



ACT
Government

ACT PRACTICE STANDARDS

Men's Behaviour Change Programs

October 2021

FOREWORD

Domestic and family violence is a widespread and complex social problem with devastating effects on women and children, families and the community. The ACT Government is committed to working to prevent this violence, to providing integrated and coordinated responses to domestic and family violence and to improving the safety of victims.

We are increasingly coming to know that to be effective in combatting this serious issue we need to shift the blame from victims and place accountability on those who use violence. These ACT practice standards support us to do just that while also supporting the provision of opportunities for men who perpetrate violence to change their behaviour.

The standards also ensure that the programs offered are accompanied by processes and practices that hold men who perpetrate violence in view of the system and that the programs offered are part of an integrated response that includes addressing the safety and other needs of victims.

These standards also support men's behaviour change programs to keep challenging themselves to be innovative and ensure that they are informed by and contributing to evidence-based research on domestic and family violence perpetrator interventions.

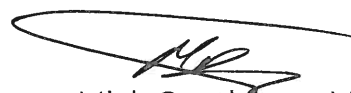
The development of these practice standards by a group that included workers in the victim support service system, workers in the men's behaviour change area, people in the criminal justice system and those in the policy development area, demonstrates the value of coordination and cooperation across the system. We thank all members of the working group for their ongoing commitment to this work.

We recognise that better holding perpetrators of domestic and family violence to account and offering them opportunities to address and change this behaviour is a critical component in a coordinated response to domestic and family violence in the ACT.

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Yvette Berry MLA

Minister for the
Prevention of Domestic
and Family Violence

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Mick Gentleman MLA

Minister for
Corrections and Policing

BACKGROUND

Domestic and family violence is a widespread and pervasive issue in Australia. From the age of 15, one in six women have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by a current or previous partner and one in four women have experienced emotional abuse by a current or previous partner (AIHW 2018).

Domestic and family violence has many and serious impacts on victims, including on physical and mental health, financially, socially and on relationships with others, for example between mothers and children. It is important to acknowledge however that not all women experience these impacts in the same way – intersectionality of inequalities such as colonisation, racism, sexism, ageism, ableism, homophobia and transphobia can create additional barriers to help seeking and access to resources for victims.

While domestic and family violence is found across all cultures and socio-economic groups, it is a distinctly gendered form of violence, in perpetration and impact. Men predominantly perpetrate violence and women and their children make up the majority of victims. As well as realising gender as a central element of domestic and family violence, domestic and family violence needs to be understood as a pattern of coercion and control over time, as opposed to other typically incident-based forms of violence.

Providing effective and appropriate responses to domestic and family violence is a priority at both national and ACT government levels.

In 2015, the Council of Australian Governments endorsed the National Outcome Standards for Perpetrator Interventions (NOSPI), which was developed as part of the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010-2022.

In 2018-19, the ACT Office of the Coordinator-General for Family Safety undertook research into perpetrator interventions and held two workshops in the ACT to explore and discuss ways for the ACT to improve responses to perpetrators of domestic and family violence. The workshops and research resulted in the publication of the Reducing Domestic and Family Violence in the ACT: Perpetrator Project Report, which outlined the next steps for this work in the ACT. Key to these steps was the development of practice standards for men's behaviour change programs (MBCPs) in the ACT.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the MBCP principles and practice standards outlined in this document is to enhance the safety of women and children by articulating consistent expectations of those providing MBCPs in the ACT. The practice standards establish minimum requirements for program priorities and key components of program design, delivery, evaluation and staffing.

The purpose of MBCPs is to hold men to account for their violence, offer them opportunities to address and change their behaviour, challenge their use of violence and keep women and children safe by monitoring and responding to the risk such men present. MBCPs are distinct in their aims and approach from anger management programs and relationship counselling.

MBCPs do not operate in isolation and cannot on their own solve the issue of men's violence against women. Rather, they are part of a broader spectrum or system of interventions with men who perpetrate violence in relationships, including policing and criminal justice interventions, apprehended domestic violence orders and court-based programs, individual therapeutic interventions and counselling, health, mental health and addiction programs, and child protection intervention. These systems and responses need to work together to ensure men who perpetrate domestic and family violence are in view of the system, are held to account for their behaviour and are offered opportunities to change that behaviour.

The practice standards should inform the development of current and future interventions with men who perpetrate violence.

Development of the standards

The ACT MBCP Practice Standards were developed in 2020-2021 by a working group that included representatives from:

- Office of the Coordinator-General for Family Safety
- ACT Corrective Services
- Everyman
- No to Violence
- Domestic Violence Crisis Service
- ACT Policing
- Victims of Crime Commissioner

The development of the ACT MBCP Practice Standards was guided by documents outlining MBCP standards existent in other Australian jurisdictions:

- Practice Standards for Men's Domestic Violence Behaviour Change Programs (NSW)
- Men's Behaviour Change Minimum Standards (Victoria)
- Practice Standards for Perpetrator Intervention: Engaging and Responding to Men who are Perpetrators of Family and Domestic Violence (WA)
- National Outcome Standards for Perpetrator Interventions (national – developed by COAG)

Application of the standards

The practice standards apply to all MBCPs operating in the ACT, including those provided by government and non-government agencies.

MBCPs are primarily group-based programs that seek to hold men who perpetrate violence to account for their behaviour and work with them to change that behaviour, with the overarching intent of improving the safety of victims.

When the program or service provided is not directly in relation to men's behaviour change and domestic and family violence the practice standards do not apply, for example they do not apply to:

- programs addressing anger management as an issue in isolation
- counselling or case management services in isolation
- referral services in isolation

Where behaviour change work is with individual men rather than group-based or is complementary to group work, these standards should be applied wherever they are

appropriate (acknowledging that not all can be applied outside of the group work context). Particularly relevant to consider in one-to-one work is:

- that the focus of the work is being driven and informed by increasing the safety of women and children;
- the importance of understanding the dynamics of domestic and family violence; and
- understanding the tactics perpetrators may use to deflect blame and/or seek collusion.

Accreditation and compliance

The working group's next steps include exploring how accreditation and compliance with these standards will be implemented in the ACT.

DEFINITIONS AND USE OF TERMS

Domestic and family violence	<p>According to Section 8 of the <i>Family Violence Act 2016</i> family violence can be defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) any of the following behaviour by a person in relation to a family member of the person: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. physical violence or abuse; ii. sexual violence or abuse; iii. emotional or psychological abuse; iv. economic abuse; v. threatening behaviour; vi. coercion or any other behaviour that — <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a.controls or dominates the family member; and b.causes the family member to feel fear for the safety or wellbeing of the family member or another person; or b) behaviour that causes a child to hear, witness or otherwise be exposed to behaviour mentioned in paragraph (a), or the effects of the behaviour.
Family member	<p>According to Section 9 of the <i>Family Violence Act 2016</i> a family member can be defined as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) a domestic partner or former domestic partner of the person; or b) an intimate partner or former intimate partner of the person; or c) a relative of the person; or d) a child of a domestic partner or former domestic partner of the person; or e) a parent of a child of the person.
MBCP facilitator	'MBCP facilitator' refers to the person responsible for delivering the MBCP.
MBCP provider	'MBCP provider' refers to the organisation delivering the MBCP.
Men's domestic and family violence behaviour change programs	<p>A men's domestic and family violence behaviour change program is an intervention that works to increase the safety of women and children by engaging perpetrators of domestic and family violence in a program that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • deconstructs violent and abusive attitudes and behaviours; • addresses the social context within which violence towards partners and children is situated; and • creates opportunities for men using violence to understand the impacts on partners and children, emphasising their choice to use violence and abuse; and develops alternative strategies to their use of violence. <p>The paramount consideration for MBCPs is the safety of adult and child victims. Safety is managed through the ongoing assessment of risk, partner contact and information sharing, referral and collaboration with other agencies and organisations in the community including police, courts, corrections and women's domestic and family violence services.</p>

Men who perpetrate violence	<p>The terms 'men who perpetrate violence' or 'man perpetrating violence' are used to refer to the man who is participating in the MBCP. These terms are used instead of 'perpetrator' to avoid totalising the men involved and in recognition of the fact that there is room for behaviour change, but still include the word 'perpetrate' to acknowledge that men are accountable for their behaviour. Men represent the overwhelming majority of people who perpetrate domestic and family violence; 95% of all victims of violence report a male perpetrator (Our Watch, ANROWS and VicHealth 2015). The standards focus on men to reflect this context, which is necessary to providing appropriate and informed responses that reflect the evidence.</p> <p>This is not to say that men are the sole perpetrators of violence. Interventions with women and gender-diverse people who perpetrate violence will require different, specified approaches.</p>
Partner	For the purposes of this document, 'partner' refers to the intimate or domestic partner of the man perpetrating violence.
Partner support worker	<p>Practitioner responsible for partner contact and support responsibilities. This may also include support of ex partners or other victims of the man's violence including family members.</p> <p>The term 'partner support worker' is used in this document, however it should be noted that this role may also be referred to by other terms such as 'family safety contact worker', 'women's contact worker' or 'women's support services' throughout the sector.</p>
Victim/s	<p>'Victim/s' refers to the person/people who have been harmed or are at risk of being harmed because of domestic and family violence perpetrated by the man who is participating in the MBCP. This includes those who are impacted through secondary exposure or victimisation.</p> <p>Children and young people who are exposed to domestic and family violence are recognised as victims in their own right. This reflects Section 8 (b) of the Family Violence Act 2016 as above and acknowledges that child victims have differing needs to adult victims.</p> <p>The majority of domestic and family violence victims are women. For this reason 'women' is sometimes used throughout the document in place of 'victims'. The focus on women as the primary victims is done with the intention of reflecting the gendered nature of domestic and family violence as shown through the evidence and research, not to discount the experiences of other types of victims.</p> <p>Men and gender-diverse people can also be victims and domestic and family violence can occur in any relationship, including heterosexual and same-sex relationships. It is important for MBCP providers to recognise that a diverse range of appropriate responses may be needed.</p>

PRINCIPLES

The practice standards are grouped under the following eight principles, which encompass the key areas necessary to providing safe and accountable men's behaviour change work:

1. Victims', including children's, safety and freedom underpins all interventions with men who perpetrate violence.
2. Interventions with men who perpetrate violence are informed by victims and the needs of family members, individually and systemically
3. Men who perpetrate violence are kept in view through integrated interventions that build upon each other over time and are mutually reinforcing
4. Effective programs must be informed by a sound and credible evidence base and subject to ongoing evaluation
5. People working in intervention systems with men who perpetrate violence understand and are skilled in responding to the dynamics and impacts of domestic, family and sexual violence
6. Men who perpetrate violence are held accountable by taking responsibility for their actions and being offered support to choose to end their violent behaviour and coercive control; when they do use violence, they face justice and legal consequences as necessary.
7. Perpetrator interventions are tailored to meet the individual needs and respond to patterns of coercive control by men who perpetrate violence, address their diverse circumstances and backgrounds, which may require a unique response and consider intersectionality
8. Inter-agency risk identification, assessment and risk management processes are consistent, robust and strong, identify and respond to dynamic and static risk and any risks associated with interventions are actively monitored and minimised.

Principle 1: Victims', including children's, safety and freedom underpins all interventions with men who perpetrate violence.

Standard 1.1 Programs focus on addressing violent and controlling behaviour, holding men who perpetrate violence to account and to take responsibility for their abuse. Programs identify and work against collusion, minimisation, victim-blaming narratives and violence-supporting attitudes. Programs challenge the man's use of family violence and the impact on their partner and family members to increase the safety of the family and support behaviour change.

Standard 1.2 MBCP providers will operate from written procedures that address the risk posed and implement risk management strategies including safety planning for the partner, ex-partner or impacted family members of the man perpetrating violence. Detailed practice guidance will set out these procedures. Practice guidance will include, but not be limited to:

- regular and systematic monitoring of threats or risks to safety;
- responsibility of the MBCP provider in managing or otherwise responding to the risks identified;
- documenting, assessing, and managing risk, including all contact with the man perpetrating violence;
- responding to critical incidents;
- referral pathways and protocols;
- reporting any risk to persons to relevant authorities;
- program content and approach; and
- the roles and responsibilities of staff.

Standard 1.3 MBCP providers will have a designated partner support worker or an arrangement with a specialist victims' support service and work together to undertake ongoing risk assessment for victims, including children, and to provide support and information about MBCP topics.

Standard 1.4 MBCP providers will respond immediately to any indications of increased risk to the safety of victims, including children. These risks will be documented and communicated to those at risk and to appropriate services.

When victims, including children, are identified as being at increased risk, an immediate response is needed that includes:

- informing relevant authorities, including police or the Child Protection Helpline;
- informing the victim;
- informing relevant services including by making a referral to an ACT integrated central service such as the Safety Action Pilot if this has not occurred already;
- working with the partner support agency; and
- working with agencies involved (such as care and protection, counselling services etc)

Implementing additional contact and strategies to keep men who perpetrate violence in view.

Standard 1.5 When the man perpetrating violence completes, withdraws or is terminated from a program, the program and/or the partner support service will contact the partner and other relevant family members at risk of family violence, or their case manager and inform them of this and any other information relevant to managing any risk to their safety from family violence.

Standard 1.6 MBCP providers and support services will prepare victims, including children, for the participation of their family member in a MBCP, including providing verbal and written information about the content and approach of the program and all relevant procedures.

Standard 1.7 All aspects of program promotion and delivery promote the safety, wellbeing and equality of women and children.

Standard 1.8 Best practice recommends programs need to be of at least 6 months duration. However, we recognise that 'MBCPs are not unitary and homogenous' (Vlais, Ridley, Green & Chung (2017)).

Principle 2: Interventions with men who perpetrate violence are informed by victims and the needs of family members, individually and systemically.

Individually

Standard 2.1 MBCP providers will have a process outlining how partner support agencies can communicate with MBCP facilitators to ensure that interventions with men who perpetrate violence are responsive to the issues being raised by the partner, ex-partner and/or impacted family members.

All information sharing must be conducted in a safe and constructive manner. It is vital that confidentiality is upheld at all times to ensure that Information provided by the victim survivor is not passed on to the user of family violence.

Systemically

Standard 2.2 MBCP providers will have a program logic that describes (or they can demonstrate) how their work and processes contribute to addressing the structural drivers of men's violence against women (not just how the program works to achieve individual participant behaviour change).

Standard 2.3 MBCP providers can demonstrate how their program is informed by the needs of victims, including children and family members (for example, research considered, alignment with Duluth or other models that prioritise the safety and needs of victims).

Standard 2.4 Risk assessment and risk management (of the man perpetrating violence) is central in the program logic.

Principle 3: Men who perpetrate violence are kept in view through integrated interventions that build upon each other over time and are mutually reinforcing.

Eligibility assessment

Standard 3.1 Assessment for the eligibility of men who perpetrate violence seeking to access programs will include:

- character, personal history and communication language skills;
- any disabilities;
- any psychiatric or psychological conditions;
- any alcohol or other drug problems; and
- any other matters the person considers relevant.

Standard 3.2 Assessment of the eligibility to enter programs will be undertaken across at least two face to face sessions of up to 60 minutes, except in exceptional circumstances.

Standard 3.3 Men deemed ineligible for programs will be referred to other relevant services and all efforts made to ensure those who need to know are informed (such as partners, probation and parole).

Standard 3.4 All men should be offered relevant referrals pre, during and post programs.

Standard 3.5 MBCP providers must notify men who perpetrate violence at the time of intake and assessment about how their information may be used or disclosed, including that their information may be shared without their consent if others are at risk of harm.

Visibility and integration

Standard 3.6 To ensure program transparency, accountability and integration, MBCP providers will develop relationships (including MOU's where possible and appropriate), with relevant local agencies. At a minimum this will include: ACT Policing, Child and Youth Protection Services, ACT Corrective Services, domestic and family violence services for women and children and relevant men's services.

MBCP providers will seek to establish relationships with local services for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, people with a disability and people who are of diverse sexuality and gender. These relationships should be established by the MBCP provider and include

wherever possible and appropriate, documented agreement (or terms of reference) about how the agencies will be involved in the development and ongoing functioning of the MBCP.

Standard 3.7 MBCP providers will work collaboratively with relevant agencies to assess, manage and monitor risk. This will include:

- exchanging information with agencies to support/inform risk assessment, risk management and monitoring of risk;
- working to improve accountability and visibility of men who perpetrate violence across all systems and services;
- participating in case conferencing with relevant agencies; and
- coordination of service responses to adult and child victims and the man perpetrating violence.

Standard 3.8 MBCP providers will include practices that improve visibility and accountability of men who perpetrate violence such as:

- use of warm referral procedures;
- case consultation;
- reporting child protection concerns;
- reporting criminal and/or high-risk behaviour to relevant authorities;
- convening and/or participating in multi-agency case management; and
- sharing information where appropriate.

Principle 4: Effective programs must be informed by a sound and credible evidence base and subject to ongoing evaluation.

Theoretical and evidence base

Standard 4.1 MBCPs must have a sound evidence-base. MBCP providers must document and demonstrate the theoretical basis for the design and delivery of programs. This includes clearly articulating how the program will:

- address risk identification and assessment
- implement risk management strategies
- undertake change work with men who perpetrate violence, including coercive and controlling behaviours
- provide the evidence base that supports these approaches.

The program's content and delivery must be consistent with this theoretical base.

MBCP providers must keep abreast of new research findings and developments in relation to theory and practice. MBCP providers will set out in writing information for men who perpetrate violence on how the program is intended to ensure they take responsibility for their use of violence and controlling behaviours, stop their use of violence and change their behaviour.

Operational review

Standard 4.2 MBCP providers will complete operational reviews in a systematic way with the aim of improving the quality and effectiveness of future programs and promoting continuous improvement. Operational reviews will include an examination of:

- all critical incidents;
- program content and delivery;
- how the program can be improved to further promote victim safety;
- the referral process and support mechanisms for victims, including children;
- program effectiveness in meeting the diverse needs of men who perpetrate violence and victims, including children;
- how the program incorporates contemporary research and practice trends; and
- how the program identifies and addresses risk.

Standard 4.3 MBCP providers will conduct an operational review every 12 months, drawing on quantitative and qualitative data, including information and feedback collected from men who perpetrate violence, ex/partners and children, and other stakeholders.

Standard 4.4 MBCP providers should ensure that at least one observer is present on at least two occasions during the delivery of each program. The observer may be internal to the service or a suitable person external to the service (such as a worker from another MBCP or a women's domestic and family violence service etc.). MBCP providers will have a written procedure in place for observers to explain their role as an observer that includes feedback on program content and facilitator practices. Observers should attend a minimum of two sessions over the course of a program to observe.

Assessment of program impact

Standard 4.5 MBCP providers will assess and report on the impact of programs on the safety of the (ex) partner and children of the man perpetrating violence.

MBCP facilitators will systematically evaluate the impact of the program on victim safety. Evaluations must include pre and post program assessments of:

- risk and safety;
- use of violence by the man perpetrating violence; and
- possession of violence supportive attitudes by the man perpetrating violence.

To enable effective assessment across these three areas, evaluations must incorporate information from multiple sources including the man's ex/partner, police reports, workers (MBCP facilitators and partner support workers), other relevant services and self-reporting by the man perpetrating violence.

Standard 4.6 MBCP providers will assess the impact of programs on the attitudes and behaviours of men who perpetrate violence. An assessment of the impact of the program on the attitudes and behaviour of men who perpetrate violence must rely on multiple sources of verification including police reports, victim and family member reports, MBCP facilitator reports as well as self-reports by the man perpetrating violence. Evaluations must include pre and post program assessments of:

- risk and safety;
- use of violence by the man perpetrating violence; and
- possession of violence supportive attitudes by the man perpetrating violence.

These impact assessments should form part of program evaluation and contribute to the evidence base as appropriate.

Contributing to evidence base

Standard 4.7 MBCP providers will contribute to an evidence base for behaviour change programs. MBCP providers will be required to collect data to contribute to an evidence base regarding the effectiveness of behaviour change programs including to promote their value and raise public confidence in their effectiveness. MBCP providers will also engage in formal program evaluations as required by funding bodies. MBCP providers may participate in research with appropriate research organisations (such as universities) using de-identified data.

Principle 5: People working in intervention systems with men who perpetrate violence understand and are skilled in responding to the dynamics and impacts of domestic, family and sexual violence.

Qualifications/requirements of MBCP facilitators

Standard 5.1 MBCP facilitators and partner support workers have access to supervision sessions at least monthly and undertake at least four relevant professional development activities annually.

Standard 5.2 All group programs will have a minimum of two facilitators. Wherever possible one facilitator should be female and one facilitator should be male, to enable positive role modelling.

Standard 5.3 Within the program team there must be at least one member who has:

- qualifications relevant to the delivery of MBCPs; and
- at least 50 hours of experience in the facilitation of MBCPs

OR

- or a clear, current and active process in place for obtaining these.

Standard 5.4 Partner support workers will hold relevant qualifications and be familiar with the ACT Domestic and Family Violence Risk Assessment and Management Framework, ensuring that their practice is consistent with this.

Standard 5.5 The partner support worker will not simultaneously have responsibility for program facilitation and partner support, except in exceptional circumstances.

Standard 5.6 Partner support work will be undertaken by a female worker unless a male worker is requested.

Standard 5.7 All staff working in programs are required to sign a code of conduct (where they have not already done so with the agency).

Standard 5.8 All staff working in programs have been the subject of a National Police Check and have a Working with Vulnerable People registration (where they have not already done so with the agency).

Understanding/training about the nature and impact of domestic and family violence

Standard 5.9 MBCP facilitators and partner support workers will have appropriate knowledge and training about the impact of domestic and family violence on women and children. This includes:

- Foundation knowledge about domestic and family violence including the gendered nature, dynamics, and impacts on women and children;
- understanding the range and patterns of behaviour known as coercive control;
- knowledge of legal and statutory responses to domestic and family violence including the criminal justice system, child protection, family law and extensive knowledge of violence restraining orders and how they operate; and
- formal training about domestic and family violence. Where possible, training should be provided by a recognised training institution or facilitators with expertise in domestic and family violence and/or interventions with men who perpetrate violence.

It is the responsibility of the MBCP provider to ensure MBCP facilitators and partner support workers possess the requisite knowledge and undertake the required training.

Knowledge and skills in supporting and advocating for people impacted by domestic and family violence

Standard 5.1 Partner support workers must have specific knowledge, training and experience to support and advocate for people impacted by domestic and family violence.

Any person undertaking partner support work will have as a minimum:

- experience in advocacy for victims of domestic and family violence; and
- skills and training in comprehensive domestic and family violence case management, risk identification, assessment and safety planning.

Principle 6: Men who perpetrate violence are held accountable by taking responsibility for their actions and being offered support to choose to end their violent behaviour and coercive control; when they do use violence, they face justice and legal consequences as necessary.

Held accountable/ acknowledge their abusive behaviour

Standard 6.1 MBCP providers will have procedures for MBCP facilitators to prevent their implicit or explicit collusion with violence supporting attitudes held by men who perpetrate violence. MBCP facilitators must develop skills in identifying and competency in responding to the attitudes that support violence against women. This will be a specific focus in supervision, professional development and in the evaluation of the program.

Standard 6.2 MBCP providers will have practices and procedures for engaging men who perpetrate violence, which address their violent and controlling behaviours.

Practices and procedures should include participation agreements that require prospective participants to:

- acknowledge their violent behaviour;
- show a commitment and capacity to attend and participate in the entire program;
- agree to a worker having regular contact with any women and children who might be affected by their violent and controlling behaviour;
- acknowledge they are required to abide by the law, including all the requirements of any legal orders in force;
- disclose any access to guns or other weapons (this information must inform risk assessments and safety planning for victims, including children);
- agree to ongoing reviews that monitor their progress in changing their violent behaviour and attitudes;
- reporting and information sharing obligations under relevant legislation;
- agree to the MBCP provider's policies on limited confidentiality and responding to criminal acts or breaches of court orders; and
- agree that information will be shared between the MBCP provider and referring agency and with relevant government and non-government agencies.

The exception to this is mandated programs that have been specifically designed for men who deny responsibility for their violent behaviour.

Standard 6.3 Program content will include information on the different forms of domestic and family violence including coercively controlling behaviours to provide opportunities for men who perpetrate violence to come to an understanding about the nature of their offending behaviour.

Programs will engage men who perpetrate violence and assist them to:

- identify and challenge ideas, attitudes, beliefs and myths that are barriers to them taking responsibility for their behaviours- past, present and future;
- recognise the many behaviours that are violent and controlling;
- recognise the effects of their violent and controlling behaviour on others;
- develop empathy and prioritise safety and the needs of family members over their own;
- use appropriate non-violent and non-controlling behaviours; and
- prioritise settings and personal relationships (e.g. friendships) that support their choice to be non-violent and non-controlling.

Impact of abusive behaviour on parenting capacity

Standard 6.4 Program content will include information about the impact of violent and controlling behaviours on a man's parenting including their capacity to be a safe father who considers the impact his behaviours have on children's growth and development.

Standard 6.5 MBCP providers and partner support workers will work to strengthen the relationship between mother and children wherever possible, recognising that undermining this relationship can be a tactic of violent and controlling behaviours.

Offered support to change

Standard 6.6 Services have policies in place to provide a response in between referral and availability of programs within the resources available.

Face justice and legal consequences

Standard 6.7 Where appropriate, the MBCP provider will provide feedback to referring agencies on the engagement of the man perpetrating violence with the program.

Standard 6.8 MBCP providers will develop procedures for non-attendance of men who perpetrate violence. Where a man fails to attend or participate in a program the man's

partner, referring agency and agencies involved in the assessment, management and monitoring of risk, will be notified.

Principle 7: Perpetrator interventions are tailored to meet the individual needs and respond to patterns of coercive control, address their diverse circumstances and backgrounds, which may require a unique response and consider intersectionality.

Standard 7.1 Programs will address the patterns of coercive control by men who perpetrate violence

- MBCP providers will have formal links to relevant support services for men who perpetrate violence from diverse communities, including translating and interpreting services.
- MBCP providers must demonstrate that proposed delivery models, including length and intensity are evidence-based and fit-for-purpose according to the needs and circumstances of men who perpetrate violence.
- Where a community's demographic profile includes a particular cultural group, staff should be supported to develop their knowledge and understanding about that group.

Standard 7.2 Programs address the individual, diverse circumstances and backgrounds of the man who perpetrates violence.

- MBCP providers must demonstrate an understanding of and regard for the particular needs and experiences of: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people; people with disability; young people; and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Diversity should underpin the design and delivery of services appropriate for meeting the needs of diverse communities. This includes ensuring that programs are culturally safe, language barriers are addressed, program content and materials are respectful and inclusive and appropriate referral pathways are in place.
- MBCP providers must have processes to manage and interrupt any discriminatory behaviour by MBCP facilitators and other men in group contexts. This includes ensuring that MBCP facilitators have the necessary skills and training in this area.
- Program materials will use/incorporate language, topics and materials that are culturally relevant and acknowledge diversity in the program.

Standard 7.3 MBCP facilitators must establish and sustain cultural competence through training, secondary consultation and professional networks.

- All MBCP facilitators must complete training to ensure that they are equipped with the knowledge and skills to provide culturally competent practice. This includes specific training on working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people; people with a disability; young people; and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- To develop and sustain cultural competence, services should provide the following on an ongoing basis: access to formal training; established professional networks that include services for Aboriginal people; people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds; gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people; people with a disability; and young people; and should engage specialists (internal or external) for secondary consultations who are a part of that group and/or have expertise in that area wherever possible.
- Cultural competence includes an awareness of one's own cultural worldview, and assumptions and biases, as well as a positive attitude towards cultural differences, knowledge of different cultural practices and cross-cultural communication skills.

Standard 7.4 MBCP providers must demonstrate how programs apply an intersectional lens to their MBCP development and implementation, acknowledging that these intersections bring with them barriers to engagement and behaviour change.

Principle 8: Inter-agency risk assessment and risk management processes are consistent, robust and strong, identify and respond to dynamic and static risk and any risks associated with interventions are actively monitored and minimised.

Standard 8.1 Participant risk assessment will utilise a structured professional judgement approach and with consideration of the ACT 13 agreed risk factors. See the ACT Domestic and Family Violence Risk Assessment and Management Framework.

Standard 8.2 All MBCPs understand that identifying and responding to risk is central to their work and this is demonstrated in their program logic (see Standard 2.4).

Standard 8.3 Risk assessment and risk management of the man perpetrating violence should be undertaken and documented at the point of initial intake and assessment, be ongoing throughout the duration of the program and at the end or completion of the program.

Standard 8.4 Risk assessment and management policy and procedures should be consistent with the ACT Domestic and Family Violence Risk Assessment and Management Framework.

Standard 8.5 Risk assessment and management procedures address both dynamic and static risk.

- The initial and ongoing risk assessment (at Standard 8.3) should address both static risk (such as age, past criminal and civil offences, etc.) and stable dynamic risk (such as internal state and behaviour, attitudes and beliefs about women and denial of responsibility etc.).
- Procedures must include assessment mechanisms for assessing for acute dynamic risk (such as new pregnancy of partner, legal interventions and family court matters, marked increase in substance abuse etc.) and responses to acute dynamic risk (such as providing extra support and contact with the man perpetrating violence, increased contact with partner support agency and increased information sharing with external agencies).
- Monitor for the risks associated with both the discontinuance or completion of the program by the man perpetrating violence (noting that men who leave a program are at higher risk of offending than those who never attend a program).

Standard 8.6 Information sharing is critical for assessing, managing and monitoring risk and is an essential component of accountability and is embedded in MBCP frameworks. Information sharing is particularly important between MBCPs and child protection services given the interconnected nature of their work.

Information sharing provisions to support information sharing for risk management include:

- Section 136 of the *Crimes (Sentencing) Act 2005*, which currently allows 'criminal justice entities' (including all current FVIP case-tracking agencies) to share information about a person charged with an offence, a victim of an offence, and a person convicted or found guilty of an offence, in a broad range of circumstances; and
- Section 19 of the *Information Privacy Act 2014*, which provides for the disclosure of personal information by a public sector agency where the agency reasonably believes that the collection, use or disclosure is necessary to lessen or prevent a serious threat to the life, health or safety of an individual, or to public health or safety. This provision should only be relied on when a public sector agency considers that there is a high risk to a domestic and family violence victim's safety, and where obtaining consent is not possible in the circumstances.

Risk management strategies including safety planning are completed and documented for every man who comes to the attention of the program, either through a brief intervention or longer-term engagement in the MBCP.

The risk management strategies including safety planning are shared with relevant services to ensure the person receives a consistent and coordinated response to their use of violence and is kept in view by the system.

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