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For Immediate Release

Domestic Violence continues to rise whilst awaiting the full impact of COVID-19

The NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (BOSCAR) report of 2nd June 2020 showed Domestic Violence had increased by 4.1% over a two year period.

“This data is alarming, but not unexpected. It is widely understood from global research that major events such as health pandemics, natural disasters and recessions tragically result in increased Domestic and Family Violence. The difference for COVID-19 is the social isolation and stay at home measures that were in place have significantly reduced victims options and ability to seek help, which in turn could lead to an under reporting in police figures,” said Delia Donovan, Interim Chief Executive Officer, Domestic Violence NSW (DVNSW).

Whilst police and crime data is helpful to inform our understanding of the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis, we also need to listen to Domestic and Family Violence services who support people experiencing violence by providing safety planning, case management, accommodation and referrals.

“It is important to look at the full picture. Any statistics related to Domestic and Family Violence must consider the huge level of under reporting we know takes place. It is also important to seek out the stories that help us to understand what’s happening. We know from our members that service provisions such as counselling and safety planning have experienced significant increases in demand over the March to May period. Disturbingly, they are also seeing an increase in the complexity and severity of cases.

“Services have quickly adapted to the COVID-19 environment and have remained open throughout the pandemic. We are working very closely with the NSW government to ensure the recently announced funding will enable services to meet the expected increases in demand on service support, refuges, temporary accommodation and housing, as restrictions start to ease,” said Donovan.

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About:

Domestic Violence NSW is the peak body for specialist domestic and family violence services in NSW. DVNSW provides a representative and advocacy function for specialist services and the women, families and communities they support. Their mission is to eliminate domestic and family violence through leadership in policy, advocacy, partnerships and the promotion of best practice.