

Safe Men Safe Communities Sector Consultation report

Forum held 26 November 2024

Summary report released 7 January 2025

Purpose of the Forum and consultation

1. Provide current practice information on working with men who use violence.

2. Collect input from workers from NADA members who provide non-government alcohol and drug services on developing a sector response to gendered violence.

The response will be inclusive of: -

Women and people who identify as women and children impacted by violence

Men who use violence and coercively controlling behaviours

LGBQ+, trans people and binary gendered

The focus of this consultation was on the sector's response to working with men who access alcohol & drug treatment and support services, who use violence and coercive behaviours in their family and partner relationships.

Sector Capacity Building

- Build organisational readiness
- Establish clinical + worker wellbeing supports
- Training - all levels of service provision
- Practice guides + resources
- Establish referral pathways
- Sustainable funding contracts
- Intersect with Workforce Sustainability initiatives

This is what you said!



Systemic + Sector Advocacy

- Increased access to Men's behaviour Change Programs
- Rural/Regional Response Framework – additional safety considerations for clients + workers
- Culturally safe forums + programs (aboriginal + multi-cultural)
- Funding - sector capacity building
- Improved collaboration – Domestic + Family Violence, Justice, Department of Communities & Justice, Health and NGO's
- Unified response from peak bodies

Practice Integration

- Intake + Assessment - protocols
- Identification of users of violence
- Screening, Risk Assessment & Response
- Holistic Safety Planning - Violence/Substance Use/Mental health - Suicide + Self-Harm/Child Protection
- Protocols for response - treatment type based i.e. residential, day program, community-based treatment, counselling
- Approaches to working in communities

Workforce Sustainability

- Funding + increased access to clinical/cultural/multi-cultural + peer work supervision
- Safety + protection – worker/clients
- Protocol for organisations for workers impacted by domestic + family violence + workers identified as using violence
- Safe workplace cultures
- Time to develop clinical practices and participate in knowledge sharing

"Upskilling the sector from the ground up"

When asking about the priorities in developing a holistic sector response, there were consistent themes

'By creating safe places to talk about it, we reduce the shame and stigma'

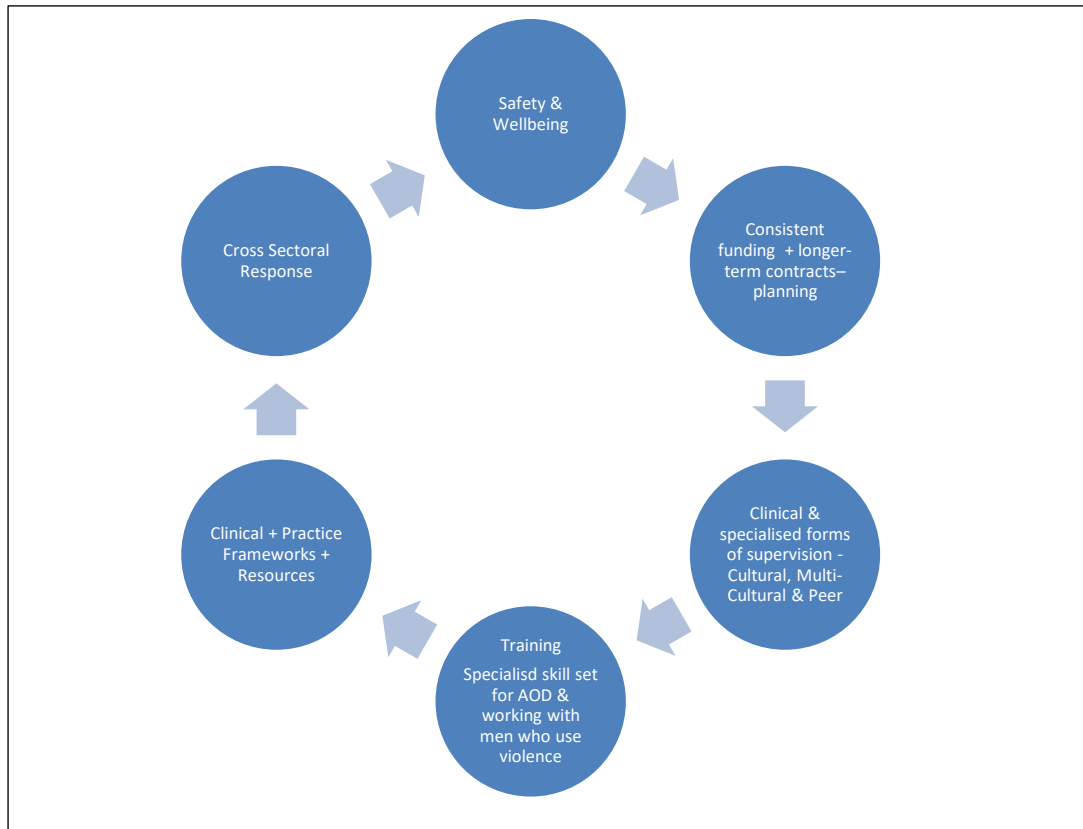
<p>Safety, risk management + response</p>	<p>Community awareness + education protocol</p>	<p>Consistent screening + identification</p>	<p>Enhance sector capacity</p>	<p>Develop service setting practice</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural safety in services • Consistent approach to safety planning • Protocols for risk assessments – identification & Responding to risk to family/partner • Transfer of care protocol • Gender specific – safe spaces • Safety + training for different settings i.e. day programs and safety for female workers working with men who use violence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities exist in -all areas of treatment & support: community, therapeutic communities/ residential, day & group programs • Need community engagement + education roles • Draw on Aboriginal cultural practices + approaches to working with these issues • Need to work with communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of men who use violence • Embed in assessment • Consistent screening + trigger questions • Awareness of misidentification signs • Screening of men incarcerated for domestic + family violence offences prior to release (post custodial) • Opportunities in transfer of care - violence identified as an area to continue work on • Longer term change can be supported 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worker Resources • Interagency guidelines to inform shared and continuing care when working with violence • Cross- sector protocols – transfer of care/risk • Sector skills development + training • Identified skills set: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ e.g. use of motivational interviewing ➢ selective empathy ➢ foundational law knowledge: ADVO's, misidentification, understanding & use of *Sections 13A* + 16A* ➢ non-collusive group work skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holistic & healing spaces for reflection devoid of shame • Collaborations to increase access to Men's Behaviour Change Programs • Research /develop approaches for working with young people (already have a proven approach) • Intersectionality practice approaches - substance use, mental health, child protection, the use + impact of violence • Practice frameworks for transgender men and women • Framework for LGBTQ+ communities

Lots of strengths, resources & skills were identified as already existing in the sector that would support the development & implementation of a framework.

Skills to build on
 Experience working with risk
 Workers committed to seeing things change
 Developing peer workforce
 Many opportunities to work with men exist across the sector

'We have volumes of existing research, models & evidence – Western Australian (organisational readiness), Victoria (MARAM), *SDECC for working with young people and cultural knowledge.'

These is where you said you would need support and resourcing



You also had innovative ideas for projects & pilots

- Interagency/Community of Practice - DFV + AOD sectors
- Cross Sector forum with other agencies - police, justice, Department of Communities & Justice, housing, community corrections
- Use the [Safety Action Meeting model](#) to develop equivalents for people who use violence - young people, men LGBTQ+, cultural approaches for specific groups - Aboriginal (Circle Sentencing model) + Multicultural communities
- Specific Men's Behaviour Change Programs for young men
- Pilot with services - identification, screening + response - then review
- Explore opportunities to incorporate Men's Behaviour Change Program principles into current programs
- Aboriginal and Multicultural specific training on working with violence
- Specialist clinician roles & teams - Alcohol and Drug/Domestic & Family Violence/Mental Health – advisory and provide clinical support across the sector

Abbreviations:

- 13A & 16A Part 13A of the Crimes (Domestic and Personal Violence) Act 2007
- SDECC: [Sydney Drug Education & Counselling Centre](#), Manly

References

- Rodney Vlasis, 2024- Presentation: [Engaging Men Who Use Domestic, Family and Sexualised Violence is an AOD Context](#)
- Joel Palmer, 2024 [Key Principles of MBCP and Opportunities in the AOD sector](#)
- [Follow My Lead - Insight Exchange](#) A great resource to explain why we need to be guided by victim survivors in the interest of safety. Business size cards with QR codes for clients.
- [I am I can - Insight Exchange](#) A resource for working with men who use violence
- The dangers of strangulation should be covered in EVERY AOD setting... [Strangulation - Insight Exchange](#) The SOS card for strangulation is also attached.
- The article attached by [Huwe-Vlasis: Issues to consider in predominant aggressor assessment](#) takes practitioners to a deeper level of understanding and can help refocus when we question who the primary aggressor is
- The [Inviting Change script](#) is attached for reference – please ensure this isn't hung up in staff rooms etc or anywhere a client may see it, as it takes away the impact of the approach.
- Susan Heward Belle - resources - [The Stacey Project: Practice Guide to Working with Complexity](#), The Diverse Fathering Experience and Invisible Practices Interventions.

Disclaimer:

All attempts to reflect the key themes has been done with the best of professional interpretation and intention. The report has been compiled from the collated feedback provided at the Safe Men Safe Communities; Working with men who use violence forum, 2024.

For information and feedback contact Antonia Ravesi, NADA antonia@nada.org.au