

16 August 2024

To the Royal Commission into Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence

Via online submission

Dear Commissioner,

Re: Submission to Royal Commission into Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence

Thank you for the opportunity to provide a submission to the Royal Commission into Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence.

AnglicareSA reiterate its commitment in preventing and responding to family, domestic and sexual violence. We will be significantly increasing our housing and case management services as part of our new strategic plan and this being a key area of social impact.

As an organisation dedicated to addressing this critical issue, we welcome the Commission's inquiry and its potential to drive meaningful change. AnglicareSA believes a comprehensive, multi-faceted approach is needed to effectively prevent violence, support victims, educate young people by way of early intervention and hold perpetrators accountable.

We are focused on supporting women, children, families and communities to build strong foundations for physical, emotional, cultural and psychological safety, security, connection and wellbeing.

Our services and programs address structural barriers and known risk factors that impede the safety of women children and young people and those that prevent the positive functioning of families.

AnglicareSA has set out its introductory submissions at Annexure A, that draw on our experience working with the vulnerable cohorts within the South Australian community.

AnglicareSA is aspiring to be a major influence in driving positive change to create safer communities free from domestic, family and sexual violence. AnglicareSA looks forward to working closely with the Commission as the inquiry progresses.

Yours sincerely



Grant Reubenicht
Chief Executive Officer
AnglicareSA

Annexure A: Submissions

We offer the following high-level input on key areas identified in the Issues Paper dated July 2024:

Prevention

AnglicareSA believes prevention efforts must focus on addressing the underlying drivers of violence, particularly gender inequality and attitudes that condone disrespect towards women. AnglicareSA has already initiated several initiatives in this area including:

- Workplace training programs on respectful relationships and bystander intervention.
- Community education campaigns challenging harmful gender stereotypes.
- A gender equality policy.

However, to facilitate systemic change, we consider the following items vital to achieving desired outcomes:

- Increased funding for evidence-based primary prevention programs.
- A whole-of-government approach to addressing gender inequality.
- Mandatory respectful relationships education in all schools.

Early Intervention

Effective early intervention requires improved identification of at-risk individuals and coordinated support.

An integrated service system with complementary relevant services and processes will enable earlier intervention and provide the mechanism for multiple issues to be addressed in a coordinated way. This will ensure the right service is provided at the right time.

AnglicareSA already contributes through:

- Identification of women and children, who access our universal services such as emergency relief and financial counselling, who are in high-risk relationships and referring them to appropriate internal and external services.
- Case conferences across multi-disciplinary teams both internal and external membership.

To enhance early intervention, we propose:

- Development of a common DFV risk assessment framework across sectors.
- Expansion of men's behaviour change programs.
- Increased outreach to high-risk groups like pregnant women and young people.

Response

Complex issues such as family violence requires a high level of service integration to enable multiple service responses to be activated simultaneously

Best practice responses must be trauma-informed and victim-centred. Our organisation delivers:

- Turning Point: a program that has a housing first approach of assisting women and children through housing, safety, stability and ongoing case management support.
- A range of domestic and family violence specific services including a perpetrator program; children's contact centres; and programs for adults and children where families are or have been separated.

For responses to be more effective and impactful, we recommend:

- Increased investment in crisis accommodation and long-term housing.
- Enhanced integration between SAPOL, courts, and support services.
- Specialised responses focused on children and other vulnerable groups impacted by domestic and family violence.

Recovery and Healing

Long-term recovery for victims of violence requires addressing the multi-faceted impacts of family and domestic violence.

Our recovery-focused initiatives include:

- Case management practices that emphasise the importance of finding pathway to specialised services.
- Tenancies within the Turning Point Program provides safety and stability until suitable permanent accommodation is found.

To better support recovery and healing, we propose:

- Increased availability of long-term, trauma-specific mental health services.
- Expansion of programs that are funded and address economic abuse and build financial independence.
- Culturally-appropriate healing programs for Aboriginal and CALD communities.

Legislative Reform

AnglicareSA acknowledges the Royal Commission's focus on examining the existing legislative frameworks and around domestic, family and sexual violence in South Australia.

Some potential areas that AnglicareSA considers could be addressed as part of this inquiry include:

1. Information sharing: Ensuring legislation expects effective sharing of information and data between different agencies and services to identify and support high-risk individuals.
2. Early intervention: legislation that adequately supports early identification and intervention for those at high risk of experiencing or perpetrating violence.

3. Trauma-informed approaches: incorporate trauma-informed practices across all aspects of the justice system response.
4. Accountability measures: ensure appropriate measures are included in legislation related to holding perpetrators accountable for their use of violence.
5. Child-specific provisions: include sufficient child-specific provisions to address the unique needs of child victim-survivors.

END