

Northern Integrated Family Violence Services
Family Violence Regional Integration Committee

Evaluation Report
NIFVS Building Bridges Forum

5 June 2024



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NIFVS Family Violence Regional Integration Committee, C/- Women's Health In the North (WHIN),
680 High Street, Thornbury, VIC 3071.

Acknowledgement of Country

The Northern Integrated Family Violence Services (NIFVS) acknowledge Victorian Aboriginal people as the Traditional Owners of the land on which we provide our services – the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people of the Kulin nation – and pay our respect to their Elders past and present.

NIFVS acknowledge that Aboriginal sovereignty was never given up and that we stand on stolen land.

We are committed to Aboriginal self-determination and to supporting Treaty and truth-telling processes.

We recognise the ongoing leadership role of the Aboriginal community on gender equality and the health, safety and wellbeing of women and gender-diverse people.

Honouring Victim Survivors of Family Violence

NIFVS recognises all victim survivors of family violence, sexual assault and all forms of gender-based violence.

NIFVS recognises the lived experience, advocacy and courage of victim survivors that shapes the family violence service sector and provides us with the evidence-base for our work. We express thanks and commitment to uphold their stories to inform our work.

NIFVS pays respect to those who have lost their lives due to family violence and the families, friends and communities who have been impacted.

NIFVS FVRIC Guiding principles

Everyone has the right to live free from family violence and the fear of family violence.

The experiences, choices, safety and longer-term recovery and healing of victim survivors are central to our responses to family violence.

The use of family violence is a choice. The underlying intent of this choice is to attain and maintain power within relationships – to undermine, disempower and isolate others in the family – through an ongoing pattern of coercive and controlling behaviours and tactics.

Family violence is predominantly gendered in its contexts and dynamics, and is derived from, and maintained by, structural inequities or hierarchies that perpetuate gender inequality.



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Executive Summary

In May 2022, Family Safety Victoria provided funding for local area MARAM alignment activities focused on building collaborative networks and practice that respond to identified local barriers. Each activity's detail was to be subject to FVRIC analysis of local needs, which would inform both the topic and focus.

The Northern Integrated Family Violence Services (NIFVS) Family Violence Regional Integration Committee (FVRIC) identified a local area need to improve understanding, and identify enhanced methods, of working across family violence and people who use violence services. Data from the 2023 NIFVS MARAM Alignment Survey also found a strong regional need to engage in a more practical learning activities to address key knowledge gaps including the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme and enhanced learning support to apply culturally safe and humble care.

The Building Bridges Forum was an all-day online event held on 5th June 2024 and brought together more than 120 leaders and practitioners from across the sector.

The Forum was delivered in two parts:

- A morning 'expert' panel session that discussed *Service Mapping with Adults Using Violence Services*. This session was focused on enhancing visibility and connectivity across the system. The panel unpacked the fundamentals of their services, including service pathways, engagement strategies, as well as identifying opportunities to strengthen the service system for the best outcomes of people experiencing family violence.
- Afternoon workshops were designed as more interactive sessions that were lead by sector experts. Three workshops were run concurrently with attendees rotating throughout the afternoon. The workshops utilized a shared case study to explore three core areas:
 - a. Deep dive: Information Sharing Schemes
 - b. Embedding cultural safety and respect with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
 - c. Culturally informed care when working with migrant and refugee women.

The Forum sought to:

- Improve cross sectorial understanding and visibility across person using violence and victim survivor services.
- Improve understanding of services working with people using violence for invested stakeholders.
- Strengthen understanding of Collaborative Practice within the context of the MARAM framework.
- Strengthen understanding of and use of the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme.

- Strengthen understanding of the Family Violence Outcomes Framework and how this informs practice.
- Strengthen competency, capability, and confidence in the application of the MARAM framework.
- Support improved cross sectorial practices and processes.
- Support the identification of 'system' gaps and areas for improved collaborative practice across the Northern Metropolitan Region.

The Forum was structured to support cross sectorial focus on the Family Violence Outcome Framework:

- Domain 3 – **People Who Use Violence:** *Perpetrators are held accountable, connected and take responsibility for stopping their violence.*
- Domain 4 – **System:** *Preventing and responding to family violence is systemic and enduring.* the inter-related work and professional relationships

The identified outcomes of the Forum were:

- Improve participant understanding of Priority 3 and 4 of the Family Violence Outcomes Framework and of how these priorities relate to system integration and alignment activities through collaborative practices
- Enhance local partnerships and support Collaborative Practice, Service Integration, and use of the Family Violence Information Sharing Schemes to achieve best outcomes for victim survivors and children.
- Local partnership agreement is developed that supports informs improved collaborative practice and information sharing across the NMR
- Practice initiatives result out of the forum addressing service system gaps as identified.

Through the Building Bridges Forum, the NIFVS FVRIC were able to achieve all identified objectives as required of the MARAM Alignment Activity Funding and as identified by the NIFVS FVRIC.

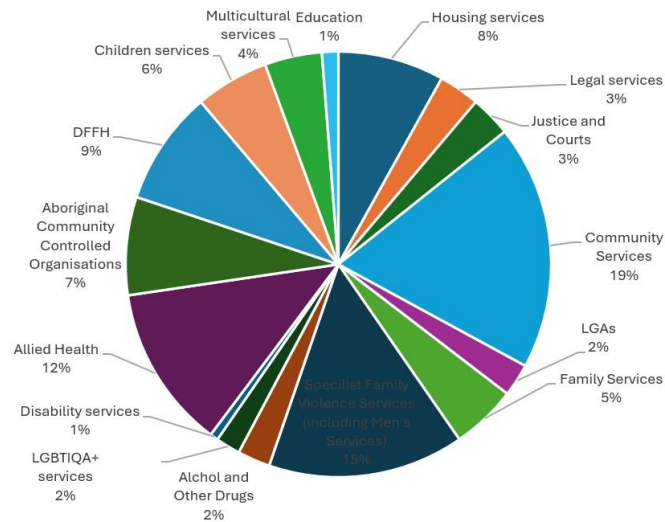
Contained within this evaluation report will be a breakdown of how the Forum was planned, coordinated and delivered.

The enduring outcomes from the Building Bridges Forum are:

- Improved understanding of the cross sectorial work across the NMR
- An expressed commitment to continue to build on the learnings born out of the forum
- A commitment to form a 'Working Group' within the governance structure of the NIFVS FVRIC which will bring together key cross-sectorial partners to provide continued leadership focusing on priority actions across the region
- A commitment future Building Bridges Forums that continue to focus on identified a local area need that improve understanding, and identify enhanced methods, of working across family violence and people who use violence sectors.

Participation

The composition of the forum attendees by workforce sector is displayed below, with the highest representation from across Community Health, Specialist Family Violence Services and Allied Health.



Budget Analysis

The NIFVS FVRIC received \$6,000 from Family Safety Victoria to deliver the Building Bridges Forum through the 2022.23 MARAM Alignment Activity funding grants.

Due to time constraints associated with consulting on the project and project development the forum was unable to be delivered in the 2022.23 financial year and was carried over into the 2023.24 financial year.

The overall cost to deliver the Building Bridges Forum was \$14,000 (approximately - TBC) with the NIFVS FVRIC matching the funding provided by Family Safety Victoria.

Technical Support	Zoom Webinar, Wix Domain and Plan	\$350
Communications	Eventbrite Premium	\$50
Expert Panelist	Gift Vouchers	\$350
Workshop Facilitators	Contracts for Professional Services	\$12,000 (TBC)
Forum Support	Participant Debriefing	\$1,000 (TBC)

Forum Review

Technology

The Building Bridges Forum was delivered online via Zoom platform, with the NIFVS managing all aspects.

a. Building Bridges Morning Session: 'Expert' panel discussion on Service Mapping with Adults Using Violence Services

Format: Zoom Webinar (purchased for the purpose)

A total of 9 people were added as **panelists**, this included:

- 6 x panellists
- Moderator
- NIFVS FVRIC Chair
- NIFVS PSA
- 2 X NIFVS Technical Support

The total number of attendance was 108.

The 'Chat' function was disabled for the audience and active for internal communication for the purpose of:

- communication to and from moderator/panellists
- sharing questions coming from the audience through the Q&A function

The Q&A function was enabled for the audience to submit questions. Questions submitted were only visible to all members of the audience if answered in the Q&A function. Questions were filtered and delivered to the moderator via the chat function by the MARAMIS & Workforce Coordinator to be addressed by the panel.

b. Building Bridges Afternoon Session: Case Study Workshops

Format: Zoom meeting

The NIFVS team (5) and workshop facilitators (8) were admitted as co-hosts. The meeting was set up with 6 breakout rooms, however, due to the high drop-out rate of participants, with 51 out of the 96 registrations attending, this was consolidated to 3 rooms.

Participants were grouped and assigned to each breakout room, staying in the same virtual space for the whole session. Facilitators rotated between the three breakout rooms to deliver their session.

Risk management

A risk matrix was developed during the planning phase, assessing likelihood and impact of potential risks. An internal evaluation after the event, found that challenges with technological efficiency in the planning and event delivery could have been mitigated if the WHIN/NIFVS Administrative team were consulted when undertaking the risk matrix.

Communications Report

The Building Bridges Forum was promoted via multiple channels:

a. NIFVS website

Four posts published ([Save the Date](#), [Register Now](#), [Thank you for attending](#), [Panel recording](#)).

b. [Building Bridges website](#)

An event specific website via Wix was created. Content embedded included the event program, speakers, FAQs and contact information. NIFVS purchased the domain and Wix account for 1 year with the intent to be adapted for future events.

c. NIFVS LinkedIn

Six posts published ([Save the Date](#), [Register now](#), [Expert Panel](#), [Forum program](#), [Day before](#), [Panel is starting](#)). Post engagement is reflected in Appendix 1.

d. WHIN Facebook, Instagram and Youtube

The extended reach of WHIN's social media presence was utilised, and communications were also shared via their social media channels (Facebook and Instagram). NIFVS has also used WHIN's Youtube channel to publish the [Expert Panel recording](#). The video was published on 1 July with subtitles and is age-restricted (18+). It had 22 views, an averaged 12-minute view duration.

e. Targeted email out

Promotional emails were sent to key stakeholders across the NIFVS network. This included the NIFVS FVRIC membership, FV Network Conveners, CSA members and associated partners across the NMR.

f. eNews and other Mailchimp campaigns

Building Bridges Forum-related pieces were included in the [March](#), [April](#), [May](#), [June](#) and [July](#) editions of the eNews. Stats can be found in the Appendix 1.

Participant Feedback

Two surveys were emailed to registered participants to gather comparative pre and post event data. Conducted through Microsoft Forms, the pre-event survey was emailed to registered participants one week before the Forum, receiving 44 responses. The link and QR code to the post-event survey was shared with participants during the morning webinar and the afternoon workshop. It was also

emailed to all registered participants one week after the Forum and included in the [NIFVS June eNews](#). It received 16 responses.

Alongside a standard quality review, the survey also sought to assess markers of change in:

- Level of understanding of the work undertaken by PUV services in the NMR.
- Level of understanding of referral pathways for PUV services in the NMR.
- Level of confidence in understanding and applying FVISS.
- Level of confidence in understanding and applying CISS.
- Level of confidence in applying culturally safe principles to practice.
- Confidence in the overall integration of the family violence service sector.

**A scale of 1 – 5 was used as the measurement:*

1 = very poor; 2 = poor; 3 = adequate; 4 = good; 5 = excellent

Overview of quantitative findings:

Morning Session

Question/Rating	Pre-Forum Survey	Post-Forum Survey
Level of understanding of the services for people who use violence in the NMR.	Average = 2.73	Average = 3.75
Level of understanding of referral pathways for PUV services in the NMR.	Average = 2.73	Average = 3.69
Level of confidence that across the NMR we are achieving the goal of an integrated service system.	Average = 3.00	Average = 3.75
Rating: Online format	n/a	Average = 4.0
Rating: Content of panel discussion	n/a	Average = 4.25
Rating: Panel facilitation	n/a	Average = 4.31
Rating: Morning session overall	n/a	Average = 4.25

Afternoon Session

Question/Rating	Pre-Forum Survey	Post-Forum Survey
Level of confidence in understanding and applying FVISS.	Average = 3.18	Average = 3.91
Level of confidence in understanding and applying CISS.	Average = 3.12	Average = 3.82
Level of confidence in applying culturally safe principles to practice.	Average = 3.00	Average = 4.09
Rating: Online format	n/a	Average = 4.20
Rating: Content of afternoon workshops	n/a	Average = 4.30
Rating: Activities and discussion in workshops	n/a	Average = 4.40
Rating: Workshop facilitation	n/a	Average = 4.50
Rating: Afternoon session overall	n/a	Average = 4.40

Key findings

- All scale-based questions assessing levels of understanding and confidence increased as a result of attending the forum.
- Feedback on the content, facilitation and overall review was very strong with the average of responses scaled 4 and over.
- The online delivery model was overall received positively, rated an average of 4.1. Qualitative data however also demonstrated expressed interest and value in delivering in-person events in the future to improve interaction, reduce screen fatigue and aid sector connectivity.
 - o *"I think it could have been in person, but I did not feel it was easy to attend online".*
 - o *"I found that about half of the group in the workshop turned off their videos/microphone which impacted engagement and made the room feel really empty."*
 - o *"It was a long time to stay focused on a screen, I would have benefitted from this being in-person"*
- A strong theme of feedback was also the length of the event and suggestions were raised that it would have been more beneficial to separate the morning and afternoon sessions into different days.

- *"It's a tiring day attending both AM and PM online sessions"*
- *"It would have been useful to have longer breaks or time for reflection after the sessions as the learning content in the morning and afternoon was so different."*
- Qualitative feedback demonstrated strong critical engagement of participants with the content, including how to approach best practice engagement with PUVs across non-specialist services:
 - *"Great speakers on the panel and some great takeaways...it would have been beneficial to discuss how the rest of the service system works with PUVs –(e.g. family services, non-specialist queer services and therapeutic services supporting children). The perpetrator is present in all these services and yet these services are not RAE's or equipped with the specialist knowledge to address PUV risk".*
- The critical engagement was mirrored in the robust range of questions submitted during the panel discussion:
 - *"How can we use cultural knowledge, strengths and cultural/community expertise in our family violence service response to strengthen our responses, rather than solely rely on western-white hetero systems responses?"*
 - *"I am interested to know how the progression of technology is impacting police work"*
 - *"I agree with Dr Paula, that an important part of PUV work is about de-stigmatising service engagement, and I think we need to look to the similar changes with the MH services, to make it more general to seek help with FV for men who use violence".*
- Some participants noted it would have been of value to be able to view the questions raised during the panel. NIFVS recognise the complexity of supporting pathways for more active engagement, however made the choice to hide questions from view to enable filtering and reduce risk of questions or comments that might have negatively interfered with the focus of conversation. NIFVS intend to consider how this can be balanced at future, in-person events.
- Strengthening cross sector knowledge and confidence was also found as a key outcome:
 - *"It was really helpful and insightful. I'm not in a specific family violence role so it was good for me to upskill and understand more about sector wide changes, referral pathways and legal obligations."*
 - *"I liked hearing about what programs run by other services, this will help with referrals and also how I approach my work."*

Recommendations

Broaden Building Bridges Forum to a topical series

Building Bridges Forums to be delivered annually as a core part of NIFVS work. Forums will be designed to adaptively respond to regional workforce and community sector need, with the goal of continuing to strengthen cross-sector collaboration.

The strong feedback on learnings and positive engagement with the material demonstrate the enthusiasm and buy-in across the sector to work collectively. The ongoing regional assessment of workforce support and service needs will feed into the planning and learning focus for each Forum with the goal of strengthening shared work across prescribed services under the MARAM Framework.

Deliver the forum in-person

The large number of attendees across the Forum speak to the accessibility of online learning, although findings demonstrated this is mostly of value for shorter events and in-person delivery. Future Building Brides events will be delivered in-person this to enhance connectivity and active, shared learning.

Refine focus and reduce learning load

To reduce the length of the event and allow time across the schedule for adequate breaks and reflection. As well, having one rather than multiple topics to support greater in-depth learning and engagement.

Deliver resource speaking to unanswered panel questions

To accompany the published recording of the panel discussion with a resource speaking to unanswered questions from the panel. To be written in consultation with the panellists.

Appendix 1: Engagement Data

Registration and participation

	Registration # (count on the day before the event)	Attendance # (incl. speakers)	Attendance # (participants only)
Morning Panel	185	119	108
Afternoon Workshop	96	64	51

Media engagement (Social and others)

NIFVS LinkedIn

Post title	Impressions	Engagements	Engagement rate	Clicks	Click through rate	Reactions
Save the Date	62	8	12.9%	6	9.68%	2
Register now	54	9	16.67%	5	9.26%	4
Expert Panel	50	11	22%	10	20%	1
Forum program	48	10	20.83%	8	16.67%	2
Day before	42	1	2.38%	0	0%	1
Panel is starting	42	5	11.9%	5	11.9%	0

eNews

NIFVS eNews March – Save the Date | 1357 opened (62.3%), 66 recipients who clicked (3%), 353 total clicks

NIFVS eNews April - Save the Date | 617 opened (27.6%), 88 recipients who clicked (3.9%), 435 total clicks

Building Bridges Forum campaign – Register Now | 539 opened (24.2%), 61 recipients who clicked (2.7%), 323 total clicks

NIFVS eNews May – Program and registration | 1441 opened (61.4%), 101 recipients who clicked (4.3%), 601 total clicks

Building Bridges Forum campaign – Reminder to NMR | 1021 opened (48.9%), 45 recipients who clicked (2.2%), 182 total clicks

NIFVS eNews June – Thank you and feedback | 1635 opened (66%), 136 recipients who clicked (5.5%), 553 total clicks

NIFVS eNews July – Panel recording | 494 opened (20%), 139 recipients who clicked (5.6%), 593 total clicks

The Northern Integrated Family Violence Services partnership acknowledge the support of the Victorian government.

