Minimum Standards for Men’s Behaviour Change Programs

The 2016 Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence (RCFV) Recommendation 91 emphasised the importance of focusing on changing the behaviour and actions of men who use violence.

Perpetrator interventions that hold men to account were identified as a key means of responding to family violence and keeping women and children safe.

In 2017, the Monash Centre for Gender and Family Violence Prevention (MGFV) was commissioned by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to conduct a consultation and review of the Minimum Standards for the effective delivery of Men’s Behaviour Change Programs (MBCP) – a core component of perpetrator interventions and of Victoria’s integrated family violence system.

MBCPs are distinct from anger management programs and relationship counselling in their aims and approach to challenge men’s use of violence and to keep women and children safe by monitoring and responding to the risk violent men present. Minimum Standards establish program priorities and key components of program design, delivery, evaluation and staffing.

The purpose of the revised Minimum Standards is to enhance the safety of women and children by providing a consistent MCBP model following current international best practice. The Minimum Standards apply to all government funded Victorian MCBPs.

As a result of this project, Family Safety Victoria released the new Minimum Standards in 2018, coming into effect on the 1st July. These will see better resourcing for MBCPs within the integrated family violence service system and primary prevention networks across Australia. No To Violence (NTV), the peak body for organisations and individuals working with men to end family violence in Victoria and New South Wales, is preparing a Practice Manual to accompany the new standards.

CHIEF INVESTIGATORS

Professor Jude McCulloch
Dr Kate Fitz-Gibbon
Professor JaneMaree Maher
Dr Kathryn Benier

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CONTACTS

Ms Vanja Radojevic
Partnerships and Business Development Manager
Faculty of Arts
+61 3 990 55445
vanja.radojevic@monash.edu

Professor Jude McCulloch
Monash Centre for Gender and Family Violence Prevention
Faculty of Arts
jude.mcculloch@monash.edu

NTV reported on Monash’s review of the Minimum Standards on their website: “In 2017, the Victorian Government (Family Safety Victoria), Monash University, No to Violence and its MBCP members, initiated a review of the standards in order to adapt them to the current practice environment; particularly the need to lengthen programs, align them to Information Sharing changes, and cater to a more diverse cohort of men.”

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