12 weeks to 20 weeks. However, we are already experiencing increased demand for referrals into these programs, particularly from diverse groups within the community.

The Perpetrator section in the prelude to the Royal Commission's recommendations refers to the

challenge that behaviour change “programs do not cater for different cohorts of perpetrators.”

The Victorian Government has recently provided \$4.8 million to fund trials of seven innovative new perpetrator intervention programs to target diverse groups. But the funding runs out in July 2019. Additional funding is required to continue to roll out these programs on a broader scale, including for other diverse groups.

Specifically these include:

- Men with a cognitive impairment
- Women and gender diverse people who use force
- Hazara and South Asian men
- ATSI services.

Continued Research

Australia has lacked research into the outcomes, effectiveness and development of men’s behavioural change programs. Building on the ANROWS report on perpetrator interventions due in 2019, we believe that a strong evidence base is critical to ensure that governments, the community and the sector make good decisions about investments in these programs as per (but not limited) to Recommendation 91 of Royal Commission.

Recommendation 91: The Victorian Government, in consultation with No To Violence [within 12 months]:

- review and update the Men’s Behaviour Change Programs Minimum Standards to reflect research findings, national and international best practice, and the central importance of partner contact work.

- develop a compliance framework, incorporating an accreditation process, for providers of men’s behaviour change programs.

The Royal Commission also found that “we do not know the extent to which existing programs are successful in changing an individual’s behaviour and attitudes or in keeping victims safe.”

Whilst there is a range of research through university-based studies, No To Violence believes that practice-based research derived from those on the ground is also needed to be able to adequately assess investment outcomes and effective interventions. Currently we rely on UK reports like Project Mirabal, which provide strong evidence that men’s behavioural change programs can be most effective in reducing the most harmful impact of family violence - hospital admissions and deaths. In addition, it has shown that just over half of women and children reported feeling very safe by the 12-month point compared to less than one in ten at baseline.

Following from Project Mirabal, the need for local research into the effectiveness of interventions is essential to keep victims safe and to identify how best to do this.

Local research – both statewide across Victoria and in regions – is urgently needed to identify problem areas, improve interventions and continue to evolve innovative approaches.

What is needed/costings in brief:	Cost
Facilitate stretch collaboration between men’s engagement practitioners and service providers across Victoria.	\$1,350,000: Expanded staff capacity (\$350,000) Collaborative framework (\$1,000,000)
Funding for additional enhanced programs to diverse communities, beyond innovation trial periods.	Not costed
NTV establishment of future Orange Doors involving sector stakeholders.	\$350,000
Scoping Victorian specific research.	\$50,000
Statewide coordinator: framework for specialist case management.	\$150,000
Practice framework for adolescent violence in the home.	\$150,000
Expansion of the specialist men’s case management service.	\$5,400,000
Increase of Men Behaviour Change Program by 25%	\$3,600,000
Waitlist management service and recommendations to government.	\$1,200,000
Total Costing	\$12,250,000

1. Project Mirabal Kelly, L. and Westmarland, N. (2015) Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programmes: Steps Towards Change. Project Mirabal Final Report. London and Durham: London Metropolitan University and Durham University

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