# Mapping Document:

# Department of Human Service Standards Evidence Guide to Domestic Violence Victoria's Code of Practice

**The DV Vic Code of Practice is for specialist Family Violence Services for Women and Children, 'Enhancing the safety of women and children in Victoria'.**

**Statement of Purpose:** The primary aim of the Code is to enhance the safety of women and children in Victoria and is designed to:

- Provide a model of best practice for services in Victoria which provide a specialist response to women and children experiencing family violence;
- Provide a foundation for ongoing reflection about how practice is undertaken and outline an optimum approach to practice;
- Ensure consistent, transparent and accountable practice across services providing specialist family violence support to women and children experiencing family violence; and
- Provide guidance for effective integration and collaboration with other community service providers and agencies engaged in providing responses to women and their children experiencing family violence

**Family Violence Sector quality assurance:** Family Violence Services specialisation ensures an adequate response to violence against women and children, and enhances the safety and wellbeing of women and children. Due to this specialised role, services need to ensure consistency of service delivery to women and children experiencing family violence.

**Key quality needs for Family Violence Services:**

- Professional specialisation required to respond to the needs of women and children escaping family violence and have a better understanding of the nature, features and dynamics of family violence
- That staff identify wider cultural issues that support violence against women, and raise the consciousness of women in the family violence service system of the gendered nature of abuse
- Transparent best-practice safety measures. This includes secrecy of refuge locations, Common Risk Assessment Framework (CRAF), building security, up-to-date safety procedures etc.

| DHS Standards | The Code |
|---|---|
| **Standard 1 – Empowerment:** *People's rights are promoted and upheld.* | |
| ***Criteria 1.1***<br>*People understand their rights and responsibilities* | **Section 6: Key Elements of Practice**<br>**6.1.3:** Rights Based Approach<br>▪ Providing an understanding of women's rights and options in the context of experiencing family violence<br>**6.1.5:** Respectful, Open and Transparent Interaction<br>▪ See a woman's behaviour within the context of their experiences 'rather than seeing the behaviour as intrinsic to the person'.pp. 66<br>▪ When undertaking assessments workers ensure the exchange between themselves and the women/children is kept 'informal and conversational not a form filling session' pp.66.<br>▪ Notes taken in the session, but forms completed afterwards<br><br>**Section 2: Fundamental concepts and values that Family Violence services adhere to**<br>**2.1** Feminist Analysis, human rights and social justice<br>**2.2** Core values:<br>▪ Rights: Family Violence is a fundamental violation of human rights<br>▪ Safety: Women and children experiencing family violence is of paramount consideration<br>▪ Children: To be protected from harm to have their rights protected.<br>▪ Empowerment: Family Violence Services work with women and children to build on their strengths and enhance their capacity to make informed decisions and exercise their right to self determination without coercion and free from judgement.<br>▪ Diversity: Family Violence is experienced by women and children regardless of class, ethnicity, religion, age, abilities or sexual preference. The experiences of women and children who live with family violence are distinct and unique.<br>▪ Access and Equity: Services responding to women and children experiencing family violence provide accessible support in a fair and equitable manner.<br>▪ Responsibility: The responsibility for violence rests with the perpetrator of the violence, and eradication |

| | |
|---|---|
| | and prevention of family violence is the responsibility of the community as a whole.<br>▪ Accountability: Perpetrators should be held accountable for their use of violence and challenged to take responsibility of their actions.<br>▪ Power: Responses to family violence must recognise and address the power imbalance and gender inequality between those who are using violence and those experiencing violence.<br>▪ Justice: Physical or sexual violence within the family is a crime which warrents strong and effective justice system response.<br>▪ Advocacy: Family Violence services advance the rights and interests of women and children affected by family violence on an individual and broader societal level.<br>**2.3.1** Providing an understanding of family violence<br>▪ 'The repeated use of violent, threatening, coercive or controlling behaviour by an individual against a family member(s), or someone with whom they have, or have had, an intimate relationship' (pp.11).<br>▪ Links to the Domestic and Family Violence Protection Act 2012.<br>▪ Family violence to include financial, emotional, psychological, physical, property damage, isolation, sexual abuse and behaviour that causes a person to live in fear.<br>**5.5:** Grievance Procedures<br>▪ An effective grievance process includes: clear written procedures, a prompt response to women raising a concern or complaint with the service, transparent communication, and facilitating independent advocacy for the women if se choses.<br>▪ Informed of role and contact details of the Housing Advocacy Service (HAS) |
| ***Criteria 1.2***<br>*People exercise their rights and responsibilities* | **Section 6: Key Elements of Practice**<br>**Code 6.1** Engaging Women in the Support Relationship<br>**6.1.1** Power: 'Power with rather than power over' pp.65<br>**6.1.2** Clear Boundaries: Ethical and empowering professional relationships (pp.65).<br>**6.1.3** Rights Based Approach:<br>▪ Provide information to further a woman's understanding of her rights.<br>▪ Women have the right to expect that workers will: demonstrate respect, communicate non-judgementally, demonstrate culturally informed and sensitive practice, appraise women and children of their options, hold themselves accountable for their actions, promote social justice, uphold the Code of Practice, and facilitate, rather than direct, case management and support processes.<br>**6.1.4** Validate and build upon strengths:<br>▪ Unconditional positive regard and active listening |

| | |
|---|---|
| | ▪ Provide information on the nature and dynamics of family violence and ensure responsibility for violence rests with the perpetrator<br>▪ Workers have extensive knowledge and understanding of issues associated with family violence including the effects of trauma, and an understanding of issues facing a diverse range of women and the barriers they face in gaining support<br>▪ Workers support empowerment of women by:<br>o Assisting women to reframe their experiences and identify the problem-solving strategies and resourcefulness they have demonstrated;<br>o Assisting women and children to recognise their own strengths, rather than focusing their problems which obscures their personal potential;<br>o Framing issues in terms of challenges rather than problems, as the focus on challenges implies the potential for overcoming obstacles;<br>o Using open ended questions with a solution focus, thereby facilitating a women's exploration of options rather than providing advice or entering into a counselling dynamic.<br>**6.1.5** Respectful, open and transparent communication<br>▪ View women's experience in context of their experiences, 'rather than seeing behaviour as intrinsic to the person', and avoid drawing conclusions or forming assessments on this basis.<br>▪ Assessment are kept, 'informal and conversational not a form filling in session' pp.66.<br>▪ Respectful verbal and non-verbal communication skills.<br>▪ Workers exercise empathic active listening<br>▪ At the beginning of an appointment, the worker seeks to determine what the woman is hoping to achieve from the appointment, revisits the issue and identifies additional needs that have arisen since the appointment was made.<br>▪ Woman sets the pace for support/counselling<br>**5.6:** Privacy, Confidentiality and Duty of Care<br>▪ Family violence services ensure that policies and procedures address<br>o Information collection – collection of information that is necessary and relevant to the provisions of support;<br>o Informed engagement – women are fully informed about what information is collected and recorded by the services, the boundaries of privacy and confidentiality and how they can access the information;<br>o Information use and exchange – how information is used by the service, the procedures to ensure consent and the circumstances information is exchanged;<br>o Information security and retention – the steps taken to protect information from misuse, loss, |

| | |
|---|---|
| | unauthorised access, modification or disclosure.<br>o Case notes – the nature and expectation of how information is recorded to ensure a consistent approach and professional standards;<br>o Access to, and the right to, correct information – how women exercise their right to access their personal information and make corrections.<br>o Duty of care – services acknowledge their duty to take reasonable care of a person.<br>**5.6**: Women's Consent<br>▪ Where possible written consent using a standard service form that provides for time limited consent to exchange information regarding specific issues relevant to service delivery.<br>▪ Verbal consent to be recorded in case file notes.<br>▪ Duty of care issues to be communicated to the relevant organisation without the consent of the woman. |

| **Standard 2 – Access and Engagement:** *People's rights to access transparent, equitable and integrated services are promoted and upheld.* | |
|---|---|
| ***Criteria 2.1***<br>*Services have a clear and accessible point of contact* | 5.9 Service Evaluation<br>▪ Feedback is actively sought from women and children who receive support as well as women who are consulted in more targeted evaluation activities of service safety.<br>▪ Ongoing assessment and evaluation of Service Safety Plan, including associated guidelines and security measures, is essential.<br>6.6 Risk Assessment and Safety Planning<br>▪ Consistent approach to risk assessment and safety planning, supported by the Service Safety Plan.<br>▪ Risk assessment is undertaken to identify factors which may jeopardise women's/child's physical emotional and/or psychological safety. As subsequent safety plan is developed based on these factors, and that builds upon the resources and experience s of the woman and is informed by the knowledge of the worker.<br>▪ Workers monitor and inform children of self-protective behaviours (or ensure they are referred to a service that can). Information is given about Kids Help Line and/or other services child appropriate.<br>▪ Meeting venues are meet safety requirements in services policies and processes that are part of the Service Safety Plan.<br>▪ Risk assessment and safety planning is undertaken with women and children on an ongoing basis.<br>▪ Risk assessment considers the risks posed by forms of abuse other than physical violence, and reflects an understanding of the nature of family violence.<br>▪ Common Risk Assessment Framework<br>o Common Risk Assessment Framework (CRAF) preliminary assessment used to inform comprehensive assessment when family violence situation has been established.<br>o Tool utilised when referral are made to mainstream services to justice, Victorian police, child protection, Child FIRST or specialist family violence services, specialist programs such as counselling and community legal centres.<br>o Information sharing subject and privacy legislation. Services should aim to acquire consent prior to sharing information in the CRAF tool. Sharing information without the victim's consent can only occur when:<br>▪ A crime has been committed or is going to be committed – the police must be contacted<br>▪ It is believed the child is likely to suffer significant harm – child protection must be contacted<br>▪ There are significant concerns for a child's wellbeing – Child FIRST must be contacted, |

| | |
|---|---|
| | and<br>▪ A victim is in need of urgent medical or psychiatric care – hospital or mental health crisis assessment and treatment team must be contacted.(pp.34) |
| ***Criteria 2.2***<br>*Services are delivered in a fair, equitable and transparent manner* | **Section 4: Access to Family Violence Specialist Service Support**<br>▪ 4.1 Eligibility Criteria<br>o Women, with and without children, who are seeking practical assistance, information or support in relation to their experience of family violence.<br>o Women who are assessed (via common risk assessment) as being at imminent risk and who identify the need for accommodation to increase their level and feelings of safety.<br>▪ 4.2 Determination of Acceptance Following a Referral<br>Policy and procedure is informed by the overarching principles and core values in the COP and are<br>o Reflective of and responsive to diversity;<br>o Uphold rights both ethically and legally – a demonstrated recognition that tit is discriminatory to deny 'groups' of women and their children, or women with particular issues, or characteristics from accessing services.<br>o Is transparent, supportive and avoids further trauma – women understand the assessment process why information is sought and how it will be used. A minimum amount of information is sought and it is considered in the context of any previous information disclosed in order to avoid the necessity of women and their children retelling their stories.<br>Section 5: Organisational Framework<br>5.1 Policies for Ensuring Access, Equity and Responsiveness<br>▪ A proactive approach should be taken to address access and equity issue including consideration for the following features:<br>o Entrance and toilet facilities for those with disabilities;<br>o Employment of workers representative of a range of cultural backgrounds;<br>o Information provided by the service, and about the service, is presented in a range of languages and in formats that are sensitive a range of cultures/abilities;<br>o Acknowledgement of a range of religious and culturally significant occasions;<br>o Workers actively support and welcome the discussions of culture and traditions;<br>o Workers are provided with training, supervisions and support to ensure appropriate responses to women;<br>o Physical setting displays material from a range of cultural backgrounds; and<br>o Inclusive and explicit language to ensure accessibility in direct service, information and provisions, |

| | |
|---|---|
| | service documentation and community development.<br>Points 5.1.1 to 5.1.6 to be considered in the development of policies, procedures and strategies to address access, equity and responsiveness.<br>5.1.1 Reflective of Diversity<br>▪ Services maintain an awareness of the demographics of their local community and women accessing the service. Where client data is not similar in profile to that of their local community, services take steps to determine why there is a disparity and seek to address it.<br>5.1.2 Promote Community Awareness<br>▪ Accurate up-to-date information regarding their services to promote community awareness of the support available to women and children who experience family violence.<br>▪ Important that all services, including those that maintain a confidential address for security purposes, feature an accessible contact phone number on promotional material.<br>5.1.3 Support Equitable Access<br>▪ Processes to determine equitable allocation of funds and material aid, and assessment of the level of intensity of support.<br>▪ Recognise the historical and social disadvantages which effect women and children, to different degrees, impact on relative access to society's resources.<br>5.1.4 Address Attitudinal Barriers<br>▪ Regular service reviews, professional development plans, reflective practice and regular supervisions provide opportunities to challenge and address these attitudes.<br>5.1.5 Assess Barriers to Access and Equity<br>▪ Organisations regularly review and assess barriers to access and equity within their services and across the broader family violence system.<br>5.1.6 Ensure Responsiveness<br>▪ Ensuring that every possible effort is made to ensure a worker is available to provide a telephone response during service hours (See also 5.4.1 Responsiveness).<br>**Feedback mechanisms in place to identify barriers to access 5.5 grievance procedures see 1.1 above.,** |
| ***Criteria 2.3***<br>*People access services most appropriate to their needs through timely, responsive* | 5.4.1 Responsiveness<br>▪ Necessity of a timely response is reflected in policy and procedure that addresses referral management.<br>▪ Phone calls to services are returned within an 8 working-hour period.<br>▪ Once initial contact is made with the woman, she is advised of the process for assessment or determination of the referral and an appointment/contact is scheduled within a 16 hour working-day |

| | |
|---|---|
| *service integration and referral* | period.<br>5.4 Collaboration and Integration<br>The development of policy and procedure should support integration and collaboration, and increase the participation of services in activities to enhance integration such as:<br>▪ Active participation in regional or sub-regional family violence networks or committees designed to activate and monitor the integrated response to family violence;<br>▪ Negotiation of local and regional referral pathways and protocols, according to statewide guidelines, with a range of relevant complementary services such as police, courts, child protection services, victims of crime services and sexual assault support services;<br>▪ Development of formal agreements such as protocols or memoranda of understanding to define collaborative relationships;<br>▪ Development of partnerships with culturally specific agencies such as Indigenous Family Violence Regional Action Groups and Regional Workers, and Indigenous Healing and Time Out services, to guide the development and delivery of a range of culturally appropriate<br>▪ Collaborative work with services for men who use violence against family members, establishing complementary approaches that assist in addressing the needs of the family while ensuring that the safety of women and children is paramount;<br>▪ Engagement with, and facilitation of the full participation in regional networks, of recognised community leaders including those representing community based religious, Indigenous, cultural and ethnic groups, and organisations representing the needs of lesbians, people with disabilities. This ensures culture is used to address violence and not pathologise it.<br>▪ Policy and procedure guides coordinated practice and creates streamlined referral pathways to ensure women and children experience a continuum of support.<br>6.8 Collaborative Practice<br>▪ The worker explains the importance of a coordinated approach to the client's support and the need to communicate with other services involved with them; and<br>▪ With the informed consent of the client, the worker makes contact with the service/s and schedules a case conference with involved services and the client.<br>▪ Case conferencing is also important to assist with assessment and effective case planning, monitoring and review.<br>▪ As with other elements of support provided by family violence services, co-case management is client driven, and in case planning and conferencing the worker/counsellor actively involves the woman in identifying what would be useful to support her.<br>6.8.1 Collaborative Practice with Victoria Police<br>▪ Though the ultimate decision regarding prosecution rests with Victoria Police, a case conference is an opportunity to identify the reasons for the woman's concerns, explain the court process and the role of prosecution, and to discuss and try to relieve the woman's concerns so that the legal proceedings can continue.<br>6.8.2 Collaborative Practice with Child Protection |

| | |
|---|---|
| | ▪ Where a woman and/or child requests advocacy services, a family violence worker participates in case conferences and case planning meetings.<br>5.4 Referral Management Strategy<br>Policy and procedure that guides referral management systems is designed to ensure:<br>▪ Responsiveness — consistent policies regarding response to clients and the determination and prioritisation of acceptance of referrals. Consistency includes workers' consistent response to women i.e. that all women who contact family violence services receive a response that validates their experiences and includes safety planning and active referral if necessary, even in cases where the service is unable to respond or unable to respond immediately;<br>▪ Caseloads are monitored so that workers do not exceed recommended case levels.<br>▪ Attention is given to allocation to ensure diversity and balance of complexity;<br>▪ Methods for collecting data regarding unmet demand;<br>▪ Inter-family violence service or generalist crisis service referrals to enhance safety.<br>4.3 Referral Pathways<br>4.3.1 Response during business hours<br>▪ Women with or without children who are at imminent risk and who need and want relocation to safe accommodation outside their region will be actively referred to Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service (WDVCS), the central referral service for access to women's refuge services.<br>▪ Women from a local area where there is a regional crisis service and who need to relocate within the local area should be referred via Regional Crisis Services.<br>▪ In situations where a woman does not want to enter a woman's refuge but is in need of relocation, she will be actively referred to a generalist crisis housing service in her area and referred to the domestic/family outreach service in her local area which will provide practical support, advocacy, information and case management.<br>▪ Women who are in need of information, referral or discussion of their circumstances, including safety planning, will be referred to their local family violence outreach service.<br>▪ Women who seek relocation and who have the capacity to maintain or relocate to private rental accommodation in their area will be referred to their local Private Rental Brokerage Program.<br>▪ Women who are in need of emotional support to talk through and reflect upon the impact of their experience of family violence, may be referred to their local counselling or support group service.<br>▪ Women who seek support on behalf of their children with concerns about the impact of their direct or indirect exposure to family violence may be referred to their local counselling or support group service or specialist children's service.<br>4.3.2 Specialist Response<br>▪ Immigrant Women's Domestic Violence Service (IWDVS): IWDVS provides case management services, and co-case management services (in partnership with women's refuge and outreach services), to women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds including women with children. Referrals can be made directly to the service and via refuge and outreach services according to protocol arrangements. |

| | |
|---|---|
| | ▪ Elizabeth Hoffman House (EHH): Referral to EHH occurs via direct pathways according to local protocols and via WDVCS for supported accommodation services. EHH provides support to mainstream family violence services for their work with Indigenous women.<br>4.3.3 After Hours Response<br>▪ Women with or without children, who are at imminent risk and who need, and want, relocation to safe accommodation outside their region will be actively referred to Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service (WDVCS), the central referral service for access to women's refuge services.<br>5.9 Structural Advocacy and Community Development<br>▪ Feedback is actively sought from all women who receive support as well as other women who are consulted in more targeted evaluation activities. Ongoing assessment and evaluation of Service Safety Plans, including associated guidelines and security measures, is essential. Here, too, services must actively seek the feedback of service users and incorporate their views.<br>6.1.3 Rights Based Approach<br>▪ As service users, women have the right to provide feedback to the service regarding the support they receive.<br>7.3.1 Intake and Assessment<br>▪ Women are fully informed of their rights and responsibilities within the service and beyond. Information regarding service guidelines, privacy and confidentiality, and duty of care responsibilities is provided at the earliest opportunity and this information is revisited throughout the support period. Information is also provided about the case management process(pp. 54). |

| **Standard 3 – Well-being:** *People's right to well-being and safety is promoted and upheld.* | |
|---|---|
| ***Criteria 3.1***<br>*Funded organisations adopt a strengths based and early intervention approach to service delivery that enhances people's wellbeing.* | 2.2 Core Values<br>▪ Empowerment: Family violence services work with women and children to build on their strengths and enhance their capacity to make informed decisions and exercise their right to self-determination without coercion and free from judgement.<br>6.1.4 Validate and Build Upon Strengths<br>Workers demonstrate recognition of the strengths, resources and spirit of women. In validating women's experiences, workers should demonstrate unconditional positive regard and active listening. Workers support the empowerment of women by:<br>▪ assisting women to reframe their experiences and identify the problem-solving strategies and resourcefulness they have demonstrated;<br>▪ assisting women and children to recognize their own strengths, rather than focusing on their problems which obscures their personal potential;<br>▪ framing issues in terms of challenges rather than problems, as the focus on challenges implies the potential for overcoming obstacles;<br>▪ using open ended questions with a solution focus, thereby facilitating a woman's exploration of options rather than providing advice or entering into a counselling dynamic.<br>7.3 Case Management with Women<br>7.3.2 Case Planning<br>▪ Workers recognise and respond to women as the primary planners of their own goals and objectives. A case plan is a plan of action to address goals identified during assessment and to provide a framework and purpose for the support relationship. Case plans clearly identify anticipated time lines and allocation of tasks. Workers document case plans with women and children. They can be developed over time and should be updated according to circumstances.<br>7.3.3 Case Review<br>▪ Case plans are reviewed regularly throughout the support period. Reviews are often undertaken in an informal way at each appointment however it is important that workers also initiate formal reviews at regular intervals throughout the support period. Review is an opportunity for the worker and woman to reflect on:<br>o the case plan;<br>o what has been achieved;<br>o what has been useful for the woman during her support;<br>o future directions;<br>o any issues that may not have been previously documented or included in the case plan;<br>o Risk assessment and safety planning.<br>7.3.4 Exit Planning |

| | |
|---|---|
| | ▪ Exit planning involves a range of strategies developed with the woman for her unique circumstances and includes safety planning and community linkages.<br>7.3.5 Case Closure<br>▪ This involves reinforcing strategies discussed during exit planning and ensuring she is aware of how to access family violence support in the future. Women may withdraw from support for a range of reasons without notice. For this reason it is important that workers provide positive feedback, reiterate progress and revisit safety planning strategies at the conclusion of each appointment. |
| ***Criteria 3.2***<br>*People actively participate in an assessment of their strengths, risks, wants and needs.* | 7.3.2 Case Planning<br>▪ Workers recognise and respond to women as the primary planners of their own goals and objectives.<br>3.2.2 A) Crisis Services – State-wide<br>▪ Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Centre<br>o WDVCS aims to provide support, information and referral for women and their children experiencing family violence 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. WDVCS is the central referral point for women's refuge.<br>5.1 Policies for Ensuring Access, Equity and Responsiveness<br>▪ information provided by the service, and about the service, is presented in a range of languages and in formats that are sensitive to a range of cultures/abilities;<br>▪ workers actively support and welcome the discussion of culture and traditions;<br>5.1.3 Support Equitable Access<br>▪ Processes to determine equitable allocation of funds and material aid, and assessment of the level of intensity of support.<br>▪ Recognise the historical and social disadvantages which effect women and children, to different degrees, impact on relative access to society's resources.<br>6.2 Engaging Children in a Supportive Relationship<br>▪ Workers provide children with age and gender appropriate information to enhance their understanding of the family violence service and the purpose of the support provided. Workers should communicate this in plain, age-appropriate language.<br>Section 7: Service Delivery with Women<br>▪ Worker who facilitates the initial contact and/or intake and assessment must ensure that their service is the most appropriate to meet the needs of the woman. |
| ***Criteria 3.5***<br>*Services are delivered in a safe environment for all people free from abuse, neglect violence and /or* | Promotes an environment where people are free from abuse, neglect, violence and/or preventable injury<br>Services provider has clearly documented policies and processes for responding to potential or actual harm, abuse etc.<br>People are safe from abuse, neglect etc.<br>5.4.2 Enhancing Safety<br>▪ Where the strategies employed by the woman and worker do not enhance the woman's feelings of safety, the |

| | |
|---|---|
| *preventable injury.* | worker assists the woman to relocate to safer accommodation (this may mean active referral via another agency such as WDVCS) and assists the women with safety planning.<br>▪ In an instance where a woman who is accommodated and supported in a communal refuge, is located by the perpetrator, causing the woman and the other women accommodated with the service to fear for their safety, the service may seek to refer the women to another family violence service or generalist service to crisis accommodation. As the other women and children accommodated with the service are not the target of the perpetrator, the workers consider their relocation only where no other option will increase the women's feelings of safety. This decision is reached through careful risk assessment and thorough exploration of options with the individual women and through a process that is supported by the service safety plan.<br>▪ Policy and procedure supports workers to model ways of dealing with crisis and managing risk that are sustainable and empowering. Consequently, it is important that workers do not assume that relocation is the first or only option for women and children in these cases.<br>5.7 Service Safety Plan:<br>▪ Define proactive measures designed to prevent the occurrence of risk to all persons frequenting the service<br>▪ Outline clear procedures regarding response to a critical or potentially critical incident, so the need for improvisation is minimised;<br>▪ Enable professional and prompt response to risk with the aim of containing or preventing escalation of the circumstances; and,<br>▪ In the wake of critical or potentially critical incident, define measures to appropriately deal with the impact of the incident. These measures also ensure the service has a process for evaluation and reflection to enable the service to take the opportunity to develop and learn from the incident. (pp.56)<br>5.7.1 Focus on Individual Risk<br>▪ Focus on individual risk promotes inclusiveness and optimal accessibility for clients, as opposed to a broad service that lack flexibility in their application to individual and clients and their particular circumstances.<br>▪ Case by case risk assessment and planning supported by security measures in Service Safety Plan.<br>5.7.2 Occupational health and safety<br>▪ Client safety as integrated into the Service Safety Plan and organisational policy and procedure. This includes worker supervision and debriefing, process for determining a safe venue for contact with clients, training and professional development, and worker orientation.<br>5.7.3 Guidelines for Access to Service<br>▪ Guidelines developed to support the Service Safety Plan to facilitate safe and comfortable access to service for clients. |

| | |
|---|---|
| | ▪ At all times service guidelines:<br>o Uphold women and children's rights<br>o Are flexible to respond to the individual experiences of women and children<br>o Are respectful of women and children<br>o Are relevant to the current circumstances of the service<br>o Are in line with legislation<br>o Are reasonable and model a constructive response to risk; and<br>o Do not replicate the nature and dynamics of family violence<br>▪ Women's feedback and reviews are incorporated into the development of review of service guidelines and a child inclusive process is taken. To facilitate this process, services actively encourage women to provide feedback of any sort regarding their support, including positive feedback concerns and complaints.<br>▪ To promote equity, services ensure flexibility in guideline to recognise the individual circumstance and needs of each client. Flexible guidelines and support ensure that women who work and study at night can access support (including those employed in the sex industry) and accommodation.<br>▪ Service guidelines support women's rights to self-determination while balancing these with others' rights to safety.<br>▪ Safety concerns never justify prohibitions on women associating with men in general, or ex partners, in particular. 'Freedom of association is a basic human right and guidelines like this would breach an individual's human rights…for some women maintaining contact with the perpetrator is part of the leaving process;. Services have the right to include guidelines that determine who may accompany women to their service sites, though it is important to consider that guidelines that enforce isolation and do not support women's social networks, have been found to exacerbate the issues faced by women and children who experience family violence. (pp.58) |
| **Standard 4 – Participation:** People's right to choice, decision making and to actively participate as a valued member of their chosen community is promoted and upheld. | |
| ***Criteria 4.1***<br>*People exercise choice and control in service delivery and life decisions, where appropriate.* | 5.8 Responding to breaches of guidelines<br>▪ The first response to an alleged breach of a guideline or policy is an investigation that is undertaken according to formalised and documented procedures that ensure that a woman who may have breached guidelines has the opportunity for a fair hearing. The process includes providing the opportunity for a woman to have an independent advocate present when the issue is explored with her. Women are also advised of their rights to ensure a fair process, and to build trust in the process and the service.<br>5.9 Service Evaluation<br>▪ Feedback is actively sought from all women who receive support as well as other women who are consulted in more |

| | |
|---|---|
| | targeted evaluation activities. The issue of support to children is integral to any service evaluation and is included by seeking direct feedback from children and their mothers about their support. Ongoing assessment and evaluation of Service Safety Plans, including associated guidelines and security measures, is essential.<br>5.1 Policies for Ensuring Access, Equity and Responsiveness<br>▪ information provided by the service, and about the service, is presented in a range of languages and in formats that are sensitive to a range of cultures/abilities;<br>▪ workers actively support and welcome the discussion of culture and traditions |
| ***Criteria 4.3***<br>*People maintain connections with family and friends, as appropriate* | *Specific area of relevance for family violence sector. This requires further investigation in future COP planning.* |