



GFVA Advocacy Strategy

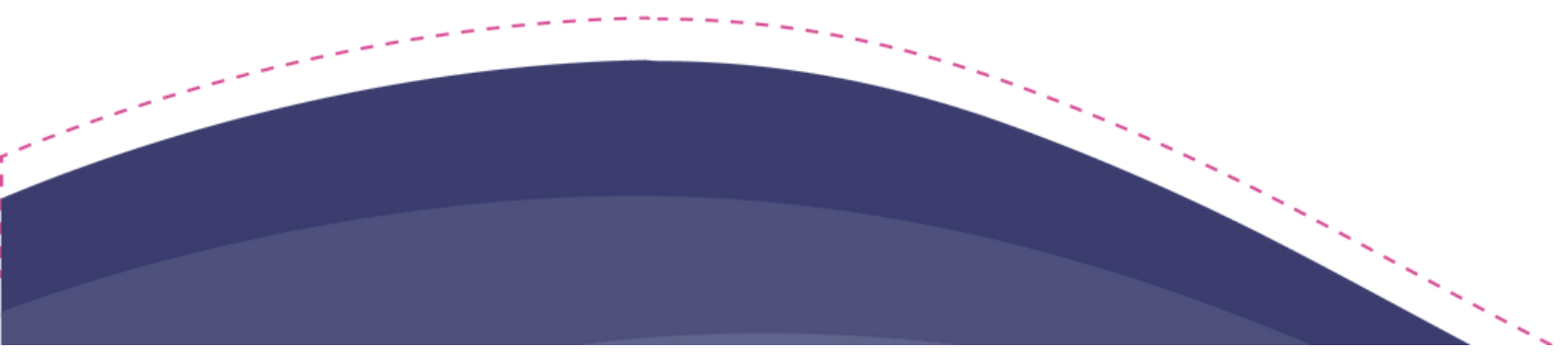
2024-2028

www.gippslandfamilyviolencealliance.com.au



Contents

Gippsland Strategy	03
Advocacy Strategy on a page	04
Participation and Partnership	05
Awareness of key issues	05
Innovation	05
Coordination	06
Actions	07
Appendix- One Pager	08
Appendix- The Facts Explained	09



A Gippsland Strategy

The GFVA Advocacy Strategy was created to sit alongside the GFVA Strategic plan, to guide our work between now and 2028.

The strategy has been formed with a Working Group, which has come from members of the Governance Group.

We have identified the following as key priorities within the Gippsland Area:

- Therapeutic Supports
- Services for Men
- Case Management
- Coordination of services
- Housing

Under these priorities will be our key asks.

The purpose of the strategy is to engage the partnership, practitioners, community and leaders in advocating for Gippsland's needs and to have a coordinated approach which allows for everyone to be involved at their own level.

This strategy will sit alongside two toolkits:

- Community Toolkit
- Partners Toolkit

Along with an annual calendar of events.

Advocacy is a key element of social work sector however, Dalrymple, Boylan and Wharton argue that social work advocacy has been constrained over recent years by '*bureaucracy and proceduralisation of services and resources*'.

Advocacy can bring together the service sector, to make meaningful change for service users, and is an important method for '*enabling people who have previously been ignored or silenced to...draw on their experiences of oppression and powerlessness as a marginalised group, to recognise the impact that such experiences have on their capacity*' and to feed that to decision makers for meaningful change. Service providers can play a part as both the advocate for the services they provide as as a conduit for decision makers.

The Deakin Journey Mapping Project, along with other GFVA projects support the need for advocacy in Gippsland and provide the reason and resources for the advocacy group to undertake their work.



Advocacy Strategy on a page



PARTICIPATION AND PARTNERSHIP

Building continued brand awareness with both community and the members of the partner agencies to identify the GFVA as one united voice.



AWARENESS OF KEY ISSUES

Build knowledge of the key issues important to the FV sector, as well as how both agencies and community can participate in awareness raising.



INNOVATION

Look for areas of innovation, new funding streams, innovative methods to solve issues.



COORDINATION

Have consistent, coordinated mechanisms for advocacy. Identify key times of year to advocate.

THE NEED

Therapeutic supports are essential to support the recovery of those who have experienced family violence. Targets for the therapeutic programs are not inline with demand and the ability to engage with clients for the length of time it takes to recover is not current allowed in the guidelines.

THERAPUTIC SUPPORTS



Services for men are currently limited, with early intervention programs currently not funded. Greater ability to engage men early, with greater program options is needed to intervene early.

SERVICES FOR MEN



Case management for people who experience violence has experienced limited uplift inline and population growth.

CASE MANAGEMENT



Service users need dedicated supports who can help them navigate the system and coordinate their care. Agencies with increasing demand have lower capacity to work together and to support clients. We're asking for dedicated services to support the coordination of services.

PREVENTION



The Housing Crisis is impacting both service users and practitioners. Limited affordable housing has impacted on the ability of services to close cases, along with agencies ability to recruit. This plan supports the Housing Requests of the Gippsland Homelessness Network.

HOUSING AND EXIT PATHWAYS



PRINCIPALS

Gippsland's needs are unique to the region, with local specificities, funding asks, and coordination needs.

As a result the advocacy strategy may leverage off statewide work, however needs to have a Gippsland overlay.

GIPPSLAND FOCUSED



Advocacy cannot be done just by the working group. It is an activity that anyone regardless of who they are can become involved in. We want to create consistent pathways for everyone to participate, and to collaborate for Gippsland's needs.

COLLABORATIVE



The Purpose of the Gippsland Family Violence Alliance is to critically evaluate and disrupt systems and structures to ensure they become inclusive, accountable, equitable and accessible for Gippsland Communities. We do this through:

- Building workforce capability
- Collaborative practice
- Evidence and advocacy
- Taking a collective impact approach
- Innovation

PURPOSED





PARTICIPATION AND PARTNERSHIP

Building continued brand awareness with both community and the members of the partner agencies to identify the GFVA as one united voice.

Dalrymple, Boylan and Wharton, in the book *Effective advocacy in social work*, notes that participation means active involvement of service users in decision making (pg 91). They also note that including the community and service users in decisions and advocacy for change is informed by principals of anti-oppressive practice within social work literature.

Community is already mobilised around the issue of family violence in Gippsland with the:

- Country Women's Association
- Lions Club
- Rotary Association

all listing prevention of family violence in their strategies and plans. Including these groups and mobilising them around shared issues will strengthen the key messages.

Effective advocacy in social work, also notes that advocacy is relational, including service users, but also extending to organisational and policy contexts of practice (pg67). Working effectively with organisations to support system's improvements through advocating for improved funding, guideline changes and also looking collectively at other options to support the service system is part of advocacy. As a result it's equally important that all members of the GFVA come together to participate in partnership around the advocacy strategy.



AWARENESS OF KEY ISSUES

Build knowledge of the key issues important to the FV sector, as well as how both agencies and community can participate in awareness raising.

Building awareness of the needs of the service system can be done through a multi-layered approach, which allows for agencies to discuss their individual agencies needs/wants, while also undertaking advocacy for the rest of the service system.

Evidence suggests that community joining in in advocacy efforts does create change more effectively than industry groups, as a result we have included both in the strategy.



INNOVATION

Look for areas of innovation, new funding streams, innovative methods to solve issues.

Agencies and services have been limited to the service delivery models which have been provided by the state government. However, there are a number of new and emerging funding streams that can be explored through the federal government, local government and philanthropic partnerships.

Applying for these funding streams will be more successful, if we partner as a committee on applications and identify what we need as a region collectively.

Innovation requires a mixture of data, creativity and risk taking, as well as reflectivity to opportunities.





COORDINATION

Have consistent, coordinated mechanisms for advocacy. Identify key times of year to advocate.

We suggest that for the advocacy to be effective, we need coordinated approaches to when/where the advocacy is undertaken.

We are suggesting two coordinating elements:

- A quarterly meeting between communication/marketing teams from Gippsland Agencies, to ensure that there is a consistent plan to disseminate information, information and resources.
- A annual advocacy plan, led by the Advocacy Working Group, which will highlight key events where and when advocacy will occur.



On-going actions

Project	Stakeholders	Goals	Actions
Engaging Stakeholders	Community Organisations	To have them support the messaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify Community organisations which want to be involved Support them with resources and avenues for engagement
Engaging Stakeholders	GFVA Partner Organisations	To have them support the messaging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support with resources around key messaging, for social media, newsletters, meetings with politicians et
Regular meetings with decision makers	Local and state politicians	To educate about the needs of the FV Sector in Gippsland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set up regular meetings Engage wherever possible in local round-tables, parliamentary enquiries and other events where politicians might attend
Media	Community	To educate about the needs of the FV Sector in Gippsland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support with knowledge of the needs of the family violence sector

Campaign Actions

Project	Stakeholders	Goals	Actions
Domestic and Family Violence Awareness Month (Social Media Campaign)	Agencies Community Orgs Media Community	To educate about the needs of the FV Sector in Gippsland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage agencies and community groups in social media campaign via photo frames Open letter to decision makers
16 Days of Activisms Forum	Agencies Decision Makers	To educate about the needs of the FV Sector in Gippsland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To hold a forum which both celebrates the work of the sector and educates decision makers about the needs of the sector.



Family violence is at crisis point in Gippsland.

We are appealing to decision-makers for increased support for people in Gippsland facing family violence, aiming to navigate the challenges of providing services in regional, rural, and remote areas.

We seek investment in:

- Primary Prevention
- Services for adults who perpetrate FV
- Case Management
- Therapeutic Support
- Housing and Exit Pathways

In 2024 Gippsland experienced:

6,646 breaches to a FV intervention order

17% increase in serious assaults due to FV

9,724 family violence calls to Victoria police

2,179 incidents involving sexual offences

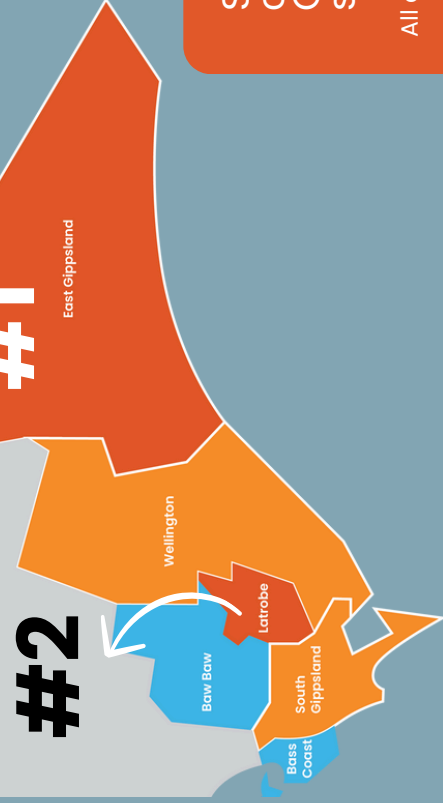
16.4% average increase in FV across Gippsland

3,466 Gippslanders received a Homelessness service because of FV.
July 2023–June 2024



Scan the QR code for more Gippsland FV statistics.

All data extracted from the [Crime Statistics Agency](#).



We need sustained, predictable and ongoing funding, to:

- Advance the capacity of case management services
- Continue to uplift the funding for Women's Health Services beyond 2026 to work in gendered violence prevention
- Double the capacity of the FV and sexual assault counselling and therapeutic programs
- Introduce specific unit pricing for Family Contact workers in men's programs
- Increase the programming options for adults who use violence.
- Provide housing options which allow victims to remain in their home, or
- Provide supported and affordable crisis, short- and long-term housing options for those who cannot remain in their home



the facts: explained.

Family Violence is at crisis point in Gippsland.

Case Management

- Provide specific funding for the employment of peer support workers, people with lived experience who can walk alongside victim/survivors throughout their journey.
- Predictable and sustained funding for brokerage, Agencies in Gippsland have been told there is the potential for Flexible Support packages to be reduced between 50-75%.
- Increase funding to advance the capacity of case management services to provide services to those who need them.

Therapeutic Supports

- Increase the capacity of the Federal Support and Recovery Program to cover all six LGAs of Gippsland. Sustain the funding long-term, beyond its current two-year funding structure.
- Double the funding to family violence (FV) counselling to be representative of both population increases and increases in FV reporting.
- Increase funding to the Family Violence Therapeutic Intervention program to meet current/increasing demand. Currently, only 9% of Victorian children affected by FV receive therapeutic support.
- Sustainable and predictable funding for sexual assault services, allowing for the services to maintain practitioners and to support the community.
- Expedite resources to support adolescents who use violence in the home.

Housing and Exit Pathways

- Increase funding to include six (6) full-time positions for intake, assessment and planning.
- Increase case management by min. seven (7) positions.
- Federal electorate of Gippsland needs 3,100 additional dwellings; federal electorate of Monash needs an additional 3,000.
- A 60-bed Youth Foyer. Currently Gippsland only has 16 beds for young people.
- Increased and sustained funding is needed for the Housing Establishment Fund (HEF) to support crisis accommodation.
- Review the Unit Price provided to Housing Services.
- Increase crisis accommodation options for victims/survivors.
- Sustained and predictable funding for local after-hours family violence service provider.

Primary Prevention

- Sustain the uplift funding for Women's Health Services beyond 2026 to continue gendered violence prevention work including with young people.
- Continued resourcing to build the confidence and capacity of community leaders in reducing gendered and family violence rates.
- Continued investment to build the confidence and capacity of the primary prevention workforce.
- Investment in community partnerships that assist in scaling up of evidence-informed, intersectional and effective primary prevention practice.

Services for Men

- Provide predictable and sustained brokerage to support men. Brokerage is used to provide mental health supports, specialised assessment and access to groups. Baw Baw and Latrobe Men's Services have spent 67% of their yearly allocation in quarter one.
- Increase the unit price for men's services, allowing for wages to represent the difficulty of the work, increasing the attractiveness of the sector and to allow programs to expand to meet increasing demand.
- Introduce a specific unit price for Family Contact Work, allowing for the work to be an embedded part of men's programs, representing the importance of working with women and children in the men's space.
- Expedite the statewide roll out of the Serious Risk Program.

Whole Sector Approach to reducing violence

Sustained, predictable and ongoing funding, for primary prevention, intervention, response and recovery/healing, based on local Gippsland community needs.

