

30 March 2022

CNV's response to the 2022 Federal Budget

CNV welcomes the focus on and commitment to women's safety, with increased reported domestic and family violence and sexual assault, financial abuse and economic hardship, increased risk, gendered prevalence and impact during COVID-19 and natural disasters in 2021/22. Women are overrepresented and experience unacceptable rates of domestic and family violence, sexual assault and harassment within the home, workplace, and education settings. Women and girls are at greater risk of ongoing disadvantage through job insecurity, unemployment, social isolation, and disruption to support and service networks, leading to poorer health, wellbeing, and social equality in the longer term. The increased focus on women's safety across the continuum of response, early intervention and prevention and inclusion of funding to address the gendered impacts of COVID-19 and natural disasters is essential to support women's recovery.

These are the impacts that women's specialist services have seen with demands for services growing, along with critical workforce pressures. In women's specialist service sectors, recruitment and retention remains difficult particularly where there is inadequate funding. During COVID-19 lockdowns women reported higher rates of the first onset and escalation of violence. Victim/survivors reported increased social isolation and limits to their social movement and the lockdowns compelled many women to spend more time with offenders. We have experienced increased demand with reporting, referrals, and secondary consultations to coordinate domestic and family violence service and system responses that maintain victim/survivor safety and perpetrator accountability.

The Victorian family violence response and prevention capability and capacity frameworks map the specialist skills, knowledge and experience our sector and staff require to engage effectively with victim/survivors and perpetrators, identify, assess risk, and manage risk, prioritise safety and coordinate service responses, while mobilising systems and advocating for systemic reform and change. Short term funding contracts provide little security within a largely female led and experienced sector, where we require staff to be well trained, skilled, and knowledgeable and capable in applying practice expertise to recognising patterns and tactics of violence to safely support victim/survivors. They play a key role in identifying risk, safety planning and coordinating service system responses that keep perpetrators in view. Coordinated perpetrator interventions need to keep victim/survivor safety as paramount and provide accountability responses at an individual, service and system level.

We need to engage women's leadership and expertise, adequately fund and resource the most impactful outcomes through programs, partnerships, and collaborations. We also need to consult with those most affected and include the voices and experience of victim/survivors to tailor responses to their diverse needs, increase cultural safety and inclusion, while prioritising and upholding safety and accountability.

The commitment to implementing the National Plan, is important, however this does not overcome the critical and unmet need currently being experienced by service providers and victim/survivors of violence. There needs to be solid and long-term ongoing investment to support the capacity and capability of our specialist family violence workforce in response, early intervention, and recovery initiatives.

Preventing violence before it even occurs means we need to resist, challenge, and change attitudes, beliefs, cultures, and systems that condone, reinforce and support violence, marginalisation, and

**Centre for Non-Violence can be contacted on 1800 884 292 | The Orange Door Loddon can be contacted on 1800 512 359 |
The 24-hour statewide safe steps family violence crisis response line is 1800 015 188 | Men's Referral Service 1300 766 491 |
In an emergency, call 000 | For information, visit: www.cnv.org.au/we-are-here-to-help**

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inequality. Investment is essential to fund research partnerships and collaborations to build the evidence base, develop best practice and expand prevention initiatives to prevent violence before it occurs.

Gender equality initiatives within workplaces remain a huge area for improvement. Key actions are required to prevent and intervene earlier in challenging and changing unequal structures and systems that contribute to women's economic security, status, leadership, opportunities, and career progression.

The budget does little to address systemic issues at all the levels where change is needed at an individual, community and system level. prevention, early intervention, and response. We need a long-term commitment and funding, acknowledging our specialist expertise and ability to working with victim/survivors and those most marginalised to tailor solutions that meet their needs.

What was delivered was far less than what the specialist women's sector has been asking for.

The budget does nothing to address the lack of safe and secure, affordable housing. Money to help women leave abusive relationships is helpful, but not if they have nowhere to go. The sector has outlined what is needed in the Everybody's Home campaign. There has been very little investment in long-term housing and short-term crisis allocations. We cannot meet the need and demand.

We need to do more to address the drivers of violence. Prevention messages aren't going to deliver safety straight away, but they're equally important.

There is insufficient focus and funds to work with children and families through perpetrator intervention and related programs.

We are calling on the government to listen to the experts about where funding is needed, and how much.

We know where the demand is and where the money should be spent.

We need funding to build the evidence base by measuring impacts and change in individuals, communities and systems and showing where the most impactful outcomes.

We need to reduce the impacts and ongoing burden on women to ensure their recovery.

We are also encouraging all governments to consider the economic cost of violence against women to the Australian community.

Knowing that it costs that much, we should be making equal investment to respond to the issue.

Budget allocation summary (background)

The 2022-2023 federal budget provides a \$2.1 billion budget package with targeting funding and measures to support women and girls, in recognition of the key issues that impact the nearly 13 million women and girls in Australia. It recognises the different experiences and outcomes that women and girls face in relation to their safety, economic security and health and wellbeing.

There has been an acknowledgement of the ever-increasing cost of living and an allocation of \$1.5 billion through cost-of-living payments to eligible pensioners, welfare recipients and concession card holders to support the rising cost of living. This equates to an average \$20 a fortnight for singles and \$30 for couples, which is inadequate in an already large gap of unaffordable living.

Women's Safety

- \$550.8 million will be put towards programs that prevent family and domestic violence or offer early intervention
- \$1.3 billion allocation to women's safety initiatives across the continuum of prevention, early intervention, response, and recovery, including the implementation of the next National Plan to End Violence against Women and Children 2022-32 and funding allocations to national leadership across the continuum to evidence best practice and expand on the work of ANROWS and Our Watch
- \$22.6 million allocation to addressing gender-based violence through prevention initiatives
- \$87.9 million to support family safety screening and specialised case management within law and justice responses, assisting families to resolve family law matters and increase cultural safety
- \$52.4 million over four years to protect victim-survivors against cross-examination by family violence perpetrators
- \$8.4 million over three years for a pilot of a new service delivery model to provide survivors of sexual assault with greater access to dedicated legal services to support their recovery and engagement with the criminal justice system
- \$1.2 million over four years for Court Network and volunteers at the Federal Circuit and Family Court
- \$48.7 million over four years to support victim-survivors of family, domestic and sexual violence, and child sex abuse to navigate the health system
- Expansion of the Family and Domestic Violence Primary Health Network pilot to establish a pilot in each state and territory working to prevent and respond to child sex abuse, to support early identification and intervention of family, domestic and sexual violence, and child sex abuse, and provide coordinated referrals to support services

Response

- \$164.8 million over three years for financial assistance and support for women affected by family and domestic violence (2 year Escaping Violence Payment trials)
- \$4.7 million over two years to support the Government to lead discussions with states and territories to develop a five-year national work plan to strengthen and enhance how Australia's criminal justice systems respond to sexual assault
- Design of National Principles to Address Coercive Control

Recovery

- \$290.9 million over five years in recovery measures, to ensure victim-survivors can rebuild their lives, participate in their workplace and community, and obtain financial independence and economic security
- \$67.2 million over four years to pilot a new model of trauma informed care, (Primary Health Networks) for improved coordination and access to recovery services for people who have experienced family, domestic or sexual violence
- \$25.0 million over five years for the Illawarra Women's Health Centre to support the establishment of a women's trauma recovery centre

Early Intervention

- \$9.0 million to continue a range of community-based prevention activities, including Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) integrated referral programs, support pathways for women with disability experiencing violence, and supporting men as new parents
- Updating the 'My Blue Sky' website, Australia's national online hub dedicated to forced marriage prevention and support
- An additional \$1.0 million to establish consultation mechanisms with victim-survivors to ensure their experiences inform implementation of the next National Plan

Diverse cohorts and groups

Measures in this Budget, across all pillars, will support all women, with some measures providing targeted support for women and children who are particularly at risk or experience unique forms of violence. There are several initiatives will particularly benefit women with diverse lived experiences:

- funding of \$10.7 million under the National Partnership Agreement to bolster frontline family, domestic and sexual violence services in the Northern Territory will support commitments towards Closing the Gap
- funding of \$27.8 million over two years will extend Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family safety services, and provide funding for up to 18 existing providers currently funded under the Third and Fourth Action Plans
- funding of \$9 million in 2022-23 to continue a range of community-based prevention activities, including Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) integrated referral programs, support pathways for women with disability experiencing violence, and supporting men as new parents
- \$104 million over five years for Our Watch will boost its efforts in prevention for LGBTIQ+ people, women with disability, and migrant women
- \$100 million for National Counselling Services will include opportunity to work with Aboriginal Controlled Organisations and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander services to provide culturally appropriate and trauma-informed support.

Workforce capacity and capability

While women's participation in the workforce remains high currently, women continue to experience greater vulnerability, risk, and uncertainty than ever in secure employment and economic security. Women are much more likely to experience increased economic insecurity through job loss, increased unpaid work and caring responsibilities. The gender pay gap remains, at 13.8 per cent, with women earning on average \$255.30 per week less than men. Australia's labour market is highly segregated by gender, with one third of all working women are employed in health care, community services, social assistance, education, and training. On average men earn more than women within every industry in Australia, even those that are heavily female. Differences in earnings impact women's superannuation balances at retirement age, resulting in increased social disadvantage and risk of homelessness. Lower financial security and independence put women at higher risk of poverty and women who experience family and domestic violence are at a greater risk of homelessness.

- \$18.5 million over four years from 2022-23 for the Workplace Gender Equality Agency to further drive progress towards gender equality in Australian workplaces
- The Government is working towards implementing all recommendations of the review of the WGE Act. In this Budget, the Government is providing additional resources to WGEA to ensure they are equipped to implement these recommendations and other initiatives, including the establishment of Excellence in Workplace Gender Equality Awards.

Young people

- \$203.6 million over six years, to continue the work of Our Watch and prevention for LGBTIQ+ people with disability and migrant women and develop further resources to educate young people about consent and respectful relationships
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- \$46.0 million over four years to deliver phase five and six of the Stop it at the Start campaign Consent and supporting respectful relationships to drive population level change in people's attitudes towards violence

Consent

- \$32.2 million over five years for a consent campaign focusing on young people aged 12 and older and their parents
- \$5.0 million over two years to conduct a national survey of secondary school-age students' understanding of consent (linking with respectful relationships education)
- \$6.0 million over four years to update the Commonwealth's respectful relationships education online platform in line with the new Australian curriculum and based on expert advice