

# FUND THE FAMILY VIOLENCE SYSTEM: SAVE MONEY, SAVE LIVES



## Family violence referrals have more than **tripled** in Northern Metropolitan Melbourne since 2009/10.

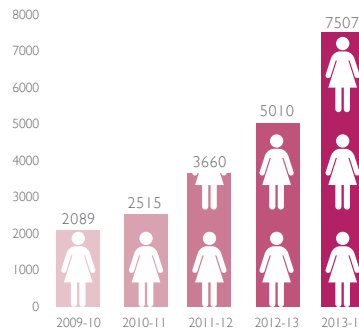
The dramatic rise in referrals of women who have experienced family violence is not being met with a sufficient funding increase for the family violence service system.

Lack of funding for family violence agencies to provide support beyond crisis response means that the long-term issues women face cannot be addressed.

This is extremely costly as women re-enter the system multiple times.

The best outcomes occur when women and children have their immediate needs met and where there is longer term support available.

NUMBER OF POLICE REFERRALS TO WOMEN'S INTAKE SERVICE 2009-2014



**259%**  
increase over  
**5 years** from  
2009-10

In order to **BREAK THE CYCLE** of re-entering a violent relationship, a woman in this situation needs access to:

- Immediate refuge accommodation
- Secure long-term housing
- Ongoing outreach support

**URGENTLY FUND** specialist and targeted services so they can meet demand including processing and responding to police referrals, case management, counselling and therapeutic programs for both women and children. (No More Deaths Campaign, 2014)

## ENTERING THE SYSTEM

### Ideal

Best practice response to a woman experiencing family violence

Enters the system **once**

= **\$29,825.56**

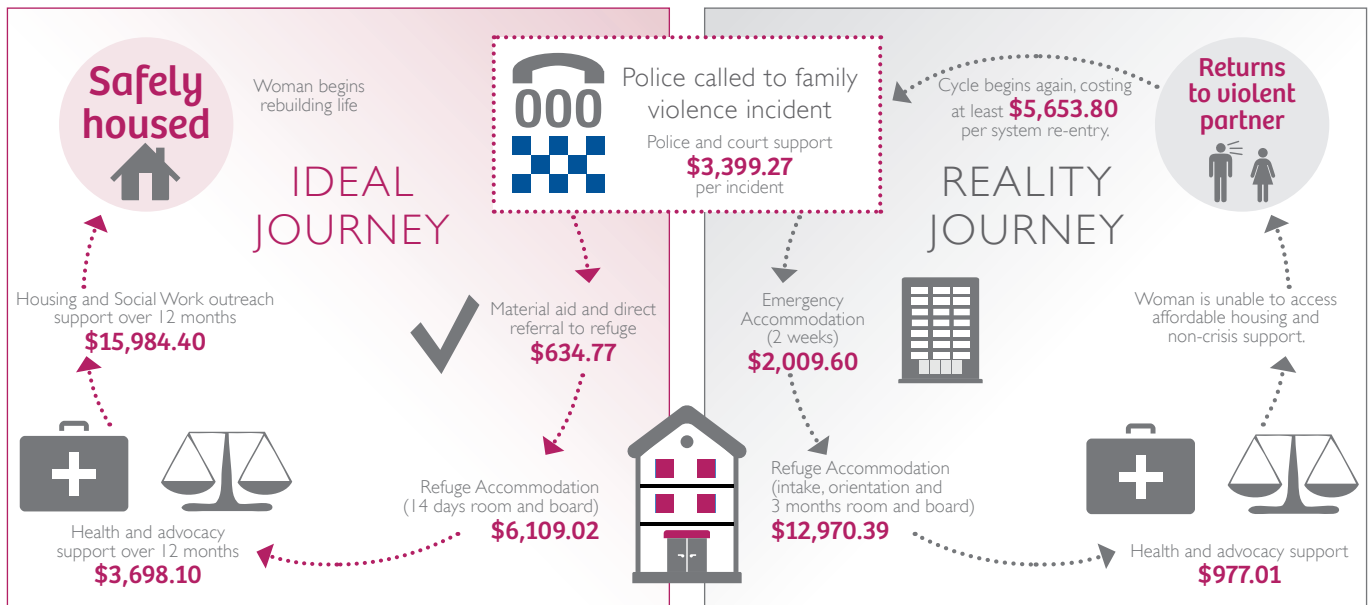


### Reality

Inadequate funding to respond appropriately results in a greater long-term cost

Enters the system **7 times**

= **\$53,279.07**



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## COST OF ACTUAL SERVICE PROVISION

SUPPORT RECEIVED	SUBTOTALS
Police and court support	\$3,399.27
Emergency Accommodation (2 weeks)	\$2,009.60
Refuge Accommodation (intake, orientation and 3 months room and board)	\$12,970.39
Health and advocacy support	\$977.01
Risk assessment, material aid and case management for subsequent system re-entries (6 X \$5,653.80)	\$33,922.80.
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$53,279.07</b>



Family violence is the **NUMBER ONE CAUSE** of women's homelessness in Victoria. Over half of women who access homelessness services cite family violence as the reason for their homelessness.<sup>3</sup>

On an average day, nearly **60%** of all new requests for immediate accommodation are unable to be met by Australian homelessness services funded under the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program.<sup>4</sup>

## COST OF OPTIMAL SERVICE PROVISION

SUPPORT RECEIVED	SUBTOTALS
Police and court support (as above)	\$3,399.27
Material aid and direct referral to refuge	\$634.77
Refuge Accommodation (14 days room and board)	\$6,109.02
Health and advocacy support over 12 months	\$3,698.10
Housing and Social Work outreach support over 12 months	\$15,984.40
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$29,825.56</b>

Providing immediate refuge space, **SECURE LONG-TERM HOUSING** and outreach support over **12 MONTHS** will provide a better chance of a positive long-term outcome, with reduced risk and less re-occurrence of family violence.



### NOTES

Costings were developed by Kristin Diemer (PhD) Senior Research Fellow (Family Violence Research Program - University of Melbourne). Costing analysis is based on information supplied by members of the integrated family violence service system in Northern Metropolitan Melbourne.

These costings are based on the services provided to a woman who accessed family violence services in 2014. This woman had a seven-month-old child and initially accessed refuge for three months, before returning to her partner. Her case is taken to be representative.

Costs do not include: case related operating overheads and infrastructure expenses, worker salary on-costs, overall staff management and supervision, non-client direct costs (administration), professional support such as accountants, HR or professional development costs.

If the system were adequately funded, it is less likely that women would return to violent partners and more likely that they would be able to build lives away from family violence.

### SOURCES

- 1: Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS]. (2012). Personal Safety Survey Australia. (Cat. No. 4906.0). Canberra: Australian Bureau of Statistics.
- 2: Gondolf, E., & Fisher, E. (1988). Battered Women as Survivors An Alternative to Treating Learned Helplessness. Lexington MA: Lexington Books.
- 3 and 4: AIHW. (2011). People turned away from government funded specialist homelessness accommodation 2010-11 (Vol. Cat. no. Hou 260). Canberra: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.