dvcs

Domestic Violence Crisis Service

02 62 800 900

Annual Report 2025-26



Helping to build lives free of violence.

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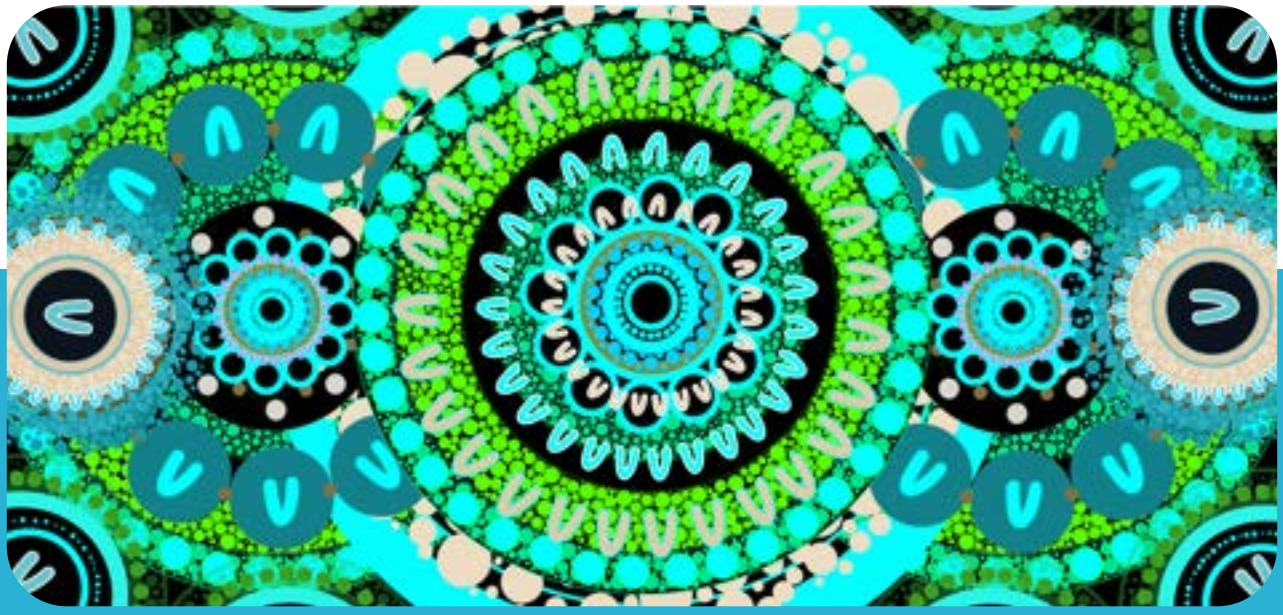
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Acknowledgement of Country

The Domestic Violence Crisis Service acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the traditional and ongoing custodians of the lands we live, learn and work on. Their stories and experiences have been ongoing for tens of thousands of years, and we acknowledge that their sovereignty was never ceded. We pay our respects to Elders, past, present and those that are emerging and their continued connection to country, culture and community.

The experience of colonisation and loss continues to impact Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and we acknowledge the deep stories of hope that these communities continue to hold. We acknowledge their strength and resilience and respectfully acknowledge their distinct rights and perspectives.

Artwork by Lynnice Church





Our Vision

A world free from violence and abuse.



Our Principles

Our principles shape the way our services are created and operate - to be client-focused, client-directed and child-centered. At the heart of these principles is the safety of the people we exist to support.

S - Safety
A - Accountable
F - Feminist framework
E - Equality
R - Respect

Message from the Board

I begin by acknowledging the victim-survivors of domestic and family violence in our community: those who reached out to us this year, those who could not, and those whose lives were taken. Their experiences shape everything we do.

It would be difficult to describe 2025–26 without starting with funding, because for much of the year it shaped every conversation at the board table. In February, DVCS faced the prospect of losing 20 per cent of funding out of its crisis line due to an ongoing ACT government contracting process. The board and executive were clear that reducing our 24/7 service was not something we were prepared to accept quietly. Our CEO, Sue Webeck, spoke publicly and persistently about what those cuts would mean for Canberrans in danger, and I want to thank her for the courage and clarity of that advocacy.

That advocacy mattered. The ACT Government subsequently agreed to maintain current funding for another year, and the 2026–27 ACT Budget went further, committing $44.2 million over four years to strengthen frontline services, including $18.5 million to provide stable, ongoing funding for core domestic, family and sexual violence response services, among them DVCS.



For an organisation that has lived year to year for too long, a multi-year arrangement is a genuine milestone. It means DVCS will be able to maintain the crisis line's operation 24/7, 365 days per year.

Behind the funding headlines, the entire DVCS team did extraordinary work. Each month our crisis line assists around 700 Canberrans, providing safety planning, risk assessment, referrals, and support, often in the middle of the night and in the most frightening moments of people's lives. Our criminal justice advocacy program continued to grow in importance, having seen a nearly 50% increase in demand over five years as more victim-survivors pursue the criminal justice pathway. This work sits on an established foundation. DVCS has been operating in Canberra for 35 years, and we remain grateful to every staff member, volunteer and board member who has built and carried that legacy.

I would be doing members a disservice if I presented the budget outcome as the end of the story. The new funding largely maintains existing service levels, and DVCS will still need to triage and prioritise the most urgent matters. Demand continues to outpace our capacity, and short-term arrangements for some programs create workforce pressures. Our workforce carries a heavy load, and supporting and caring for their wellbeing remains one of the board's highest priorities.

Across the ACT and nationally, domestic, family, and sexual violence remains an ongoing crisis. ACT Policing reported family violence-related calls rising year on year. Organisations across the sector are experiencing the same pressures as DVCS. There is also ongoing uncertainty about how Commonwealth funding flows to local services; under the 500 Workers initiative, for example, DVCS's share amounted to 0.6 of a role, and it remains unclear how the expanded national investment will reach Canberra's specialist organisations. The sector continues to call for longer funding cycles, transparency in how funds are allocated, and investment that matches real demand rather than historical budgets.

My sincere thanks go to our CEO Sue Webeck, Deputy CEO Brooke McKail, the DVCS Leadership team, every staff member and volunteer, and to my fellow Board members, for their rigour and generosity with their time. Thank you also to our funders, donors, partners, and the many Canberrans who supported DVCS this year.

This is my final report as Chairperson of DVCS. I joined the board in 2021 and have had the privilege of serving as Chair since November 2022. After four years in the role, it is time to hand over to new leadership. I have never taken this role lightly. Working alongside DVCS in its pursuit of helping to build lives free from violence has been an honour. I came to this board with lived experience of domestic and family violence, both in a relationship in my teens and in a childhood home where coercive and financial control were part of daily life. That experience has shaped how I have approached every decision at this table, and it has given me a deep appreciation of what it means for someone to pick up the phone and have a skilled, compassionate person answer.

Over my time as Chair, I have watched this organisation hold its ground through years of rising demand and funding that never quite kept pace. I have seen our staff sustain a 24/7 service under enormous pressure, and I have seen our CEO and executive advocate fearlessly for the people we serve. This year, that persistence helped secure multi-year funding for our core services. It is not everything we need, but it is a foundation we did not have before, and I am proud that the board has been able to support the team in achieving that.

I believe that true advocacy happens through action, and that belief will not end with my term. I will continue to champion the elimination of domestic, family, and intimate partner violence in my professional life and in the community, and I will keep showing up to DVCS events as a supporter and friend long into the future.

To my fellow directors, again thank you for your generosity. To Sue and the executive team, thank you for your leadership and for making the board's work easy to believe in. And to every staff member and volunteer, thank you for the work you do, most of which the community will never see, but all of which matters enormously. I step down from my role as Chair knowing DVCS is in good hands, and I look forward to watching the organisation continue to grow.

Thank you for trusting me with this role.

Kylie Burnett, DVCS Board Chair



CEO Report

I often feel overwhelmed at the thought of trying to articulate all that has happened in the year prior when bringing our annual report together. Some things continue to move incredibly slowly, such as reform to end the national crisis of gender based violence we all face, as well as funding reform and reducing red tape. Other things continue to move swiftly, such as the emerging needs of community we serve, and the specific circumstances we work through each day in order to create safety alongside those impacted by domestic and family violence.

In many ways what I have written in this section every year describes an intolerable amount of bureaucracy. It surrounds responses to domestic and family violence, continuing to slow the ability to improve prevention and early intervention of those delivering services, and the ability to recover and heal for those impacted by violence. Funding scarcity remains, including an inefficient use of existing resources to enable service delivery on the front lines. The current political environment has rightly raised the national consciousness of domestic and family violence in our community, but has not yet delivered on promises to ensure every person impacted by violence is able to receive a service which supports their needs. Across the country and across the service system far too many calls for help continue to go unanswered as a direct result of lack of resourcing, and lack of lived-experience and evidence-based policy reform. Yet somehow, we must find a way through that in order to keep delivering services and keep hope for ourselves and our community. So, this year I will focus on what has delivered hope for us.

This year our work with the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions has strengthened, enabling us to now deliver services co-located at their offices one day a

week. This enables us to work with ODPP team members to ensure consistent and streamlined information is provided to victim-survivors engaged in matters with the Court. It helps to reduce duplication for our teams, but also enables a single point of contact for victim-survivors.

We have welcomed exceptional new team members across our programs including some new members of our leadership team. The diversity of our team is one of the core principles to what enables us to deliver high-quality services to the ACT community. Different professional perspectives informed by training, qualifications, lived experience, service experience from prior workplaces, different jurisdictions, diversity of life experience and so much more is what truly enables us to be a multidisciplinary team. We have been enriched and at times challenged by the questions new members ask, advice they provide, insights that they share and at every juncture we have been grateful for the perspectives they bring and their willingness to share.

We have delivered joint advocacy work alongside community partners, and we continue to hold very firm to our experience that integrated services support a robust and healthy sector who can truly serve our community well. We remain grateful for the support, solidarity and service delivery of many of our service sector colleagues, particularly our sector partners Women's Legal Centre, who continue to share advocacy resources, collaborate and work effectively with our shared clients, and provide insight and guidance to our team. They always welcome an opportunity to come and share their service information and expertise at our team meetings and continue, even when resource constrained, to look for ways we can collaborate.

Our partners at A Gender Agenda and Meridian continue to be creative, responsive and adaptable in the face of funding challenges, and to try and build stability and trust for the communities you serve, supporting them to reach for our support when needed. We value the work we have been doing together, and are committed to continue to work alongside you.

We thank all of our community and government partners including Victim Support ACT, Family Violence Safety Action Program, Yerrabi Yurwang, Women's Health Matters, Capital Health Network, Housing ACT, ACT Corrections, Child Youth and Family, Child and Family Centres, Sisters in Spirit, Catholic Care Marymead, Beryl Women Inc, Toora Inc, Doris Refuge, M-Hub, CRCC, ACT Policing, Domestic Family Violence Investigation Unit, The Family Violence Liaison Officers, Legal Aid ACT and The Witness Assistance Officer's at the DPP.

We sincerely thank the community members who continue to reach out for support, who provide us feedback so we can continuously improve our services, who trust us by sharing some of the most horrendous moments of their lives with us. Your strength, determination

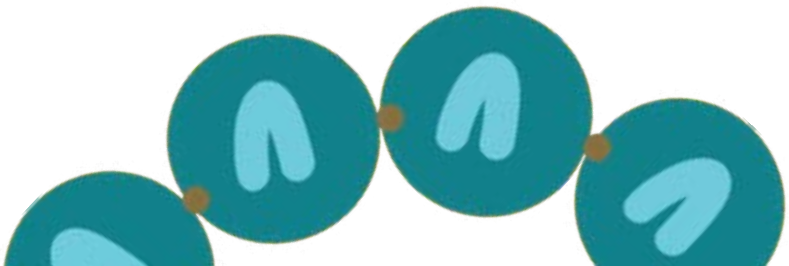
and often persistence far outstretches anything which should be considered reasonable, and it is our privilege to walk alongside even the smallest moments with you and witness your courage. It is for that reason that we turn up to do the work of making a better system: so the response you deserve does not require your strength and persistence to navigate.

We thank the ACT community who have supported our advocacy for more stable and sustainable funding. Every single person who commented on media articles, texted into radio stations, asked questions of their local members at street stalls, emailed us, or spoke to our team at events and functions: you made us feel a little less lonely, and a little more hopeful. The care you demonstrate in prioritising the needs of those impacted by violence, and the need to respond to those using violence, means that we have hope that everyone in our community may be able to live free from violence one day. But in the meantime, our community believes everyone should be able to access the specialist domestic and family violence response they deserve.

The DVCS team remain purpose-driven and focused on increasing the safety of those impacted by domestic and family violence. We have welcomed new babies across our team, had team members finish their study, embark on new study, get married, start new relationships and as well as end relationships. People have moved across teams, been promoted or moved to new roles outside of DVCS. All of the ups and downs of life have been navigated across our team - and some pretty left field downs too before anyone walked through the door for work - but what is consistent is how our team continues to turn up. Not just turning up for their work shift or for the community we serve, but turning up for each other. Celebratory messages, gentle check-ins on difficult days, meals dropped, hugs of welcome back or quiet words that simply say, 'we see you and support you'. This is a critical part of enabling everyone to keep turning up and finding ways to make that possible. The care, consideration, kindness and accountability in the way the DVCS team operates is formidable. I am deeply grateful for the impact this has for me as a member of the team every day, but also that it enables DVCS to deliver an incredible breadth of programs across each day including a 24-hour response directly to community. Thank you to each and every member of the DVCS team. The work of responding to domestic and family violence is complex, unpredictable and often unrelentingly distressing, and it is a choice to do this work and a commitment to do it as well as you do. Thank you.

DVCS will continue to turn up and respond to the needs of our community, advocate for reform and improvements in outcomes for those impacted by violence in our community. We hope that however you can, you will continue to turn up alongside us. We have covered so much ground over the 38 years of DVCS, but we still have so much more to do.

Sue Webeck, CEO



Impact Snapshot

We supported
5,107
clients

- 8.0% First Nations
- 12.3% CALD
- 79.3% female
- 18.8% male
- 1.7% other gender

323
face-to-face crisis visits

2501
nights of emergency accommodation

86
Men's Behaviour Change groups facilitated

We responded to
36,680
incoming contacts

and made
54,641
outgoing contacts

Crisis Intervention



The Canberra community continues to experience a need for family violence crisis intervention services at a level higher than the crisis intervention team has capacity to respond to.

While the Crisis Intervention team continues to be stretched thin, we work hard every day to meet client need, collaborate with external services, and advocate for the best outcomes for our clients. The Crisis Intervention team is determined to achieve the best client outcomes and uphold our feminist social justice values in all contact with clients and our community.

At an operational level, reflecting recommendations in the Specialist Services Review and feedback from service users about challenges getting through to the crisis line, in mid-March we trialled a significant service model change. We reconfigured the DVCS crisis phone line to separate call queues for clients and community members and for service providers. This has enabled us to prioritise clients without other support, and to improve our data collection and understanding of where calls are coming from.

We took staff feedback on the trial during the Staff Conference Day on 14 April, and after reviewing data and collating feedback we have maintained this model. We will continue to build on these changes, with new funding received in the ACT Budget being allocated to

an additional daytime Crisis Intervention shift to answer service provider calls.

For people at imminent risk of family violence related harm, DVCS can support emergency hotel accommodation. While this service can be a vital part of a safety plan, it is not a long-term housing solution. Unfortunately, for many people there are few appropriate exit options. In particular, we have observed people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities on temporary visas and with no income having few exit pathways, leaving them facing the uncertainty and instability of hotel accommodation for longer. These challenges are often compounded by limited financial resources and access to financial assistance, alongside additional systemic and practical barriers that can restrict clients' ability to transition into safe and sustainable longer-term housing. We continue to advocate for system reform, and work with partners across the housing sector to identify appropriate system responses.

In the 2025-26 financial year DVCS recruited 7 additional Crisis Intervention team members, and internally promoted three practitioners into more senior positions.
We acknowledge the incredible commitment of the Crisis Intervention team. Their work includes advocacy, referrals, crisis support, safety planning and supporting people in crisis accommodation. The dedication and empathy the team have for DVCS clients is contributing to our vision of a world free of violence.

Juan Caranguian and Paige Vuillemot, Crisis Intervention Team Leaders



Legal Support and Advocacy

It has been another exciting yet challenging year for the Legal Advocacy teams which saw several changes across service delivery and structure.

The court advocacy program staff continue to provide comprehensive support to clients who are seeking to obtain family violence orders both in cases where Legal Aid assist and where they are unable to assist. The extension of the Court Navigator program until 2027 means that the staff within this program can continue to provide this level of comprehensive support to clients in the space.

The team have noted challenges around the ongoing roadworks taking place in the vicinity where the Magistrates Court is located.

With the roadworks underway this has created several problems in terms of safety and accessibility for clients coming into court. With these challenges ongoing it has meant that there has been increased communication and stronger collaboration with court stakeholders on how services can best support court users who need to attend for their civil or criminal matters. DVCS and Legal Aid continue to work on strengthening the working relationship between the two services and how we can best support one another to achieve more positive outcomes for our mutual clients in a court environment.

We continue to see a significant increase in the number of matters proceeding through the criminal justice system each year. This year saw the continuation of having an additional full-time substantive criminal justice advocacy worker to aid in providing support to the team with the increasing number of matters.

This has allowed DVCS to provide more comprehensive support in victim engagement and advocacy with key stakeholders like ODPP and Victim Liaison Officers within ACT Policing.

This year has seen a roll out of a DVCS/DPP co-location partnership. The purpose of this partnership is to help better support the needs of victim survivors who are having to navigate the criminal justice system whilst also strengthening our already existing working relationship with the DPP. This has been a unique opportunity, and the services have already seen the benefits of this partnership in victim survivor engagement and cross-learnings between the services regarding navigating the criminal justice system.

The continuing increases to client support within both teams are reflected in the data gathered for this year, which is inclusive to seeing over 800 clients for face-to-face support. The data also includes supporting victim survivors who gave evidence at criminal hearings, providing support to victim survivors who wrote a victim impact statement for a criminal matter and commencing case tracking for over 900 clients, which continues to increase from previous years.

I cannot thank both the Court Advocacy and Criminal Justice Advocacy teams enough for the strong advocacy and tireless support that they provide to the community who are experiencing family violence. I look forward to continuing to strengthen our partnerships with legal stakeholders over the next year.

Megan Cook, Legal Advocacy Team Leader



Partnerships

The partnerships team has continued to evolve over the past 12 months, establishing itself as a dynamic team with strong connections within the ACT community. Members of the team are positioned in various services within our community, which increases our ability to connect with those struggling with domestic and family violence who may not be able to call the crisis line.

Our Family Violence Safety Action Program (FVSAP) Coordinator, situated within Victim Support ACT, supports families in high-risk domestic and family violence situations. For the financial year 25-26 our FVSAP Coordinators completed 3297 client contacts, including crisis visits, risk assessments, safety planning, and client advocacy.

Our team of liaisons situated within Children, Youth and Families (CYF) supported families, young people and children impacted by domestic and family violence. During this period our liaisons completed a total of 2477 client contacts or service consults, which include client consults and advocacy and are conducted either face-to-face or via phone, email, online, or a submitted report. There were 129 people from CALD backgrounds, with countries of birth including but not limited to India, Iran, Afghanistan, Philippines and Sri Lanka.



In addition, 111 Aboriginal people, 4 Torres Strait Islander people, and 1 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander family were supported by the liaison team.

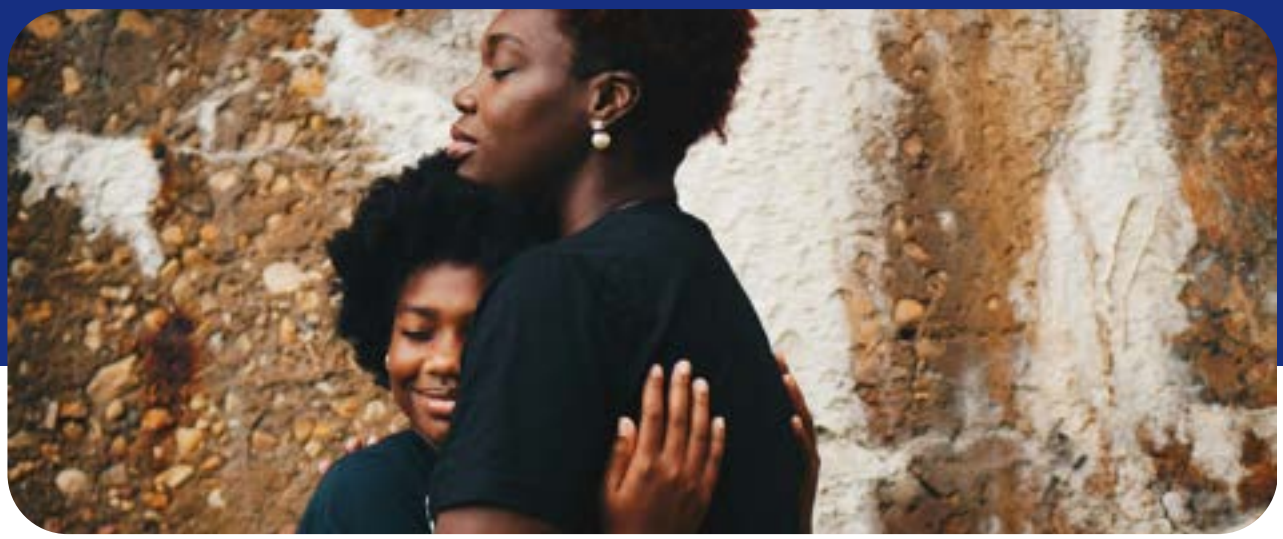
Our team of liaisons situated within the ACT Child and Family Centres (CFCs) provided face-to-face support to families within their local community settings, increasing ease of access to our services. During the previous 12 months the CFC Liaison staff situated in Gungahlin CFC, West Belconnen CFC, and Tuggeranong CFC completed 885 client contacts, which includes client advocacy, risk assessment, safety planning, case management, and follow up appointments. Of these, 26% of clients were from CALD backgrounds, 30% identified as First Nations, and 17% identified as a person with disability.

In addition to these services, DVCS continues to work with Capital Health Network on the Primary Health Care project. This project aims to increase the DFV education and awareness of healthcare staff, building the capacity of practitioners to respond to DFV and increase referral pathways through to our service. The project has been extended.

Kate Moran led the Partnerships Team over the past 12 months, supporting and guiding the team with her expertise and care, and ensuring all elements of the team were operating effectively to support clients at risk in our community. Kate left DVCS in July this year to enjoy time with her grandchildren, and we would like to thank her for her dedication to the team.

Mandy Larsson, A/g Assistant Director Client Services

Case Management and Outreach



This year has been one of continued commitment and purposeful service delivery for the Case Management and Outreach team. Throughout 2025-26, the team has worked alongside women, children and families impacted by DFV, providing practical support, safety planning, various levels of advocacy, housing assistance and pathways to longer-term stability. The programs and groups outlined in this report reflect the dedication of staff to client-centred, trauma-informed practice, as well as the strength and resilience of the people we support. As service needs and system pressures continue to evolve, the team remains focused on improving safety, strengthening collaboration and delivering responsive support that promotes recovery, wellbeing and hope for the future.

Case Management Programs

Throughout 2025-26, the Case Management and Outreach team delivered extensive supports to women, children and families impacted by DFV through our specialist case management programs, including Staying@Home, Crisis Case Management, and the Young People's Outreach Program (YPOP). These programs provided practical, trauma-informed and client-centred support to assist clients to increase safety, secure and maintain housing, and work towards short, medium and long-term goals. Case managers undertook risk assessments and safety planning, completed property audits, arranged home security improvements and personal alarms where appropriate, and provided

advocacy across housing, legal, health and wellbeing systems. This wraparound approach enabled clients with varied and complex needs to navigate service systems more effectively while strengthening their safety, stability and connection to ongoing support.

Throughout the period, case managers in the Staying@Home program provided long-term case management support and security upgrades to 40 women and their children. The Crisis Case Management program provided complex systems navigation, support and engagement to 69 clients. Within the Crisis Case Management team, a dedicated case manager also provided short-term case management support to clients accessing DVCS crisis accommodation, assisting them to identify safe exit pathways and transition towards greater stability. During this period, this support was provided to 47 clients, including children, who entered DVCS crisis accommodation.

"The CCM support has been above and beyond, and I am becoming teary telling you about how I am feeling and how well supported you have been through the program"

"I much appreciate for all the supports you have provided to us"

"The parenting session were extremely helpful and changed our lives. The YPOP program improved my son's experience at school and wanting to go to school. He now feels safe due to the steps that were put in place to support him"

YPOP supported 55 clients, including children and their parents. Across these programs, the breadth of support ranged from short-term advocacy and referrals through to intensive, longer-term case management for clients experiencing highly complex needs. Case Managers continued to work alongside clients to navigate the changing ACT service system, strengthen access to appropriate support, and achieve positive outcomes that improved safety, stability and wellbeing.

Support Groups

During 2025-26, DVCS continued to provide group-based support through the Moving On program, with groups delivered in both Term 1 and Term 2 in 2026. The program offered participants a safe, structured and supportive environment to reflect on their experiences, strengthen their understanding of the impacts of DFV, and build practical strategies for recovery, confidence and future wellbeing.

Moving On was conducted in January 2026 and May 2026, with experienced DVCS facilitators leading 6 participants in both terms through two-hour sessions over 8 weeks. The group provided an important opportunity for participants to connect with others in a supported setting, explore themes relevant to healing and moving forward, and develop tools to support safety, self-awareness and personal growth. Feedback from participants highlighted the value and impact of the program, with attendees reporting that the sessions were meaningful, practical and supportive of their recovery journey:

"This term's group was more aligned in where everyone was at, so it was easier to connect and have more meaningful conversation. I also found myself really looking up to the girls in this group"

Although the Beyond Support Group for trans and gender-diverse people did not run during 2025-26, a key achievement was the substantial preparatory and program development work completed by DVCS and AGA to strengthen Beyond for future delivery. The team reviewed previous participant feedback, refined the curriculum, strengthen the intake and screening process and improve recruitment and accessibility planning. This included reviewing the volume and pacing of session content, developing a participant workbook, updating promotional and referral pathways, and considering practical barriers that may affect attendance, such as evening delivery, winter travel, public transport reliance and participant safety when travelling to and from sessions. The work undertaken has positioned Beyond to be more responsive, accessible and sustainable in the next delivery cycle.

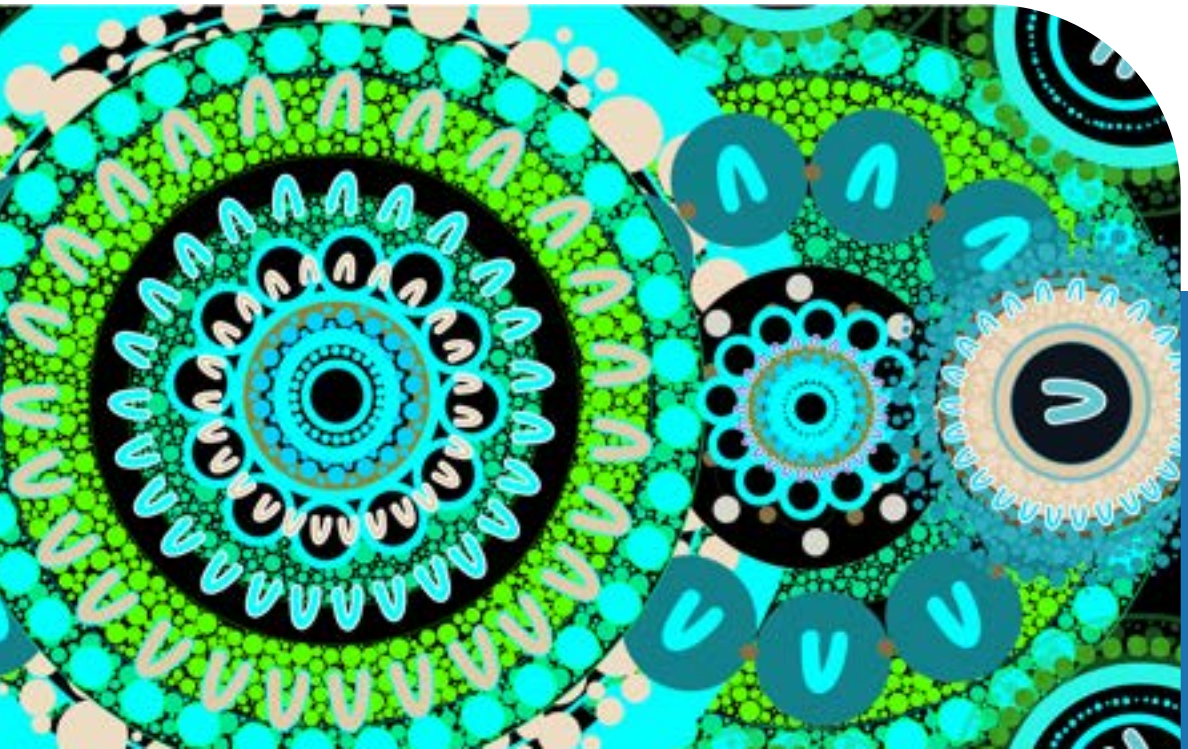
Dr. Eunice Oteng Owusu, Case Management and Outreach Team Leader

Room4Change

The Room4Change program has continued to facilitate two core group offerings of the 30-week Duluth model Men's Behaviour Change program and the 17-week Caring Dads fathering program. In addition, the program continues to provide group readiness sessions and individual case management sessions to respond to presenting needs and to facilitate safest and most effective program engagement. The Men's Behaviour Change Practitioners engage in resource intensive, comprehensive risk and safety focused appointments with men to determine suitability for the program during the assessment process.

During 2025-26, 50 men engaged with Room4Change as program participants. Room4Change Partner Support team worked with 134 people subjected to domestic and family violence, who had a combined total of 241 children under the age of 18 in their care. This figure consists primarily of the partners and ex-partners of Room4Change program participants, but also includes their parents, their adult children and other extended family members who they may have used violence against.

Throughout 2025-26, 16 men engaged in Room4Change assessment without progressing to participate in the program. In their engagement with the assessment process, the

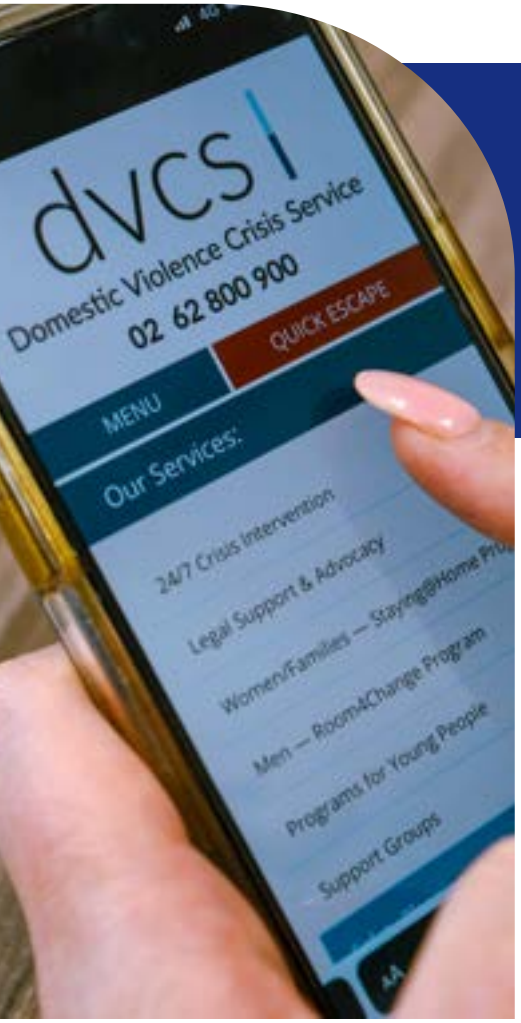


Room4Change Men's Behaviour Change Practitioners offered these men opportunities for reflection on their use of domestic and family violence, engaged in safety planning and referrals and collaborated with sector partners through relevant information sharing to support shared understandings of risk and support needs.

Room4Change accommodation has continued to support the engagement of program participants experiencing insecure housing or needing to relocate to increase safety of adult and child victim survivors. Throughout the past 12 months, 9 men have accessed the accommodation. Access to Room4Change accommodation further informs the safety planning and continued engagement with ongoing program participants and with men undergoing assessment for the program.

During 2025-26 Room4Change implemented a new waitlist procedure for incoming referrals to ensure appropriate resourcing for existing clients, while remaining responsive to the needs of the community. Waitlisted clients were supported with safety and accountability planning and referrals to alternate or interim services as appropriate. The 2025-26 period saw an increase in referrals from the previous year.

Belinda Campbell, Executive Director Client Services
Rita Menere, Room4Change Team Leader



Practice Development

DVCS places practice reflection, professional development and workforce sustainability at the heart of our values, policies, and our approach to supporting our community and providing a consistent and professional service. This year, we have continued our commitment to practice development by holding all-staff Conference Days on 21 October 2025 and 14 April 2026, facilitating staff to share professional development learnings and come together as a working community. We have also continued to offer opportunities for staff to research and prepare conference papers, contribute to reporting, and reflect on submissions and sector instruments.

The role of Manager for Supervision and Practice Development has just seen its second year at DVCS. This position has enabled DVCS to:

- provide 366 individual reflective practice supervision sessions with an internal specialist DFV supervisor
- provide monthly group supervision for our senior practitioner team
- continue term-based supervision for support group facilitation teams
- deliver 5 induction and onboarding terms for new staff across four programs
- provide staff with the opportunity to attend 48 professional development activities, including training on complex case management, trauma-responsive leadership, technologically assisted violence, men's behaviour change, and supporting children to heal from the trauma of family violence among other offerings.

Professional Development is a whole-of-service activity at DVCS. All DVCS leaders, including senior practitioners, staff in corporate roles, and frontline staff in specialist positions facilitate induction sessions for new staff. Team Leaders provide individual and group program supervision to staff, and the organisation continues to provide external group and individual supervision including issue-specific supervision across the service.

DVCS is committed to our responsibility as a DFV specialist service to support the evolving DFV sector in development and sustainability of this workforce through information sessions and training exchanges with other organisations, such as the Women's Legal Centre. DVCS continues as a partner agency with the Safe & Together Institute. This year, we sent 7 staff to the annual Safe & Together Conference as attendees and speakers. We have continued our collaboration with VSACT and CYF to deliver Safe & Together core training and look forward to hosting this training in the coming year.

Roberta James, Manager for Supervision and Practice Development



Corporate Services

The Corporate Services team continues to provide support across DVCS to frontline teams, ensuring the organisation runs smoothly. My thanks go to Alex G, Florence and Louise for their commitment to the vision and values of DVCS, their expertise and willingness to have a go at anything asked of them!

This year we worked closely with our external partners, including OPC providing IT support and Successful Alliances providing financial services. Both organisations are responsive, flexible and accountable, and we are grateful for the work they do to make sure DVCS can operate effectively in support of the community.

The two-yearly review of operational policies and procedures commenced in November 2025 and was completed in February 2026. This involved establishing committees of Leadership Team and frontline staff to review the content and operationalisation of each of the 89 policies and procedures in DVCS' suites. Feedback from the last two years received through our Policies Issues log was collated, legal and regulatory change was investigated, and additional feedback was sought from all staff. This process ensures our policies and procedures are current, relevant and reflective of on-the-ground issues and experiences.

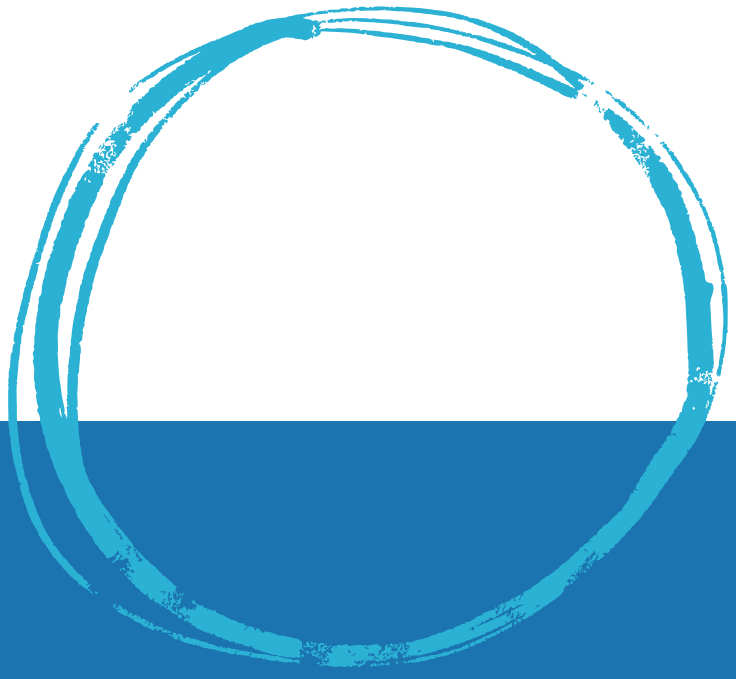
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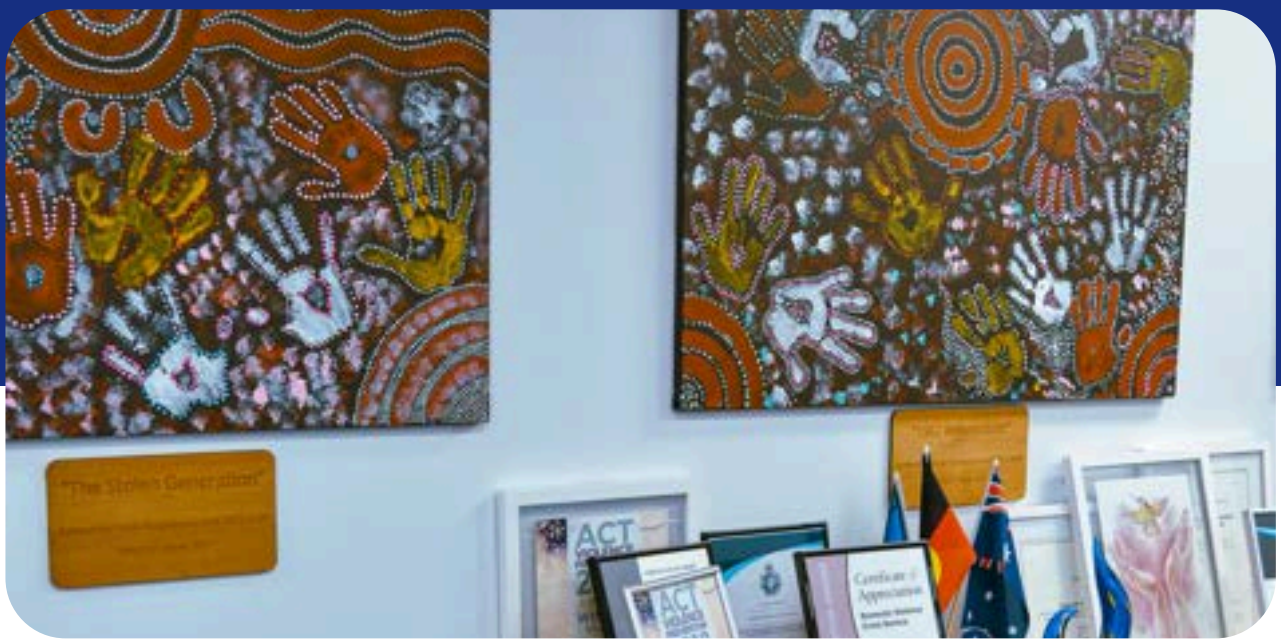
There continue to be gaps in data about people's experiences of DFV, both at a local and national level. We actively participated in a pilot national DFSV client data collection, led by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). The trial period operated for three months between March-May, followed by three feedback sessions and a survey. DVCS participation was important as we were one of few crisis services participating in the pilot, and we highlighted some of the challenges of the pilot model for services without discrete periods of service and with a large number of clients engaging each day (compared to, for example, a case management only service).

During the period we identified the need for advice to ensure DVCS meets our privacy obligations, including in relation to release of personal information and the sharing of information through legal processes. We are working with privacy experts to audit DVCS privacy measures, policies and training to ensure we are meeting these obligations.

Brooke McKail, Deputy CEO



Reconciliation



During 2025-26 DVCS worked toward implementation of our Reflect RAP, which is aligned to our strategic goal of a commitment to reconciliation.

The Reconciliation Committee continues to meet with representatives from across the organisation. The Reconciliation Committee worked through the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Cultural Awareness Self-Assessment Toolkit, developed by ACTCOSS Gulanga Program for the ACT Community Sector. During this period, we focused on identifying priority actions under the following three standards:

Standard 1 – Respect and Commitment
Standard 2 – Staff Knowledge and Development
Standard 4 – Culturally Appropriate Service Delivery

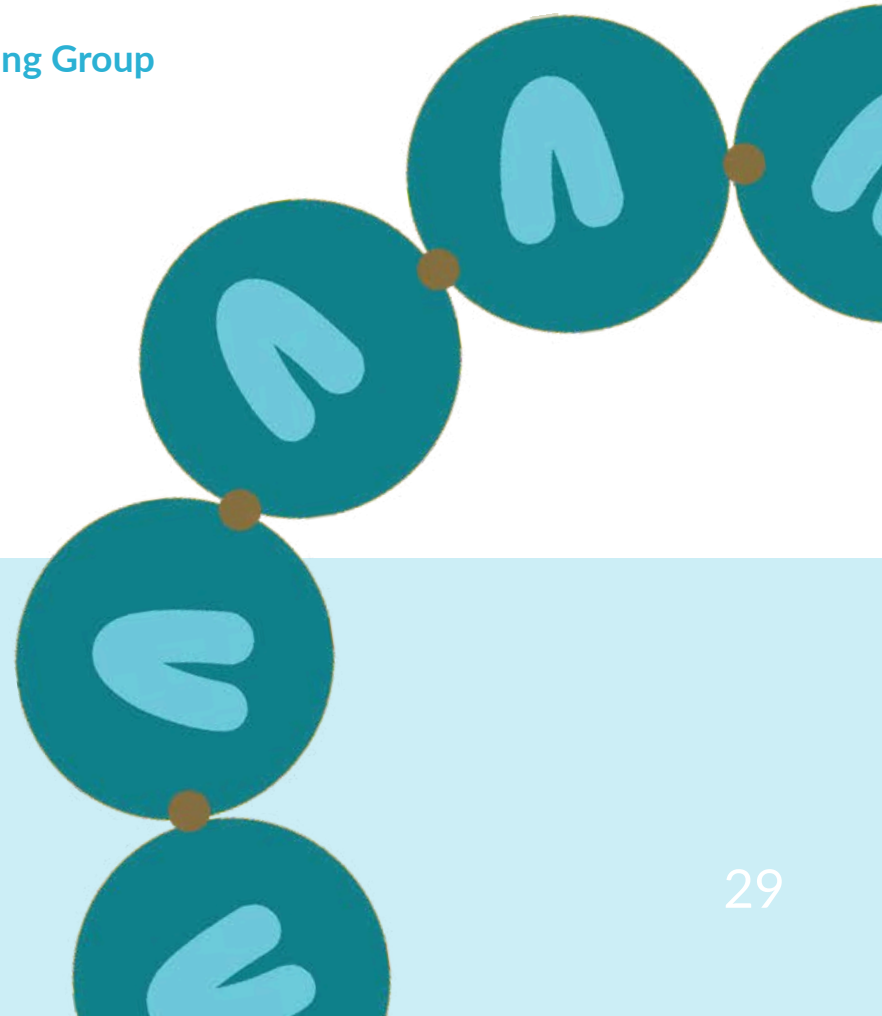
In January, DVCS provided staff the option to not recognise the 27th of January public holiday and substitute for a different day as a public holiday, while still maintaining 24/7 operation of the Crisis Line. This is to allow staff the choice to acknowledge the impact of this date on First Nations communities, rather than celebrate it.

Several staff completed the online Trauma-informed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability delivered by Centre for Cultural Competence Australia. This course is designed as an introduction to trauma and its impacts on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

DVCS continues to engage with Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations (ACCOs) to improve cultural responsiveness and strengthen referral pathways for First Nations people. Representatives from ACCOs met with the DVCS Leadership Team and attended the DVCS Staff Conference Day in April to meet with the broader team and build relationships across the organisations.

A Cultural Learning Framework is currently in development to more strongly embed our commitment to cultural understanding and ongoing learning across the organisation. It will involve commitments from staff to participating in cultural learning, embedded through the supervision and performance review framework.

Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group





Policy & Community Engagement

DVCS policy and advocacy work aims to shape policy reform agendas that will prevent family violence, improve outcomes for victim survivors, and strengthen system responses.

We provided formal submissions to the following inquiries and consultations:

- Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Bill 2025 Discussion Paper (July 2025)
- Inquiry into Auditor-General Performance Audit Report 10/2024: Safer Families Levy (September 2025)
- Inquiry into the Liquor Amendment Bill 2025 (November 2025)
- ACT Budget consultation (January 2026)
- Standing Committee on Legal Affairs Inquiry into the Family, Personal and Sexual Violence Legislation Amendment Bill 2025 (February 2026)
- Inquiry into the relationship between domestic, family and sexual violence and suicide (March 2026)
- Justice and Community Safety Directorate consultation on Changes to ACT Sex Work Laws (April 2026)
- Standing Committee on Legal Affairs Inquiry into the Bail Amendment Bill 2026 (June 2026)

DVCS continues to be a trusted voice for media, government and community in conversations about domestic and family violence. We attended consultation processes, gave evidence at inquiries, and participated on advisory committees across a wide range of reform and policy areas. We fulfilled more than 50 media requests for comment, on topics including responding to coercive control, preventing gender-based violence, funding for specialist services and police responses to violence.

As in previous years, DVCS hosted the ACT's National Domestic Violence Remembrance Day Candlelight Vigil, honouring people who have lost their lives due to family violence. This year there was a focus on the experiences of the LGBTIQA+ community, with speakers representing A Gender Agenda and Meridian.

We are increasingly called upon to deliver training and education sessions to government and non-government organisations on recognising and responding to domestic and family violence. This year, training audiences included ACT Policing, Child, Youth and Families, Tresillian, The Canberra Hospital social work teams, University of Canberra staff and students, Housing ACT, and Child and Family Centre staff.

Brooke McKail, Deputy CEO



Disability Inclusion

Earlier this year, DVCS established a Disability Accessibility Working Group to support the development, implementation and review of a DVCS Disability Access and Inclusion Plan (DAIP). The working group promotes a culture of accessibility, disability inclusion and best practice across DVCS programs and services for staff and clients. The working group has met 4 times this year with 13 members regularly contributing across several DVCS programs, including Criminal Justice Advocacy, Room for Change Partner Support, Policy, and the Leadership team. To build staff capability and support the development of the DAIP, members also attended Disability Inclusion Plan training organised by the Office for Disability.

The Disability Accessibility working group is developing measurable actions to improve the accessibility of our service, embed disability inclusion into standard practice, and apply principles of universal design to lift the burden of disclosure for clients. These actions are being developed under the Disability Justice Strategy's 5 focus areas: Information and communication, Education and guidance, Identification, screening and assessment, Better service delivery, and Research and review.



DVCS also conducted a review of resources made available to clients for the development of accessible documents and information. Staff identified Safety Planning, Limits to Confidentiality and Conditions of Stay as the most regularly and widely used resources with clients, which have been developed in Easy Read with support from the Easy Read Toolbox – a social enterprise developed by and employing disabled people.

DVCS has continued to strengthen our tailored disability education and guidance to build disability confidence and capability. We deliver Disability Inclusion training as part of staff induction, with topics and themes tailored to responding to clients with disability and what reasonable adjustments can look like in each program. DVCS held a staff conference day featuring a Responding to Clients with Disability training with a focus on identifying and providing reasonable adjustments to clients irrespective of disability disclosure. Staff have responded positively to tailored disability guidance and training, finding them "informative and necessary for the DVCS team as a whole". Staff commented on the "usefulness of resources when speaking to clients" and "help me know how to talk about disability". As a result, DVCS is responding to clients with disability more holistically and practitioners can better identify and offer reasonable adjustments as a standard protocol of client-led support.

Recognising the place of medical professionals as a main intervention point for domestic and family violence disclosure and support, DVCS collaborated with the Capital Health Network to develop training around identifying and responding to Women with Disability subjected to domestic and family violence for GPs and allied health professionals to build their knowledge and capability.

DVCS has also implemented an Accessible Events protocol to improve the accessibility of our staff and community events.

Ajar Sana, Disability Inclusion Advocate

Financial Position

Domestic Violence Crisis Services Inc

ABN:54 658 714 235

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

For the Year Ended 30 June 2026

	Note	2026 $	2025 $
Revenue			
Revenue and Other Income	3	11,335,369	10,123,612
		11,335,369	10,123,612
Expenses			
Administrative expenses		(177,354)	(229,924)
Board expenses		(360)	(1,798)
Client expenses		(846,124)	(750,356)
Community event expenses		(4,451)	(2,472)
Depreciation and amortisation expense		(314,709)	(256,840)
Employee benefits expense		(8,492,819)	(7,474,805)
Finance lease expenses		(106,076)	(53,673)
General expenses		(67,682)	(65,069)
Marketing expenses		(22,294)	(8,269)
Motor vehicle expenses		(43,654)	(25,366)
Professional services		(228,348)	(232,406)
Premises expenses		(61,450)	(78,819)
Property expense		(64,246)	(67,339)
Staff training		(61,225)	(87,860)
Workers compensation insurance		(581,327)	(632,723)
		(11,072,119)	(9,967,719)
Surplus before income tax		263,250	155,893
Income tax expense	2(a)	-	-
Surplus for the year		263,250	155,893
Other comprehensive income for the year		-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year		263,250	155,893

Domestic Violence Crisis Services Inc

ABN:54 658 714 235

Statement of Financial Position
As At 30 June 2026

	Note	2026 $	2025 $
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	4	**2,570,048**	2,474,715
Trade and other receivables	5	**30,373**	41,169
Other financial assets	6	**90,242**	86,721
Other assets	8	**225,233**	201,151
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		**2,915,896**	2,803,756
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, plant and equipment	7	**154,104**	162,260
Right-of-use assets	9	**971,488**	1,242,604
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		**1,125,592**	1,404,864
TOTAL ASSETS		**4,041,488**	4,208,620
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other payables	10	**450,205**	546,615
Lease liabilities	9	**246,807**	214,202
Employee benefits	12	**775,315**	606,783
Contract liabilities	11	**352,466**	640,768
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		**1,824,793**	2,008,368
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Lease liabilities	9	**812,781**	1,059,588
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		**812,781**	1,059,588
TOTAL LIABILITIES		**2,637,574**	3,067,956
NET ASSETS		**1,403,914**	1,140,664
EQUITY			
Reserves		**81,399**	81,399
Retained earnings		**1,322,515**	1,059,265
TOTAL EQUITY		**1,403,914**	1,140,664

Full financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2026 available at dvcs.org.au

Treasurer's Report

Our result for the year was a modest surplus of $263,250. Considering the Board approved a deficit budget before the beginning of the Financial Year, the surplus is an excellent result. However, similar to previous years, much of the favourable budget outcome came at an extraordinary, and unsustainable cost to DVCS through reduced employee costs.

The financial sustainability of DVCS was a source of discussion at most Board meetings throughout the year. When faced with a substantial reduction in funding for the 24/7 crisis line, the organisation and Board knew we needed to advocate for a sustainable future. The potential for reduced funding meant the Board had difficult discussions on what changes to service delivery would be needed to keep DVCS financially sustainable. The regularity with which I have had those discussions at the Board table over the last five years should give some people a moment's pause.

Through sustained advocacy, the ACT Government committed to fund DVCS in 2026-27 at the same level as 2025-26 and subsequently committed to a multi-year funding model. Sue Webeck advocated strongly, privately and publicly for DVCS to have enough funding to continue to operate the crisis line on a 24/7 basis. I thank Sue for her tireless advocacy for DVCS and all victim-survivors who rely on DVCS for support. I hope the executive team and Board can spend less time discussing financial sustainability and more time on the important work of DVCS.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to my FARS colleagues, Adam, Chelsea, Ben, Kylie and Maisi. I would like to thank Brooke who supported FARS in Sue's absence throughout the year. Sue's unwavering support, advocacy, passion, humour and peerless attention to detail is undeniable in everything, including all things related to budget management. Sue, thank you for having answers to my questions and meeting at 8:00am. As this is my last Report as Treasurer, I would like to thank everyone I have served on the FARS committee with and the two Board Chairs who have supported me, Sian and Kylie.

Kate Glynn, Treasurer



Our Supporters

As a not-for-profit organisation, DVCS acknowledges the ongoing support of our funding partners, the ACT Government, Australian Government and Capital Health Network.

We thank our sponsors, donors, philanthropic organisations and pro-bono partners for their generous support, including those listed below. Thank you for your support which means we can continue our work towards helping people build lives free from violence.



Governance

Board

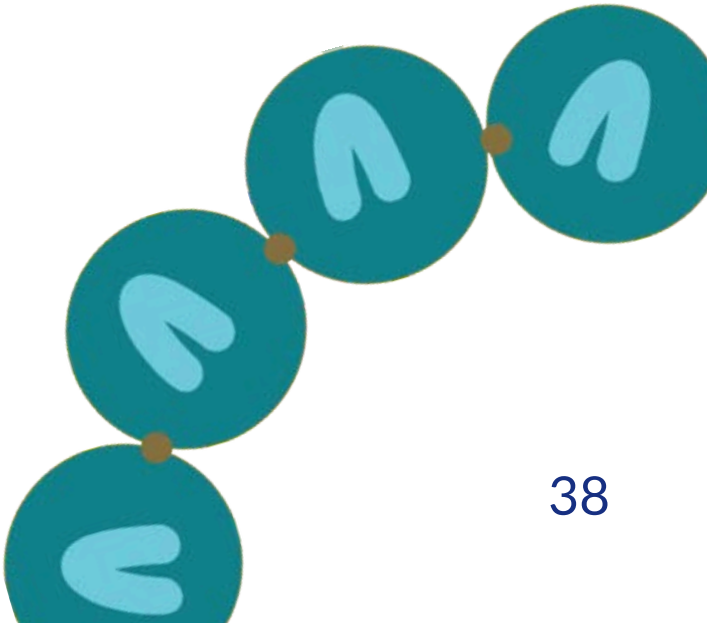
The Domestic Violence Crisis Service is governed by a Board of Directors who are responsible for ensuring the strategic direction as well as the financial and legal stability of the organisation. Our Board members are dynamic, bringing a range of diverse professional
and personal experiences to their governance. We thank them for their dedicated leadership and guidance throughout the last year.



Kylie Burnett - Chair
Karen Moore - Deputy Chair
Kate Glynn - Treasurer
Julie Vey - Secretary
Adam Gill
Manasi Ahuja
Chelsea Holton
Ben Burdon (from Nov 2025)
Jemma Rule (from Nov 2025 - Jan 2026)
Yeva Avakyan (from May 2026)

Auditor

Hardwickes
more than accounting



dvcs

Domestic Violence Crisis Service

02 62 800 900

Domestic Violence Crisis Service Incorporated

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