

Family Domestic Sexual Violence Training and Link Worker Support Program – Information Sheet



Family, domestic, and sexual violence including child sexual abuse (FDSV) are serious public health issues that can cause significant physical, emotional, psychological, and financial harm. It is estimated that a full-time GP is likely to see up to 5 women per week who have experienced some form of intimate partner abuse in the last 12 months. People who have experienced child sexual abuse are 2.4 times more likely to have 6 or more visits to a GP in the last 12 months.

Primary health care professionals, such as GPs, are often the first point of health professional contact for victim-survivors of FDSV due to the physical injuries and/or mental health problems resulting from abuse and violence. As such, GPs have an important role to play in prevention, early identification, and responding to disclosures appropriately.

CHN has commissioned and partnered with specialist FDSV organisations – Domestic Violence Crisis Service (DVCS) and Canberra Rape Crisis Centre (CRCC) to deliver a Family, Domestic, Sexual Violence and Child Sexual Abuse Training and Link Worker Support Program, in the ACT. This initiative is part of the Supporting Primary Care Sector Response to FDSV.

What is on offer?

The program aims to support primary health care professionals recognise and respond to early signs of FDSV through:

- a range of free, RACGP-accredited, tailored and trauma-informed training and resources for the ‘whole-of-practice’.
- Link Workers embedded within DVCS and CRCC, who will facilitate coordination of referrals from general practices to relevant support services, improve integration between primary health care and the FDSV sector, and enhance service navigation for victim-survivors.

CHN invites general practices to register their interest to participate in the program. Practices will

have the opportunity to receive training and support from Link Workers until June 2026.

A **one-off** financial incentive payment of **\$5000 (ex GST)** is available for up to **15 general practices**. The funding must be used for remuneration of staff time associated with undertaking FDSV training and support activities.

What will your practice receive?

Training

- RACGP-accredited, trauma-informed, tailored, foundational training sessions on Domestic and Family Violence, Sexual Violence, and Child Sexual Abuse for the whole-of-practice (including non-clinical staff).
- Additional in-depth training for clinicians on specific topics, tailored to the needs of the general practice.
- Training sessions will be delivered at a practice-level with flexible offerings (early morning/lunchtime/after-hours sessions) depending on practice preference and can be spread across several weeks. Each training session will be no longer than 2 hours in duration.
- Training sessions have been co-designed by Link Workers (FDSV specialists) and CHN’s Family Safety Team, advised by a GP with lived experience and special interest in FDSV.
- Training will be co-delivered by Link Workers and CHN’s GP Advisor, wherever possible.
- Participants will receive Continuing Professional Development (CPD) hours and certificate of attendance for their participation.

FDSV advice and ongoing engagement with Link Workers:

- Link Workers will visit practices on a fortnightly-basis and provide ongoing engagement and post-training support to general practice to assist in the implementation of training content.

- Link Workers will also be available over the phone during business hours (Mon. – Fri.) to provide general and/or patient-specific advice, secondary consultations, individualised referral advice, and support to general practice staff.

Referral support for victim-survivors

- Link Workers can receive direct patient referrals from general practice and provide initial case coordination, risk assessment, and safety planning for victim-survivors, followed by warm referrals to appropriate supports and services.
- Link Workers will also be able to close the referral loop by providing feedback to GPs on the referral outcomes (with patient consent).

Organisational supports and resources

- DFSV related resources for general practice.
- Advice on practice-level FDSV policies and procedures, and information on legislative requirements.
- Opportunity to participate in communities of practice, if interested.

What will your practice gain?

- In-depth knowledge, understanding and awareness of the role of general practice in addressing FDSV.
- Enhanced confidence, skills, and readiness to recognise and respond appropriately to FDSV.
- Upskilled non-clinical and administrative staff.
- Enhanced safety for victim-survivors by building a safe climate for disclosure within the practice.
- Mastery of respectful inquiry strategies and mechanisms to support victim-survivors.
- Improved awareness of relevant mandatory responses under ACT legislation in relation to FDSV.
- Debriefing support from Link Workers.
- Improved understanding of the FDSV referral pathways and role of FDSV Link Workers.
- Improved partnerships and trust between primary care and FDSV sector.

What is expected from practices?

- Participation in three 1.5 to 2-hour RACGP-accredited foundational training sessions on Domestic and Family Violence (DFV), Sexual Violence (SV), and Child Sexual Abuse (CSA).
- Minimum of 3 consultations with DFV, SV and CSA Link Workers to seamlessly integrate processes into the practice's workflow.
- Participation in a baseline survey shortly after initial consultation with Link Workers, and follow-up surveys at 3-6 months, 12 months and 18 months post-engagement.

Who can apply?

This opportunity is open to **any general practice in the ACT region**, including Aboriginal Community Controlled Medical Services. To be eligible to receive a one-off payment of \$5000, applicants must meet the following requirements:

- have an ABN
- be registered for the purposes of GST
- nominate a key contact for grant communications.

Application Steps

1. Complete the application form (estimated time to complete: 10 minutes).
2. Upon receiving your application, CHN will send through an acknowledgement message of receiving your submission.
3. Applications will be evaluated based upon eligibility criteria and demonstration of a commitment to whole-of-practice participation.
4. Upon notification of acceptance, successful general practices will be required to complete and sign a grant agreement provided by CHN.

Need Assistance?

For any questions or additional support, please contact Dr Suman Shetty, CHN Family Safety Program Manager at familyafety@chnact.org.au