

For Immediate Release

17 March 2022

DVNSW and CWA Co-Host NSW Regional Forum on Domestic and Family Violence

Domestic Violence NSW (DVNSW) will be virtually co-hosting the DVNSW Regional Forum with the Country Women's Association today at 2pm.

In Australia, people in remote and very remote communities are 24 times more likely to be hospitalised for family or domestic abuse than people in major cities. Women and children living in regional, rural, and remote areas who experience domestic and family violence face specific issues related to their location and characteristics of living in small communities.

“It’s incredibly important that as a peak body for domestic and family violence, we give regional and remote services a platform to have their voices heard by DVNSW and key ministers in parliament,” says Elise Phillips, Interim CEO of DVNSW. “Issues that affect these regions differ from those in metropolitan areas, and we need to ensure funding and resources provided to these regions are well-informed and targeted.”

“The housing crisis in regional NSW is impacting the safety and recovery of women and children affected by domestic and family violence,” says Penny Dordoy, Head of Community Services at Housing Plus. “The lack of safe and affordable housing in the regions pushes women into homelessness or back to the unsafe violent relationship - all choice and agency is taken from them.”

Alongside DVNSW members, in attendance will be the Hon. Natalie Ward, Minister for Women’s Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Sexual Violence, who is also speaking at the forum, the Hon. Jodie Harrison, the Shadow Minister for Women and the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Assault, the Hon. Rose Jackson, Shadow Minister for Water, Housing and Homelessness and Abigail Boyd, Member of the Legislative Council.

Jane Matts, a survivor-advocate of domestic and family violence in a rural town, says it’s imperative the NSW government dedicates greater outreach and support to regional women experiencing and leaving violence.

“Domestic and family violence survivors in small country towns often don't know where to turn for help, especially in a crisis because transport, money and accommodation are not readily available - you can't just Uber out of the family home. Victim-survivors in regional Australia have so few options to leave, so they stay and find ways to manage, stay silent and survive.”

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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.

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

- **1800RESPECT** or 1800 737 732 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