



Queensland's plan to respond to domestic and family violence against people with disability

The Queensland Government is committed to implementing all recommendations for government in the landmark *Not Now, Not Ever* report of the Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence in Queensland.

We all have a responsibility to act: domestic and family violence is not acceptable and it is preventable.

The Special Taskforce, in its *Not Now, Not Ever* report, noted that there is little information about the impact of domestic and family violence on people with disability and, as a result, there is insufficient information available about the ability of the broader service system to meet their needs. Further, the Special Taskforce noted the development of appropriate responses to the identified challenges and vulnerabilities required deeper investigation and called on the Queensland Government to commission a review to address the impact of domestic and family violence on people with a disability (Recommendation 10).

The Queensland Government commissioned a review which reported research shows that people with disability are subjected to domestic and family violence for significantly longer periods of time, experience multiple forms of violence, and have fewer pathways to safety and justice. This is especially the case for women with disability, with multiple layers of discrimination impacting on their daily lives based on their race, age, gender, and sexual orientation, as well as disability.

Research has identified that supporting women with disability impacted by domestic and family violence require responses that:

- focus on the person and their support requirements rather than the disability
- include women with disability in the development and implementation of responses
- have co-ordinated multi-agency input
- gather systemic data about women's experiences of domestic and family violence in order to enhance prevention and responses

Our Approach

The release of Queensland's plan to respond to domestic and family violence against people with disability is our opportunity to drive actions to

end domestic violence in Queensland – for all Queenslanders.

This plan has been prepared to respond to these and other issues identified in the *Not Now, Not Ever* report, and contemporary review and research reports. Women with disability seek help and support for similar reasons that other women do to the physical, sexual, psychological and emotional tactics of domestic and family violence. Yet for women with disability, there are additional barriers to safety and accessing inclusive support: an intimate partner can also be the carer and the perpetrator; community attitudes and social isolation; education, work and employment opportunities and communication challenges.

Eliminating domestic and family violence is a long-term endeavour, requiring focused and sustained commitment from the whole community.

This plan aims to build on the domestic and family violence reforms already underway in Queensland, through the Queensland Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2016-2026, to raise awareness, enhance services and improve policy and practices across government.

This plan will further drive improvements to services, systems and data to increase awareness of, and better respond to, people with disability impacted by domestic and family violence, through the key focus areas:

1. raising awareness
2. building sector capacity and capability
3. implementing practical responses
4. building the evidence.

The national focus on violence against women presents an opportunity for Queensland to build on this commitment to achieving practical and sustainable solutions.

This plan will identify opportunities for people with disability with lived experience to be involved in its implementation. In this way the plan will be enriched and more effective.

The Queensland Government will work with organisations to ensure access and inclusion, responsiveness and capability to serve people with disability in crisis.





Focus area 1: Raising Awareness

Signature initiative

- 1.1. Design and implement an inclusive and accessible communication and engagement response to raise awareness in relation to people with disability impacted by domestic and family violence and their human rights.

Supporting initiatives

- 1.2. Access to community advocacy services information to assist supported decision making, including in regional and remote areas of Queensland.
- 1.3. Develop tailored workplace resources to raise awareness and improve capability to address the impact of domestic and family violence on people with disability employed by Queensland Government departments.

Outcomes

- Awareness is raised in Queenslanders of the additional risks and impact of domestic and family violence for people with disability and services available.
- Awareness is raised on strategies to reduce and prevent the incidence of domestic and family violence against people with disability.
- Promotion of the human rights, independence of, and supported decision making by, people with disability to prevent harm and continuously improve quality service responses.

Links to the *Queensland Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2016–2019*:

- Foundational element 1: A significant shift in community attitudes and behaviours is required.
- Supporting outcomes: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7.

Supporting Outcomes Legend

- 1: Queenslanders take a zero tolerance approach to domestic and family violence
- 2: Respectful relationships and non-violent behaviour are embedded in our community
- 3: Queensland community, business, religious, sporting and all government leaders are taking action and working together
- 4: Queensland's workplaces and workforce challenge attitudes contributing to violence and effectively support workers
- 5: Victims and their families are safe and supported
- 6: Perpetrators stop using violence and are held to account
- 7: The justice system deals effectively with domestic and family violence

In Australia, intimate partner violence causes more illness, disability and deaths than any other risk factor for women aged 25-44 years old.

In Australia, people with a disability or a long-term health condition were around twice as likely to have experienced violence from a current or previous cohabiting partner in the year before the 2016 Public Safety Survey (PSS).

For women, 2.5% (72,300 women) of those with a disability or long term health condition had experienced partner violence compared with 1.3% (83,700 women) without a disability or long-term health condition.

For men, this was 1.1% (32,200 men) with a disability or long-term health condition compared with 0.6% (39,700 men) without (ABS unpublished analysis of PSS data).

Reference: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (2018) *Family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia*



Focus area 2: Building sector capacity and capability

Signature initiative

- 2.1 Develop and evaluate responses to close identified gaps for people with disability affected by domestic and family violence including actions to:
- improve information available for people with disability about accessing domestic and family violence support, including in Easy English formats
 - deliver training and workshops for women with disability around issues connected with domestic and family violence and how to seek assistance
 - develop resources and deliver training across the domestic and family violence sector to improve capacity of domestic and family violence services to recognise and respond to the needs of women with disability and their children
 - develop resources and deliver training to build capability in the disability workforce to better support women with disability to recognise signs of domestic and family violence and link them to appropriate support
 - work with women with disability to guide development of resources and policy to prevent and respond to domestic and family violence, and work with disability sector stakeholders to explore opportunities for collaboration with people with disability within the public and community sector to develop, raise awareness and break down stereotypes
 - identify and pursue 'good practice' underpinned by further collection of evidence through evaluation of the above resources and training

Links to *Queensland Domestic and Family Violence Strategy 2016–2019*

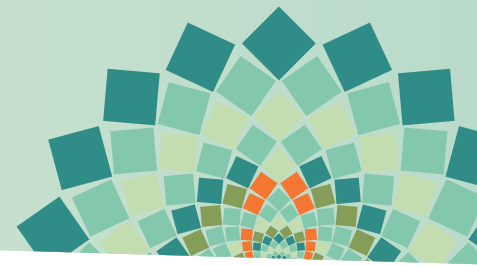
- Foundational element 2: An integrated response system that delivers the services and support that victims and perpetrators need.
- Supporting outcomes: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7.

Supporting initiatives

- 2.2 Integrated Service Responses (ISR) for domestic and family violence to include disability advocacy organisations and relevant disability service providers in their place-based models, where available.
- 2.3 Domestic and Family Violence High Risk Teams (HRT) proactively access disability service providers and/or professionals with appropriate levels of expertise to support multi-agency complex risk assessment and safety management planning.
- 2.4 The Domestic and Family Violence Workforce Capability and Capacity Building Service will include working with women with disability as a priority training area.
- 2.5 The renewed practice standards for working with women affected by domestic and family violence will include elements relating to best practice for working with people with disability.
- 2.6 Include additional guidance in the Queensland Health Domestic and Family Violence Toolkit of Resources to support health staff working with and responding to people with disability impacted by domestic and family violence.
- 2.7 Transform Housing and Homelessness service delivery to improve customer outcomes through more person-centred, holistic assessment and integrated pathway planning that is focussed on supporting customer safety, improving housing stability and improving other whole of life outcomes.

Outcomes

- Supports to people with disability impacted by domestic and family violence are improved, in particular to women with disability.
- Programs and initiatives to reduce and prevent domestic and family violence against people with disability are enhanced.
- Specialist and non-specialist domestic and family, disability, community justice and health services are disability and domestic and family violence-informed, capable, accessible and inclusive for people with disability impacted by domestic and family violence.





Focus area 3: Implementing practical responses

Signature initiatives

- 3.1 Extend and strengthen the capacity of the Gold Coast Domestic and Family Violence Taskforce trial to better respond to people with disability impacted by domestic and family violence.
- 3.2 Construct two new crisis shelters in areas of high need (Caboolture and Gold Coast) that can accommodate women with high mobility needs and complete the renewal of shelters in the remote and discrete communities of Pomppuraaw and Woorabinda.
- 3.3 The specific needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women with disability impacted by domestic and family violence are considered and addressed in the implementation of Queensland's Framework for Action – Reshaping our Approach to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Domestic and Family Violence.

Outcomes

- Practical responses assist people with disability impacted by domestic and family violence to be safe and well supported, and improve the understanding of the complexities that frontline QPS officers face when attending domestic and family violence incidents.

Supporting initiatives

- 3.4 Examine available brokerage and emergency crisis payment arrangements to confirm they meet the immediate crisis needs of women with disability and their children impacted by domestic and family violence.
- 3.5 Introduce flexible assistance packages for women (including women with disability) impacted by domestic and family violence to support independence and enable a choice of housing that best meets their needs being delivered under the Queensland Housing Strategy 2017-2027.
- 3.6 Continue to support the Queensland Police Service Domestic and Family Violence Coordinator Network, including the delivery of integrated domestic and family violence services for people with a disability, and examine opportunities to strengthen this integrated service delivery model with key partner agencies.
- 3.7 Leverage Commonwealth investment under the Fourth Action Plan for the *National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children 2010-2020* to ensure that the needs of women with disability are addressed.
- 3.8 Raise the awareness of responses to address the impact of domestic and family violence on people with disability, through existing National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) governance and reporting arrangements.

Links to *Queensland Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2016–2019*:

- Foundational element 2: an integrated response system that delivers the services and support that victims and perpetrators need.
- Foundational element 3: a stronger justice system response that will prioritise victim safety and hold perpetrators to account.
- Supporting outcomes: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7.



Focus area 4: Building the evidence

Signature initiatives

- 4.1 Map existing domestic and family violence data sets to identify opportunities to improve data collection about people with disability, including women with disability and their children, impacted by domestic and family violence.
- 4.2 Design and implement an evaluation plan that will:
 - map existing data to define need and improve targeting of responses
 - align existing data to the domestic and family violence prevention reform outcomes to track progress
 - identify data gaps and mechanisms for prioritising data collection to measure impact
 - establish the process to monitor and report on progress against the plan.

Supporting initiatives

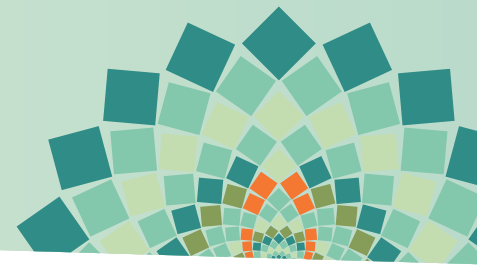
- 4.3 Engage with research organisations to continue building the evidence base on the impact and experience of domestic and family violence and ‘what works’ for people with disability impacted by domestic and family violence.
- 4.4 Examine the issues involved in gathering evidence to support civil and criminal responses for people with disability experiencing domestic and family violence (including prosecution of offenders).

Outcomes

- Improve understanding and awareness of the experiences of domestic and family violence on people with disability, including women with disability and children.
- Promote research and evaluation of the provision of support for people with disability who are impacted by domestic and family violence.

Links to Queensland Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2016–2019:

- Foundational element 1: A significant shift in community attitudes and behaviours is required;
- Foundational element 3: A stronger justice system response will be strengthened to prioritise victim safety and hold perpetrators to account.
- Supporting outcomes: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7.



How to get help

In an emergency call the police on triple zero (000).

DVConnect Womensline

Phone: 1800 811 811
(24 hours, 7 days a week)

Womensline helps women to obtain safe refuge accommodation, confidential counselling and referral to other services.

DVConnect Mensline

Phone: 1800 600 636
(9am to midnight, 7 days a week)

Mensline provides confidential counselling, information and referral to men affected by domestic and family violence.

1800RESPECT

If you or someone you know is experiencing violence or abuse, you can contact 1800RESPECT on 1800 737 732 or through online chat, for support.

Lifeline

Phone: 13 11 14
(24 hour Crisis Counselling Line)

Resources

1800RESPECT app for women with disability

Sunny is 1800RESPECT's free app for women with disability who have experienced violence and abuse. Sunny has been co-designed with women with disability to make sure it provides the very best support for the people who use it.

[Download Sunny from the App Store for iOS](#)
[Download Sunny from Google Play for Android phones](#)

Court support

Improved accessibility of information of court processes for applying or responding to domestic violence orders in Auslan, "BrowseAloud" technology and streamlined processes for engaging interpreters.

Interactive Poster: 'One size does not fit all'

Services can use the interactive poster to access resources to support access for women with disability to domestic and family violence.

<https://dh2wpaqogtxwe.cloudfront.net/Whatever-It-Takes-Access-Resource%20FINAL.4.pdf>

Training

Recognise-Respond-Refer Training

Domestic and Family Violence Response Training (DV-alert) is designed to build capacity in frontline workers within universal services for whom family violence is not a core function of their role. E-Learning Disabilities course enrolments now open.

<http://www.dvalert.org.au/education-and-training/e-learning>

