

SETSCoP

Communique: Third meeting of the Individual and Family Wellbeing and Safety sub-group

Videoconference – 30 March 2021

On 30 March, SETSCoP held its third meeting for members of the Individual and Family Wellbeing and Safety sub-group. During the meeting two providers presented on their domestic and family violence (DFV) projects and initiatives.

Best Practice Initiatives

Most DFV projects and initiatives shared within the presentations, target both the individual and community through building networks within the community and collaborating with other organisations who provide specialist DFV services. Participants noted the importance of the involvement of community members and peers of the victim-survivor.

The presenters also shared on projects that focus on building confidence within community leaders to address the issue and to raise broader awareness of DFV. By educating community members, service providers are able to increase the understanding of DFV and knowledge of support available.

Attendees emphasised that DFV remains a prevalent issue in their work. Service providers described challenges with engaging CALD communities in conversations around DFV and that use of networks, building rapport and trust are essential. Additionally, attendees mentioned that the training of staff, especially caseworkers, is important to provide adequate support.

Challenges to addressing Domestic and Family Violence

Participants noted that there are many challenges to addressing DFV within CALD communities. Some of the most commonly experienced were:

- Issues with the cultural responsiveness of mainstream DFV services
- Finding community members who are committed to addressing DFV
- Limited disclosure of DFV unless the topic is brought up by providers
- Visa concerns such as a fear of losing their right to stay in Australia
- Impact of reporting and seeking help on their reputation in the community

Attendees stressed the importance of soft-entry approaches and creating a safe space for conversations on healthy relationships. By providing information on what is considered DFV, what Australian law says and the different levels of violence, clients can be empowered to recognise when they have experienced abusive behaviour.

Essential Skills

Participants shared the specialist knowledge and skills that they consider are essential for settlement staff to support clients who are experiencing DFV. Some of the skills mentioned are:

- Understanding how to conduct a risk assessment
- Understanding how a client's support system works
- Adopting a person-centred approach, where clients are empowered and are seen as the expert of their own situation
- Being versatile and capable of working with different groups (youth, community leaders, etc.)
- Being culturally responsive and sensitive
- Capable of building trust and rapport with the client

Resources shared

[Multicultural Communities Reference Group - MiCare and Wyndham Community and Education Centre](#)