



Mark Speakman
Attorney General
Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence

MEDIA RELEASE

Sunday, 15 March 2020

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PREVENTION TRAINING FOR RELIGIOUS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS

Religious and community leaders will receive domestic violence awareness and prevention training in a bid to boost victim support and increase reporting across the state.

Attorney General and Minister for the Prevention of Domestic Violence Mark Speakman said the training would empower leaders so they had the tools and resources available to help victims who come to them seeking guidance.

“Multicultural communities, and those who’ve recently emigrated to NSW in particular, will often look to local community or religious leaders as a first point of contact about a range of issues, including potential domestic abuse,” Mr Speakman said.

“That means the initial response from these leaders when a disclosure is made can heavily affect the outcome for victims.

“We hope that this training will make a significant difference to members of multicultural communities, especially women and children, who experience many barriers to reporting violence in the home to police or other frontline services, and may even struggle to identify it in the first place.

“Educated with the right skills, information and ability to recognise abuse in different forms means this training will help reach many survivors for the first time, and ultimately help ensure that people get the crucial help they need before it’s too late.”

Training sessions will be delivered across the state over the coming months, targeting all religions and denominations as well as other community support organisations. Around 120 leaders in total are expected to receive the training. The training is in addition to existing information seminars for religious groups and communities that promote the supports available.

The rigorous sessions will cover a range of topics, including awareness training of what constitutes domestic violence, ‘accidental counselling’, managing vicarious trauma, child protection and reporting responsibilities, as well as safety assessment skills. Referral information and other resources will also be provided for ongoing practical support.

The NSW Government’s Diversity Services team will finalise selection of a Registered Training Organisation in the coming weeks, after which leaders will have the opportunity to sign up for training.

The training is part of the NSW Government's record \$431 million investment over four years to respond to domestic and family violence, which includes support for frontline services as well as enforcement and prevention programs to hold perpetrators to account.

*For confidential advice, support and referrals related to domestic and family violence, contact: **1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732), The NSW Domestic Violence Line (1800 65 64 63) or Men's Referral Service (1300 766 491).***

MEDIA: Brooke Eggleton | 0437 472 455