

Reporting on family violence measures in municipal public health and wellbeing plans

Advice for local government, July 2019

This document will assist councils to report on the family violence measures included in their Municipal public health and wellbeing plans for 2017-2021.

Following the Royal Commission into Family Violence, the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*, in accordance with Recommendation 94 of the Royal Commission, was amended to require councils to specify measures to prevent family violence and respond to the needs of victims of family violence in the community in preparing public health and wellbeing plans and to provide the Secretary to the Department of Health and Human Services with information regarding these measures at key intervals during the four year lifetime of their plans [(Section.26 (6A)].

Councils are already required to review their Municipal public health and wellbeing plan annually, amend if necessary, and give a copy of the current plan to the Secretary. The department has worked with the Municipal Association of Victoria (MAV) to ensure reporting on measures to prevent family violence and respond to the needs of victims, is streamlined with other reporting requirements and with the MAV *Preventing violence against women and promoting gender equality survey*, to be circulated to councils in July 2019. This will minimise the reporting burden on councils while still promoting a sustained focus on prevention of family violence.

Victorian family violence prevention approach

Guiding the Victorian Government's family violence primary prevention approach to delivering unprecedented reforms are:

[Ending Family Violence: Victoria's Plan for Change](#) (the 10-year Plan) launched in November 2016 and outlines the Government's 10-year strategy for implementing the Royal Commission's recommendations.

[Safe and Strong: A Victorian Gender Equality Strategy](#) - launched December 2016.

[Roadmap for Reform: strong families, safe children](#) - launched April 2016.

[Free from violence: Victoria's strategy to prevent family violence and all forms of violence against women](#) - launched May 2017.

[Free from violence: First Action Plan 2018 – 2021](#) – launched January 2018.

Free from violence outlines a primary prevention framework and presents a set of outcomes to ensure we meet the long term vision of a Victoria free from violence. A Monitoring and evaluation framework has also been developed to measure progress against the actions set out in the First Action Plan underpinned by the Free from violence outcomes framework.

Through the First Action Plan, local government is being supported to be leaders in the primary prevention of family violence and all other forms of violence against women. The Office for Women, Department of Premier and Cabinet is overseeing the *Local Government Free from violence grants program* and has produced evaluation reporting and guidance for the 35 councils participating in this program. It includes indicators and measures to evaluate primary prevention activities and outcomes, delivered by councils through the Free from violence grants program, to promote gender equality and prevent family violence and all forms of violence against women.

Alignment with other Department of Health and Human Services requirements for reporting

To ensure a coordinated local prevention effort, it is expected that councils work with the department and local partners to agree on a common approach to reporting on family violence measures that is most appropriate for the local area.

The document, *Advice for public health and wellbeing planning in Victoria: planning cycle 2017 – 21*, provides information on the requirements and expectations of funded prevention and health promotion organisations, and emphasises the importance of collaboration to improve the health and wellbeing of local populations.

Reporting requirements

Councils are required to report on measures **no later than 31 October in the second year and in the final year of the Municipal public health and wellbeing plan** to align with the current cycle of annual review and evaluation of plans. The MAV *Preventing violence against women and promoting gender equality survey*, to be disseminated to councils in July 2019, will include additional questions to capture information on family violence measures included in council municipal public health and wellbeing plans.

The department's survey questions are provided in Table 1 below and will be disseminated to councils with the MAV survey in July 2019, with instructions for completion and return.

Table 1

What are the family violence measures (actions or strategies) included in your council's Municipal public health and wellbeing plan?	
What are the local indicators and measures guiding implementation of these initiatives?	
What are the key facilitators to the implementation of these measures?	What factors have supported implementation, including reach and effectiveness, of actions in your council's Municipal public health and wellbeing plan?
What are the key barriers to the implementation of these measures?	What are the limitations reducing the reach and effectiveness of these actions?
Are there any new measures you would include in your council's subsequent Municipal public health and wellbeing annual action plan or business plan?	

Resources

[Free from violence: Victoria's strategy to prevent family violence and all forms of violence against women](#)

[Family violence and municipal public health and wellbeing planning, guidance for local government, May 2017](#)

[Advice for public health and wellbeing planning in Victoria: planning cycle 2017 – 21](#)

[A practical guide to conducting annual reviews of Municipal public health and wellbeing plans](#)

[Local Government Free From Violence Grants program – Evaluation reporting guidance and template for councils, January 2018](#)

Role of the Department of Health and Human Services

It is important that councils work closely with their local Department of Health and Human Services contact. You can contact your Population health and community wellbeing planning team at your nearest Department of Health and Human Services office.

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