



# Hume Strengthening Risk Management Project

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Northern Family and Domestic Violence Service

# Northern Region

## 7 Local Govt Areas

- Hume
- Moreland
- Yarra
- Darebin
- Banyule
- Nilumbik
- Whittlesea

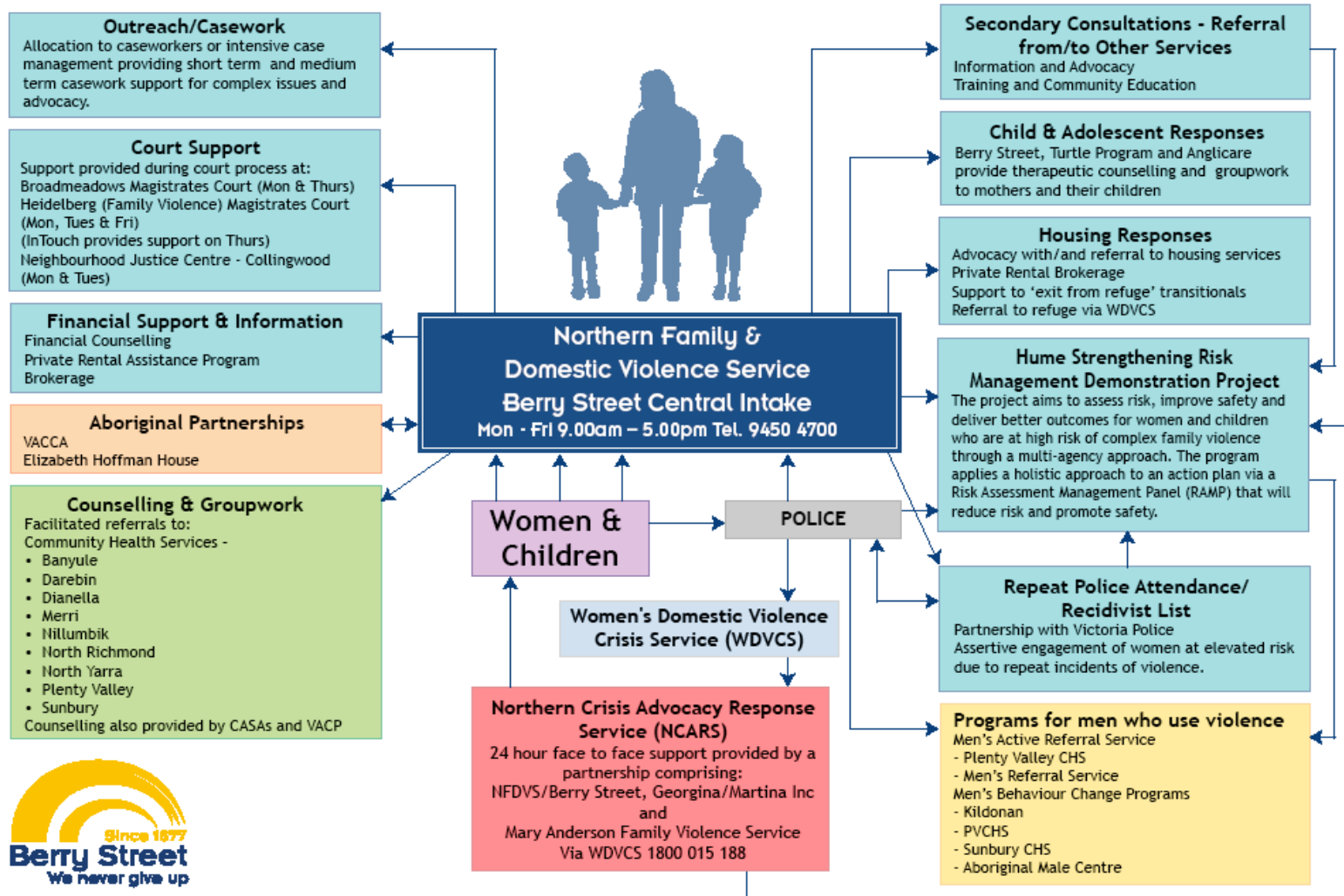


North  
Metropolitan Region



# Northern Family & Domestic Violence Services- From crisis to recovery

## Northern Integrated Family Violence Service System for Women, Children & Men



# What lead to the funding of the project?

- ❑ Strengthening Risk Management Framework & Practice Guidelines
  1. Applying consistent & comprehensive approaches to risk assessment & risk management across the sector to ensure women & children's safety needs are addressed.
  2. Delivering a flexible model which appropriately serves diverse groups.
  3. System wide responses are required to hold men accountable for their behaviour.
  4. Prioritising supports for children.
  5. Ensuring accountability for family violence across the whole sector.



# KPMG Benchmarking Data

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- ❑ Risk assessment tools are inaccurate unless there is ongoing information sharing
- ❑ KPMG Benchmark data shows that in 2% of 886 incidents police showed 6 or more risk factors present. The data from women's family violence specialist agencies in the same snapshot found 34% of women with 9 or more risk factors.
- ❑ This data could be expected – but it indicates the importance of collaboration, feedback, information sharing and escalating the risk management response
- ❑ Shared risk assessment without shared risk management can mean 'too much talk and not enough action'.



# SAFER Research Summary Points

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- ❑ Intervention orders are viewed by women as important - more highly valued if breaches were followed-up by police and held up in court.
- ❑ Intervention order must be accompanied by other safety supports as breaches are common and difficult to ‘prove’ – evidence collection is critical.
- ❑ Very little indication that stronger penalties for breaches (other than fines or undertakings) are being imposed.
- ❑ Women would feel safer if accountability for breaches of intervention orders had a stronger impact on their (ex) partners. Fines and signed undertakings are having little impact in reducing the abuse for a majority of women and their children.
- ❑ ***Positive reports from women that when Police do follow-up on a breach (eg phoning or visiting abuser) it does have a positive impact in reducing the severity and frequency of breaching.***
- ❑ Support through the on-going crisis points is highly valued



# International MARACS Model

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- ❑ MARACs provide a forum for sharing information and taking actions to reduce harm to high-risk domestic violence victims.
- ❑ Evaluations show agencies assisted victims more efficiently, primarily through enhanced information sharing.
- ❑ MARACs improve victims' safety: both police and victim data revealed that 6 in 10 victims had not been re-victimised. These positive results demonstrate the benefits of a coordinated community response for high risk women (Robinson, 2006).



# International MARACS Model

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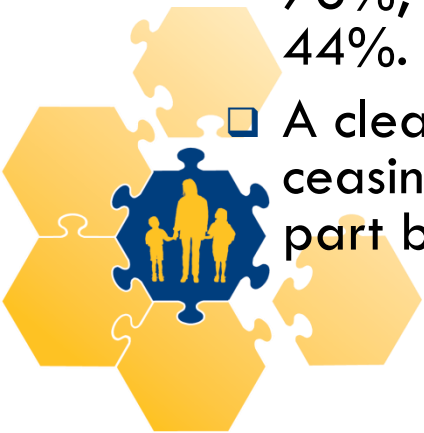
- ❑ Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACS)
  - ❑ Leads to multi-agency action to manage risk by combining risk assessment, professional judgement and victim perception.
  - ❑ Identify the highest 10% of severely at risk victim
  - ❑ Thresholds include:
    - ❑ 10 risk factors (from a list of 20)
    - ❑ Or 4 significant concerns drawn from top 5 risk factors (criminal record for drugs/violence; current incident resulted in injuries; use of weapons, threats to kill; ex/partner obsessively jealous and highly controlling)
    - ❑ Or 3 police call outs in 12 months (similar to RPA)



# Evaluation of MARACS Model

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- ❑ Model of an advocate working intensively with women at high risk of family violence through multi-agency working
- ❑ 2,500 women with 3,600 children over a two year period.
- ❑ Clear impact on safety
- ❑ 57% of all victims supported by an IDVA experiencing a complete or near cessation in the abuse following 3-4 months of contact.
- ❑ Attention to the safety of women markedly decreased the direct threats to children's safety: conflict around child contact improved by 45%; victim afraid of harm to children improved by 76%; and perpetrators threats to kill the children changed by 44%.
- ❑ A clear link between the number of services offered and abuse ceasing. Reflects firm links with partner agencies, facilitated in part by the Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs).



# Demonstration projects

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- ❑ To test the implementation and delivery of coordinated multi agency approaches to strengthen family violence risk management.
- ❑ Projects sites will be City of Hume & City of Greater Geelong – both have high rates of family violence attendances by police and high numbers of applications for Intervention Orders.
- ❑ Vic Govt & Commonwealth Govt Service Integration Projects Initiative. Approx \$1 mil over 2 years (until 30 June 2013) for each project.



# Aims of the Project

- ❑ To strengthen risk management practice for women & children who are most vulnerable to continuing and potentially lethal family violence.
- ❑ Deliver an effective, multi agency risk assessment and case management approach to improve safety for women and children in the City of Hume and increase accountability of men who use violence.



# Target Group

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- ❑ **Women & children** experiencing or at risk of family violence;
- ❑ **Male partners/ex-partners** who have used violence – to challenge their use of violence & mitigate further risk to women & children;
- ❑ Yearly target of **100** women, children & men;
  
- ❑ **Specific targeting may include:**
  - ❑ Recidivist cases; heightened risk episodes, child protection referrals
  - ❑ Aboriginal women & children



# Service Delivery Model

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- ❑ Comprehensive risk assessment.
- ❑ Management & safety plan for each referral identifying clear roles and responsibilities for agencies participating.
- ❑ Each RAMP meeting will review the responsibilities and case management plans from the previous RAMP meeting.
- ❑ Case conferences & professionals meeting for individual clients will occur outside of the RAMP but will be referenced in ongoing monitoring of cases.



# Staffing Model

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- ❑ Regional Director (RAMP Chair)
- ❑ Program Manager (Co-Chair)
- ❑ Coordinator
- ❑ Senior case manager- women's case manager
- ❑ Senior case consultant/therapist – infant, children & adolescents
- ❑ Senior case manager – focus on engaging men
- ❑ Administrative support
- ❑ Embedded within NFDVS



# RAMP - Risk Assessment & Management Panel

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- ❑ A locally based forum where new ways of working collaboratively will be tested across multiple agencies & sectors.
- ❑ Opportunity to bring all relevant players to the table to design, implement & deliver a coordinated multi-agency response.
- ❑ Voices of women and children will be represented at RAMP.
- ❑ Assess & identify expectations of men (by case management response).



# What makes a good RAMP?

- ❑ “The meeting should focus on the domestic violence and child protection concerns. The information shared should be fact based and not opinion”
- ❑ “The meeting assists to facilitate, monitor and increase the safety of the women and children”
- ❑ “Don’t wait for the MARAC (RAMP) if you have immediate safety concerns”
- ❑ “Helps to manage perpetrator risk by involving corrections, police and prosecutions”
- ❑ “Promotes workers from all sectors to constantly think about the safety of women and children”
- ❑ “Domestic violence cannot be solved without communication between agencies and services”
- ❑ “It’s important that everyone knows their role. It’s important that clear actions are made and followed up”
- ❑ “It’s important that everyone working with a complex family has the same information and understanding of the issues

# Governance Structures

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- ❑ State wide Reference Group
- ❑ Local Reference Group
- ❑ Hume Domestic Violence Network
- ❑ NIFVS Partnership Group
- ❑ Northern Strategic Network
- ❑ NCARS Review/Working Group
- ❑ Think Child Reference Group



# Questions...?

