

Measuring Family Violence in Victoria

Family violence is a significant pathway into homelessness for Victorian women and children. Domestic Violence Victoria and the Council to Homeless Persons, together with the Family Violence Interdepartmental Committee and the SAFER research team, will host a series of half-day regional workshops on measuring family violence in Victoria and working with family violence data.

Workshops are relevant to practitioners in the homelessness, housing and family violence sectors and will:

- provide an introduction and overview of the latest data on family violence in Victoria
- provide an overview of how to utilise relevant data to inform policy and enhance service provision and management
- outline developments in state-wide data collection and analysis and explore the limitations of family violence data.

Reviewing Reform

The Victorian Family Violence Database (VFVD) provides trend analysis of state-wide family violence reports in Victoria from 1999. Volume 4 contains nearly a decade of data ranging from the police, courts, supported accommodation and hospitals to Local Government Areas (LGAs). The data and analysis in Volume 4 presents a unique opportunity to identify the impact of family violence reforms and advise on trends, gaps and system weaknesses.

Identifying Service Needs

The Family Violence Benchmarking Project has collected four two-week snapshots of data from family violence services over the past two years, recording who is using the family violence service system and how many service users are able to access an integrated service. An analysis of Benchmark learnings will help identify key achievements and opportunities for regional responses to family violence.

Evidence and Research

The SAFER research program aims to gain an understanding of how the Victorian family violence reforms are impacting on the safety and wellbeing of women and children and the accountability and responsibility of men who use violence. This presentation will provide an overview of the research to date and engage in a dialogue with workshop participants about how the research program can be meaningful for the sector.

Looking Ahead

The Ten Year Family Violence Strategic Framework will provide a performance framework for understanding both the progress of the reform process across the integrated family violence system, and its intended outcomes – reduced incidence and prevalence of family violence and greater accountability for perpetrators. It will provide a framework for each central government agency's development of strategic planning and, in turn, guidance for regions in developing their own family violence work plans.

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The Victorian Homelessness Research and Evaluation Capacity Building Project (VHRECBP) – which is coordinating the workshops – is a pilot project funded by Victoria's Office of Housing.

VHRECBP principal objectives are:

- *to facilitate the skills development of homelessness agencies in research and evaluation and support the development of relationships between homelessness agencies and researchers*
- *the provision of funded professional consultancy hours open to agencies with a research idea or project underway or an evaluation requirement which would benefit from professional input.*