

# “One year on: Successes & challenges in operationalising an integrated ‘one-stop-shop’ for women escaping family and domestic violence in Perth, Western Australia

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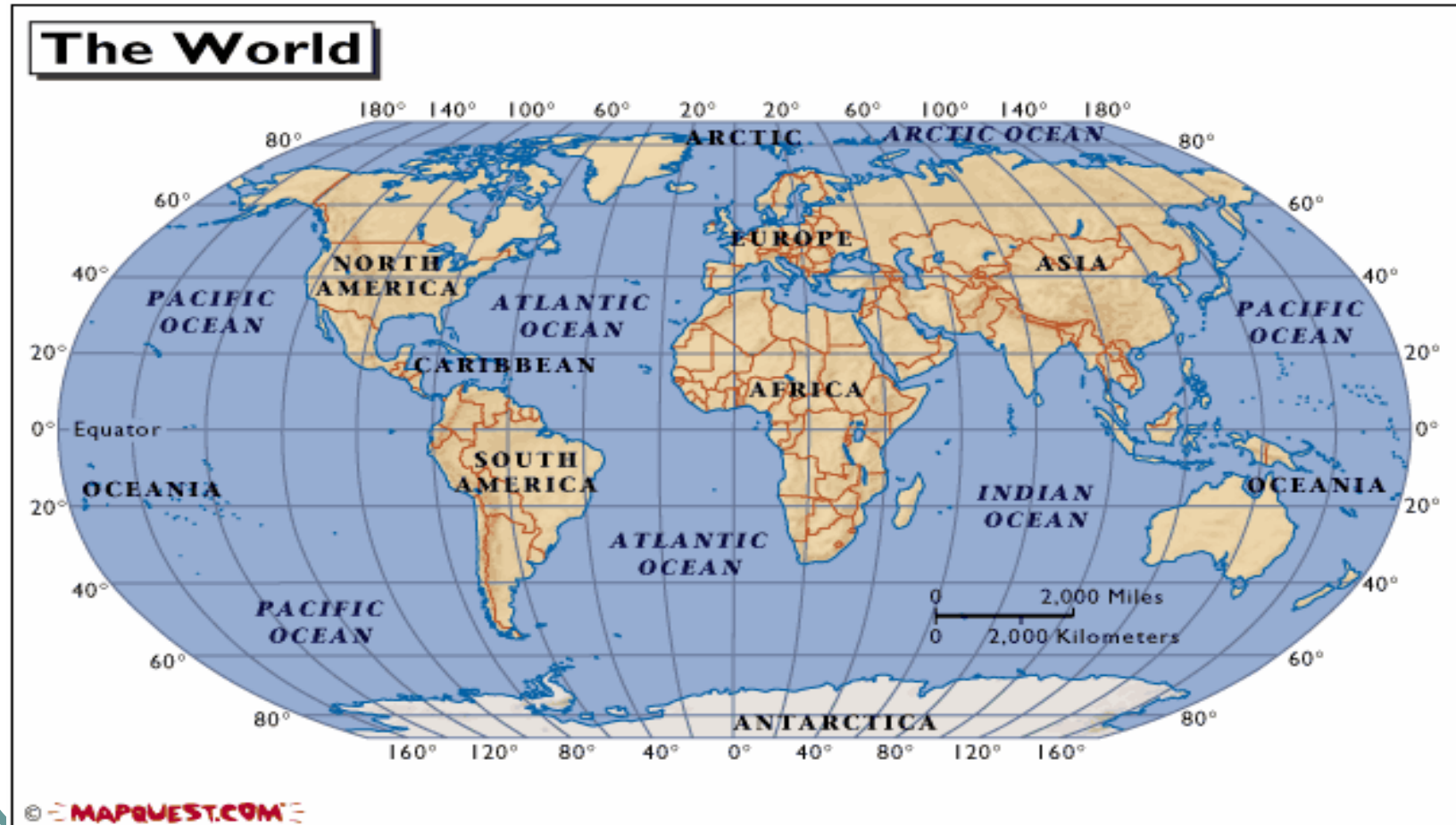
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# DVAS Central



# Where we are – global context



# Where we are – Australian context



# Presentation Format

- Policy Context
- DVAS Central model
- “1 year on” - successes and challenges

# Policy Context

- Justice Focussed
- 'Across government', 'Co-ordinated', 'Integrated
- 2004 Strategic Plan

# What is the DVAS Central model?

- Collaborative approach – Daka-Mulwanda et al. (1995) continuum
- Interagency Approaches
- On site agencies – in 2 areas: legal & support and advocacy
- Legal
  - WA Police – 2 officers
  - Legal Aid Commission – Domestic Violence Legal Unit
- Support & Advocacy
  - Orana House Inc – Advocacy & Support Worker
  - Co-ordinator (0.8), Line Managed by Orana
  - Department for Community Development
  - Yorgum Aboriginal Corporation- Indigenous counsellor/advocate (sessional)
  - Domestic Violence Children’s Counselling Service (sessional)
  - Nardine Outreach – Women’s Groups – (school term)

# Executive Level Structure

- Orana House Management Committee
  - Lead agency
  - Co-ordination of DVAS Central
  - Contract Management and accountability
- DVAS Central Steering Committee
  - Provision of advice, support & guidance in relation to strategic direction & long-term sustainability
- Partnership Group
  - Directs operational matters through an active task oriented approach

# Policies, procedures & practice principles

- Shared principles of intervention
- Same criteria for service delivery
- Agreed policies and procedures
- Same forms and case files



# “1 year on”

- Methodology

- Qualitative

- Interviews or focus groups (n=29) with:

- DVAS Central staff
- On-site service providers
- Partner agencies not providing on site services
- Clients (9)

- E-mail survey (n=55) – open ended questions – social service agencies – response rate 40%

# Data Analysis

- Interviews/focus groups audio-taped, transcribed verbatim
- Transcriptions, electronic survey responses imported into QSR N6
- Constant comparison (Glaser, 1978; Glaser & Strauss, 1967, Lincoln & Guber, 1985).

# Successes

- General benefit of the model
- Benefits of the model for:
  - Clients
  - Staff
  - State

# General Benefits of the model

- Facilitates collaboration

You don't get ...cohesion across services unless people literally work together, because it's that day to day contact that we have with each other and we sit down and jointly case manage a lot of our clients and by doing that we become much more familiar with each other, our responsibilities, what the processes are. (Stakeholder agency)

# Clients

- Direct and Indirect Benefits
- Direct Benefits:
  - Negates need to repeat story

- Having everyone on site means that women don't have to go and tell their story a hundred times, you know, it was all one place and they [staff] just refer it through, [it's a] smooth process for her.

# Clients – Direct Benefits

- Negates need to repeat story
- Enhanced safety
  - Multidimensional concept
    - Physical safety
    - Emotional safety
    - Spatial safety
    - Knowledge as safety

# Enhanced safety

- Physical safety

- The fact that clients can go in and they don't have to run around ... the Perth region to access all the services means that, particularly in the city, I mean a lot of them will be on trains and stuff like that. If they've only got the one location to go to they're not as exposed. So that makes it easier and safer for them.

# Enhanced safety

- Physical safety
- Emotional safety
- Spatial safety
  - Clients not 'giving up'

- [I felt that] because of the co-operation between the [co-located] services I.... just because of that [co-operation] I felt more supported. I didn't get fed up halfway between [accessing services] and just go back [home]. (Client)

# Enhanced safety

- Physical safety
  - Impact of co-location of services
- Emotional safety
- Spatial safety
  - Clients not 'giving up'
- Knowledge as safety
  - access to holistic information & speed of access to client information

- We know that we have to safety plan [a] woman a little bit more [if we know that she is in danger, and], having the agency like that [co-location of services], her safety is a lot more improved because of our [available] information.

# Clients – direct benefits

- Negates need to repeat story
- Enhanced safety
- Consistency in response

I think as a model, you know, it's [DVAS Central model] looking at partnerships between government and non-government sectors, I think ... it's about unity – making a uniform response... make[ing] sure that ... they're [clients] not going to get a different response [from different agencies]


# Clients – direct benefits

- Direct and Indirect Benefits
- Negates need to repeat story
- Enhanced safety
- Consistency in response
- Non threatening face of police

- I think....the biggest thing for the client particularly is coming to a place where they don't feel intimidated. Going to the police station to report something like this [domestic violence] is something they just won't do or they find it very difficult to do and the police at DVAS are very approachable and most people don't realise [that they're police officers]...but they [clients] always say....'Oh, it's so much easier coming here than it is going down to the police station and talking to a man behind a counter in a uniform'.

# Clients – direct benefits

- Direct and Indirect Benefits
- Negates need to repeat story
- Enhanced safety
- Consistency in response
- Non threatening face of police
- Client empowerment



By actually coming to a service where you can get information on a whole range of different things means that you can make a fully informed decision. So knowing the consequences of doing x y and z is going to be this.... and by...getting information in one location means that people don't have to shop around to get the information and then think and try to make sense of it all. They're actually supported to try and make sense of it all and then make a decision.

# Clients – Indirect Benefits

- Hybridisation of skills and knowledge

- I think the beauty of having a service such as this, is that you, it's like a cross fertilisation of skills, expertise and ideas and so on.... So actually you're able to develop a more cohesive and intense response [for clients].

# Clients – Indirect Benefits

- Hybridisation of skills and knowledge
- Access to information regarding individual circumstances


Access to information: that's really important to women and the other workers because the women will come in and go 'the police came to my house last night' and then they won't have a full understanding of what has occurred like 'have the police charged the husband and where is he and what's happening' and all that...and we can go into our systems and say 'yes, that's true, the police have been to your home three times'. So it just speeds everything up for people.... which then enables us to get them restraining orders or to get them priority housing or crisis payments or whatever it is they need.

## Staff - benefits

We learn from each other, from the other agencies that are here, you know.... I know from myself that I've learned a lot more about police and legal information and processes than I knew before I started working here and I'm now able to give better quality information to clients from that side of things than I would have been able to before.

# Benefits - state


- Financial and non financial
- Financial benefits
  - Goodwill of stakeholder agencies



A lot of things that Orana provides to DVAS Central.... in kind support at management level... They [Orana] are responsible for the funding contracts for the service and they do that work for free.... financial administration and funding accountability.

# Benefits - state


- Financial and non financial
- Financial benefits
  - Goodwill of stakeholder agencies
  - Non-duplication of services



All the agencies...let go of their individual ties and try and work as one unit rather than go down their separate paths because it seems foolish to try and reinvent the wheel...removing any duplication of service, do it once, do it right.

# State - benefits


- Financial and non financial
- Financial benefits
  - Goodwill of stakeholder agencies
  - Non-duplication of services
- Non financial benefits
  - Accountability



Most certainly one of the big things about co-located people working together is accountability. You know, you're much more accountable in this kind of environment. Whatever agency you are ... your decisions and actions that you take are like, you know, they're scrutinized by people from other agencies.

# On-going challenges


- Agency level challenges
  - Securing all agencies on-site



Agencies that said they would [be co-located] haven't and that's been a major constraint [on the service] and that's not a criticism of those agencies, they've got major resource issues and it's very difficult for them to stretch even further than they've already stretched...

# On-going challenges


- Agency level challenges
  - Securing all agencies on-site
- Philosophical challenges
  - Maintaining and fostering relationships and partnerships



The essence of DVAS Central is basically, the support it receives from other agencies.... it'll collapse if the partners are not there, it can't work on its own and the whole model is based on collaboration.

# On-going challenges

- Agency level challenges
  - Securing all agencies on-site
- Philosophical challenges
  - Maintaining and fostering relationships and partnerships
- 'Filling the gaps'
  - Access to family law legal advice



You could say that every single family is a family law issue.

If they [clients] need to see a lawyer to get assistance for family law or to be represented in a family law matter we're [current DVAS staff] not qualified to do it

# On-going challenges

- Agency level challenges
  - Securing all agencies on-site
- Philosophical challenges
  - Maintaining and fostering relationships and partnerships
- 'Filling the gaps'
  - Access to family law legal advice
  - Services for Children
  - Multicultural services

# Implications

- Greater understanding of the dimensions of safety
- Importance of fostering and maintaining relationships and partnerships
- Importance of being community based
  - Having non-government domestic violence agency as lead
- Bottom line, however, to work optimally, all agencies need to be on-site

# Thankyou.

- Questions?

