

Ageing safely forum
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In the journal “Violence against women” an article entitled *Responding to the needs of older women experiencing domestic violence* argues that: ‘Older women experiencing domestic violence are an invisible group who fall into the gap between two forms of family violence: elder abuse and domestic violence.’ and recommends that: ‘a collaborative response is needed accounting for both the age and gender dimensions of the problem.’

As Jill has mentioned, CASA House and the Domestic Violence resource Centre worked for some years together developing and delivering training on older women and domestic violence. This training was primarily aimed at the domestic violence field. However, we were very aware that we needed to reach out to the aged care sector, and this year, in partnership with Senior Rights Victoria (a community legal service providing services for older people), we adjusted the program in order for it to be more relevant for aged care workers. The input from Senior Rights Victoria was invaluable. Through it, we were able to include additional material about legal rights and responses and issues about capacity and guardianship. The other benefit of working with SRV was that, advertising through their networks, we were able to reach participants from the aged care field.

We were very pleased that the participants who registered were a mixture of domestic violence and aged care workers. From the domestic violence field there were; an applicant worker from the Magistrate’s Court, 3 dv outreach workers and one refuge worker. The other participants worked in a variety of aged care settings, and it was particularly pleasing that 4 of the participants were working with clients from non-English speaking backgrounds. A member of the police force also attended. Apart from the specific content of the program, the networking was invaluable, in fact the participants asked us to send an email list

in order to further collaborate. It was clear that workers from both fields had little understanding of each other's work roles and networks.

I'd like to briefly describe the program content. (Power Point training agenda). The training used a range of learning methods: lectures, role-plays and group discussions. Because of the range of participants, the group discussions were very rich, where participants could share their skills and knowledge. As we have found in other training on domestic violence, participants can struggle with asking direct questions. In this section, the facilitators did a demonstration role-play and then gave participants a scenario and they did a role-play. The discussion following this was useful, as we teased out the discomfort about asking questions, and why it is useful to do this.

Participant evaluation was very positive, and interestingly, the content that was overwhelmingly noted as the most useful was the information and exercises on risk assessment and risk management. In particular, the participants found the exploration of risk management very useful, as many have clients who are unwilling or unable to leave the perpetrator of violence.

I'd like to briefly describe the Common Risk Assessment Framework which is being rolled out in Victoria. For many years, Victoria has been committed to an integrated response to domestic violence. As part of this response, the government, using international research and in consultation with the domestic violence field, developed the CRAF, which hopefully will mean that all victims of violence will get a consistent response, and that fewer victims of domestic violence will be killed. The major elements of the framework are: (Power Points).

The training included a case scenario and participants were asked to develop a risk management plan for the client. The elements of risk management were explored and discussed. (PowerPoint).

What we learned

- The benefit of developing and delivering the training with trainers from both fields
- The benefit of participants from both fields
- The importance of collaborative responses to victims of violence

I believe that it would be more useful to provide this training program on a regional basis. Recently, DVRCV was involved in a training program about dv and disability. The training was delivered regionally to disability workers, and it was complemented with a series of regional forums, where disability and domestic violence workers met together to share information, discuss ideas and develop collaborative partnerships. I believe this strategy would be very useful in the aged care field. We are all working towards a common goal: the safety of people who are experiencing violence and abuse, and we can make the invisible visible to each other.