

Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme: From Concept to Practice

NIFVS Forum Summary

On 24 July 2018, 100 participants unpacked the practice implications of the new Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS). Dr Anita Morris, Family Violence Principal Practitioner (DHHS) and speakers from Family Safety Victoria (FSV) and DHHS explained more about the scheme. A panel of regional specialists shared learnings about the initial phase of the FVISS and through a case study, participants considered implications for their practice.

Background

The Royal Commission into Family Violence report recommended that the *Family Violence Protection Act 2008* be amended to create a family violence information sharing regime. The resulting scheme began on 26 February 2018 for initial tranche agencies.



Dr Anita Morris, DHHS

Overview

Prescribed information sharing entities (ISEs) are authorised to share information between themselves in order to assess and manage family violence risk.

In September 2018, a broad range of additional agencies will be prescribed.

Advantages to Date

- ✓ Opportunities to enhance safety for adult and child victim survivors and increase the visibility of perpetrator behaviour
- ✓ Victim survivors feeling positive about perpetrator patterns being mapped
- ✓ Ability to access information about perpetrators previous behaviour and the escalation of risk (e.g. from Central Information Point)
- ✓ Building mutual respect for professional insights/expertise
- ✓ Freeing up practice: agencies now more likely to share risk relevant information without being prompted
- ✓ Conversations about confidentiality and consent happening earlier and more explicitly.



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Family Violence Information Scheme

How the FVISS relates to other legislation and reforms

The new scheme doesn't interfere with existing legislation, such as [privacy](#) legislation. The changes have removed the requirement that a serious threat to an individual's life, health, safety or welfare be [imminent](#) before information can be lawfully shared.

The [Child Information Sharing Scheme](#) (CIS) will be brought into effect in September 2018, with many of the same agencies being prescribed as under the FVISS. The criteria for information sharing with CIS is broader in that it relates to children's wellbeing issues as well as safety and risk.

Training on both information sharing and risk assessment will be available from September 2018.



Participants at FVISS Forum

| Challenges | Solutions |
|---|--|
| Ensuring that agencies are ready to respond even if they may not be receiving many or any requests | Assign a champion or person responsible to maintain momentum and expertise |
| Risk of client disengagement/ clients being reluctant to share information | Discuss consent with clients early, work to gain women's consent to share information |
| Concern by workers about the complexity of the scheme and how it will effect current practice and process | Use FSV resources such as tip sheets , training , or email FSV for more information. Ensure information shared is 'risk relevant' |
| Working out what 'risk relevant' information to share about women in relation to their children | Ensure staff are up-to-date with current family violence risk assessment frameworks (i.e. CRAF and then MARAM) |
| Staggered implementation. | Take the opportunity to learn from initial tranche |

Further Resources: Find more information about the [FVISS](#), [MARAM](#) and the [CIS](#).