

# Rural and Remote Women and the National Plan to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children

Factors such as financial insecurity, dependency, stress, a perceived lack of confidentiality and stigma attached to the public disclosure of violence can contribute to keeping rural women trapped in violent relationships.

## WHAT IS THE NATIONAL PLAN TO REDUCE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND THEIR CHILDREN (THE NATIONAL PLAN)?

The *National Plan* is an agreement by all Australian governments to work together to reduce violence against women and their children.

The *National Plan's* vision is for Australian women and their children to live free from violence in safe communities.

## HOW DOES THE NATIONAL PLAN ASSIST WOMEN WHO LIVE IN RURAL AND REMOTE COMMUNITIES?

The *National Plan* recognises that women from rural and remote communities may face social isolation and have less opportunity to access services. This is why the *National Plan* has targeted responses to address domestic and sexual violence in rural and remote communities.

The *National Plan* recognises that the services responsible for supporting victims of violence must be flexible enough to meet the diverse needs of their clients, in particular women from rural and remote areas.

The issues confronting Indigenous women, many of whom live in rural and remote areas, are addressed as a separate area under the *National Plan* (see the Indigenous information sheet at [www.fahcsia.gov.au](http://www.fahcsia.gov.au) for further information).

## HOW IS THE NATIONAL PLAN DIFFERENT TO OTHER GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES?

For the first time, all Australian governments will work together to reduce violence against women and their children. This includes:

- **Funding a national telephone counselling service** for any Australian that has experienced, or is at risk of, family and domestic violence and/or sexual assault. **1800 RESPECT** (1800 737 732) is a free and confidential 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, professional counselling service that will give women and children living in rural and remote areas access to immediate and ongoing assistance.

- **Continuation of training that targets nurses and Aboriginal health workers** in rural and remote areas. This training assists workers to recognise and respond effectively to women and children experiencing violence.
- **Funding Community Action Grants** to support communities to reduce violence against women. This will be achieved by working with community organisations and sporting codes to engage community in a range of primary prevention activities.
- **Improve women's economic participation** and independence through paid parental leave, increased pension rates and increasing leadership opportunities through government boards.
- **Encourage sexual assault and domestic violence services to work with a range of agencies** including justice, medical and others to provide flexible, innovative, inclusive and integrated services which recognise diversity.
- **Implement *The Line***, a campaign aimed at young people to encourage and promote respectful relationships.

### HOW WILL THE NATIONAL PLAN MAKE A LASTING DIFFERENCE?

The *National Plan* aims to make a significant and lasting reduction in violence against all women and children.

This will be achieved by drawing on research and experience, identifying and promoting what measures work well in communities, improving how we work with perpetrators and enhancing the service response to women experiencing violence.

### WHAT ELSE IS THE GOVERNMENT DOING TO HELP RURAL AND REMOTE WOMEN?

The Australian Government established the National Rural Women's Coalition and Network, for rural women to connect with individuals and state-based networks to ensure better social and economic outcomes for women in rural townships and on farms.

### WOULD YOU LIKE A COPY OF THE NATIONAL PLAN?

The *National Plan* is available online at:

<http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/women/progserv/violence/nationalplan/Pages/default.aspx>

Or you can order hard copies by calling 1800 050 009

### IF YOU NEED ASSISTANCE CALL:

- 1800 RESPECT – 1800 737 732
- Local services in your state or territory
- Relationships Australia – 1300 364 277
- Mensline - 1300 789 978

**If you require urgent assistance contact the police on 000.**

