



New South Wales  
No to Violence  
Listening Tour Report  
2019



## Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of Australia, the traditional custodians of the lands and water. We pay respect to all Elders, past and present as well as the individuals and organisations working in their communities to address all forms of family violence. We wish to acknowledge how family violence disproportionately affects Aboriginal communities, and in particular Aboriginal women and children. We acknowledge the importance of engaging with Aboriginal men to generate change to end family violence and strengthen family connections in Aboriginal communities. We are indebted to Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and all of the incredible leadership and progress they have achieved for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in the family violence space.



Supported by



# Executive Summary

Police respond to 400 family violence incidents everyday in NSW and in 2018, 33 women were murdered by someone known to them.

While change and reform are coming in the domestic and family violence sector, the safety of women and children is still violated every day. NSW is the largest state in Australia with the highest population densities in its cities and across its vast regional areas. The men's behaviour change sector in NSW is relatively new and collaborative work across sectors requires ongoing development. While work has begun to increase workforce and sector development initiatives around responding to men within the broader service system, there remain gaps in awareness and the system is largely uncoordinated. Awareness of sexual, domestic and family violence has become more of a public concern and yet communities remain uninformed of the 'not so recognisable' coercively controlling behaviours or how to respond to family violence within their communities. There are huge gaps in service provision across the state that prevent us from being able to adequately and safely respond to men who are using family violence.

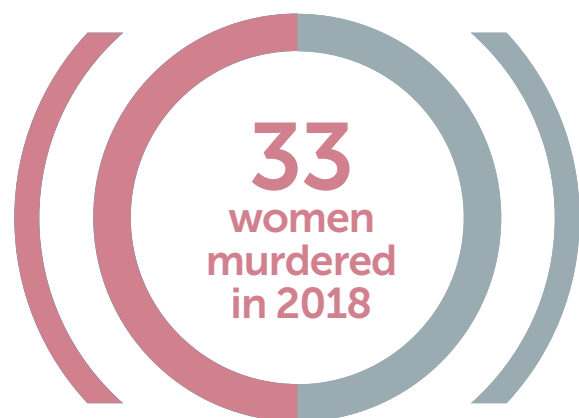
No to Violence has toured NSW regions and listened to people working on the frontline of family violence to identify how we can achieve safety for women, children and families.

No to Violence is only one part of the domestic and family violence sector, working alongside others providing women and children's services. Evidence shows that working directly with men to change their behaviour can contribute to the increased safety of women and children. Through our telephone referral service, we refer men into behaviour change programs that have been shown to be effective in mitigating the very worst of the harm of family violence.

This Listening Tour has proved an invaluable experience for No to Violence:

- > It identified a genuine appetite for collaboration amongst key community service providers
- > It highlighted the skills and expertise of these groups, people who know their community best, and can readily identify opportunities for enhanced service delivery
- > It fostered in all of us a strong, shared expectation for services to continually improve, so that increased collaboration may result in behavioural change and increased safety for families.

This report details the specific 'asks' which NTV has of candidates in the NSW election.



# Background

## Current Context in NSW

Since 2017, No to Violence has been funded by the NSW Government to provide sector development to support the sustainable growth of the men's behaviour change sector and the Men's Behaviour Change Network NSW.

No to Violence recognises that there are significant developments for the men's behaviour change sector in NSW planned for 2019:

- > The Men's Referral Service, the telephone counselling and referral service arm of No to Violence, has been funded to undertake the Automatic Referral Pathway as part of Safer Pathway. The Men's Referral Service has begun contacting men who have consented to receive a call within three days of a domestic and family violence incident
- > The Department of Justice will be introducing the revised Practice Standards for Men's Behaviour Change Programs (MBCP) and accompanying Compliance Framework. Existing and prospective providers of MBCPs will undergo a registration process following its introduction. No to Violence will be assisting providers to achieve consistent application of the new Practice Standards across all programs in NSW
- > Expansion funding was allocated to several existing accredited providers in 2018 to increase the number of MBCPs from 18 to 34. This funding is limited to the end of 2019 and has been allocated to regional areas with high rates of domestic and family violence
- > Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS) will be releasing several papers on perpetrator interventions that will inform best practice and highlight gaps in the work
- > The NSW Health Education Centre Against Violence (ECAV) continues to develop and deliver male family violence intervention training, and strengthen the workforce of the the men's behaviour change sector.

## A Safe State

No to Violence is a member of the NSW Women's Alliance, which launched the Safe State platform in 2018. The Women's Alliance believe every person has the right to be safe and to live free from violence, yet one in five women experience sexual violence and one in four women experience violence by a current or former partner. The Women's Alliance has identified six areas where significant change needs to happen:

1. Create cultural change to prevent violence and promote gender equality.
2. Provide immediate and ongoing support for people experiencing violence.
3. Ensure people experiencing violence have a safe home.
4. Ensure people experiencing violence can access justice safely.
5. Enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to lead change to end violence.
6. Be accountable to specialist workers and the wider community.

## The No to Violence Listening Tour

No to Violence undertook a grassroots listening tour in January 2019 in regional locations experiencing some of the highest incidences of family violence in NSW. This tour built on information gathered during prior visits to Western, the Mid North Coast and the South Coast of New South Wales.

No to Violence CEO, Jacqui Watt, and NSW Sector Development Manager, Lizette Twisleton, convened four listening workshops and met with participants from a wide cross-section of each community in regional NSW in January 2019.

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

# 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 to report these to government.

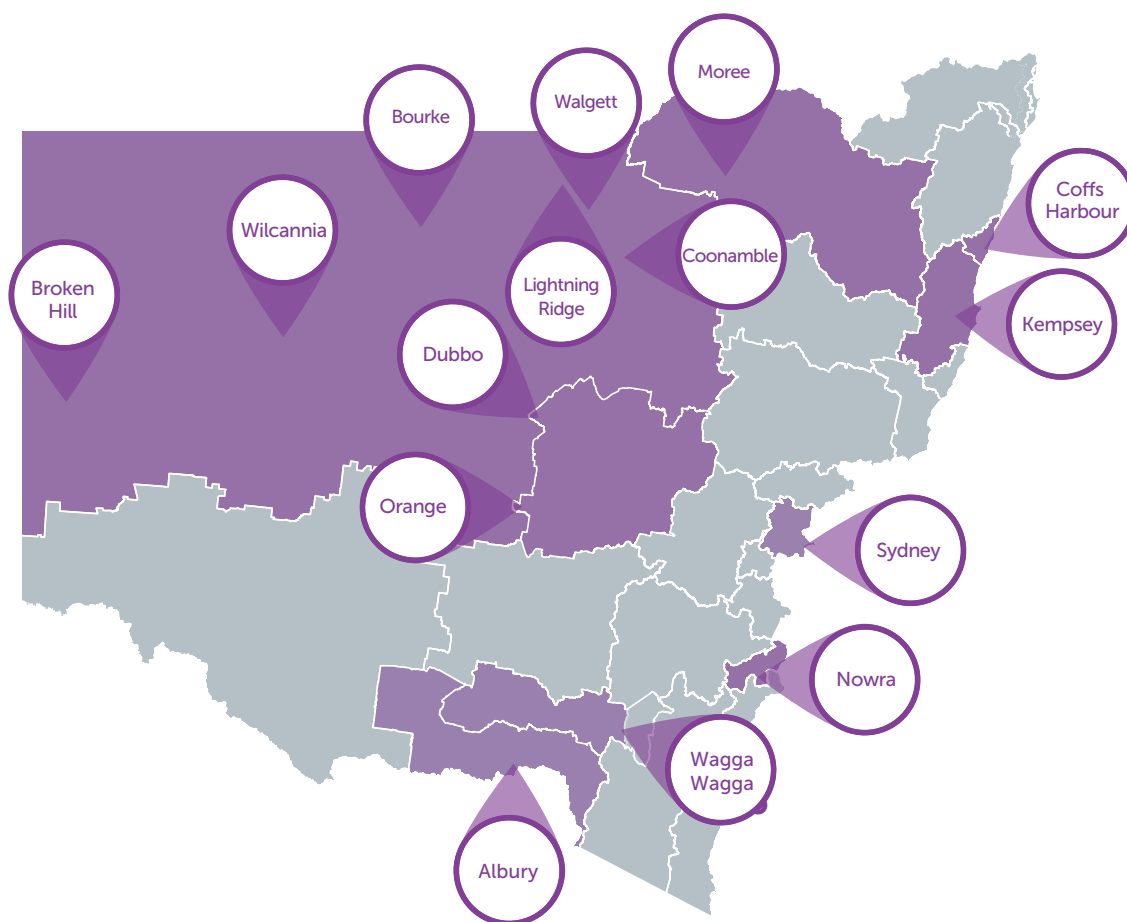
We met with local organisations and MPs to hear first-hand about their priority areas for men's family violence services.

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

- > Albury
- > Orange
- > Wagga Wagga
- > Dubbo

During the last eighteen months, No to Violence has also visited:

- > Kempsey
- > Nowra
- > Wilcannia
- > Coonamble
- > Walgett
- > Sydney
- > Coffs Harbour
- > Broken Hill
- > Moree
- > Bourke
- > Lightning Ridge



# Our vision for keeping women and children safer

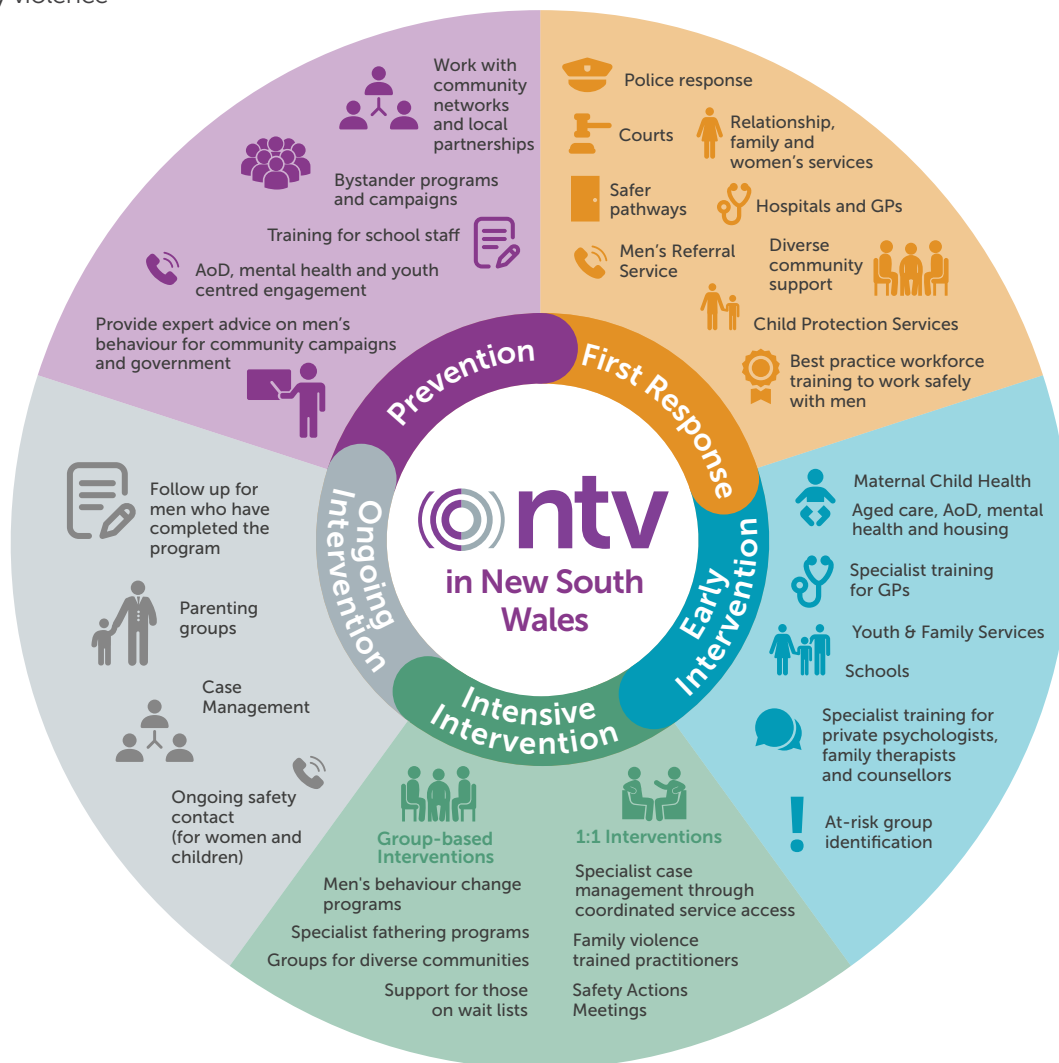
Based on No to Violence's Listening Tour in Victoria in 2018, No to Violence facilitated workshops to elicit open, safe communication among practitioners and providers within the communities, along with the available MPs for their electorates, and asked participants to identify:

> 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

> Gaps in men's services across the range of family violence reform measures.

> Suggestions as to how the whole system may be improved



The above model was used as a visual tool to spark discussion and input from Listening Tour attendees about what more is needed to intervene

and respond to men's family violence at the individual, systemic and community level.

No to Violence ©2018

# What we learnt

During the Listening Tour we found that services consistently identified common pressure points and areas that require capacity building and a coordinated, collaborative approach between agencies.

At every Listening Tour stop, the following issues were identified to improve our work with men who use family violence:

1. Primary prevention, bystander training and early intervention
2. Funding based on regional and remote needs
3. Information sharing and inter-agency collaboration
4. Case management and coordination at a local and regional level
5. Intersections with NSW Health Services
6. Housing availability and emergency housing for victims and perpetrators
7. Availability of culturally appropriate programs
8. Increased services for men who use violence
9. Workforce development

## 1. Primary prevention in communities

Eradicating violence against women requires a whole of community response and one of the key strategies to end violence against women is strong primary prevention initiatives. Our Watch is an organisation that is driving national change in the culture, behaviours and power imbalances that lead to violence against women and their children through its evidence-based 'Change the Story' framework. The NSW government is the only state or territory government in Australia that is not a member of Our Watch (Safe State 2018).

Programs delivered in pre-natal services, childhood centres, schools and tertiary institutions and bystander training in corporate and community settings need to address the gendered nature of sexual, domestic and family violence. Participants at all locations spoke of the need to have programs that increase knowledge within the community about men's use of family violence, and how to identify and respond in a range of settings. Early engagement with boys and young men about respectful and safe attitudes may prevent escalating problematic behaviours and early offending.

*"NSW is the only state that hasn't signed onto Our Watch" – Wagga Wagga*

*"Offer male mentoring in community to reflect positive behaviours" – Orange*

*"Lack of knowledge about men's perpetration of violence and forms of DV with a lack of community support and community capacity to support changed behaviours of men" – Orange*



# What we learnt

*"There is a lack of community education on how domestic and family violence might present in workplaces and in other spaces" – Albury*

2 THE BORDER MAIL Tuesday January 22, 2019 bordermail.com.au

**NEWS**

## Men's program based in Albury area needed

BY ELLEN ERSARY

DEVELOPING a Men's Behaviour Change program in Albury and funding increases have emerged as two key issues for practitioners working in family violence ahead of the NSW election.

No to Violence held a session with about 15 representatives from Albury, who said a program for perpetrators should be introduced.

There is an offering in Wagga run by Gateway Health, which does accept Albury participants, but it's in high demand.

Albury deputy mayor Amanda Cohn, who chairs the Albury-Wodonga Family and Domestic Violence Committee, said there was a MHC program in Wagga but there needed to be one in Albury.

"The people who are experiencing homelessness, financial difficulty and difficulty with mental health or drug and alcohol, it's a huge ask to be driving to Wagga and back," she said.

"A lot of NSW government programs are done by region, and we get forgotten down here."

Ms Cohn echoed calls from the group that gathered on Monday for more funding for prevention.

"There's a lot of amazing practitioners on the ground in Albury... they want to do more community prevention and education work, and they're just not funded to do that, they're funded for programs to do a very specific job," she said.

Rachel Seath, a counsellor at the Women's Centre for Health and Well-being in Albury, said funding remained a key issue for her organisation.

"(Funding for) case management is huge - specialised domestic violence services in Albury are lacking and education needs to be brought into focus," she said.

There is no direct equivalent on the NSW side of the Border of the Centre Against Violence, which is an over-arching agency dealing with emergency situations and follow-up support.

Linking in with Junction Support Services and Gateway Health.

The group heard that while there was rhetoric from local and state governments about making the state border disappear, when it came to operations there remained problems.

No to Violence NSW sector development manager Lizette Twisleton said Albury could grow to replicate what takes place in North East Victoria, with the two states working in tandem.

"What might be worth exploring is how Gateway could support a NSW program," she said.

"Men are turning up to other services for perhaps mental health, and then identified DV, at the moment it seems there is nowhere to send him."

No to Violence will prepare a report before its takes place in North East NSW election.

**Damage to structure by vehicle**

THE Golden Ball bridge has again been closed to traffic following damage.

The bridge had been reopened after flash flooding in the Wangaratta region last month.

The structure had been repaired but was again closed to vehicles for several hours on Monday after wooden planks were damaged, before being fixed and re-opened to traffic.

An oversized vehicle caused the damage.

The incident came hours after the bridge was closed for rearing works.

**Latest dam, rain figures**

HUME Dam was at 34 per cent capacity on Monday, holding 100.236GL, at a height of 179.19m. It was 34 per cent on Sunday. This time last year the dam was at 64.2 per cent. Dartmouth Dam was holding 386GL at 70.21 per cent of capacity. There was no rain recorded in Albury-Wodonga for the 24 hours to Sun Monday.

The Bureau of Meteorology is predicting another hot and sunny day today, with a maximum temperature of 28 degrees.

**Weather: P14**

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**WEATHER**

**TODAY** Hot and sunny

**TOMORROW** Hot and partly cloudy

Min: 31°C Max: 39°C

**CONTACTS**

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Monday 22 Jan 2019

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Division 3: 5642450

Division 4: 521150

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THE BORDER MAIL Tuesday January 22, 2019

## 2. Regional and remote funding for perpetrator services

Services at each stop of the Listening Tour unanimously raised the issue of inadequate funding and resourcing to deliver programs and recruit into vacant roles.

Current funding models were identified as not being consistent with the needs and particular issues communities and services face in regional and remote NSW. Services struggle to deliver innovative programs, case management for complex cases and adequately assist clients across vast distances.

A key example of this was the lack of 24 hour access to crisis accommodation and long wait lists for trauma counselling for families experiencing family violence. The cost of delivering services to smaller communities is expensive in terms of staffing and travel. One service spoke of not being permitted via their funding agreement to purchase assets (cars) and therefore relied on hire cars to cover more than 500 kilometres per month.

Tendering processes also have the consequence of creating competition between services vying for the same funding, which leads to poorer collaborative practices between organisations and further perpetuates a siloed service system. Limited funding has meant that staff are unable to attend training or participate in much needed local committees and forums that could increase local and regional collaboration.

*"The funding is based on metro-centric service models and expectations resulting in under staffing... vast areas covered by only two case workers" – Dubbo*

*"Currently the waiting list for psychological services for women and children affected by domestic and family violence is longer than five months" – Albury*



No to Violence NSW Sector Development Manager, Lizette Twisleton, CEO Jacqui Watt and Member for Orange, Dr Joe McGirr MP



### 3. Information sharing and inter-agency collaboration

The ability to share information is constrained by individual and organisational understanding of the relevant information sharing legislation and protocols. Training on the protocols, that also encourages stronger inter-agency collaboration, could increase victim safety, keep perpetrators in view, and facilitate effective interventions to improve overall client outcomes. This could prevent service delivery and case work occurring in siloes and allow organisations to share skills, best practice and learnings. Workshop participants raised the need, as has A Safe State, for regional coordination and governance.

This presented acutely as a cross-border issue in Albury due to Victoria's new Information Sharing legislation.

"We need a unit of services that includes police, health, child protection, community care and NGOs around domestic and family violence" – Dubbo

"There is no access to perpetrator's relevant information to fully assess the risk of violence e.g. prison release dates, court outcomes, parole conditions and so on" – Albury

"Collaboration between services is essential to ensure support continues to meet the needs of the client" – Wagga Wagga

"The lack of partnerships and innovation creates gaps in service access and decreases ability to attract funding" – Albury

### 4. Case management and case coordination for families, including perpetrators

Increased resources for case management and better case coordination was requested at all Listening Tour stops. Specialist DFV Courts were identified by attendees as a way to increase coordination and management of family violence cases across regional centres.

Case management provides continuous wrap-around care for clients regardless of the complexity of their needs. In regional and remote areas, with many people living in isolated communities, this encompasses increased travel requirements coupled with a general lack of service availability. Effective case management would rely on increased funding and better coordination of local services.

The Albury workshop identified a number of cross-border issues around service provision, case management, information sharing and the increased workload this places on services. The complexity of different jurisdictions' service funding models, referral pathways and legislation creates significant impact on service delivery and collaboration.

"We could fill 10 positions and still not meet the demand of 200 referrals per month" – Dubbo



No to Violence CEO Jacqui Watt presenting at a workshop in Orange

# What we learnt

“Case management should be provided at all Women’s Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Services across NSW” – Wagga Wagga

“Cross border issues between NSW and Victoria – different responses to family violence, different legislation and policing responses, and perpetrators move from Albury to Wodonga and vice versa” – Albury

## 5. Intersections with NSW Health Services

If training and screening for domestic and family violence were available consistently across all settings such as maternal, child and family health, mental health, alcohol and other drugs and accident and emergency departments, victims of family violence could receive assistance sooner, perpetrators would be identified earlier and be referred to appropriate services.

“There needs to be management of perpetrators in acute settings like mental health, alcohol and other drugs, and emergency departments” – Albury

“We need intensive help and access to all services immediately following a domestic violence incident for victims and perpetrators - mental health, trauma, counselling, continuously following up and checking in” – Wagga Wagga

## 6. Crisis accommodation

Crisis accommodation is crucial to ensure the safety of vulnerable victims, including all children of women leaving violence. Crisis accommodation for perpetrators of family violence could mean that women and children are able to remain in their homes if they choose to do so. A properly funded service could offer 24 hour responses, financial assistance for victims, be able to accept and assist more vulnerable clients and provide support for perpetrators.

“In some cases, the victim doesn’t meet the criteria for programs because of her location or because she doesn’t have children” – Dubbo

“There should be more options for men’s accommodation so families can stay home and be safe” – Wagga Wagga

## 7. Culturally appropriate programs for perpetrators

Access to services is limited for both victims and perpetrators where family violence intersects with people from culturally diverse backgrounds. Diverse communities are highly vulnerable, and services responding must have culturally inclusive principles and programs.

Services and programs for Aboriginal peoples and communities must be designed with local community leaders and Aboriginal community controlled organisations and take into account the impacts of colonisation, intergenerational trauma and ongoing systemic discrimination.

“Male mentoring to reflect positive behaviour, outreach for offenders at the end of any program and effective programs to break the cycle of DV” – Orange

## 8. Increased services for men who use violence

The demand for community-based responses for men who use family violence is high across regional and remote NSW, especially for areas where the rates of family violence represent some of the highest numbers in the state. Men's behaviour change programs and other community based programs may help keep women and children safer by supporting men to address harmful attitudes and behaviours while also keeping men visible to the service system and community. Programs and mentoring for young men who may be exhibiting concerning behaviours could be referred into early intervention programs if made available.

"How is the cycle meant to end if the behaviour isn't addressed?" – Dubbo

"Smaller programs for men to attend before crisis point" – Orange

"Specialist support for juveniles identified as early offenders" – Orange

## 9. Workforce development for people responding to men who use family violence

Training and professional development was identified as difficult to access for staff in regional and remote communities. It was noted that most opportunities and a wider variety of training are held in metropolitan and urban centres, carrying additional costs for travel and accommodation. These limited opportunities are not targeted towards some professional services such as GPs and teachers leaving gaps in knowledge, ability and willingness to respond to DFV.

Training offered locally is reportedly infrequent and not always suited to regional experiences. Services often do not have the resources to back-fill positions and face the difficult choice of training over service delivery. Recruitment and retention of staff is made more difficult by the reality of a smaller pool of suitable candidates. The training required to prepare new and emerging workers and provide ongoing professional development requires a further investment of resources. Funding models for regional service provision do not take these complicating factors into account.

NTV has a close working relationship with the NSW Health Education Centre Against Violence and supports the workforce development initiatives of the Men's Domestic and Family Violence Interventions portfolio.

"Specialist holistic training is needed for first responders and GPs, and in schools and hospitals" – Dubbo

"There should be improved training for police around domestic and family violence - how to refer, what to look for, and to have more respect for the people they are responding to" – Dubbo



Dubbo workshop participants: Karly Bourke, Jacqui Watt, Wanita Gibbs, Mellissa Shennan, Lizette Twisleton, Wendy Hanchard and Megan Boshell

# What this means

NSW is the most populated state in Australia. The challenges faced by remote and rural communities are unique and are characterised by vast distances, small, intimate communities, and pervasive domestic and family violence.

Even though service provision in metropolitan Sydney is more accessible for people experiencing and using family violence, parts of western Sydney have some of the highest rates of domestic and family violence in NSW with too few

MBCPs to respond to the need of Greater Sydney. These constraints may be eased with substantially increased funding to provide coverage statewide and coordination of services outlined in the No to Violence vision for keeping women and children safer (see page 6).

Key priorities identified during the Listening Tour included 24 hour access to crisis accommodation; greater primary prevention efforts via community groups, sporting clubs and workplaces, improved interagency collaboration, and more funding for services, including Specialist DFV courts. We must evolve a whole-of-system response to all aspects of men's use of family violence if we are serious about changing the trajectory of harm in our communities.

Priorities for the men's domestic and family violence sector in NSW	Costing
Increase current funding to develop a range of men's family violence interventions in NSW	\$1M over four years
Ongoing funding and increased scope of the Automatic Referral Pathway	\$8.5M over four years
Dedicated funding for Men's Behaviour Change Program sector, including case management (increase number of MBCPs to 45)	\$40M over four years
Crisis accommodation for men who use family violence, supported by trained specialist workers to support Staying Home Leaving Violence program	Not costed
Improved regional governance to support coordinated local decision-making – NTV to convene four forums per year over four years	\$750K over four years
Develop a whole-of-system workforce strategy for front line workers to safely identify and refer perpetrators over four years, undertaken by ECAV	\$1M over four years
Aboriginal Controlled organisations and community to develop programs for Aboriginal men who use family violence	Not costed
Development of a practice framework to work with young men using intimate partner and family violence	\$800K over four years

No to Violence, as a member of the NSW Women’s Alliance, fully endorses all 49 recommendations made in A Safe State. Many of the recommendations speak to the issues and concerns raised by attendees of the No to Violence Listening Tour.

Safe State	Costing
Establish an independent statutory body for the coordination of primary prevention of gender-based violence (A Safe State, 1a)	\$12M over four years
Make prevention of gender-based violence a key priority in NSW secondary schools (A Safe State, 1b)	\$14.7M over four years in 100 secondary schools
NSW to become a member of Our Watch to support the national evidence-based ‘Change the Story’ shared approach for the prevention of violence against women and their children in Australia (A Safe State, 1c)	
Increase funding for specialist domestic and family violence services and crisis response services to support women experiencing domestic and family violence (A Safe State, 2a)	\$310M over four years for women’s services.
Give people experiencing violence the choice and support to remain safely in their home (A Safe State, 3a)	\$7.5M p.a. to the Staying Home Leaving Violence program
Ensure all women and children experiencing domestic and family violence can immediately access crisis and transitional housing (A Safe State, 3b)	\$150M over four years for crisis and transitional housing for women and children
Establish specialist domestic and family violence courts (A Safe State, 4c)	\$250K to undertake a feasibility study
Enable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to lead change to end violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children (A Safe State, 4)	Not costed
Improve regional governance to support coordinated local decision-making. Create a mechanism to enable regional and remote sexual, domestic and family violence service providers to raise policy and program issues in regional and remote areas with government and to ensure government must address those issues (A Safe State, 6f)	Not costed
Develop and implement a whole-of-system workforce strategy to ensure high quality responses to sexual, domestic and family violence in a trauma-informed way (A Safe State, 6g)	\$2M over two years to develop and implement a comprehensive workforce capability strategy for those working in the fields of social work, healthcare and medicine and law
Train specialist, mainstream, and government workers, legal practitioners, judicial officers and court staff to respond to sexual, domestic and family violence in a trauma-informed way (A Safe State, 6h)	\$10M over two years

# No to Violence Listening Tour Attendees

We were pleased to welcome representatives of the following organisations to the Listening Tour.

## Organisation Attendees

3WhiteHorses  
Lifeline Albury Wodonga  
Albury Wodonga Family and Domestic Violence Committee  
DHHS Victoria  
Centre Against Violence  
Hume Riverina CLS  
Albury Wodonga Health  
Albury City Council  
Orange City Council  
Local Court Orange  
Lives Lived Well  
Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service  
Binaal Billa Family Violence Prevention Legal Service

Interrelate Family Relationships Centre  
Mission Australia  
Housing Plus  
Western Women's Legal Support  
Argyle Community Housing  
Department of Family and Community Services  
Sisters Housing Enterprises  
Tumut Regional Family Services  
Relationships Australia  
Wagga Wagga City Council  
NSW Police  
Save The Children  
Wagga Family Support  
Wagga Women's Health Centre

## Honourary Attendees

Mr Dean Moss, NSW Greens candidate for Albury  
Cr Kevin Mack, Albury City Mayor  
Dr Joe McGirr MP, Member for Wagga Wagga  
Mr Philip Donato MP, Member for Orange

Individuals and organisations are working tirelessly in NSW to prevent and respond to men's family violence, and keep women, children and families safer. No to Violence looks forward to working with the NSW Government to address the needs and concerns raised in this report, and enable this work to continue and expand.



Supported by





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## Men's Referral Service

1300 766 491

- > 24 hours: Tasmania and New South Wales
- > 8am–9pm Monday–Friday: all other states
- > 9am–6pm Saturday–Sunday: all other states

Interpreters available upon request.

To chat online, please go to [ntv.org.au](https://www.ntv.org.au)

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