

Observing, Documenting, Sharing: Engaging Perpetrators Under MARAM

15 March 2022



Presented by



**WOMEN'S HEALTH
IN THE NORTH**



The Northern Integrated Family Violence Services Partnership acknowledges the Wurundjeri People of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Owners of the land on which we provide our services.

We pay our respects to their Elders past and present and recognise the ongoing living culture of all Aboriginal people. We express commitment to Aboriginal self-determination and our hope for reconciliation and justice.

We pay our respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples here today.

Sovereignty has not been ceded. Always was, always will be.



The Northern Integrated Family Violence Services Partnership acknowledges the strength, resilience and resistance of those have been targeted by family violence perpetrators. We recognise that it is essential that responses to family violence are informed by their experiences and advocacy.

We acknowledge that there will be many people present today who have their own experience of violence, whether as a young person or adult.

We pay our respects to those who did not survive and acknowledge friends and family members who have lost loved ones to this serious, prevalent and preventable issue.



About NIFVS

Northern Integrated Family Violence Services (NIFVS) is the partnership that provides family violence system leadership across the northern metropolitan region of Melbourne.

Our Mission

Provide regional leadership that increases the safety of victim survivors, the accountability of perpetrators and strengthens Victoria's family violence reforms.

In 2020 - 2021

- Trained 3,237 professionals
- Linked 3,686 stakeholders to NIFVS activities
- Provided 29,463 website users with resources



What to Expect from Today

With a focus on observing, documenting, and sharing information, this webinar will be an opportunity for you to:

- **Locate your thinking** in the MARAM for Adults Using Family Violence
- **Hear advice** from specialists on engaging and observing perpetrator behaviours and narratives
- **Explore current practice** in perpetrator accountability within the limits of your role

We will hear from Simone Tassone (FSV) and Erin Lockington (NTV) on Observing Narratives and Responding to Adults Using Family Violence, as well as a panel of regional specialists, including Lucy Burnett (Thorne Harbour Health), Maya Serelis (Berry Street/Child Protection) and Ada Conroy (NIFVS).



MARAM & Information Sharing

The Victorian government is progressing three interrelated reforms to reduce family violence and promote child wellbeing and safety:

Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM): Sets out the responsibilities of different workforces in identifying, assessing and managing family violence risk.

Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS): Enables authorised organisations to share information to facilitate assessment and management of family violence risk.

Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS): Enables authorised organisations to share information to promote the wellbeing and safety of children.

The MARAM and Information Sharing Schemes (MARAMIS) are enabled by legislative, policy and practice alignment.





Presentation

Observing and Responding to Adults Using Family Violence

Simone Tassone

A/Manager

MARAM Framework and Practice Development

Family Safety Victoria

voice • choice • power



Observing and responding to adults using family violence

March 15, 2022

Simone Tassone
A/Manager - MARAM Framework and Practice Development

Contact: infosharing@familysafety.vic.gov.au

Acknowledgment of country

Our discussion is being held on traditional lands and we wish to acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Traditional Owners.

We pay our respects to their Elders, past and present, and the Elders from other communities who may be here today.

We recognise the long-standing leadership of Aboriginal communities in Victoria to prevent and respond to family violence, supported through self-determination and self-management, to improve outcomes for Aboriginal people and families – while also acknowledging the devastating and ongoing impacts and accumulation of trauma across generations as a result of colonisation and the dispossession of land and children.

MARAM practice development - Background

- Throughout 2020-2021 FSV worked with Curtin University and No to Violence to develop the new MARAM Practice Guides and tools for working with people using family violence
- Consultations with over 1000 professionals including academics, subject matter experts and workforce representatives to support practice guidance development
- Development, piloting (research) and user testing tools alongside practice guidance
- Across 2020-2021, we held a series of consultation sessions with specialist and non-specialist practitioners, and specialist practitioners and community groups working with people using violence within/across Aboriginal communities, diverse communities and older people.

MARAM practice development - Consultations

- In July 2020, consultation focused on foundational knowledge and non-specialist practice, including:
 - Myths and stereotypes about use of family violence across communities
 - Beliefs, attitudes and narratives of people using family violence towards victim survivors across communities
 - Balancing safe engagement, needs and safety – including holding a supportive therapeutic relationship while also inviting perpetrator accountability and working for the victim survivors' safety
 - Risk management and safety planning for people who use family violence.

Updated Foundation Knowledge Guide

- Strengthened definition of coercive control
 - Not a standalone form of family violence
 - Reflects the pattern and underlying feature or dynamic created by a perpetrator's tactics and use of family violence
 - Felt impact or outcome on victim survivors
- Introducing key concepts for practice for responding to people using family violence
- Updates presentations of family violence in different relationships and communities
 - Common perpetrator presentations and narratives
 - Service access and engagement barriers for perpetrators

Why risk assessment and management with adults using family violence?

- Strengthening system-wide perpetrator accountability
- Supporting multi-agency practice and whole-of system response – underpinned by information sharing
- Roles and responsibilities for identification, assessment and management based on opportunities across workforces
- Observation and direct engagement – using your system role and service model
- Shared understanding and language to describe family violence risk presented by adults using family violence

Structured Professional Judgement

- Centring the lived experience and risk to the adult and/or child victim survivors
 - Observing narratives and behaviours that indicate or inadvertently disclose their use of violence or risk-relevant circumstances
 - Identifying overt and subtle narratives that indicate beliefs and attitudes
 - Analysing the narrative and risk-relevant information through the lens of impact on victim survivors
 - Elevating victim survivor self-assessment of risk
- Evidence-based risk factors
- Information sharing
- Intersectional analysis
 - Patterns of behaviour that target victim survivors' identity and/or experiences
 - Perpetrator's own identity and/or experiences



Applying key concepts of practice with adults using family violence

- Victim-centred practice – understanding the person (perpetrator) in their context
- Intersectionality – seeking help, barriers, presentations and understanding themselves, targeted behaviours to exploit or cause further harm to victim survivors
- Trauma and violence-informed practice – recognising presence of own lived experiences
- Safe, non-collusive practice – using a balanced approach
- Professional responsibilities – understanding conscious and unconscious bias

Key practice concepts for engagement

- Build rapport – using professional curiosity, respectful and non-judgemental approaches
- Use a balanced approach to engagement to respond to invitations to collude
- Identify needs and circumstances related to risk and encourage help seeking and connections to support – this will support risk management and safety planning
- Reflective practice – use secondary consultation, seek supervision to support your safe and non-collusive practice

What is collusion?

- The way that professionals, organisations or systems might reinforce, excuse, minimise or deny a perpetrator's use of family violence towards family members and/or the extent or impact of that violence.
- Verbal and non-verbal, conscious or unconscious
- Any action that has the effect of reinforcing the perpetrator's violence-supporting narratives and/or avoidance of responsibility
- Professionals are responsible for recognising invitations to collude, reflecting on their own practice and responding in non-collusive ways
- Non-collusive practice is critical to managing the risk of systems abuse and misidentification of the predominant aggressor

Recognising invitations to collude

- Seeking your agreement, sympathy or alignment to their narrative
 - denial, minimisation or justification of behaviours
 - support or excuse their attitudes or narratives about family members, community and society
 - shift responsibility to the victim survivors, victim blaming
 - mask own responsibility, excusing behaviour by taking a victim stance
- Avoidance of questioning and responsibility
 - using purposefully inflammatory comments to seek an argument with professionals
 - using professionals' questioning or challenge to justify a position or claim that systems are against them

Responding to invitations to collude

Compliant collusion

Engagement occurs and the conversation feels friendly, personal and easy. You hear their narrative and there is little challenge and conflict, which can lead to validating their experiences and narrative.

A balanced approach

You engage with the person using violence, acknowledging their needs and increasing their readiness to engage with the services you offer or provide.

You know these services will actively contribute to reducing risk associated with family violence and provide feedback about how these may improve other aspects of their life, like relationships with family members.

These sessions may be difficult because the person using violence experiences internal conflict, vulnerability or shame, but may not necessarily name these feelings at this point.

Oppositional confrontation

You use information from others to tell the person you know about their use of family violence.

You use information to 'catch them out'.

The person notices you are judging them for their use of violence, either through what you say or your body language. They respond to you with the same level of opposition, which you experience as 'resistance'.

Identification

Identification is largely observation-based practice.

You may ask direct questions in certain circumstances, but it is not an expectation.

Identifying indicators a person is likely to be using family violence by observing common narratives and behaviours.

You may identify the person is using family violence from:

- their own account or description of themselves, their relationship, or their behaviours
- disclosure from family members
- indirect disclosure from the person themselves about behaviours that constitute family violence
- information from other professionals or services

Identifying narratives or behaviours linked to using family violence

Beliefs or attitudes

Observed narratives: Beliefs or attitudes	Yes	No	Comment/detail of observation
Makes statements that indicate sexist, misogynistic, homophobic, transphobic, ableist, ageist or racist beliefs (denigrating person or group based on identity)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Makes statements that indicate gendered entitlement to power, control and decision making	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Makes statements that indicate belief in ownership over victim survivor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Physical or verbal behaviour

Is violent and/or controlling towards victim survivor before, during or after the session	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Insists on sitting in on appointments with victim survivor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Identifying presenting needs and circumstances

Identify areas in the person's life that may be:

- related to risk behaviours
- function as a protective factor

You can use your existing relationship and role to do this.

When discussing the issue that they are attending your service for, you can ask questions to develop an understanding of the person's context – themselves, their relationships, and any connection to professional services and personal supports or other environmental issues.

EXAMPLE: The person using violence has recently moved from regional Victoria to Melbourne. They have moved with their partner and newborn after they were made redundant. They don't have friends or family in Melbourne, but their partner does. They are currently unemployed and reliant on Centrelink and parental leave.

Identifying presenting needs and circumstances

Personal identity, status of relationships/dynamics²

Personal identity, attributes and experiences

Partner (current/former), children, other family members

Social and community connections³

Connection to friends or extended family network

Connection/sense of belonging to community, cultural groups, networks, social media, clubs

Presence of systems interventions ^{RF}

Police, Child Protection, Court, Corrections or other coordinated interventions

Practical or environmental issues

Aboriginal cultural or diverse community support services

Professional or therapeutic services, counselling,^{RF} disability services, medical or mental health services^{RF}

Risk management approaches

Identification

- Address immediate risk
- Proactively share information with other services
- Provide information about other services and supports, or make a referral where appropriate
- Depending on your system role and service model, you may continue to monitor for escalation of behaviours and changes or deterioration in circumstances and proactively share information
- Make use of secondary consultation to guide your practice and support

Next steps

- The development of the MARAM non-accredited Adult Using Family Violence training has commenced. There will be three learning packages – Identification, Intermediate and Comprehensive
- Communication about training delivery will be circulated later in 2022
- There is no expectation to use the MARAM tools prior to completing MARAM training
- To support organisations align, FSV have developed an Organisational Readiness Checklist. This includes recommended high-level steps for organisational leaders to align to the MARAM perpetrator guidance.
- The checklist is available online. Refer to the ‘Organisational focused resources’ at <https://www.vic.gov.au/maram-practice-guides-and-resources>



Presentation

Observing Narratives and Behaviours

Erin Lockington

Practice Development Officer

No To Violence

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Observing narratives and behaviours of people using family violence

*Erin Lockington, MARAMIS
Practice Development Officer*

Acknowledgement

No to Violence acknowledges First Nations Peoples across these lands; the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters. We pay respect to all Elders, past, present and emerging. We acknowledge a deep connection with country which has existed over 60,000 years. We acknowledge that sovereignty was never ceded, and this was and always will be First Nation's land.

Structured Professional Judgement



Observing narratives and behaviours

You may identify the person's narratives and behaviours related to their use of family violence from:

- their own account or description of themselves, their relationship, or their behaviours
- disclosure from family members
- indirect disclosure from the person themselves about behaviours that constitute family violence
- information from other professionals or services

Observing beliefs and attitudes

Listening for narratives:

- About their intimate partner, children and family relationships
- About their position of power and entitlement to use coercive control or violent behaviour
- That deny, minimise or justify controlling behaviours

Observing behaviours

Behaviour towards victim survivor:

- Physical and verbal abuse
- Disclosures of coercive behaviour
- Controlling behaviours

Behaviour towards professional:

- Attempts at collusion
- Intimidation or manipulation

Practice support for practitioners

- Internal organisational support
- Secondary consultations
- Reflective practice and training



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Artwork by Laura Callaghan, 2018

10 Minute Break





Panel Discussion

Lucy Burnett

Senior Care and Recovery Coordinator, Therapeutic Services & Capacity Building, Thorne Harbour Health

Maya Serelis

Senior Specialist, Family Violence Child Protection Partnership, Berry Street

Ada Conroy

Workforce Development Coordinator, Northern Integrated Family Violence Services Partnership, Women's Health In the North





Next Steps

There are a number of ways to stay involved:

- **Visit** the NIFVS MARAMIS web portal
- **Watch** the NIFVS Service System Overview
- **Participate** in *Resisting Collusion with Male Perpetrators*
- **Join** a Local Family Violence Network
- **Stay tuned** for further information and training opportunities promoted via the NIFVS enews

www.nifvs.org.au



For more information visit
www.nifvs.org.au



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