

DVRCV's focus:

Keeping the destination in sight



The first report of the Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor, tabled in parliament this May, made it clear that Victoria has exceptionally strong foundations on which to build its future response to family violence. The report notes that Victoria, “has been at the forefront of family violence policy development and reform in Australia for the past 15 years and has been influential in propelling reforms in other Australian and international jurisdictions”.

However, the independent monitor’s report also made it clear that a number of systemic limitations mean we are not providing an adequate response to enough victims, and as a state we have not yet undertaken adequate and sustainable activity to prevent violence against women and family violence from occurring in the first place.

In an election year – particularly during a time of significant reform – it’s important that we take a moment to reflect on the spirit of the Royal Commission into Family Violence and learn what we can from the

first phase of implementation. As a statewide resource centre with 32 years of expertise in family violence, we at DVRCV believe it is important to take full advantage of this once in a lifetime opportunity where public and policy support for ending family violence is intersecting in a way it rarely has before.

As a priority, we would call on all political parties to ensure they have a long-term approach to ending family violence, which includes implementing the full range of reforms proposed by the Royal Commission. But it’s also important to think more broadly about the future in this election year. Beyond the 227 individual recommendations, what is our vision of the state we want to create, and what will get us there?

DVRCV wants to see:

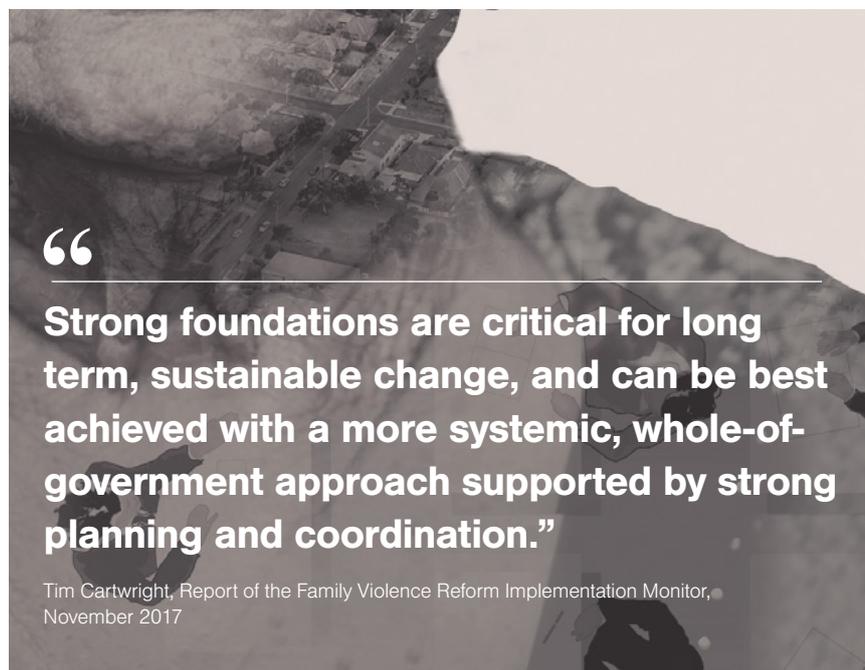
1. A coordinated, statewide service system that is accessible to all women, young people and children, no matter what kind of family violence they’re experiencing, and no matter who they disclose to.

2. A prevention infrastructure that supports strategic, coordinated, evidence-based and long term work that is mutually reinforcing and connected across all areas where we live, work, learn and play.
3. Perpetrators held to account across a range of service systems and across society, earlier recognition of their coercive or controlling behaviour and support for perpetrators to change their behaviour through a range of support and accountability measures.
4. Friends, family and colleagues with the ability to recognise controlling behaviour in perpetrators, know how to offer support to a victim survivor or approach a conversation with a perpetrator to support their entry into the service system (where possible and safe).
5. All professionals appropriately qualified, skilled, valued, equipped and supported at every stage of their career to respond to family violence or deliver primary prevention activities.

DVRCV believes two significant things will support the achievement of these outcomes:

- All organisations are resourced to meet the needs of their staff and their clients as well as to participate in the reform environment, and work together towards a shared vision.
- The Office for Women is returned to the Department of Premier and Cabinet to ensure policy and legislative oversight of the whole of government reform process and adequate embedding of a gender and family violence lens across every government portfolio.

The Royal Commission has provided a roadmap and a vision for the future family violence system and as a state, we have progressed a raft of reforms that are having a positive impact. But it’s now even more crucial, in the momentum and admirable urgency of implementing every recommendation, that we keep our ultimate destination in sight – a world where women and children can live free from violence. ■



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Strong foundations are critical for long term, sustainable change, and can be best achieved with a more systemic, whole-of-government approach supported by strong planning and coordination.”

Tim Cartwright, Report of the Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor, November 2017