

Victorian Specialist Family Violence Advisor (SFVA) Capacity Building Program in Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drug Services

Family Violence Royal Commission

The Royal Commission into Family Violence (2016) highlighted the need to enhance the way health and human services work together to ensure victim-survivors are supported and perpetrators are visible and held accountable. The Royal Commission found alcohol and other drug services and mental health services play a direct role in identifying and responding to family violence.

Specialist Family Violence Advisor positions were developed in response to recommendations 98 and 99 of the Royal Commission into Family Violence 2016:

Recommendation 98:

The Victorian Government fund the establishment of specialist family violence advisor positions to be located in major mental health and drug and alcohol services. The advisors' expertise should be available to practitioners in these sectors across Victoria.

Recommendation 99:

The Victorian Government encourage and facilitate mental health, drug and alcohol and family violence services to collaborate by:

- resourcing and promoting shared casework models
- ensuring that mental health and drug and alcohol services are represented on Risk Assessment and Management Panels and other multi agency risk management models at the local level

About the SFVA program

- The Victorian Government (Family Safety Victoria and The Department of Health) funded establishment of the SFVA positions across 17 areas in 2017.
- The ongoing positions are auspiced by area mental health and alcohol and other drug services.
- SFVAs embed family violence expertise within the alcohol and other drug and mental health sectors, support continuous improvement, lead system and practice change, and build sector capacity and capability to identify, assess, and respond to family violence.

SFVA responsibilities:

1. Build family violence capability and capacity.
2. Support collaboration.
3. Provide secondary consultation.
4. Support family violence Multi Agency Risk Assessment and Management (MARAM) alignment and embedding.
5. Engage with statewide SFVA activity.

No to Violence

Since January 2020, No to Violence has provided statewide coordination for the SFVA program.

The Statewide Coordinator supports the program by facilitating a Community of Practice and peer supervision, advising SFVAs and managers, delivering program inductions and exit interviews, organising special interest groups, collating and presenting quarterly and annual reports to the Statewide Steering Committee, representing and advocating on behalf of the program, and participating in relevant committees and working groups.

For more information on the program or if you would like to connect with the Statewide Coordinator, Kimberlea Green, please email: sfvaprogram@ntv.org.au

Additional information

For more information on the SFVA program guidelines and reporting template, please visit: [Specialist Family Violence Advisor guidelines and reporting template | health.vic.gov.au](https://health.vic.gov.au/sfvaprogram)