



MEDIA RELEASE

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Leading family violence experts brief Parliamentarians against Family Violence

Leading family violence experts, including representatives from the National Association of Community Legal Centres (NACLC), Domestic Violence Victoria and Safe Steps met with Members of Parliament, Senators and staffers last night at an event hosted by Parliamentarians against Family Violence.

Parliamentarians against Family Violence is a bipartisan Parliamentary Friendship Group, convened by Tim Watts MP, Ken Wyatt MP and Andrew Broad MP.

The three speakers, including NACLC Chair Michael Smith, Fiona McCormack CEO of Domestic Violence and Annette Gillespie from Safe Steps (Family Violence Response Centre), all emphasised that increasing levels of demand for family violence-related assistance is contributing to a crisis and impacting the ability of legal and non-legal service providers to help people experiencing family violence.

“It is a sad reality that family violence is having a huge and devastating impact in the community. This year women have been killed each week and there are thousands of families facing threatening situations every day,” said Michael Smith, Chair of NACLC.

In highlighting the work of Community Legal Centres (CLCs), Mr Smith commented that, “CLCs are increasingly responding to the crisis in family violence at their services right across Australia. Family violence and family law are the top two specialist areas/client groups for CLCs that indicates the huge demand for assistance across Australia every year.”

He also highlighted the wide range of assistance CLCs provide, “legal help for women and children experiencing family violence is not just about intervention or restraining orders. It also means helping in related areas, such as family law, tenancy, housing, social security, debt, child protection and a range of others” added Mr Smith.

Mr Smith also emphasised that “while front-line services to respond to family violence are crucial, CLCs are using this knowledge and working closely with family violence services, police and the courts to influence systemic improvements and work to prevent family violence before it occurs. All this work is essential to eliminating the scourge of family violence.”

For further information or to arrange an interview contact: NACLC Chair Michael Smith
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NACLC acknowledges the traditional owners of the lands across Australia and particularly the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, traditional owners of the land on which the NACLC office is situated. We pay deep respect to Elders past and present.