



Centre for
Women's Safety
and Wellbeing

2022 - 2023 Annual Report





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Acknowledgements

Acknowledgment of Country

The Centre for Women's Safety and Wellbeing acknowledges we are located on stolen Whadjuk Noongar land. We support the [Uluru Statement from the Heart](#) and call for reparations to be made as part of our reconciliation journey. We honour Aboriginal people for their continued resistance and resilience, and we pay deep respect to elders of all generations who continue to protect and promote culture and country.

Honouring Victims and Survivors

The Centre for Women's Safety and Wellbeing recognises the strength and resilience of adults, children, and young people who have experienced domestic, family, and sexual violence. We pay our respects to those who did not survive and acknowledge the families, friends and communities who have lost loved ones to this preventable and far-reaching issue.

We are committed to ensuring responses to domestic and family violence are informed by lived experience.

Celebrating Diversity

The Centre for Women's Safety and Wellbeing celebrates the mosaic of backgrounds, experiences, and stories that people from all walks of life bring to our community. We welcome and respect people of diverse gender, sex and sexuality. We are committed to greater inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer people (LGBTIQA+).

We believe in fostering a safe and inclusive space where diversity is not just acknowledged but celebrated. By embracing the richness of our differences, we are empowered to share our unique strengths and perspectives, ultimately building a stronger and more resilient society. Through unity in diversity, we work towards a future where everyone can thrive and have a voice, regardless of background or circumstances.

Artist: Rosie Paine

Rosie Paine is a proud Yilka/Wongutha/Noongar/Yamatji woman from the North East Goldfields of Western Australia.



About Us, Our Vision, Our Values

The Centre for Women's Safety and Wellbeing (CWSW) is the leading voice for women and children affected by domestic and family violence and sexual violence in Western Australia.

We are an independent organisation and the peak representative body for women's specialist domestic and family violence, community-based women's health, and sexual assault services in Western Australia.

We work with governments, peak bodies, community, and private organisations to prevent violence against women, promote women's health, advance gender equity, and to ensure that women's voices are integral to policy, legislation, and services.

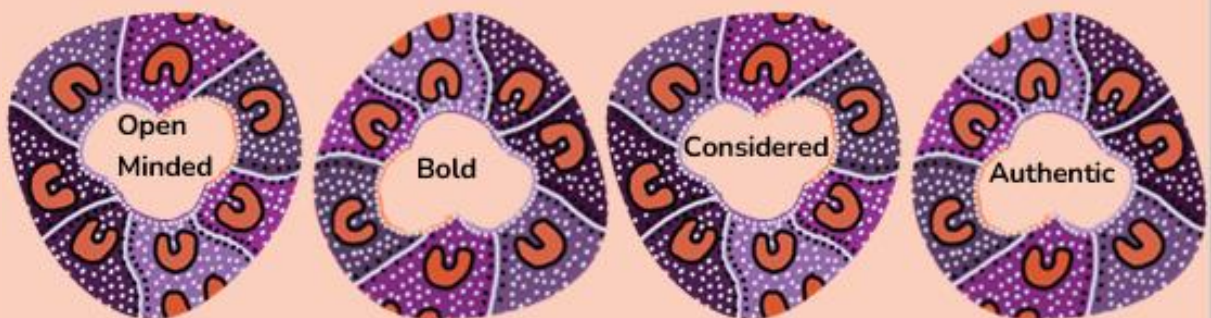
We take an intersectional approach that recognises the multiple forms of discrimination many women face so that responses to these issues address the particular and diverse needs of women.

We believe that responses to domestic and family violence and sexual violence are most effective when they are informed by and developed in partnership with victim-survivors. CWSW acknowledges that the specialist domestic and family violence and sexual violence sectors have been developed with and are underpinned by the lived experience of victim-survivors.

Our Vision

A safe and equitable world where women thrive

Our Values





Our Strategic Priorities





Chair's Report

This past year has continued to be one of growth and widening influence for the Centre for Women's Safety and Wellbeing.

I would like to thank Rebecca Smith as the Centre's inaugural Chief Executive Officer bringing together the various specialist women's service into a coordinated peak. Dr Alison Evans then commenced as the next Chief Executive Officer for the Centre to lead the next phase of development. The Board members recognise the hard work and commitment of Alison to developing the Centre's profile and influence to end violence against women and children.

There has been a lot of activity across the year, and I thank all the Board members for their passion and commitment to the Centre's work and supporting staff.

During the year there has been an important expansion in the Centre's work reaching out to regional and remote Western Australia to conduct training and consultation in both family and domestic violence and sexual violence areas. There has also been the development of the Centre's work with women's health centres which is increasing the depth of work being undertaken. The small and passionate team of staff at the Centre have worked incredibly hard to make sure the range of work and associated events to meet their commitments to the sector and funders.

The Centre's continuing partnership with Stopping Family Violence involving joint projects involved the successful September 2023 conference *The Journey to Ending Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence*.

Whilst sadly not new, I want to recognise the preventable deaths of women and their children at the hands of abusive partners. The enormous sense of injustice, grief and ongoing losses that this causes to the lives of families and loved ones left behind is overwhelming and their voices are critical to influencing future work.

In relation to advocacy, the Centre is represented on various key committees, working parties and groups ranging from reforms on responses to sexual violence to commissioning of services, involving national and state representation. A key platform this year was the Domestic and Family Violence Talks about the urgent need for greater and improved responses to FDV in WA and the subsequent WA Government Taskforce established.

In the next phase of the Centre's growth, we will be looking at consolidating the funding and supporting important initiatives that include the evolution of the Lived Experience expert group and the workforce development to ensure the work of



women's specialist services is recognised for its complexity and ultimately that women and children accessing the services engage with high quality programs that meet their safety and other needs.

Finally, as I have said previously, I invite individuals and organisations to continue their support for the Centre's commitment to stopping violence and ending gender inequality.

Donna Chung



CEO's Report

The Centre for Women's Safety and Wellbeing is working harder than ever to advocate for and raise the profile of family and domestic violence services, sexual violence services and community-based women's health services. Collectively, these services play a vital role in improving the safety, health, and wellbeing of women in Western Australia and advancing their rights and opportunities.

In partnership with victim survivors, sector leaders, and government partners, we have been driving family, domestic and sexual violence awareness, advocacy, and reform and have strengthened our strategic capabilities across the continuum from prevention, early intervention, response and recovery and reestablishment.

Throughout the year, we participated in advocacy around core funding to ensure that services have a strong and sure footing to undertake their critical work. We were actively engaged in work occurring at a national and state level around how we respond to coercive control; modernising legislative responses to sexual violence; women's economic and housing security; and equal opportunity and abortion legislation.

We have been creating opportunities for the sector to come together through communities of practice, webinars, forums, workshops, and conferences. We have continued to build the capability of the emerging prevention workforce through workforce and sector development activities. Our primary prevention work has continued to develop and evolve across the year, culminating in the completion of Western Australia's first ever primary prevention framework: Foundations for Change.

We secured funding to develop WA's first industry Code of Practice for specialist family and domestic violence services working with victim survivors. We have travelled around the State consulting with services to ensure that the Code is responsive to their local contexts. We are deeply appreciative of the strong support that we have received across the State to undertake this important work to guide consistent, quality service provision for victim survivors accessing specialist family and domestic violence services in Western Australia.

In 2023 we've continued working to incorporate the practical and knowledge-based value of lived experience into our work and ensure an approach that has dignity, social justice and human rights at the centre. It continues to be important to ensure that victim-survivors expertise is drawn from a diversity of perspectives.



In the spirit of authentic allyship we are continuing to improve and deepen our engagement and collaboration with the Aboriginal family violence sector and advocates and this important work will continue to inform all that we do. Thank you to all our members who continue to advocate for reconciliation and for a positive way forward.

We are excited about the work we have been undertaking together with peak bodies and representative networks from all Australian states and territories, where we have been connecting and collaborating to progress national advocacy priorities.

It is a privilege to be part of this organisation – our team, Board, sector and supporters are an inspiration to me. Thank you to all for allowing us to support you, to amplify your voice and be your allies. While we've achieved so much this year, there is still so much to be done.

I would like to sincerely thank the CWSW Board for the support they have provided me with in my first year as CEO and for placing their trust and confidence in me as CEO and in CWSW as the peak body. I would also like to thank the CWSW team for their hard-work and commitment to effecting sustainable and purposeful systemic and social change. The small team at the Centre has done an outstanding job in meeting the challenge of ever-increasing demands for engagement, support and consultancy.

We are grateful for the allyship of services, lived experience, the Office for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence and Women and Newborn Health Service. Thank you for your feedback, your interest and your participation in the work of the peak.

Thank you also to our philanthropic and corporate supporters and donors for your donations, in-kind support and pro-bono help.

We are ambitious in our purpose to end domestic, family and sexual violence and to advance women's health and gender equity. We will work hard in the year ahead to bring people together across the community to do this. Violence against women and children and gender-based violence must be a state priority, and we will campaign and raise awareness with and on behalf of our member organisations, to ensure that it is treated as one.

Alison Evans



Treasurer's Report

I am pleased to present the 2022/2023 financial report for the Centre for Women's Safety and Wellbeing (CWSW). CWSW has maintained its sustainable financial standing in 2022/2023 and remains in a strong position to deliver its purpose into the future.

CWSW have continued to seek and embrace new opportunities to increase support and advocacy for members and women over the past year and have had steady workforce growth. We are appreciative and give thanks to the support of Department of Communities, Department of Health, Lotterywest, Water Corporation, the Minderoo Foundation, individual donors and our members who have enabled us to deliver our outcomes. CWSW are pleased at the increased investment, subsequent activities and outcomes to date in women's health and primary prevention during this period. We have also received an increase in donations and memberships. This financial year has resulted in a profit of \$171189 for CWSW in 2022/2023.

There have been no changes of significance to accounting standards during this period. CWSW remains in a strong financial and operational position going into the year ahead to deliver contractual outcomes and its organisational purpose.

On behalf of the Committee, I would like to acknowledge the excellent work of Alison Evans, Rod Lillis (Accountant) and Sharon Dean (Finance Coordinator) who have worked diligently in the operations, implementation of improved controls, comprehensive reporting and management of our financials. I also thank Donna and all Board members for their time and contributions over the year. My final thanks go to the entire team at CWSW who have continued to increase the reach of the important work to support members, and the safety, health and wellbeing of women in Western Australia.

Kelda Oppermann



Highlights

Strategic Priority 1: Build the sustainability, capability, and connectedness of domestic, family and sexual violence services and community-based women's health services

Code of Practice

About:

In December 2022, CWSW and Stopping Family Violence successfully advocated for the development and implementation of a Western Australian Code of Practice (the Code) and an Audit Tool for specialist family and domestic violence services.

The purpose of the Code is to articulate a set of principles and standards to guide consistent, quality service provision for victim survivors accessing specialist family and domestic violence services. The purpose of the Audit Tool is to assist services to use the Code as a resource for continuous quality improvement.

Achievements for 2022-23 include the recruitment of 2.0FTE staff, a Code of Practice literature review, the commencement of an Expert Reference Group, and consultations with specialist domestic and family violence services across metropolitan, regional, and remote areas.

Highlights:

 Consultations in Western Australia from April to June included:

- Northam
- Narrogin
- Newman
- Rockingham
- Carnarvon
- Geraldton
- West Perth
- Mandurah
- Merriwa
- Bentley
- Derby
- Fitzroy Crossing
- Broome



- ♥ Consultation with peak body Living Proud to ensure the Code is written with a foundation of inclusivity and to capture the voices, challenges, and perspectives of the LGBTIQA+ Community.
- ♥ Focused consultations with ISHAR and MWAS to ensure the Code meets the needs of our culturally and linguistically diverse communities.
- ♥ Parliamentary Statement by Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence released 20 June, to update the House of Representative on the Code of Practice and Audit Tool Project.





Preventing Violence Together

This year, Preventing Violence Together (PVT) has focused on developing Western Australia's first primary prevention of violence against women framework, funded by the Department of Communities. The purpose of the framework is to set the foundations for evidence-informed primary prevention practice in WA and to build the capability of an emerging primary prevention workforce. Early in the development process, PVT established a Project Team comprising Aboriginal stakeholders from regions across WA to ensure that the framework represented the needs and voices of Aboriginal people. Our work with Aboriginal stakeholders is critical because Aboriginal women experience disproportionately high rates of violence, which is perpetrated by men of all cultural backgrounds. The framework is due to be released in March 2024.

One of the key objectives of PVT is to build the capacity of practitioners and organisations to deliver evidence-informed primary prevention activities in their communities. This year the PVT team piloted two primary prevention training courses: Prevention in Practice and Unpacking Resistance. The courses were developed by Safe and Equal in Victoria and adapted by PVT for the Western Australian context. Prevention in Practice is a two-day course for practitioners seeking to understand and engage in primary prevention practice. PVT delivered six Prevention in Practice pilots: three in Perth, one in Geraldton, one in Busselton and one online. Unpacking Resistance is a one-day course for practitioners who are seeking to build their confidence and capacity to understand and respond to backlash and resistance. PVT delivered three Unpacking Resistance pilots in Perth, Busselton, and online. Participants of these pilot training courses provided a wealth of feedback, which has been invaluable in shaping PVT's upcoming Foundations of Primary Prevention of Violence Against Women training.

Throughout the year, the PVT team has enjoyed meeting and building relationships with individuals, organisations and communities committed to preventing violence against women. We facilitated more than 20 consultation workshops to inform the development of the primary prevention framework. These workshops were informative, thought provoking and grounded in a collective commitment to social justice and gender equality. PVT has also delivered a monthly Community of Practice to support the 17 recipients of the Department of Communities' Family and Domestic Violence Primary Prevention Grants Program. It has been rewarding to see the capacity of WA's emerging primary prevention sector grow over the course of the year.



Preventing
violence
together



Framework Development Project Team



Unpacking Resistance training in Busselton







Prevention in Practice training in Geraldton

Domestic and Family Violence Specialist Response






Communities of Practice

In 2022-23, CWSW sought to evolve its engagement with the domestic and family violence sector from meetings to Communities of Practice (CoPs). The purpose of CoPs is to increase collaboration, share and develop knowledge, and improve practice, including exploring ways to implement evidence-based practice in the sector's work.

Over the course of the year, CWSW has facilitated the following CoPs:

-  Domestic and Family Violence Outreach and Advocacy Specialists (includes SAH and CRS workers)
This group is for those working in a service that is not a refuge but is funded to provide services and support to victim-survivors of domestic and family violence. The group includes front-line staff, coordinators and managers.
-  Domestic and Family Violence Refuge Specialists
This group is specifically for those working in women's refuge services. The group consists of front-line staff, coordinators and managers.
-  Domestic and Family Violence Children's Specialists
This group is for those whose primary role is to work with children and/or young people who are victim-survivors of domestic and family violence. This group is comprised of front-line staff.
-  Domestic and Family Violence Counsellors
This group is specifically for domestic and family violence counsellors whose primary role is to provide counselling to women and/or children who are victim-survivors of domestic and family violence.

Hosted Meetings

-  Lived Experience Advisory Group
-  Domestic and Family Violence Non-Refuge Managers Meetings
-  Domestic and Family Violence Children's Specialists
-  Domestic and Family Violence Service Managers
-  Domestic and Family Violence Network Meetings



Workshops, Webinars & Presentations

-  Understanding tech abuse (hosted by CWSW, facilitated by WESNET)
-  There's an app for... (hosted by CWSW, facilitated by WESNET)
-  Children, young people and tech (hosted by CWSW, facilitated by WESNET)
-  Understanding stalkerware (hosted by CWSW, facilitated by WESNET)
-  Understanding and responding to the high risk and harm of non-fatal strangulation
-  Location, location, location (hosted by CWSW, facilitated by WESNET)
-  Exploring the complex interplay of domestic and family violence, alcohol and other drug use and mental health
-  Are You Safe At Home? Collaborative webinar with Safe and Equal
-  Understanding the experiences and impacts of domestic and family violence
-  Working with victim-survivors of domestic and family violence
-  Working with young people who have experienced domestic and family violence
-  LGBTQIA+ people experiencing domestic and family violence (in collaboration with Connection and Wellbeing Australia)
-  LGBTQIA+ foundations of inclusive practice'
(in collaboration with Connection and Wellbeing Australia)
-  WA Sexual Offence Laws: Key Learnings from other States and Territories
(webinar in collaboration with Women's Legal Services WA)
-  Understanding coercive control (webinar presentation)
-  Gender equity presentation
-  Violence against women and gender inequality presentation
-  Violence against women and children and its impacts
-  Syphilis in WA: Women, pregnancy and what you need to know
-  Cervical Screening Test Self Collection: New Policy, New Opportunities.

Strategic Priority 2: Strengthen the ability of organisations, sectors and systems to provide coordinated, comprehensive, effective responses

Domestic and Family Violence non-specialist workforce Development

DFV & AOD Intersecting Capability Review Tool (ICRT)

The intersecting domestic and family violence and alcohol and other drug capability-building initiative is a collaboration between peak bodies in the domestic and family violence sector, including CWSW and Stopping Family Violence, and the peak body for the alcohol and other drug sector, the Western Australian Network of Alcohol and other Drug Agencies.

The purpose of the project is to assist family and domestic violence and alcohol and other drug service providers to review their capability to identify and respond to people with intersecting family and domestic violence and alcohol and other drug concerns by building the Intersecting Capability Review Tool (ICRT).

Since December 2022, CWSW has presented a face-to-face workshop exploring the complex interplay of domestic and family violence, alcohol and other drug use and mental health and its impact on victim-survivors. The workshops have equipped practitioners to apply the ICRT and other tools and strategies in their context.

Women's Experiences of Re-establishing their lives following domestic violence

Domestic and family violence casts a long shadow over women's lives well after they have ended their relationships. Most of the funding of domestic and family violence services are at the point of crisis and longer-term support is largely not available.

The purpose of this project is to document women's experiences of the long shadow cast by domestic and family violence and identify the range of policies and programs that are critical to supporting women's re-establishment of their lives and futures. As women's support needs will change over the course of time and is dependent on their circumstances, the need to identify the gaps in

our service systems and in our research evidence is critical. The research project involves the examination of the needs and possible responses that could be provided to women survivors of violence to improve their long-term health and wellbeing outcomes.

The project comprises the following key components:

- Evidence Review
- A survey of women about their longer-term needs
- A survey of practitioners to gather their perspective on women's needs and the supports currently available for the identified needs
- A Focus group to test the viability of the research recommendations for implementation in practice.

The project is a collaboration between the Centre for Women's Safety and Wellbeing and Curtin University.

Transitional Housing Service Model Project

In 2022, the Centre for Women's Safety and Wellbeing (CWSW) received funding from the Minderoo Foundation to develop a proposal for a transitional housing service model that includes practical and therapeutical supports for women and children victim-survivors for up to two years post-separation from the perpetrator of domestic and family violence. An Advisory Committee guided the project.

The objectives of the project were to:

- Review the national and international evidence on the effectiveness and experiences of transitional housing interventions and supports/services for women and children experiencing domestic and family violence.
- Review effective transitional housing and support models from other disciplinary areas for any key learnings.
- Consult with stakeholders from the domestic and family violence and housing sectors across Western Australia.
- Consult with the family and domestic violence sectors from other states and territories.
- Consult with women with lived experience of domestic and family violence.



In 2023, the Centre for Safety and Wellbeing published a report on the project findings and recommendations for expanding housing and support models in Western Australia. The following is a summary of the findings and recommendations moving forward:

The Transitional Housing Project Report highlights the challenges and inadequacies in the provision of supported transitional housing for women and children experiencing domestic and family violence in Western Australia. The current system, while recognising the importance of transitional housing, is described as small, under-funded, and lacking a cohesive strategy. The report emphasises the need for immediate government investment to address existing transitional housing challenges. It advocates for further investment to develop a leading practice model, identify housing needs across the state, and enhance outreach support for victims.

The report underscores the benefits of supported transitional housing programs, combining housing and support services to reduce homelessness risks and aid in the healing and stabilisation of women and children. However, it highlights the existing gap between supply and demand, with only around 80 transitional housing properties for a potentially larger eligible population. The financial underpinning of these programs is also noted, as rental income alone does not cover the full costs of property, tenancy management, and support services.

To address these issues, the report calls for an expansion of transitional housing stock through various means, including social housing, private market sourcing, and regional collaboration. It emphasises the importance of appropriate and accessible housing, with refuges having nomination rights and serving as support providers. Furthermore, the report stresses the necessity of ongoing support and long-term housing solutions for women exiting crisis and transitional accommodation.

In terms of recommendations, the report urges immediate government investment in existing transitional housing, the coordination of a leading practice model, and the identification of housing needs across Western Australia. It also calls for increased investment in specialist domestic and family violence outreach support, tailored service models for the post-separation period, and enhanced funding for Safe at Home initiatives and affordable housing programs. Overall, the report advocates for a comprehensive policy and investment strategy to bridge gaps in the current



transitional housing system and align with the National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022–2032.

Housing Advisory Roundtable

On 12 September 2023, domestic and family violence and community service representatives met with the Hon. Simone McGurk MLA, Minister for Child Protection; Women's Interests; Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence; Community Services and the Hon. John Carey MLA, Minister for Housing; Lands; Homelessness; Local Government to discuss the critical issue of housing for women and children seeking to leave a perpetrator of domestic and family violence. A briefing paper was prepared for this Roundtable. A summary of themes and recommendations was prepared for distribution after the Roundtable. The summary paper 'unpacks' the recommendations set out below.

Key recommendations to emerge from the Roundtable:

1. Increase support for victim-survivors to safely stay in their homes after leaving a perpetrator of domestic and family violence.
2. Resource specialist domestic and family violence services to deliver mobile outreach services to support victim-survivors continuing to live in the same home as the perpetrator of domestic and family violence.
3. Increase the availability of immediate and long-term housing options for women leaving perpetrators of violence to cater for the diverse needs of victim-survivors.
4. Support victim-survivors to access private rental properties.
5. Develop strengthened referral pathways and family and domestic violence education and training for frontline professionals working in specialist homelessness and social housing sectors, and private real estate sector.



6. Develop a transitional housing service model tailored to victim-survivors for the two years post-separation.
7. Develop a housing strategy that supports the supply of suitable housing for women and children escaping domestic and family violence.
8. Embed an intersectional approach into WA's housing strategy to ensure that victim-survivors who experience discrimination have access to specific support and housing services.
9. Invest in the capability to gather state-wide data to map the housing needs of women and children escaping domestic and family violence to housing supply.
10. Invest in placed-based initiatives that provide adequate resources and autonomy to Aboriginal communities to decide on the types of properties, location, and support models they require.

Safe Housing for Family & Domestic Violence Survivors Advocacy Group

Purpose

To advocate for the Western Australian Government to fund secure, stable and long term social and affordable housing to promote the safety, wellbeing and best possible outcomes for victim-survivors of family and domestic violence.

The Safe Housing for Family and Domestic Violence Survivors Advocacy Group brings together diverse knowledge, skills, and expertise to:

- Develop key asks to support safe, timely and affordable housing for survivors of domestic and family violence
- Develop an advocacy plan and timeline
- Form a coalition of support
- Implement advocacy plan

Policy and Systems Advocacy

CWSW's submissions are a tangible representation of our commitment to advocacy and engagement to influence social policy and system design. This is an important peak body function.

Legislative Responses to Coercive Control in Western Australia

In October 2022, CWSW participated in the community consultation process relating to the question of whether coercive control should become a criminal offence, or whether it can be dealt with by other means. CWSW's submission stated "While criminal law is part of the domestic and family violence legislative environment, it is not in-and-of-itself necessarily the most effective way of ensuring victim-survivor safety and holding perpetrators accountable. To be effective, each part of the domestic and family violence response system must be fully integrated, mutually reinforcing, and facilitating reciprocal accountability. This will allow the whole system to effectively manage the risk and harm associated with coercive control and ensure safe outcomes for all victim-survivors regardless of where they enter the system. It is our view that there are actions that should be taken now to improve system-wide responses to coercive control, that are not contingent on the introduction of a new offence".

Family Law Amendment Bill 2023

In February 2023, CWSW made a submission to the Family Law Reform of the Attorney-General's Department on the Exposure Draft of the Family Law Amendment Bill 2023. The submission acknowledged the review of the family law system as a welcome opportunity to enhance and adapt the family law system to be responsive to domestic and family violence in a way that keeps women and children targeted by perpetrators of domestic and family violence safe from violence and abuse, while also ensuring fair and just outcomes for all parties. We argued for the Family Law Amendment Bill 2023 to re-focus Australia's family law system on the best interests of children and the safety of caregivers. It is important that courts consider whether there is a history of domestic and family violence before determining how parents should make decisions about their child or children. This would protect children from spending time with a violent parent.



CWSW held an online drop-in session to hear from the domestic and family violence sector on the proposed changes, which formulated the basis of CWSW's submission.











- Response to Discussion Paper Volume 1 OBJECTIVES, CONSENT AND MISTAKE OF FACT

CWSW argued the need to change the current laws on consent and mistake of fact (as it relates to sexual offences) in Western Australia. We submitted that the Criminal Code should be amended to introduce the affirmative consent model into Western Australian legislation. We also asked that a history of intimate partner violence or domestic and family violence be expressly required to be considered in sexual violence offences, where it is relevant.

We noted that the incidence and impact of intimate partner sexual violence is significant, with Australian domestic and family violence workers estimating 90-100% of their female clients have experienced intimate partner sexual violence. We do not believe sexual violence within a domestic violence context has been adequately addressed in the law. We believe principles should include 'intimate partner' terminology. The value of including this terminology directly within interpretive principles is that it emphasises that sexual assault is also perpetrated by intimate partners. Women are more likely to be sexually assaulted by an intimate partner than by a stranger or acquaintance.



Governance, advisory committees and working groups

-  Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Strategy Working Group
-  Commissioning Working Group
-  Data and Outcomes Working Group
-  Community Partnerships Roundtable
-  Path to Safety Steering Group (Co-chair)
-  Family and Domestic Violence Commissioning Expert Reference Group
-  Women's Health Services meetings
-  Sexual Assault Support Services meetings
-  Family Court of WA Reference Group
-  Sexual Violence Strategy Reference Group
-  WA Peaks Forum
-  Coordinated Response Services meetings
-  Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Advisory Group (National Women's Safety Alliance)
-  Australian Women's Health Network (Board)
-  National Association of Services Against Sexual Violence (Board)
-  Family and Domestic Violence Expert Advisory Group (WA Health)
-  Sustainable Health Review Partnership Group.

Strategic Priority 3: Mobilise collaborative advocacy for collective impact

National Domestic and family Violence Peaks, Networks and Services Joint Advocacy

Funding from the Paul Ramsay Foundation has enabled two face-to-face meetings this year. The group also meets online on a bi-monthly basis.

Current key areas of focus:

Ensuring a national baseline standard for specialist service provision

Providing supports for victim-survivors of gendered violence is challenging, specialist work which requires tailored qualifications and expert experience. Victim survivors require consistent and safe supports regardless of where they access services, which is why we need standards that recognise the elements of specialist practice and ensure a baseline quality of support. National standards could build from existing quality standards available in some jurisdictions and would create a framework to simplify and improve procurement processes at all levels of government. Higher quality responses will improve service capacity as victim survivors will be assured safe and effective supports the first time they access the system. Ultimately, uplifting the standards of crisis response, case management and recovery services for victim survivors will improve outcomes and prevent further harm and victimisation.

Recommendation 1: Invest in sector-led research, consultation and development of national standards for specialist domestic and family violence service provision.

Further action plan initiatives for consideration: resourcing to support implementation; training; procurement and funding principles to align with national standards.

Understanding, measuring and meeting increasing demand

As community awareness around the dynamics of domestic and family violence has increased in recent years, along with major events like the COVID-19 pandemic, demand for specialist domestic, family and sexual violence services has skyrocketed and support needs have become more complex.



Investment into these services has not increased commensurately.

Specialist services across the country need more, fully indexed funding, for longer contractual terms, in order to deliver safe, effective, high-quality support for all people experiencing this abuse. The outcomes for this funding investment include reduced death, disability of injury for women and children, reduced health burden and reduced homelessness leading to increased participation in the workforce and economy.

Recommendation 2: Immediately invest in increased funding for specialist, domestic, family and sexual violence services through flexible, long-term arrangements.

Significant investment is needed into increasing data capability in order to accurately measure demand for support services, whether and how victim survivors' needs are being met, and what the outcomes are of their engagement with service systems; context and geographically responsive investment strategy and funding models that appropriately resource metropolitan, regional, remote and very remote service delivery.

Addressing specialist workforce challenge

Responding to domestic, family and sexual violence is highly specialised and there aren't currently enough skilled and qualified people to deliver on Australia's ambitious goals of ending this violence within one generation or reducing violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children by at least by 50%.

Building a sustainable specialist workforce requires concerted, long-term efforts not only to attract and train new practitioners, but also to improve the working conditions, expand professional development opportunities and strengthen career pathways to reduce attrition and maintain a healthy workforce. Dedicated initiatives are necessary to recruit and retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specialist workers and workers with other cultural expertise, for example with language skills. A workforce strategy will support the outcomes within the National Plan and Closing the Gap Target 13, including consideration of job/role design and related capability framework.

Recommendation 3: Develop a 10-year, national, domestic and family violence workforce development, recruitment, remuneration and retention strategy.

Further action plan initiatives for consideration: remuneration framework/principles commensurate with the considerable expertise, risk and complexity that specialist practitioners hold, and commensurate with the government's stated commitment to gender pay equity; workforce health and wellbeing initiatives; professional development and career pathways planning; partnerships with educational institutions to strengthen pre-service qualifications and facilitate specialist career pathways; employment pathways for victim survivors as peer workers and specialist practitioners.

Sexual Violence Expert Advisory Group

The Sexual Violence Expert Advisory Group (SVEAG) brings together diverse knowledge, skills, and expertise to:

- Work with practitioners, stakeholders and leaders to bring sexual violence issues into the public policy arena
- Coordinate and participate in advocacy and action to reform policy and improve the service system; and
- Scale up and embed practice development and innovation across the continuum from primary prevention to recovery.

The SVEAG is focused on current and emerging issues and opportunities for systemic reform related to sexual violence in Western Australia. This also includes issues and opportunities raised by members as they present themselves.

Key Activities

SVEAG activities are currently organised around the following key areas:

- Development of the Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Strategy
- Review of Sexual Assault Support Services
- Review of Sexual Offences and Consent Legislation
- Review of the Experiences of Victims of Sexual Offences in the Criminal Justice System
- Improved prevention of and responses to sexual violence, including sexual harassment in the workplace
- Sexual violence awareness/prevention month

 Lived Experience Advisory Group (LEAG)

Members of the Lived Experience Advisory Group are victim-survivors of diverse forms of domestic, family and sexual violence who support the work of the peak and other organisations by using their lived experiences of domestic, family and sexual violence and systems navigation to advocate for change.

The LEAG is designed to:

- provide victim-survivors with formal opportunities to influence systemic reform
- Inform CWSW's work, including:
 - Advocacy:
 - Policy development
 - Legislative reform
 - Sector reform
 - Sector support and development:
 - Service design
 - Practice responses
 - Projects, programs and events
- Support improved prevention of and responses to domestic, and family violence and sexual violence in Western Australia.

The LEAG meets bi-monthly and is currently at capacity.

 Young Women Forum

In October 2022, CWSW held the 'Young Women Forum: Sexual Violence' to engage young women in the community in CWSW's sexual violence advocacy work. The forum provided an opportunity for participants to learn about current measures the Western Australian government is taking to address sexual violence prevention and response, and to share their views on the drivers and impacts of sexual violence, and necessary systemic reforms. CWSW published a 'Summary of Findings' report, which outlined the shared views and experiences of young women. The report demonstrated that sexual violence is present across all areas of public and private life and stated that a whole-of-society preventative approach is needed to address the underlying drivers of perpetration. Participants shared a strong frustration regarding victim-survivors' difficulties with accessing the supports they need to assist recovery and a just outcome and stated that "help is only for the privileged".



Events

Candlelight Vigil



On 3rd May 2023, CWSW hosted a Candlelight Vigil to recognise Domestic Violence Remembrance Day, which is observed every year on the first Wednesday of May. The Vigil provided a space for people to come together to honour victims of domestic and family violence, grieve, share messages of hope, and ensure that we never forget the people behind the statistics. The Vigil is also a call to action to speak up, lifting the veil of silence that surrounds domestic and family violence, and to reach out for support if experiencing, or perpetrating violence.

32nd Annual Silent March Against Domestic and Family Violence



32nd Annual Silent March Against Domestic and Family Violence

On 29th November 2022, domestic and family violence services, government, WA Police and members of the community gathered at Forrest Chase and walked through the city to honour victims and survivors of domestic and family violence and to say NO to violence against women and children in our community. It was a scorching hot day, yet so many members of the community and our colleagues from the domestic and family violence sector turned up – which demonstrates a shared determination to drive change.



Are You Safe at Home Day



'Are You Safe at Home Day?', May 10, is an opportunity to ask someone you know if they are safe at home. This year CWSW supported the 'Are you Safe at Home?' campaign, which was developed by Safe and Equal in 2020 in response to COVID-19.

The campaign provided information to victim-survivors on where to find support and information to friends and family on how to respond if they are concerned someone they know is unsafe at home. With a focus on supports for Western Australia, the campaign explored what family violence is, who it impacts, what the signs are, and how to have safe and respectful conversations with colleagues about family and domestic violence.

The Bleeding Tree



In May 2023, CWSW and Black Swan presented a panel discussion reflecting on the themes of The Bleeding Tree and examining the power of sisterhood and the important role community plays in addressing family violence. The Bleeding Tree is a play by Australian playwright Angus Cerini that centres around the lasting effects of domestic and family violence, shared pain, isolated suffering and complex societal guilt. The play is based a mother and her two daughters who have just killed their husband and father. In a state of shock and disbelief, they reflect on the abuse and violence this man has inflicted on them over the years. Bringing together a group of First Nations women and facilitated by Alison Evans, the panelists included Kyalie Moore, Renna Gayde, Barbara Bynder, and Gloria Lockyer.



International Women's Day - Crafternoon



In March 2023, CWSW and Women's Legal Services WA celebrated International Women's Day. Women in the family, domestic, and sexual violence, and community-based women's health sectors, took time out to connect, chat, and create a Crafternoon.

- A 'Celebrating the Voices of First Nations Women Morning Tea', hosted in collaboration with the Greens, Women's Legal Services WA and Zonta House. The purpose of this event was to yarn with a diverse group of women to hear how a Voice to Parliament would help First Nations women reclaim their agency and to discuss how allies can walk alongside First Nations women to amplify their voices and create safe spaces for cultural exchange.

International Women's Day – Yarning Circle



In March 2023, CWSW celebrated International Women's Day with a yarning circle at Yagan square amphitheatre. The event included a smoking ceremony, artwork by Paige Pryor and Karla Hart's wonderful dancers. Speakers included: Senator Dorinda Cox, President of the Senate Sue Lines, Senator Louise Pratt, Councillor Karen Wheatland, Sharon Wood Kenny, Tina Hayden, Esther Montgomery, Petrina Slater and Lorraine Pryor.



Women's Health Week



CWSW proudly celebrated Women's Health Week in September 2022 by attending the launch of Women's Health Research Alliance WA and participating in a the Hidden World of Women podcast to discuss the health and wellbeing benefits of sport and the sense of belonging that can come from participating in a club, and the systemic lack of inclusion for women in sport and what action needs to be taken to achieve equality in sport.

CWSW's social media content focused on why women's health is essential, why women's health week is important, and why we need a community-based women's health sector.

Publications

- Budget Briefing

In May 2023, CWSW published their Budget Briefing, which summarised new key measures within the federal and state budgets that are relevant to women's safety, health and wellbeing, and gender equity and advocated for greater commitment from federal and state governments to meet the ever-increasing demand and unmet need.

- Domestic, family, and sexual violence reader

The Domestic, Family, and Sexual Violence Reader was released in September 2022 to provide stakeholders with insight into current and



emerging policy, practice, and research. The reader was developed as one of a suite of resources and strategies to create and share knowledge and build collaborations to respond to domestic, family, and sexual violence.

- The spring edition focused on sexual violence. Key themes included the policy and legal context of sexual violence prevention and response; the complex interplay between child sexual abuse, adult sexual assault, and domestic and family violence; and sexual violence in the workplace and mining industry.

Media attached: Reader

- Insights

The Insights publication was released in May 2023 during the Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month, an annual initiative to raise community awareness of domestic and family violence. This publication provided a platform for the voices, lived experiences, knowledge, and expertise of victim-survivors to be listened to and to inform the sector's practice.

Through the generous and courageous sharing of victim-survivors, we were given a glimpse of the many forms of violence and abuse they endured, what they needed to do to survive, and the toll the abuse took not only on their lives but also on the lives of their children.

We hope that through their experiences, those who work in the domestic, family, and sexual violence sector can use what they have shared to further their knowledge and understanding, inform their practice and strengthen their responses to the women and children they work with.



Strategic Priority 4: Build an accountable, sustainable organisation

Service Directory Review

In March 2023, CWSW conducted a review of its service directory. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive with the majority of respondents finding the directory easy to navigate and information easy to locate. Suggestions for improvement included enhancing search options and expanding on the information included in the directory. Now that the inhouse review of directory contents has been completed, our immediate focus will be on updating information and repairing links. We will then look at the optimisation of search functions and improving the overall site design.

Continuous Improvement

- CWSW has developed a suite of new, modernized policies and procedures and a new contract template.
- Content Writing Guidelines for CWSW online and print publications have also been developed.
- A Communications and Language Guide is under development.

Media Coverage

CWSW received 44 media mentions, incorporating our comments on issues ranging from coercive control, crime statistics, the state budget, housing, funding for domestic, family and sexual violence services.

A key priority throughout the year was to create a people centred organisation, with a team culture focused on inclusion, quality improvement, collaboration, ethical engagement, care and a high standard of work.



Our Board (As at 30 June 2023)

Donna Chung: Chair

Nicci Lambert: Deputy Chair

Kelda Opperman: Treasurer

Justine Colyer: Secretary

Tanya Elson

Andrea Creado

Anne Moore

Gloria Moyle



Our Team (As at 30 June 2023)

Alison Evans: Chief Executive Officer

Kate Jeffries: Senior Manager, Workforce Development, Quality and Governance

Eva Perroni: Manager Women's Health & Gender Equity

Darcee Schulze: Domestic & Family Violence Lead

Lucille Rowland: Learning and Development Lead

Gillian Cleary: Professional Learning and Development Coordinator

Jessica Corbyn: Code of Practice Lead

Mary-Rose Tomeo: Manager, Preventing Violence Together

Alicia Gibbs: Preventing Violence Together Lead

Bobbi Robertson: Practice Development Specialist (PVT)

Katie Moynan: Specialist Practice Development & Research (PVT)







Renee Solomon: Office and Events Support

Sharon Dean: Finance Coordinator





Sarella Kessel: Administrative Officer

Thank You






We would like to acknowledge and thank the organisations and government agencies who generously provide continued support and funding for our work:

-  Department of Communities
-  North Metropolitan Health Service
-  Lotterywest and Healthway
-  Water Corporation
-  Linkwest (provide grants towards the purple benches for CRC's and promote the project)
-  Dulux (donate the paint for the purple benches)

Thank you for grants from:

-  Department of Communities
-  Lotterywest
-  Water Corporation
-  North Metropolitan Health Service

Thank you for generous donations by:

-  Myer Carousel
-  Dulux (provide the paint for the Purple Benches)
-  Verity James – Master of Ceremonies (donated her services as MC for the March)
-  Country Women's Association of WA Inc.
-  Soroptimist International

We are grateful to have partnered with the following organisations this year:

-  Stopping Family Violence
-  Western Australian Network of Alcohol and other Drug Agencies
-  WESNET
-  Women's Legal Services WA
-  Safe & Equal
-  Zonta House
-  Consumer Credit Legal Service
-  Financial Counsellors Association of WA
-  WA Council of Social Services



A special thanks to the organisations that supported the planning and preparations of the Annual Silent Domestic and Family Violence March and our Candlelight Vigil.

Thank you also to everyone who has generously donated to CWSW this year.

