

WHITTLESEA COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS FAMILY VIOLENCE MONITOR

DATA FROM PERIOD
1st January 2017 – 30th June 2017

About this report series:

Whittlesea is a municipality in Victoria with one of the highest recorded incidence of family violence. It is an acute issue for Whittlesea as a whole.

In 2011, all major Whittlesea Community Connections (WCC) program areas identified family violence (FV) as a major issue. As such, FV was included within WCC's priority plan 2011-2012 year. In response to the increasing incidence of individuals presenting to the agency with family violence disclosures, WCC endeavoured to collect data on all who presented to the agency and reported incidents of family violence as a way of measuring the rate of increase in incidents over a period of time. FV is again one of three service priorities in WCC's 2014-15 Priority Plan.

A data collection template was developed to capture information about each time FV was reported to the agency. Guidelines for doing this were set so that each individual's case was only recorded once and not duplicated between internal referrals and each time they came to the agency. This form will continue to change as needed to best record information.

The data maps the number of incidents reported, including the client's suburb, their cultural background, the type of violence being experienced, and the types of services they are accessing. This data will help to identify local experiences of FV and will assist our responses to the issue both at an individual level and through broader advocacy.

Key Information this half year

- During this 6 months 158 new people presented to WCC for family violence.
- There were 123 working days this 6 month period. This equates to 1.3 presenting at WCC per working day.
- Whittlesea Community Legal Service (143) continues to receive the highest number of incidents (90%), followed by casework (6), FV outreach worker (4), emergency relief (3), transport (1) and community information (1).
- In 43% of all cases (68 cases) this was the first contact with a support agency.
- 48% of cases (77 cases) had contacted police and 49% (78 cases) had applied for an intervention order.
- Over the past three years, more than 80% of cases, (83%) involved multiple forms of abuse. Each client disclosed an average of 2.5 types of abuse.
- In 44% of cases it was reported that children had witnessed the violence.

- Overwhelmingly, perpetrators were recorded to be ex-partners. 66% of cases involved ex-partners. 17% of cases involved current partners.
- 82% of cases reported that the violence occurred during their relationship
- 69 cases involved people who were born outside of Australia. Of those born outside of Australia, 70% spoke a language other than English at home.
- 17 cases required interpreters.
- 85% of females identified as a victim. 63% of these women identified their ex partner as the perpetrator and 21% their current partner.
- 9 men identified as victims, 22 men identified as perpetrator and 1 man identified as both victim and perpetrator.
- 3 females identified as perpetrator, 1 of whom identified as both victim and perpetrator.
- The 26-40 age group had the highest representation with almost half of all incidents (75 cases).
- The majority of people – 66% – live within the City of Whittlesea.
- 28% came from outside Whittlesea, including Greensborough, Cragieburn, Templestowe, Preston.
- Epping, Mill Park, Mernda and Thomastown represent the largest proportion of contacts within the Whittlesea LGA at 24%, 19%, 15% and 11 % respectively.
- The suburbs of South Morang, Doreen and Mernda make up approximately 25% of the Whittlesea population. 30% of cases within the Whittlesea LGA were from these areas.
- The suburbs of Lalor, Epping, Epping North, Thomastown and Mill Park make up 54% of the Whittlesea population. 63% of cases were from these areas.
- Co-occurring factors were present in 39% of all cases.
 - Substance abuse was present in 39 cases (25%), or 1 in 4 cases
 - Technology was used to stalk/harass in 28 cases (18%), or 1 in 6 cases
 - Problem gambling was present in 4 cases.