

Gippsland Integrated Family Violence Service Reform Steering Committee

Strategic Plan January 2018 – June 2019

Vision

A future where all people in Gippsland are safe, thriving
and live free from family violence

Mission

Drive the integration of services that respond to family violence at a local area level and oversee reform processes to achieve safety, accountability and choice

Priority 1 - Workforce

Workforce development is a major reform initiative across the state, supported by Victoria's 10 year Industry Plan. The Industry plan identifies four tiers of the workforce:

- 1) Specialist family violence workers (sole or major focus on family violence)
- 2) Workers in core support and intervention agencies (Mandated agencies, including Victoria Police, courts, legal agencies and court services, Corrections Victoria and Child Protection, and other agencies including Child FIRST and Integrated Family Services who work with many families who may be experiencing or are at risk of family violence)
- 3) Workers in mainstream services (including the health-care system (GPs, community health, hospitals), therapeutic services (psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, counsellors, family therapists) and agencies that support financial security, such as Centrelink)
- 4) Workers in universal services (including schools, childcare centres and faith-based institutions)

The Integrated Family Violence Steering Committee (hereafter, the Steering Committee) will continue to support increased capacity across all tiers, with a specific focus on specialist family violence workers, to strengthen the integrated family violence service system in Gippsland.

1. Grow a strong and sustainable family violence sector in Gippsland

Guide, implement and report on workforce development at the regional level, in line with the 10 year Industry plan

Example action: Conduct a staff survey across the Gippsland family violence workforce to map gaps, required skills and to inform future planning

2. Build family violence response capability within an integrated service system

Ensure all four tiers of Gippsland's workforce have access to opportunities for professional development in family violence, thereby supporting all workers in the region's integrated family violence service system to;

- a) have a common understanding of family violence,
- b) consistently identify family violence risk (including those at risk of experiencing or using family violence) and
- c) know what to do with that information, within the bounds of their role.

Example action: Deliver cross sectoral training on specialist family violence topics, i.e. David Mandel 'Safe and Together' training

3. Strengthen and support existing workforce with a focus on staff health and wellbeing

Implement strategies that result in improved wellbeing and connection and that contribute to the valuing and retention of specialist family violence workers across tiers 1 and 2.

Example action: Run a Family Violence Counsellors Network & Men's Behaviour Change and Partner Contact Network to provide training and support to specialist workers

Priority 2 - Regional Focus

As a cross sectoral partnership, the Steering Committee has practical knowledge of local needs, challenges and opportunities in relation to the state reform agenda. This knowledge ensures the state reform agenda remains relevant and appropriate for the Gippsland region and that the Steering Committee continues to respond to and support local experiences.

4. Expand the reach of the committee to be truly representative of the region

Examine the work of the Steering Committee to identify gaps in regional representation. Foster relationships and implement strategies to fill these gaps.

Example action: Review membership of the Regional and Sub Regional committees to ensure all relevant partners are involved from across Gippsland.

5. Enhance the capacity of the Steering Committee for regionally-based and evidence-based advocacy

Establish a program of data collection and/or research on local experiences to provide evidence for effective advocacy work

Example action: Support Master's/PhD students from local tertiary institutions to take part in research projects related to relevant aspects of the family violence system.

Priority 3 - Integration

To improve outcomes and reduce re-traumatisation of those seeking support, all services providing care to those exposed to family violence must work from an integrated perspective, informed by family violence specialist services. This enables holistic, consistent and collaborative care. The Steering Committee works with agencies across the spectrum of response to strengthen integrated family violence service delivery and to improve outcomes for families, women, men and children.

6. Grow and sustain a high quality integrated family violence service system in Gippsland

Lead the roll out of family violence integration reforms in our region (including support and safety hubs, info sharing legislation, MARAM framework, etc.) while supporting the ongoing delivery of high quality, integrated and collaborative family violence support. Strengthen the structural integrity of the regional family violence system by identifying and responding to gaps and ensuring balance across the service delivery sector.

Example action: lead information sharing and give key updates on safety hub development, ensuring Outer Gippsland is up to date and included in communications

7. Deepen collaboration of the Steering Committee with other regional networks and statewide structures to maintain holistic and appropriate integration work across the region

Ensure the work of the Steering Committee remains consistent with and informed by existing partnerships (IFRAG, Homelessness network, Prevention of Men's Violence against Women Steering Committee, Child and Youth Area Partnerships, Victim Survivor Advisory Council, Primary Care Partnerships, Child and Family Service Alliances, etc.), through RIC and Chair representation and ongoing consultation with each network.

Example actions: Identify and act on opportunities for cross sectoral projects, such as the Co-design Partnership forum held in 2016

Priority 4 - Governance

To ensure the ongoing effectiveness and relevance of the Steering Committee, strong governance must remain a focus over the next eighteen months. This includes working with the sub-regional networks to ensure all work of the Steering Committee is based in local knowledge and experience.

8. Strengthen internal processes and structures to ensure the Steering Committee and the sub-regional committees remain collaborative, relevant and effective

Review and update Terms of Reference, Strategic Plan, Membership, Sub-regional committees (Latrobe/Baw Baw, South Gippsland/Bass Coast, Wellington/East Gippsland) and meeting structures to ensure all internal processes support the Steering Committee to achieve strategic outcomes. Define what integration looks like for the sector and the region.

Example action: Complete action plans for all Sub-regional committees, in line with the Steering Committee Strategy plan.

Priority 5 - Leadership

As a well-established, cross sectoral and valued partnership across the region, the Steering Committee plays a leadership role in strengthening integrated family violence practice. At the forefront of the reform agenda, the Steering Committee will also continue to foster an environment for innovation and collaborative strategies that contribute to greater integration.

9. Strengthen the position of the Steering Committee as the leading partnership for family violence reform across the entire Gippsland region

Establish cohesive direction and purpose to guide the work of the Steering Committee with a strong vision, mission and consistent messaging. Promote the strengths and value of the partnership to local stakeholders, peak bodies and to government to highlight opportunities for the Steering Committee to continue leading work in the family violence space.

Example action: Continue advocating to Family Safety Victoria that the Steering Committee is consulted as a partnership with expertise in family violence reform implementation, in relation to local implementation initiatives.

10. Build the capacity of the Steering Committee to influence the statewide reform and implementation agenda from a regional perspective

Identify opportunities to influence and engage relevant government and peak bodies relating to regional gaps, barriers, successes and opportunities. Collect, generate and utilise data to support this engagement.

Example action: Consult regionally with prescribed agencies using the L17 portal to document and feedback difficulties in using and accessing the portal. Seek support and solutions from technical experts to resolve this.

11. Enhance collaborative work and projects that build the evidence base for effective and sustainable integration in Gippsland

Foster programs/projects/research with positive integration outcomes and that demonstrate best practice. Fund and support these pieces of work to qualify for and access ongoing sources of funding.

Example action: Fund ABC program, support with governance and assist to seek and apply for ongoing funding opportunities.