

30th March 2020

For Immediate Release

Help Is Available If You Are Experiencing Domestic and Family Violence

The Prime Minister Scott Morrison announced yesterday that Google searches for domestic violence have increased by 75%.

Domestic and Family Violence services in New South Wales are open and ready to help.

Across Australia we anticipate a rise in domestic and family violence as communities go into lock-down and self-isolation in response to the COVID-19 epidemic.

“Reports internationally and research from previous crisis’ show that domestic violence increases during crisis periods, we have seen this start to happen in Australia too,” says Domestic Violence New South Wales (DVNSW) media spokesperson, Renata Field.

“It would be horrendous to be in insolation with your abuser” said Sandy^{1*} a survivor of domestic violence working with DVNSW to speak out publically about domestic violence.

“Our message to anyone experiencing domestic and family violence in NSW is clear and simple – help is available to you. Services are and will remain open.” says Ms Field. “Services are quickly adapting to ensure that help is accessible and safe during the COVID-19 crisis, however we are extremely concerned that people will be unsafe and feel that it is even harder than ever to reach out for help. “

“It is important that people in the community, friends, families and neighbours know violence in the home is never acceptable and that the current situation is no exception. If anyone is experiencing domestic violence, help and support is available, the 1800 numbers are still running, accommodation is available and phone counselling is available.” says Ms Field.

DVNSW welcomed the government’s announcement yesterday of \$150m in additional funding under the national domestic violence initiative. DVNSW will be working with the NSW government and domestic and family violence services to ensure these funds are utilised in the most practical way to enable services to

provide the necessary and needed help and support for women and children experiencing domestic and family violence.



With the NSW Women's Alliance, DVNSW are asking governments to:

1. Enable sexual, domestic and family violence services to adapt service models and continue service delivery.
2. Adopt a whole of government response to supporting people experiencing sexual, domestic and family violence.
3. Support women, children and young people, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, immigrant, refugee, culturally and linguistically diverse women, women with disability and LGBTIQ people at higher risk of sexual, domestic and family violence.

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Media contact: Renata Field 0457167339

To connect with a survivor of domestic and family violence: 0457 167 339

If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence help can be found via:

- **1800RESPECT** or 1800 732 732 which offers a national counselling helpline, information and support
- **NSW Domestic Violence Line** 1800 65 64 63 which offers a state-wide counselling helpline, information and support
- **Men's Referral Service** 1300 766 491 for men, or friends and family of men using violence

About DVNSW

Domestic Violence NSW Inc. (DVNSW) 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.

¹ *Name changed for safety reasons