

Fact Sheet 2: Whittlesea CALD Communities Family Violence Services

Whittlesea Community Futures calls for State and Federal Government support to implement an integrated early intervention and prevention service model to respond to family violence against CALD women in the municipality.

What is happening right now?

- The rate of family violence in the City of Whittlesea is at a critical new high at 1249 per 100,000 people, compared to 1071 for Victoriaⁱ. This is the highest rate of reported family violence in the Victoria Police Northern Division 5ⁱⁱ.
- Over the past five years the number of incidents reported to police in the Whittlesea LGA has almost doubled (see WCF Family Violence Fact Sheet 1) leading to local agencies declaring family violence a critical public health issue for our community and establishing the Whittlesea Family Violence Taskforce to address this.
- In 2012-13, 2110 family violence incidents were reported to Victoria Police including one homicide (an increase of 35% on the previous year); in 743 of these incidents children were presentⁱⁱⁱ;
- An average of 40 incidents of family violence are reported to Victoria Police every week;
- More than half (56%) of all assaults arose from family violence;
- Family violence was the context for 46% of all rapes and 15% of all other sex offences (95% of the victims were female; 100% of the alleged offenders were male)^{iv};
- Berry Street Northern Family and Domestic Violence Service have received significantly more referrals for women (3618) from the Whittlesea municipality than from any other municipality in the northern metropolitan region (NMR)^v;

The City of Whittlesea is diverse, with a large proportion of residents born overseas (34%) and a larger proportion born in non-English speaking countries (32%) than the Melbourne statistical average^{vi}.

Over 40% of residents speak a language other than English at home, compared to the Melbourne average of 29%. The City of Whittlesea also has a large proportion (22.4%) of people who speak a language other than English and speak English *not well or not at all*. Local evidence and experience reveals existing service responses in the municipality are not meeting the complex needs of CALD women experiencing family violence^{vii}.

A research and scoping exercise was undertaken by the Whittlesea Community Futures Partnership in 2012 and has informed the development of a new approach that focuses on the additional barriers to accessing support and services experienced by CALD women – the *Whittlesea CALD Communities Family Violence Project*^{viii}.

How can we build a better future?

The proposed Whittlesea CALD Communities Family Violence Project will deliver an integrated service model to local CALD communities. The aim of the integrated model is to support CALD communities, newly arrived migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers, to break the cycle of family violence and empower these communities to respond to the challenge of preventing violence against women.

The experience of family violence within CALD communities is complex and requires an appropriate mix of prevention and early intervention strategies be adopted.

How much will it cost?

Whittlesea CALD Communities Family Violence Project

Project Element	Resources (staff, evaluation, administration)	Total (per annum)
Model Coordination/Integration Mechanism	0.8 EFT Project Worker (\$58,205) Administration costs (\$9,448)	\$67,653 Funded by Victoria Legal Aid for 12 months
The Empowerment of CALD Women	Social Support Group brokerage funds (\$40,000) Training and consultation (\$7,500) Materials and administration costs (\$5,000) Evaluation (\$1,500)	\$54,000 Funded by Scanlon Foundation and Victoria Women's Benevolent Trust
Building the Capacity of Community and Religious Leaders	Networking, training and administrative support (\$6,500)	\$6,500 Funded by Scanlon Foundation
Elements requiring urgent Government funding		
Preventing Family Violence: Early Intervention in the Settlement Process	0.5 EFT Project Worker (\$40,000) Administration costs (\$10,000) Evaluation (\$2,000)	\$52,000
Preventing Family Violence: Programs Targeting Young People (whole-of-school program)	0.6 EFT Project Worker (\$45,000) School expenses (\$30,000) Evaluation (\$15,000) Materials and administration costs (\$10,000)	\$100,000
Reducing Recidivism: Increasing Access to Behaviour Change Programs	3x 0.4 EFT Facilitator costs (\$90,000) Facilitator recruitment and training (\$20,000) Materials and administration costs (\$10,000)	\$120,000
Project total (per annum)		\$400,153

How will the community benefit?

The project aims to reduce violence against women and community acceptance of family violence through improved attitudes to gender equity and respectful relationships. CALD women will benefit from increased connectedness with the community and reduced barriers to accessing support services.

The project will:

- build an effective and culturally-responsive multi-level service system to reduce the incidence and the impact of family violence in CALD communities
- increase knowledge amongst CALD communities of what constitutes family violence; improve early-identification of CALD women at risk of violence, increase community safety and awareness of support services.

Family violence imposes a huge financial cost on the Australian economy.

- Access Economics estimates that family violence cost Australia \$8.1 billion in 2002-03^{ix}.
- VicHealth report that eliminating violence against women would save the health sector \$207 million per year^x.

What objectives does this help us achieve?

Federal Government

- National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and Their Children 2010-2022
- National Plan First Action Plan 2010-2013: Building A Strong Foundation

Victorian Government

- Everyone Has A Responsibility To Act – Victoria's Action Plan to Address Violence Against Women and Children 2012-2015
- VicHealth Framework for the Prevention of Violence Against Women
- Foundation to Prevent Violence Against Women and their Children

City of Whittlesea

- Council Plan 2013-2017
- Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013-2017
- Connect: A municipal plan for children, young people and their families 2013-2018
- Building a Respectful Community A Strategy for the Northern Metropolitan Region 2011-2016
- Department of Justice North Metropolitan Region Regional Community Safety Plan 2011

Whittlesea Community Futures

- Whittlesea Community Futures Partnership Action Plan 2011-2016

Key Messages

- Whittlesea Community Futures is seeking State Government support to implement an integrated early intervention and prevention service model to respond to family violence against CALD women in the municipality.
- Family violence in the City of Whittlesea is at an unacceptably high level and will continue to increase as the population grows. The rate of family violence in the City of Whittlesea is 1249 per 100,000 people compared to 1071 for Victoria.
- The City of Whittlesea has one of the highest reported incidents of family violence in the Northern Metropolitan Region.
- There has been a 249% increase in reported incidences of family violence in the municipality since 1999.
- Over 40% of residents in the municipality speak a language other than English at home, compared to the Melbourne average of 29%.
- It is critical to provide for cultural diversity within specialist family violence services given the City of Whittlesea's highly diverse population, the current and projected growth rate as well as the geographic isolation of some areas due to the urban/rural interface.

ⁱ Recorded Family Incident Reports, Corporate Statistics, Victoria Police, September 2013

ⁱⁱ Banyule, Darebin, Nillumbik, Whittlesea

ⁱⁱⁱ Victoria Police Family Incident Reports

http://www.police.vic.gov.au/content.asp?a=internetBridgingPage&Media_ID=72311

^{iv} Women's Health In the North Family Violence Fact Sheet Whittlesea LGA 2012-2013

^v Police referrals received by NFDVS by LGA Financial Year Comparison July 2009 - June 2013

^{vi} Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011 Census of Population and Housing

^{vii} Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2011 Census of Population and Housing

^{viii} Whittlesea CALD Communities Family Violence Scoping Exercise Report 2012

<http://www.whittleseacommunityconnections.org.au/content/research-reports/>

^{ix} Access Economics 2004, *The cost of domestic violence to the Australian economy: part 1*, Office of the Status of Women, Canberra

^x Cadilhac DA, Magnus A, Cumming T, Sheppard L, Pearce D & Carter R 2009, *The health and economic benefits of reducing disease risk factors*, VicHealth, Melbourne