

Integrated Family Violence Services DHS Stage 2 Funding Process Additional Frequently Asked Questions

What does the Department expect to see in a joint partnership submission?

A successful joint submission will include a wide range of players to deliver an integrated service response for women and children experiencing family violence and for men who require behaviour change programs or emergency accommodation. As detailed in the funding specifications a joint submission would be expected to:

- Have a range of service providers involved in the partnership. For example, a submission involving 3 or 4 large agencies to deliver services across a large regional or sub-regional area is unlikely to meet the partnership requirements of the funding specifications and may not be accepted.
- Demonstrate involvement of a range of services and links with police, courts and other related health, housing and family support services.
- Demonstrate local expertise and links with local services.

What is meant by integration?

Each service component should be delivered in the context of all services and agencies that have a role in responding to family violence incidents. This includes police, the courts and the support services specifically funded to deliver family violence related services, as well as generalist services, community health services, hospitals and local general practitioners. The submission should indicate how links such as referral and communication will occur.

What is the expectation of DHS regarding increases in the targets and dollars over the three years? How is this to be addressed in the submission?

Organisations will need to provide as much detail as possible to show how the funding will be used in 2006/07 then how it will move over the three years eg increases in staffing and outputs. It is up to CSOs to provide a model within the submission. Each year's budget and service delivery targets are to be provided within the submission.

What are the expectations for police referrals to the men's behaviour change programs?

Organisations delivering men's behaviour change programs should be part of ongoing regional integrated family violence coordination meetings. Centrally work has commenced with DHS staff, the police and No to Violence on developing appropriate referral protocols for the integrated family violence response for men. This work includes referral protocols between police and men's programs.

What sort of individual would be suited to deliver the leadership, service integration and planning component? Could an existing Family Violence Networker take that role?

This new component focuses on bringing a wide range of organisations together to deliver services collaboratively in the region or sub-region and achieve change. Where organisations believe that the Networker has the skills to deliver this role effectively, they are encouraged to consider this approach.

Why is the men's accommodation component included in the men's services submission alongside the behaviour change component? Who will provide the accommodation service?

It is anticipated that agencies experienced in providing housing services and access to crisis accommodation will be well placed to be involved in the men's emergency accommodation service component of the men's service submission. Both programs for men have been included in the submission to encourage the development of local partnerships between agencies, to complement work on referral protocols being undertaken at the statewide level.

There are concerns regarding the delivery of housing options for men. What resources and support are there?

This work can be done in collaboration with the rest of the homelessness service system. Housing and homelessness support services are experienced in dealing with people in crisis whose health and safety may be at risk and currently work closely with family violence outreach and refuge services.

The provision of crisis accommodation for men requires integration across programs and consideration of the safety of women and children. This integration requires more than protocols. Established processes and practices between the Men's Behaviour Change programs and housing providers are required. The links with police will also need to be enhanced. The provision of this component will be closely monitored and the model will evolve over time.

How flexible are the funds for the men's accommodation component?

These limited funds are to provide crisis accommodation options for men where an interim intervention order with exclusion provisions has been granted. The funds are primarily to provide short-term accommodation, however a small amount may be used flexibly to facilitate the access to crisis accommodation eg for travel expenses.

Are there establishment funds available for the Men's Behaviour Change Program?

DHS is currently considering how best to assist organisations in ensuring that staff are appropriately qualified to deliver men's behaviour change programs. This may involve distribution of additional funding to enable new staff to obtain the Graduate Certificate in Social Science (Male Family Violence – Men's Behaviour Change Group Facilitation) qualification.

While the unit price for men's behaviour change programs does not include the cost of new infrastructure costs/establishment costs, it does however include depreciated costs for office furniture and lease of computer/printer, motor vehicle (based on average number of persons per vehicle) and photocopier.

Do women provided with Intensive Case Management need to meet all the categories in the guidelines?

Intensive case management guidelines are available on the website at

www.dhs.vic.gov.au/integratedfamilyviolence

Intensive case management should be available to women experiencing family violence who are at greatest risk and meet several of the criteria outlined in the guidelines. However staff involved in delivering these services and particularly senior staff will need to make informed judgements about the availability and eligibility for these services.

The specification for intensive case management stipulates tertiary qualifications. Are these mandatory?

Senior staff should undertake the provision of intensive case management. These staff are working with women at greatest risk and must have the relevant tertiary qualifications and experience. Over the next 18 months the provision of intensive case management will be monitored and feedback on the qualifications and skills of staff will be incorporated into future guidelines for the service.

Are the funds for women and children's services for direct service delivery or can they be used for other purposes?

Funding is provided to increase direct service delivery. Services should be provided by qualified and/or experienced paid staff. Services operating expenses have been factored into the unit price.

When will the State-wide Family Violence Risk Assessment Framework be available?

The tender for the development of the *Family Violence Risk Assessment Framework* has closed and interviews have been conducted. Consultants will be appointed in March 2006 and work will commence as soon as possible. Work on the framework is expected to be completed around the middle of 2006, and the framework will be available to services by late 2006.

What hours is the after hours service expected to cover?

The women and children's specification (page 23) stipulates the time frame for the After Hours service – 'After Hours services will typically be available within the hours of 7.00pm to 6.30am Monday to Thursday and 7.00pm Friday to 6.30am Monday'.

What is meant to happen from 6.30am – 9am Monday to Thursday and from 5pm – 7pm on Friday and from 6.30am – 9am on Mondays?

The hours stipulated in the specification for the provision of after-hours services is in line with after hours provision in the SAC award. Standard hours commence from 6.30am and go until 7pm Monday to Friday. Agencies could reconsider standard operating hours to ensure services are available during these times.

When/How are children counted as 'clients'?

Within the women's and children's counselling and support component, a minimum of 30% of funds is allocated specifically for the provision of services for children and young people. Children are counted as clients according to the following definition:

A client is a woman affected by family violence, including a woman experiencing an immediate crisis, recovering from experiences of violence or abuse or at risk of being unsafe in the family environment. Where services are provided to other people connected to the client, (eg child, parent, partner), they will not normally be counted as an additional client. Services provided to this group will be included in the episode of care for the women.

A child or young person may be counted as a separate client where the mother is not receiving ongoing support or where, in the course of providing services to the mother, issues are identified which require the provision of separate counselling and/or support to the child or young person.

Services funded through the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program are subject to the provision of the Supported Accommodation Assistance Act 1975, which stipulates that clients must be of legal school leaving age. However if services are provided to young people separately from any services provided to the adult client (that is, the child is not accompanying the parent) a separate client form can be completed for that service episode.

What training & professional opportunities will be available for staff?

The Department of Human Services (DHS) has contracted Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE (NMIT) to deliver family violence introductory training to family violence sector workers operating within the integrated service system. The aim of this training is to promote professionalism within the workforce and to establish a learning culture that supports the Government's new approach to family violence.

This training will be accredited training at Certificate IV level of the Community Services Training Package. Initially 7 units of competency will be offered during May/June 2006. Accreditation in these units will provide participants with a professional development pathway to further education and training.

What can we do if there isn't a sense of partnership and collaboration in developing submissions?

Regional DHS staff will contact organisations during March to get feedback on how the submission process is going. Any concerns should be raised with regional offices. The Department and facilitators will continue to strongly encourage agencies to work together and involve a wide range of organisations – large and small, specialist and generalist – in discussions and preparation of a joint submission. However, DHS staff will not discuss the specifics of funding or possible funding outcomes.