


NASA SV

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF SERVICES
AGAINST SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Annual Report 2021-2022



**HELP
HOPE
CHANGE**

#SVAM2022
#HelpHopeChange
#SexualViolence

Funded by

Queensland
Government

What is
one thing you
would like to
CHANGE?

“ Provide immediate
therapy and help victims.
More awareness for long term help.
Too many limitations to support –
need more counsellors. ”
WE CANNOT WAIT!
Anonymous survivor

 
Queensland Sexual Assault Network



NASASV Chair Report

The 2021 - 2022 year.

The National Association of Services Against Sexual Violence (NASASV) works to further the shared aims of services for those who have experienced sexual violence, with the ultimate goal of eliminating sexual violence in the community. The Association understands that:

- Sexual violence is an abuse of power which is most often committed by men against women, children and other men.
- Sexual violence is both a consequence and reinforcement of power disparities between individuals and in society. Attitudes, beliefs, laws and social structures which allow or support the power of one group over another, or which allows or supports violence, contributes to the problem of sexual violence in society.

NASASV is committed to addressing inequalities in society which may perpetuate sexual violence including: gender, race, culture, age, ability, religion, sexuality and class.

Sexual violence includes a range of violent behaviours, including unwanted touching, sexual harassment and intimidation, coerced sexual assault and rape and other physical violence and threat to life.

Sexual violence can have a range of impacts on the individual and society. These can include physical, emotional, economic, social, psychological, legal, health, political and spiritual consequences. The impacts can be compounded by factors such as gender, race, culture, age, religion, ability, sexuality, language and class.

Empowerment of those who have experienced sexual violence is essential to redress the impact of sexual violence.

Services can work towards empowerment by:

- Ensuring that the views of those who have experienced sexual violence are sought and used to influence service provision.
- Promoting the rights of those who have experienced sexual violence through the provision of information, options and choices, and
- Ensuring that decisions about accessing services are in the hands of the person seeking assistance.

Services against sexual violence are committed to the principles of access and equity and aim to reflect the diversity of the communities they serve.

Sexual violence is a crime against the individual and society. All sectors of the community, including government, should work towards the elimination of sexual violence.

In assisting those who have experienced sexual violence, services will recognise that the mental health impact of sexual violence is a traumatic response and provide services within a trauma specialist framework.

Services provided will be:

- Evidence based and best practice
- Provided within a framework of quality assurance and quality improvement, and
- Be systematically evaluated.

The Key objectives of the NASASV

1. To co-ordinate the sharing of information, skills and resources between services and state and territory networks on all aspects of service provision and co-ordination.
2. To assist governments in developing policies for building safer communities.
3. To lobby and negotiate with Commonwealth, State and Territory governments, government departments and other relevant organisations on issues of common concern to sexual assault service providers and those who are affected by sexual violence.
4. To promote understanding of sexual violence in the context of gender and power relations.
5. To promote equity of access to services for all those who have experienced sexual violence, recognising that women and children are the predominant group, paying particular attention to those most marginalised on the basis of their race, culture, gender, disability, age, language, sexual orientation and geographic location.
6. To promote community awareness of sexual violence and its personal and social consequences at a state, territory, national and international level and to support and facilitate the community education, community development and primary prevention role of services at a local level.
7. To research service provision issues for those who have experienced sexual violence.
8. To provide information on training development and resources to services and to promote high quality training and skills development for workers through liaison with relevant national, state and territory training bodies and participation in the development of accredited training.
9. To monitor the range and diversity of service models and promote, through the development of best practice models, the best possible services for survivors.
10. To organise and facilitate national meetings, conferences and seminars.
11. To undertake any other activities necessary to fulfil the purpose of the organisation.
12. To actively seek to engage with newly emerging sexual assault services.

Research tells us, that approximately 1 in 4 females & 1 in 6 males experience sexual assault by the time they reach adulthood and that a further 1 in 5 women experience sexual violence after the age of 15. An estimated 2.9 million Australians have experienced sexual violence over the course of their lifetime.

In addition, recent ANROWS data suggests that the lifetime prevalence of sexual violence has been underestimated. The report - *A life course approach to determining the prevalence and impact of sexual violence in Australia: Findings from the Australian Longitudinal Study on Women's Health* reveals that:

- 51 per cent of women in their twenties have experienced sexual violence
- 34 per cent of women in their forties
- 26 per cent of women aged 68 to 73

Sexual assault services respond to the needs of people who have experienced sexual violence in their homes, in public places and institutions, at the hands of family, friends, strangers, and public or authority figures as well as their partners. Approximately 80% of sexual assaults are committed by someone known to the victim, sexual violence often occurs during domestic violence.

Sexual violence is a gross invasion of an individual's human rights and in many cases it is a crime. However, the resultant trauma can result in lost quality of life and life opportunities that contribute to negative consequences and outcomes such as mental illness or substance abuse.

NASASV is focused on the long-term outcomes of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and its role in producing a way forward to respond to and change the values and practices that have led to ongoing sexual abuse and violations of human rights. Sexual Assault Services across Australia have an advocacy role in bringing about this change and the expertise to assist Government and other organisations and institutions to drive this change process through to a more positive future.

Some of the activities which NASASV have undertaken during 2021/2022.

- Membership representation on the Australian Government Department of Education, Skills and Employment, Respectful Relationships Reference Panel.
- Engagement with relevant national organisations including ANROWS (National Centre of Excellence) regarding the national research agenda and assessment of research proposals.
- Our Watch (Foundation) regarding primary prevention consultation.
- Engagement in a range of national consultations under the National Partnership to Eliminate Violence Against Women and Children.
- ANROWS – Practitioner Engagement Group Consultations.
- Consultation with the federal government in relation to the National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022 – 2032 Membership of the National Plan Advisory Group. This consultation involves the provision of specialist expertise to inform the achievement of change and eliminate sexual violence, domestic and family violence.

All Australian Governments have committed to the National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022 – 2032 (National Plan). The National Plan will support a renewed national approach to ending violence against women and children.

This includes setting the national policy agenda to guide the work of states and territories, safety experts and front line services, and engaging with victim-survivors, to deliver meaningful change.

The ten-year National Plan will be underpinned by two five year action plans and a dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan is being developed by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Council on family, domestic and sexual violence.

The National Plan Advisory Group (NPAG) provides expert advice to inform development of the underpinning Action Plans to inform Government in implementing and overseeing the National Plan.

The Department of Social Services funded NASASV in 2020/2021 to review the National Standards of Practice Manual for Services against Sexual Violence (Second Edition) to reflect outcomes in best practice in primary prevention and service provider responses.

NASASV has developed the National Standards of Practice Manual for Services Against Sexual Violence (Third Edition). These Standards were developed in consultation and collaboration with the Gendered Violence Research Network, University New South Wales. Consultation was conducted with an Expert Advisory Panel and Services across the nation. The Standards are available on the NASASV website.

The Commonwealth Attorney General's Department, National Office for Child Safety (NOCS) has engaged the National Association of Services Against Sexual Violence (NASASV) to develop a Best Practice Guidance Resource for service providers that engage with victims and survivors of child sexual abuse. This Guidance Resource will align with the Standards of Practice Manual for Services Against Sexual Violence (3rd edition) (NASASV Standards) but will focus specifically on service provision to victims and survivors of child sexual abuse. NASASV has again contracted the Gendered Violence Research Network (GVRN), UNSW Sydney, to project manage and partner with them to develop the Guidance Resource.

The sexual assault sector encompasses both Government and non-Government services with a range of different client groups, service profiles and practice frameworks. There are significant ongoing changes and challenges in the Australian context in relation to the delivery of sexual assault services.

It is with pleasure that I submit this Annual Report. I would like to thank the members of the Association and the members of the NASASV Board, and the Executive for their contribution to the organisation over the past year.

Joanne Sheehan-Paterson OAM
Chair – National Association of Services Against Sexual Violence
November 2022



SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Overview

Yarrow Place Rape and Sexual Assault Service continues to be the only specialised sexual assault service in South Australia. Yarrow Place is a state government service of SA Health, attached to the Women's and Children's Health Network and provides health care, forensic examinations, counselling and training.

Highlights and Achievements

Yarrow Place has seen an upward trend in the requests for counselling services since 2017. The service was provided with additional funding, for two years, from the Office for Women to alleviate the waiting times for people requesting counselling. Most clients are now able to be seen within 2 weeks of their request and 100% of clients are seen within 6 weeks of a request.

The My Place program, which is an intensive therapeutic care program for young people in care or post care who are sexually exploited, at risk of pregnancy or pregnant with the risk of child removal, was nominated for a Women and Children's Health Network award.

Partnerships and Collaborations

Yarrow Place is a member of Embolden which is the State peak body for Sexual, Domestic and Family Violence and has members on the Board to represent sexual assault. Embolden co-ordinates state events such as Reclaim the Night and the DFV Vigil etc

Yarrow Place is participating in two areas of research with Flinders University. The first is a research project exploring Systems Fatigue, that is, how complex systems such as the criminal justice system or child protection system impact on social workers working in sexual assault. The second is the evaluation of the My Place Program which is an intensive therapeutic care program for young people in care or post care who are sexually exploited, at risk of pregnancy or pregnant with the risk of child removal.

Key State Issues / Challenges

South Australia does not have a specialist sexual assault service for youth 13 – 15 who are sexually assaulted outside of a 'child protection mandate', for example, a young person sexually assaulted at a party by an friend or by a stranger where there are no ongoing child protection issues.

Katrina Dee
Director Youth and Women's Safety and Wellbeing Division



WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Sexual assault services in Western Australia have continued to experience increasing levels of demand throughout 2021-2022. Due to the limited number of funded sexual assault services, timely access to specialist services is a genuine concern, particularly for victim-survivors in regional areas. It is nonetheless encouraging to see a number of developments in progress within the sexual violence sector in WA which in time will result in improved policy and system responses.

Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Strategy

In September 2021, the Office of the Commissioner of Victims of Crime and the Department of Communities announced their joint leadership in the development of Western Australia's first Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Strategy. The WA sexual violence sector effectively campaigned for the development of this strategy. The purpose of the Strategy is to improve outcomes for victim-survivors of sexual violence, focusing on primary prevention, support for recovery, and holding perpetrators to account.

In November 2021, the Department of Justice, Department of Communities, and the Centre for Women's Safety and Wellbeing hosted a consultative forum to engage with organisations that work to address sexual violence in Western Australia to discuss consultation and community engagement for developing the strategy. A public consultation process is being developed based on the findings of the consultative forum. An announcement will be made when the consultation process opens.

A Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Reference Group has been established to guide the consultation process and the development of the Strategy. The group is made up of people from both government and non-government organisations with expertise in the prevention of, and response to, sexual violence for diverse cohorts, alongside individuals with a lived experience of sexual violence. The Centre for Women's Safety and Wellbeing sits on this group. The Strategy is expected to be developed by the end of 2024.

There have been delays with the project due to COVID-19 and competing work demands for the Victims of Crime Office and the scale of the response to the coercive control consultation.

A Literature Review was undertaken based on feedback from the Sexual Violence Consultative Forum that there is a well-established evidence base in this area which should inform the Strategy, and that this research should not be unnecessarily duplicated.

The Project Team contracted the Gender Research Network (GRN) at Curtin University to undertake the Literature review. The Review is being led by Dr Samantha Owen and Professor Therese Jefferson.

The GRN also developed a series of eight research workshops (including pre-reading material), presented by various academics, on their area of expertise. Workshops that have been held to date:

- Refugee and migrant communities and the COVID-19 project – culturally safe programs
- Sexual violence and coercive control in refugee and migrant communities in WA
- Sexual violence in digitally networked publics – argues that online sexual violence is not a distinct phenomenon outside of the broader social context
- Sexual violence in the workplace
- A case study: Implementing Sexual Violence Legislation and Policy in Jamaica – implementation methods for an intersectional approach
- Sexual violence and Indigenous women in Australia

A final report based on the workshop findings will be written up by a GRN Research Assistant.

The Strategy will sit within a complex policy environment and will need to align with various other state and federal strategies, inquiries and reviews. The Project Team will map this environment.

The draft Consultation Plan is high level but will be further developed by findings from the Literature Review, and learnings from the coercive control consultation process.

Sexual assault support services review

In partnership with the sexual assault support services sector and the Centre for Women’s Safety and Wellbeing, North Metropolitan Health Service is undertaking a sexual assault support services review. Priorities for the review include:

- Equity of access across WA
- Reduction in waitlists
- Trauma-informed practice
- Crisis response
- Innovative ways of delivering services
- Consumer Focused
- Best practice
- Legislation and Reform
- Attracting and retaining appropriate staffing

The review is expected to commence in early 2023.

Child Sexual Abuse Therapeutic Services – Strategic Commissioning Process

The Department of Communities commenced a strategic commissioning process for the Children’s Sexual Abuse Therapeutic Services and Indigenous Healing Services in October 2021 with this process due to produce a commissioning plan by early 2023. This process has involved

- a literature scan focussing on best practice responses for children, young people, and adults, who have experienced child sexual abuse including consideration of service models, supports for the families of survivors and key infrastructure (or systems responses) for supporting improved outcomes.
- scoping of relevant and available data to inform a profile of need and unmet demand; and
- facilitation of a series of Design Labs with service providers to undertake client journey mapping across a variety of contexts, share findings and to agree community, client and service outcomes, preferred service models and key infrastructure required to support operations.

Sexual Violence Expert Advisory Group

The Sexual Violence Expert Advisory Group continues to meet. The Group is co-chaired by the Centre for Women's Safety and Wellbeing and Allambee and brings together diverse knowledge, skills, and expertise to:

- Work with practitioners, stakeholders and leaders to bring sexual violence issues into the public policy arena
- Coordinate and participate in advocacy and action to reform policy and improve the service system; and
- Scale up and embed practice development and innovation across the continuum from primary prevention to recovery.

The SVEAG is focused on current and emerging issues and opportunities for systemic reform related to sexual violence in Western Australia. This also includes issues and opportunities raised by members as they present themselves. Current activities are organised around the following key areas:

- Development of the Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Strategy
- Review of Sexual Assault Support Services
- Review of Sexual Offences and Consent Legislation
- Review of the Experiences of Victims of Sexual Offences in the Criminal Justice System
- Improved prevention of and responses to sexual violence, including sexual harassment in the workplace

Lived Experience Advisory Group

The Centre for Women's Safety and Wellbeing established its first Lived Experience Advisory Group. There are fifteen women in this group with lived experience of domestic, family and sexual violence. It has been a very productive start with members engaged in the government's commissioning work and in WA's consultation on legislative responses to coercive control.

Other News

***Enough is Enough* report**

In June 2022, the WA Parliamentary Inquiry handed down a final report titled *Enough is Enough* from its inquiry into sexual harassment against women in the fly-in fly-out (FIFO) mining industry, with 24 recommendations for government and the industry which urge stronger action to better support women working in the industry. In September 2022, the WA Government released their response to the *Enough is Enough* report: supporting 11 of the 15 recommendations made to government, supporting in principle the other four recommendations, and noting the 9 recommendations made to industry.

Drink spiking protocol

The WA Police Sex Crime Division, in partnership with SARC, ChemCentre WA and RPH Emergency Department representatives, has developed a drink spiking protocol that will provide self-administered test kits at Police Station front counters to screen for 600+ drugs/metabolites in suspected cases.

The WA Police Sex Crime Division is also currently reviewing the response to sexual assault complainants and the investigative interviewing skills of officers as they consider the implementation of recorded interviews.

The Sex Crime Division will provide support for a PhD project between 2022 to 2025. This will include Specialist Investigative Interview (SII) personnel undertaking investigative interview training between April-October 2022. This training will comprise:

- Six online modules totalling 12 hours per officer;
- A workshop and three mock interviews which staff will attend by video conference;
- Three assessment mock interviews per officer to be conducted pre and post training.

Also, to enable a review of investigative responses to be conducted, the unit will supply 650 de-identified case summary reports of adult sexual assault complainants for the 2020 calendar year. They will also assist in the recruitment of stakeholders (police and non-police) for the purpose of focus group discussions about investigative interview reform.

Legislative review of the sexual offence and consent laws

In February 2022, the Attorney General, Hon. Jon Quigley, and the Minister for Women's Interests, Hon. Simone McGurk, announced the Law Reform Commission of Western Australia's legislative review of the sexual offence and consent laws and the Department of Justice's review of victim-survivors experiences of the criminal justice system. The final report of the former is due to be released in July 2023 and the latter in May 2024.

Anti-discrimination laws

The Law Reform Commission of Western Australia's (LRCWA) final report makes 163 recommendations to make the State's anti-discrimination laws fair and effective.

In 2019, the Attorney General asked the LRCWA to provide advice and recommendations to Government on possible amendments to enhance and update the Act.

There was overwhelming public interest in the project, with an extensive discussion paper published in 2021. In response, the LRCWA received 995 written submissions and undertook seven online and in-person public consultation sessions.

The Government has broadly accepted the recommendations with further consider to the extent their implementation however several key reforms are expected to be included in the Bill including:

1. removing the outdated "disadvantage test" for sexual harassment complainants, in line with the Community Development and Justice Standing Committee's report into sexual harassment against women in the FIFO mining industry - "Enough is Enough".
2. strengthening protections for LGBTIQ+ staff and students in religious schools.
3. providing anti-discrimination protections to those who are trans, gender-diverse or non-binary without the need for recognition from the Gender Reassignment Board.
4. extending the prohibition against sexual and racial harassment to members of Parliament and Parliament staff, judicial officers and court staff, local government councillors and staff, and unpaid or volunteer workers.
5. protecting family and domestic violence victims from discrimination.
6. introducing anti-vilification laws; and
7. strengthening victimisation provisions.

The new Act will bring WA into line with other jurisdictions and ensure the State has modern, fair and effective anti-discrimination laws that make it easier for the community - including individuals, employers and service providers - to read and understand their rights and obligations.

Alison Evans (CEO, Centre for Women's Safety and Wellbeing) and Nicole Lambert (CEO, Alambee)



Sexual Assault Services Victoria

VICTORIA

Overview

Sexual Assault Services Victoria (SASVic) is the peak body for specialist sexual assault and harmful sexual behaviour services in Victoria. We work to promote rights, recovery and respect for victim-survivors and other people impacted by sexual violence and harm. We seek to achieve this by working collectively to change the attitudes, systems and structures that enable sexual violence to occur. We have seventeen member services.

Highlights and Achievements

- SASVic and its members successfully advocated for the introduction of an **affirmative consent** Bill to Victorian parliament in 2021. Affirmative consent models represent a profound shift in the way the law understands sexual consent, requiring the defendant to prove they had a reasonable belief that consent was provided – rather than the victim proving consent was not given. Now that the Bill has passed into legislation, we are working closely with the Victorian Government to ensure implementation leads to improved community attitudes and legal outcomes for survivors.
- SASVic and members advocated strongly in the lead up to the Victorian Law Reform Commission's report on Sexual Offences, and strongly support the resulting report. We have advocated consistently for the full implementation of the VLRC recommendations.
- This year has seen the significant strengthening of the peak body (SASVic), including because of increased funding. The peak is increasing the sector's ability to advocate for reforms that will benefit, provide high quality training to members, and strengthen consistent services.

Partnerships and Collaborations

- The Victorian specialist sexual assault sector works closely with government and community sector services in relation to sexual assault reforms, and on family violence reforms.
- The **upcoming state election** has set the scene for state politics in Victoria in 2021-2022. SASVic has focused on strengthening the current government's commitment to full implementation of the Victorian Law Reform Commission's (VLRC) 2021. The report has been described as a 'once-in-a-decade opportunity' to reshape the experience of victim survivors and ensure that perpetrators of sexual violence are held to account.
- **Improving state-wide access to forensic medical exams** for victim-survivors of sexual assault has been another area of continued 'behind the scenes' and media advocacy for SASVic and our members in this period. Sadly, very little has changed despite the VLRC calling for the government to provide greater access to forensic services in its landmark 2021 report. Too many victim-survivors continue to experience unacceptable delays and barriers to accessing essential forensic services.

Key State Issues / Challenges

- Many SASVic members have long waiting lists, exacerbated by the funding model for specialist sexual assault service being outdated. We are advocating for a new fit-for-purpose funding model.
- SASVic also worked hard to influence and inform the early development of **the long-awaited Sexual Violence and Sexual Harm Strategy** in 2021, working closely with The Department of Justice and Community Safety and Family Safety Victoria. A draft framework to inform the whole of government strategy was developed in October 2021. Unfortunately, we have been informed by government that advocacy that further progress of the strategy has been delayed. The final strategy is now expected in early 2023.

Kathleen Maltzahn
CEO, SASVic



Australian Capital Territory

Overview

The Canberra Rape Crisis Centre is a community-based Feminist Organisation which has been in operation in the Canberra Community since 1976. CRCC operates a 24-hour callout service to Police and Forensic services, a crisis line from 7am-11pm daily, Counselling, Court Support, Advocacy, Crisis Intervention, a dedicated men's service called the Service Assisting Male Survivors of Sexual Assault (SAMSSA) and a dedicated First Nations service called Nguru. CRCC also operates a national sport line for people impacted by sexual misconduct.

Highlights and Achievements

There has been significant work within the ACT Community this year with focus on Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (called SAPR). This work focussed on the service system responding to sexual violence as well as a 10 year sexual assault prevention plan. Government in the ACT have committed to collaborate to improve responses to sexual assault from all Ministerial portfolio's. The ACT Government is commended on this important work.

CRCC has engaged nationally and internationally with initiatives to respond to Military Sexual Violence. This has been an important collaboration to support those impacted by sexual violence whilst employed within the military.

CRCC has focussed inwardly this year to ensure that our Organisation is strengthened during the difficult world of Covid-19. The pandemic has had a dramatic impact on front line services and CRCC is not immune from this impact. Additional and diverse strategies have been necessary to respond to the difference in the workplace, support Staff and ensure that services are delivered in the most timely and professional manner.

CRCC has partnered with a number of local and national services which include Everyman Australia, Beryl Women's inc, Police, FAMSAC(Forensic and Medical Sexual Assault Centre), Older Persons Advocacy Network(OPAN), ACT Disability, Aged and Carer Advocacy Service(ADACAS).

A significant achievement from 2021-2022 has been the NASASV partnership enabling a closer working relationship with the Gender Violence Research Network(GVRN) in the development of the National Standards.

CRCC has progressed the response to sexual violence impacting First Nation community members with an additional executive role within CRCC providing systemic advocacy within the ACT. This role

works collaboratively locally and nationally to raise the issue of sexual violence response within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

CRCC continues to offer a national service focussed on sexual misconduct within Sport. This national line works in collaboration with Australian Sports Commission and offers support and information, as well as pathways to seek help for people impacted by sexual violence who are working or involved in sport.

CRCC held Reclaim the Night on the lawns of Parliament House this year for the first time since Covid-19 occurred. The focus of this event was sexual violence within institutions- including workplaces, schools and universities.

CRCC is a member of the provider panel of 1800RESPECT.

Key State Issues / Challenges

Despite the multiple news headlines that continue to highlight the failure of our systems in responding to sexual violence, we seem to see the same issues arising now-that were problems in previous decades. The longitudinal study from ANROWS that spoke of the prevalence and impacts of sexual assault has perhaps given us the best insight into the true extent of sexual violence and its long-term impacts on people and the communities in which they live. Such crucial research is important in building the framework for response to this issue.

Waiting lists for Counselling remain a significant challenge for our sector, as does the need to proactively campaign for better resourcing of Sexual Assault Services.

I thank our NASASV Board, particularly the Executive Team, including Heather for all your efforts in supporting the work of our services and the need to keep the lives of those accessing our services in the forefront of our Advocacy.

Chrystina Stanford, CEO
Canberra Rape Crisis Centre



QUEENSLAND

Over the past year, QSAN has worked diligently to place the issues of sexual violence and the issues facing the sector in the spotlight both Statewide and Nationally. Our success at getting to the table is largely as a result of our success last year in securing funding for a QSAN Secretariat. The Secretariat has continued to provide the highest standard of commitment and advocacy to the sector and those we represent – survivors of sexual violence.

Highlights and Achievements

- Over the past 12 months QSAN has made an impressive 20 submissions, including a noteworthy submission to the WSJT on sexual violence reforms.
- QSAN was successful in our tender for the Investing in Women Grant for the Help, Hope Change social media campaign during Sexual Violence Awareness Month which saw 11 workshops held throughout Queensland.
- Enhanced relationship with QPS at a State level and the establishment of regular meetings between QPS and QSAN representatives.
- Two QSAN representatives on the Board of NASASV (QSAN Chair and Secretariat) resulting in greater participation at the National Level.
- Increased awareness of QSAN and member service activities.
- Establishing a point of contact for media and government.
- Increased social media presence and establishment of twitter and linked in accounts.
- Enhanced communication throughout the network and an overall greater media presence state wide.

Sector Funding Issues

Unfortunately, not a lot has changed regarding the urgent need for increases to core funding for sexual assault services across Queensland. QSAN took each and every opportunity throughout the past year to speak with the Attorney General, Ministers, and members of parliament to inform them of the increase in demand and the dire need to increase funding. Whilst services did receive small, fixed term enhancements, this does not address the ongoing funding crisis affecting the sexual assault sector. We continue to wait for the outcome of the review undertaken by DJAG and the Treasury Corporation.

Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce

One of the major highlights over the past year was the work conducted by the Women's Safety and Justice taskforce. Two QSAN members volunteered their valuable time and considerable expertise to ensure the voice of QSAN and the survivors of sexual violence that we support, were heard. I would like to acknowledge and thank Di Macleod and Gillian O'Brien for their immense efforts and success at ensuring QSAN representatives were at this very important table!

The taskforce produced its second report “Hear her Voice 2” examining the barriers faced by Queensland women and girls accessing the criminal justice system, both as victims and as offenders. With a significant emphasis on the issues of sexual violence, the taskforce made 188 recommendations. Of particular note are:

Recommendation 10 – *“The Queensland Government develop a five year whole of government strategic investment plan for the services delivered and funded by government agencies to prevent and respond to sexual violence.”*

Recommendation 11 – *“Services and agencies working in an integrated way, similar to the Sexual Assault Response Model” {SART Townsville}, and “a response available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week”.*

Recommendation 13 – *“The Queensland Government embed a trauma-informed system of safe pathways” “These pathways will be designed from a victim’s point of first contact with the service system and throughout their engagement with the service or criminal justice system”.*

Recommendation 15 – *“The Queensland Government consider establishing an independent and integrated peak industry body for sexual violence services”.. “The main functions of the peak body will include: systemic advocacy.... Service system capacity and capability building..... improving statewide coordination and integration..... leveraging and maximising investment across the service system”.*

We just received notice that the Queensland Government has accepted the recommendations of the sexual violence report in total and/or in principle. QSAN will play a crucial role in continuing to advocate for and in ensuring the integrity of the roll out of these recommendations

Angela Lynch, Secretariat,
Queensland Sexual Assault Network



TASMANIA

Overview

- The Tasmanian Government continues to fund Laurel House in the North and North West and the Sexual Assault Support Service (SASS) in the South to provide specialist community-based services which empower, and support individuals and families affected by sexual violence. Both services saw an injection of funds in FY22 that provided for additional counselling staff across the state.
- Laurel House was funded by the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) Information Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) grant to develop and deliver educational resources and training across Tasmania. The initiative assists Tasmanian health professionals and disability support workers to better support people with a disability who have experienced sexual assault.
- SASS was funded in March 2021 to provide a state-wide program for children who use Harmful Sexual Behaviours. The Prevention, Assessment, Support and Treatment (PAST) program involves both therapeutic assessment and intervention and training for schools, educators, and professionals.

Highlights and Achievements

- The Commission of Inquiry into the Tasmanian Government's Responses to Child Sexual Abuse in Institutional Settings was established on 15 March 2021 by Order of the Governor of Tasmania. The Commissioners - the Honourable Marcia Neave AO, Professor Leah Bromfield and the Honourable Robert Benjamin AM held their opening hearing on 26 October 2021. 4 weeks of public hearings were held in FY22 with a further 5 weeks of hearing scheduled for quarter one in FY23. Harrowing stories of abuse and systematic failures to prevent and respond to child sexual abuse across the Tasmanian state service including within the health service, schools, Ashley Youth Detention Centre, and other out-of-home care placements were shared in the public hearings. Victim-survivors. Due to postponement of hearings, the Commissions original deadline of 31 August 2022 to submit its report and recommendations to the Governor of Tasmania was extended to May 2023.
- Sustained interest by the media in the Commission of Inquiry and the advocacy of victim-survivors, including Tasmanian Grace Tame, has provided increased scrutiny of politicians and public servants, and has prompted many victim-survivors to reach out for support.
- Disability Royal Commission hearings in Tasmania (one of 2 was moved online due to COVID) focused on the experience of victim-survivors with disabilities in accessing sexual and family violence supports. Laurel House CEO, Kathryn Fordyce provided evidence about the barriers to disclosure of sexual violence experienced by people with disabilities especially those with complex communication needs.
- In March 2022, the Tasmanian Government has also announced \$15.1m for the introduction of police-led multidisciplinary centres. Over two years it is planned to pilot two Multidisciplinary Centres in Tasmania - one in the north and one in the south of the State. An evaluation of the pilot will assist with the roll out of a third North West service. These Centres will bring together sexual assault services (Laurel House in the north and SASS in the south), family violence counselling services, child safety services, and specialist police investigators under the one roof.
- During 2022, the Tasmanian Government has consulted on its *Third Family and Sexual Violence Action Plan*. This included launching a *Hearing Lived Experience Survey 2022*, opportunities for public submissions, and 6 stakeholder workshops focused on gathering the experience and

expertise from diverse groups including people in regional, rural, and remote communities, culturally and linguistically diverse people, people with disability, children and young people, and older people. Specific consultation occurred with the Tasmanian Aboriginal Community.

- The Tasmanian Government has committed to establishing its first Victim-Survivor Advisory Council as part of the Third Action Plan.
- The pilot Tasmanian Witness Intermediary Scheme that commenced in March 2021 continued in FY22 providing children and adults with communication needs to better participate in the criminal justice system. The scheme has had some challenges with meeting demands in the North West of the state due to shortages of appropriately qualified allied health professionals.
- Laurel House CEO, Kathryn Fordyce, was appointed to the National Office of Child Safety's National Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Child Sexual Abuse Advisory Group.

Partnerships and Collaborations

- Laurel House Disability Project leveraged strong relationships with the service sector and those with lived experience of disability with 14 individuals with disabilities and 19 support organisations involved in the development of materials. The project saw the development of two short films codesigned by people with disabilities and people with disabilities featuring on and behind the scenes. 55 organisations attended training and 75 medical practices and 13 disability support organisations were provided with guides for responding to disclosures of sexual violence from people with disabilities. The toolkit of resources can be found at: <https://laurelhouse.org.au/ourprojects/disabilityworkforce-/support-projectresources/>
- Providers of Sexual Assault Care (PSAC) continues to bring together Sexual Assault Services, Tasmania Police, Sexual Assault Forensic Examiners and Forensic Scientific Services. The PSAC forum scheduled for October 2021 was postponed due to COVID and an online forum was held in March 2022. The forum featured speakers from Laurel House about the Disability Project, staff from the Department of Justice about the Witness Intermediary Program and victim-survivor Keelie McMahon and her mother Annette Whitemore about their experience of the service and justice systems.

Kathryn Fordyce
Chief Executive Officer – Laurel House

NORTHERN TERRITORY

Sexual assault is an ongoing issue across Australia including in the Northern Territory (NT).

NT service provision overview

- Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARC) are located in Alice Springs, Tennant Creek, Katherine and Darwin and are available 24/7 to assist victims.
 - o There are regional services in Gove District Hospital and Katherine District Hospital to support adult victims of acute sexual assault.
 - o Paediatric clients are transported to either Darwin or Alice Springs in an acute situation.
- SARC provides the following services:
 - o Counselling for adults and children who have been sexually assaulted at any time in their life
 - o Information, support and counselling for non-offending parents, family members and partners
 - o Education and information for community or professional groups
 - o Support if you are going through a legal process
 - o Protective behaviour for children
 - o Working with other government agencies to work on prevention.
- At the Darwin and Alice Springs SARC, 24-hour access is available to medical and forensic, legal and counselling information.
- Medical assistance includes:
 - o Screening and preventative treatment for sexually transmitted infections
 - o Pregnancy prevention
 - o Collection of forensic evidence
 - o Screening for drugs where drink spiking is suspected
 - o Providing a medico-legal report.
- Many remote clinics have Preliminary Forensic Kits and if further assessment is needed, transport can be arranged to the nearest SARC in Katherine, Gove, Tennant Creek or Alice Springs for adults.
- All paediatric clients are flown in to either Alice Springs or Darwin.

Gaps

- A largely transient work force and lack of trained medical staff makes covering the 24 hour crisis response roster challenging, particularly for our Paediatric service.
- Recruitment of suitably qualified counsellors has become increasingly difficult which ultimately impacts waitlist timeframes.

Blackspots

- The major blackspot is the lack of follow up counselling and healing services in the remote communities throughout the Northern Territory.
- Robust data capturing and information sharing services to enable multidisciplinary responses to patient needs, and identification of trends in population cohorts required to effectively map service provision.

Waitlists

- The current waitlist in Darwin for ongoing counselling consistently falls below best practice clinical standards. Risks of this are mitigated through one off crisis counselling as required and regular contact with clients on the waitlist to keep them updated and offer referral to other providers if necessary, and where possible.
- Alice Springs waitlist is currently within national standards, however they do not offer any outreach services or support to remote communities.

NT Health is working with other agencies to provide preventative and educational strategies to target harmful sexualised behaviours particularly with a placed based approach in remote communities.

They are also working with education departments to offer education to youth to promote and encourage respectful and healthy relationships.

Prudence Boylan
Manager SARC Darwin

Sara-Anne Harn
Co-Director Women's Children & Youth
Department of Health NT



NEW SOUTH WALES

Full Stop Australia (operating the NSW Sexual Violence Helpline)

Overview

It has been a year of transformation at Full Stop Australia. With a new leadership team at the helm, we transitioned into a company limited by guarantee and set a vision and a path for the next three years. As part of this vision, we changed our name from Rape & Domestic Violence Services Australia to Full Stop Australia – recognising that everything we do is geared towards putting a full stop to sexual, domestic and family violence.

Highlights and Achievements

There were many highlights in 2021/22, but to name a few:

- We successfully retendered for our National Sexual Abuse and Redress Support Service.
- We provided over 15,000 trauma counselling sessions nation-wide and supported nearly 500 survivors with monetary assistance to escape violence.
- We trained more than 2,200 people in community, government and corporate settings to better prevent and respond to sexual, domestic and family violence.
- We contributed to 28 policy and law reform processes resulting in important changes, including affirmative consent and coercive control laws, protections for survivors giving evidence, safety in family law, respectful relationships education in schools, paid domestic violence leave, respect at work, and increased funding for sexual violence services.
- We developed a National Survivor Advocate Program for people impacted by sexual, domestic and family violence to be supported to drive real reform to the law, policies and practices impacting upon their own lives and the lives of other survivors.
- We helped shape the next 10-year National Plan to End Violence Against Women to have a focus on addressing sexual violence and supporting survivors to recover.
- We helped shape the innovative Lighthouse Project and Evatt List in the Federal Circuit and Family Court of Australia and assisted in successful advocacy efforts for its expansion.

Counselling and Trauma Recovery Services

Full Stop Australia provides a range of trauma counselling and recovery services to people impacted by sexual, domestic and family violence, including through the **NSW Sexual Violence Helpline** (formerly known as the NSW Rape Crisis Service) which provided over 10,000 occasions of service in 2021/22. Other services operated by Full Stop Australia include the following:

- Community Based Counselling Services in NSW Women's Health Centres
- Yarrow Place Rape & Sexual Assault Service South Australia After-Hours
- National Sexual Abuse and Redress Support Service
- National Violence and Abuse Trauma Counselling and Recovery Service
- Rainbow Sexual, Domestic and Family Violence Helpline
- National University Support Line for Survivors of Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment
- Victims Services NSW Counselling

- Professional Services including Clinical Supervision, Self-Care, Vicarious Trauma Management, Workplace Wellbeing, Debriefing, and Counselling Support.

To ensure quality, our service model includes therapeutic planning which engages our clients to support a trauma informed approach and minimises the need for clients to retell their story. Clients who consistently engaged with Full Stop Australia’s Counselling Services in 2021/22 reported a 91% reduction in subjective distress as a result of service engagement.

In addition to the therapeutic planning with our clients, Full Stop Australia’s Counselling and Trauma Recovery Services Team actively engage with a range of service partners who also provide care to our clients. In 2020-21 we maintained over twenty Community Care Networks to ensure an integrated approach to care for clients presenting with complex care needs. Our liaison extends beyond direct client care, with our Counselling and Trauma Recovery Team, Counselling Service Managers and Clinical and Client Services Director engaging with a vast range of services across the service system, including government, non-government and corporate service agencies.

Full Stop Australia’s face to face counselling and trauma recovery services were impacted by the second wave of COVID lockdowns during the 2021/22 year, with sessions transitioning back to telehealth during this period. Our team nevertheless ensured uninterrupted service provision for clients during this time with the implementation of COVID video sessions.

Overview of Sexual Violence Services in NSW

In NSW, there are 64 Sexual Assault Services with NSW Health state-wide. These provide psychosocial support, medical forensic care, and ongoing trauma specialist counselling. Their capacity is limited, however, and patients who have been sexually assaulted in the previous 7 days are prioritised, alongside children and young people. Approximately 40,000 service events were recorded by Sexual Assault Services in NSW in 2021-2022. Waiting lists for trauma specialist counselling ranges from 1 month to 12 months. The reason sexual assaults within 7 days are prioritised is that this is the crucial window for a medical forensic examination to be undertaken. Crisis support is also critical at this time. The NSW Government has not disclosed the current funding provide to NSW Sexual Assault Services.

There is also a state-wide 24/7 trauma specialist sexual violence counselling service – the NSW Sexual Violence Helpline (formerly known as NSW Rape Crisis) which provided 10,448 occasions of service in 2021/22. This service is operated by Full Stop Australia. The core funding for the NSW Sexual Violence Helpline in 2021/22 was \$1.59 million which left the service substantially underfunded to meet client demand, with one in three calls from survivors unable to be answered. To address this gap, Full Stop Australia successfully advocated this year for \$1.1 million in temporary one-off federal funding for 2022/23 under the National Partnership Agreement on Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence, and NSW Labor have committed to continuing this additional funding if they are elected in 2023. At the time of writing this report, the Coalition Government has not made this same commitment. Moreover, even with the additional top up funding, there remains no funding for administration and overheads such as rent, telephone, IT services, human resources, financial management and governance. The funding agreement only covers counsellor wages leaving Full Stop Australia to fundraise to cover the cost of running the organisation.

Full Stop Australia similarly this year requested temporary one-off funding of \$467,000 to increase the accessibility of the state-wide sexual violence service to priority populations – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people with disability, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, LGBTIQ+ people, and children/young people. This funding would be used to upskill

the service system to better identify, respond and refer clients impacted by sexual violence, to develop and strengthen referral pathways, and co-design targeted resources. NSW Labor have committed to this additional one-off funding in 2022/23 if they win office in the 2023 election. At the time of writing, the Coalition Government has not made this same commitment.

In addition to the NSW Sexual Violence Helpline, Full Stop Australia is funded to provide trauma specialist counselling to adult survivors of child sexual abuse in six Women's Health Centres in metropolitan and regional locations across NSW. The core funding for this service is \$275,000. A total of 2,418 counselling sessions were delivered through this service in 2021/22 which also runs at a deficit and is supplemented by community donations. This year, Full Stop Australia called for an additional \$663,000 to expand this service to 14 additional Women's Health Centres, and to develop an outreach program for select Neighbourhood Centres and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations state-wide to improve access to trauma specialist counselling services in regional, rural and remote areas.

Survivors and Mates Support Network (SAMSN) receive a small amount of funding to provide peer support groups and a peer support phone line for male survivors of sexual violence, and there is another service in the Newcastle area, Victims of Crime Assistance League (VOCAL) which provides services to women impacted by sexual, domestic and family violence. Both these services are similarly calling for additional funding to meet unmet demand.

The remainder of trauma specialist counselling services offered to people impacted by sexual assault in NSW are delivered by private practitioners and accessed through the state-wide Victim's Support Scheme (for victims of crime) and through Mental Health Care Plans funded by Medicare. However, survivors regularly report a lack of availability of trauma specialist counsellors in their area, a lack of Aboriginal counsellors, long waiting lists, and in numerous cases, non-trauma informed approaches.

In this regard, Full Stop Australia is calling for an additional \$419,000 over 5 years to develop and deliver a complex trauma training program to specialise 1,000 existing mental health care practitioners (accredited social workers, psychologists and counsellors), increasing the availability of trauma specialist counsellors through existing funding schemes.

With respect to case management and court support services for people impacted by sexual violence, unlike those impacted by domestic and family violence, there are virtually no such support services state-wide. The Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions does provide a degree of support to sexual assault complainants in the District Court through their Witness Assistance Service, but this service regularly lacks capacity to provide support to complainants throughout their hearings. Court support for sexual assault complainants in local court matters is virtually non-existent across NSW.

There are a number of New Street services within NSW Health for children under the age of 10 years of age exhibiting problematic harmful sexual behaviours. These services are not uniformly available across the state.

There is nothing formal in place for children, young people and adult persons using sexually abusive behaviours in their relationships, aside from domestic violence-focused accredited men's behaviour change programs, also not universally available with extensive waiting lists.

Key State Issues / Challenges

The NSW Sexual Violence Strategy lapsed in the 2021/22 year as efforts turned towards the development of our next National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children. Full Stop Australia made submissions and hosted a Survivor Roundtable event at Parliament House to advise on the development of the next NSW Sexual Violence Plan for 2022-27.

Recommendations for reform span primary prevention and early intervention initiatives to those involving response and recovery. There are also key recommendations with respect to targets, measurement, reporting and governance, as well as workforce development. Full Stop Australia's full submission can be accessed here: https://fullstop.org.au/uploads/main/Full-Stop-Australia-Submission_NSW-SV-Plan-2022-2027.pdf

The key NSW law reform in the 2021/22 year comprised of the legislation of an affirmative model of sexual consent in the *Crimes Act 1900* (NSW) which was spearheaded by survivor-advocate Saxon Mullins and supported by Full Stop Australia and others in its crafting.

Notwithstanding strong advocacy, the NSW Government did not introduce any new evidential or procedural reforms to support sexual offence complainants in the justice system. Instead, a new research project was announced into the experience of complainants in these matters. The project is being led by the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research and is due to report in September 2023.

Supporting the Voices of People with Lived Experience

Full Stop Australia's Counselling and Trauma Recovery Services team have worked with a range of community-led groups and individuals in 2021-22 to enhance the voices of people with lived experience. For example, the counselling team partnered with The Survivor Hub to facilitate a monthly support group for survivors of sexual violence, with a focus on engagement with the justice system, and provided vicarious trauma support and clinical consultation for Athletes Rights Australia, a peer-led group supporting those impacted by abuse in the sporting industry.

Caring for our Workforce and Beyond

Full Stop Australia maintains a strong commitment to minimising the risks and impacts of exposure to traumatic material through the work we undertake in the clinical, education and advocacy roles within our organisation. The Counselling Service Managers are responsible for the implementation of our vicarious trauma management framework across the organisation. Our Workplace Wellbeing Program engages with a range of organisations in the corporate, government and non-government sectors to develop and implement tailored programs to minimise the risks and manage the impacts of vicarious trauma and other employment related stress. In 2021-22, we successfully integrated Professional/Fee for Service offerings into a single booking and rostering system to ensure higher levels of service consistency and quality assurance in relation to vicarious trauma management and clinical consultation service provision.

Training & Consulting Services

This year was a year of growth and continuous transformation for our Training and Consulting Services. We focused on meeting the emerging needs of audiences across all sectors by ensuring that our current programming is evidence-based and relevant, and developing new programming to address existing gaps in education.

In 2021/22, we delivered training to 2,281 individuals. This included 1,353 individuals accessing one of the 110 face-to-face and interactive online training sessions and 928 individuals accessing our self-paced online courses. Responding with Compassion and Understanding and Responding to Vicarious Trauma continue to be our most popular programs, with 47% and 25% of our total program delivered respectively. The majority of our training participants were from the education sector (32% of workshops), followed by government agencies, (25%), corporates (23%) and non-government organisations (20%).

National Advocacy

There has been a reckoning in Australia. 2021/22 was the year that sexual violence was in the spotlight. Full Stop Australia's media advocacy centred around sexual violence reforms across Australia.

Full Stop Australia develops submissions to government inquiries in every Australian jurisdiction to inform policy, practice and law reform impacting upon our clients' safety, justice and wellbeing. In our consultation processes, we seek feedback from both our frontline trauma specialist counsellors and our clients who have expressed an interest in having their say on the systems and processes impacting upon their own safety.

Across this financial year, Full Stop Australia has submitted 28 reform submissions to improve legal and policy responses to sexual, domestic and family violence nationwide. Legislative and policy responses to coercive control were a key focus this year, with reforms underway in Western Australia, South Australia and New South Wales. On sexual violence, landmark affirmative sexual consent reforms were achieved in NSW, and in this regard, Full Stop Australia secured a narrowing of the "mental health loophole" which would have seen people with depression or anxiety being able to escape the requirement to take active steps ascertain consent.

Other highlights included the mandating of respectful relationships education in the Australian curriculum across all stages of learning spearheaded by Full Stop Australia Ambassador Chanel Contos and Teach Us Consent and Fair Work legislation for 10 days paid domestic and family violence leave each year for all employees.

Full Stop Australia's other reform submissions concerned the issues of strangulation, stealthing, policing, civil and criminal justice, open justice, respect at work, sentencing, victim's services, sexual assault service funding, housing and homelessness, and women's economic security

National Advisory Committees

Full Stop Australia also provided advice on the following advisory committees:

- Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research Sexual Assault Advisory Panel
- Australian Institute of Criminology Advisory Group on Focused Deterrence and Intimate Partner Violence
- Federal Circuit Court and Family Court of Australia's advisory group on sexual, domestic and family violence
- Australian Government Advisory Group on the National Plan to End Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence
- National Women's Safety Alliance Policy Advisory Committee
- National Working Group on Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence
- NSW Minister's Council on Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence
- NSW Office of the Department of Public Prosecutions Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Review Committee

National Survivor Advocate Program

Full Stop Australia was proud to establish the National Survivor Advocate Program in 2021/22. We know the power of lived expertise in driving change and raising community awareness, so we created a program to support survivors to tell their story and influence change in whatever way they choose. The program, supported by Pinnacle Charitable Foundation, offers survivors a platform to advocate for change and access a trauma-informed network of support. Adopting an intersectional approach, the program brings together survivors from diverse backgrounds and varied experiences and provides opportunities for them to be heard on the matters they care about most. As at 30 June 2022, we had 222 survivors join the program, and this number is growing in number and diversity by the week

National Mental Health Commission Research

This year, Full Stop Australia was funded by the National Mental Health Commission to investigate the impacts COVID-19 had on the mental health and wellbeing of victim-survivors of sexual domestic and family violence. The study found that people impacted by sexual, domestic and family violence were disproportionately impacted by COVID and made several recommendations for system improvements which would mitigate impacts in future pandemic conditions. The research will inform the next National Mental Health and Wellbeing Pandemic Response Plan. To access the full report, visit our website: <https://fullstop.org.au/advocacy/research>.

Seven key recommendations were made to improve mental health responses for people impacted by sexual, domestic and family violence in the pandemic context. Visit <https://fullstop.org.au/advocacy/research> to find out more.

Cultural Safety and Inclusion

In line with Full Stop Australia's vision, purpose and values, 2022 enabled us to take both an external and internal approach to diversity and inclusion across our organisation. Our diversity and inclusion initiatives have been wide-ranging from engaging and developing key relations with Indigenous communities across Australia to facilitating an integral roundtable event on Indigenous sexual violence and cultural sensitivity service requirements.

Following the feedback from key meetings and the roundtable event, we commenced with an inside-out approach to diversity and inclusion by employing a Cultural Advisor for the organisation, which led the development of both a Cultural Safety and Awareness training program and guidelines for Staff and Board members.

We also work with a range of diverse community organisations to continue to break down the barriers that some of our more vulnerable clients face such as People with Disabilities Australia and Older Women's Network and we have also actively engaged with ACON to share practice experiences across our clinical services, providing service representation at community information panels and consulting around a community specific resource related to the introduction of affirmative consent laws in NSW.

Key Initiatives in Focus

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Sexual Violence Roundtable

A group of stakeholders from across multiple Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and other key groups, came together to discuss the current landscape for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sexual violence survivors, and the need for more services and cultural safety by providers. Feedback provided from participants provided great insights into the educational and cultural safety shortfall of both medical and support services providers across the country, as well as the accessibility of these services for victims in regional and remote areas.

Cultural Safety and Awareness Program

Full Stop Australia embarked upon a cultural safety and awareness program in 2021/22 to include in-depth training for all staff, board directors and volunteers. Comprehensive policy, procedure and practice review is also a key component of clear Cultural Diversity Policy and Guidelines for all internal and external stakeholders.

Embracing diversity through art and branding

This year we also expanded our Cultural Diversity Strategy by purchasing and displaying a Aboriginal artwork, which includes the story of the artwork. The artwork was purchased from a Survivor, Lee Anne Hall, from the Bundjalung and Gomerioi/Euahlayi Nations. We have used the artwork for a new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander logo. This will be used externally on a number of new culturally-focused resources from posters, business cards and merchandise.

Multilingual videos on violence and abuse

This year, thanks to Women NSW, Full Stop Australia partnered with Cultural Perspectives to develop a series of in-language videos promoting awareness and understanding of the nature and dynamics of sexual, domestic and family violence, and where to get help. So far, the videos have been produced in Arabic, Hindi, Korean, Mandarin and Vietnamese.

Partnerships and Collaborations

Full Stop Australia could not have achieved what we have in 2021/22, without our essential partnerships and collaborations. Our key government, corporate and philanthropic partners include the following:

Author

Hayley Foster, Chief Executive Officer,
Full Stop Australia (operating in the NSW Sexual Violence Helpline)