

2022-23

NSW Pre-budget Submission



28 January 2022

The Hon. Natalie Ward
Minister for Women's Safety and the Prevention of
Domestic and Sexual Violence
GPO Box 5341
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Minister Ward

I am writing to you to share the NSW Men's Behaviour Change Network (MBCN) and No to Violence's pre-Budget submission for the 2022-23 Budget. This builds upon the 2022-23 NSW State Budget Key Asks we shared with your office on 5 January 2022.

While family violence is almost always perpetrated by men, the physical, social, emotional and economic consequences of family violence are disproportionately placed on victim-survivors, primarily women and children. In addition to the daily threat and harm to women and children, **men's family violence costs Australia more than \$20 billion dollars every year**, with State and Territory governments losing more than \$7 billion dollars annually.

The 2022-23 NSW State Budget provides an opportunity to correct this misplaced burden.

We are calling for an additional investment of more than **\$109 million over four years from 2022-23** to enhance the ability of Men's Behaviour Change Programs to maintain the safety of women and children, hold perpetrators to account for their use of violence and abusive behaviours, and to support long-term behavioural change.

This investment includes:

- **\$93 million** to sustain and enhance delivery of the existing MBCPs across NSW, recognising that this additional and ongoing investment is needed to ensure that perpetrators assessed as suitable for MBCPs, can access a MBCP regardless of where they live in NSW.
- **\$3.8 million** to support and retain a skilled and sustainable Male Family Violence Intervention (MFVI) workforce, through supporting MBC practitioners to complete training and develop a workforce strategy for the MFVI sector and ongoing sector development.
- **\$12.2 million** to develop, deliver and evaluate specialised MBCPs that are community led for community sector groups including First Nations communities, the LGBTIQ+ communities, and migrant and refugee communities.

This investment will help NSW to achieve the NSW Premier's Priority of reducing the number of domestic violence offenders by 25 per cent by 2023 and ensure all children and families in NSW thrive in line with the "Children and families thrive" State Outcome.

Thank you for considering this pre-budget submission for the 2022-23 NSW State Budget. No to Violence would greatly appreciate the opportunity to discuss this submission in further detail with you.

Please contact me at jacquiw@ntv.org.au or 0429 030 318 to arrange this meeting.

Yours sincerely



Jacqui Watt
Chief Executive Officer

For Noting:

The **NSW MBCN** is made up of all registered men's behaviour change providers and their practitioners in NSW and is committed to supporting those affected by family and domestic violence and providing opportunities for perpetrators to examine and end their use of domestic and family violence.

No to Violence is Australia's largest peak body representing organisations and individuals working with men to end family violence. We provide support and advocacy through specialised national workforce development and sector development in men's family violence interventions. No to Violence also operates the national Men's Referral Service, which is an umbrella term for a number of services for men, including single and multi-session support, police referral services and accommodation support services.

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Acknowledgment of Country

No to Violence acknowledges First Nations Peoples across these lands; the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters. We pay respect to all Elders, past, present and emerging. We acknowledge a deep connection with country which has existed over 60,000 years. We acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded, and this was and always will be First Nation's land.



Executive Summary

One in four Australian women have experienced intimate partner violence since the age of 15 (PSS 2016). Intimate partner violence is disproportionately perpetrated by men against women and girls: men's violence against women is so pervasive that a man kills one woman each week in Australia ([Bricknell 2020](#)). Quantifying the impact of men's violence undermines the human reality—but it offers a compelling metric for increased government funding. Men's family violence costs Australia more than \$20 billion dollars every year ([DV NSW 2020](#); [PwC 2015](#)). Women directly bear the brunt of these costs, but State and Territory governments lose more than \$7 billion dollars annually as a result of men's family violence (DV NSW 2020; PwC 2015). In economic terms, men's family violence is simply bad for business; in reality, men's family violence is a threat to women and children throughout New South Wales.

New South Wales must appropriately fund the perpetrator intervention sector. Specifically, our sector requires an immediate injection of long-term, sustainable funding to develop an integrated service model; support a skilled and sustainable workforce; invest in perpetrator interventions that work for everyone; fully fund New South Wales's perpetrator intervention sector to ensure all men can access the services they need; and to strengthen the evidence-base for Men's Behaviour Change Programs.

While family violence is almost always perpetrated by men, the focus, burden, and consequences of family violence are disproportionately placed on victim-survivors, primarily women.

The 2022-23 New South Wales State Budget provides an opportunity to correct this misplaced burden; to achieve a future where the burden of responsibility and onus for change lies squarely on the shoulders of perpetrators, and the male family violence intervention (MFVI) service system is resourced to respond to risk, thereby improving the safety of victim-survivors.

Funding of **\$109,884,936.49 million** over four years is necessary to realise this future and transform the way we respond to family violence perpetrators. This investment will bring NSW closer to achieving the NSW Premier's priority for reducing domestic violence reoffending and ensuring that all children and families in NSW thrive ("Children and families thrive" State Outcome).

1. Integrated Service Model

Fully fund an integrated service model that responds to the unique needs of diverse men who use violence, and to their families.

MBCP Expansion (\$93.08 million over four years)

The New South Wales Government must immediately increase funding for Men's Behaviour Change Programs (MBCPs). Without evidence-based programs, perpetrators will continue to use violence and coercion, putting thousands of women and children at risk and costing the economy billions of dollars each year ([DV NSW 2020](#)). Men's use of family violence is a \$21.7 billion dollar problem—it requires an adequately-funded response.

Description

MBCPs are our primary response to perpetrators of family violence. Investing in a well-funded, innovative, and evidence-based MBCP sector means getting more services to more men who need them—and, ultimately, keeping more women and children safe. Without long-term, secure funding, our sector struggles to innovate, pilot new programs, implement best practice risk responses, recruit and retain skilled staff, and even evaluate the programs that already exist. We are asking the NSW government to substantially increase funding for our sector through an allocation of new and additional funding.

For MBCPs to appropriately respond to risk and support behaviour change for perpetrators of violence, they must be supported to undertake the following:

- Pre-group work including motivational interviewing to ensure MBC group readiness
- MBC group work
- 1-on-1 case work for men engaged in group work who have complex needs
- Family safety work/partner contact
- Post-group support for men (pilot at four sites)
- 1-on-1 case work for men unsuitable for MBCP group work (pilot at four sites)
- Comprehensive risk assessment and response

Investing in MBCPs to meet the Practice Standards: \$83.9 million over four years

NSW has invested in the development of the Practice Standards for the Men's Domestic Violence Behaviour Change Programs (NSW Practice Standards), an important set of guidelines for our sector. Unfortunately, the NSW government has not funded our sector so that we can *meet* these guidelines. This funding is the absolute minimum needed to fully implement the NSW Practice Standards; properly respond to and engage the individual perpetrators of violence; and to manage the risk perpetrators present to victim-survivors.

Current funding levels are insufficient for service providers to meet the NSW DCJ Practice Standards including the requirement to comply with comprehensive and ongoing risk assessment and response, partner and ex-partner contact, and embedding the Risk-Needs-Responsivity (RNR) model, which tailors the intervention to the specific needs of each individual perpetrator.

\$82.1 million over four years from 2022-23 is needed to continue delivering existing MBCPs in 47 locations across NSW to the standard required by the Practice Standards (3 of the 47 locations are new programs delivered by providers currently working towards registration; 44 sites are existing programs delivered by registered providers)

Making behaviour change stick: \$9.87 million over four years

The MBCP sector is changing rapidly. It is of the utmost importance that the NSW Government enables our sector to stay on the cutting-edge of best practice. This means investing in piloting new and innovative programs, and funding comprehensive program evaluations to measure outcomes. We need to know whether programs work, for whom, and for how long.

We require **\$8.8 million** over four years from 2022-23 to pilot and evaluate 1-on-1 case work for men who are unsuitable for MBCP group work at four sites. This pilot would run in conjunction with an already established MBCP. Many men who are referred to MBCPs are assessed as 'not group ready.' This means that they are unable to take part in and benefit from MBCPs: this is most often the case where men are classed as high-risk offenders or where they are unable and unwilling to take responsibility and be held accountable for their abusive and controlling behaviours. We propose that 160 men would be supported through this pilot program each year.

Completing an MBCP does not, unfortunately, guarantee long-term behaviour change. Perpetrators require on-going support to ensure that the behavioural changes they may have internalised during MBCP work are maintained for months and years to come. This type of work requires post-participation support and follow-up. We require **\$1.07 million** over four years from 2022-23 to pilot and evaluate post-participation support at four sites. This post-participation support would operate in tandem with an established MBCP. We propose that 80 men would be supported through this pilot program each year.

Benefits

- 1600 partners/ex-partners will be supported by Women & Children Advocates or Partner Support Workers each year (1472 partners/ex-partners of men in group work, and 128 in intensive 1on1 casework pilots)
- 2000 perpetrators of violence will be held accountable; supported to change their abusive behaviours; and kept in view of the system each year (1840 in group work and 160 in intensive 1on1 casework pilot)
- Maintaining victim-survivor safety and reducing recidivism of perpetrators by holding them to account and supporting long term behaviour change
- NSW MBCPs meet the NSW Practice Standards for Men's Behaviour Change Programs
- New MBCP programs are established at 5 sites

2. Support a skilled and sustainable workforce

Provide long-term funding to develop and retain a skilled, specialised, and sustainable workforce

The Male Family Violence Intervention (MFVI) workforce is highly specialised. Unfortunately, the current, short-term contracts and lack of competitive remuneration packages available to the MFVI workforce make attracting and retaining skilled staff a constant challenge. Without a sustainable MFVI workforce, we cannot hope to end men's family violence in NSW.

MFVI work, which includes MBCPs, is complex and requires a specialised set of skills developed through in-depth training, supervised practice, ongoing clinical supervision, and mentoring. This skill set is vital to ensure that practitioners can effectively and safely support users of violence to change their abusive behaviours for the long term. The challenges of this work are compounded by a lack of strategic investment in recruiting, retaining, and expanding the workforce, especially for MBCPs working with rural, regional and remote communities.

Investing in our sector now means reduced long-term costs: an underfunded sector is characterised by high-turnover because of burn-out and the lack of competitive remuneration packages. By investing in our sector now, the NSW Government will ensure that we can attract and retain staff, thereby decreasing the need for re-training, up-skilling, and on-boarding of new staff.

Supporting the MFVI workforce (\$3.8 million over four years)

Training our workforce: \$1.7 million over four years

The MFVI workforce comes from a wealth of backgrounds and specialisations; this diversity is one of the many strengths of our workforce. There is a distinct need, however, to standardise the education and training of the MBC workforce. This means enabling new members of our workforce to undertake the mandatory 10713NAT Graduate Certificate in Men's Behaviour Change Individual and Group-work Interventions (MB-701). While the course itself is free, there are indirect training costs which can be overly burdensome on providers who are already delivering MBCPs on extremely limited funding.

These costs include wages for staff undertaking the training (including supporting them to complete coursework and assignments during work hours, attend intensives and supervision), wages for staff who temporarily back-fill those roles to ensure MBCPs can continue to be delivered, and additional travel and accommodation costs for rural and regional providers especially when there is a return to face-to-face training as the Covid-19 pandemic eases. Anecdotal information from the sector suggests that there are indirect training costs of at least \$18,000 per person, with costs being significantly higher for providers located in rural, regional or remote locations. We require \$1.7 million over four years to enable 92 new MBC practitioners to undertake this vital, mandatory course.

Creating a workforce strategy: \$80,000 over 12 months

Creating a sustainable workforce, through retaining the existing workforce, and continuing to attract and retain new workers, requires careful planning. While there have been significant improvements in the training available to our sector and the broader specialist DFV sector, there needs to be a comprehensive workforce strategy and professional development framework for specialist domestic and family violence services in NSW, which was recommended in an audit of DFV workforce training undertaken by ECAV in 2010. Our sector needs a workforce strategy to ensure that the MFVI sector attracts and retains the highly skilled and specialised staff we need. An initial investment of **\$80,000 in 2022-23** to ECAV and NTV will enable development of a robust workforce strategy for the MFVI sector. This injection of funding must be supported with on-going funding to ensure we can fully implement the workforce strategy. The NSW MBCN and No to Violence strongly support DVNSW's recommendation for a ten-year workforce strategy for the broader specialist domestic and family violence sector to be funded.

Supporting sector development: \$2.06 million over four years from 2022-23

As the largest peak body for services working with perpetrators of family violence, No to Violence provides an important and unique function for the NSW MFVI sector. Our Sector Development team consults with the NSW Men's Behaviour Change Network, and advocates for the resources, training, guidelines, and support they need to end men's family violence. This work of the Sector Development team includes:

- Proactively increasing collaboration and integration between the MFVI sector and the broader DFV and social services sectors to keep women and children safe
- Developing, implementing, and reviewing a consistent risk assessment and management framework across NSW, the 'Risk Safety and Support Framework'
- Supporting best practice and compliance with the NSW Practice Standards for Men's Behaviour Change Programs, through regular Communities of Practice and Forums; and individual practice development support to emerging and provisionally registered providers
- Providing expert policy advice about the MFVI sector to NSW Government, the broader DFV sector including DVNSW, and social services sector to improve the system response to DFV
- Promoting the critical role of the MFVI sector in ending family violence through ongoing advocacy on behalf of the MFVI sector in NSW including written submissions to NSW Government inquiries

We require an investment of \$2.06 million over four years so that we can continue providing this vital function. This funding will ensure that we can retain 4 staff to engage with NSW service providers; develop the tools our sector needs; and continue working closely with the NSW Government.

3. Invest in perpetrator interventions that work for everyone

Develop, deliver, and evaluate six specialised MBCPs (\$12.2 million over four years)

Description

One-size does *not* fit all—especially when it comes to behaviour change programs. Different men have different needs, and these needs are tied to culture, community, and background. If the NSW Government is serious about changing the abusive behaviour of perpetrators, then we need to be serious about investing in programs that work for everyone.

We must invest in developing programs that respond to different men's needs and experiences. Working with community-led organisations who already have an established footprint in the DFV sector, to co-design for-community programs increases the likelihood that the content of MBCPs will be relevant for MBCP participants.

Self-determined, community-based practice for First Nations communities: \$4.07 million over four years

Through No to Violence's First Nations Drop-In, Aboriginal Controlled Community Organisations (ACCOs) in NSW have strongly advocated for increased resourcing for ACCOs to enable them to engage in culturally-relevant and meaningful work. We note DCJ have recently funded a NSW Aboriginal Engagement Officer at No to Violence until early 2023 to review the existing NSW Practice Standards for Men's Behaviour Change Programs to ensure that they are culturally responsive to First Nations communities, and continue working with ACCOs to develop culturally relevant MBCPs. However, additional investment needs to resources ACCOs to develop, deliver and evaluate First Nation's specific MBCPs that are community developed and led.

Community-led and safe programs for gay, bi, trans, and queer men: \$4.07 million over four years

We know that gay, bi, trans, and queer men who perpetrate family violence are almost always unable to access safe and appropriate programs. Organisations like ACON run important but woefully under-resourced programs that are designed and led by the communities they serve. Funding the expansion and continuation of these programs mean more men understand the impacts of their behaviour, take accountability, and stop using violence.

Culturally-appropriate, community-based programs for migrant and refugee men: \$4.07 million over four years

Diverse men need diverse responses. Men from migrant and refugee backgrounds require tailored interventions that speak to their culture frameworks and experiences. This means providing MBCPs and other perpetrator interventions in-language, but also in culture. An in-culture programs is one that is rooted in culturally specific ideas that ultimately enable perpetrators to understand the impact of their behaviours, and to take accountability for their violence.

In-culture, in-language programs for the Tamil and Arabic-speaking men are currently being delivered in Sydney with plans to establish another program for Farsi-speaking men in early 2022. While these programs are a step in the right direction, there needs to be ongoing and increased investment to support existing programs and expand in-language, in-culture programs to engage with men from other language and cultural groups, and roll-out of existing in-language, in-culture programs to other parts of NSW.

Additional investment is needed given that developing an in-language, in-culture program takes substantial time and effort. This includes co-designing the program with the relevant community; recruiting and training suitable male and female MBC facilitators (there usually are limited or no experienced MBC facilitators who speak the relevant language) and Women's & Children's Advocates; training and ongoing supervision for MBC facilitators and Women's & Children's Advocates, especially if they are new workers to the sector; and adequate resources to continually review and improve the program based on participant feedback.

4. Fully fund an effective MBC sector to ensure all men can access the services they need

Investment

Further investment is required to establish MBCPs in areas of NSW where there is currently no coverage.

Description

One key factor to achieve the NSW Premier's Priority for reducing domestic violence recidivism is ensuring every perpetrator of violence in NSW can be referred to an appropriate intervention, including a MBCP, in a timely manner.

Unfortunately, the NSW Government has not provided adequate resources to make this priority a reality yet. Service providers report long waitlists due to a lack of funding and face on-going challenges in recruiting and retaining qualified staff. Barriers to accessing MBCPs are significant, especially for men who live in rural, regional, and remote communities; gay, bi, trans and queer men; and migrant and refugee men. A waitlist survey undertaken by No to Violence of NSW and Victorian members in May 2021 indicated an average wait time to access services of 16 weeks.

Men who are motivated to attend an MBCP and change their behaviour may become disengaged if there is a long wait time. Face to face groups were put on hold in NSW due to the Covid-19 related lockdowns from July and August 2021 which would have increased the average wait time to access services. There continues to be uncertainty about whether face to face programs can restart as planned in early 2022 due to the high community transmission of the Omicron strain.

The NSW Government must immediately fund a mapping process to better understand the gaps in services. This mapping must include up-to-date data about rates of DFV across the state; priority geographic regions for increased investment; and services available for priority populations like First Nations communities, migrant and refugee communities, people with disabilities, and the LGBTIQ+ community. No to Violence suggests that NSW DCJ (in partnership with relevant NSW Government agencies) are best placed to commission the mapping from a university partner.

Face-to-face services must be prioritised for investment. Whilst online perpetrator interventions provide an important alternative and are considered better than no-intervention for men who cannot access a face-to-face intervention, they are not yet considered equivalent. Online perpetrator interventions should be fully funded where appropriate. It is vital that the NSW Government recognises that online perpetrator interventions are just as time and resource intensive as face-to-face interventions, if not more so.

5. Strengthen the evidence-base for MBCPs

Description

Understanding whether MBCPs work, when, how, for whom, and for how long is crucial if we are to end men's family violence. To date, the NSW MBC sector is not subject to consistent or rigorous evaluation; this leaves an enormous gap in the evidence base around 'what works.' The NSW Government must fund evaluations of MBCPs to build the evidence base for perpetrator interventions. This is a foundational piece of work that will ensure providers can maintain compliance with Principle 3 of the Practice Standards for Men's Behaviour Change, which requires that programs be informed by a sound evidence base and are subject to ongoing evaluation.

The first step in developing a sector-wide standard and framework for evaluation is solidifying the sector's theory of change and outcomes framework. The NSW Government should, in collaboration with the MFVI sector including MBCP providers, relevant peak bodies, and researchers and experts, develop an outcomes framework detailing the desired impacts, outputs, and outcomes of perpetrator interventions.

In order for an outcomes framework and subsequent evaluation framework to effectively build an evidence-base, the NSW Government should fund the implementation of these frameworks. Furthermore, the viability of these frameworks must be underpinned investment into either the training of existing MBCP staff in rigorous data collection and evaluation methods, or the provision of external evaluators with specific expertise in research design and implementation. This investment is highly recommended, as currently many MBCP providers do not have staff with the relevant expertise necessary to conduct process or outcomes evaluations.

If the NSW government chooses to invest in upskilling existing MBCP staff, instead of external evaluators, this investment must be accompanied by funding that supports additional staff time. Realistically, the responsibility of evaluation and implementation will likely fall on staff engaged in frontline work. In order to prevent detrimental impacts on service provision or the evaluation itself, it is important to ensure services receive the funding necessarily to either hire additional staff or providing existing staff with more paid hours.

We also require funding directed towards on-going monitoring of data to meet outcomes frameworks, as well as funding full program evaluations of individual MBCPs and other perpetrator interventions. This necessitates building evaluations into program logics and planning processes from the ground-up. Periodic external evaluations are desirable; but provider-driven, robust evaluations must be conducted in line with funding cycles.

Lastly, No to Violence believes that robust evaluation of MBCPs should ideally involve the voices and input of victim-survivors. While there are a number of important outcomes that should be pursued through MBCPs, victim-survivors have a key role to play in ensuring men's accountability for their actions stays at the forefront of our program. We request the government considers some funding to help facilitate the inclusion of victim-survivors in this process, such as through fairly compensated consultation.

Funding sought

Proposal	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	Four Year Total
1. Integrated Service Model					
Investing in existing MBCPs	\$20,996,410.76	\$20,996,410.76	\$20,996,410.76	\$20,996,410.76	\$83,985,643.04
1-on-1 case work pilot	\$2,205,581.36	\$2,205,581.36	\$2,205,581.36	\$2,205,581.36	\$8,822,325.44
Post-group support	\$267,324.58	\$267,324.58	\$267,324.58	\$267,324.58	\$1,069,298.31
Sub-total	\$23,008,316.93	\$23,008,316.93	\$23,008,316.93	\$23,008,316.93	\$93,877,266.79
2. Skilled and sustainable workforce					
MFVI workforce training costs	\$414,000	\$414,000	\$414,000	\$414,000	\$1,656,000
MFVI workforce strategy	\$80,000	Additional implementation funds needed in future NSW State Budgets			\$80,000 + Implementation funds (TBC)
NSW Sector Development	\$514,000	\$514,000	\$514,000	\$514,000	\$2,056,000
Sub-total	\$1,008,000	\$928,000	\$928,000	\$928,000	\$3,792,000
3. Perpetrator interventions that work for everyone					
Specialised MBCPs for First Nations, GBTQ, and migrant and refugee men (6 programs)	\$2,672,989.60	\$3,180,893.37	\$3,180,893.37	\$3,180,893.37	\$12,215,669.70
4. Fully fund an effective MBC sector to ensure all men access the services they need					
Service mapping	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Funding for MBCPs	Additional funding for MBCPs to address current service gaps needed in future NSW State Budgets				TBC

5. Strengthen the evidence base for MBCPs					
Evaluation costs	Evaluation funding needs to be provided to develop and implement evaluation framework; undertake rigorous program evaluation etc. in the 2022-23 and future NSW State Budgets.				TBC
Total	\$26,689,306.53	\$27,117,210.30	\$27,117,210.30	\$27,117,210.30	\$109,884,936.49
Note: Consumer Price Indexation (CPI) is not included in these figures and are to be applied as needed.					