



MONASH
University

**MONASH GENDER
AND FAMILY VIOLENCE
PREVENTION CENTRE**

**FACULTY
OF
ARTS**

Victorian Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic

Submission to the Public
Accounts and Estimates
Committee, July 2020

Prepared by the Monash Gender and Family Violence
Prevention Centre.

Parliament of Victoria: Public Accounts and Estimates Committee
Submission to the Inquiry into the Victorian Government's response to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee to inform the Inquiry into the Victorian Government's response to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

This submission has been prepared by members of the Monash Gender and Family Violence Prevention Centre (MGFVPC).

The focus of our submission is on detailing the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic to date on women's experiences of violence and on practitioner responses to family violence in Victoria. Our recommendations are forward facing and directed towards what action can be undertaken and coordinated by the Victorian Government to improve women's safety and freedom from violence.

The submission also provides summary details of our Centre and current research that we are leading examining family violence and the COVID-19 global health pandemic.

Please find our submission attached to this letter.

We would welcome the opportunity to provide further detail to inform the work of the Public Accounts and Estimate Committee's Inquiry into the Victorian Government's response to the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Kind regards,

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1. Current research on family violence and the COVID-19 pandemic

Members of the Monash Gender and Family Violence Prevention Centre are currently leading a range of research projects seeking to understand how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted on experiences of and responses to family violence.

These projects are summarised here.

Gender-based violence and help-seeking behaviours during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Project leads: Naomi Pfitzner, Kate Fitz-Gibbon and Jacqui True

This project seeks to understand women's experiences of male violence as well as their help-seeking behaviours during the COVID-19 pandemic. The project aims to generate knowledge on service adaptations and innovations in response to the pandemic and identify service and resource gaps to ensure that women experiencing violence get the support they need. In order to achieve these aims, the project is framed by two key research questions:

1. What are the impacts of COVID-19 on gender-based violence in families and beyond?
2. What are the responses to gender-based violence during the health crisis and were women's help-seeking behaviours effectively responded to?

This project will generate new knowledge on effective crisis response and support for gender-based violence during the COVID-19 pandemic and provide an evidence base for service providers to reimagine service delivery during times of crisis.

The first phase of this project involved an online anonymous survey used to capture the voices and experiences of practitioners responding to women experiencing violence during the COVID-19 shutdown in Victoria, Australia. The survey ran for a four-week period from 23 April to 24 May 2020. The survey was administered through the survey development software Qualtrics. Survey responses were received from 166 Victorian practitioners. Univariate analyses were conducted to explore overall trends in the nature and frequency of violence against women during the COVID-19 shutdown, and the qualitative survey data was thematically analysed. The findings of this survey were presented in Pfitzner, Fitz-Gibbon and True (2020).

The research team has also published a second report presenting the findings from two surveys conducted by the Queensland Domestic Violence Services Network over a ten-day period in April 2020 (15 – 24 April) and a two-week period in May 2020 (8 – 22 May). The surveys sought to capture the professional views and experiences of practitioners responding to women experiencing violence during the period of COVID-19 restrictions in Queensland, Australia. Data collection for the second survey occurred during the Stage 1 easing of restrictions which began on 15 May 2020. Survey One provided a snapshot of DFV client and service needs in Queensland during the shutdown period and Survey Two explored emerging issues from the first survey. The findings of the Queensland surveys were presented in Pfitzner, Fitz-Gibbon, Meyer and True (2020).

This project is part of [The Melbourne Experiment](#), a Monash University research initiative. Further details about the project are available on the [project website](#).

Family violence, help seeking and temporary migration during COVID-19

Project leads: Marie Segrave and Naomi Pfitzner

The project seeks to map the specific challenges of the pandemic and its flow-on effects to women who hold temporary visas, and their children, experiencing family violence in Victoria, Australia. This project will review 100 cases of women on temporary visas who became clients of inTouch Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence during the predominant lockdown (from 22 March to 21 June) and will draw a cross-sectional

sample of 100 clients across key visa types – including bridging, student and sponsored partner visas – as a basis for analysis. The research will seek to understand the specific impacts of lockdown for women on temporary visas experiencing family violence, including the financial stressors placed on temporary migrants who were excluded from the Commonwealth Government’s COVID-19 financial support packages. It will build on previous work by Segrave (2017) that has mapped the specificity of temporary migration as contributing to women’s insecurity in the context of experiencing, and seeking support or safety from, family violence. The research will utilise a mixed methods approach and provide a quantitative descriptive analysis of case files over this period. Utilising these files, and via consultation with inTouch case managers and their leadership team, specific case studies will be drawn out in more detail to offer more substantive accounts of women’s efforts to find security and safety during this period.

Family violence, legal needs and access to justice during COVID-19

Project leads: Naomi Pfitzner, Kate Fitz-Gibbon and Silke Meyer

In partnership with Women’s Legal Services Victoria this project will investigate the impact of COVID-19 on access to justice and the legal needs of family violence victim/survivors with a particular focus on child protection and women’s access to justice during periods of restrictions. The project will draw on the experiences and views of legal practitioners and clients during the pandemic as well as administrative service data.

2. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on women’s experiences of violence

The coronavirus pandemic is causing uncertain and stressful times for all members of the Victorian community. This is likely to be significantly heightened for families experiencing family violence. National and international research evidences the gendered impacts of natural disasters, including the higher prevalence of family violence in the aftermath of crises (see, for example, Parkinson and Zara 2013). Financial stress arising from a change in employment and income has also been recognised as a precursor to family violence, femicide and filicide. This is particularly critical in the rapidly changing context of the coronavirus pandemic, which will see many Victorian families affected by a reduction or loss of income. While this will affect households across the board, low income families and those with insecure employment arrangements will be disproportionately affected by financial stress.

Periods of restrictions and lockdown pose significant health and safety risks for Victorian women and children experiencing family violence. In a country which already experiences one woman a week being killed by a man, usually an intimate partner or ex-partner, and where one child a fortnight is killed by a parent, we cannot underestimate the combined risks that physical isolation, financial stress and family violence have already had, and will continue to have throughout the pandemic.

This submission details the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic to date on women’s experiences of violence and on practitioner responses to family violence in Victoria. Our recommendations are forward facing and directed towards what action can be undertaken and coordinated by the Victorian Government to improve women’s safety and freedom from violence.

IMPACT ON THE NATURE, FREQUENCY AND SEVERITY OF VIOLENCE

Our Victorian based research demonstrates an increase in the prevalence, severity and complexity of violence against women (VAW) reported to practitioners since the beginning of the COVID-19 crisis (Pfitzner, Fitz-Gibbon, Meyer and True, 2020). Following the first wave of COVID-19 restrictions in Victoria, services working with perpetrators of family violence reported an increase in service use. Findings from the first

survey of 166 Victorian frontline practitioners supported to women experiencing violence during the COVID-19 shutdowns revealed the following:

- An increase in the frequency and severity of VAW
- 59% of Victorian practitioners surveyed reported that COVID-19 has increased the frequency of VAW
- 50% of Victorian practitioners surveyed reported it has increased the severity of VAW
- An increase in the complexity of women's needs noted by 86% of respondents
- An increase in first-time family violence reporting by women noted by 42% of respondents

Victorian practitioners reported new forms of violence that perpetrators are using during the first wave of COVID-19 restrictions in Victoria (Pfitzner, Fitz-Gibbon and True, 2020). Survey respondents described the ways in which perpetrators were using the restrictions and threat of COVID-19 infection, purposeful or otherwise, to restrict women's movement, to gain access to women's residences and to coerce women into residing with them if they usually reside separately (Pfitzner, Fitz-Gibbon and True, 2020). These findings demonstrate how perpetrators of intimate partner violence and other forms of violence against women have adapted their abusive behaviours, finding new opportunities to control and isolate their victims during the COVID-19 restrictions. While not the focus of this recent study, the identified increased exposure of women to family violence is equally experienced by children residing in households experiencing family violence. Ensuring support and recovery needs for children affected by family violence are therefore equally critical.

We recommend the Victorian Government introduce additional funding support packages for the family violence sector to allow them to meet increased demand during any forthcoming periods of restrictions and into the easing and recovery periods. This will ensure the sector can provide effective and timely responses to women and children experiencing family violence. We note the importance of timely distribution of any additional funding to the sector.

IMPACT ON SHARED CARE ARRANGEMENTS AND THE WEAPONISING OF CHILDREN

Research has repeatedly highlighted perpetrators' strategic use of children and child contact arrangements to exercise ongoing abuse and control over the non-abusive parent post-separation. The control measures implemented by the Victorian Government to manage the spread of COVID-19, including physical distancing and stay-at-home restrictions, have offered a welcome tool for perpetrators of family violence to further manipulate, control and terrorise women and children who are subject to shared care arrangements (see also United Nations, 2020).

While our Victorian research to date has not examined this issue, our Queensland study presents emerging evidence on the heightened risks and experiences of violence for children during this period (Pfitzner, Fitz-Gibbon, Meyer and True, 2020). In Survey Two, 21% of practitioners surveyed reported an escalation of perpetrators' threats to children (n=24) and 9% reported perpetrators' abuse towards children that had not been experienced before the pandemic (n=11). In terms of detailing what form the abuse against children took, 10% of Queensland practitioner respondents reported perpetrators threatening to infect their partners and/or children with coronavirus (n=11) and 6% reported perpetrators not letting their partner use a hand sanitiser or stopping her from protecting herself and/or her children against the coronavirus (n=7).

While perpetrators commonly use children to coerce and control their victims, including undermining the mothers' relationship with their children, violating shared care arrangements, withholding children and threatening to harm children (Bagshaw et al., 2011; Campo, 2015; Holt, 2017), our Queensland study revealed that the COVID-19 pandemic has increased such opportunities for perpetrators to do so. These findings indicate the ways in which COVID-19 restrictions in Victoria may facilitate an increase in coercive and controlling forms of domestic and family violence post-separation and substantially affect women and children's lives throughout the pandemic to date.

We recommend the Victorian Government consider funding a state-wide study of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on shared care arrangements and the implications for women and children experiencing family violence.

IMPACT ON THE SAFE HOUSING SHORTAGE AND WOMEN'S RISK OF HOMELESSNESS

Findings from our Victorian survey of practitioners responding to women experiencing violence during the initial stage 3 restrictions revealed a perceived lack of safe accommodation options for women who are unable to remain at home during the restrictions (Pfitzner, Fitz-Gibbon and True, 2020). Practitioners believed there is a need for the government to urgently address the significant safe-housing shortage that pre-existed in Victoria but has been heightened to critical levels during the COVID-19 pandemic. Numerous Victorian practitioners noted that securing safe-housing options and availability during the COVID-19 restriction period posed a significant challenge.

Relatedly, a major challenge is gaps in support including accommodation options for non-citizens without permanent residency. People experiencing family violence who hold temporary visas are often without a reliable or ongoing income, cannot access ongoing social security benefits and are therefore often unable to access longer-term subsidised accommodation options. This group of temporary migrants has been identified during this time as at significant risk of destitution and homelessness (Rushton, 2020).

There has been long-held recognition across Australia and in Victoria specifically that there is a shortage of safe-housing options for women and children (see, for example, Flanagan, Blunden, Valentine and Henriette, 2019; RCFV, 2016; Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence, 2015; Valentine et al., 2020). Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, family violence was recognised as a key contributor to women and children's homelessness in Australia (Special Taskforce on Domestic and Family Violence, 2015; Tually et al., 2018) and our research has repeatedly shown that a lack of safe and sustainable housing solutions frequently forces women and children back into unsafe family and living arrangements (Meyer, 2014, 2015).

We recommend the Victorian Government commits additional immediate and dedicated support to women and children experiencing family violence by devoting funding for securing safe-housing options. We note the importance of timely distribution of this support.

IMPACT ON PERPETRATOR ACCOUNTABILITY AND HOLDING PERPETRATORS 'IN VIEW'

Since the outset of the COVID-19 crisis and the subsequent two waves of Stage 3 restrictions there has been minimal attention paid to how this will impact responses to family violence perpetrators – in terms of the justice system's ability to hold perpetrators to account during the COVID-19 crisis and the wider family violence system's need to keep perpetrators 'in view'. Both are critical to manage and monitor the identified heightened risk and dangerousness during this period of uncertainty.

In 2016 the findings of the Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence highlighted the need to break down silos in the family violence and wider service system to increase perpetrator visibility. This notion of increased perpetrator visibility relies on service system coordination, risk assessment and information sharing. While these principles remain valid, the extent to which they can be achieved is significantly hampered by the COVID-19 restrictions, which limit victims' ability to seek help and contribute to family and perpetrator invisibility. This raises the very real risk that new perpetrators of family violence will remain invisible to the system for longer. Patterns of escalation among known perpetrators may on the other hand go 'unchecked' for prolonged periods unless proactively monitored during this period of heightened risk.

One of the key ways in which known family violence perpetrators are held to account and kept in view is through their attendance at and participation in men's behaviour change programs (MBCPs). These programs are usually run in a weekly, group-based format and require men to physically attend group sessions as well

as engage in short or long-term case management. At the outset of the first stage 3 restrictions in Victoria, services delivering programs with perpetrators of family violence and practitioners offering face-to-face supports had to reorient to deliver their services remotely. For instance, some men's intervention programs are adapting their strategies to reach known perpetrators who otherwise would be unsupported (Fitz-Gibbon, Burley and Meyer, 2020).

In our Queensland study, practitioners responding to Survey Two commented that restrictions around face-to-face service delivery have affected their area of practice while also creating new opportunities for service engagement (Pfitzner, Fitz-Gibbon, Meyer and True, 2020). Queensland examples provided included the remote delivery of men's behaviour change programs (MBCP) and (ex)partner contact to manage the safety of women and children linked to men in such programs. Practitioners reflected that when delivered remotely, these points of contact were not restricted by geographic and time challenges associated with face-to-face client meetings.

We believe these service innovations may lead to improvements in the future delivery of men's service and behaviour change interventions post COVID-19 restrictions, especially for clients in remote geographic areas. Given the heightened invisibility of perpetrators during period of restrictions, it is important to rigorously evaluate the benefits of any innovations operating during this period to maintain contact with perpetrators and ensure ongoing engagement (see also Fitz-Gibbon, Burley and Meyer, 2020).

It is essential that the momentum of the work advanced in Victoria to keep perpetrators in view is not lost during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. There is no roadmap as to how this should be achieved but at a time when women and children face heightened risk and invisibility in their homes it is clear that we must prioritise and resource the monitoring, assessment and management of family violence perpetrator risk.

[The Victorian Government should invest in building the evidence base on the impact and effectiveness of service innovations and remote delivery with perpetrators during the periods of restrictions.](#)

[The Victorian Government should commit additional funding to the Men's Referral Service \(MRS\) and to men's behaviour change program providers to ensure these services can adequately cater for increased demand during periods of restrictions, the easing of restrictions and through the recovery period.](#)

IMPACT ON WOMEN ON TEMPORARY VISAS EXPERIENCING VIOLENCE

Temporary migrants in Australia regardless of visa status, and before the pandemic, have long been disadvantaged by the system because they have no access to Centrelink, Medicare or housing. In the context of COVID-19, a significant financial burden has been carried by temporary workers who were refused access to the federal support packages (JobKeeper and JobSeeker) for those out of work, or those who could not work due to the lockdown. Financial stress and increased alcohol consumption, combined with the lockdown and myriad compounding stress factors in the context of COVID-19, have resulted in escalating reports of violence and severity of family violence for temporary migrants.

Service providers in Victoria reported a 20 per cent increase in temporary visa holders coming forward needing assistance in the context of family violence, while Domestic Violence NSW reported that 60% of women on temporary visas they were supporting had less access to income, food and essentials (Rushton, 2020). The conditions for this group of women are significant, not least because there are no safe options: leaving a violent partner is inherently risky because of the absence of any guarantees of ongoing support, yet remaining with a violent partner is also significantly risky in terms of the immediate and long-term safety of women and their children. These conditions have escalated during the pandemic.

[The Victorian Government should support the development of a national model to ensure that visa status does not limit access to support in the short or medium term, building on the existing evidence base and support state and territory-led efforts to support all those who experience family violence equally.](#)

The Victorian Government should embark on a state-wide communication strategy with a diverse range of partners, to ensure communication to all women of their rights and the offer of support and protection irrespective of migration status. This is urgent nationally, but in the context of an extended second lockdown critical for Victoria.

3. IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON SERVICE DELIVERY AND RESPONSES TO WOMEN EXPERIENCING VIOLENCE

Like many other service areas, family violence specialist services in Victoria have had to act quickly during the initial stages of the COVID-19 stage 3 restrictions to support continued client engagement and safety. Since the third week of March 2020 in Victoria, social restrictions largely prevented face-to-face service delivery with victim support and perpetrator intervention services reoriented to deliver many of their services via online and telephone counselling.

REMOTE SERVICE PROVISION DURING STAGE 3 RESTRICTIONS

In our Victorian study (Pfitzner, Fitz-Gibbon and True, 2020), practitioners indicated that many services that have traditionally provided in-person responses to women experiencing violence were transitioning to phone, video and messaging-based services during the COVID-19 pandemic. Given the timing of the survey, falling over a four-week period during the initial stage 3 restrictions in Victoria, practitioners were at different phases of their transition to remote-service delivery. Some of the remote-service practices that were reported in the survey had been developed specifically in response to the pandemic, while other organisations had utilised and expanded existing remote-service models.

Many Victorian practitioners reported that their organisations have sought to integrate family violence response into the essential services that have remained open during the shutdown, such as doctors' clinics, Centrelink and childcare services. Practitioners recognised that these service touchpoints offered potentially useful ways to access women and children who have experienced violence but who may otherwise be unable to seek help (see further Pfitzner, Fitz-Gibbon and True, 2020). Victorian practitioners also reported that their organisations had created new alert systems for women to signal when they need support. These alerts include the use of code words in telephone and text communication as well as physical signals.

Service innovation during COVID-19 suggests that more services could potentially be delivered remotely to ensure wider service accessibility and client visibility. Because none of the current innovated service models have been evaluated while being implemented during the two waves of COVID-19 stage 3 restrictions, it is important to consider their effectiveness in improving regional, rural and remote service accessibility in the form of service trials, accompanied by evaluation research to establish the evidence base necessary to inform future utilisation of technology facilitated service delivery. Work done prior to the pandemic in the UK by Robinson (2017) suggests that telephone contacting (instead of face-to-face visits) in one police force area, and domestic abuse complainants, results in improved satisfaction levels in service delivery for the latter.

The Victorian Government should invest in building the evidence base on the efficacy of family and domestic violence remote service provision in order to support interventions that demonstrably work to increase protection. While it would need to be established whether technology-facilitated service provision can ensure effective client engagement, support and perpetrator accountability, learnings from service provision under COVID-19 restrictions may be able to inform technology facilitated service provision trials in regional, rural and remote communities beyond the pandemic. These trials could include remote access to:

- Specialist family violence/ victim support services;
- Culturally specific family violence specialist services;

- Community legal services for victims and perpetrators;
- Men's Behaviour Change Programs/ casework; and
- Opportunities for swifter court appearances through access to technology facilitated mention dates in rural and regional settings with limited court sitting days.

IMPACT ON THE WELLBEING OF PRACTITIONERS RESPONDING TO WOMEN EXPERIENCING VIOLENCE

Our research in Victoria since the beginning of the pandemic has revealed the risk of losing the essential workers on the frontlines of our family violence response, as a result of overwhelming workloads and potential burn out. The change in service delivery to largely remote formats, has required frontline workers providing crisis counselling and conducting risk assessment and planning with women experiencing violence to do so from home.

Several respondents to our Victorian survey reported that changes to the mode of service delivery as a result of COVID-19 restrictions have increased clinician stress and raised new challenges associated with setting practitioners up to work from home (Pfitzner, Fitz-Gibbon and True, 2020). Acknowledging that these services have typically not been delivered solely remotely, nor have workers typically been based from home (either completely or partially), the move required at the start of the COVID-19 restriction period represented a significant adjustment and cost for many services and individual practitioners. In addition to the breakdown of barriers between work and home, practitioners identified the additional toll on their time during this period.

As Victoria continues to navigate its response to the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a need to devote the funding and resources required to ensure the family violence sector can meet the demands of the increasing number of women seeking help from violence while also ensuring the necessary health and wellbeing supports are available for family violence practitioners (Pfitzner, True, Fitz-Gibbon and Meyer, 2020). The specific of what support packages are required should be determined in close consultation with the family violence sector.

We recommend the Victorian Government invests in developing worker wellbeing packages to ensure that the wellbeing of family and domestic violence practitioners working from home.

Summary of Recommendations

It is essential that the Victorian Government continues to demonstrate its commitment to securing women and children's safety from violence during this period of heightened risk. All phases of Victoria's response to the pandemic – stage 3 restrictions and the easing of restrictions – presents risks to women's safety that must be adequately recognised by the Government through sustained funding to the family violence sector and men's services in Victoria and rigorous evaluation of that funding for additional and innovative responses to family violence.

Our submission has made the following nine recommendations:

1. We recommend the Victorian Government introduce additional funding support packages for the family violence sector to allow them to meet increased demand during any forthcoming periods of restrictions and into the easing and recovery periods. This will ensure the sector can provide effective and timely responses to women and children experiencing family violence. We note the importance of timely distribution of any additional funding to the sector.

2. We recommend the Victorian Government consider funding a state-wide study of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on shared care arrangements and the implications for women and children experiencing family violence.
3. We recommend the Victorian Government commits additional immediate and dedicated support to women and children experiencing family violence by devoting funding for securing safe-housing options. We note the importance of timely distribution of this support.
4. The Victorian Government should invest in building the evidence base on the impact and effectiveness of service innovations and remote delivery with perpetrators during the periods of restrictions.
5. The Victorian Government should commit additional funding to the Men's Referral Service (MRS) and to men's behaviour change program providers to ensure these services can adequately cater for increased demand during periods of restrictions, the easing of restrictions and through the recovery period.
6. The Victorian Government should support the development of a national model to ensure that visa status does not limit access to support in the short or medium term, building on the existing evidence base and support state and territory-led efforts to support all those who experience family violence equally.
7. The Victorian Government should embark on a state-wide communication strategy with a diverse range of partners, to ensure communication to all women of their rights and the offer of support and protection irrespective of migration status. This is urgent nationally, but in the context of an extended second lockdown critical for Victoria.
8. The Victorian Government should invest in building the evidence base on the efficacy of family and domestic violence remote service provision in order to support interventions that demonstrably work to increase protection. While it would need to be established whether technology-facilitated service provision can ensure effective client engagement, support and perpetrator accountability, learnings from service provision under COVID-19 restrictions may be able to inform technology facilitated service provision trials in regional, rural and remote communities beyond the pandemic. These trials could include remote access to:
 - Specialist family violence/ victim support services;
 - Culturally specific family violence specialist services;
 - Community legal services for victims and perpetrators;
 - Men's Behaviour Change Programs/ casework; and
 - Opportunities for swifter court appearances through access to technology facilitated mention dates in rural and regional settings with limited court sitting days.
9. We recommend the Victorian Government invests in developing worker wellbeing packages to ensure that the wellbeing of family and domestic violence practitioners working from home.

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Appendix A: Monash Gender and Family Violence Prevention Centre

The Monash Gender and Family Violence Prevention Centre (MGFVPC) is at the forefront of research and education aimed at preventing family violence. The Centre is contributing to transformative social change by providing an evidence base for policy change that better supports and protects those experiencing family violence and addresses the cultural and economic drivers that underpin it. The Centre's track record includes ground-breaking research, engagement with government and civil society stakeholders, and innovative educational offerings.

The Centre's work has had a significant impact on the transformation of policy and practice and has a record of bringing together Monash and international researchers to collaborate with partners in government, social services, legal services, policing and health. Centre members have significant experience working with family violence and criminal justice stakeholders across the public sector and has advanced knowledge of the various processes involved in reviews and evaluations. The team has engaged or worked with a broad range of departments, and non-government organisations and statutory bodies.

The MGFVPC has extensive expertise and a strong track record in researching sensitive topics and engaging with hard-to-access or marginalised groups. Recently completed research projects have included Indigenous women, women from culturally and linguistically diverse communities, women with disabilities who have experienced family violence in all its forms, perpetrators of family violence, and key stakeholders from the family violence and criminal justice system service sectors. The Centre's distinctive approach engages with the full continuum of prevention, including primary prevention (preventing violence before it occurs), secondary prevention (early intervention to stop violence reoccurring), and tertiary intervention and response (to prevent long-term harm from violence). Our research is grounded in qualitative and quantitative methods, combined with a well-developed understanding of the contemporary policy landscape.

Members of the Monash Gender and Family Violence Prevention Centre are engaged in:

- **Australian Research Council funded research** – competitively awarded programs of research that provide independent, high-quality research to advance the national interest, with MGFVPC researchers undertaking major projects on intimate partner homicide and international students and sexual and intimate partner violence
- **Contract research and consultancy** – including on all aspects of family violence, family violence prevention and responses to family violence
- **Policy development** – including on perpetration interventions, risk assessment and risk management, mapping and developing linkages, and collaborations between sectors and between multiple intersecting reforms and reform agendas
- **Evaluations of programs and reforms** – including large-scale multi-sector reforms
- **Workforce capability building** – on family violence prevention for practitioners and policy makers from a wide range of sectors
- **Expert lectures, seminars, industry briefings and opinions on gender and family violence**

For further details about current and recently completed research projects, please visit the [Centre Research webpage](#).