

Federal Government Pre-Budget Submission 2018-2019

Community Migrant Resource Centre
February 2019

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Who we are

The Community Migrant Resource Centre (CMRC) is a not – for profit charitable organisation who has been recognised for over 25 years at a state and National level, as a leader in the area of multicultural resettlement. As a leader within the sector, CMRC aims to provide quality programs for the resettlement of migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and humanitarian entrants in the Greater Western and the Northern Regions of Sydney. It provides services to vulnerable groups such as women, families, youth and seniors as well as disability services to those CALD communities settling in CMRC’s catchment areas always implementing innovative, targeted and inclusive services, programs and events to more than 27,000 clients annually. CMRC also very effectively operates an Intake and Assessment system which receives 14,500 referrals of families and individual people per year linking and connecting individuals with needed services.

As an organisation we understand and recognise the intersect of services delivered to women and families experiencing violence and recognise the need for a more planned and integrated package of service provision for women and families in crisis with limited resources and support.

What we do

CMRC has vast cross cultural resettlement practice experience, extensive experience working with women and families with complex needs and a long history of working in innovative ways utilising trauma informed practices to raise awareness and reduce the incidence of Domestic Violence in The Hills Shire local area. Over the years CMRC has established sound links to the community and strong productive partnerships with a range of service providers, government and non-government organisations and has lead extensive and diverse DV prevention interventions, activities and projects in The Hills Shire local area such as:

- Develop & Implement a range of DV prevention, projects, e.g. the Hills Says No to DV, African Staying Home Leaving Violence.
- Conduct early Intervention programs, focus on the impact and effect on DV on children
- Deliver programs to promote healthy relationships
- Develop & deliver DV education and training programs, at local schools, religious institutions, businesses.
- Conduct education programs on Australia’s Legal System
- Provide Court Support to women of CALD background
- Provide local court visits to community leaders and service providers
- Provide Case Management Safety Planning Strategies for services working with DV clients
- Conduct information & community awareness raising forums e.g. targeting parents, General Practice, ethnic specific population groups.
- Convene/Chair of the Hills Domestic Violence Prevention Network with membership of over 60 organisations.
- Chair the Multicultural Community Network with membership of over 60 partner organisation
- Provide service sector support to a range of organisations in the Hills Shire
- Co-developed and produced resource (Charmed & Dangerous Booklet, DV Prevention Wallet Cards
- Actively support national annual community awareness raising activities such as White Ribbon Day and Hills Parent Forum
- Partnerships with local community organisations to deliver DV forums with the result of forming local women’s group to address family harmony

Raising awareness and reducing the incidence of domestic violence

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Introduction

CMRC would like to thank you for the opportunity to provide a Pre-Budget Submission 2018-2019 under the domestic and family violence subtopic. We welcome and are supportive of the commitment of Federal Government has made to end family and domestic violence and would like to advocate for this to be maintained and increased as domestic and family violence continues to be one of the biggest challenges of our time that requires a growing investment. Domestic violence affects families and individuals across Australia it impacts on all communities regardless of culture, ethnicity, religious belief, social economic status or age. Services struggle keeping the increasing demands and there is a lack of service integration and coordination.

The aim of CMRC submission is to identify key issues relating to domestic and family violence, gaps in service provision and recommend a specific viable comprehensive long term strategy. A strategy that is properly resourced, planned and implemented to ensure the integrated delivery of essential Domestic and Family Violence trauma informed support services, for all women and specialises in the provision of cultural competent services to Culturally and Linguistically Diverse women and families.

Issues & service provision

Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) remains a critical area of concern in Australian communities despite documented reporting of personal, political and social costs. Domestic and Family Violence, is an increasing issue for newly-arrived refugees and emerging communities. For some years, NSW crime statistics indicate domestic violence incidents reported to police are increasing at an alarming level. We understand that women and their children who experience marginalisation by culture, ethnicity and/or uncertainty or fear around visa or immigration status experience heightened vulnerability to DFV.

Research suggests that a resettlement journey forms 'cumulative risk' and is a compounding factor that can make these women vulnerable to imminent violence. With exposure to violence against women (especially as a child), the direct experience of violence (such as child physical or sexual abuse), or long-term exposure to other forms of violence, whether as a child or adult (such as racist violence, lateral or community violence, or situations of armed conflict and war), can in some cases contribute to the normalisation of violence, particularly in the absence of positive alternatives and support to recover from its impacts. Research also highlights the relationship between the refugee and settlement pre-migration experiences that intersects with constructs of tradition, patriarchy and gender. On arrival, CALD women experience liberalising of attitudes towards gender roles, however some CALD men do not accept a shift in power dynamics in a relationship.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics report found one in five women had experienced sexual violence and one in three experience physical violence. Multicultural communities face the biggest challenges in getting help. Women state that they lack knowledge of available services in the community and feel very overwhelmed by the existing complex service systems they are expected to navigate in.

Domestic and family violence continues to be one of the
biggest challenges of our time



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Research shows that women of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) in background face cultural, social and language barriers resulting in a real sense of bewildering and isolation. The 2016 Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence also found that women of CALD background are amongst the groups with a greater risk of family violence.

In all communities, domestic and family violence is hidden because of secrecy, fear and shame. In some cases, cultural differences are used to justify, hide or explain the abuse. Domestic and family violence broadly, includes physical and sexual violence, threats, intimidation, emotional abuse, economic control, isolation, and belittling behaviours. These factors are a major driver of both poverty and homelessness among women and children. It is well known that domestic violence is a significant influence for both homelessness and child protection factors.

The CMRC is particularly aware that women and families who may be recent migrants/refugees may be afraid of the consequences of reporting domestic and family violence. Research indicates that refugee women are also more vulnerable to family abuse due to increasing economic stressors, cultural adaptation, alcohol/substance addiction, miscommunication, inter-generational conflict, and shifting gender roles as contributing to the impact of many of these resettling communities.

Investing in prevention early intervention & crisis support

Recommendation

CMRC recommends the Federal Government to continue to make the eradication of domestic and family violence a top national priority and work collaboratively across sectors, including the community sector to ensure that women and families impacted by domestic and family violence receive the support they need.

CMRC would like to make a specific recommendation to the Federal Government and that is to invest in the establishment and provision of a Specialised Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Information & Referral Women's Hub Service Model in The Hills Shire District. The creation of a DFV Information and Referral Women's Hub will be a response to identified needs from The Hills Shire women, local services and community for coordination between the traditional domestic violence support service system and the settlement and community service support system. This Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Information & Referral Women's Hub Service Model will offer the following benefits:

Ensuring that women and families impacted by domestic
and family violence receive the support they need

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Benefits for women & families

Women experiencing DFV will be able to access valuable information, specific DFV support services to address current problems prevent escalation of these and foster a protective environment. CMRC believes that this Hub Model can also provide a soft entry and pathways to other existing CMRC support programs such as CMRC Early Intervention Parenting programs. Women have identified that when choosing to leave violent relationships they often need to consider their children wellbeing, connecting these women to other CMRC existing programs would be of great benefit as well as to offer to connect women and families to other local resources. The Women's Hub will operate as a one stop shop service model it will offer an easy entry point of access. A soft entry to culturally appropriate and sensitive services that are non-judgemental, respectful, safe and respectful of all women's rights. An initial comprehensive holistic assessment will be conducted by the centres intake worker to assess the particular needs of the woman and will be triage to one or more of the four service streams.

CMRC will be the lead agency working collaboratively with a range of other relevant organisations, such as The Sanctuary The Hills Women's Shelter, The Lisa Harnum Foundation, TAFE, University, and Local Health District.

Benefits for Government

Investing on this Hub Model could result in economic cost savings for the Government. It is estimated that violence against women costs Australia \$21.7 billion each year, with the government carrying more than a third of the cost burden, Price Waterhouse Cooper (2015). The Hub Model will address the need to enhanced efficiency and enhance integrated service delivery to a need for DFV Information and Referral services in the Hills Shire Location. Currently although there are valuable funded DFV services which have been operating in the Hills Shire location we are we can also identify a fragmented delivery of services that may not always achieve the best outcomes for women or the best value for money. CMRC believes that by implementing a Women's Hub Model based in The Hills Shire can facilitate a long term strategy that combines service delivery in one single location.

Through strategic centralisation the Hub Model will afford unique opportunities to maximize efficiency and effectiveness. As well as shift of resource allocation to support the implementation of early intervention strategies, to prevent problem and crisis from getting worse assisting women and families with complex needs. The improvements in service efficiency achieve have the potential to result in financial savings. Create linkages between community, government and non-government services, shared services, more effective use of space, can reduce overheads.

Facilitating a long term strategy that combines service delivery in one single location



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Action Needed

Establish a One Stop DFV Prevention Information & Referral Women's Hub:



INTAKE: Initial holistic assessment conducted. Depending on the specific needs of the woman she is then triage to a particular stream or streams.

STREAM 1: Emergency relief includes: community aid, food bank, electricity vouchers, gas vouchers, emergency phones (Telstra Scheme), mortgage relief, transport financial assistance, financial counselling. The women will learn skills to assist them to gain economic and social independence.

STREAM 2: Case Management, Social Support, Information & Referral to a range of services e.g. Women & family Law Services, Children Services.

STREAM 3: Housing Support & Welfare Benefits, Information on affordable housing, crisis accommodation, social housing, rental market & well as information on welfare benefits.

STREAM 4: Vocational Support, women specific vocational support which includes education and training that focus on providing women with skills for work. The increase access to educational and training opportunities will empower women and increase their level of confidence.

STREAM 5: Physical & Mental Health Services and general, well – being programs. The women will learn strategies to identify and better cope with symptoms of stress, anxiety, depression and learn where to go for support and assistance.

The increase access to educational and training opportunities will empower women and increase their level of confidence

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Women Training Education Creative Studio

The Women's Hub model will develop and apply a cultural development strategy for women clients. It will develop and deliver a range of community cultural development projects through (art, music, writing, video, drama) to create opportunities for all women but with a focus on CALD women who may experience access barriers and disadvantage, to express themselves, tell their own stories, share their experiences, and connect in a safe nurturing environment meet with other women and collectively build empowering community dialogues.

Engaging women through arts and cultural activities, the centre will support women to build confidence, gain a sense of connection with other women to create sustainable support networks. Women will embark in creative processes that will produce multiple benefits, build relationships, capacity to cooperatively problem solve together, share resources and re build social capital.

A multipurpose flexible space designed to accommodate a range of practices is required:

Empowering CALD women through the provision of information, education, child care support & creative initiatives. CALD women will be able to develop, knowledge, skills and confidence.

The space will be suitable for:

- Conducting young women mentoring program
- Supporting women job seekers, getting job ready,
- Be money smart
- Hosting art activities, opportunities for self-expression, developing social skills, creative thinking, confidence building.

Conclusion

The above recommendation calls for the establishment of One Stop DFV Prevention Information & Referral Women's Hub Model of Service designed to ensure that the 2018-2019 Budget allocations and strategies implemented work toward addressing the DFV identified needs of all women including those women from CALD women and addresses the service delivery gaps discussed in CMRC submission. CMRC believes that there is great opportunity for the Government to address many of the access barriers to DFV support services and challenges experienced by women in particular the disadvantage experience by multicultural women in the Hills Shire who may be at risk of harm and experience much inequality.

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Budget

Please find below the details of the total budget.

The Hills- DFV Women Hub

	TOTAL YR1	TOTAL YR2	TOTAL
Income	\$250,000.00	\$250,000.00	
Wages and on-costs			
Wages - Program Manager	\$65,854.88	\$67,830.53	\$133,685.41
Wages - DV worker	\$49,110.88	\$50,584.21	\$99,695.09
Wages - DV worker	\$9,110.88	\$50,584.21	\$99,695.09
On-costs	\$26,252.26	\$27,039.83	\$53,292.09
Total wages	\$190,328.90	\$196,038.77	\$86,367.67
Project costs			
Venue hire	\$1,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$3,000.00
Staff training	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$2,000.00
Pulicity and Promotion	\$5,000.00	\$3,500.00	\$8,500.00
Travel	\$3,000.00	\$2,500.00	\$5,500.00
Catering	\$6,221.10	\$5,011.23	\$11,232.33
Program cost	\$10,000.00	\$9,500.00	\$19,500.00
Total project cost	\$26,721.10	\$23,011.23	\$49,732.33
Overheads			
Project management fee	\$25,000.00	\$25,000.00	\$50,000.00
Computer costs	\$5,000.00	\$3,500.00	\$8,500.00
Insurance	\$450.00	\$450.00	\$900.00
Office expense	\$2,500.00	\$2,000.00	\$4,500.00
Total overheads	\$32,950.00	\$30,950.00	\$63,900.00
TOTAL	\$250,000.00	\$250,000.00	\$500,000.00
GST	\$25,000.00	\$25,000.00	\$25,000.00
TOTAL INC GST	\$275,000.00	\$275,000.00	\$525,000.00