

## SETSCoP

### Communique: ACT/NSW Domestic and Family Violence ACT & NSW sub-group

#### Videoconference – 29 November 2021

On 29 November 2021, SETSCoP held its first meeting for members of the ACT and NSW Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) sub-group. The focus of the meeting was to consult members on the systems and tools currently in place to provide DFV supports to SETS clients, identify referral systems and pathways, discuss the intersection between DFV and migration regulations and identify current prevention and intervention programs in place to work with men.

#### Identifying DFV, risk assessment and safety planning

Members described the various strategies used to identify DFV and tools used for risk assessments and safety planning. These included:

- Strengths, needs and risks tools used at intake
- Home visit check lists
- DFV tools including [DV SAT tool](#) developed by the NSW Government.

Many providers deliver DFV information sessions in order to build client's knowledge and understanding of DFV.

Providers discussed the importance of building trusting relationships with clients to create a safe environment for disclosures to occur. Strategies include women's outreach, sewing groups and a coffee club for women.

Other issues which occur in the context of DFV and have an effect on the service provided and the pathways for clients include:

- Challenges accessing housing support, emergency accommodation, Centrelink and Medicare
- Difficulty obtaining financial assistance
- Lack of access to legal support including for custody issues
- Limited capacity of DFV services.

Providers also discussed the importance of working with community leaders to assist in sharing information on what DFV is and services that are available to assist.

#### Referral pathways

Members discussed the importance of relationships with service providers in their region, particularly in regional locations. Some providers participate in their regional DFV committee. Members discussed the service providers they regularly refer to.

Providers noted that some clients can be hesitant to connect with some mainstream service providers, due to language barriers, lack of culturally responsive support and lack of understanding of visa categories. Some clients are also reluctant to engage with new services when they have built a trusting relationship with the SETS provider. In addition, many services are at capacity and have a long waiting list, requiring the SETS provider to continue to support the client until other services can assist.

### **DFV and migration regulations**

Service providers discussed regular reports received from clients of perpetrators keeping passports and threatening to contact immigration as a form of abuse and control. Clients also reported perpetrators withholding Centrelink payments or using money which has been paid for visas as a form of control. Attendees also discussed the problem of some women not understanding their rights and visa status, causing them to hesitate to remove themselves from an abusive environment.

Challenges faced include limited access to migration agents and legal support (both because it is unavailable through Legal Aid / community legal centres and because of high costs), as well as difficulties accessing Medicare or Centrelink support.

### **Men's programs**

A small number of providers reported men's specific programs, including DFV awareness sessions for men (with some occurring in-language) and men's outreach and information sessions on the rights of men and women in Australia.

### **Shared resources**

[DV SAT tool](#) developed by the NSW Government