

# **Leading the response to domestic and family violence in NSW**

**Domestic Violence NSW  
Pre-Budget 2023-24 Submission**

# NSW Funding Priorities

- 1** | Increase funding for the specialist domestic and family violence sector in NSW by a minimum of \$145 million annually.
- 2** | Invest in annual funding of \$20 million for sexual, domestic and family violence prevention initiatives in NSW.
- 3** | Increase funding for Domestic Violence NSW to \$1.35 million annually to support a quality-focused, trauma-informed, specialist domestic and family violence sector in NSW.

# About Domestic Violence NSW

Domestic Violence NSW (DVNSW) is the State's trusted **peak body for specialist domestic and family violence services in NSW**. We have over 150 members and organisations across NSW.

Our members represent the diversity of specialist services working in NSW to support women, families and communities impacted by domestic and family violence.

Our member organisations include crisis and refuge services, transitional accommodation and community housing providers, family support services, Aboriginal controlled organisations and specialist CALD organisations, specialist homelessness service providers, men's behaviour change programs and networks, community organisations working with high-risk communities, specialist women's legal support services, specialist women's health services, women and children's support services, and Safe at Home programs.

## CEO

Delia Donovan

## CONTACT DETAILS

Domestic Violence NSW  
PO Box 3311  
REDFERN NSW 2016

## TELEPHONE

(02) 9698 977

## EMAIL

[ceo@dvnsw.org.au](mailto:ceo@dvnsw.org.au)

## WEBSITE

[www.dvnsw.org.au](http://www.dvnsw.org.au)

## Acknowledgement

This report was written on the unceded lands of the Gadigal People of the Eora Nation and the Dharawal people. We pay respects to Elders past, present and emerging. Domestic Violence NSW would like to acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across the breadth and depth of Australia. We recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have lived and cared for Country for over 65,000 years and continue to do so, honouring ancestors and knowledge holders within community, and observing ancient cultural practices.



# Executive Summary

**Violence against women is a fundamental human rights violation that requires greater attention, investment and action by the NSW Government.** Domestic and family violence has a wide-ranging impact on the NSW economy and State budget, from justice, corrections and police to health, housing and homelessness, community services, education, women and child protection.

- Between January to December 2021, 32,133 domestic violence assault incidents were recorded by the NSW Police Force.<sup>1</sup>
- In NSW from June 2019 to June 2021, there was a 9.8 per cent increase in reports of domestic violence to police.<sup>2</sup>
- In the five years to December 2021, 43% of all NSW murders were domestic violence related (137 of 317 total murder victims).<sup>3</sup>
- In 2021, 15,938 people appeared in court in NSW for domestic violence assault.<sup>4</sup>
- Children are also victim-survivors of domestic violence.

With the majority of violence perpetrated against women, a Price Waterhouse Cooper report estimated that **violence against women costs \$21.7 billion a year**, with governments (Federal, State and Territory) bearing an estimated \$7.8 billion a year, comprising health, administration and social welfare costs.<sup>5</sup> Underrepresentation within national prevalence estimates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, pregnant women, women with disability and women who are homeless may add a further \$4 billion to the cost of violence against women and their children in Australia each year. It is also estimated that the second generational impacts from violence against women and their children is estimated to cost the Australian economy \$333 million per annum.<sup>6</sup>

The specialist domestic and family violence service sector is at the frontline of preventing and responding to domestic and family violence in NSW, and Domestic Violence NSW is the state's trusted representative peak body for the specialist domestic and family violence sector in NSW.

Domestic Violence NSW represents over 130 non-government specialist domestic and family violence services operating in NSW, including:

- crisis and refuge accommodation services
- transitional accommodation and community housing providers
- specialist homelessness service providers
- family support services
- Aboriginal controlled organisations
- specialist Culturally and Linguistically Diverse organisations
- men's behaviour change programs
- community organisations working with high-risk communities
- specialist women's legal support services
- specialist women's health services
- women and children's support services
- Safe at Home programs.

Beyond support for its members, Domestic Violence NSW provides direct domestic, family and sexual violence policy advice for the NSW Government, and especially for the Attorney General, Minister for Women's Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Sexual Violence, and Minister for Families and Communities.

Domestic Violence NSW calls on the NSW Government:

- To invest in the specialist non-government services provided by the domestic and family violence sector to ensure quality, holistic and long-term support is provided to victim-survivors, vulnerable children and their families.
- To stop the violence before it starts by funding sexual, domestic and family violence prevention initiatives.
- To increase annual funding of the sector's peak organisation Domestic Violence NSW to enable it to support specialist services provide policy input and expertise.

The Domestic Violence NSW Pre-Budget Submission provides the NSW Government with three funding priorities that will substantially reduce the financial and social costs of domestic and family violence to the NSW community and economy:

- 1. Increase funding for the specialist domestic and family violence sector in NSW by a minimum of \$145 million annually.**
- 2. Invest in annual funding of \$20 million for sexual, domestic and family violence prevention initiatives in NSW.**
- 3. Increase funding for Domestic Violence NSW to \$1.35 million annually to support a quality-focused, trauma-informed, specialist domestic and family violence sector in NSW.**

These investments by the NSW Government will:

- Reduce death, disability and illness due to domestic and family violence.
- Stop the violence before it starts.
- Provide the quality, holistic and long-term support victim-survivors of domestic and family violence – including children and their families – need.
- Reduce the long-term costs and impact of domestic and family violence in the community and on the State economy.
- Support the NSW Government's commitment to *Closing the Gap*, in particular through Target 13: to reduce the incidence of domestic and family violence experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women and Girls by 50% by 2031, headed towards 0.
- Support NSW Government obligations under the *National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022-2032*.
- Support the *NSW Health Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Domestic and Family Violence 2021-2026*.
- Support rollout of the *Crimes Legislation Amendment (Coercive Control) Bill 2022*.
- Support the *NSW Domestic and Family Violence Plan 2022-2027*.
- Support the *NSW Sexual Violence Plan 2022-2027*.
- Support the *NSW Women's Strategy 2023-2026*.
- Support development of the *NSW Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Primary Prevention Strategy*.

- Support the Premier’s Priorities to break the cycle of disadvantage, and the Stronger Communities Cluster State Outcomes:
  - Premier’s Priorities to be achieved with this funding:
    - Protecting our most vulnerable children by decreasing the proportion of children and young people re-reported at risk of significant harm by 20% by 2023.
    - Increasing permanency for children in out-of-home care by doubling the number of children in safe and permanent homes by 2023 for children in, or at risk of entering, out-of-home care.
    - Reducing the number of domestic violence reoffenders by 25% by 2023.
    - Reducing street homelessness across NSW by 50% by 2025
  - Stronger Communities Cluster State Outcomes to be achieved with this funding:
    - Children and families thrive: ensuring the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable, children, young people and families, and protecting them from the risk of harm, abuse and neglect (State Outcome 2)
    - Efficient and effective legal system: Resolving matters through legal services, the administration of courts and tribunals, and client-facing justice services to victims and vulnerable people (State Outcome 3)
    - People have a safe and affordable place to live: Assisting people who are unable to access or maintain appropriate housing, including homelessness services (State Outcome 4)
    - Reduce reoffending: Operating the State’s corrections system, including support for, and management of, adult and juvenile offenders in correctional centres and the community (State Outcome 6)
    - Safer communities: Preventing, detecting and investigating crime; maintaining social order and community safety; promoting road safety and supporting emergency management (State Outcome 7).

# 1

## Increase funding for the specialist domestic and family violence sector in NSW to \$145 million annually

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### Funding Priority

- ▶ Increase the current investment in specialist domestic and family violence services in NSW to \$145 million per year (including funding from the federal-state partnership).

### Proposed Initiatives

- Introduce a minimum of five-year funding contracts for specialist sexual, domestic and family violence services.
- Urgently increase base-funding to specialist sexual, domestic and family violence services to \$145 million per year to ensure a sustainable, well-resourced sector that can deliver quality trauma and violence-informed, culturally appropriate services and support for victim-survivors experiencing gendered violence.<sup>1</sup>
- Increase funding to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specialist domestic and family violence services and increase the number of Aboriginal Controlled Organisations operating specialist domestic and family violence services.
- Ensure specialist sexual, domestic, and family violence services are sufficiently funded to cover indexation including matching annual increases to the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and staff award increases.
- Provide NSW Government funding for the land and design of the [Women's Trauma Recovery Centre](#) in the Illawarra (a national first) to innovatively, safely and holistically address high levels of violence. This will enable the federal funding for construction and operation to be utilised.

### Outcomes

- Reduced rates of death, disability, injury and illness due to domestic and family violence.
- Victim-survivors of domestic and family violence (including children) will have timely access to the effective, high-quality specialist support they need to be safe including crisis support, safe housing, counselling and case work support.
- Ensuring the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable children, young people and families, and protect them from the risk of harm, abuse and neglect.

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<sup>1</sup> Specialist service should meet the minimum requirements of a quality domestic and family violence specialist service as outlined in the Good Practice Guidelines for the Domestic and Family Violence Sector in NSW developed by Domestic Violence NSW.

- Avoidance of escalating costs in responding to domestic and family violence through early intervention.
- The NSW Government can successfully deliver on its commitments and priorities under the:
  - *National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022-2032,*
  - *NSW Health Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Domestic and Family Violence 2021-2026,*
  - *NSW Domestic and Family Violence Plan 2022-2027,*
  - *NSW Sexual Violence Plan 2022-2027,*
  - *NSW Women’s Strategy 2023-2036,*
  - *NSW Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Primary Prevention Strategy (in development),*
  - *Closing the Gap,* in particular Closing the Gap Target 13.

## Evidence of Success

- Specialist services provide high quality services, as evidenced in the [\*Domestic Violence NSW Good Practice Guidelines for the Specialist Domestic and Family Violence Sector in NSW.\*](#)
- Services have faced additional costs and demand due to COVID-19, drought, fires and floods but have continued to deliver high quality outcomes for clients.<sup>7</sup>
- Investment in Victoria since the Royal Commission into Family Violence has seen a dramatic improvement in service delivery and availability of service to meet demand.<sup>8</sup> This success can be replicated in NSW.
- Services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children delivered in partnership with Aboriginal Controlled Organisations is evidenced to provide quality results to community members.<sup>9</sup>

## Statement of Need

**One in three women in Australia have experienced physical violence in their lifetime**, one in six adult women or one in sixteen men have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by a current or former partner.<sup>10</sup> The severity of injury is even higher for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women than non-Aboriginal women, with Aboriginal women aged 15 and over were 32 times more likely to be hospitalised for family violence as non-Indigenous females in 2016-17.<sup>11</sup>

**Approximately one woman every week is murdered by a partner of former partner.**<sup>12</sup> At least 50% of women who reported domestic and family violence disclosed having a child in their care.<sup>13</sup>

The violent, threatening, abusive and/or intimidating behaviour of domestic and family violence has a range of serious consequences for families and communities. Domestic and family violence causes fear, physical and/or psychological harm. Children who are exposed to violence in the family context experience significant trauma and are at high risk of suffering psychological and emotional trauma.<sup>14</sup> However, this **trauma can be significantly reduced when appropriate supports and responses are put in place.**<sup>15</sup>



The ongoing support required for victim-survivors of sexual, domestic and family violence is substantial, with demand outstripping supply for specialist services, resulting in devastating consequences.

The NSW Government has responded to rising rates of domestic and family violence by increasing funding to services by \$100 million or 60 per cent since 2020-21. While per capita funding for services remains well below levels in Australia-wide leader Victoria, these investments have been important in addressing the rising rates of domestic and family violence. But more investment and work to build sector capability and sustainability is required.

Chart 1: Total State Government Spending on domestic and family violence, \$ per capita



Source: Impact Economics and Policy September 2022, *Aftershock: Addressing the Economics and Social Costs of the Pandemic and Natural Disasters*

Domestic Violence NSW recommends that the NSW Government increase funding by a minimum of \$145 million per year for specialist sexual, domestic, and family violence services to deliver trauma and violence informed, culturally appropriate services:

- \$52 million for Women’s Refuges (Specialist Homelessness Services)
- \$6 million for Women’s Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Services
- \$20.3 million for NSW Women’s Health Centres<sup>2</sup>
- \$12 million for Specialist Women’s Legal Services, including \$5 million for Women’s Legal Service NSW, \$5 million for the Wirringa Baiya Aboriginal Women’s Legal Centre, \$1.8 million for Legal Education and Advice in Prison Program for Women, \$200,000 for the Seniors Rights Service, additional funding for Community Legal Centres and additional funding for Family Violence Prevention Legal Services and the Aboriginal Legal Service to expand their domestic and family violence, family law and care and protection work
- \$8.4 million for Staying Home Leaving Violence Program
- \$1.45 million for Specialist Aboriginal controlled domestic and family violence services

<sup>2</sup> The overall ask of \$145 million for the sector is an increase of \$10 million on the \$135 million requested in the NSW Women’s Alliance election platform [Action to End Gendered Violence](#). This increase reflects a revised figure from NSW Women’s Health Centres as they seek to bring their funding in line with CPI increases.

- \$1.1 million for the NSW Sexual Violence Helpline (and an additional \$500,000 in one-off funding to deliver services to marginalised groups)
- \$14 million for intersectional approaches for marginalised priority groups (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, culturally and linguistically diverse, regional, rural, and remote, people with disability, older women and younger women, LGBTQ+)
- \$2.3 million for NSW Financial Abuse Service
- \$27.25 million for Men’s Behaviour Change Programs.

### **Reccomendation:**

- ▶ Increase the current investment in specialist domestic and family violence services in NSW to \$145 million per year (including funding from the federal-state partnership).

# 2

## Invest in annual funding of \$20 million for sexual, domestic and family violence prevention initiatives in NSW

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### Funding Priorities

- ▶ Invest in long-term community-based primary prevention initiatives under the *NSW Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Primary Prevention Strategy* (in development).
- ▶ Annual investment of \$10 million for respectful relationships education in early childhood and school settings.
- ▶ Annual investment of \$10 million for coordinated, state-wide violence prevention initiatives that address gender inequality as the driver of sexual, domestic and family violence.

### Proposed Initiatives

- Fund the implementation of long-term community-based primary prevention initiatives which align with the national prevention strategies developed by Our Watch:
  - [\*Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women in Australia \(second edition\)\*](#),
  - [\*Changing the picture: A national resource to support the prevention of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children\*](#), and
  - [\*Changing the landscape: A national resource to prevent violence against women and girls with disabilities\*](#).<sup>16</sup>
- These initiatives should be funded as part of the *NSW Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Primary Prevention Strategy* (in development).

### Outcomes

- Violence is stopped before it begins, preventing injury, death and disability and reducing the trauma for hundreds of thousands of NSW residents.
- A systemic approach to the prevention of domestic, family and sexual violence and violence against women is established, driving evidence-informed primary prevention across NSW.
- NSW is an international leader in the field of violence prevention.
- The NSW community is educated and active on how to change the culture of gendered violence to create safer communities for all.

- Policies, strategies and programs to prevent violence against women use the shared national understanding of the evidence and principles of effective prevention established through the work of Our Watch.
- NSW fulfills its commitments under the *National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022-2032*, *NSW Domestic and Family Violence Plan 2022-2027*, and *NSW Sexual Violence Plan 2022-2027*.

## Evidence of Success

- [\*Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women in Australia \(second edition\)\*](#)
- [\*Changing the picture: A national resource to support the prevention of violence against Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their children\*](#)
- [\*Changing the landscape: A national resource to prevent violence against women and girls with disabilities\*](#)
- [\*NSW Health Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Domestic and Family Violence 2021-2026\*](#)
- [\*Preventing violence before it occurs: A framework and background paper to guide the primary prevention of violence against women in Victoria\*](#)<sup>17</sup>
- [\*Pride in Prevention: A guide to primary prevention of family violence experienced by LGBTIQ communities\*](#)<sup>18</sup>

## Statement of Need

Research demonstrates that gendered violence is preventable and that with resourcing and community action we can create families and communities free from violence.<sup>19</sup> Domestic and family violence is a symptom of wider gendered inequality, and efforts to eliminate this violence should be paired with primary prevention techniques that simultaneously foster gender equality.<sup>20</sup>

The specialist domestic and family violence sector recognises the need to change the culture of gendered violence in NSW. The sector strongly supports the work of Our Watch in bringing together the international research, and nationwide experience, on what works to prevent violence against women and children.

**An upfront investment in violence prevention through community education and early intervention programs can stop violence – and its associated costs of funding the police, the judiciary, child protection and community services – before it begins.**

Violence prevention initiatives require leadership and coordination of implementation, as well as the resourcing of local initiatives and marginalised groups to adapt violence prevention initiatives to their own local and cultural contexts.

**Domestic Violence NSW recommends that the NSW Government fund the development of policies, strategies and programs to prevent violence against women** in consultation with the specialist domestic and family violence sector in NSW, using the shared understanding of the evidence and principles of effective prevention outlined by Our Watch’s national prevention strategies.

Currently in NSW there is no direct investment in primary prevention. It is hoped this will change with the development of the *NSW Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Primary Prevention Strategy*. To ensure this

work is effective, the NSW Government must make a funding commitment to address the underlying causes of violence and reduce the ongoing cost of violence to the community and the economy. In 2021-22, Victoria spent \$46.3 million on primary prevention initiatives. Domestic Violence NSW recommends that the NSW Government develop a systemic approach by funding long-term, community-based primary prevention activities.

### **Reccomendations:**

- ▶ Invest in long-term, community-based primary prevention initiatives under the NSW Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Primary Prevention Strategy.
- ▶ Annual investment of \$10 million for respectful relationships education in early childhood and school settings.
- ▶ Annual investment of \$10 million for coordinated, state-wide violence prevention initiatives that address gender inequality as the driver of sexual, domestic and family violence.

# 3

## Increase funding for Domestic Violence NSW to \$1.35 million annually to support a quality-focused, trauma-informed, specialist domestic and family violence sector in NSW

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### Funding Priority

- ▶ Increase funding for Domestic Violence NSW to \$1.35 million recurrent annually to guarantee representation, advocacy, and support of quality service delivery for over 130+ specialist domestic and family violence services across NSW, and well-evidenced policy advice for the NSW Government.

### Proposed Initiatives

- **Substantial NSW Government investment in Domestic Violence NSW - the state's trusted representative peak body for specialist sexual, domestic and family violence services.**
- **Resourcing Domestic Violence NSW adequately to support specialist domestic and family violence services so they can better provide essential services to women and children at risk of death, disability and injury from domestic violence.**
- Resourcing Domestic Violence NSW sufficiently to provide its member organisations (130+ specialist domestic and family violence services across NSW) with training and support to implement the [\*Domestic Violence NSW Good Practice Guidelines for the Specialist Domestic and Family Violence Sector in NSW\*](#) to ensure quality service delivery that meets the needs of victim-survivors of domestic and family violence.
- Resourcing Domestic Violence NSW to support existing networks that deliver primary prevention of domestic, family and violence initiatives.
- Resourcing Domestic Violence NSW to continue to provide sector-specific information and support to the NSW Government to address the high levels of domestic, family and sexual violence in the community.
- Resourcing Domestic Violence NSW to enable it to adequately support essential domestic and family violence workers (and the services that employ them) to increase performance and staff retention and reduce vicarious trauma, through training opportunities, cultural supervision, community of practice learning opportunities and resource libraries

## Outcomes

- **A strengthened peak body for the specialist domestic and family violence sector.**
- **A viably funded Domestic Violence NSW would be best placed to support and coordinate the NSW domestic and family violence services sector and equipped to further support and advise NSW Government departments, agencies and Ministers.**
- **Viably funding Domestic Violence NSW will ensure that the NSW Government has access to specific policy advice directly on behalf of the specialist domestic and family violence sector when making policy and investment decisions.**
- The NSW Government supports a sustainable specialist domestic and family violence service delivery sector through peak body coordination.
- The NSW Government is supported by a trusted and informed peak body (Domestic Violence NSW), enabling it to safely implement and coordinate NSW Government domestic, family and sexual violence funding and initiatives.
- The NSW Government can meet its commitments under the:
  - *National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022-2032,*
  - *NSW Health Strategy for Preventing and Responding to Domestic and Family Violence 2021-2026,*
  - *NSW Domestic and Family Violence Plan 2022-2027,*
  - *NSW Sexual Violence Plan 2022-2027,*
  - *NSW Women's Strategy 2023-2036,*
  - *NSW Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Primary Prevention Strategy (in development),*
  - NSW Budget 2022-23 Women's Opportunity Statement, Supporting families, building a brighter future, and
  - *Closing the Gap*, in particular Closing the Gap Target 13.

## Evidence of Success

- Domestic Violence NSW **works directly with the NSW Government** to improve the spectrum of policy, legislative and program responses to domestic, family and sexual violence and to eliminate domestic, family and sexual violence in NSW through leadership in advocacy, partnerships and promotion of good practice.
- Domestic Violence NSW **advocates for the domestic and family violence services sector** (and related support services and systems), as well as for victim-survivors of violence including those from diverse and vulnerable backgrounds. This advocacy will take the form of targeted advocacy projects, media representations, public speaking engagements, and publishing research and reports.
- Domestic Violence NSW **provides policy advice to NSW Government** including Government inquiries and Royal Commissions, and directly with Ministers (notably the Attorney General, Minister for Women's Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Sexual Violence, and Minister for Families and Communities), Government departments, and decision makers to ensure the design and implementation of best practice programs, policies and services in NSW.

- Provision of policy advice includes weekly meetings with Ministers, Ministerial staff and NSW Government representatives at Departmental level to provide policy advice on preventing and responding to domestic, family and sexual violence; and **active participation** in over 70 interagency meetings, ensuring information is shared with the sector and the NSW Government has the information necessary to effectively implement domestic and family violence policy.
- Domestic Violence NSW **participates in government, sector and stakeholder committees, working groups and advisory groups**. Work through these groups and committees includes influencing and informing government policy and investment, building the sector’s knowledge and capacity, and working towards systemic change.
- Domestic Violence NSW **supports the entire NSW domestic and family violence specialist service sector, including Domestic Violence NSW’s 130+ member services** with updates and resources relating to changes in government policies, programs and legislation, good practice resources for operating as a specialist sector, updates and advice on events such as COVID-19 and flood disasters, providing avenues for the sector to connect with one another.
- Domestic Violence NSW **provides training and consulting services for government, community organisations and the private sector**.
- See the [Annual Reports](#) of Domestic Violence NSW for further information on the organisations’ successes year upon year.

## Statement of Need

Domestic Violence NSW is the state’s trusted representative peak body for the specialist domestic and family violence sector in NSW. Domestic Violence NSW has over 150 member organisations that represent the diversity of specialist services working in NSW to support women, families and communities impacted by domestic and family violence.

Member organisations include crisis and refuge services, transitional accommodation and community housing providers, family support services, Aboriginal controlled organisations and specialist CALD organisations, specialist homelessness service providers, men’s behaviour change programs and networks, community organisations working with high-risk communities, specialist women’s legal support services, women and children’s support services, and Safe at Home programs.

The number of members of Domestic Violence NSW as climbed from 48 in 2017-18 to 108 in 2021-22, growing even further to 130 by January 2023. In 2021-22, a further 26 Women’s Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Services joined Domestic Violence NSW as their peak body.

The growth in core membership reflects the strength of the sector but also places an additional workload on Domestic Violence NSW that has not been reflected in core State Peaks Program funding. Other peak bodies in NSW have not experienced the same level of growth in membership as DVNSW has, as shown in Chart 3.



Chart 2: Increase in Domestic Violence NSW membership

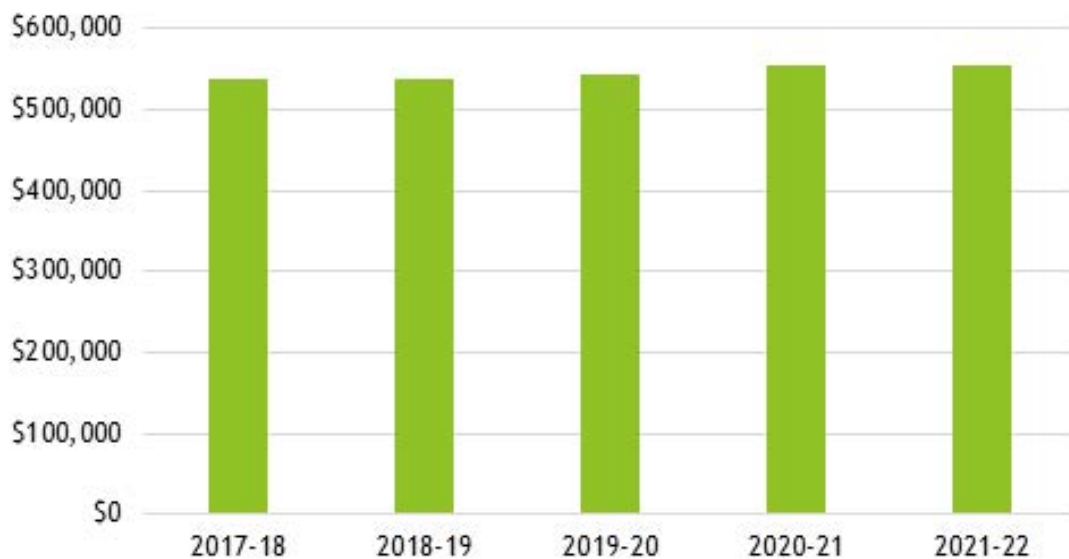


Source: Impact Economics and Policy analysis of data available from annual reports

Domestic Violence NSW is currently funded approximately \$1 million to represent, support and advocate for the staff and clients of over 130 specialist domestic and family violence services across NSW. However, the base funding is made up of only \$593,000 with the supplementary made up of one-off grants and short-term projects which is not recurring. This funding translates to just over six full-time employees.

Despite the significant increase in rates of family and domestic violence in NSW, and NSW Government investment in service delivery, the core peak funding of Domestic Violence NSW to undertake sector engagement, leadership and Government liaison has barely increased in real terms since 2017.

Chart 3: Domestic Violence NSW Real Core Peak Funding



Domestic Violence NSW core peak funding must be increased by a minimum of \$730,000 per annum in 2023-24 in order to provide a more accurate picture of true costs, to ensure its sustainability and continued leadership in efforts to reduce the impact of family and domestic violence in NSW, in partnership with the sector and the NSW Government. For full details, see the business case for increased core peak funding, which Domestic Violence NSW has submitted directly to the Department of Communities and Justice.

The NSW Government support provided by Domestic Violence NSW is particularly complex and time intensive. Domestic and family violence policy and practice covers several government portfolios including Health, Education, Police and Communities and Justice (including communities, child protection, housing, justice and women).

**Over the last two years, Domestic Violence NSW has seen a 120% increase in membership from 60 to over 130 member organisations. This significant increase in membership demonstrates demand for the peak’s service and the relevant and quality representation, advocacy and services Domestic Violence NSW is providing to its members.**

By comparison, Safe and Equal, the peak organisation for domestic and family violence services in Victoria, were funded \$2,473,476 in FY 2020-21 to represent 85 organisations.<sup>21</sup> This is double the funding of NSW for a peak body that supports a third fewer organisations. NSW also has a larger number of victim/survivors of domestic and family violence and a much larger geographical region. With the additional resources Safe and Equal were able to provide a suite of training options to the sector to improve practice and ensure evidence-based service delivery. Safe and Equal have played an important and influential part in translating government domestic and family violence policy to practice and providing support for the governance of the state’s federal commitments to address the issue.

*Table 1: Uplift in annual State Peaks Program funding required for Domestic Violence NSW*

	Required Funding (2021-22)	Current Funding (2021-22)	Increase
<b>Workload Growth Since 2017-18</b>			
<b>Membership</b>	\$972,365	\$593,160	\$379,205
<b>Total Revenue</b>	\$1,024,469	\$593,160	\$431,309
<b>Total Government Funding</b>	\$1,465,655	\$593,160	\$872,495
<b>Submissions</b>	\$1,370,997	\$593,160	\$777,837
<b>Sector Comparisons</b>			
<b>Other SPP funded peaks</b>	\$1,382,152	\$593,160	\$788,992
<b>Business Sustainability</b>			
<b>Remuneration rise to match SCHADS Award</b>	\$1,196,970	\$593,160	\$603,810
<b>FTE staff growth to fill all core roles</b>	\$1,841,042	\$593,160	\$1,247,882
<b>Average</b>	<b>\$1,321,950</b>	<b>\$593,160</b>	<b>\$728,790</b>

A more adequately funded Domestic Violence NSW would be able to better support and coordinate the NSW domestic and family violence services sector and would also be better equipped to support and advise NSW Government departments, agencies and ministers.

Table 3 provides the funding growth required to address observed growth in workload since 2017-18 and provides parity with similar organisations. In addition, the funding increase accounts for lifting current staff wages and allowances to be on par with the market standard and hiring additional staff members to be able to add positions such as primary prevention officer and learning & development officer to the organisation.

The figures: current funding \$593,160 plus annual increase of \$728, 790 equals required funding for 2022-23 of \$1,321,950.

In essence, **funding for Domestic Violence NSW should be increased to \$1.35 million annually.**

### **Reccomendation:**

- ▶ Increase funding for Domestic Violence NSW to \$1.35 million recurrent annually to guarantee representation, advocacy, and support of quality service delivery for over 130 specialist domestic and family violence services across NSW, and well-evidenced policy advice for the NSW Government.

# References

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- <sup>2</sup> Equity Economics (2021). *Rebuilding Women's Economic Security – Investing in Social Housing in New South Wales*, Sydney
- <sup>3</sup> [https://www.bocsar.nsw.gov.au/Documents/Landing\\_Pages/DV%20murder%20infographic%202021.pdf](https://www.bocsar.nsw.gov.au/Documents/Landing_Pages/DV%20murder%20infographic%202021.pdf)
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- <sup>6</sup> KPMG, (2016). The cost of violence against women and their children in Australia
- <sup>7</sup> Equity Economics (2020). [A Wave of Disadvantage Across NSW](#).
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