



ANNUAL REPORT 2022/2023





Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we work and live, the Wulgurukaba of Gurambilbarra and Yunbenun, Bindal, Gugu Badhun and Nywaigi and Kalkadoon and Mitakoodi people and pay tribute to their cultures, their ancestors and their elders past, present and all future generations.

We recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and children experience significantly higher levels of domestic and family violence. This is compounded by experiences of racism, marginalisation, and other significant factors deeply rooted in the impacts of colonisation and the loss of land and culture. We support the Uluru Statement from the Heart and acknowledge that sovereignty has not been ceded.

We also acknowledge the women and children who have lost their lives to domestic violence, and those who continue to live with this fear and trauma amongst our community.



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A message from NQDVRS President

01

On behalf of the Management Committee, I am pleased to present this report outlining NQDVRS achievements and challenges in 2022-2023.

As the new President of NQDVRS it has been my honour to have been a part of a year of significant achievement for the service. I have taken on the role of supporting Verity and staff, along with other Committee members, on the firm foundation provided by outgoing President, Lindy Edwards. Fortunately, Lindy remains an active and supportive member of our Management Committee.

The last 12 months has been a busy time, with Verity as CEO continuing to capably respond to challenges and opportunities with integrity, thoughtfulness and a clear focus on the best interests of the NQDVRS and the clients we serve. Reviewing the issues Lindy mentioned in last year's report, I note that many are the same - struggling to get extra resources to meet the ever-increasing demand, staff changes, ensuring conformity with the Practices Standards and HSQF Audits.

The standout achievements for 2022/2023 are the completion of preparations for the relocation of the NQDVRS premises in July 2023 to a fit-for-purpose office on Ingham Road with a separate Men's Behaviour Change Program building entered from Gorden Street. The high volume of planning work was led capably by Verity, supported expertly by Committee Member Therese Smith. NQDVRS also received confirmation of re-certification under HSQF which is a fantastic result after many months of intense work. Finally, a tender for High-Risk Team and Integrated Service System was submitted in April. This was a significant investment of CEO time as well as the Leadership Team. It is with great pleasure that I am able to announce that NQDVRS was awarded the contract at the start of the next financial year.

A message from NQDVRS President

02

Governance changes implemented last year have continued to ensure accountability, with Treasurer, Therese Smith ably overseeing the finances and supporting Carolyn who does a great job managing the budget. The finance subcommittee oversaw changes to the finance software as well as the review of other programs to ensure financial viability and accountability. All have done an outstanding job! The Strategic Plan leads the direction of the service. I want to particularly note the completion of the NQDVRS Reconciliation Action Plan – thank you to Committee Member Meg Davis for her work on this.

The Mount Isa Office continues to provide a very valuable service in the Community, with Shannon leading the staff team of committed workers. After the Department undertook a review of the provision of domestic violence services to the Mount Isa and surrounding areas, the Mount Isa and the Gulf Tender was issued. Extensive discussions occurred with 54 Reasons regarding a partnership to provide a subcontract arrangement. Agreement was reached after many meetings and significant negotiations and MoU signed by CEO. Response to Tender questions was provided to 54Reasons and final Tender response submitted in June.

I would like to thank Verity and all the staff for their tireless work and commitment during another very difficult 12 months, and the Management Committee for their ongoing support of the organisation and in particular their support of me, which has certainly made my role easier.

In closing, I want to thank the Department of Justice and Attorney General, for their ongoing funding of NQDVRS, which has enabled us to do the work we do and to meet the increasing need of the women and children in the Community. Also, thank you to Zoe Semson, Kate Wimblett, Amy Duke and Ankur Verma and the Regional office for their on-going support.

Nonie Harris

NQDVRS PRESIDENT

2022-2023 – Not losing sight of the vision.

I wanted to start by thanking the members of COCAITH for the support and belief shown towards the organisation. In particular, the members of the Management Committee whose inclusive leadership and effective ethical decision making is ensuring the organisation meets current and emerging practice. The 2022-2023 Annual Report presents an overview of who we are and the important work we do, our achievements and performance over the year and acknowledgment of our funders and supporters.

When reflecting on the 2022-2023 year, there was so much to share. However, I wanted to start with our organisation's vision: **The elimination of domestic and family violence**. As CEO it can be all too easy to forget our purpose when caught up in running the business of the organisation, securing new premises, dealing with legislative and regulatory compliance, developing Policies and Procedures, managing HR, writing tenders, negotiating contracts, taking on new systems, the list goes on - I will expand on this in a moment. However, we all share a common purpose, to achieve our vision and to ensure the safety and rights of women and children. This focus bolsters our resolve to withstand the organisational challenges, to fight the system failings and confront engrained patriarchy which serves to place women and children at ever increasing frequency and risk of DFV. As we galvanised our resolve to eliminate DFV, our recently formed Values – **Integrity, Advocacy, Innovation, Compassion and Collaboration**, lay a sound foundation for how we will work to achieve this.

Of course, to achieve our vision, we must be an organisation which is specialist, credible and highly effective. As touched on above, the 2022-2023 year has been a resounding success in this regard. I acknowledge the banding together of everyone across the organisation to embrace continuous improvement which led to an outstanding audit result and HSQF recertification in May. Shortly after, in quick succession, we responded to two significant tenders issued by the QLD Government. The first tender for Townsville High Risk Team and Integrated Service Systems was submitted in April and I am delighted to confirm we were awarded the contract shortly after the year end. Next came the Mount Isa and Gulf Tender which saw a partnership with 54 Reasons established and tender response submitted in June. Both aligned with our strategic commitment to expand and grow our services across the regions.

In unison with these sizable achievements was our mission to find a new home for the service in Townsville. We were clear that a move was necessary to ensure we could provide premises fit for purpose and future proofed for growth. The prolonged and complex process of securing and fitting out premises spanned the whole year. Our resolve was clear, premises that felt safe, welcoming, and respectful for clients and a space which reflects how much we value our staff. To bring this to full fruition, we engaged consultants to rebrand which went on to inform our interior design. The full extent of the rebranding will be seen next year when launched as part of our official opening of the new premises. Change of this nature does not happen by chance, and once again I have been truly grateful for the collegiality across the organisation and the can-do attitude I have witnessed through times of great change.

Building on decades of leadership across the sector, the year also witnessed the establishment of the Domestic Violence Integrated Response Partnership in Townsville. This followed the review of Dovetail in 2021-2022 which gave way to the formation of the Partnership's Governance Group, Action Group and Network, orchestrated by our organisation. The level of commitment and genuine drive to do things differently and demonstrate leadership across key partners has been nothing short of inspirational.

It has also been a year of reform. The Women's Safety and Justice Taskforce and other reviews are setting an agenda for change and our organisation will continue to play an active role on behalf of our regions.

I am deeply proud of the striking success of the organisation throughout 2022-2023, and the unwavering care shown towards victim survivors of DFV. I look forward to fully realising these many achievements and much more next year.

Finally, I wanted to express my gratitude to so many people. There has been unwavering peer support again this year from QDVSN and SPEAQ members. To all the supporters and those who have willingly donated, you have helped so many victim survivors with your generosity. Our funders the Department of Justice and Attorney General, thank you.

Verity Bennett

NQDVRS CEO

On behalf of the Management Committee, I have pleasure in presenting the audited financials for the year ending 30 June 2023.

Key milestones for the service this year:

I continue to work with management to improve the efficiency of our reporting. The next implementation will be reporting software to overlay the Xero system. This will produce a dashboard of information and ratios pertinent to a not-for-profit organisation suitable for Management Committee members to maintain their oversight.

Service report by funding will be automated in the coming year by design of custom reports for our CRM software.

The Finance Sub-Committee consisting presently of CEO, Finance and HR Manager and Treasurer hold discussions in the week prior to the monthly meeting to review the monthly reports.

This was a significant year for the organisation with the fit-out of the new premises ready for the move at the beginning of the 2023-2024 financial year. I would like to acknowledge all funders who made this possible as well as the owners of the premises - Peak ARE Pty. Ltd.

Income and expenditure have remained in line with our budget projections. Income in 2022-23 from the Department of Justice and Attorney General continues to be the major funding received, along with other contributors equating to just under \$3.4 million.

The largest expenditure for the service continues to be as expected - salaries and related expenses standing at \$2.07 million (Figure 1).

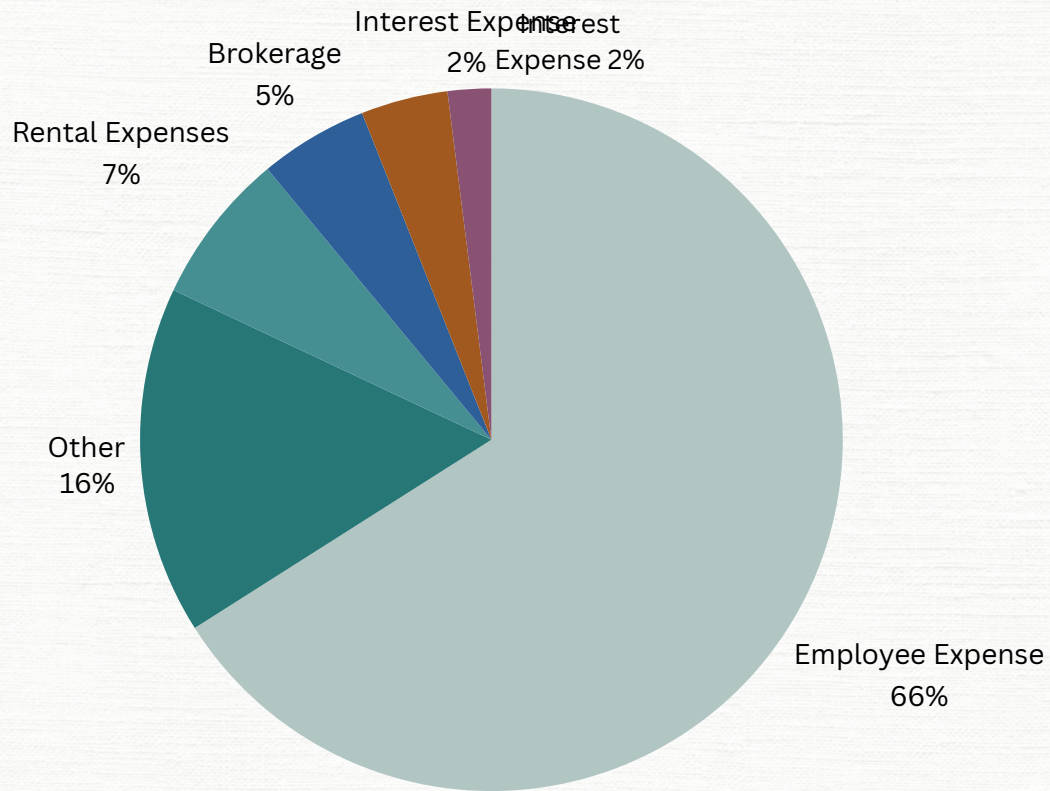


Figure 1. Expenditure

It remains a challenge to meet the growing demand for support in the domestic violence sector. We remain committed to applying these funds in a prudent manner which serves our clients to the best of our ability.

The Management Committee would like to take this opportunity to thank all our financial supporters, funders, members and staff for their ongoing commitment and dedication to the organisation. The awareness and generosity of the Townsville and Mt Isa community towards our service is greatly appreciated.

Therese Smith

NQDVRS TREASURER



Who we are

North Queensland Domestic Violence Resource Service (NQDVRS) is a long-standing specialist service providing crisis support, information, and referral for victim survivors, as well as men's behaviour change programs.

The rights and dignity of victim survivors and culturally respectful engagement is of paramount importance and underpins service delivery.

NQDVRS has a strong advocacy voice, campaigning for men's use of domestic and family violence to end. This is a gendered issue where the focus must be on men ending their violence and abuse.

A whole of community approach with strong leadership is needed to create change. NQDVRS is committed to being a leader with others, and values and nurtures honest and respectful relationships.

Our staff are highly trained and experienced practitioner advocates who are multi-disciplined in their approach. Staff lead on different programs but also provide back up support for each program to ensure shared knowledge and a holistic approach to anyone we work with.

Our approach

We acknowledge the intersectionality of the many barriers that exist for women and their families as they seek safety and support, and that women from diverse backgrounds can face particular and unique challenges.

In the work we do we believe in the right of justice, equality and fairness for all. We regard women as the experts over their own life and we see our work as a partnership that is respectful, transparent and accountable.

Our principles and values are strongly held and shared with everyone we spend time with, whether this is our clients, colleagues or our many partner organisations.

Collaboration and integration are central to the work we do. This occurs every day as part of service delivery. NQDVRS are also active members of longstanding Queensland networks such as Queensland Domestic Violence Services Network (QDVSN) and Services and Practitioners for the Elimination of Abuse Queensland (SPEAQ).

We sincerely acknowledge the women and children that came to our service, for sharing your stories and for trusting our service. We will do our utmost to be here for you to help advocate and be a trustworthy support.

Our values

Integrity

We do this by - Modelling a deep sense of social justice and recognising that Domestic Violence is a violation of human rights. Our decisions and interactions are grounded in ethics with transparent respectful communication. We ensure that our approach is holistic, client centred, and survival led by continually learning from survivors through evidence-based practice that underpins everything we do.

Advocacy

We do this by - Standing as the specialist sector partner in the region fiercely advocating for the elimination of domestic violence. We are strong advocates for structural and generational change, for balance, justice and equity, and we are recognised as a leader in our community driving a whole society change to gendered violence from a feminist framework.

Innovation

We do this by - Continuing to build on our 30 years of experience, professionalism, and practice wisdom as the go to agency for women experiencing domestic violence. Our trained, and skilful staff are agile and continually refining and improving our service response in support of our clients and community. We are inquisitive, imaginative, and revolutionary as we lead change in domestic violence in NQ.

Compassion

We do this by - Walking alongside survivors of domestic violence through deep listening, being present, prioritising their safety, and allowing women and children to progress at their own pace. It is our priority to help women feel welcome, safe and be supported by us without judgment. We support women to recognise, exercise and advocate for themselves and their children. We respect wherever they are on their journey and acknowledge that they are experts in their own story and have power in her own autonomy.

Collaboration

We do this by - Nurturing honest and respectful relationships with other stakeholders in supporting the safety of women and children. Working closely with organisations and the community to raise awareness, educate and promote the part everyone can play in ending domestic violence. Everything we do is with the women's voice front of mind.

Our Management Committee

President – Nonie Harris

Associate Professor Nonie Harris has more than 30 years' experience as a social worker and academic and has held several senior executive roles, including Head of Social Work at JCU.

Nonie has qualifications in social work and a PhD in the discipline of Women's Studies. Nonie values her prolonged engagement with Townsville's women's services, particularly as President and Vice President of the NQCWS (the Women's Centre) management committee and, currently, as a member of the management committee of the North Queensland Domestic Violence Resource Service.

Treasurer - Therese Smith

Therese was born and educated in North Qld and successfully operated an IT company for over 20 years. Therese had eight years as a member of James Cook University Council. Her roles included Chair of Univet Pty Ltd.

Her experience includes over twenty years of board experience in Not for Profit and government organisations in tertiary education, mental health, employment training, sports management, and domestic violence sectors as well as corporate zns. Therese is skilled in strategic planning, corporate governance, finance, and information technology.

Therese is committed to community and is an active member of Zonta Townville Metro.

Secretary - Ines Zuchowski

Dr Ines Zuchowski has extensive work experience as a social worker in social welfare practice, exposing her to a broad range of interventions and fields of practice. Research has been an integral part of her professional social work practice.

Ines is now employed as a senior lecturer in Social Work and Humans Services at JCU. Ines social work practice experience and research interest are particularly centred around, child and youth welfare, violence prevention, professional development of supervision, social justice and human rights, women's issues and field education for social work students.

Committee Member - Lindy Edwards

Lindy Edwards has more than 30 years' experience working in the Community Sector, in particular in the area of domestic violence and women's homelessness.

Lindy has a Bachelor of Social Work degree and was for over 20 years the Co-ordinator of Seras Women's Shelter. Now retired, she continues to contribute to the work of eliminating violence against women and children through her involvement with the NQ Domestic Violence Resource Service as a Management Committee member.

During the many years working in the Community Sector, Lindy held Executive positions on the boards of other local Not for profit organisations as well as State and National domestic violence and homelessness peak organisations.

Committee Member – Alex Whitney

Alexandra Whitney (Alex) is an experienced family and domestic violence lawyer working in the community legal sector. Alex has considerable experience in alternate dispute resolution working as a mediator for the NSW Community Justice Centre and a conciliator of the Queensland Human Rights Commission. Alex was previously a Board Director for the National Social Security Rights Network.

Committee Member - Meg Davies

Meg Davis has been a practising social worker in Townsville since 1978 working extensively in the community inclusive of Indigenous health, homelessness, mental health, family skills and was Manager of Townsville Multicultural Support Group Inc. (TMSG) 1998-2020.

She is currently in the final months of her PhD at James Cook University that has been inspired by her work in the resettlement sector through TMSG. She has a strong feminist commitment to human rights and social justice. Through her diverse work experiences, she has participated in strategic advocacy networks and has been on the board of NQDVRS since late 2020.

Committee Member – Kristin Perry

Kristin Perry has more than 17 years' experience in strategic human resources management and has held several management roles, including her current position as Manager, Talent Acquisition and Remuneration at James Cook University.

Kristin has qualifications in Business and Human Resources Management and is currently studying Psychological Science and Sociology. She has a strong commitment to feminism, equity, diversity and inclusion and is an advisor to the JCU Gender Equity Action and Research Team and a member of the Indigenous Action Group.

Relatively new to boards, Kristin has previously been a member of the Townsville Basketball Board and joined the NQDVRS Board in May 2022.

Our Strategic Plan 2022-2027

We recognise the significant impact of domestic and family violence on our local communities. A staggering amount of change is needed to eliminate the violence and abuse experienced by so many.

We have undertaken an intentional and thorough planning process to understand what we need to do now and into the future to lead this change and provide the best support for victim survivors. The Strategic Plan is the culmination of 4 months of listening, talking, thinking, and reflecting.

As we embark on our journey to implement this Strategic Plan, we commit to monitoring and reviewing our progress. We hold each other accountable to the commitments we have made as an organisation.

This Strategic Plan articulates our journey to support victim survivors and courageously lead a positive domestic and family violence shift in the North Queensland regions.

During this 5-year Strategic Plan, the voice of victim survivors is elevated, as their experiences teach us how to provide the most crucial services in our community.

Our Social Vision

The elimination of domestic and family violence.

Our Principles

- The safety and the rights of women and children is at the heart of everything we do
- Collaboration and integration with others provide the best service for our clients
- The voice of First Nations people is heard and respected throughout our organisation
- Domestic and family violence will not end unless we relentlessly advocate for change.
- Decisions and interactions are grounded in ethics and integrity with transparent respectful communication
- Continuous improvement is our responsibility so that we remain the specialist domestic and family violence service in the regions



Our Priorities

Our people and our culture are highly valued

- Enrich the experience of working here
- Build a strong and inclusive team
- Increase First Nations people representation
- Nurture and develop professional growth

Our organisation prioritises the safety of women and children and demonstrates professionalism

- Provide excellence in service delivery
- Enhance our cultural inclusivity
- Strengthen efficiencies by transforming process
- Grow and expand service provision

Our sector recognises us as the lead agency driving change in our regions

- Engage in respectfully collaborative partnerships
- Stand as the specialist sector partner in the regions
- Boldly advocate for change
- Improve awareness and understanding of Domestic and Family Violence

Our governance continually improves to ensure ethical and sustainable practice

- Set and model the organisation's positive culture
- Instil the value of good governance and continuous improvement
- Implement contemporary practices and procedures

Our Achievements 2021-2022

Our Governance

- Attracted a new Management Committee member
- Implemented a new 5-year Strategic Plan
- Achieved HSQF recertification
- Introduced a Governance Charter
- Reviewed legal structure and drafted a new Constitution
- Reviewed and introduced new Policies
- Introduced a new Risk Management Framework
- Introduced a new Emergency Management & Business Continuity Plan
- Introduced new Skills Audit and Matrix Report
- Continued to Auspice SPEAQ.

Our Organisation

- Developed a new brand (planned launch in 2023-2024)
- Secured and fitted out new premises in Townsville
- Adopted a Reconciliation Action Plan
- Engaged in Cultural Competency training
- Tendered for HRT/ISR contract - Townsville (awarded start of 2023/2024)
- Tendered for DFV services - Mount Isa
- Engaged with victim survivors to inform service changes
- Engaged with stakeholders to inform service changes
- Re-wrote Practice Manuals
- Developed new Process documents
- Commenced online Men's Behaviour Change programs
- Pilot expansion of Men's Behaviour Change program to Charter's Towers, Ingham, Aye
- Engaged in social/media awareness campaigns and interviews
- Participated in DFV reform consultation
- Partnered in the delivery of fundraising activities
- Introduced a new phone system.

Our People

- Adopted organisational values
- Increased training and development opportunities
- Welcomed new staff
- Continued to support students on placement
- Held team building activity
- Increased peer networking through community of practice forums & networks
- Revised Position Descriptions
- Renegotiated enhanced EAP arrangement
- Continued to provide regular Staff Meetings and Leadership Meetings
- Maintained Tuesday afternoon networking and awareness sessions
- Redefined Supervision
- Broadened our recruitment process.

Our Sector

- Established Townsville DVIR Partnership
- Formed a DV Governance Group
- Formed DV Action Group
- Established a DV Network to share information
- Supported DVIRG as the specialist DFV service
- Coordinated Candlelight Ceremony with Women's Centre and Sera's
- Increased community education and information sessions
- Maintained active membership of QDVSN and SPEAQ
- Co-delivered training across the sector.

Our Service in Numbers

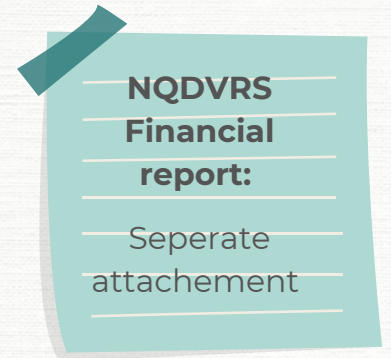
Demand for service support has been increasing year on year.

During 2022-2023, 6,897 clients received supports across our different services, which is an overall increase of 15% from the previous year.

The largest increase in demand was recorded against children's Counselling (48%) followed by Adult Counselling (20%).

Of the clients we work with, 39% identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, for Mount Isa this is 81%.

Police referrals to our organisation has seen a considerable increase of 21% from the 2021-2022 financial year.



6,897 clients received support across the services



3,623 Police Referrals received



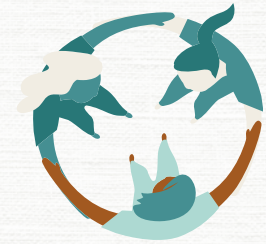
39% of Clients identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander



22,727 hours of services delivered



20,171 hours of appointments (in person & phone)



27,179 client activities

15

Our Service Delivery

Crisis Support & Counselling

“The support has been amazing, they have gone above and beyond. The workers showed empathy and sympathy and really made you feel like they cared, and I mattered.”

We offer walk in crisis support for people experiencing domestic and family violence. This includes, but is not limited to; information, crisis counselling, safety planning, referrals for safe accommodation, and assistance with applying for or varying a Domestic Violence Order. We also provide therapeutic counselling to support victim survivors to achieve improved quality of life.



**10214 hours
of support
provided**

**7975 Townsville
2248 Mt Isa**

**3298 clients
supported**

**2697 Townsville
626 Mt Isa**



16

The demand on the crisis service has continued to be high, with the current housing and economic climate leading to increased requirements for financial assistance. Operating on a drop-in basis has been beneficial to clients who are able to present when they are ready and be seen by a specialist worker in a timely manner.

Many clients fleeing domestic violence are finding themselves at risk of being homeless. In Mt Isa we provide a homelessness service. Finding accommodation is challenging due to the demand and shortage of suitable rental properties and women's lack of financial means. Work continues alongside private real estate and other homelessness services to help victims secure long-term housing.

NQDVRS and The Women's Centre have continued to collaborate to deliver the Keeping the Sharks at Bay group. This ongoing relationship has provided women with a safe and supportive environment to discuss their experiences of domestic and family violence. In Mt Isa 16 women took part in the Keeping Strong Women Safe program. Women self-referred or were referred by partner services or the Magistrate.

NQDVRS continues to strengthen relationships with other local organisations such as the shelters and legal services. These relationships have resulted in regular legal clinics held at NQDVRS, in partnership with NQ Women's Legal Service, First Nations Women's Legal Service and Townsville Community Legal Service.

Court Support

“I feel safer physically and mentally, not just for me but my kids too. They have been a great support.”

We provide court support to both the aggrieved and the respondent. Court support workers will provide the aggrieved with information about the court process, emotional support, and safety planning. Court support workers will also assist the aggrieved with their safety whilst at court. The respondent court worker will assist respondents with information about the court process and their options, and by providing referrals to programs that assist with behaviour change.

The demand on Court Support at the Specialist Domestic Violence Courts in Townsville and Mt Isa continued to be high, coupled with the organisation providing a service at the DFV Criminal Court once a week and providing a service at Family Advisory and Support Service.

Court Support workers work closely with stakeholders such as North Queensland Women's Legal Service, court staff, respondent duty lawyers, and police prosecutions. These ongoing collaborative relationships prove beneficial for victim survivor safety and perpetrator accountability, with increased referrals for internal NQDVRS programs.

At times the court process can feel disempowering for women who often feel invisible while navigating this complex system. Court support workers continue to receive positive feedback about the impact their emotional and practical support is having on women attending court.

The court space can also be a critical moment for respondent workers to engage with men using violence to encourage reflection, accountability, and to consider participating in a Men's Behaviour Change program to understand the impacts that their violence has had on women and children.



**2697 hours
of support
provided**

2044 Townsville
652 Mt Isa

**2225 clients
supported**

2091 Townsville
134 Mt Isa



17

Safety Upgrades

“The support was great, I can’t thank NQDVRS enough for helping me with everything.”

We offer safety upgrades to enhance the safety of women and children in their homes after an abusive relationship. We provide practical safety upgrades which can include lock changes, sensor lighting, security screens and alarms.



249 clients supported

169 Townsville
24 Mt Isa

Additional clients were supported through Enhancement funding during the year

Both programs – Choosing Safety in Townsville and Safe at Home in Mt Isa have been in high demand with many complex cases and an increase in referrals. The purpose of the program is to assist victim survivors to feel safer remaining in their homes after experiencing domestic and family violence. This is done by offering practical support, liaising with relevant housing providers such as Department of Housing and Real Estates and working with the client on broader safety planning.

Choosing Safety in Townsville received 280 referrals which is an increase from previous years. Referrals are received from external stakeholders including Queensland Police, FEAT, FaCC, Save the Children, The Women’s Centre, TAIHS, Relationships Australia, Act for Kids, DV Connect and Department of Housing. This increase has resulted in a higher number of multi-disciplinary approaches to supporting victim survivors to leave a DFV relationship and implement safety upgrades. This included liaising with other key agencies such as Community Corrections and the Queensland Police Vulnerable Persons Unit to ensure the victim survivor has adequate safety plans in place prior to exiting the relationship.

Additionally, many safety upgrades completed have been for clients residing in Department of Housing properties. This led to inter-agency collaboration to streamline request processes, ensuring best practice for clients.

AARDVARC Children's Counselling

“*[child] seemed to understand me more, I had no idea what they did, but to let go and feel completely safe was incredible. It was like they connected us emotionally again.*”

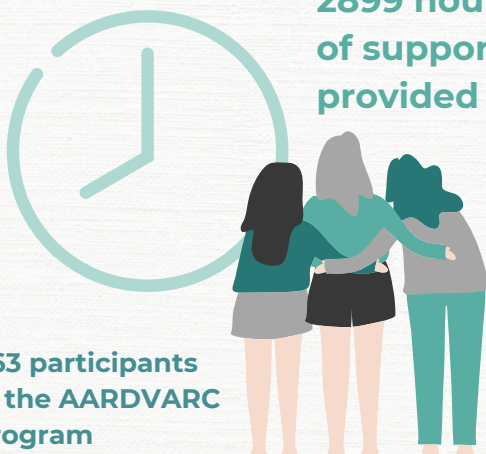
Acknowledgement and Recognition of Domestic Violence and Real Change (AARDVARC) is our healing program for children and young people aged 4 to 18 years, and their caregiver who have experienced domestic or family violence. The AARDVARC program offers the child/ren and their caregiver acknowledgment of their experience of violence and an opportunity to talk and make sense of their experience within a safe and supportive environment.

AARDVARC has had another busy year supporting caregivers and children, with the waitlist growing larger than ever. Despite wait times, workers continue to gain heart-warming positive feedback from children and their caregivers regarding attending the program.

AARDVARC offered the Crossroads trauma informed reflective parenting program as part of Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month. This program was successful in providing women with earlier parenting supports whilst they were on the waitlist for AARDVARC.

AARDVARC workers focused on further strengthening collaborative working relationship with other service providers by attending several local children's organisations. Positive feedback was provided by stakeholders and other services regarding the AARDVARC program. These ongoing collaborative relationships strengthen interagency support to achieve best outcomes for clients.

**2899 hours
of support
provided**



**463 participants
in the AARDVARC
Program**

Men's Behaviour Change

“I feel my partner participating in MenT&R has contributed positively to our relationship that I finally feel equal and feel like I can safely express my feelings to him.”

We offer a Men's Behaviour Change Program for men who use violence and abuse in their relationships. This operates in a group format for a total of 20 weeks rolling program. Participants will gain information and tools to challenge and change the values, beliefs and behaviours that are the foundation for their use of abuse.

The year saw continued demand and sector investment into providing men's behaviour change (MBC) services to respondent men. This is in recognition of the important and essential role that these programs and other perpetrator interventions can have on reducing violence in communities by addressing and challenging dominant patriarchal systems and beliefs designed to oppress and abuse women and children.

The MBC program obtained approval to trial online program delivery to both Townsville and Mt Isa regions, allowing men living in rural townships improved accessibility to participate in an MBC program.

Recruitment in this specialist space remains a challenge, however the service continues to support new and existing staff to meet required practice standards for Perpetrator Intervention Programs.

The purpose of a MBC program is to encourage critical reflection in men to be accountable for their use of violence and to promote safety, gender equality, and respect towards women. Feedback from women is therefore crucial to determine if she is feeling safe and seeing genuine change from him.

MBC Specialist Staff work closely with Women Advocates who perform ex/partner contact to the participants in program. This is to ensure all practice is survivor-led and elevates the voice and safety of women and children in any intervention involving the man using violence.

3335 hours of engagement

2608 Townsville
726 Mt Isa



911 clients engaged in Men's Behaviour Change service

748 Townsville
165 Mt Isa

20

Sector Development

“I have nothing but positive comments, I think as a service and their individual staff, all seem really passionate about what they do..... They are a hugely beneficial service to our community.”

The Sector Development program is funded to provide service-system capacity building activities and support to Charters Towers, Ayr, Ingham and Palm Island. Critical to the success of the program is building close relationships with service providers to understand their place-based needs and service gaps to respond effectively to victim/survivors experiencing DFV.

Key achievements this year have focused on sector awareness and training of the Common Risk and Safety Framework (CRASF) and risk assessment tools. The Sector Development Worker has collaborated closely with the Integration Manager from DJAG, to provide tailored CRASF training roadshows to regional stakeholders and has been a central point of contact to assist services understand referral pathways and eligibility criteria into the forthcoming HRT, in addition to highlighting relevant information sharing legislation.

The Sector Development worker routinely visits regional specialist DFV services and network meetings to promote sector development opportunities, support community events, and advocate back to DJAG around identified service gaps to improve integrated service responses in these communities. In addition, the Sector Development Worker provides external supervision services to DFV Specialist Staff to provide debrief, practice support and resources to these staff. Working within the Sector Development program provides clear insights and recognition of the amazing work of DFV specialist staff who live and work in these regional centres, whilst still maintaining professional boundaries and going above and beyond for their communities to keep women and children safe and connected.

**849 hours
of sector
development**



**Network meetings
and collaboration in:**

- Ingham
- Ayr
- Charters Townes
- Palm Island

Integrated Service Response

“The strengths of NQDVRS is the knowledge and experience of caring professional staff and positive relationships with stakeholders.”

As the local Specialist DFV service we play a leading role partnering and collaborating with many other services, and hold membership of networks and groups across Townsville and Mt Isa.



2733 hours of integrated service response



5 Dovetail meetings
4 Action Group Meetings
3 Governance Group Meetings



51 DVIRG meetings convened - Townsville

Townsville DVIR Partnership

Following the review of Dovetail in 2021-2022, a new arrangement was introduced this year. Townsville DVIR Partnership consists of a DV Governance Group, DV Action Group, DV Network and DVIRG (high risk DV).

DV Governance Group – The first meeting occurred in November 2022. The group is still in its formation stage with a planned workshop in September 2023 to determine purpose and process for this new strategic collaboration. Membership continues to grow, and meetings have demonstrated both the need and the commitment to DFV leadership and oversight.

DV Action Group – The purpose of the Action Group is to provide a proactive and preventative intervention against domestic and family violence. Membership consists of 26 partner organisations with the first meeting in February 2023. The group meets monthly to discuss service system gaps and trends to collectively progress bodies of work to enhance DFV practice, education and awareness to the community.

DV Network - The broader DV Network has grown to 85 members who receive updates prepared by NQDVRS via a Mail Chimp DV Network web page. Members of the DV Action Group are automatically members of the DV Network.

DVIRG (Domestic Violence Integrated Response Group) - DVIRG provides a local integrated service response where there is a 'serious threat to the life, health or safety of a person because of domestic violence'. Meetings have consistently occurred with high levels of referral to the group, averaging 10 clients weekly.

In Mt Isa NQDVRS is an associate member of the High-Risk Team and attends on occasions and refers clients.

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Community Education and Awareness

“Great presentation by passionate knowledgeable subject matter experts. Thanks for sharing your knowledge with us.”

We play an active role in community education and awareness as the Specialist DFV service. There is a focus each year during Domestic Violence Prevention Month.

- NAIDOC March
- Suicide March
- Homelessness Event at Centacare
- DFV Week Event at Centacare
- DFVPM Event at Civic Centre
- DFVPM Event at 54 Reasons
- NAIDOC Event at Overlander Hotel
- In Her Shoes Mt Isa
- Candlelight Ceremony
- 16 Days of Activism activities
- Homelessness Expo with Althea Projects
- Heatley State High Healthy Relationships Program Sessions
- Love Bites at Heatley State High School and William Ross State High School
- Mensline Australia
- No to Violence
- Zonta
- In Her Shoes delivered in partnership with NQWLS and Townsville City Council
- Red Rose Rallies
- Healthy Relationships Community Ed with Queensland Youth Services
- Crossroads training to facilitate a trauma informed, reflective parenting program for parents and caregivers whose children have been impacted by DFV.
- Healthy Relationships with Clontarf program at Kirwan State High School
- Presentation of DFV to Ergon Energy delivered in partnership with Mercy
- Defence Families Expo
- DFV awareness presentation to QLD Day Surgery
- Deadly Day Out
- Townsville Multicultural Support Group – Safer Pathways for Women presentation
- Safer Families DFV Event Ingham
- Cowboys Community Corner
- Healthy Relationship group with Project Booyah
- Our Townsville Expo
- Keeping the Sharks at Bay delivered in partnership with The Women’s Centre
- Health and Wellbeing Expo at William Ross State High School
- Radio and press interviews



Our Supporters and Donors

Lisa Holmes

Teresa Hope - Body Shop

Eleni Millios

Heidi Turner - Crystal Clear PR & Marketing

Kate's Campaign for Change

The Rock Christian Church

Rotary Club - Port of Townsville

Marg Marty - The People Principle

Mr Hardy

The Mother's Union

Townsville City Council

Zonta Metro

Share the Dignity

iSee Church

Verve Design

Zonta Townsville

Project Speak Up

Rize Up

Oshea Dyer

Elston Giving Community

Rebecca Larsen

St Patrick's College

Pinnacle Pentecostal Church

Knight Frank

Railway Estate Labor Branch and West End Patronss

Sensational Girls Network

Peak ARE Pty. Ltd.

Explore Property

Evolution IT

Eureka Furniture Townsville

Thank you to those who donated anonymously

The amazing people who attended and Bodyshop Fundraiser and bought items which raised funds for care packs

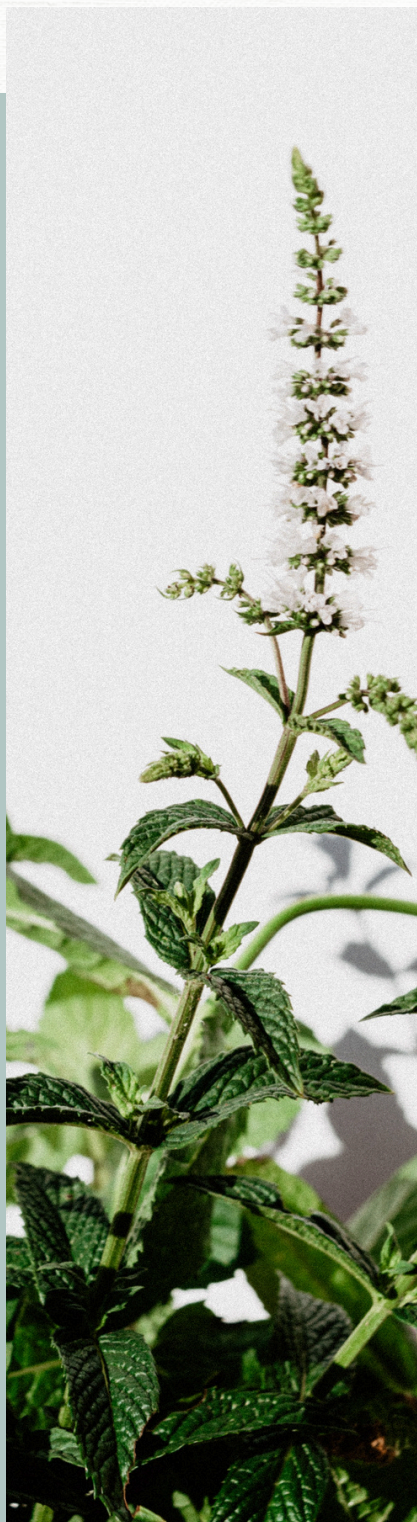
The amazing people who attended and donated to NQDVRS Give Now following the Fabulous Women's Charitable Luncheon

Thank you to the wonderful individuals, who have provided personal hygiene and care products and monetary donations throughout the year

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Thank you!

Our Staff and Students



Staff

Alan
Anne
Bec
Brad
Bree
Carolyn
Cathee
Catilyn
Cecilia
Chris
Danielle
Elizabeth
Emma
Erin
Esme
Heather
Heidi
Helena
Jackie
Janice
Jarrad
Kathryn
Kylie
Lexie
Lorraine
Melissa
Nakita
Paul
Rechelle
Renee
Shanice
Shannon (C)
Shannon (S)
Skye
Verity

Students

Aishwarya
Eden

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