

# Men's Behaviour Change Group Work

*Minimum Standards  
and Quality Practice  
Summary Document*



## **Men's Behaviour Change Group Work**

Minimum Standards and Quality Practice Summary Document

© No To Violence 2005

First published December 2005

This document is copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purposes of private study, research, criticism or review as permitted under the Copyright act, no part may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without prior written permission. Enquiries to be made to No To Violence.

### **Copying for educational purposes**

Where copies of part or the whole of the document are made under Part VB of the Copyright Act, the law requires that prescribed procedures be followed. For information contact the Copyright Agency Limited.

Written and typeset by Elizabeth Wheeler

Published by No To Violence, the Male Family Violence Prevention Association

Melbourne, Australia

## *About this document*

Behaviour change work with men is similar in some ways to other types of counselling work, but very different in other ways. It carries extra risks to all involved and requires specific skills and knowledge related to family violence and working with men who use violence.

In 1994, NTV (then V-NET) published *'Stopping Men's Violence In The Family: A Manual for Running Men's Groups, Volume 1, Context and Standards'*. The Manual, containing Minimum Standards, best practice goals and discussion of some of the central issues surrounding men's behaviour change work, was one of the first of its kind in the world. It arose from concern about the potential dangers to women and children in working inappropriately with men who use violence. Given the specialised and difficult nature of the work, the intent of the Manual was to promote and enable responsible men's behaviour change work.

Since its publication, the Manual has been used widely by men's behaviour change program providers, facilitators, researchers, students and activists against family violence. It has been a source of information and ideas, a guide to establishing new programs and a basis for ethical decision-making.

In the ten years since the Manual was published, much has changed. Collectively, men's behaviour change program providers have more experience. Understandings have deepened and praxis has changed.

After a comprehensive review process, NTV is pleased and proud to release its new Minimum Standards and Good Practice Guidelines. This document summarises the case for Minimum Standards and Good Practice Guideline, lists the new Standards and Guidelines and outlines the process through which members' compliance with the Minimum Standards will be monitored.

Two manuals, *Men's Behaviour Change Group Work: Minimum Standards and Quality Practice* and *Men's Behaviour Change Group Work: Resources for Quality Practice* will be published in January 2006. The former provides a detailed explanation of the Minimum Standards and Good Practice Guidelines and comprehensively addresses current and emerging themes in men's behaviour change group work practice. The latter comprises a range of tools for use in program planning and delivery. Together, these manuals will provide significant guidance and support to new and existing providers of men's behaviour change programs.

# About the Standards & Guidelines

## *The case for Minimum Standards & Good Practice Guidelines*

Men's behaviour change programs are provided by many different providers and in many different settings. They are facilitated by people of diverse backgrounds, disciplines and theoretical positionings. There are great disparities in the resources available for men's behaviour change work. These differences mean that each men's behaviour change program will be unique.

Whilst respecting and valuing uniqueness, NTV believes there are some Minimum Standards for men's behaviour change work. These are necessary for:

**Safety.** The aim of behaviour change work with men is to promote women's and children's safety. Where this work is conducted inappropriately or without adequate safeguards, interventions with men have the potential to endanger women and children, staff and others. Minimum standards of practice establish a basic framework for working with men in a manner most conducive to the safety of all involved.

**Accountability.** Men's behaviour change work is undertaken in the interests of safety for women and children. Without opening men's behaviour change work to their scrutiny and feedback, NTV and program providers risk further reinforcing patriarchal social relations in which women's and children's voices and experiences are disregarded. Structures and processes for accountability to women and children include:

- Contact with individual women and children.
- Links and partnerships with women's and children's services.
- Relationships with government.

**Quality assurance.** Men's behaviour change programs are a service, and as such need benchmarks for quality and processes for complaints or grievances.

**Public information.** People seeking to join or refer men to behaviour change programs are often not in a position to assess the suitability or safety of programs. Minimum standards of practice enable referrers to be confident about the appropriateness, quality and integrity of a service.

**Facilitating the safe expansion of programs.** Men in many parts of Victoria have no access to men's behaviour change programs. NTV is committed to assisting the development of new programs by making clear the minimum requirements for their establishment, conduct and evaluation.

NTV believes the phrase 'Minimum Standards' most accurately reflects the fact that there are policies, procedures and practices that are *imperative* for safe, ethical men's behaviour change work. These are the minimum necessary to ensure that men's participation in men's behaviour change programs does not increase the danger to women and children.

Of course, NTV also advocates policies, procedures and practices that exceed minimum requirements. NTV identifies these as Good Practice Guidelines. They do not fulfil NTV's current criteria for Minimum Standards, however most, if not all, are essential for quality practice. It is hoped that all members will aspire to reach and then surpass the Good Practice Guidelines as they expand and enrich their programs over the years.

## *Responsibility for implementing the Minimum Standards*

The Minimum Standards and Good Practice Guidelines in this Manual are intended for all entities that provide men's behaviour change programs or groups, regardless of whether they are agencies, organisations, businesses or sole traders.

NTV regards this issue of responsibility as critical. Firstly, fulfilling NTV's Minimum Standards and providing quality men's behaviour change programs requires a comprehensive approach. Secondly, men's behaviour change programs are usually conducted in the name of an entity, and thus, the reputation and good standing of that entity is at stake in its delivery of quality men's behaviour change programs. Thirdly, many aspects of men's behaviour change work are policy or procedural in nature, and are beyond the influence of individual members of staff.

Entities that provide men's behaviour change programs must have organisational membership of NTV to be recognised as men's behaviour change program providers. Their governance bodies bear ultimate responsibility for upholding the Minimum Standards and for the conduct and quality of all program activities. All relevant senior managers should be aware of the Minimum Standards and their organisation's responsibility for upholding them.

## *Overview of the self-regulatory framework*

The NTV Management Committee has adopted a self-regulatory framework for upholding its Minimum Standards and quality in men's behaviour change group work. This framework is based on the following principles:

- When monitoring and upholding the Minimum Standards and quality practice, NTV's primary concern is the provision of safe and appropriate programs that are consistent with NTV's philosophy.
- The continuum of responses when providers' practices are not congruent with the Minimum Standards should range from support to become compliant, through to sanction.
- NTV's role as monitor should not be overly surveillant or intrusive upon providers.

A detailed description of the self-regulatory framework is contained in *Men's Behaviour Change Group Work: Minimum Standards and Quality Practice*. In summary:

- Compliance with all Minimum Standards will be monitored.
- All providers of men's behaviour change programs wishing to be members of NTV will be monitored, regardless of whether they are agencies, organisations, businesses, or sole traders.
- All programs aimed at facilitating or supporting men's behaviour change, which are run by NTV members, will be monitored, regardless of what they are called.
- NTV will monitor compliance with the Minimum Standards via a Membership Review Panel comprising representatives from the Management Committee.
- Compliance with the Minimum Standards will be actively monitored on an annual basis, via a survey and Statutory Declaration.
- Action when a provider does not comply with the Minimum Standards will range from support to become compliant, through to sanction. A five-step process will be in place when non-compliance is alleged. This will comprise complaint; assessment; consideration and action by the Membership Review Panel; recommendations to the NTV Management Committee; and action by the NTV Management Committee. Compliance with the Minimum Standards will continue to be a condition of membership of NTV.
- NTV will review its Minimum Standards and Good Practice Guidelines on a triennial basis.

# Summary of Minimum Standards

## INTRODUCTION TO THE MINIMUM STANDARDS

*MS1* Responsibility for implementation of NTV's Minimum Standards rests with the governance body of the lead provider.

## RESPONDING TO MALE FAMILY VIOLENCE

*MS2* Program providers only provide couple therapy or relationship counselling if the woman is willing to participate, does not feel threatened in the counselling situation and feels safe at home. They never provide couple therapy or relationship counselling when the man is still using physical violence or significant levels of controlling behaviour.

## STAFFING MEN'S BEHAVIOUR CHANGE PROGRAMS

Note that that the NTV Management Committee may deem a person's experience and qualifications to be equivalent to the criteria listed below. Men's behaviour change group facilitator qualifications from a recognised tertiary or training institution are equivalent to the Graduate Certificate of Social Science (Male Family Violence - Group Facilitation) referred to below.

*MS3* For every men's behaviour change group session:

- At least one facilitator is a Level Three Facilitator.
- A second facilitator is at least a Level Two Facilitator.
- Third and subsequent facilitators are at least Level One Facilitators.

Level One Facilitators meet all the following  
*Level One criteria:*

- Has a demonstrated understanding of the men's behaviour change process and the gendered nature of male family violence
- Has observed a minimum of 10 men's behaviour change group sessions.

Level Two Facilitators meet all the following  
*Level Two criteria:*

- Has a demonstrated understanding of the men's behaviour change process and the gendered nature of male family violence
- Has at least 80 hours of experience facilitating relevant group work
- Has observed a minimum of 10 men's behaviour change group sessions
- Has at least 2 years experience in direct service provision with women in the context of family violence OR in a program that adheres to NTV Minimum Standards (or an equivalent for men's behaviour change). This includes the MRS.

(continued over page)

Level Three Facilitators meet all the following

*Level Three A criteria:*

- Has a demonstrated understanding of the men's behaviour change process and the gendered nature of male family violence
- Has at least 3 years professional experience in counselling
- Has at least 2 years experience facilitating relevant group work
- Has a 4 year degree from a recognised tertiary institution in a relevant discipline (for example, Social Work, Psychology, Psychiatry, Community Welfare, Behavioural Science or Medicine)
- Has at least 100 hours of experience facilitating men's behaviour change groups

*OR Level Three B criteria:*

- Has a demonstrated understanding of the men's behaviour change process and the gendered nature of male family violence
- Has a Graduate Certificate of Social Science (Male Family Violence - Group Facilitation)
- Has at least 100 hours of experience facilitating men's behaviour change groups.

*MS4*

Contact workers meet all the following *Contact Worker criteria:*

- Has a demonstrated understanding of the men's behaviour change process and the gendered nature of male family violence
- Has knowledge of the processes and content of the provider's group sessions
- Has observed a minimum of 6 men's behaviour change group sessions
- Has experience in direct service provision with women in the context of family violence OR a Graduate Certificate of Social Science (Male Family Violence - Group Facilitation).

*MS5*

Staff undertaking assessments of men:

- Are a Level 3 (A) Facilitator OR
- Have a Graduate Certificate of Social Science (Male Family Violence - Group Facilitation) AND at least 200 hours of experience facilitating men's behaviour change groups.

*MS6*

Supervisors of men's behaviour change program staff meet all the following *Supervisor Criteria:*

- Has a Graduate Certificate of Social Science (Male Family Violence - Group Facilitation) OR a 4 year degree from a recognised tertiary institution in a relevant discipline (for example, Social Work, Psychology, Psychiatry, Community Welfare, Behavioural Science or Medicine)
- Has relevant and diverse skills in counselling and group work
- Has at least 3 years professional experience in the family violence field
- Has at least 100 hours of experience facilitating men's behaviour change groups
- Has current knowledge of issues in male family violence and the men's behaviour change field.

<i>MS7</i>	All group programs are facilitated by at least two co-facilitators, one male and one female co-facilitator, unless there are demonstrably exceptional circumstances, in which case, they are facilitated by two male facilitators, both of whom: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Have at least fortnightly contact with at least one experienced woman worker in peer supervision, individual supervision, telephone supervision (in cases of geographical isolation) or the program's Reference Group AND</li> <li>▪ Have their sessions observed (directly or via audio or video tape) by an appropriately experienced female at least monthly.</li> </ul>
<i>MS8</i>	Initial contact is made by a female worker and women are able to have contact solely with female staff if they wish.

<i>MS9</i>	Facilitators and contact workers participate in at least four relevant professional development activities each year (of which two are activities conducted by NTV) and keep a log of their professional development activities.
------------	--

## **PROGRAM PLANNING**

<i>MS10</i>	Men's behaviour change program providers have a Reference Group that meets at least quarterly. This group comprises representatives of local women's services and as many other relevant service providers as possible.
<i>MS11</i>	Programs provide men with access to a minimum of 24 contact hours of men's behaviour change group-work, spread over a minimum of 12 sessions and spaced no more than fortnightly. Contact hours do not include time spent on initial assessment or follow-up processes.
<i>MS12</i>	Providers emphasise all of the following core messages in all aspects of program promotion and delivery: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The safety of women and children always comes first.</li> <li>▪ There are many different ways that a man can be violent and controlling.</li> <li>▪ Violence and abusive reactions are controlling of others, even though men might feel 'out of control'.</li> <li>▪ Male family violence has wide-ranging, long-lasting negative effects on those who experience it.</li> <li>▪ Male family violence is never acceptable or excusable, and some forms of violence are illegal.</li> <li>▪ Every man has a choice to use or not use violence.</li> <li>▪ It is each man's responsibility to stop his violence and abuse.</li> <li>▪ Being responsible means giving up using force and power to get what you want.</li> <li>▪ Male family violence has a context in patriarchal attitudes and structures, and the association between masculinity and violence is socially constructed.</li> </ul>

(continued over page)

- There is a difference between a feeling and a behaviour, and men have a choice about how to behave when they are experiencing a certain feeling.
- Responsibility, equality, respect and trust can promote more equal and non-violent relationships.
- Being aware of others' feelings is important in non-violent ways of relating.
- Being aware of one's own feelings is important in non-violent ways of relating.
- Everyone needs to challenge sexism and secrecy about male violence – including within men's behaviour change programs.
- Women and children are in the best position to judge whether men are behaving in less violent and controlling ways.

MSB

Providers help men to develop skills to:

- Identify and challenge any of their ideas, attitudes, beliefs and myths that stand in the way of them taking responsibility for their behaviour in the past, present and future.
- Recognise the many ways that they can be violent and/or controlling.
- Recognise the effects of their violent and controlling behaviour on others.
- Listen to, accept and integrate feedback about their behaviour from women and children.
- Place others' needs and emotions on at least an equal footing to their own.
- Respond to their own and others' strong emotions in non-violent and non-controlling ways.
- Use appropriate non-violent and non-controlling behaviours and ways of relating.
- Manage and use appropriately their feelings of guilt and shame about their violent behaviours, in ways that enable them to take responsibility for their behaviour.
- Prioritise settings and personal relationships (for example, friendships) that support their choice to use non-violent and non-controlling behaviours and ways of relating.
- Enhance and draw upon positive personal qualities such as persistence and openness.
- Identify thoughts, feelings, physiological reactions and behaviours that are part of the 'winding up' process; use strategies to interrupt that process; and use 'winding down' thoughts before using non-violent and non-controlling alternatives.
- Advocate against men's use of violent and controlling behaviours, especially in male-dominated spaces, and challenge the social contexts and conditioning in which these take place.
- Reshape their own masculine identity and sense of manhood so that they are characterised by non-violence. Identify how non-violent and non-controlling behaviour and ways of relating will help them to strengthen their existing positive attributes and become a better person, partner and parent.

## ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION

- MS14* Groups' eligibility requirements include that men must:
- Acknowledge that they have a problem, or at least demonstrate a willingness to consider the possibility of acknowledging their violent behaviour.
  - Show a desire, commitment and capacity to attend and participate in the entire program.
  - Show a willingness to keep their partner and children safe (or acknowledge their right to be and feel safe, where men do not have contact).
  - Agree to program staff having regular contact with any women and children who might be affected by their violent and controlling behaviour.
  - Agree to abide by the law, including all the requirements of any legal orders in force.
  - Agree to the provider's policies on limited confidentiality and responding to criminal acts or breaches of court orders.
  - Agree to give up their access to guns or other weapons, unless they require them for their livelihood (in which case staff should discuss this safety risk with their partner and incorporate this factor into safety planning).
  - Agree to an ongoing evaluation and monitoring of their progress in changing their violent behaviour and attitudes.
- MS15* All men who enquire about a men's behaviour change program are provided with a Men's Referral Service brochure and encouraged to use the service as a complementary source of support.
- MS16* Men or women making an enquiry about a men's behaviour change program are contacted by program staff within one week, but preferably within 48 hours.
- MS17* Intake assessment includes at least one face-to-face interview conducted by an appropriately qualified family violence worker.
- MS18* At a minimum, assessment covers the man's:
- Current relationship status and relationship history.
  - Parenting status.
  - History of using all forms of violent and controlling behaviours.
  - Capacity for using all forms of violent and controlling behaviours.
  - Possession of weapons.
  - Legal standing, including current or previous court proceedings or orders, charges or convictions, and any reports required by statutory or other bodies.
  - Understanding of the need for change and willingness to change.
  - Commitment and ability to attend group sessions.
  - Ability to keep women and children safe, particularly in relation to physical violence.

(continued over page)

- Acceptance that, throughout the group program, group facilitators will contact women and children who are affected by his violence.
- Willingness to accept the provider's policies regarding limited confidentiality and responding to criminal acts and breaches of court orders.

Any potential barriers to the man's participation are also assessed and managed appropriately.

If women and children affected by the man's violence agree to contact with the program, they are invited to contribute information to the man's assessment.

<i>MS19</i>	Program providers have a process to continue to engage and support men, women and children, in circumstances when men cannot enter a group immediately.
<i>MS20</i>	Program providers give men, women and children documentation about the rights and responsibilities of all parties.
<i>MS21</i>	Participation in the provider's program is contingent upon men signing a contract agreeing to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Program staff contacting any women and children affected by their use of violence.</li> <li>▪ Limited confidentiality.</li> <li>▪ Staff disclosing information about them to statutory bodies as required by law.</li> <li>▪ Pay fees as set by the provider.</li> </ul>
<i>MS22</i>	All groups have an agreement about acceptable conduct and behaviour within the group and about the consequences of breaking the agreement.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

<i>MS23</i>	In all record keeping: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ File notes discriminate between fact and interpretation.</li> <li>▪ Records never contain speculation about future behaviour.</li> <li>▪ Quotes are written down wherever possible.</li> <li>▪ Disclosures are attributed to the person who makes them (for example, 'Mr N said ...').</li> </ul>
<i>MS24</i>	Information that might reasonably be considered to have the potential to jeopardise a person's safety is never recorded.
<i>MS25</i>	Women's and children's files are separate to men's files.
<i>MS26</i>	Files and notes never leave the provider's premises. They are stored in a secure environment, with access limited only to relevant personnel.

<i>MS27</i>	Men are permitted to join a men's behaviour change group only if they have agreed that their personal information will have limited confidentiality.
<i>MS28</i>	All conversations between women and program staff, and all information given to staff by women, are kept confidential unless women wish otherwise or unless the circumstances require mandatory reporting.
<i>MS29</i>	When providing any information to a court or other statutory body, providers include information about the complexities and uncertainties of men's behaviour change work. They do not: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide any feedback about men that helps them to avoid penalties, or that lessens the strength of a justice or child protection response to their use of violent and controlling behaviour.</li> <li>▪ Provide a court or other statutory body with any comments about men's behaviour outside the group, or with timelines for behaviour change or family reunification.</li> </ul>

## **ACCOUNTABILITY TO FAMILY MEMBERS**

<i>MS30</i>	Contact with and support of women and children is primarily about their safety and wellbeing.
<i>MS31</i>	Men are encouraged to talk about and reflect on the impacts of their violence on women and children. Men are provided with information and evidence about the effects of their violence on women and children, and women's and children's voices have a place in every group session.
<i>MS32</i>	Program staff always ask about and respect the wishes of women when they share information about men's behaviour.
<i>MS33</i>	Information provided by women and children is shared with men or the group only if they have given explicit permission, and the program staff agree that it is safe to do so.
<i>MS34</i>	At minimum, contact workers ask women and children about: Their safety. What information and support they need. Their experiences of the man's behaviour.
<i>MS35</i>	Contact workers tell women about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Any threats, direct or indirect, to their or their children's safety.</li> <li>▪ The man's attendance and participation in the group.</li> <li>▪ What the group has been talking about.</li> <li>▪ The limitations of groups for men and the possibility that the violence and controlling behaviours might not stop.</li> <li>▪ Their rights, including rights to live in safety, legal protection, support and information.</li> <li>▪ What they, as the provider, will do in the event of a man breaching a court order or committing any act of violence against them or their children.</li> </ul>

(continued over page)

- Services and resources that might help them to make decisions for themselves and in their and their children's interests.
- Any concerns that they have about the wellbeing or safety of their children.

*MS36* Initial contact with women and children occurs as part of a man's intake assessment, or if this is not possible, before a man attends his first group session.

Where women and children express interest in being contacted by program staff, additional contact occurs at least:

- After the man's second or third session.
- Every three or four weeks through the program.
- When the man leaves the program.

More or less contact than this is at the discretion of individual women and children.

Contact arising from specific safety concerns (for example, to advise a woman that her partner has not attended) is imperative and is counted as extra to the schedule of contact outlined above.

*MS37* Providers make all reasonable attempts to contact any woman who has had an intimate relationship (co-habitation, co-parenting of a dependent child or adolescent, or a sexual relationship) in the last two years with a man wishing to participate in a men's behaviour change group.

Women who currently live with or have recently separated from a man wishing to participate in a men's behaviour change group are sent an introductory letter, followed up by a telephone call.

Women who have been separated from a man wishing to participate in a men's behaviour change group for more than three months are sent a letter inviting them to make contact.

## **SAFETY**

*MS38* Program providers have and implement written procedures for:

- Documenting all risk assessments.
- Monitoring threats or risks to safety in an ongoing and systematic way.
- Responding to perceived threats to safety.
- Reviewing critical incidents.
- Responding to criminal acts.
- Notifying relevant authorities of possible risk to children, consistent with the notification pathways of their relevant authority.
- Relevant aspects of the procedures are explained to men, women, and children upon entry to the program, and thereafter as needed.

*MS39* Program providers assist women and children to make and revise safety plans to cover foreseeable contingencies.

*MS40* Providers ensure that women and children who do not want to see the man who has violated them are not on the premises at the same time as him, or that if they are, there is no chance that they will encounter each other.

*MS41* At a minimum, when a participant in a men's behaviour change group commits any act of violent and controlling behaviour, whether reported by the man, a family member or a third party, program providers always have contact with the woman to:

- Revisit her safety plan
- Offer support, or offer to organise support, for her to pursue legal action or to discuss her legal option
- Offer support, or offer to organise support, if she wishes to speak with police
- Discuss whether she wishes to pursue legal action (for example, criminal charges, seeking a court order) against the man
- Discuss any risks to her safety that she or the provider believe could arise from her taking legal action or speaking with police and make changes – as needed – to her safety plan
- Discuss any other action she would like the provider to take, including when and how often the provider should contact her again
- Discuss any risks to children and action that program staff feel they might need to take regarding a child protection notification
- Report back to her about what has been done in response to the man's act, what further support she can get, and what (if any), further action she needs to take.

## **PRACTICE AND PROGRAM DELIVERY**

*MS42* Men's behaviour change groups focus on violence and control as primary themes. Cessation of violent and controlling behaviour is prioritised over other potential outcomes, such as personal development.

*MS43* Program providers work with specialist services and draw on information about good practice to maximise their inclusiveness for men who are marginalised because of their indigeneity, ethnicity, sexuality or other factors.

*MS44* Group agreements include processes for facilitators and participants to respond to misogyny and collusion with, or minimisation of, violent and controlling behaviours within the group.

*MS45* Facilitators debrief for a minimum of twenty minutes at the conclusion of each group session.

*MS 46* Level Two and Three Facilitators, and Contact Workers, have at least monthly, one-on-one supervision, with a Supervisor who meets NTV's criteria for supervisors.

Level One Facilitators have at least fortnightly, one-on-one supervision, with a Supervisor who meets NTV's criteria for supervisors.

Staff undertaking assessments of men have at least monthly, one-on-one supervision, with a Supervisor who meets NTV's criteria for supervisors.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

*MS 47* Program providers evaluate each program they deliver, drawing on quantitative and qualitative data, including information and feedback collected from participants, women and children, and other stakeholders. The findings of evaluation are reported to all members of the Program Reference Group and are used to inform future program planning and delivery.

# Summary of Good Practice Guidelines

## STAFFING MEN'S BEHAVIOUR CHANGE PROGRAMS

- GPG 1* Position descriptions and performance appraisals for all staff involved in the provision or management of a men's behaviour change program are informed by the NTV Minimum Standards.
- GPG 2* Providers delegate a staff member to oversee implementation of the NTV Minimum Standards.
- GPG 3* When involving a previous group participant in a men's behaviour change program in an ongoing formal capacity in a group (for example, as a mentor, educator or facilitator), program providers:
- Provide a written role description, including aims, prerequisites and selection criteria for the role; rights and responsibilities of both the participant and the provider; accountability processes; and, scope, limitations and boundaries for the role.
  - Ensure that the man satisfies all of the provider's selection criteria.
  - Provide effective training and induction.
  - Have regular contact with his partner, if he has one (including if he commences a relationship).
  - Involve him in briefing and debriefing for every group session.
  - Provide regular supervision with a professional facilitator.
  - Have a formal contract with him for the provision of his services (whether paid or voluntary).
  - Have a policy on payment/honoraria for volunteers.
  - Conduct an exit interview upon his departure from the program.

## PROGRAM PLANNING

- GPG 4* Providers document the theoretical underpinnings of their men's behaviour change program.
- GPG 5* Providers make all reasonable attempts to have contact with their local family violence outreach service, family violence networker, and police at least quarterly.
- GPG 6* Providers attend meetings or other activities of their local family violence network at least quarterly.
- GPG 7* All staff in men's behaviour change programs have access to up-to-date information about services that could be used by men, women and children, including those provided by regional and state-wide providers.

## ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION

*GPG 8* Providers offer information about their men's behaviour change program to all local health, welfare, legal and other providers that provide services to women, men, children and families.

This information includes the provider's approach to men's behaviour change; intake and assessment process; processes for accountability to women and children; program structure; statement of rights and responsibilities for male program participants and their family members; and, a clear differentiation between men's behaviour change programs and anger management groups.

*GPG 9* All eligibility criteria have a documented rationale.

*GPG 10* In following up an initial enquiry, staff provide the enquirer with information about what the provider can offer and the timelines and processes for assessment.

*GPG 11* Providers encourage men to make their own bookings for assessment.

*GPG 12* Providers taking a booking for a man from a woman first assess her safety, situation and options before discussing the pros and cons of her making a booking on his behalf.

*GPG 13* Providers accept referrals from other providers or staff outside the program only if the man is involved in the process.

*GPG 14* When a man is returning to a group program after an absence of more than three months, he is re-assessed.

*GPG 15* If a man is not eligible to enter a provider's men's behaviour change program, or decides against joining a group, staff try to assist him to identify and explore other options.

*GPG 16* If a man participates in an intake assessment but is not eligible to enter the provider's men's behaviour change program, or decides against joining the program, staff request his permission to make contact with relevant women and children in order to check on their safety.

*GPG 17* Providers document how they engage with Indigenous communities and individuals in the context of Indigenous family violence.

*GPG 18* Providers who work with Indigenous individuals have regular contact with a relevant Indigenous family violence service for the purposes of secondary consultation and support.

*GPG 19* Engagement with Indigenous communities and individual Indigenous men in the context of Indigenous family violence issues is consistent with the findings and recommendations of the Victorian Indigenous Family Violence Task Force.

*GPG 20* Providers :

- Invite representatives from their local Indigenous organisation and Migrant Resource Centre or other relevant ethnic community organisation to participate in their Reference Group.
- Provide information about their men's behaviour change program to local Indigenous and ethnic community workers.
- Provide interpreters for assessment, groups and contact with men's families wherever possible.
- Avoid Anglo-centrism in educational materials by using a variety of cultural settings for scenarios in group work.
- Ensure appropriate referrals for men who have experienced torture or trauma.
- Monitor group dynamics and respond to marginalisation or other forms of exclusion on the basis of race, culture or English language ability.
- Take care to avoid language that implies that male family violence is acceptable in some places or cultures.
- Challenge racism and racist stereotypes from group participants, making it clear that these power-over ways of relating are another form of violent and controlling behaviour.

*GPG 21* Providers document the processes they use to ensure cultural and linguistic inclusiveness.

*GPG 22* Providers never condone or excuse violent or controlling behaviour on the basis of culture or men's experiences.

*GPG 23* To challenge homophobia and be sexually inclusive, providers:

- Provide appropriate referrals, information and resources for men who are in same-sex relationships.
- Have regular contact with a relevant gay men's health worker or counsellor for the purposes of secondary consultation and support.
- Monitor group dynamics and respond to marginalisation or other forms of exclusion.
- Challenge homophobia and homophobic stereotypes from group participants, making it clear that these power-over ways of relating are another form of violent and controlling behaviour.

Providers document the processes they use to ensure sexual inclusiveness.

Providers never condone or excuse violent behaviour on the basis of sexuality or men's experiences.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

- GPG 24* Facilitators who undertake to sign the attendance sheets of legally mandated clients negotiate any further feedback with the mandating provider, bearing in mind Minimum Standard 29.
- GPG 25* Program staff who provide reports to statutory bodies at the request of women take into account the possible implications for their safety now and in the future.  
Upon written requests from women, they can choose to provide information about:
- Anything women have disclosed about their experiences and feel safe to make public.
  - Anything men have disclosed about their violence during assessment and group sessions.
  - Any behaviour or attitudes of men that facilitators have observed in the group.
- GPG 26* Reasonable attempts are made to have further contact with men who drop out of a program.
- GPG 27* Men who are making a planned exit from a program are invited and assisted to develop an exit plan.
- GPG 28* Men are contacted at least once after their departure from a program, to reinforce the importance of maintaining behaviour change, and remind men that the program has a continuing interest in their changed behaviour.
- GPG 29* Women are always notified when a man leaves or drops out of a program.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY TO FAMILY MEMBERS**

- GPG 30* Children are included in decision making on an age-appropriate basis.
- GPG 31* Contact workers do not make any comment to family members about any positive changes in the man's behaviour.
- GPG 32* If a provider will no longer provide services to women and children for any reason, staff formulate and implement an exit plan or a handover plan (if another provider is to provide future support) and make all reasonable attempts to conduct an exit interview.

## **SAFETY**

- GPG 33* Providers conduct program activities in places that are safe, well-lit, comfortable, physically accessible, located close to public transport and child-friendly.
- GPG 34* Providers ensure that men's behaviour change groups always start and finish at the designated time.

- GPG 35* In the extraordinary event that a group session is being facilitated by a single facilitator, another staff member is present in the building and within easy reach for the duration of the session, and is aware that the session is being conducted.
- GPG 36* Providers have documented occupational health and safety procedures specific to the context of men's behaviour change program.
- GPG 37* Providers and staff review staff safety procedures before the commencement of each group program, or every six months where the group is ongoing.

## **PRACTICE AND PROGRAM DELIVERY**

- GPG 38* Men are referred for counselling from appropriate generalist or specialist services for issues other than their use of violent and controlling behaviours.
- GPG 39* All group programs regularly talk about ways that men try to avoid responsibility for their violent and controlling behaviours, including misogyny, objectification of women, denial, justification, blaming others, minimisation, collusion, secrecy, disruption of the group process or portraying themselves as victims.
- GPG 40* Facilitators point out to men when they try to avoid responsibility or collude with others' avoidance of responsibility.
- GPG 41* Facilitators foster a group culture in which men monitor and point out each others' attempts to avoid responsibility or collude with others' avoidance of responsibility.
- GPG 42* Providers encourage and support observers to attend their men's behaviour change groups.
- GPG 43* Observers are briefed before the session and participate in debriefing afterwards.
- GPG 44* Observers are bound by the same confidentiality as facilitators.
- GPG 45* Processes and the length of time that will be spent debriefing are agreed by facilitators before the beginning of a group program.

## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

- GPG 46* Providers seek women's and children's views about their own safety before, during and six months after men's participation in a men's behaviour change program.
- GPG 47* Providers monitor the behaviour of individual men on an ongoing basis.

- GPG 48* Providers seek women's and children's views about men's behaviour before, during and six months after their participation in a men's behaviour change group.
- GPG 49* Providers undertake an assessment of the behaviour change of individual men at least every six sessions.
- GPG 50* Providers never participate in research that establishes control groups.
- GPG 51* Any research undertaken by third parties (including students) has the approval of a relevant ethics committee, and the research proposal and approval are sighted by the program provider.