The Winston Churchill Memorial Trust of Australia

Report by Katharine Short

2008 Churchill Fellow

To study best practice in integrated domestic violence programs.

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INTRODUCTION

This fellowship enabled me to travel to New Zealand, the United States of America (USA), Canada and the United Kingdom (UK) to look at examples of good and innovative practice in the field of domestic and family violence. Services everywhere continually strive to improve their practice in this area where so many victims are created; both women as direct recipients of abuse and violence and children as the sometimes victims and oftentimes observers.

My interests were wide-ranging due to the nature of the program in which I work, which I will describe briefly in the main body of this report. I was interested in services to men, women and children, as well as how specialist court services are arranged and how different statutory and non-statutory agencies work together.

This report, therefore, provides a diverse but in no way comprehensive overview of some of the services and programs available to address domestic and family violence in the cities I visited. The sheer size of some of the countries I visited means that service provision can differ within the same city, let alone state or province. However, what I hope I have portrayed are examples of innovative and good practice in this area, that both statutory and non-statutory agencies can consider in future developments in South Australia (SA). In arriving at my recommendations I tried to consider new practice at no or low cost, as well as future development should budgets allow or service provision be adapted or altered. As one person I spoke with put it: if there is no extra money available, we need to “work smarter” within existing budgets.

I would like to extend my appreciation to the Churchill Trust for allowing me the opportunity to pursue my interests in this way. I would also like to thank everyone I met overseas for their generosity with time and resources, and their willingness to share their expertise and knowledge. In particular I would like to thank the following people for assisting me in organising my agenda: Jill Proudfoot, Tiaria Fletcher, Lila Jones, Scott Miller, Graham Barnes, Tim Kelly, Dr Lynn Stewart, Penny Rickman and Mary McCaffrey.

Thanks are also due to the South Australian Department for Correctional Services (DCS) for supporting me on such an extended study leave. This would not have been possible without the additional support (and workload carried!) of a number of very special people in my team in the Salvation Army and Correctional Services Courts Unit to cover my absence. Thank you to Richard Putnam, Cornelia Steinhausser, Kirsty Cordingley and Trudy Babinskas. Special thanks to Dallas Colley, whose expertise and unfailing commitment to this area of work has proved both a source of support and an inspiration.

My final thanks go to my husband, Nick Short, whose ceaseless support of my life choices, application to the Churchill Trust, and subsequent long absences, means the world to me.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The fellowship travel to New Zealand, USA, Canada and the UK was undertaken between the 6th October and the 6th December 2008, which included a week's holiday in the UK prior to returning to Australia. The aim of the fellowship was to examine domestic violence services for all parties affected by violence and abuse in both statutory and non-statutory settings, including the interface between the two. The intended outcome was to consider how changes to service provision could enhance further the safety of women and the protection of children, and hold more men accountable for their use of violence and abuse.

Highlights:
- Seeing the diversity of services offered by Preventing Violence in the Home
- Observing various specialist court systems and meeting with Judge Mather
- Attending the Duluth DAIP 3-day training and observing non-violence classes
- Time spent with Changing Ways staff, and observing their partner assault response program and their Caring Dads program
- Meeting with Dr Lynn Stewart and enjoying home made lentil soup after many weeks of hotel and restaurant food!
- Time spent with staff at the National Probation Service Bath office

Recommendations: space does not allow for the full list of recommendations to be repeated here; please refer to pages 40-43 of this report for the complete list. What follows are brief points on a selection of the recommendations made.

Consideration to be given to:
- Mandating men’s stopping violence groups
- Making a change to the Domestic Violence Restraining Order conditions to include an option to require attendance at a stopping violence group
- Introducing realistic and efficient time-scales in the FVC
- Police family violence call out reports being routinely passed on to nominated domestic violence agencies
- Introducing a parenting program for specific domestic violence perpetrators who are fathers
- Introducing child-specific safety planning as seen in the PVH Child Crisis Team and how this could be achieved in SA
- How to increase the pool of men’s program facilitators

Implementation and Dissemination:
- Information learned will directly inform my work as a men’s worker with the Central Violence Intervention Program (CVIP)
- Findings will be disseminated through presentations to SA DCS and the Domestic Violence Network that I facilitate, and by articles submitted to relevant interested organisations, including the Probation and Community Correctional Officer Association, the Australian Domestic Violence Clearinghouse and the National Council to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children
ABBREVIATIONS

BWJP – Battered Women’s Justice Project
CAADA – Coordinated Action against Domestic Abuse
CAS – Children’s Aid Society
CCR – Coordinated Community Response
CSC – Correctional Service Canada
CVIP – Central Violence Intervention Program
CW – Changing Ways
CYFS – Child Youth and Family Services
DAIP – Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs
DCS – Department for Correctional Services
DVC – Domestic Violence Court
DVRT – Domestic Violence Response Team
FVC – Family Violence Court
FVIARS – Family Violence Inter-Agency Response System
HAIP – Hamilton Abuse Intervention Project
IDAP – Integrated Domestic Abuse Program
IDVA – Independent Domestic Violence Advisor
MAPPA – Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements
MARAC – Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Committee
MOU – Memorandum of Understanding
NOMS – National Offender Management Service
NPS – National Probation Service
NVIP – Northern Violence Intervention Program
OASys – Offender Assessment System
PVH – Preventing Violence in the Home
SA – South Australia

SARA – Spousal Assault Risk Assessment

UK – United Kingdom

USA – United States of America

WAVES – Waitakere Anti-Violence Essential Services
FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

6th-15th October, Auckland, New Zealand
- Aaron Steedman, Men’s Program Coordinator, Preventing Violence in the Home (PVH)
- Jill Proudfoot, Client Services Manager, PVH
- Donna Williamson, Child Crisis Coordinator, PVH
- Family Violence Inter-Agency Response System (FVIARS) meeting, Auckland
- Dave Ryan, Senior Sergeant, District Family Violence Manager, New Zealand Police
- Tiaria Fletcher, Manager, Waitakere Anti-Violence Essential Services (WAVES)
- Elaine Dyer, Project Manager, Violence Free Waitakere
- Jim Heays, Clinical Manager, Man Alive
- Judge David Mather, Family Violence Court, Waitakere City Council
- Claire Richardson, Family Violence Prevention, Safe Waitakere, Waitakere City Council

15th-17th October, Hamilton, New Zealand
- Julie Pullman, Services Manager, Hamilton Abuse Intervention Project (HAIP)
- Lila Jones, Project Manager, HAIP
- Alan McGlade, Detective Sergeant, Family Safety Team, New Zealand Police
- Belinda Skinner, Men’s Program Coordinator, HAIP
- Gary Watene, Probation Officer, Department of Corrections Community Probation Service

20th-31st October, Duluth, Minnesota, USA
- Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs (DAIP), 3-day training, “Creating a Process of Change for Men Who Batter: Level One”
- Scott Miller, DAIP Team Leader, DAIP
- Lyle Wildes, Facilitator, Positive Attitude Development Group, Inc.
- Graham Barnes, Resource Specialist, Battered Women’s Justice Project (BWJP), Minneapolis
- Connie Sponsler, Training and TA Manager, BWJP, Minneapolis
- Katy Eagle, Domestic Violence Response Team (DVRT) System Advocate, DAIP
- Johnnie Walker, Probation Officer, Arrowhead Regional Corrections Court and Field Services
- Cathryn Curley, Legal Advocacy Supervisor, Safe Haven Shelter for Battered Women
- Lisa Salo, Director of Resources, First Witness Child Abuse Resource Center

3rd-7th November, London, Ontario, Canada
- Tim Kelly, Executive Director, Changing Ways (CW)
- Trevor Hinds, Program Director, CW
- Michele Paddon, Women’s Contact Counsellor, CW
- Dr Mohammed Baobaid, Coordinator Muslim Family Safety Project, Men’s Counsellor CW, Adjunct Professor at the Centre for Research and Education on Violence against Women and Children, University of Western Ontario.
- Debbie Ball, Executive Director, Faye Peterson Transition House, Thunder Bay
- Victoria Hathaway, Social Worker, Children’s Aid Society (CAS)
- Alison Cunningham, Director of Research and Planning, Centre for Children and Families in the Justice System

**10\textsuperscript{th}-14\textsuperscript{th} November, Toronto, Ontario, Canada**
- Donna Dobrijevic, Correctional Program Delivery Officer, Correctional Service Canada (CSC)
- Dr Lynn Stewart, Manager, Living Skills, Counter-Point and Family Violence Prevention Programs, CSC
- Nancy Kinsman, Manager, Fenbrook Institution, CSC
- Rachel Cantin, Treatment Manager, National Trainer, CSC
- Leona Duerck, Intake Coordinator and Men’s Worker, Counterpoint
- Onnie Ramiro, Women’s Program Counsellor, Counterpoint
- Dr Smita Vir Tyagi, Psychologist, Ontario Correctional Institute

**18\textsuperscript{th} November, London, UK**
- Penny Rickman, Community Projects Manager (Violence), Interventions and Substance Misuse Team, National Offender Management Service (NOMS)
- Angela Colyer, Sexual and Violent Offending Team, Public Protection Unit, NOMS
- Chris Potter, Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) Policy Developer, Sexual and Violent Offending Team, Public Protection Unit, NOMS
- Felicity Hawksley, Head of Victims and Safeguarding Children Team, Public Protection Unit, NOMS

**19\textsuperscript{th}-28\textsuperscript{th} November, Bath, UK**
- Mary McCaffrey, Probation Officer and Integrated Domestic Abuse Program (IDAP) Facilitator, National Probation Service (NPS), Avon and Somerset, Bath Office
- Guy Mountford, IDAP Facilitator, NPS
- Faith Cartwright, IDAP Treatment Manager, NPS
- Alice Butler, Women’s Safety Worker, NPS
- Deborah Silver, Court Probation Service Officer, NPS
- Becky Gill, Court Probation Service Officer, NPS
- Maggie Ward, Domestic Violence Social Worker, New Way
- Shan Sinclair, Graham Munn, Domestic Violence Workers, New Way
- Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Committee (MARAC) meeting, Bath
- Juliette Parsons, Freedom Program facilitator

**29\textsuperscript{th} November-4\textsuperscript{th} December, brief holiday in UK**
**6\textsuperscript{th} December, arrive back in Adelaide, South Australia**
PREAMBLE

It is a tragic indictment of our society in the 21st century that during the course of this nine-week fellowship trip, in every country visited, reports of murders and assaults of women and children by partners and parents appeared in those countries’ newspapers.

Domestic violence causes untold harm to women and children in both their human rights and economic costs. Violence against women is about power and control and is an abuse of human rights: women have a right to live, free from violence and free from the fear of violence. Victims of domestic violence can sustain a range of physical injuries including death and there can be wide-ranging effects on their mental health and subsequent coping or lifestyle behaviours. There is growing evidence to suggest that children exposed to domestic violence suffer effects to their psychological, physical and social wellbeing and as such this should be recognised as a form of child abuse.

This report describes services and programs in relation to the following areas: services for men; specialist courts; services for women; services for children; and inter-agency working. The areas chosen and services discussed reflect the author’s interest in relation to living and working in SA. It follows, therefore, that not every aspect of a service or agency visited will be covered in the body of this report. In addition the views expressed in this report do not necessarily represent the views of CVIP or DCS, and any errors, misrepresentations or omissions are the responsibility of the author.

In this preamble there is a brief description of all agencies visited together with website links if available. This will allow the reader to make further enquiries into individual agencies if interested. Services that were considered to have applicability or merit to SA are covered in more detail in the main sections, with discussion regarding applicability to SA found in the conclusion section of the report.

First, some introductory information about definitions and the gendered nature of domestic and family violence explains the use of the terms ‘he’ and ‘she’ within the body of this report, followed by some brief information about the CVIP.

In this report the terms domestic and family violence will be used interchangeably. Family violence is often used as a more inclusive term to acknowledge the wider kinship ties in Indigenous Australian society, whilst many agencies and programs describe services for domestic violence, domestic abuse, woman abuse or intimate partner violence. There are many ways of defining domestic and family violence, with most definitions encompassing both the physical and non-physical nature of abusive behaviour. The definition of domestic violence used by the CVIP is “any action which is experienced by your partner as producing fear or intimidation and therefore having the effect of your partner limiting what she says and does”.

Domestic violence is gendered in nature: although more men than women experience violence in any given year, women are significantly more likely to experience violence from a current or former partner. 34% of women who have had an intimate partner report experiencing at least one form of violence during
their lifetime (Australian component of the International Violence against Women Survey, 2002-3, quoted in Marcus and Braaf, 2007). In Australia almost 2 in 5 homicides occur between family members, of which 60% are between intimate partners. Three quarters of these murders involve men killing their female partners, an average figure of some 58 deaths per year. On average in Australia 25 children each year are killed by their parents, with fathers responsible for 63% of these deaths (Australian Institute of Criminology, 2003).

CVIP offers stopping violence groups to heterosexual male perpetrators of domestic violence. For this reason, and the fact that studies worldwide consistently show more men perpetrate domestic violence than women, this report will refer to perpetrators as ‘he’ and survivors/victims as ‘she’.

Australia has a relatively short history of integrated domestic violence services. CVIP is a respected example of an integrated program that has run for 9 years as a collaborative venture between DCS, Salvation Army, the Attorney General’s Department, Adelaide Magistrates Court and the SA Police. It is one of only two funded integrated domestic violence programs in SA that involves both government and non-government agencies.

CVIP accepts referrals from both the Family Violence Court (FVC) and the Court Diversion Program in Adelaide Magistrates Court, SA Police Family Violence Investigation Section and DCS. It provides services to all parties affected by domestic violence, with men’s workers to co-facilitate the stopping violence group and women’s and children’s advocates to provide support, information and advocacy to men’s partners or ex-partners and children. CVIP also has a DCS case manager who attends the FVC and supervises those offenders attending a program, dealing with any non-compliance issues as they arise. The stopping violence group is a voluntary program; men are not prejudiced in the court proceedings if they decide not to participate. For further information on this program, please visit: http://www.salvationarmy.org.au/SALV/LANDING/pc=PC_60235
BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF AGENCIES VISITED

Preventing Violence in the Home, Auckland City, New Zealand
Website http://www.preventingviolence.org.nz
PVH is an incorporated society with charitable status that was founded in 1990. It has grown to become New Zealand’s largest family violence prevention agency. It offers services including a crisis response team, a telephone crisisline, a call out and follow-up advocacy service, a child crisis team, a men’s stopping violence program, professional training and community education.

Preventing Violence in the Home

Waitakere Anti-Violence Essential Services, Henderson, Auckland, New Zealand
Website http://www.waves.org.nz
WAVES is a collaborative agency within a network of organisations. It has a membership of both government and non-government service providers who cover the areas of Waitakere City and South Kaipara. WAVES assists in facilitating multi-agency interventions to reduce family and domestic violence.

Waitakere Anti-Violence Essential Services
Man Alive, Henderson, Auckland, New Zealand
Website http://manalive.org.nz/
Man Alive is a secular and non-political organisation that was set up in 1996 and is New Zealand’s biggest men’s centre. It offers services including a living without violence program including a Maori-specific version called Te Ara Taumata Ora, a men’s change and support group, a Dads Alive skills program, services for youths and boys and family and couple counselling. Its point of difference from other services is that its program and services are designed for men, by men.

Hamilton Abuse Intervention Project, Hamilton, New Zealand
Email haip@ihug.co.nz
HAIP has one of the longest-running men’s stopping violence education programs in New Zealand. It provides programs for both Maori and non-Maori men. In addition to this program, it offers services and programs for Maori, non-Maori and Asian women and a youth program for teenagers who live with family violence. It has a principal focus of ensuring a consistent inter-agency response to family violence.

Hamilton Abuse Intervention Project

Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs, Duluth, Minnesota, USA
Website http://www.theduluthmodel.org/
DAIP originally formed in 1980 and it facilitates the coordinated community response effort to address domestic violence in Duluth. It offers services including non-violence classes for men, education groups for women whose partners are attending the non-violence classes, community education, professional training and coordinating interagency meetings. It also offers a group for victims of battering who have used illegal violence against their batterer. DAIP is part of the Minnesota Program Development Inc, which also includes the Duluth family visitation centre, Mending the Sacred Hoop (services for Native Americans) and the Battered Women’s Justice Project.
Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs

Battered Women's Justice Project, Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA
Website http://www.bwjp.org
BWJP is funded with federal grants. It provides technical assistance and training to law enforcement, prosecution, courts and advocates. It has also played a significant role in working with the United States Department of Defense to address domestic violence in the military.

Safe Haven Shelter for Battered Women, Duluth, Minnesota, USA
Website http://www.safehavenshelter.org/
Safe Haven has been providing safe housing and support services to battered women since 1978. Services offered include women's education and support groups, women's and children's advocacy, legal advocacy and education to the local community.

First Witness Child Abuse Resource Centre, Duluth, Minnesota, USA
Website http://www.firstwitness.org
First Witness opened in 1993 and is a collaborative venture between public and private agencies responsible for the investigation, assessment, prosecution and medical intervention of children who report sexual and physical abuse or who witness violent crimes. Although approximately 90% of their work is with sexually abused children, Lisa Salo, director of resources, estimates that 50% of the children seen each year have domestic abuse co-occurring with sexual abuse. First Witness’ primary focus is to facilitate forensic interviews and provide support services for children.
Changing Ways, London, Ontario, Canada
Website http://www.changingways.on.ca/
CW is a registered charitable organisation that was established in 1984 and has grown to become one of the largest independent providers of interventions for men in Ontario, with a commitment to research, learning and discussion. Services offered include a partner assault response program for men, a partner/mother contact and support program, a partner intervention program for women, the Caring Dads program for fathers who have exposed their children to abuse or actually assaulted them, and a sex offender accountability and responsibility program. In addition CW has involvement with the Muslim Family Safety Project and the Neighbours, Friends and Families provincial woman abuse prevention campaign.

Centre for Children and Families in the Justice System, London, Ontario, Canada
Website http://www.lfcc.on.ca/
The Centre for Children and Families in the Justice System is a non-profit social service agency that commenced in 1974 under the name of the London Family Court Clinic. It provides services to children and families involved with all aspects of the justice system, including victims, witnesses, custody disputes, child protection proceedings, civil suits, and for young offenders in custody or therapeutic care settings. In addition, it has become internationally renowned for creating resources for service providers to support mothers whose children have been exposed to domestic violence, and in understanding the effects on children themselves.

Correctional Service Canada, various community and prison locations, Ontario, Canada
Website http://www.csc-scc.gc.ca
CSC supervises those offenders across Canada sentenced to two or more years’ custody. Dr Lynn Stewart developed the family violence prevention programs that are run in institutions as well as the community. There are moderate- and high-intensity programs and culturally-specific programs for both Aboriginal and Inuit offenders. High-intensity programs and culturally-specific programs run only in the institutions.
Counterpoint, Toronto, Ontario, Canada
Website http://www.counterpoint.coop/
Counterpoint was created as a cooperative of different agencies in the mid 1990s when the then provincial government budget cuts resulted in a severe reduction in domestic violence services. It is now one of 11 agencies that provide partner assault response programs in Toronto. These programs are provided in both English and Spanish, with an advocacy program for women also available in both languages.

National Offender Management Service, London, UK
Website http://www.justice.gov.uk/about/noms.htm
NOMS is responsible for commissioning and delivering adult offender management services in custody and the community in England and Wales. It is an executive agency of the Ministry of Justice.

National Probation Service, Avon and Somerset area, Bath, UK
Website http://www.aspa-online.org.uk
Avon and Somerset probation area is one of 42 probation areas that make up NPS. It is the fourteenth-largest probation area in England and Wales, and supervises offenders on community sentences and after release from prison. Bath probation office is one of ten in the Avon and Somerset area and services provided include various accredited offender groupwork programs. IDAP is based on the Duluth DAIP and women’s safety workers are employed by NPS to prioritise women’s and children’s safety as offenders complete IDAP. NPS has a second accredited domestic violence groupwork program that is run in 8 probation areas and 5 prisons at both a moderate- and high-intensity level. In prison it is called Healthy Relationships and in the community, the Community Domestic Violence Program. These two programs are the Canadian programs written by Dr Lynn Stewart and run by CSC.
New Way, Bath, UK
New Way is a social services project that works with both victims and perpetrators of domestic violence who are parents. It aims to help parents understand the impact of abuse and violence on their children and how to keep their children safe. It has been running for three years and has recently become a permanent part of mainstream services.

Freedom Program, Bath, UK
NB this website has been created by the author of the Freedom Program and is not linked with Juliette Parsons, who co-facilitates this program in Bath.
Website http://www.freedomprogramme.co.uk
The Freedom Program is a 12-week support group for women who wish to learn more about the reality of domestic violence. It was written by Pat Craven, a former probation officer, in 1999, and now runs in over 100 venues across the UK.
SERVICES FOR MEN

Examination of services for male perpetrators of family violence was centred on how group work programs are organised and delivered. Most programs visited were mandated through the court system, either the criminal court as a result of a guilty plea or sentence, or in some places the civil system as a condition of an order for protection or a restraining order. Groups varied between being open with continuous entry or closed depending on the man’s originating referral source. Both types had clear consequences for non-compliance. Contact with men’s partners or ex-partners and children varied; this will be discussed in the sections on services for women below.

Preventing Violence in the Home, Auckland City, New Zealand

PVH runs a men’s stopping violence program called No Excuses that runs for 20 weeks with open, continuous entry. It accepts referrals from the FVC in Auckland, Department of Corrections Community Probation Service and the family court. Self-referrals are accepted so long as the man intends to submit a guilty plea at court, and self-referrals are also accepted for men not involved in any court process. Men are not accepted who plead not guilty, but they can be referred to the program, if found guilty, after sentence through the probation service. Because the program is mandated from all the referral sources (except the self-referral, which becomes mandated as soon as a guilty plea is entered in court) there is no assessment for suitability for the program, although if certain issues are highlighted during the intake interview then certain men could be excluded. Reasons for exclusion might include men with no English language skills, those with severe mental health issues or intellectual disability, deaf men and homosexual men; PVH may provide one-to-one programs for these men. Non-compliance action is taken if men miss three sessions or do not participate fully in the program. Although the probation service and the family court will be informed immediately of issues of non-compliance, the FVC only becomes aware of this the next time a man appears in court without a letter of attendance from PVH. A proforma letter is written once a man has completed a program and it is agency policy not to comment on individual behaviour.

Participants sign a contract that includes issues around safety and accountability. They are made aware that partners or ex-partners will be contacted and offered support and information and, if a program facilitator is concerned for the safety of any person, confidentiality is not maintained. In New Zealand police provide information to a locally nominated agency about family violence call outs they attend. The database PVH uses is able to cross reference names, which means that Aaron Steedman, the men’s program coordinator, knows the following day if a man attending a program has been involved in further incidents of violent or abusive behaviour. He also receives the names of men listed for the FVIARS meetings, so is aware if there is multi-agency concern regarding the risk of any man and the safety of their partners or ex-partners and children.

PVH does not offer a specific indigenous program for any cultural group. Aaron Steedman estimates that the breakdown of men in groups is approximately 20-25% Caucasian, 20-25% Pacific Islander, 20-25% Maori and the other 25% a mixture including Asian and Fijian Indians.
Participants are required to pay a fee to attend the program, which is on a sliding scale according to circumstance. Mandated men are funded to attend a program in New Zealand: the probation service locally has a contract with PVH; funding for men referred through the FVC comes from the Ministry of Justice; and the family court pays a fee for men mandated to attend a program as a condition of a protection order. PVH is able to provide multiple groups each week because the majority of facilitators are contracted for sessional work. Professional supervision is maintained for these contracted staff with monthly joint supervision for co-facilitators and peer supervision groups held every three months.

**Hamilton Abuse Intervention Project, Hamilton, New Zealand**

HAIP’s stopping violence program runs for 25 weeks with open, continuous entry. Referrals come from family court protection order conditions and the probation service (there is no specialist FVC in Hamilton). All men must be sentenced to attend the program although self-referrals are accepted so long as there are no pending or outstanding court matters. Due to the mandated nature of the program there is no assessment as to suitability. Severe mental health issues were cited as reason for exclusion from the program. Non-compliance action is taken when men miss three sessions of the program, and HAIP will inform either the family court or the probation service as appropriate. The same group session is run each week in all the programs offered, which allows men who are unable to attend at the start of the week to maintain their attendance by coming to a group later in the same week. At completion of the program an attendance letter is provided to the referral source, and it is agency policy not to comment on individual behaviour.

Men sign an Agreement of Participation in which it is stated HAIP will contact both the victim of their offending and/or any current partner to offer support and advocacy. Confidentiality is not kept where safety may be at risk. A member of staff from HAIP is part of the Family Safety Team: this is an initiative that was introduced approximately three years ago to increase networking between agencies around domestic and family violence. It generally involves police supervisors and investigators, adult advocates and child advocates, and could involve staff from police, statutory child protection agencies and non-statutory agencies. The Family Safety Team receives daily information on police call outs to domestic violence incidents, and Belinda Skinner, men’s program coordinator, is advised if any of the men attending groups have been involved in further incidents of violence or abuse.

HAIP offers a specific Maori program run by Maori facilitators. At present it is the choice of the individual as to whether they attend this group or a mainstream group, but Julie Pullman, services manager, indicated the New Zealand Government is considering making a change so that all Maori men will be required to attend a specific Maori program.

Voluntary men pay to attend the program, whilst those referred through the probation service and the family court are funded to attend, identical to PVH arrangements above. Large numbers of programs can be offered because most program facilitators are contracted staff for sessional work only.
Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs, Duluth, Minnesota, USA
DAIP runs 27-week non-violence classes with open, continuous entry. Referrals are accepted from probation and as a condition of an order for protection made in the civil court. Men are also able to self-refer to the program. There is no assessment for suitability for the program as it is mandated. Both referral sources are advised of issues of non-compliance and men are usually allowed to recommence the program after paying a re-enrolment fee. If a man is suspended from the program more than once, probation may be advised that DAIP is no longer willing to accept him back into class. DAIP does not write completion reports for men who have attended their program. Scott Miller, team leader, spoke of reports appearing in family court as ‘proof’ a man has changed his behaviour, and he feels such information can be misused, hence the agency decision.

The contract for participation which men sign, informs them that the victim of their violence and abuse will be contacted and that any concerns about safety issues will be reported. All law enforcement agencies in Minnesota are now required to give their police reports on domestic violence incidents to a designated domestic violence agency. In Duluth the DVRT receives these reports, and Scott Miller will be advised if men attending the non-violence classes have been involved in further domestic violence incidents.

At present DAIP offers specific non-violence classes for Christian men and men who are fathers. It has previously run a Native American class but at the time of writing this report was without culturally-appropriate facilitators. Similarly it is engaged in discussions with the African-American community about commencing a specific program for African-American men.

All men pay to attend the non-violence classes. Of the facilitators who provide the programs each week, only Scott Miller is a permanent employee. Other facilitators are paid a flat fee for each session they facilitate and Scott Miller explained that people take part in this as they wish to be part of the social change. This arrangement allows DAIP to provide seven groups each week.

Changing Ways, London, Ontario, Canada
CW provides partner assault response programs of 17 weeks’ duration. Referrals are received from the Domestic Violence Court (DVC) after a man has pleaded guilty but before sentence, or after sentence if the program has been mandated as part of probation supervision. Men may self-refer to the program. CW also receives some referrals for men who are on parole, but only those who have been sentenced to less than two years’ custody: in Canada those offenders who receive more than two years’ custody are managed by CSC, a federal government department. Those men who receive a community penalty or less than two years’ custody are managed by provincial government departments. CW provides both open and closed groups. It offers closed groups to all probation/corrections men and open groups for voluntary clients and men still on bail. This decision was explained by Trevor Hinds, program director, as mixing similar profiles of men in the same groups. As this is a mandated program there is no assessment for suitability; however, men might be excluded if it was felt their hostility levels towards the program were too high, they had pending charges related to violence, untreated drug or alcohol use, or severe psychiatric or cognitive impairments. Re-referrals are accepted if men demonstrate a
willingness to engage. Non-compliance is reported back to the original referral source. End of program reports are prepared which discuss client participation in the areas of accountability, responsibility, and safety.

Men are required to sign a statement of undertaking which includes acknowledgement that their current partner and any previous ex-partner/victim of domestic violence will be contacted to provide information and referral services. Confidentiality is waived if program staff consider the man represents a direct threat to the safety of another person.

CW does not offer a specific indigenous program for any cultural group. Tim Kelly, executive director, estimates that Ontario has an Aboriginal population of 10-15%.

All men are required to pay a fee to attend a program. In addition since 1998 the Ministry of the Attorney General has provided funding to program providers for all men referred through a DVC. CW uses contracted staff, student interns and volunteers to assist with service provision. In this way they are able to offer a number of programs each week.

CW also runs a program for abusive men who are fathers called Caring Dads. This program runs for 17 weeks and CAS, a government child protection agency, makes most referrals. CW co-facilitates this program with staff from either CAS or probation. This program is described as an attempt to redress the balance of a lack of accountable services for men who have been abusive towards their children or their children’s mother (Scott 2006).

Correctional Service Canada
The family violence programs offered by CSC are available only to those men sentenced to more than 2 years’ custody who are assessed as suitable for the program. Suitability is determined by use of Spousal Assault Risk Assessment (SARA) in conjunction with the number of incidents of violence reported. These programs are therefore mandated for those men assessed as suitable. Men might be excluded if English is not their first language, they have severe mental health issues, they are appealing their sentence, or they strongly deny the use of any abusive or violent behaviour. Men who strongly deny their violence are offered a self-help workbook based on the stages of change which aims to increase motivation to attend a program. There is a moderate-intensity program of 27 sessions run in both the community and institutions, and a high-intensity program of 75 sessions that is run only in the institutions. These programs operate as closed groups; however the maintenance program that is available after completion of the main program is an open group with continuous entry. Non-compliance will affect release options whilst an offender remains in custody, and will be a breach of parole conditions if they have already been released. End of program reports are completed and focus on the following target areas: problem thinking; emotional mismanagement; impulsivity; social and communication skills; and anti-social peers.

The ‘consent to participate in a correctional program’ form advises men that confidential information will be disclosed if there is reason to believe they constitute a threat to the safety of themselves or others in the institution or the community. In addition men authorise CSC staff to contact their current partner.
Donna Dobrijevic, correctional program delivery officer, advised that partner contact was mostly carried out by parole officers who would refer a man's partner on to a suitable community agency. She stated program delivery officers do send out a package of information about domestic violence community agencies local to the partner's address, and prior to a man commencing a program confirmation is required that his partner has received this information. It is possible that the current partner is not the victim of the man's violence and abuse, and in these cases the victim may already be in contact with CSC through victim notification services and would already be receiving relevant support and information; ideally program officers contact victim notification to confirm whether or not a community safety package should be forwarded to the victim.

CSC offers a culturally specific version of the family violence program for Aboriginal men and Inuit men, although these are not available in all locations.

Funding for these programs comes from CSC. Some contracted workers in the community are used to assist in program delivery. Given Canada's large land area and consequent rural living of many of its citizens, CSC family violence programs appear to be limited in their availability, particularly once a man leaves custody. This may result in some federal correctional services clients being referred to other non-government domestic violence programs in order to fulfil their parole conditions after release from custody.

**Counterpoint, Toronto, Ontario, Canada**

Counterpoint provides a partner assault program that is 16 weeks in length. Men can be referred as a condition of probation, as a condition of a peace bond, or through the DVC if they have pleaded guilty. As Toronto has some eleven agencies providing partner assault programs, a central intake for referrals has been created, and the referrals from the DVC arrive by fax via the central intake process. As the program is mandated there is no assessment for suitability, but men would be excluded if they were appealing their sentence, were strongly hostile to the program, had severe drug or alcohol issues, psychiatric problems or severe cognitive impairment. Non-compliance action is taken if more than two sessions are missed, with information being submitted to either probation or the DVC. Brief tick box reports are completed for men who attend the program.

Men sign to acknowledge that their confidentiality is waived if the safety of another person is at risk and that Counterpoint will make contact with both the victim of their abuse and any current partner to offer support and information.

Counterpoint offers their program in Spanish, and all women's support services are also available in Spanish. Leona Duerck, intake coordinator and men's worker, estimates that of the more than 400 men who complete the program each year, 100 of these would complete the Spanish program. Up to 50 men per year might require an interpreter, and Counterpoint allows interpreters into their groups who have themselves attended domestic violence and partner assault response program training.

As at CW, funding for men referred through the DVC comes from the Ministry of the Attorney General. All men pay a fee for service regardless of their referral source. Counterpoint offers five programs each week by using contracted staff trained through an internship program.
National Probation Service, Avon and Somerset area, Bath, UK

Referrals to IDAP occur either as a condition of a community order or as a licence condition after release from prison, and the program runs for 27 weeks. In addition there are pre- and post-group sessions completed with the offender manager. Men are assessed for suitability for the program at the pre-sentence stage: all men appearing in court with domestic violence offences are required to have a pre-sentence report prepared. NPS is in the process of rolling out specialist DVCs across the country, with full implementation due by 2011. In Bath an IDAP facilitator will meet with the offender to assess their suitability after the pre-sentence report author has met with them. Assessment tools used are Offender Assessment System (OASys) and SARA. To be assessed suitable an offender must acknowledge his offence, have some acknowledgement of other abusive behaviours, and be motivated to change. This information is fed back to the pre-sentence report author and is incorporated into the report. Once a condition has been made the man is mandated to complete the program, which is open with continuous entry. Non-compliance action can result in a return to court within 15 days for men under community orders, and it is required that if found guilty of breach the order is made more onerous in some way; a man can no longer just be ordered to continue with the original penalty. Reports are prepared at the end of the program and address: responsibility; identifying beliefs; effects of violence; steps taken to change; motivation; potential risk situations; and suggested areas for further development.

Men are required to sign a statement of agreement to the release of information prior to commencing the program, which states their partner or ex-partner will be contacted and information shared with other agencies if there are safety concerns. In the UK there are two multi-agency meetings that focus separately on victims and offenders. MARACs focus on women’s and children’s safety, and a representative from NPS attends so that information should be passed on to IDAP facilitators if a man in the group was involved in further violent or abusive incidents. In addition, whilst an offender is under a sentence the offender manager may contact police to request information on any call outs to their address that have occurred. Again, this information can then be passed on to the IDAP facilitators. There are also high-risk meetings that occur where the focus is the offender, known as MAPPA. This allows prisons, probation and the police to work with other agencies to manage the risk posed by violent and sexual offenders living in the community, in order to protect the public. To be eligible for MAPPA an offender must be a registered sexual offender, or if a violent offender, must have more than a 12-month prison sentence, or must have committed a sexual or violent offence in the past and be considered to pose a serious risk of harm to the public. Given the nature of domestic abuse, which is often not criminal until physical violence occurs, and any subsequent sentencing, which is often less than a 12-month prison sentence, domestic violence offenders do not often come under MAPPA.

In Bath, NPS does not offer a specific indigenous program for any cultural group. Mary McCaffrey, probation officer and IDAP facilitator, stated that Bath was predominantly a Caucasian area.

NPS provides full funding for men to attend IDAP, and there are dedicated program staff employed to provide the suite of accredited groupwork programs. In
the Avon and Somerset area at the time of writing there were ten IDAP programs running, of which one is run in Bath.

**Discussion**

Common themes that emerged may be familiar to those working in the family violence field. Men’s programs are mandated, whether or not referrals have come from a specialist FVC, if the man has been referred to attend as part of a sentence for a criminal offence. It has been recognised for some years that mandating stopping violence programs for men can enhance the safety of women and the protection of children; women report increased feelings of safety when their partner or ex-partner is involved in a program. In addition, mandating men to attend such programs sends a consistent message that violence and abuse towards women is not acceptable. Kathleen Carlin, quoted in Robertson (1999, p.75), makes the point eloquently: “Without clear sanctions against (battering) in the general society, and against the legitimacy of the privilege that underlies it, the message the batterer gets is ambivalent. Until laws and policies make it clear that battering is no longer acceptable, the batterer, when confronted and told, ‘You have a choice; violence is a choice’, will continue to hear the unspoken implication, ‘but the world doesn’t care which choice you make’.”

Additionally, in some countries men can be mandated to attend programs as a condition of a restraining order/order for protection being taken out by their partner or ex-partner. This does not necessarily mean that men have criminal proceedings pending, but the message about the unacceptability of violence is clear. This was observed in New Zealand, Minnesota and Canada.

Generally, if programs were mandated no assessments for suitability were required, although each agency visited had either written or unwritten criteria as to what other factors might render a man unsuitable for a group. These most commonly included chaotic drug and alcohol use, severe mental health issues, intellectual disability, and poor English language skills, but could also include a very strong resistance to attending a program. It was acknowledged that this type of attitude could be too disruptive for other men in a group. CSC attempts to address this issue by providing a self-help resource for men to complete in their own time, which addresses different motivational stages and seeks to increase a man’s motivation to attend a program. The resource they use is called Roadways to Change and is produced by Pro-Change Behaviour Systems Inc., founded by James Prochaska in 1997. The website link is: [http://www.prochange.com/](http://www.prochange.com/)

Each agency visited had clear responses to non-compliance although the final decision as to consequences appeared to rest with the referring agency. For voluntary men the only sanctions available for non-compliance appeared to be the imposition of additional fees should they wish to re-engage with a program.

Reports prepared for men who had completed a program varied from single page letters stating completion details, to lengthy reports detailing evidence of a man’s attitudes and behaviours since engaging with the program. Those agencies that provided completion letters only were clear that it was not possible to ascertain from a man’s contributions in group whether behavioural change had occurred, and only men’s partners over time could state whether changes had occurred. Agencies that require a fee for service from men would sometimes withhold
completion letters until payments were complete. The only agencies that wrote lengthy reports on a man’s behaviour were government ones: CSC and NPS. These were also the only agencies that had formal assessment procedures for suitability to attend a program.

Procedures for risk and safety issues during a group were consistent: all men are required to sign acknowledgement that current partners and/or victims of their domestic violence offending would be contacted. The level of service offered varied, however, and this will be discussed in the section on services for women below. Procedures were in place for dealing with immediate issues of safety during the running of a program in terms of actions or threats made by the man. It was not the case, however, that regular meetings necessarily occurred between men’s workers and women’s advocates, but happened more on an as needs basis. Some agencies were involved in multi-agency meetings that dealt with high risk client groups, notably the FVIARS and MARAC meetings.

All service providers listed in this section endorsed a mixed gender co-facilitation model, i.e., one woman and one man facilitating the program.

Service provision for indigenous and multicultural groups varied, with some programs offering specific culturally-appropriate groups, such as HAIP, DAIP and CSC. Counterpoint offers its men’s program and support services for women in Spanish as well as English, and it allowed interpreters in groups who had undertaken domestic violence training. Most agencies acknowledged there was a lack of funding to provide interpreter services and that interpretation is not just a translation of language but has a cultural context to it as well.

Most programs charge men a sliding fee for service, with only CSC and NPS not charging anything. In New Zealand program providers are paid a fee by the referral source, which includes men referred through the FVC, the family court and the probation service. In Canada the DVC also pays program providers to deliver a service for men required to attend a group. Of the non-statutory agencies visited, all used contracted sessional staff to provide multiple groups each week. In addition, CSC made some use of contracted staff for service provision in the community.

The only programs routinely offered in the prison system were provided by government agencies, CSC and NPS. PVH and DAIP had tried to set up prison based programs but generally the experience was a frustrating one, with limited access to prisoners and difficulties with prisoners being moved to another prison prior to completion of a program. At the time of writing HAIP was examining the possibilities of offering a service in a local prison.
SPECIALIST COURTS

Provision of specialist DVCs and FVCs varied even within countries. Of the towns and cities visited the following had specialist FVCs operating: Auckland; Waitakere (located in Henderson, Auckland); London, Ontario; Toronto; and Bath. It was surprising to learn that neither Hamilton nor Duluth had specialist courts, although in Duluth DAIP is looking into options to set one up. FVC sessions were observed in Auckland, Waitakere and Bath.

New Zealand Family Violence Courts (Auckland and Waitakere)

In 2008 the Ministry of Justice issued FVC National Operating Guidelines with the aim that, subject to some local variation, court processes are administered in a consistent, effective and efficient way. These guidelines recognise that successful FVC models involve close collaboration and communication between key parties, including the judge, police prosecution, probation, counsel and community agencies. The guidelines state:

“…every effort should be made to ensure that any domestic violence charge is heard and determined, with the exception of any sentencing, within 13 weeks (i.e. three months after the defendant’s first appearance at court)”. (Ministry of Justice, 2008, p. 6).

The time frames encourage a plea to be entered no more than two weeks from first appearance in the FVC, a status hearing to be held within four weeks of a not guilty plea, and a defended hearing to be held within 6 weeks of the status hearing if the matter has not been resolved. For this to occur all parties involved need to have an understanding of the complexity of family violence and the aims of the FVC. Notwithstanding a defence lawyer’s obligations to their clients, counsel who work in this court need to be supportive of the protocol so that the time limits are adhered to.

Men who appear in the FVC can be referred to an approved family violence program once they have pleaded guilty, but before sentence. In certain circumstances these men may end up with a discharge without conviction if they successfully complete a program as per sections 106 and 107 of the New Zealand Sentencing Act 2002. Interestingly the Guidelines refer to this type of referral as a non-mandated program, whereas each program provider visited considered these referrals to be mandated. The funding to program providers for men referred through the FVC was secured from 1 July 2008. Proof of attendance is required by the court on completion of a program. The Guidelines also confirm that, if a protection order is made, the respondent should be directed to attend a family violence program. This is set out in law in the New Zealand Domestic Violence Act 1995, unless the family court considers there is good reason for not making such a direction. Again, these referrals will be fully funded. As stated earlier in this report, men sentenced to supervision by the Department of Corrections Community Probation Service will be funded to attend a family violence program by the Department of Corrections.

In Waitakere FVC staff from the local refuges sit in court and provide information to the judge on any cases known to them. A representative from the local men’s program, Man Alive, also sits in the court. In Auckland FVC there was no representative from the program provider, PVH, on a regular basis. This is because all referrals are automatic due to the mandated nature of the program so PVH is not required to complete any referral paperwork in court.
Court options for non-compliance with a family violence program prior to sentencing include allowing more time for completion of a program, sentencing to probation with a condition that men complete the program, or sentencing in some other way, for example, community service or prison. If a man is breached by probation for non-compliance with a family violence program, the options the court has will depend on whether probation apply for a revocation of original sentence or a breach of the supervision. Judge David Mather, one of the Waitakere FVC judges, believes that if a man is not completing a program he is not completing his sentence and therefore should be re-sentenced rather than breached on the conditions of his supervision. Sanctions are higher with revocation of probation and re-sentence.

Canadian Domestic Violence Courts (London and Toronto)
DVCs in Canada were not observed. At stated earlier, since 1998 the Ministry of the Attorney General has provided funding for all men referred to a domestic violence program through a DVC. These referrals can be made after a guilty plea but before sentencing and, similar to New Zealand, in certain circumstances men with no previous convictions may be sentenced to a penalty without conviction. Toronto operates five DVCs, and staff from the central intake team sit in the court to take details of the men referred to a program and to assign the men to one of the 11 domestic violence program providers in Toronto, based on location and situation including employment shifts.

UK Domestic Violence Courts (Bath)
At the time of writing, there were 106 specialist DVCs in the UK with the intention of a full roll-out across the country by 2011. Twelve key components have been identified as comprising a specialist court. These include a requirement that MARACs are linked to the courts and each court has an Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA). IDVAs sit in the court to support women who are witnesses and to pass on information about court results to women whose partners or ex-partners are appearing in court, particularly in relation to changes of bail conditions or sentencing. IDVAs also assist women in the process of taking out protective orders in the civil court. IDVAs are key attendees at MARACs.

As stated earlier, defendants can only be referred to IDAP after assessment by NPS and sentencing. Court time-scales are fast tracked, and were reported to be no more than 14 days between an incident occurring and charges being laid, and no more than 14 days until first appearance in court. At this stage defendants were encouraged to submit their plea. If a guilty plea is submitted, the case is adjourned for 3 weeks for a pre-sentence report to be prepared, which would include an assessment for IDAP. If a not guilty plea is made a trial date should be fixed within 6 weeks, according to Avon and Somerset Domestic Incidents Protocol (2008). If legal aid is required the court will adjourn for one week.

Options available to the court, for issues of non-compliance with a condition to attend a program, now require a sentence to be made more onerous in some way, such as the addition of unpaid work hours. As with probation in New Zealand, breaches can be submitted either for a breach of the supervision condition or revocation of the original sentence.
Agencies that sit in the DVC include IDVAs, and police from the Domestic Violence Unit, who would have no formal role but are there to collect information on court outcomes for their system.

Discussion
Of the specialist courts observed and information gained about DVCs in Ontario, similar themes emerge. There has clearly been a commitment to the funding of programs mandated through the FVCs by each country’s government. Governments’ stance on violence against women is demonstrated by a commitment to fund programs that seek to reduce domestic violence.

Efficient and prompt time frames are an important part of the specialist court process, as it is recognised that, the longer the court process, the more likely a victim may be to withdraw a complaint or refuse to attend court. Issues of divided loyalties, reconciliation and conciliatory, or equally threatening, behaviour on the part of the perpetrator all play a part in this.

In both New Zealand and Canada men referred through a specialist court may attend a stopping violence group after submitting a guilty plea and before sentencing. Successful completion of a program may result in sentencing without conviction. This approach is only used in cases where the defendant has no previous convictions or the matter is viewed as appropriate for such an approach. It may have the effect, however, of providing these men with an opportunity for learning by attendance at a group program, with the valuable additional benefit that men’s partners or ex-partners are offered a service and contact with domestic violence agencies.

Whilst not linked to specialist FVCs, in some countries the condition to attend a stopping violence group was a tick box option in a restraining order or an order for protection that was mandated, unless the man successfully opposed the making of the condition in court. This occurs in New Zealand, Minnesota and Canada. Again, this provides opportunities for men to address their abusive and violent behaviour, and for women and children to receive support, information and referral to other services.
SERVICES FOR WOMEN

The majority of the services for women examined were directly linked with men’s programs, although with variations in arrangement and delivery. Additionally, in accordance with local protocols, some agencies provided to women services not linked to a men’s program, as a result of receiving police family violence call out information. These agencies included PVH, HAIP and DAIP. Both New Zealand and the UK convene inter-agency meetings for women assessed as being at imminent risk of serious harm.

Risk and safety issues in relation to men attending a group and their partners or ex-partners are not specifically referred to in this section as these have been covered in the section on services for men above.

Preventing Violence in the Home, Auckland City, New Zealand
PVH is the nominated agency to receive copies of police call out paperwork every time an arrest is made for a domestic violence related offence within Auckland City. A large body of volunteer advocates in addition to a number of permanent women’s advocates means that women can be contacted 24 hours a day when information is received in order to visit the victim in a safe place to provide support and information. Family safety advocates are able to take on longer-term work, in conjunction with the police, for women assessed as high risk, with referral to other agencies occurring as appropriate.

Due to the high volume of men attending the stopping violence program at the time of visiting the agency, PVH did not have capacity for partner contact with all women whose partners were attending the men’s program. It was also noted that PVH was restricted from making contact with the (ex-) partners of men who were referred by the family court. If there was a concern about a woman’s safety whilst the man was attending a group, PVH could easily ascertain from their database if one of their women’s advocates was already in contact with her, and if not, they would contact a domestic violence agency close to the women and request that contact was made. This was an area that Jill Proudfoot, client services manager, hoped would be expanded so that all partner contact was maintained within PVH.

PVH staff participate in FVIARS. This was developed in 2006-7 by police, the Ministry of Social Development (Child Youth and Family) and the National Collective of Independent Women’s Refuges, to ensure a shared response to police family violence call outs by improving information sharing between agencies. Meetings are held fortnightly and in addition to those agencies mentioned above can also include probation, housing, hospital and health. The idea of this model of working is that a collective decision about the best response to a high risk situation occurs as soon as possible after an incident, and protocols have been developed to allow information sharing to occur. PVH is working on drawing up a uniform risk assessment form for referral to FVIARS, as at present different referring agencies use different forms.

Hamilton Abuse Intervention Project, Hamilton, New Zealand
HAIP is involved in the inter-agency response to police family violence call out paperwork being received by the Family Safety Team. It responds to the women with face-to-face meetings within either 24 hours or 3 days depending on the level of risk assessed. For those women assessed as low risk (for example family
violence not between intimate partners), initial contact is made by phone call or letter.

If a man is referred to HAIP to attend a stopping violence program his (ex-) partner is contacted by a HAIP women’s advocate. This contact occurs once a man attends an induction session, where he is required to provide details of the victim of his violence and abuse. Initially women may be provided one-to-one contact where an assessment would occur, but then would be offered the opportunity to attend a group that gives information about what to expect whilst a man is attending a program, how to measure any change and how to ensure ongoing personal safety. For the duration of the men’s group, unless the woman specifically requests otherwise, a phone call is made to enquire how she is and elicit any concerns she may have about the man’s behaviour towards her.

HAIP offer three groups for women that run during school terms for 10 weeks. They offer separate programs for Maori, non-Maori and Asian women. Programs are designed to assist women in recognising abusive behaviour and explore the effects and impact on all family members of living with violence. In addition they provide groups to give information about the process of applying for protection orders and giving evidence in court, and court advocates are available to support women through the court process if required.

Domestic Abuse Intervention Programs, Duluth, Minnesota, USA
DAIP women’s advocates make contact with women whose (ex-) partners are attending a program once the man has attended an orientation session and provided contact details. Support and education groups are offered to women whose partners are attending the men’s program. Unless the woman specifically states otherwise, regular phone calls will be made to ascertain her opinion on her safety and any abusive or violent behaviours her (ex-) partner may be using.

In Minnesota a change in statute has been made so that all law enforcement agencies are required to provide police reports for domestic violence call outs to a designated domestic violence agency. In Duluth, DVRT receives these reports via a system similar to that in New Zealand. The DVRT team comprises two police investigators, an administrator, a system’s advocate and a women’s advocate. These positions are funded and provided by the City of Duluth, a federal grant, DAIP and Safe Haven and contact is made with each woman to offer support and information.

Safe Haven Shelter for Battered Women, Duluth, Minnesota, USA
Safe Haven Shelter opened in 1978 and is one of two shelters in Duluth, the other being a culturally-specific Native American Shelter. Staff and volunteers provide advocacy for women and children, and legal advocates assist with filing orders for protection and offer support in both the criminal and civil court systems. On-call advocates are available to respond to women after an abuser is arrested (this function is part of the DVRT team described above). Safe Haven offers various educational and support groups for women who have been abused. These groups are available to both women residing in the shelter as well as women still living in their own homes.

Women’s advocates from both Safe Haven and DAIP regularly attend court to provide support and assistance to women who may be appearing as witnesses or
applying for orders for protection. These women may or may not be known previously to either agency.

Changing Ways, London, Ontario, Canada
A women’s advocate at CW contacts men’s (ex-) partners once the man commences a program. At the time of visiting the agency, Michele Paddon, women’s contact counsellor, had only recently taken on the role and is reviewing the services and programs provided to women. Current services aim to provide information, support and appropriate community referrals for longer-term counselling. While a man is attending a program women will be contacted by telephone to assess any ongoing safety concerns unless they specifically request otherwise.

Another program available in London and Middlesex County for both children and their mothers who have experienced abuse has been co-authored by Michele Paddon and Susan Loosley. The Community Group Program for Children Exposed to Woman Abuse is available for children aged 4-16 and separate groups are run concurrently for the mothers. The mothers’ group focuses on assisting women to explore and reflect how to support their children’s healing. This program is funded by the Ministry of Community, Family and Children’s Services and referrals can be made by CAS, or the police if they attend a domestic violence call out where children are present. Self-referrals can also be made.

Centre for Children and Families in the Justice System, London, Ontario, Canada
While not practitioners in the domestic violence field, the Centre for Children and Families in the Justice System has produced various research reports and training resources for service providers to help abused women help their children. Some publications are available through their own website; others can be ordered through the Canadian National Clearinghouse on Family Violence website: http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ncfv-cnivf/familyviolence/index.html

Relevant publications include:
- Little Eyes Little Ears: How Violence Against a Mother Shapes Children as They Grow (2007)
- Helping an Abused Woman: 101 Things to Know, Say and Do (2008)

Counterpoint, Toronto, Ontario, Canada
Counterpoint women’s advocates make contact with (ex-) partners of men attending the partner assault program once a man has attended an orientation session. Women are invited to attend weekly support groups in either English or Spanish, and assistance with transport costs is provided. In addition Counterpoint offers supportive counselling, educational workshops, crisis intervention and safety planning, and referral to other services as appropriate.
There was local variation as to when women’s safety workers made contact with women whose (ex-) partners had been assessed as suitable for IDAP. In some areas contact commenced once a man was sentenced with a condition to attend IDAP; in other areas contact was initiated once a man commenced the program, although telephone contact might occur in the interim. Services were provided on a one-to-one basis, with support, information and safety planning being provided and referral to other agencies occurring as appropriate. Women’s safety workers completed women’s versions of SARA to complement the risk assessments completed for men and to provide the woman’s experience of the violence and abuse that occurred. Penny Rickman, community projects manager (violence), interventions and substance misuse team, NOMS, explained that this role could not function without other organisations in the community being available to refer women to, and in this sense NPS was part of a coordinated community response to domestic violence. Penny Rickman recognised that the women’s safety worker role was limited in its function to the safety of the woman whilst the man attended a program, rather than designed to provide long-term support. This is why other community organisations are important as a resource to which women can be referred for ongoing support if required.

All specialist DVCs are required to have IDVAs present in court. Their role is to support the woman throughout the court process and beyond. They liaise with victim support and witness care services to ensure that appropriate support for women is maintained. They are able to pass on relevant information to women regarding changes to bail conditions and sentencing outcomes after a defendant has appeared in court. They can also assist with the taking out of civil orders for protection.

IDVAs also attend MARAC meetings, which work towards creating multi-agency safety plans for those victims assessed as being at high risk of harm from domestic violence perpetrators. Many agencies can be involved in this process, including police, women’s refuges, IDVAs, probation, health, community mental health, drug and alcohol services, social services and other agencies, as appropriate to each case. Potential referrals can be identified by any agency using a Coordinated Action against Domestic Abuse (CAADA) recommended risk identification checklist. This checklist and a referral form can be viewed by going to the following link: 
Information about CAADA can be found at: http://www.caada.org.uk

Freedom Program, Bath, UK
One community resource referred to by NPS women’s safety workers is the Freedom Program, which is a rolling 12-week support group for women. There is no cost to attend and crèche facilities are provided. As stated earlier in this report it is open to any woman who wishes to learn more about the reality of domestic violence. The main aims of the group are to assist women to recognise potential abusers; to illustrate the effects of domestic abuse on children; to help women take appropriate steps to protect themselves and their children; to help women gain self-esteem and confidence to take control over their lives; and to introduce women to other community resources in their area that may assist them. The program author, Pat Craven, is preparing a distance learning pack involving an interactive DVD, which will allow purchasers to provide the program to clients.
without having attended training in person. Please refer to the website for further
details and information.

Discussion
Most of the agencies visited offered contact and support to women whose (ex-) partners were referred to a stopping violence group. This is widely recognised as an essential part of any men’s program as it prioritises both the safety of women and the protection of children, and privileges the experiences of the women. It was generally agreed that take-up of contact and support from women was low although phone contact to discuss safety concerns and men’s behaviour while men attended a group was higher. It was felt that the sooner contact could be made and the more personal the approach (i.e. by telephone initially), the higher the contact rates achieved.

The systems in New Zealand and Minnesota to require all police family violence call out reports to be passed on to a nominated agency meant that immediate crisis support and assistance could be provided to victims of abuse and violence. This has the potential for an increase in the take-up of services and support, whereas once men have been referred to, and are attending, a group it is possible that circumstances have become more settled for women who remain in the relationship, and also that some initial contrition, or conversely continued threatening behaviour, on the part of the man may affect decisions about contact with a women’s advocate. This fits with agencies acknowledging that take-up of women’s services could be low once a man commences a program. Equally, if a woman has left the relationship she may see no need to accept the services of an agency engaged with her ex-partner, even though post-separation can often be a time of increased danger for women leaving violent relationships, and a time of need for increased support for children.

Childcare was available to all women attending groups, and several agencies assisted with transport costs. Some agencies favoured support groups for women as being a cost effective way to offer services to a potentially large number of people, particularly where agencies were providing multiple groups for men each week. Support groups for women covered similar ground and there was a strong focus on safety planning and the effects of abuse and violence on children.

All agencies listed offered support services to women in both the criminal and civil courts, even if there was no specialised FVC operating.
SERVICES FOR CHILDREN

Of the services discussed in this section, some could equally have been listed in the sections on men and women above. Services covered in this section include both those directly provided for children exposed to domestic violence and those services provided specifically for parents who have exposed their children to domestic violence. There is, of course, an element of cross over in all of the sections of this report given that domestic and family violence affects all those involved whether as perpetrators, victims or witnesses.

Preventing Violence in the Home, Auckland City, New Zealand
PVH developed the Child Crisis Team after Jane Drumm, executive director, went on a study trip to USA and Canada in 2001, where one of the areas she examined was programs for children. The Child Crisis Team is described as a rapid response service for children who have witnessed family violence and is unique in New Zealand. Referrals can be made to the team by agencies including Child Youth and Family Services (CYFS), PVH women’s advocates, Barnardos, schools and public health nurses. Initially Donna Williamson, child crisis coordinator, contacts the mother for background information so she can connect the family with the most suitable child advocate and women’s advocate. The women’s advocates are staff from PVH, but the child advocates are contracted staff employed in a relevant field, so they may include psychologists, child therapists and counsellors.

For the first visit both the child advocate and women’s advocate will visit the home together to gather information and history about the family violence. The child advocate will visit the family up to four times and will work on developing safety plans for the child and assisting the child to begin to make sense of what has happened. If an assessment is made that the child might benefit from further intervention, referrals are made to appropriate agencies to continue this work. This intervention is designed to be structured and time limited, and is offered as soon as possible after violence has occurred, hence the maximum of four appointments. The mother will receive support from a PVH woman’s advocate which will include information about the effects of family violence on children and how to assist the child to deal with what has occurred. This support can be ongoing.

Hamilton Abuse Intervention Project, Hamilton, New Zealand
HAIP offers separate male and female groups for teenagers living with family violence. The groups run for 10 weeks and aim to both support and educate participants so they themselves can maintain healthy relationships in the future. For younger children affected by family violence, the women’s advocates would refer on to specific services offered Parent Works, Parentline or Barnardos.

The Brainwave Trust
Website: http://www.brainwave.org.nz/
Brainwave is an organisation that several people spoke highly of. It is a national organisation in New Zealand set up as a charitable trust. The website states its aim is to “raise public awareness about the amazing new findings in brain research, which emphasise the importance of early experiences on infant brain development; and to educate about the important implications of this knowledge”.

It has produced several pamphlets about the effects of family violence on children’s brain development. These are available via the website listed above.

**Changing Ways, London, Ontario, Canada**
Whilst CW does not provide any direct services for children, it can refer women and children to the Community Group Program for Children Exposed to Woman Abuse that is mentioned in the section on services for women above. As has been referred to in the section on services for men, CW also offers a parenting program for men who have used violence and abuse, called Caring Dads. This program assists fathers to improve their relationship with their children and to end their controlling, abusive and neglectful behaviour.

**New Way, Bath, UK**
The New Way project is housed within Bath social services and has been operating for three years. It is designed primarily for families who are committed to staying together. It was set up as a response to a recognition that up to 80% of the referrals for child protection registration had domestic violence issues in the family. The intervention is one-to-one and there is both a male and female domestic violence worker on the team, although the first meeting is held jointly to allow a service agreement to be signed by parents. Up to 8 sessions are held with each parent, although this can be flexible according to assessed need. The workers regularly come together to discuss issues of risk and safety. Sessions assess parents’ knowledge of domestic violence and how this may affect their child’s behaviour. This service is a voluntary arrangement with parents, but if they miss two sessions they are referred back to the service of origin to discuss attendance before further sessions are offered. Referrals come mostly from social service teams, health visitors, IDVAs and MARACs.

**Discussion**
Most agencies visited acknowledged limited in-house services for children but were aware of specific children’s services to which they could refer in their local communities. Services that were observed tended to be innovative in their field, such as the Child Crisis Team in PVH and the New Way project in Bath social services.

CW offered a specific program for abusive men who are also fathers, but it is a parenting program not a domestic violence program. DAIP offers a specific non-violence class for men who are fathers. Both agencies described how the denial and barriers to taking responsibility were often reduced more quickly with those fathers who could see the benefits of not raising their children in an environment where violent and abuse is occurring.
INTER-AGENCY WORKING

DAIP (2008a) describes a Coordinated Community Response (CCR) as “an inter-agency effort to change the climate of tolerance of battering by: institutionalising practices and procedures which centralise victim safety and offender accountability in domestic assault related cases”.

This section of the report does not examine new services not already described above. Instead it draws attention to those services examined where agencies are working together to address family violence.

Jill Proudfoot, client services manager, said PVH does have formal links with child protection agencies whereby if CYFS assesses the threshold of a family referred as too low for official CYFS involvement they will refer the family to PVH for service provision. CYFS is also one of the referring agencies to the Child Crisis Team. PVH is a core member of the Auckland City FVIARS groups, which were set up under an Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the police, CYFS and the National Collective of Independent Women's Refuges (the sending of police family violence call out reports to a nominated domestic violence agency has been in existence in Auckland for many years and is not linked to the more recent development of FVIARS meetings).

HAIP is also involved in the receiving of police family violence call out reports, as a member of HAIP staff is part of the Family Safety Team.

Waitakere is recognised nationally in New Zealand as a site of good collaboration between agencies, which is assisted by the existence of WAVES, the collaborative agency within a network of both government and non-government service providers. Tiaria Fletcher, manager of WAVES, thought that generally statutory agencies were better at sharing information with each other, but that sometimes a gap could occur in sharing information between statutory and community agencies. This could lead to problems, as it tends to be community agencies who take on the longer term intervention work with families and they may be missing vital information that could impact on risk and safety issues.

The specialist FVC at Waitakere is seen as working well between the different agencies involved. This court process has been evaluated by Massey University (Coombes, Morgan and McGray, 2007). This is one of three evaluations that have been compiled by the authors on the Waitakere FVC. The authors found that 80% of cases going before the court were taking longer than the guidelines set out by the Ministry of Justice, and this was supported by Judge David Mather, who stated services could be improved with the provision of more court time for family violence cases, although allocating additional court time is not without its own difficulties in a court described as the fourth busiest in New Zealand. The evaluation noted that statistical evidence alone cannot take account of victims’ experiences of safety, and therefore their views would need to be sought in order to evaluate holistically the success of the court in holding offenders accountable for their actions and protecting victims. At the time of writing this report Tiaria Fletcher, manager of WAVES, explained that the third evaluation study which examines the victims’ experiences has been completed but the Ministry of Justice had yet to release the study.
The DVRT in Duluth receives the police domestic violence call out reports and its staff include people from DAIP, police and Safe Haven Shelter. In addition to responding to the victims of domestic violence call outs, the team works on identifying gaps in the system which hinder an effective CCR.

CW appears to have close links with CAS locally as they use staff from CAS to co-facilitate the Caring Dads program, and CAS are one of the key referrers to this program. CAS houses another program for children and women affected by domestic violence, The Community Group Program for Children Exposed to Woman Abuse. As the co-author of this program, Michele Paddon, is now working at CW as the women’s contact counsellor, and continues to co-facilitate one of the groups, it is likely that a close working relationship between CW and CAS will continue.

Victoria Hathaway, social worker at CAS in London, Ontario, manages a team of six staff who work with long term clients with domestic violence issues. She said having a specialist domestic violence team in CAS is a new innovation for the Province. She expressed a personal opinion that sometimes agencies could misunderstand each other’s roles (this was an opinion repeated by people in other countries) and might not always understand the limitations of the agencies and how these might impact on different agencies working together. It appeared that making specific links with individual people within agencies could assist with the task of working together to address domestic violence issues. Victoria Hathaway spoke of successful examples of inter-agency working in their community response model, whereby in conferencing cases they brought together people from both statutory and community organisations to work on safety planning for the mothers. She stated that positive feedback has been provided about this process from both service providers and the clients themselves.

In the UK two multi-agency high-risk meetings focus on either the perpetrator (MAPPA meetings) or the victim (MARAC meetings). In Avon and Somerset names of perpetrators received at MARAC meetings are cross-referenced to names of offenders under MAPPA. If a match occurs an abridged version of the MAPPA minutes that detail the management and risk of that offender are sent to the MARAC chair (Bath and North East Somerset Domestic Violence MARAC Terms of Reference, April 2008).

NPS IDAP convenes multi-agency meetings every 6-8 weeks involving probation officer managers, IDAP tutors, women’s safety workers, social services, police domestic violence units and probation senior managers. The purpose of the meetings is to discuss safety issues for the partners of the men involved in IDAP, and each agency brings information and sanctions further actions if required.

The specialist DVCs in the UK have been set up with requirements that they work with other agencies, and there are 12 components that make up a DVC. Two of these have been referred to in this report: IDVAs and MARACs linked in with the court system. The other components are: multi-agency partnerships with protocols; identification of cases; trained and dedicated criminal justice staff; court listing considerations; equality and diversity issues; performance management; court facilities; children and young people; managing perpetrators; and other services (Home Office, 2008). For a full description on these please refer to the following link:
The Duluth model proposes four strategic principles of inter-agency intervention:

- Change is required at the basic infrastructure levels of agencies involved in case processing
- The overall strategy must be victim safety-centred
- Agencies must participate as collaborating partners
- Abusers must be consistently held accountable for their use of violence

DAIP goes on to say: “The Duluth model has been widely successful in offering greater victim protection and reducing repeat acts of violence in many different communities. But it has not been successful everywhere. Its success appears to depend on skills, leadership, and follow through from the victim advocacy groups and key intervening agencies”. (Handout from training attended, DAIP 2008b).

This view was supported by many people spoken to across the countries visited, who felt that how well systems worked often hinged on key people who were committed to the process and that if that person was absent, or moved on, changes could occur as to how well agencies worked together, regardless of legal mandates or protocols. Other people thought that agencies competing for the same grants or funding could cause separation between those agencies who should be working closely together in a CCR. Equally, people spoke of staff time as an issue for inter-agency working, especially where new initiatives required inter-agency working and cooperation but provided no additional funds to assist with this. Several people also spoke of how the different histories and philosophies of people within different agencies could result in criticism of each other rather than looking for the positives in how to work together.

Services and agencies examined provided examples of good inter-agency working but conversations with people also highlighted the continued need for a greater understanding between different agencies, both statutory and non-statutory, so that the focus on reducing the harm caused by domestic and family violence is not diminished. Many people voiced opinions that it was most often individual working relationships that assisted with effective integration of services which assists a CCR.
CONCLUSIONS

It has not proved possible to thoroughly read and digest all the material that was so generously given by the various agencies visited in time for the completion of this report. As this occurs the author will continue to speak with appropriate agencies to disseminate the information learned. Findings will be disseminated through presentations to the SA DCS and the Domestic Violence Network that the author facilitates, and by articles submitted to relevant interested organisations, including the Probation and Community Correctional Officer Association, the Australian Domestic Violence Clearinghouse and the National Council to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children. Submissions will also be made as and when relevant seminars, forums and training events are held within SA.

The following section on recommendations details areas where the author believes changes could be made to improve service provision in SA; however, some comments about applicability to SA follow here by way of an attempt to draw together the ideas generated from services observed overseas.

Services for Men
At present SA does not have any mandated family violence programs, yet it has two funded integrated programs that involve both government and non-government agencies attached to specialist FVCs. These are the CVIP and the Northern Violence Intervention Program (NVIP). The use of a voluntary program attached to a FVC can cause complications with non-compliance matters and, more importantly, sends a mixed message to men about society’s view on the unacceptability of violence against women. It is generally accepted that good practice principles for men’s groups include clear consequences for the use of violence, which are more difficult to impose if there is no mandatory groupwork program to which a man can be referred. Voluntary programs require assessment processes to ascertain suitability for attending a group, which can be both time consuming as well as delaying the court process if the man has been referred through a FVC.

Specialist Courts
A strong criminal justice response is seen as an integral part of an effective CCR. SA has in place the foundations for increasing the strength of the criminal justice response with the provision of specialist FVCs. Both CVIP and NVIP receive funding from State Government, however service provision remains limited due to the high numbers of domestic violence respondents who appear in the FVCs in Adelaide and Elizabeth, the small size of the teams in CVIP and NVIP, and the voluntary nature of the program. These high numbers also contribute to lengthy delays between initial offending and the final court outcome.

Due to the voluntary nature of the stopping violence group, CVIP sits outside the court process so court outcomes should not be prejudiced by a man’s contact with the program. It is possible that the incentives provided in New Zealand and Canada of a sentence without conviction increases program attendance whilst at the same time offering service opportunities and support to women and children. As stated above, issues of non-compliance can be more difficult to manage if defendants and lawyers are advised that contact with the program is voluntary.
Scott Miller of DAIP states the biggest impact on re-offending is a tight criminal justice response, and the appropriate use of sanctions is enormously important in any CCR to domestic violence. The voluntary nature of programs in SA seems to conflict with this basic principle of effective work in the field of domestic and family violence.

Services for Women
SA currently has a pilot program of high risk inter-agency meetings similar to the FVIARS and MARAC meetings in New Zealand and the UK. In SA these are known as Family Safety Meetings that take place as part of the Family Safety Framework that was developed in 2006. Currently there are three pilot areas at Holden Hill, Noarlunga and Port Augusta. Further information can be found by visiting: [http://www.officeforwomen.sa.gov.au/index.php?section=787](http://www.officeforwomen.sa.gov.au/index.php?section=787)

Services for Children
In recent years there has been growing recognition that children who come to the attention of child protection services for physical or sexual abuse are likely also to be the victims or witnesses of domestic violence, and that witnessing violence is in itself a form of child abuse. This is acknowledged by New Way in the UK, finding up to 80% of their referrals having domestic violence issues. It is also highlighted in the SA review of child protection that was commissioned in 2002 (Layton, 2003). This review found that too often in the past the non-abusing woman has been held accountable for the children’s safety from her violent partner. As stated in the Layton Report in section 24.2:

“This situation has resulted in inappropriate responses. There is anecdotal information which highlights the difficulties in current practice. For example, FAYS [formerly Family and Youth Services, now known as Families SA] intervention to investigate abuse in the context of domestic violence, may result in advising a woman who is experiencing domestic violence that her child or children will be removed unless she leaves her violent partner. Effectively this approach punishes the victim of domestic violence and abrogates the responsibility of the perpetrator of violence. It can also operate to prevent women from seeking assistance in relation to domestic violence, particularly where they have a pre-existing distrust of Government services and authorities”.

Tim Kelly, executive director of CW, commented that child protection systems around the world have historically had low expectations for men and sexism-driven high expectations for women. CW now provides training for child protection workers about how to engage men, as this was something they were not used to doing and felt uneasy about. If it is easier to engage the woman it is not hard to see how the woman becomes the one responsible for the safety and protection of the children in the family.

In order to hold more men accountable for their use of violence and abuse there needs to be both services to which a man can be referred and an understanding of the complex issues of family violence amongst child protection workers, together with a willingness (and a legal mandate) to work with other agencies to promote the safety and the best interests of the child and the family. This statement could be true of many countries across the world, but also within SA, and whilst there are likely to be pockets of good practice occurring there is a need for greater consistency.
RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Consideration to be given to mandating men’s stopping violence groups:**
   - This would remove the need for assessment procedures in the FVC that delay the court process due to additional adjournment times. Discussion would be required as to whether to mandate men once a guilty plea is submitted, or after sentencing.
   - As an interim measure all men who appear in the Adelaide FVC could be mandated to be assessed for a stopping violence group. In this way CVIP would still assess men as to their suitability to attend a group, but numbers could be monitored to see by how much program numbers increase. Again, decisions would be required as to whether this occurred prior to a plea, after a guilty plea, post-sentence, or at their first appearance in the FVC.
   - Offering a mandated stopping violence group could assist DCS staff in their case management of offenders and give clear messages to offenders about the unacceptability of violence towards women and the sanctions for non-compliance with a program.
   - Mandating programs through the FVC could strengthen the court’s ability to provide strong sanctions for non-compliance, which is more difficult to achieve when defendants and their lawyers are advised that programs are voluntary.

2. **Consideration to be given to strengthening sanctions for non-compliance:**
   - This would send a firm message that violence against women is not acceptable, and would need to be addressed alongside the mandating of men’s programs.

3. **Consideration to be given to a presumption against bail where someone charged with a domestic violence offence, with children at their home address, proposes to return to this address:**
   - A bail enquiry report can address issues of children being present when alleged offences of domestic violence have occurred.
   - Section 10 (4) of the SA Bail Act 1985 states that: “Where there is a victim of the offence, the bail authority must, in determining whether the applicant should be released on bail, give primary consideration to the need that the victim may have, or perceive, for physical protection from the applicant”. Consideration of the victim’s perspective needs to include children as victims; it is now widely accepted that witnessing domestic violence is a form of child abuse, and children who witness violence and abuse directed at their mother are arguably just as much victims of this offending as their parent.

4. **Consideration to be given to making a change to the Domestic Violence Restraining Order conditions to include an option to require attendance at a stopping violence group.**

5. **Consideration to be given to agencies being more explicit about eligibility criteria:**
   - This could reduce court and facilitator time lost with inappropriate referrals, for example, limited English skills.
   - Government should be lobbied to increase services for culturally and linguistically diverse people, particularly as the multicultural society that makes up Australia includes people for whom English is not their first language. This would need to take into account the diverse cultural needs of these other groups.
Where numbers suggest a need, specific culturally-appropriate indigenous programs should be available.

6. Consideration to be given to reducing the length and content of post-program reports:
   - This would free up time for program facilitators to provide more services.
   - Reports should reflect an acknowledgment that facilitators cannot assess accurately any lasting behaviour change in men based on their participation in a program without external evidence, such as observation of changes made by (ex-) partners or others.

7. Consideration to be given to lobbying government for additional funding for program providers, particularly if programs are to be mandated:
   - This would have a huge impact on service delivery capacity and could increase the location of groupwork programs across SA.
   - It is noted that State Government already funds CVIP and NVIP.

8. Consideration to be given to charging men a fee to attend programs:
   - This might assist in service provision, but might only be possible where programs are mandated.

9. Consideration to be given to how to increase the pool of men’s program facilitators:
   - This could be done with the use of contracted staff in the domestic violence field, similar helping professions, social work students, DCS staff, etc.
   - Options for professional supervision and support would need to be examined.

10. Consideration to be given to introducing a parenting program for specific domestic violence perpetrators who are fathers:
    - This could either follow a format similar to the Caring Dads program from Ontario, or investigations could be made into running the Caring Dads program in SA if appropriate.
    - Options should be examined for offering this in conjunction with Families SA as this could both pool scarce resources and increase inter-agency working and communication.

11. Consideration to be given to offering a specific stopping violence group for men who are fathers:
    - This has been seen overseas to break down denial and increase acceptance of responsibility more quickly, and it could focus on increasing men’s knowledge and awareness of the effects of violence on children and their development.

12. Consideration to be given to introducing FVCs in other courts across SA:
    - This will not be a new recommendation to those in SA.
    - Attached to this should be guidelines for the provision of support staff for women attending court as witnesses or applying for restraining orders.

13. Consideration to be given to introducing realistic and efficient time-scales in the FVC:
    - This would require changes to many areas, including the consideration of additional court time given to the FVC.
It is acknowledged that the longer a domestic violence matter takes, the more likely a woman is to withdraw the charge or become an unwilling witness, and that this is often linked to pressure exerted by the perpetrator.

14. Consideration to be given to a “carrot and stick” approach to program attendance:
   - As observed in New Zealand and Canada, first-time offenders may receive a penalty without conviction in response to successful program completion. This not only requires a man to complete a program, but also allows his (ex-) partner to receive support and information.

15. Consideration to be given to men’s workers and women’s advocates not being seen together in FVCs:
   - This can damage credibility regarding confidentiality for male and female clients and potentially increases risk to women’s safety and workers’ safety.
   - Clearly issues of risk and safety require information to be shared, but if possible this should be conducted outside of the open court.

16. Consideration to be given to extending Family Safety Meetings to the whole of SA:
   - Currently if a woman’s address falls outside the pilot areas then the opportunity for convening an inter-agency meeting to discuss risk and safety is not available.
   - At a minimum, the permanency of the three pilot areas where Family Safety Meetings are currently held should be guaranteed.

17. Consideration to be given to CVIP offering support groups for women whose (ex-) partners are attending a stopping violence group:
   - Given the small staff numbers, this could increase the capacity of the women’s advocates if additional men’s programs are provided through the mandating of men to attend a program.
   - Options could be examined for providing this service in conjunction with another agency to make use of existing facilities, for example, a crèche, and this could have the added benefit of being in locations that are more convenient for women to attend.
   - Some support groups for women provide advice on what to expect from their partner if attempts are being made to change his behaviour and beliefs. This is not to suggest that the woman becomes responsible for changing her own reactions towards her partner but is meant to imply that the woman could increase her understanding, and therefore inform her choices, within that relationship.

18. Consideration to be given to police family violence call out reports being routinely passed on to nominated domestic violence agencies:
   - Early contact may increase the take-up of support and services by women and at a minimum may provide them with information about safety issues and local services they may not have been aware of previously.
   - It also increases the accountability of male group participants for any ongoing abusive behaviour, particularly if program facilitators are notified of further police call outs whilst a man is attending a program.
   - This could also enable the court to be updated on any subsequent call outs prior to finalising any FVC matter.
19. Consideration to be given to introducing child-specific safety planning as seen in the PVH Child Crisis Team and how this could be achieved in SA.
   - This type of service would require examination of appropriate child-focused agencies with whom to forge links.

20. Consideration to be given to how to provide information to families about the known effects of domestic violence on children’s development:
   - This already occurs, but how much information is specifically given around damage to brain development is not known. Investigation into expanding this important area is warranted with the use of accessible and reader-friendly public information.
   - This could easily be assimilated into packages that are sent to women by domestic violence agencies at little additional cost, and also to perpetrators as a motivating factor to making changes.

21. Consideration to be given to opportunities to provide, attend or share training with other agencies:
   - This could increase networking and understanding of each other’s roles.
   - The expertise of men’s workers in the domestic violence field could be used to provide training to those in the child protection field around how to engage men who have used violence and abuse.

22. Consideration to be given to the examination of referral pathways between child protection services and domestic violence services, particularly when referring abusive men to stopping violence groups.
   - It may be of benefit to also examine options for forging links with the family court.

23. Consideration to be given to strengthening (or creating) legal mandates, MOUs and protocols:
   - This will try to ensure the continuity of effective inter-agency working even after individual staff may move on.

Finally, it is acknowledged that what is possible in the metropolitan area of SA is different to options for rural areas and these should be considered separately. Since the Labour Government came to power in 2007, a National Council to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children has been formed. A national plan is being developed to provide direction on a range of responses until 2021. This plan will take into account current legal remedies, policies and services already provided by each State and Territory. At the time of writing this report the draft plan has yet to be released and so the author is not aware if any of the recommendations in this report overlap with any information contained in the national plan. Further details on the National Council and the national plan can be found at: [http://www.ofw.fahcsia.gov.au](http://www.ofw.fahcsia.gov.au)


Bath and North East Somerset Domestic Violence MARAC Terms of Reference, April 2008.


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