



A SNAPSHOT

Queensland Centre for
Domestic and Family
Violence Research



2023

YEAR IN
REVIEW

WWW.NOVIOLLENCE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We proudly acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the lands across Queensland and Australia's other states and pay our respects to All First Nations Peoples. We acknowledge that sovereignty over this land was never ceded. We value the ongoing contribution of our many First Nations partners in advising, supporting and contributing to our work and projects, so that your voices and those of your communities are reflected in our work. We thank you with humility.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VICTIM SURVIVORS

We acknowledge the adults, adolescents and children who have been impacted by domestic, family and sexual violence, many of whom remain invisible and unheard. We recognise the importance of an integrated systems' response when victim survivors speak. You are the reason behind, and at the forefront of, our work. We thank you for sharing your stories with us and keeping us grounded in our efforts.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF SPECIALIST AND FRONTLINE SERVICES

We acknowledge the life changing and life-saving work of all who work on the frontline in gendered violence response specialist services: the value and complexity of your work cannot be overestimated. We appreciate that this work cannot be done in isolation and highlight the worth of working together across sectors to create safer lives for victim survivors. We thank those specialists, and all who work with you, for the many ways in which you support and enrich our work.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF OUR PARTNERS

We acknowledge the funding received from the Queensland Government, the investment and support of CQUniversity, the invaluable advice from our First Nations Advisory Group and the many supporters and partners who enable our work – without you we couldn't achieve our mission of changing and ending the tragic story of domestic, family and sexual violence.



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Welcome to our Year in Review for 2023.

Often, we are asked about the extent of our work at the Queensland Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research. The question is a reasonable one given our unique, intersecting model.

OUR FOCUS



A good way for us to reflect on and share our work is by presenting a snapshot of our key highlights and accomplishments over 2023.

Although this document is organised around these areas, it should be emphasised that these are not siloed areas of work. We are a small team, located in diverse sites, collaborating across projects to efficiently and effectively make a difference. No doubt you will see the healthy 'blurring of these edges' as you read this Year in Review!

There is much more to tell across the three areas of our endeavours. If you are interested in knowing more, our website (www.noviolence.org.au) provides additional information and requests for further advice on research topics or education are always welcomed via email (qcdfvronline@cqu.edu.au).

We trust that you will enjoy this little sojourn back through our 2023 and look forward to 2024 as we maintain our commitment to contribute to a safer world for women and their children.



Associate Professor Heather Lovatt
Director, Queensland Centre for Domestic and Family Violence Research.



RESEARCH + EVALUATION



RESEARCH + EVALUATION

Our research and evaluation projects are supported by practice and cultural wisdom from our valued sector partners and shaped by the voices of those with the lived experience. We are also developing exciting and innovative new research on the use of artificial intelligence (AI), and other new technologies in sector services delivery, working towards user-focused and trauma-informed approaches that have victim survivors' lived experience at the forefront.

Key Projects

QCDFVR has continued to work with the community to undertake innovative and impactful research that makes a real difference to the safety of women and their children. Projects continued, initiated or completed over 2023 included:

- Second and final evaluation of the Strangulation Trauma Centre (STC) model.
- Investment Specification Project Review of Queensland Government Domestic, Sexual and Family Violence Investment Specifications.
- Culturally safe place based evaluation of the Good Way Change Men's Behaviour Program.
- Trauma-informed AI: Developing and testing a practical AI audit framework for use in social services.
- UnitingCare Evaluation of Men's Behaviour Change Program – Stage Two and Stage Three.
- Mapping automated decision-making tools in administrative decision making in NSW governments for improved transparency for service users.
- Literature Review: Youth Perpetrator Interventions.
- Literature Review: Perpetrator Interventions.



PUBLICATIONS

Research was shared through a variety of mechanisms including a range of publications and presentations.

Journal articles

Lowik, V., Cheyne, N., & Lovatt, H. (2023). "He's been trying to get me ...": The lived experience of survivors of intimate partner strangulation after leaving the abusive. *Journal of Family Violence*, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10896-023-00664-x>

Lowik, V., Cheyne, N., & Lovatt, H. (2023). I'm going to take my power back and do whatever I can': The self-efficacy of survivors of intimate partner strangulation and their engagement in research interviews. *Qualitative Social Work* (online 26 December 2023). <https://doi.org/10.1177/14733250231225156>

Sleep, L. (2023). Female dependents, individual customers and promiscuous digital personas: The multiple governing of women through the Australian social security couple rule. *Critical Social Policy*, 43(2), 193-213. <https://doi.org/10.1177/02610183221089265>

Reports

George, A.-J., Lowik, V., Suzuki, M. & Corbett-Jarvis, N. (2023). Specialist Approaches to Managing Sexual Assault Proceedings: an Integrative Review, The Australasian Institute of Judicial Administration Incorporated.

Maitra, S., Sleep, L., Suzanna, F., & Henman, P. (2023) Building a Trauma Informed Algorithmic Assessment Toolkit. University of Queensland/ University of Notre Dame IBM Ethics Lab.

Weatherall, K., Henman, P., Bello y Villarino, J.-M., Matulionyte, R., Sleep, L., Trezise, M., Van Der Arend, J., & Wilcock, S., Mapping Automated Decision-Making Systems across the NSW Public Sector (DRAFT). University of Sydney/University of Queensland.



Dr Vicki Lowik and Dr Amanda-Jane George who led the Integrative review with Associate Professor Heather Lovatt who was an advisor on the project.

Book Chapters

Redden J. & Sleep L., (in production, forthcoming, 2024) “Welfare/ Social Policy and AI”. In R. Paul and E. Carmel (Eds). Handbook on Public Policy and Artificial Intelligence. Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd.

Sleep L. & Rundle O., (in production, forthcoming, 2024) “Assessing parenting payment applications by individual circumstances of parents, not their relationship status”, Chapter 12. In K. Seear, B. Batagol, H. Askola, J. Richardson, J. Walvisch (Eds). The Feminist Legislation Project. Routledge UK.

Other Publications

The Conversation – Does Australia need dedicated sexual assault courts? Dr Vicki Lowik and Amanda-Jane George, CQUniversity Australia. October 30, 2023.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

The AES23 International Evaluation Conference brings together evaluators from around the world, and each year, the conference is held in a different Australian host city. In 2023 Associate Professor Heather Lovatt and Dr Vicki Lowik presented at the “Through the Lens” Brisbane AES Conference.

Their presentation, “Breaking the silence on women’s lived experience of violence by hearing from survivors” identified that evaluations can be strengthened by capturing the voices of program users. Whilst associated risks need to be acknowledged, involvement in evaluations can break the silence on violence against women, enabling participants to be heard and empowered.



Associate Professor Heather Lovatt and Dr Vicki Lowik presenting at the “Through the Lens” Brisbane AES Conference.

Other Presentations Included

- Henman, P., Fay, S., & Sleep L. (2023) Trauma Informed Auditing of ADM systems in Social Services Delivery. [Invited Conference presentation]. Notre Dame IBM Data Ethics Lab Workshop. Notre Dame University. Indiana. United States. 14 June.
- Kennedy, J., Notely, T., Humphry J., & Sleep L. (2023) Automation and Accessibility. [Conference presentation]. ADM+S CoE Symposium: Automated News and Media. University of Sydney. 13 July.
- Lowik, V. (2023) Specialist Approaches to Managing Sexual Assault Proceedings: An Integrative Review. [Conference presentation]. Australian and New Zealand Mental Health Association's Stop Domestic Violence Conference. Hobart. November.
- Sleep L. (2023) "This is NOT human services": Counter-mapping automated decision making in social services in Australia. [Invited Conference presentation] Digital Welfare to work workshop, Melbourne University, 15 - 16 February.
- Smith, J. (2023) Including the personal – Lived experience involvement in social work education: A road less travelled and/or a rickety bridge to cross. Australia and New Zealand Social Work and Welfare Educators and Research Symposium, 1-3 November, Gold Coast.
- Smith, J. (2023) Zooming in for skill development: Requirements disrupted – from residential to remote learning. Australia and New Zealand Social Work and Welfare Educators and Research Symposium, 1-3 November, Gold Coast.
- Smith, J. (2023) Researching traumatic experiences: Vicarious trauma inside academe and the ethics of care, 4th National Human Research Ethics Committee Conference, 29 Nov – 1 December, Brisbane.



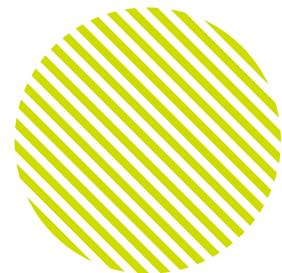
Dr Lyndal Sleep in Sydney

RESEARCH HIGHER DEGREES

RHD students are an important part of the QCDFVR community, and its aim to build research capacity in Queensland and Australia on domestic, family and sexual violence.

Topics being explored are diverse and include:

- The lived experience of the partners/caregivers of ex-ADF veterans diagnosed with PTSD with a focus on domestic and family violence and suicidality
- What might explain why some men use strangulation in their abusive intimate partner relationships
- Reproductive health and violence against women: experience of Afghan migrant women in South-East Melbourne
- Communities of Practice (CoP) as a protective factor against the impact of vicarious trauma (VT) on specialist DFV practitioners
- Online dating sexual violence
- Coercive control
- Breaching of DFV protective orders





SECTOR SUPPORT



Communities of Practice

The Communities of Practice (CoP) continued to be an important aspect of the QCDFVR support to the sector work.

Family and Child Connect and Intensive Family Support Services

Now in its seventh year, the Family and Child Connect and Intensive Family Support Services (FACC/IFS) CoP for specialist DFV practitioners continued with both peer support sessions and external presentations and the evaluation for the 23-24 financial year again identified a high level of satisfaction with the content of the sessions.

Women's Health and Wellbeing Support Services

Membership for the Women's Health and Wellbeing (WHW) CoP has grown in the last twelve months with the contact list growing to 66 practitioners who are able to access the sessions and the members' site.

“ Thank you all.
Love that this is a
safe place to talk. ”

“ (I wouldn't change
anything.) It's perfect as it
is. Lots of thought is put
into the topics and
presentations. ”



Presentations

The two CoP were enriched by a program of engaging speakers.

- The Strangulation Trauma Centre and its programs.
- DVConnect's current model and future projects.
- Perpetrator intervention programs and the challenges of working with men using violence.
- Child sexual exploitation.
- A review and practical implementation guide to the *Queensland's Domestic and family violence services Practice principles, standards and guidance* and other relevant policy documents for practitioners relating to gendered violence.

Peer support

Peer Support groups continued this year with topics requested by participants including:

- Intersectionality and Accessibility.
- Safe and Together Framework.
- Queensland Common Risk and Safety Framework (2022): what it is and how to use it.
- Women's use of violence.
- Evidence informed group work.
- Case study: review approaches to encouraging wellbeing for women.



(I like the) collaboration with other DFVP workers... the ability to discuss challenges, progress, legislation changes and good work.

(I like that this) is specific to my role and practice skills. It connects me with other DFV Specialists. I feel acknowledged in my role and work.

2023

Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum

The 2023 Queensland Indigenous Family Violence Prevention Forum was held in Mackay on the 9th and 10th May 2023.

Once again, the Forum maintained its integrity as an opportunity to come together in a way which permits genuine engagement, with almost 130 stakeholders from around Queensland participating either virtually or in person.

More than 100 delegates were present “in the room” in Mackay and 25 participants from around the State were “in the Zoom” across the event.

The majority (71%) of attendees identified as Aboriginal and/ or Torres Strait Islander, and pleasingly, we are proud to see a continuation of a healthy uptake of male delegates (21%) for our Forum.



“
The honesty, the stories of hope and community - a powerful experience. This has been excellent - thank you!



EDUCATION + TRAINING



Training

QCDFVR plays a big role not only in the DFV and sexual violence sectors but also throughout Queensland by providing specialist training and education in line with the Queensland Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy to 'make DFV everybody's business'. This facet of the Centre includes recurring agreements and one-off bespoke packages in a variety of arenas, including private, government and non-government organisations.

- DFV Awareness raising for Progression (One day in person workshop): Queensland Corrective Services, Townsville.
- DFV Awareness raising for Progression (One day in person workshop): Queensland Corrective Services, Wacol.
- Foundations of DFV work x 2 (3-part, Virtual delivery): Commissioned by WorkUP Queensland.
- Introduction to responding to DFV (In person, repeated sessions): Centenary Bridge construction Project (2 out of 8 sessions delivered in 2023).
- Brief introduction to Coercive Control (Online webinar): Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia (PACFA) Queensland.
- Introduction to Common Risk and Safety Framework Level 1 tools (Online webinar): Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia (PACFA) Queensland.
- DFV and Kids (in person workshop): "Lighting the Way" conference organised by United Workers Union for Teachers Aides.
- Disability and DFV (One day, in person workshop): Disability Carers Queensland, Rockhampton.



Other Projects

Queensland Common Risk and Safety Framework Online Modules

2023 saw the launch of QCDFVR's Online Courses website with the Queensland Common Risk and Safety Framework (CRASF) training modules as commissioned by DJAG's Office for Women and Violence Prevention. As of 31st December, almost 1200 users had created accounts with the online learning platform and registered for one or more of the possible six modules.

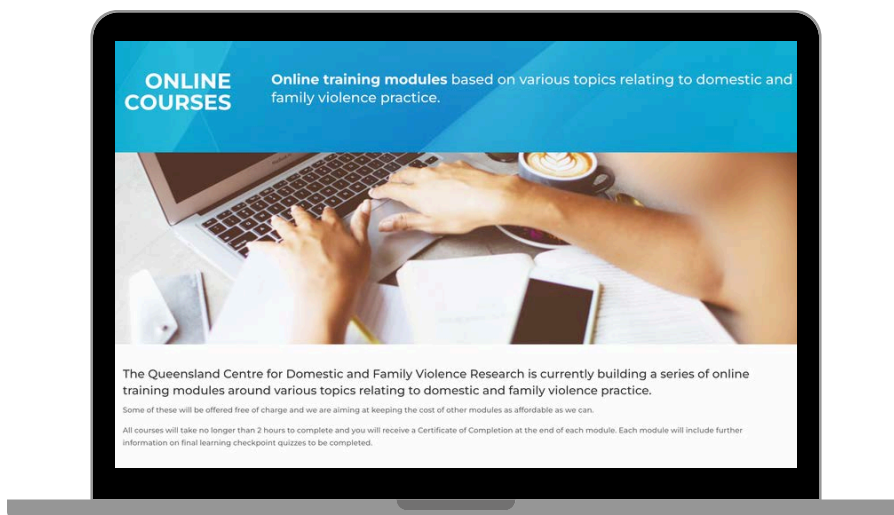
The first six modules launched this year included:

- Level 1 Screening tools Queensland CRASF – Go Live date: March 2023 - 995 registrations.
- Level 2 CRASF Risk Assessment tool – Go Live date: June 2023 – 590 registrations.
- Level 2 CRASF Safety Planning tool - Go Live date: June 2023 – 389 registrations.
- Level 3 CRASF Multi-Agency Dynamic Risk Assessment and Safety Management tools – Go Live date: July 2023 – 203 registrations.
- Worker Safety and Wellbeing – Go Live date: September 2023 – 145 registrations.
- Information Sharing Guidelines – Go Live date: November 2023 – 116 registrations.

There has been a large uptake on this versatile and easy to use site, and the feedback has been very positive. Users have signed in from Queensland Police Service, Queensland Health Department, Education Queensland, Department of Justice and Attorney General, specialist DFV services, generalist support services all around Queensland.

More CRASF modules will be launched in 2024 on topics such as:

- Delivering integrated DFV responses
- CRASF for people working with children
- CRASF and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- CRASF and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- CRASF and people with disabilities.



Micro-credentials

- PDC73556 Adolescent-to-Parent Violence
- PDC87397 Understanding the Dynamics of Coercive Control
- PDC88568 Understanding Domestic and Family Violence*
- PDC88569 Domestic and Family Violence Work Practices*
- PDC88570 Legal and Ethical Considerations in Domestic and Family Violence Practice*
- PDC88582 Work Health and Safety Considerations in Domestic and Family Violence Practice*
- PDC99012 Working with Perpetrators: Behaviour Change Processes**
- PDC99013 Working with Perpetrators: Dynamics, Drivers and Tactics of Control**
- PDC99015 Working with Perpetrators: Guides and Legislation**
- PDC99014 Working with Perpetrators: The Impact of Violence on Child Development**

*Each of these is a component of (VET) unit of competency CHCDFV001 Recognise and respond appropriately to domestic and family violence.

**These support Queensland's Perpetrator Intervention Services Requirements (PISR).



Higher Education

After significant changes in past years, 2023 brought a consolidation of the Postgraduate learning options available at CQUniversity:

CV74 GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PRACTICE

CV79 GRADUATE DIPLOMA OF DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PRACTICE

CH81 GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN FACILITATING MEN'S BEHAVIOUR CHANGE

CL23 MASTER OF DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE PRACTICE

Designed for professionals and independent learners, these courses are delivered as wholly online postgraduate degrees, to offer the ultimate in flexibility and convenience.

Because our learners are busy and need to study when and how it suits them, the Be Different Hyperflexible Learning Platform has unique benefits:

- Hyperflexible – Start anytime with no fixed terms – there's just a set period of time (usually 5 years for a masters) to finish your degree.
- Self-paced – Plan your study around your availability with no fixed assessment deadlines, session dates or group assignments.
- Affordable independent learning – Our low-contact design means we've cut traditional overheads and passed the savings to you.
- Accredited qualifications – Our courses are designed and delivered by a team of Academics, who have practical experience across disciplines, as well as across educational levels.

The Queensland Police Service, in particular, availed of our hyperflexible study delivery, through the provision of scholarships for selected staff. As well, QCDFVR sponsored a round of scholarships targeting frontline workers.

So overall, the year was an exciting one and we were delighted by the feedback we received from students about the Be Different approach:

Studying the unit through engaging with the Be Different learning material deepened my understanding of key concepts while sharpening my critical thinking skills. This experience has motivated me to approach my role as an Indigenous DFV facilitator with increased empathy and a deeper understanding of the multifaceted societal issues at play.

As I continue with my studies, I understand the importance of reaching out for support personally and professionally, whenever I needed it. Whether it was from my peers or the support services available at CQU, having that assistance made a significant difference in how I dealt with challenges and continued progressing. By setting goals based on these reflections, I maintained a commitment to constantly grow and evolve as a student.



 **QCDFVR**
*Queensland Centre for Domestic
and Family Violence Research*

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