



## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, AGEING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES  
BEC CODY MLA (CHAIR), VICKI DUNNE MLA (DEPUTY CHAIR), CAROLINE LE COUTEUR MLA

### Inquiry into referred 2017–18 Annual and Financial Reports ANSWER TO QUESTION ON NOTICE

Asked by Elizabeth Kikkert

Ref: CSD Annual Report, output class 2.7, Safer Families

In relation to: key recommendations made by the Canberra Multicultural Women's Forum Consultation Initiative for Family and Domestic Violence

1. What community-based initiatives dealing with Family and Domestic Violence (FDV) focus on men from CALD backgrounds?
2. What measures will the ACT Government take to support community-based initiatives focused on men from CALD backgrounds working with other men on FDV-related issues, in terms of:
  - a. Prevention education
  - b. Intervention
3. Are there any plans to establish a fully accessible refuge with wraparound services for women and children from CALD backgrounds? If yes, what is the current status of its establishment; if not, why not?
4. What further consultations will the ACT Government undertake in regards to specific forms of violence, which may manifest in some CALD communities in the ACT?
5. What communities were not consulted as part of the Canberra Multicultural Women's Forum Consultation Initiative for Family and Domestic Violence?
  - c. When does the ACT Government plan to consult with these communities, and publish a report on subsequent findings?

Minister Berry: The answer to the Member's question is as follows:

1. The Migrant and Refugee Settlement Service (MARSS) runs a Men's Outreach Workshop focusing on community awareness and educational measures to prevent Family and Domestic Violence (FDV) among CALD communities. The main themes underpinning these workshops include building respectful relationships, addressing the drivers of FDV and understanding gender inequality and power relations.

There are also several community based behaviour change programs which operate in the ACT, which are inclusive of men from CALD backgrounds. These programs acknowledge the specific challenges that impact men from multicultural backgrounds while taking a consistent approach on respecting women and preventing violence in domestic and intimate partner settings. Examples of behaviour change programs currently operating include, *Everyman's Working with the Man Program* and Domestic Violence Crisis Service's *Room 4 Change*.

2. The ACT Government funds services operating community based initiatives related to FDV prevention and intervention to ensure that the diverse needs of all CALD men are integrated into these programs.
  - a) The ACT Government ensures a focus on the needs of the CALD community in FDV community based initiatives by including mandatory reporting in service funding agreements on 'initiatives that improve engagement with CALD services to contribute to improved outcomes'.
  - b) The ACT Government ensures that services providing FDV interventions have staff who are culturally competent by also mandating this requirement in service funding agreements. Staff must undertake cultural competence training to ensure that any FDV interventions are implemented in a linguistically and culturally appropriate way.
3. The CALD community were a focus group included in consultations undertaken in the lead up to last year's Housing and Homelessness Summit. Consultations highlighted the extra vulnerability CALD women face in the community and their increased risk of homelessness. A major contributing factor to this was the limited services available to women with uncertain immigration status.

An action that came out of the ACT Housing Strategy 2018 to combat this was the \$1.8 million committed by the Government to establish a new service to support members of the CALD community with uncertain immigration status in need of housing assistance. This funding will provide medium term accommodation and support to gain community connections, employment, and education to enable people to sustain their accommodation in the longer term, while their immigration status is being resolved.

All organisations funded to provide accommodation and support to women and children under the ACT Specialist Homelessness Sector are required to provide evidence of initiatives to improve engagement with culturally and linguistically diverse communities. Domestic and family violence continues to be a major driver of homelessness with around 30 per cent of specialist homelessness services clients identifying this as a primary reason for seeking assistance. In 2017–18, the ACT Government provided \$4.6 million to eight Specialist Homelessness Services to provide accommodation and support to women (with or without children) experiencing domestic violence, including two dedicated crisis accommodation services for those in need of an immediate safety response. These services provide significant support for women and children from CALD backgrounds.

4. The ACT Government will undertake further consultations through work with the Family Safety Hub. Insights gathered, which led to the establishment of the Hub, identified CALD communities in the ACT as a particularly vulnerable and at risk group. This was attributed to additional barriers faced by women in CALD communities, such as language and access, and specific forms of domestic and family violence faced by this community.

The consultations raised a series of challenges which will be further workshopped by the community and government sectors. The workshops will aim to find innovative solutions to ensure a better service response to at risk and vulnerable groups, and to improve service design and delivery.



The ACT Government will also consult with children and young people on their experience of FDV and how this has impacted their lives. CALD children and young people will be included in this discussion. This work is in response to Recommendation 1 of the DVPC Final Report on the Extraordinary Meeting which focused on the needs of children and young people impacted by FDV. The consultations will be managed in partnership with the Children and Young People Commissioner and the Office of the Coordinator General for Family Safety. The consultations are planned to commence in the first half of 2019.

5. On 27 September 2018, the Minister for Women launched the final report of a project developed and delivered by the Canberra Multicultural Women's Forum (CMWF). This report highlights the key findings obtained from consultations undertaken by the CMWF with respect to particular CALD communities in the ACT. Specifically, these consultations by the CMWF focused on how CALD women rated the accessibility, effectiveness and cultural relevancy of service delivery relating to DFV.

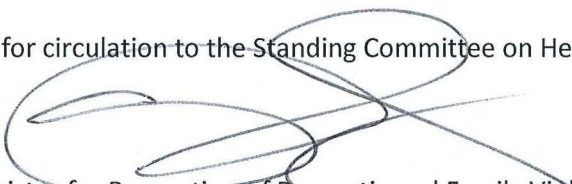
The consultation initiative was supported by the Government through \$15,000 awarded to CMWF in a 2016-17 Women's Safety Grant.

The report by the CMWF states that consultations focused on communities based on ACT Government population statistics, with the largest and/or fastest growing CALD community language groups. The report notes that communities consulted at the forum were Arabic, Spanish, Chinese, African continent, South East Asian, South Asian and Pacific Islander. The report also states that large CALD communities in the ACT that were not consulted were Italians, Greeks, Croatians, Germans and French as the specific emphasis for consultations was to focus on fast growing CALD communities in the ACT.

- a) The ACT Government is committed to ensuring that all the diverse voices in the community are captured. In the lead up to the 2018 Multicultural Summit, a range of consultations occurred across several CALD communities. Key themes focused on service delivery that is responsive to the needs of the CALD community and ensuring positive outcomes for particular at risk and vulnerable community members. The insights gathered from these communities informed discussions at the Summit and will be considered in the preparation of the next action plan under the Multicultural Framework.

Approved for circulation to the Standing Committee on Health, Ageing and Community Services

Signature:



Date: 29/11/18

By the Minister for Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence, Ms Yvette Berry