

Senate Community Affairs Committee
ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
SOCIAL SERVICES PORTFOLIO
2016-2017 Additional Estimates Hearings

Outcome Number: 2.1 Families and Communities

Question No: SQ17-000258

Topic: National Action Plan

Hansard page: Written

Senator Louise Pratt asked:

Each of the 6 outcomes in the national plan have a Measure of Success. Can you advise what progress (over the past 6 years) has been achieved against each of these measures?

Answer:

The Commonwealth Government, in partnership with the states and territories and the community as a whole, is committed to leading a strong national approach to reduce violence against women and their children, as outlined in the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022 (National Plan).

The National Plan sets out an ambitious framework for action to respond better to and support women and children who have experienced (or are at risk of) violence, to hold perpetrators to account for their actions and to prevent violence from occurring in the first place.

The primary sources to measure progress against the six outcomes are the Personal Safety Survey (PSS) and the National Community Attitudes towards Violence against Women and their Children Survey (NCAS). PSS 2016 is currently in the field and NCAS 2017 will be in the field from June 2017. Results from those waves will provide the first real indication of progress on a national level.

Data being developed through the implementation of the National Data Collection and Reporting Framework (DCRF) provides an increasingly accurate picture of prevalence, justice responses and deaths related to family and domestic violence and the consistency and comparability of this data are improving all the time.

The Department is working with the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and the Australian Bureau of Statistics on a cross-sectional data project which will gradually strengthen data collections and options for data linkages across Australia. Measurement of a sustained reduction in violence against women and improved outcomes for women and their children will improve over the next six years.

In addition, there has been a major investment in front-line services to support women experiencing violence and their children. For example, 1800RESPECT is the national online and telephone counselling and support service for people affected by domestic and family violence and sexual assault. 1800RESPECT has grown to become an integral part of the wider service system and delivers new and innovative ways to support professionals and people experiencing, or at risk of, domestic and family violence and sexual assault, and their family and friends. The 1800RESPECT service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and now includes the telephone and online counselling, support for frontline workers, the digital platform such as the website, webinars, and the DAISY application.

Other initiatives include Our Watch's work in primary prevention, training provided by DV-Alert across a range of sectors to improve service responses to victims of violence and the significant investment in research through funding for Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety, including a specific research stream on perpetrators of violence.

This is supported by a \$30 million national campaign to reduce violence against women and their children. The campaign was launched on 20 April 2016 and is jointly funded by the Australian, state and territory governments. The campaign takes a primary prevention approach and aims to help break the cycle of violence by encouraging adults to reflect on their attitudes and have conversations about respect with young people.

Indications from early tracking research suggest that real behaviour and attitudinal changes are occurring as a result of the campaign. 67 per cent of all influencers – such as parents, family members, teachers, coaches and employers – have seen the campaign, and of those, 68 per cent have taken action. This action includes things like reconsidering the way they behave towards others and talking with a young person about respect.

One of the key messages of the campaign – that respect towards women is linked to violence against women – has also cut through. 79 per cent of Australians agree that violence against women starts with disrespect against women, up from 68 per cent before the campaign began.