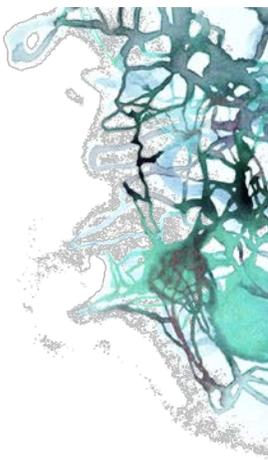




NORTH WEST METROPOLITAN REGION PRIMARY CARE PARTNERSHIPS

Identifying Family Violence and Responding to Women and Children

ORGANISATIONAL ASSESSMENT



Acknowledgements



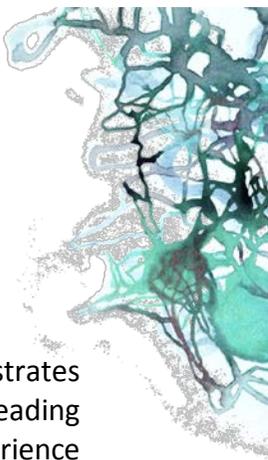
The North West Metropolitan Region (NWMR) Primary Care Partnerships (PCPs) acknowledge the support of the Victorian Government.

The development of this example policy was led by Alice Henderson, Project Officer at North East Healthy Communities.

North East Healthy Communities acknowledge the peoples of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Custodians of the land on which our work in the community takes place. We pay our respects to their culture and their Elders past, present and emerging.

Disclaimer: The information contained in this publication is provided by North East Healthy Communities and is for general information purposes only. While information is current at the time of publication, subsequent changes to events may occur. North East Healthy Communities ventures to provide current and accurate information and we make no representations or warranties, express or implied, about the completeness, accuracy, reliability, or availability, with respect to this publication. Any reliance you place on such information is therefore at your own risk. In no event will North East Healthy Communities and its employees be responsible or liable for any loss or damage including without limitation, indirect or significant loss or damage, or any type loss or damage whatsoever, suffered by any person as the result of reliance on information contained in this publication.

April 2019



Identifying Family Violence and Responding to Women and Children: Organisational Assessment

Background

Family violence is a serious issue that significantly affects health and wellbeing. While family violence affects all genders, evidence demonstrates that it is overwhelmingly perpetrated by men against women and children. Family violence is a violation of human rights and is the leading contributor to ill health and preventable death in women aged 15–44. One in three Australian women, who have an intimate partner, experience violence from a partner or an ex-partner. Victims/survivors of family violence are in our community, in workplaces, schools and community groups.

Even for staff who do not often encounter family violence it is important that they know how to identify family violence and respond in ways that support a woman's needs, particularly her need for safety. Many of the steps that can be taken by staff to encourage people to talk about family violence do not require specialist knowledge. Identifying family violence early, by enquiring when you notice indicators, can prevent future violence and assist women on their pathways to safety.

Purpose

The *Identifying Family Violence and Responding to Women and Children: Organisational Assessment Tool* has been designed to be used in conjunction with the *Identifying Family Violence and Responding to Women and Children: Client Policy Template* and *Identifying Family Violence and Responding to Women and Children: Example Policy* developed by the Inner North West Primary Care Partnership. These documents outline best-practice principles in the support of women and children experiencing family violence.

The purpose of this organisational assessment is to assist organisations to review existing or newly developed organisational policies around identifying family violence and responding to women and children. This tool aims to generate discussion and identify existing strengths and areas for change and improvement by highlighting best practice principles. The results from this tool can then be used to make changes to IFVRC procedures and policies and build staff capacity in this area.



Completion of the organisational assessment

Completion with a group

When completing this assessment as a group, it is recommended that someone facilitate the discussion. The facilitator might be someone within your organisation or you might engage a professional with expertise in responding to and identifying family violence. The facilitator's role is to help your group adhere to time, provide additional information and navigate through difficult discussions. Due to the size of the organisational assessment, it is probable that a few meetings will be required to complete it.

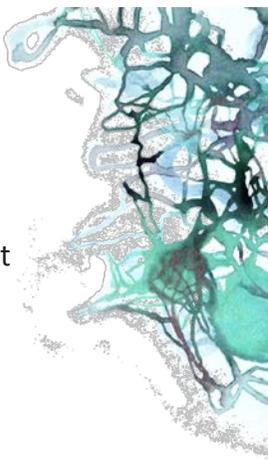
The organisational assessment should be completed by a cross-organisational team which offers a wide representation of skills, knowledge and expertise. Engaging staff from different levels of the organisation will help capture a range of experiences to better understand what is currently happening in your organisation and to understand factors that may enable or impede change in your workplace. To gain organisational influence, it is important that senior management are also included in this team.

Before you start you will need:

- approximately three hours dedicated to completing the organisational assessment (this can be spread over a few meetings);
- a small group that includes staff from different levels and departments within your workplace;
- someone to facilitate the sessions;
- someone to take notes;
- copies of the organisational assessment tool; and
- copies of your IFVRC policy and procedures document.

How to complete the organisational assessment:

1. Complete and action 'Creating an authorising environment for an organisational response to family violence (page 4)'.
2. Each team member is provided with a copy of the organisational assessment.
3. As a group – with or without facilitation – read and discuss each statement.
4. Use the columns alongside each statement to write down key conversational points regarding what has or is currently being done and answer what your organisation is currently doing, as well as ideas for what could be changed or improved. Your IFVRC policy and procedure should provide support in completing this assessment.

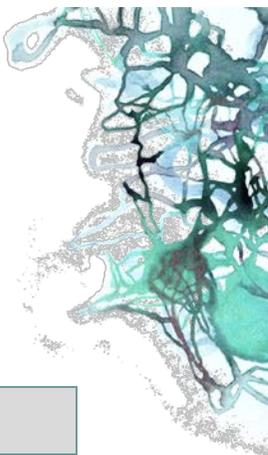


Completion as an individual

If you are completing this organisational assessment as an individual staff member, follow 'how to complete the organisational assessment' above. Once the assessment is completed it is recommended that you discuss your answers with other staff so that those with a wide representation of skills, knowledge and expertise are involved in this process.

After organisational assessment completion

1. Use the Identifying Family Violence and Responding to Women And Children organisational assessment guide to develop an implementation plan for changes to your newly developed or existing IRFRWC policy and procedures.
2. Action relevant implementation points.



Creating an Authorising Environment for an Organisational Response to Family Violence

Creating an authorising environment for an organisational response to family violence is imperative to gaining a successful organisational approach to identifying family violence and responding to women and children. The following statements identify conditions that are necessary to create such an environment. Completing this section, and undertaking improvements/changes where required, is desirable prior to completing the organisational assessment.

	What have we done?	How can we improve/change?
1. Our organisations senior management team has undertaken ' <u>Identifying and responding to clients and staff experience family violence: training for managers</u> '.		
2. Our organisations management team have endorsed an organisational response to identify and respond to family violence. This commitment is an organisational priority.		
3. Our executive management team has provided authorisation and support to undertake the identifying family violence and responding to women and children organisational-assessment.		
4. Our organisation has the capacity and willingness to resource a small cross-organisational improvement team to conduct the identifying family violence and responding to women and children organisational-assessment and implement identified actions.		
5. Our organisation is willing to allocate a budget to enable the implementation of an identifying family violence and responding to women and children action plan.		

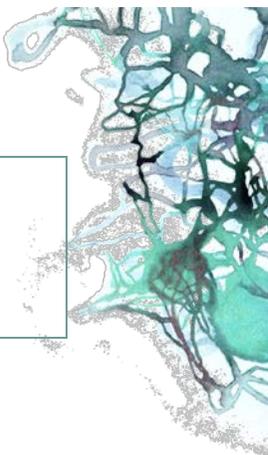


Identifying Family Violence and Responding to Women and Children – Organisational Assessment

1. Identifying Family Violence and Responding to Women and Children (IFVRWC): Policy

	What have we done?	What/how can we change/improve?
1 Our organisation has an Identifying Family Violence and Responding to Women and Children policy. At a minimum it includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Training and education- Responding to family violence- Safety of children and young people- Safety planning- Staff and client safety- Referral and consultation- Support for staff¹		
1.2 Our orientation requires new employees to familiarise themselves with the Identifying Family Violence and Responding to Women and Children policy and Procedures.		
1.3 Our Identifying family violence and responding to women and children policy is included in our organisational policy review cycle. (The review includes practical implementation of procedures).		

¹ Note: Implementing all items in this checklist will align your policy with best practice principles. After completing this checklist, your organisations Workplace Family Violence policy may need to be reviewed and updated to reflect required changes.



1.4 Where relevant, our Identifying Family Violence and Responding to Women and Children policy is detailed in other organisational policies (e.g. client file, client confidentiality).		
--	--	--

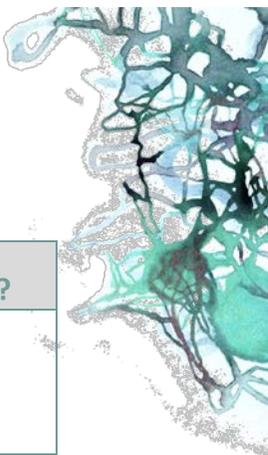
2. Training and Education

	What have we done?	What/how can we change/improve?
<p>2.1 As part of our orientation/induction program, <u>all</u> staff at our organisation attend training which covers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Definition, causes, impacts and indicators of family violence- Asking about and responding to family violence- Barriers to disclosure- Children and family violence- Risk assessment and safety planning- Consultation and referrals- Support for staff- Administration and documentation <p><i>Training is mandatory for all staff. Training may be tailored depending on staff role.</i></p>		
2.2 Our organisation's annual training calendar contains relevant IFVRC training and regular refresher courses.		



3. Responding to Family Violence

	What have we done?	What/how can we change/improve?
<p>3.1 Our organisation has documented and promoted procedures for staff to follow when asking women and children about, and responding to, family violence. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Speaking directly with women about family violence if indicators of family violence are observed.• Assessing and taking action around the immediate safety the client as well as other family members, including children and pets.• Using a professional interpreting agency as required (be mindful when using a local interpreter and ask the client about gender preference of interpreter).		
<p>3.2 Our organisation has a clear privacy and confidentiality policy. This is shared with all clients so that they are aware of the limits to confidentiality as per privacy legislation.</p>		
<p>3.3 Our organisation is inclusive in our practice. We actively engage in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Culturally sensitive practice that includes indigenous and CALD women and their families; and- Family-sensitive practice.		



4. Supporting Children

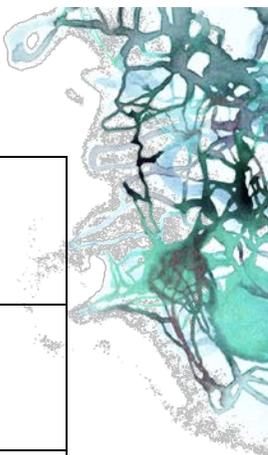
	What have we done?	What/how can we change/improve?
4.1 If family violence is present or strongly suspected, our staff enquire whether any children or young people reside with the woman or have contact with the perpetrator.		
4.2 Our organisation has documented and promoted procedures for assessing the risk to a child exposed, or suspected to be exposed to, family violence.		
4.3 Our organisation has documented and promoted procedures for staff to follow regarding consultation with, or Child First or Child Protection if children are suspected to be exposed to family violence.		
4.4 Our organisation engages and complies with the Victorian Governments Child Information Sharing Scheme. ²		

5. Screening for Family Violence

(Note: Some organisations may decide not to screen for family violence – if this is the case, there is no need to go through section 5).

	What have we done?	What/how can we change/improve?
5.1 Our organisation has considered (and made decisions about) screening women about family violence. These options have been considered:		

² Victorian Government, [Child Information Sharing Scheme](#).

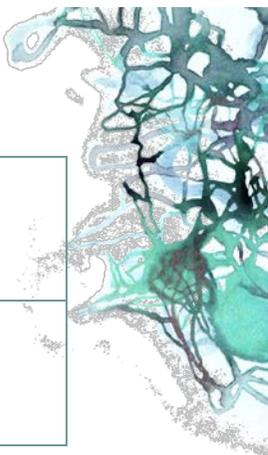


<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screening women who are considered to be at a higher risk of experiencing family violence • Routinely asking/screening all women³ 		
5.2 (Where relevant) our organisation has documented and promoted procedures for screening women about family violence.		
5.3 Our organisation provides family violence screening training for staff (if and where relevant).		

6. Staff and Client Safety

	What have we done?	What/how can we change/improve?
6.1 Our organisation has documented and promoted procedures for staff to assess their own safety while working off-site (including an assessment of all occupants/bystanders).		
6.2 Our organisation has documented and promoted procedures for staff to assess their own safety while working on-site (including an assessment of other staff, clients and visitors).		
6.3 Our organisation has documented and promoted procedures for staff to contact police if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is an immediate threat to staff, clients, family members or other visitors; and 		

The WHO recommends screening for high risk populations, such as women with mental health disorders and antenatal care. However, 'universal screening' or 'routine enquiries' (i.e. asking women in all health-care encounters) should not be implemented.³



<p>- When a crime has been or is likely to be committed.</p>		
<p>6.4 Our organisation has documented and promoted procedures for staff to follow if managing both the woman and a perpetrator on site or during a home visit.</p>		

7. Safety Plans

	What have we done?	What/how can we change/improve?
<p>7.1 Our organisation encourages referrals to specialist family violence services so that they can undertake comprehensive safety planning and risk assessment with the woman/child.</p>		
<p>7.2 Our organisation supports women to develop a safety plan in instances when a client prefers not to seek specialist support, is not eligible to receive support from a specialist service, or is waiting to gain access to a specialist service.</p>		
<p>7.3 Our organisation has developed an easily accessible safety plan for staff to use with women experiencing family violence.⁴</p>		
<p>7.4 Our organisation works with the woman to include the safety of children and young people in the safety plan.</p>		

⁴ Safety plans are living documents and require regular review.



8. Referral and Consultation

	What have we done?	What/how can we change/improve?
8.1 Our staff consult with senior staff if they require further direction or advice when supporting a woman/child experiencing family violence.		
8.2 Our organisation encourages staff to access secondary consultations with specialist family violence services in response to women/children experiencing family violence		
8.3 Our organisation makes referrals to specialist family violence services, justice services and auxiliary mainstream services for women and children experiencing family violence.		
8.4 Our organisation engages and complies with the Victorian Governments Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme for risk assessment and risk management. ⁵		

⁵ Victorian Government, [Family Violence Reform: Information Sharing and Risk Management](#).

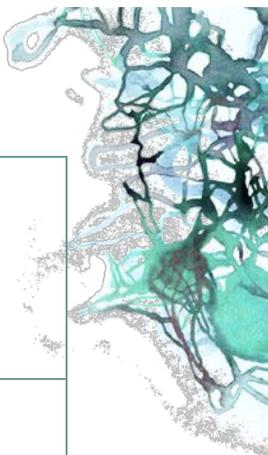


9. Support for Staff

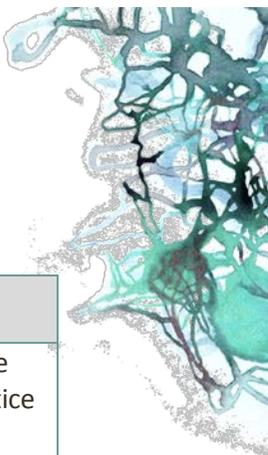
	What have we done?	What/how can we change/improve?
9.1 Our organisation's EAP provider has the skills and experience to support staff who work with clients experiencing family violence. (Our service agreement with our EAP includes such a clause). EAP information is readily available to staff.		
9.2 Our organisation has documented and promoted procedures for supporting and debriefing staff who work with client/s who have experienced family violence.		

10. Documentation and Administration

	What have we done?	What/how can we change/improve?
10.1 Our organisation has clearly defined procedures for the documentation in client records of client disclosures and/or when staff ask clients about the occurrence of family violence but there is no disclosure.		
10.2 Our organisation has mechanisms for staff to book longer appointment times for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Family violence enquiry and identification- Action planning and steps toward safety- Responding to family violence disclosures- Supporting women and children with referrals		



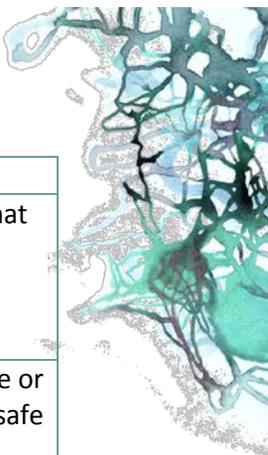
<p>10.3 Our organisation has review systems in place to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Check usability and adherence to procedures outlined in our organisations identifying family violence and responding to women and children: Client policy. Data is used to improve service delivery.		
<p>10.4 Our organisation has developed and promoted resource material on family violence (posters, pocket cards and/or leaflets).</p>		



Useful Resources ⁶

Resource	Description
<u>1800RESPECT</u>	1800RESPECT Frontline Workers Toolkit contains resources for workers who come into contact with people affected by sexual assault, domestic and family violence in the course of their day-to-day work. Good practice resources include apps, videos and digital content for organisations and workers in a variety of sectors.
<u>Family Violence Risk Assessment Risk Management Framework and Practice Guides 1-3, CRAF Manual ed.2</u>	The Family Violence Risk Assessment and Risk Management Framework, also known as the Common Risk Assessment Framework (CRAF), helps practitioners from a wide range of fields understand and identify risk factors associated with family violence and respond consistently.
<u>Identifying Family Violence and Responding to Women and Children: Client Policy template</u>	Policy template designed to be used to support the development of an Identifying Family Violence and Responding to Women and Children: Client policy template.
<u>Information Sharing and Risk Management</u>	In response to the Commission’s findings, a family violence information sharing scheme has been created by the new Part 5A of the Family Violence Protection Act 2008 . It authorises a select group of prescribed information sharing entities to share information between themselves for family violence risk assessment and risk management.
<u>Domestic Violence Resource Centre Victoria:</u> - <u>Referral Options Booklet</u> - <u>Promotional material</u>	A Referral Options booklet developed as a resource for workers in the domestic and family violence sector. It includes contact details and further information on services in the family violence and related sectors around Victoria. DRVCV also have a range of promotional materials regarding family violence, respectful relationships and facts on family violence.
<u>The Lookout</u>	A webpage for workers supporting women’s safety in Victoria. Resources for family violence workers, other professionals, survivors/family/friends including family violence resources, training and events, family violence services directory.

⁶ Note: this list is not exhaustive.



<u>Northern Integrated Family Violence Services</u>	Multi-language Posters to inform community members, victims and perpetrators about support services that are available in the northern metropolitan region. A poster is available for men and women contain information in English, Arabic, Farsi, Mandarin, Punjabi, Turkish and Vietnamese. They can be displayed in waiting rooms, on the back of toilet doors, or anywhere it might benefit clients.
<u>Orange Door – Family violence reform</u>	The Orange Door is a new way for women, children and young people who are experiencing family violence or families who need assistance with the care and wellbeing of children to access the services they need to be safe and supported.
<u>Relationships Australia</u>	Safe from Violence: Guide for women leaving or separating. A guide outlining what family violence is and supports to access during different stages of leaving or separating from a violent relationship.
<u>Safe Steps</u>	Safe steps have a range of publications available – both brochures and print resources. Some of these contain general information, however many are primarily safe steps related.
<u>Strengthening Hospital Responses to Family Violence</u>	A tool kit of resources designed to support the implementation of procedures outlined in an organisations workplace family violence policy. This tool kit includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Family Violence Workplace Policy and Procedure• Project Management Tools• Training Materials• Training Handouts• Communication Materials (for promotion of family violence support services and issues)
<u>Women’s Health West</u>	My Safety Plan: The booklet contains information that others have found useful when they have left a violent relationship. This booklet contains suggestions that may be adapted to suit individual circumstances; only the person experiencing violence can decide on the best options for them and their family and what is realistic and affordable.