



SURVIVORS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE EMPOWERED THROUGH EMPLOYMENT

The intersection of family violence, unemployment and poverty.

An International Specialised Skills Institute Fellowship.

VICTORIA MEAD

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Awarding Body – International Specialised Skills Institute (ISS Institute)

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- » Nancy Martinez from Chrysalis in Santa Monica
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1. Executive Summary

Family Violence comprises a range of forms of abuse, from physical to emotional and financial, among others. It is based on gender inequality, power and control, adhering to a patriarchal structure, discrimination and marginalisation.

Many people are surprised to learn how prevalent family violence is in our communities:

- » 1 in 3 Australian women have experienced physical violence
- » 1 woman per week is murdered in Australia
- » 90% of Australian women with an intellectual disability have experienced sexual abuse
- » 1 in 4 women and 1 in 7 men have experienced emotional abuse by a current or former partner. (AIHW Website 2018)

I will refrain from using the word Victim in this report as, according to Santos et al. (2010), feminist research believes the word victim assumes women to be passive to the structures of patriarchy.

Family violence often takes many forms and is often more than physical abuse. Behaviour that becomes threatening and controlling can lead to fear and feeling unsafe for oneself and one's children. Being affected by Family Violence may cause health problems, feelings of isolation, long-term unemployment, poverty, disconnection from the family and the community, homelessness, food insecurity, mental health issues, and many other barriers for women and children.

Family violence may include:

- » Emotional abuse e.g. manipulation, isolation, put-downs, mind games
- » Financial abuse e.g. being forced to hand over control of income or assets, coercion to take on debt or sign a contract. Not allowing access to an income
- » Sexual abuse e.g. any unwanted sexual activity
- » Social abuse e.g. being insulted in public
- » Threats of physical violence and/or revenge.
- » Property damage e.g. smashing belongings
- » Harming or threatening to harm pets

According to Crawford et al. (2010), international research has found that family violence is a significant barrier to accessing and sustaining work.

The findings related above may even underestimate the overall impact of family violence, especially regarding the inability of survivors of family violence to obtain secure sustainable employment. There needs to be more consideration for the implementation of strategies for long-term sustainable employment for women, especially those from low economic backgrounds.

Thus there is insufficient Australian research focusing on the link between family violence and its impact on long-term sustainable employment for those who have been subjected to such violence.

In Australia, the Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research reports that around 33 per cent of Australian women aged 15 and over have experienced physical violence during their lives and 19 percent of women over 15 have experienced

sexual violence. According to other research, Indigenous women are 35 times more likely to require hospitalisation due to severe Family Violence. With violence against women costing the Australia Government around \$21.7 billion per year, prevention is the key (A High Price to Pay 2015).

According to Crawford et al. (2010), World Health Organization (WHO) figures reinforce the view that interpersonal violence is extensive. The USA spends \$42 billion per year on immediate services for intimate partner violence (NCADV, 2007), but so far no cost estimate has been made of the almost eight million days of paid work that are lost because of violence. Studies in the USA also show that somewhere between 50–60 per cent of women receiving welfare have experienced physical abuse by an intimate partner compared to 22 percent of the general population (Tolman & Raphael, 2000). The prolonged duration of intimate partner violence for many women underpins the reason why so many women fail to enter the workforce and thus continue to be dependent on government funding for family violence survivors not only suffer from a range of physical and mental health problems, but are more likely to have been unemployed in the past and also tend to have higher levels of job turnover (Lloyd & Taluc, 1999).

The Fellow's current role as an employment case worker involves working with women every day who are impacted by family violence and she witnesses the debilitating effects this has on a woman's overall confidence. For women who are survivors of this cycle of abuse, the idea that they can find work, stay employed and become financially independent is for most beyond belief.

Research by Coulter (2004), indicates that 40 – 60 percent of welfare recipients had experienced family violence, and perpetrators frequently undermine their partner's efforts to find employment, obtain education or acquire employment skills. Women experiencing family violence may seek out welfare support to find independence but they then find it challenging to leave the welfare cycle because of ongoing sabotage by the perpetrator. Furthermore, issues of ongoing abuse may lead to physical and mental health issues among family violence survivors,

including a decline in self-esteem, related to difficulties in finding work and remaining employed.

Therefore, the Fellow asserts that the importance of the research conducted during this Fellowship will assist to re-frame thinking around the impacts of Family Violence and the cycle of unemployment and the post crisis management that is needed in the family violence sector. This Fellowship may eventually lead to research not only benefiting the women currently accessing services but all women generally, and most importantly all the survivors of Family Violence. Overall, it may contribute to breaking the ongoing and generally accepted patriarchal structure and gender inequality that is an accepted part of society today.

2. Abbreviations:

AOD Alcohol & Other Drugs

DV Domestic Violence

DWC Downtown Women's Centre

FV Family Violence

JS Job Seekers

LA Los Angeles

LGBTIQ+ Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex & Questioning

MH Mental Health

SAAP Supported Accommodation Assistance Program

SR Skid Row

UCLA University of California, Los Angeles

3. Fellowship Background

Aim of the Fellowship Program -

'Assist jobseekers facing barriers to employment to secure and sustain employment, thus reducing the risk of their future long-term labour force exclusion'

The aim of the Fellowship was to travel to the United States to see firsthand the best practice promoting the transition from poverty to financial independence and employment for previously unemployed women who have been affected by family violence/domestic violence.

The Fellowship allowed the Fellow to see and learn effective strategies based on research implemented by organisations in the United States that assist women who are unemployed as a result of family violence and caught in a cycle of poverty. These strategies assist women to rehabilitate, build confidence, gain life skills, attain work experience, employment, and education. The cities the Fellow visited in the United States were Los Angeles (California) and New York City (New York).

Family violence (FV) and domestic violence are barriers to women gaining employment and staying in employment, according to Coulter (2004), domestic violence/family violence has a major influence on employment for women whose partners are physically violent and who hinder women from going to work, threaten them if they want to continue with their jobs, violently beat women to stop them working, or harass and stalk women at work to increase the risk of them losing their job.

Government bodies must emphasise and validate the fact that FV is a significant barrier for many women seeking work and education. The current welfare system in Victoria may not recognise the barriers faced by women who are affected by FV (a large percentage are single mothers) in finding work, upskilling and staying in work.

Possible high level responses include: more education for welfare and employment, remove punishment as a way of gaining outcomes as these women are subjected to further difficulties encountering the welfare system. Strategies must be identified that enable welfare workers to work with women affected by Family Violence based on a strengths based framework.

Children from family violence backgrounds may also grow up unable to find or keep work due to a history of trauma. However, these issues are rarely addressed with the current jobseeker model. There is therefore, a large number of unemployed Australians who struggle to find or keep work due to underlying barriers related to past trauma.

4. The Australian Context

Within Australia there is currently little research in regard to women who have been affected by family violence and the cycle of unemployment and poverty. The welfare system has only begun to recognise the significance of family violence but has yet to understand the underlying trauma and the effect this has on women who are unemployed and on Centrelink benefits. Short term crisis intervention is not enough. There needs to be an extended framework of assistance in order to truly make a long term impact.

Homelessness/Family Violence/Unemployment

Domestic/Family violence is also a major contributing factor to homelessness in Australia, particularly for women. It is estimated that in 2003-2004, 33% (32,700) of the 100,200 clients accessing the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) (the major government response to homelessness in Australia) were women escaping domestic/family violence. In 2016-2017 72,000 women, 34,000 children and 9,000 men were potentially homeless due to Family/Domestic Violence. Family violence contributes to a woman experiencing unemployment, and therefore increases the risk of homelessness for a woman and her children. It is also reported that women in the SAAP program who had experienced Family Domestic Violence were least likely to be in employment when compared to other clients seeking SAAP (30 Bulletin Australian Institute of Health & Welfare P 1 & 10 2003 - 2004).

National Council

The plan launched by the National Council to Reduce Violence Against Women 2009-2021 and the government's response, Immediate Government's Actions (2009), both failed to address the importance of the role the workplace and employment have in reducing the impact of family violence. According to Bensoc & Paton (2009) there is strong evidence that being employed and continuing employment is a strong pathway to escaping family violence. Unfortunately this very issue has not been addressed by the National Council plan or the subsequent Government response.

An increase in Philanthropy in Australia would assist the marginalised

According to the Charities Aid Foundation world giving index, Australia ranks sixth in the world in Philanthropy, behind the USA, Myanmar, Canada, Ireland and New Zealand. The index incorporates donations of money, helping strangers and volunteering time. According to the Financial Review (2018) 90 percent of rich give in the US, compared to 60 percent here in Australia. Australia appears to still have the mindset that it's the Governments job to assist the underprivileged.

5. Fellowship Methodology

The Fellowship aimed to identify successful program strategies currently being conducted in the United States (Los Angeles and New York City) to significantly empower disadvantaged women who are affected by the intersection of family violence, poverty and unemployment. The Fellow consulted with eight organisations, including not-for-profit organisations in Los Angeles, the University of California in Los Angeles and one organisation in New York to determine best practice in the United States and to be in a position to disseminate and action these teachings within Victoria.

The Fellow was interested in visiting the United States in 2018 as the current climate of women's empowerment is improving. There is greater awareness of women's abuse thanks to the "Me Too" movement. The Fellow visited and interviewed various women's not for profit organisations across Los Angeles and also visited Skid Row, an area of downtown Los Angeles, where the Fellow identified large numbers of women who were experiencing homelessness and living on the streets.

Meetings were set up prior to traveling to the United States after extensive research was conducted across both California and New York seeking the most effective organisations who work with women affected by family violence and those that are successful in reducing poverty through employment and education and meeting post crisis needs effectively.

Fellowship International Travel Time

The Fellow travelled in the month of August 2018.

Fellow's Biography

The recipient of this Fellowship, Victoria Mead, has always been purposefully driven in the area to assist women who have been affected by family violence and ending the cycle of unemployment and poverty. Family violence, poverty and unemployment always tend to correlate—where we have one we tend to see the others.

Mead's current role as an employment case worker for McAuley Community Services for Women sees her spending each day with women who are struggling to survive and overcome these very issues. Why does family violence, unemployment and poverty intersect? This is a question that has resulted in much research and one that was the driver behind this Fellowship and compelled the Fellow to travel across the globe to the United States of America. Mead wanted to research successful methods and programs being utilised to combat these very issues, with the main aim being to research government and not-for-profit programs in the United States and to identify actionable and workable strategies.

Over the last decade the Fellow's work has focused on the unemployed, predominately clients who are long-term unemployed and generally underprivileged. The Fellow has been a leader in the field of unemployment, assisting the long-term unemployed in gaining skills, education and creating soft skills to build work readiness. Mead is the creator of "The Ultimate program" which has been delivered successfully through Job Services across Melbourne to assist long-term unemployed and the underprivileged to develop soft skills for future employment.

The Fellow's current role assists disadvantaged women affected by family violence barriers to holistically move out of disempowerment. Barriers women face include family violence, poverty, unemployment, homelessness, mental health obstacles and drug and alcohol addictions. Mead's role takes her across the greater Melbourne area, where she works to address these barriers and others including cultural, demographic, and all other forms of oppression.

Victoria holds a Graduate Certificate in Family Violence Work, Diploma of Counselling, Diploma of Business Management. Additionally, she has also completed a Certificate IV in Mental Health and is currently completing a Bachelor of Social science majoring in behavioural studies.

The Fellowship allowed Mead to gain a larger, international scope of experience and knowledge in the areas of family violence and the barriers of unemployment, poverty and women's overall oppression.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths:

- » Government is improving family violence support systems and more funding may be put in place for new programs
- » There is greater awareness across all agencies to reduce family violence, so there is more ability to communicate new ideas around empowerment for women affected by family violence
- » There are International role models of best practice that we can learn from
- » There is more media exposure in regard to family violence and sexual abuse leading to greater public awareness

Weaknesses:

- » Funding for not for profit is cyclical and generally short term

- » Limited research is being conducted on employment as a pathway out of family violence for women
- » There is a lack of public awareness of family violence and what contributes to it
- » There is a lack of corporate giving and lack of public accountability around corporate giving
- » There is a lack of organisational resourcing – it is reactive rather than proactive, and it is difficult to develop new pathways to empower women

Opportunities:

- » Opportunities for corporate giving to increase
- » Opportunities to introduce new ideas to organisations
- » Possibilities for relationships between not-for-profits and the corporate sector to work together to reduce family violence
- » New policies can be created to support employment for women in all sectors
- » Social change on all levels leading to increased awareness of the impacts of family violence
- » Increased International relationships leading to learning

Threats:

- » Research into the impacts on women affected by family violence is reduced
- » Corporate sectors may not choose to prioritise this issue
- » Not for Profit sector becomes overwhelmed with increase in family violence and lack of support on all levels
- » Family violence workers are too overwhelmed to consider or embrace change
- » Lack of synergy between government funding requirements and not-for-profit's operational priorities

6. The International Experience

Visit 1. University of California UCLA

A meeting was conducted with Alexandra Apollini Program and Research Developer from the UCLA Centre for the Study of Women in Los Angeles, California. The Fellow was informed of the current climate of research in regard to women's issues of oppression in the USA today, especially in regard to women who are underprivileged and marginalised. Discussions also occurred around research into the underpinnings and causes of domestic violence and the impact on women experiencing these power imbalances. The #MeToo movement was also discussed which is the intersection of sex and power in the workplace, but it was noted that it was mainly a movement for high profile and privileged women. However, it does bring awareness to the issue of sexual assault and encourages all women to speak out and make perpetrators of sexual abuse accountable.

Another key study currently being conducted at UCLA relates to the increased in racism against women of colour, and the intersection of sexual violence and low socio-economic status. There is a great concern for new immigrant women in particular who are stated as undocumented, and that changes to current policies are a major component to this work.

Women of colour, undocumented, and low socioeconomic status women are the fastest growing group represented in the American prison population. Women from the above backgrounds tend to have low/poor-legal representation and policing in new policies must drive these changes.

Sex trafficking is another important area of research at UCLA. Women and Children are ongoing victims of this form of abuse. The Fellow was directed to review papers, including one by Butler (2015) that stated that racism, class & gender

inequality contribute to the ongoing widespread issue of sex trafficking. The current anti trafficking groups seem to have failed to understand the intersection of racism and women being sex trafficked (Butler, 2015).

The matter of Food Insecurity is also being researched as women affected by family violence are often unable to afford food for themselves or their children. Intimate Partner Violence and Food insecurity intersects and is both a health and social issue.



Fellow Learnings -

The research being conducted at UCLA is vital to driving a change in policies leading to and supporting the empowerment of women. In the US and Australia, similar disadvantages affect women. The more research conducted, the more likely a change in policies will result, leading to changes in legislation and ultimately a positive shift in society and the reduction of violence against women. The current research is important as this gave the Fellow an understanding of current issues affecting women in America and provided a context for effective learning during the Fellowship.

Visit 2. Pepperdine Micro Enterprise Program

Pepperdine's mission is to develop lives for purpose, service and leadership.

The Fellow met with Pepperdine Micro Enterprise Program Director Keith Obilama in the San Fernando Valley in California. The Fellow was informed that the program empowers women, with a particular focus on those affected by family violence. The program supports these women in starting their own business and assists in the utilisation of their skills and talents to step into economic empowerment and away from poverty through entrepreneurship micro enterprise program.



Keith explained that the Program was created in 2010 by Pepperdine Law Professor Janette Kerr after she attended a talk at Pepperdine University in 2007 by the forerunner of micro finance and Nobel Prize winner Muhammad Yunis from

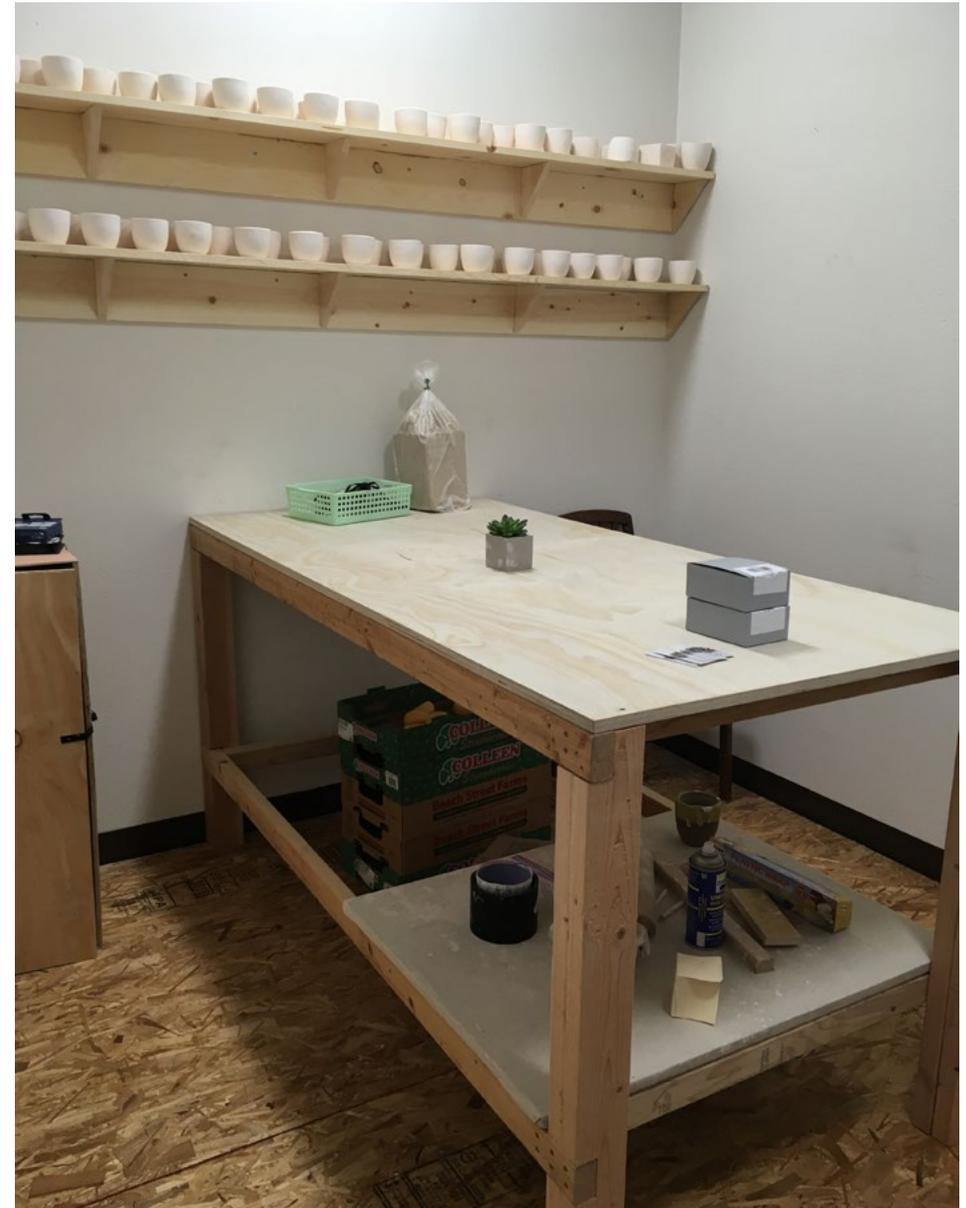
the Grameen Bank in Bangladesh.

Keith and three full-time staff assisted in creating the Pepperdine Micro Program, which has now been running successfully for the past six years. The business incubator which the Fellow was able to visit was impressive (see photos below) and is where participants are supported and mentored in creating their own micro businesses. The incubator consists of various work stations for the various types of businesses, such as a photography lab, a machinery area for creating all types of designs, a craft area, IT for web designs, tools of the trade, printing for cards and flyers and much more.

Pepperdine Micro Program takes twenty participants each semester and around fifteen participants make it through to a start-up business. The participants are called entrepreneurs-in-training and each participant is paired with two Pepperdine University graduate business student mentors. Participants are also supported individually by the staff at Pepperdine Micro Program. Keith stated that the funding is the most difficult area of support when conducting the program. Thus there is an ongoing search for potential businesses and organisations to back start-up business.

Fellow Learning experience from attending Pepperdine Micro Program:

Entrepreneurships/start-ups require ongoing research for suitable funding to be successful and to assist the program to continue. Serviced-based businesses are said to be the most profitable, while social enterprise can assist start-up businesses as a support to build a name and a brand. Entrepreneur programs can increase opportunities for women to become powerful and successful business owners.



Pepperdine Micro Program Incubator



Visit 3. CalWORKs

The Fellow met with Jill Dupont at CalWORKs Gain Program Shelter in Haven Hills, Los Angeles.

The shelter aims to heal, empower and create a sense of health and safety, whether the women attending the shelter are in or out of a relationship with the perpetrator. The Shelter offers a 30-day stay for women affected by Family Violence and during their stay they are offered training designed in recognising the signs and impacts of the lived experience of Family violence and the barriers they will have and will face when leaving family violence. The training/support groups meet at various times throughout the day and cover power and control issues within the context of family violence. The Duluth Model and other information sharing provide a chance for women to talk of their experience of family violence in a supportive environment.

The Fellow also learned of the Greater Avenues of Independence (or “Gain”) program, which is an employment and training program that seeks to help women become self-sufficient, through employment and education. The gain program offers \$100 per week to eligible clients to assist with living expenses, this is on top of the welfare payment. To obtain this extra payment participants are required to attend all training and look for work during their stay in the shelter. Job search assistance is given on a basic level, which includes interview skills, resume writing and job search skills.

Along with providing assistance to find work, CalWORKs also conducts Haven II, an 18-Month transitional housing shelter program. The Haven II Program provides no-cost temporary housing for women and their children to take future steps in designing a future without poverty or violence. This is a longer-term program of 18 months and provides the client with tools to establish a credit rating, budgeting skills, housing support and creating a safety plan.

The program includes:

Above: Business incubator areas

- » Job coaching, training
- » Linked to education programs and various workshops to build skills
- » Support groups such as developing parenting skills, building self-esteem, and understanding the dynamics of domestic violence
- » Family Counselling referrals
- » Children’s programs



Fellow Learnings -

The Fellow gained important learning during the visit to CalWORKs. The organisation is a welfare organisation funded by the government and the shelter works primarily to assist women on welfare and their children who are affected by family violence. CalWORKs is an important model of welfare delivery and women affected by family violence are directly assisted with holistic support whilst they are in the welfare system and are supported to leave family violence and gain work and independence. The focus of building independence and gaining work was a priority within the shelter.

Visit 4. Downtown Women’s Center

The Fellow met with Amanda Loso the Community Engagement officer at Downtown Women’s Center in Downtown Los Angeles, situated within Skid Row. Amanda explained to the Fellow that the center brings hope to many women who find themselves homeless and living on the streets, which unfortunately she said, for many is safer than a life within an abusive violent relationship. Amanda stated that Downtown Women’s Center assists around 4,000 women per year to recover their health and confidence and find assistance with unemployment, partner violence and mental illness.



Services at Downtown Women’s Center:

Trauma Recovery Approach

Trauma-informed care acknowledges the long-term impacts of trauma, and provides psychoeducation relating to trauma to inform clients to recognise symptoms and signs.

DWC Clinic – The DWC clinic assists women who have suffered from domestic abuse, mental illness and all other health conditions including lack of basic health service and offers mammograms and HIV testing. The clinic has over 1,000 visits each year.



Day Centre DWC is open every day of the year and offers women a safe place to go on any day to wash, study, bathe, and eat. Women can have phone and mail access, a change of clothes, a meal, and health care. The centre also provides referrals to housing and other services, legal aid, job training, educational

resources, work placements and other required services. DWC is a safe haven for women to connect with each other in a respectful and supportive environment.

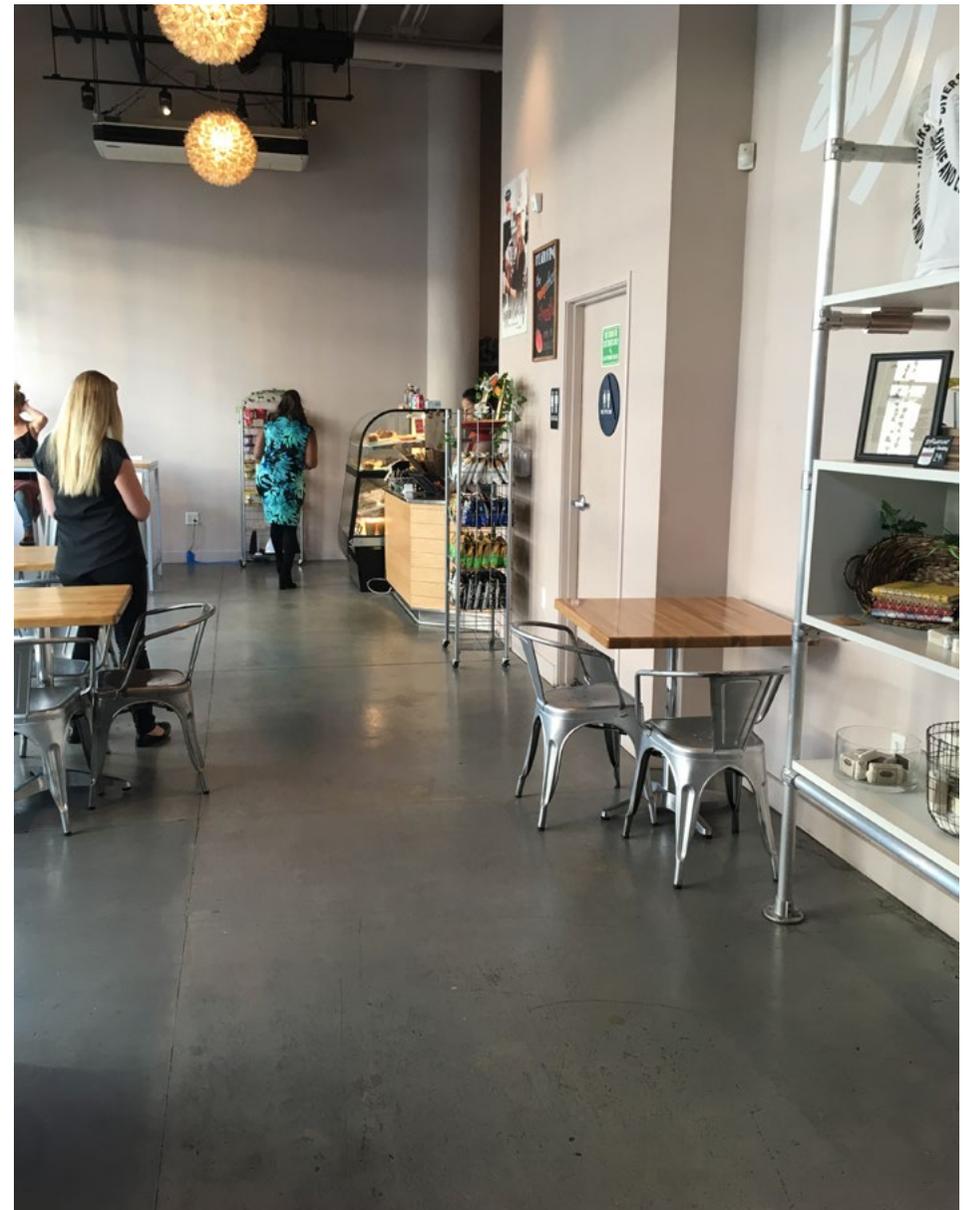
Women's Health Clinic – This is the only health clinic for women in Skid Row and is open each day for women to attend. As 90% of women who attend DWC are survivors of violence, the Trauma Recovery Centre was created in partnership with Peace Over Violence (<https://www.peaceoverviolence.org/about-us/>). The centre offers counselling, psychiatric services and referrals and is available for all women experiencing homelessness living on Skid Row.

The Downtown Women's Center Housing - There are 119 apartments with no set time limits of stay. The units are all self-contained and have their own kitchens and bathrooms and women do pay a low rental fee. There is a common lounge area at for socialising and women can utilise all health care, including counselling.

DWC Social Enterprise - A social enterprise formed by DWC is utilised by women who are accommodated at the Downtown Women's Center. The Social Enterprise assists women to learn new skills and break the cycle of unemployment by gaining work experience. The retail and hospitality enterprise provide on-the-job paid training and transitional employment for women to gain skills and find permanent employment. The social enterprise consists of the retail outlet that sells the products made by the women at DWC and has two storefronts in Downtown LA. The hospitality outlet consists of a café at the front of DWC which services the entire neighbourhood of Downtown Los Angeles. The café trains women in hospitality but only to those who are residents of DWC. "Made by DWC" is a successful enterprise, launched last year (2017). Made by DWC and the Job Readiness Program placed 44 women into jobs, and 90% of those women completed their job term requirements or maintained ongoing employment due to the ongoing support of Downtown Women's Center's workforce development program.

Job Readiness Program - Barriers to employment for women at Downtown Women's Center range from many long-standing issues to a lack of work history





Victoria Mead with Amanda Loso at Downtown Women's Center in Los Angeles / Downtown Women's Center Social Enterprise Café



Founder of Downtown Women's Center outreach case worker Jill Halverson (right) with Homeless women Rosa / Downtown Women's Centre Social enterprise Made by DWC retail products

or experience. DWC learning centre provides job readiness preparation, computer skills, literacy and math classes and counselling in vocational and academic areas. The program is a 12-week program, and they have specialised employment case managers to support women in the job readiness program. DWC also has a Set to Work program a volunteer program run by volunteers that assists women to create new skills including sewing, candle making and other creative outlets, building women's confidence.

The skills enrichment training offers homeless women pathways to gain employment skills in readiness for employment within the LA workforce. DWC also develops relationships with local business in order to assist women to gain work locally.

38 Women have been placed into work by Downtown Women's Center between January and August 2018.

LA RISE Program - LA Rise Program also assists DWC in placing women into employment once they are job ready. LA: RISE is a collaborative partnership between the City and the County of Los Angeles Workforce Development System and works with not for profit enterprises to help men and women who have been homeless or incarcerated and have faced immense barriers to gaining work and staying employed.

How does LA: RISE work? For example, after a woman at DWC has worked at the retail outlet in the DWC enterprise, LA: RISE then places the candidate into a private sector job in the City of LA or in a Vocational Training program, where they work for 1 year and the retention partner will provide support should any barriers arise during the one year placement.

Fellow learnings –

During the visit to Downtown Women's Center the fellow observed that the Downtown Women's Center was effective in the delivery of services to women living both within the accommodation and on the streets. However, the Fellow



Social Enterprise Café at Downtown Women's Center

observed that the service seems to be overwhelmed due to the volume of women attending the service and many of the clients may miss out on gaining the support needed. Programs and approaches put in place are sufficient but the client's ability to access these services may be insufficient. The support for funding is evident as corporate groups continue to support the organisation and conduct voluntary work within the kitchen for the homeless and underprivileged. The Fellow was impressed with the Social Enterprise programs and the Job Readiness programs as pathways for women to develop new skills and employment.

Visit 5. Chrysalis

The Fellow met with Nancy Martinez the Community Engagement Officer for Chrysalis in Santa Monica. Chrysalis is a voluntary Job Agency which has on average around 500 clients who voluntarily attend the office each day. Approximately 75

percent of the jobseekers who attend the service are homeless and many are women affected by family violence. The agency model requires the attendees to have had their personal barriers addressed with other agencies so as to enable a smooth work placement. The success of the model is evidenced by the 430 job seekers that gained employment in 2017. Referrals to the service include many from family violence shelters. Chrysalis assists women in shelters to gain work and all staff are trained in domestic violence management to enable them to assist women personally with any implications which may arise.

Core Curriculum - Chrysalis have very effective program models and conduct job-readiness programs that include a series of one-on-one appointments to help prepare and give individualised service to their clients for support in gaining employment. The core curriculum has been well developed in the last 30 years of service and is designed to improve a client's job search skills, self-confidence, and employability.

Workshops and services include: Job Preparation Classes, resume preparation, practice Interviews, online job applications, computer and internet training and access and customer service training. Other service models include counselling for mental health issues, and legal and financial counselling. Chrysalis also supply clients with a work wardrobe, transportation assistance and applications for scholarship funds. Volunteers play a large role also in the success of Chrysalis as volunteers conduct training in grooming, personal and job coaching and fitting clients with clothing for work. Each office has a small clothing shop with donated clothes appropriate for interviews and work.

Chrysalis Women's Empowerment program – This program model is very successful and gives women skills in self-esteem, self-efficacy, inner personal development, and assists women with social inclusion.

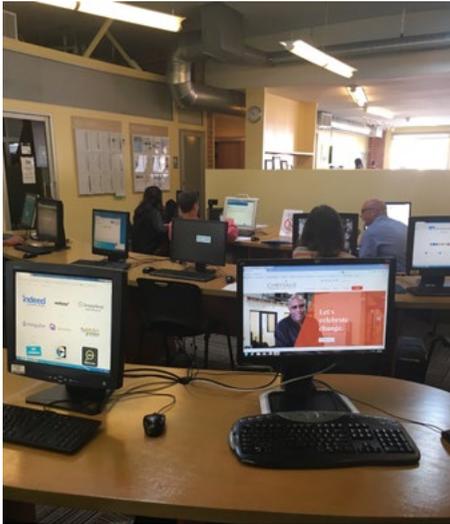
Funding - Chrysalis receives little government funding but relies heavily on corporate and celebrity philanthropy. Chrysalis has over 1,000 corporate organisations and individuals who donate to the organisation.

Chrysalis is also endorsed by various celebrity philanthropists and Chrysalis holds a Charity Ball each year to raise funds. It has raised \$15 million in funds since 2002.

Employment - Employment specialists see clients at least every 30 mins. They will refer clients to seek counselling, attend courses and training with volunteers and will refer job ready clients to various organisations seeking staff. These organisations include direct hire and transitional programs. Once the jobseeker has gained an interview they will be fitted out with interview clothes and are ready to go, thanks to the previous training in interviews techniques and grooming, among other things. Wage subsidies are not part of the job seeker programs at Chrysalis. According to Nancy the main motivating factor that assists people gaining work is offering opportunities and believing in the client's ability to achieve their goals.

Victoria Mead with Nancy Martinez at Chrysalis in Santa Monica





Job search stations inside Chrysalis

Chrysalis Social Enterprise (Transitional Jobs Program) Direct Hire

– This is owned by Chrysalis and connects organisations to the jobseekers for temporary work, assisting them in gaining current resume experience and referees (temp work can be in any area, health, food services, admin etc).

Maintenance Street and Highway

– Is a contract that Chrysalis have with various councils where they supply the roadworks company with their jobseekers. It is transitional employment, but if the Jobseeker shows initiative they may be hired permanently.

Training - Training requirements for jobseekers are funded by Chrysalis.

The Fellow's Learning – During the Fellow's visit to Chrysalis the Fellow was impressed with the delivery model implemented by Chrysalis for jobseekers. The Women's empowerment program was of special interest to the Fellow and the Fellow observed the program as being of the utmost importance especially for women who have left Family Violence and who need to rebuild their self-confidence and develop skills to assist with finding employment. The Direct Hire program is effective in assisting Women to gain skills with an organisation on a temporary basis and assist with future employment. Overall the service is very effective, especially as all clients attend voluntarily, and the Fellow observed that many of the other services visited by the Fellow in Los Angeles spoke highly of Chrysalis as an effective agency for the unemployed and underprivileged.

Visit 6. Homeboy/Homegirl Industries

The Fellow met with Homeboy/Homegirl Industries located in Downtown Los Angeles.

Homeboy/Girl Industries accomplish excellent outcomes with many young women who have escaped family violence and who have found themselves involved with street gangs in Los Angeles.

Homeboy/Homegirl Industries has become one of the most successful gang intervention and rehabilitation programs in America. During the visit to Homeboy/Girl Industries the Fellow was met by a participant of the organisation who explained that all participants of the organisation are previous gang members who welcome rehabilitation, and many of the members who do rehabilitate go on to become very successful in their work and personal lives.

“Homeboy Industries has been the tipping point to change the metaphors around gangs and how we deal with them in Los Angeles County. This organization has engaged the imagination of 120,000 gang members and helped them to envision an exit ramp off the “freeway” of violence, addiction and incarceration. And the country has taken notice. We have helped more than 40 other organizations replicate elements of our service delivery model, broadening further the understanding that community trumps gang -- every time.” - Father Greg

The Fellow learned that each year over 10,000 gang members are assisted and aided through programs to leave behind the cycle of violence, drugs and incarceration and the possibility of recidivism. Homeboy/Girl Industries welcomes gang members and assists the participants in finding new pathways to a functional way of life, mainly through education and employment.

Homeboy/Homegirl Industries offers tattoo removal, as many of the gang tattoos are on the participants face which makes it difficult to gain work. Also available are anger management, parenting classes, counselling, therapeutic dance, domestic violence intervention classes, substance abuse support, legal assistance and potential employment through social enterprises. Furthermore, participants are encouraged to train and educate themselves. Each participant is drug tested each time they attend the Homeboy/Girl centre and if they use illicit drugs they are asked to not return until they are clean.

All participants attend by choice and attendance is not mandatory. The staff are trauma informed and assisted to repair early dysfunctional relationship attachment and to assist the rebuilding of health relationships.

Father Greg says that it's jobs that 80% of these people need to help them break their negative cycle, and for the other 20% it is therapy and support services.

Employment - Homeboy/Homegirl Industries assists all previous gang members to find work and to become educated. Within the centre they have employment counsellors, and specific areas for job search and study. Employment counsellors are important in the recovery of previous gang members as they are the bridge between the client, the employer and the community. The employment counsellors encourage employers to hire homeboy/girl candidates as they are mostly keen to work and will be an asset to an employer's business.

Programs offered for all participants

- » Job-Seeker Workshops: Creating resumes, job search assistance, interview skills, computer skills, business and communication.
- » Job Placement Services: Marketing of candidates to suitable outside employers and businesses to find jobs for candidates.

- » Industrial Safety Training: DOT, Confined Space Training, OSHA, HAZWOPER, Culinary Training, Program and ServSafe® Food Handler Certifications

Social Enterprises

Homeboy/Girl Industries has really taken advantage of social enterprises as a pathway for participants to gain experience for future employment and education. Homeboy/Girl Social Enterprises consist of a bakery, clothing retail, online outlets, café, electronics, farmer markets, grocery, embroidery, silk screening and more. Each is open to all genders.



Victoria Mead with xgang member and tour officer at Homeboy/Homegirl Industries Los Angeles

Homegirl cafe

The Fellow also visited Homegirl café and was impressed with the overall business enterprise. Participants start their working life in this café and the environment is supportive. The candidates are certificate trained in all facets of hospitality for an 18-month program. During their training they continue to meet with case workers and attend ongoing programs to address barriers (AOD, DV, MH). Many female participants have found this social enterprise to be highly conducive to gaining skills and moving into empowerment through employment, financial independence and away from violence.

Homegirl Catering

Homegirl catering is a women only business program which caters for large and small events, and as with all other Homegirl enterprises it helps previously incarcerated women ease into being members of the community. 100% of all proceeds benefit participants recovery and transformation.

The Fellow's Learning – The Fellow experience in attending Homeboy/Homegirl Industries was very positive. The organisation is making a positive impact in relation to reducing gang violence and violence against women on the streets of Los Angeles. The programs are effective in assisting participants to address barriers and the main focus is on education and employment. The Social Enterprises are very successful, and the Fellow observed the Café and the Retail outlet as being highly profitable which assists the participants in learning all aspects of effective hospitality and retail services and being part of a dynamic business. Homeboy/Homegirl industries is currently being modelled across the world to assist gang members who live on the streets and thus reduce crime and save lives.

Visit 7. FreeFrom

The Fellow met with Tannia Ventura Director of Partnerships and Education from FreeFrom which is based in Los Angeles.

FreeFrom Entrepreneur program invites women affected by family violence into the program to educate them in all aspects of entrepreneurship. Underpinning FreeFrom's work with women, is a perspective of violence prevention rather than crisis intervention as the major key to breaking the cycle of violence in the United States, and for women to move towards empowerment. Becoming a business owner facilitates this process.

FreeFrom was founded in 2017 by CEO Sonya Passi. Sonya believed women who are affected by Family Violence needed a chance to start their own business in order to assist in escaping family violence and ending the cycle. Completing the entrepreneur program gives a woman the capacity to become financially

independent and escape poverty, as poverty is one of the main drivers that returns women to the perpetrator and continues the cycle of violence. FreeFrom believes the benefits of being an entrepreneur and owning a business give the opportunity for a woman to be anonymous, as a business can be conducted under a business name only. Owning a business also eases the cost of childcare and being a single parent family.

The Fellow's research noted that undocumented migrant women in the United States are a concern for social and welfare services dealing with family violence. Undocumented migrant women who are affected by family violence are at high risk of incarceration, homelessness and losing their lives to the perpetrator. Undocumented women however, may be able to stay in the United States if they have their own business. This is again an area where FreeFrom is doing effective work.

FreeFrom Entrepreneurship Program - The Entrepreneur Program assist survivors of family violence to build their own business from the base idea to full fruition. Clients applying for the Entrepreneur program are referred to FreeFrom through shelters or FreeFrom website, media or other services. Support is as follows: business planning, marketing, Social Media, Web design, leadership, customer acquisition. FreeFrom assists the client with seed funding which an investor provides to assist with the start-up of the business until that time that the business begins to gain capital then the investor sells back their part of the business.

Since 2017 FreeFrom's entrepreneur program has launched 24 businesses. All have made a profit and no participants have returned to abuse. 89% are single mothers. FreeFrom has made a big impact in the United States since 2017 and has been featured on CNN and in Marie Claire, Forbes, The Guardian and many more.

Types of business started through FreeFrom include cleaning, online retail stores, housekeeping, Food Services, Farmers markets stalls, and handmade goods.

The Fellow was also advised that along with the Entrepreneur program, FreeFrom has a new Compensation Program which encourages the perpetrator to be accountable for their actions. The Compensation program aims to give women affected by family violence a pathway to claim financial compensation for the abuse they experienced. The Compensation program also assists many other areas of financial abuse a woman may have experienced within Family Violence. These compensation programs help reduce poverty for women and reduce the burden of the welfare system.

The new Compensation Program helps survivors with legal and court assistance and access to victim of crime funding and provides all other resources to assist the survivor to win compensation against Family Violence. Since 2017, 70,000 women have claimed compensation through this program.

The Credit Program will help survivors to repair their credit ratings and build a stable financial profile. In addition, it will assist in providing a pathway to lending bodies for loans and credit and help restore financial rating after identity fraud.

FreeFrom also has a successful online Social Enterprise: Gifted is FreeFrom's online social enterprise where goods made by survivors of Family Violence can be purchased.

FreeFrom will conduct training in the future for workers working within the Women's shelters to encourage clients to think about entrepreneurship and the benefits of business ownership as a way to break the cycle of Family Violence.

Fellow Learning – The Fellow found FreeFrom to be a progressive and effective organisation which aims to end violence against women and to empower women with effective tools to walk away from Family Violence. The Fellow found the entrepreneur program to be effective due to the educating of women in all facets of owning a business and building the business into a success.

Again, the Fellow was impressed by the funding program for the entrepreneurship



The image shows a screenshot of a news article from The Guardian. The article title is "Women-led startup turns domestic abuse survivors into entrepreneurs". The sub-headline reads: "Financial insecurity keeps women trapped in violent relationships. FreeFrom, a California not-for-profit, wants to break the cycle". The article is categorized under "news | opinion | sport | arts | lifestyle". A "become a supporter" button is visible in the top left corner. Below the article title, there is a photograph of a woman in a dark suit sitting at a desk, typing on a laptop. The caption below the photo states: "FreeFrom is currently working with 30 female entrepreneurs in Los Angeles, San Francisco and Oakland. Photograph: Mike Ngo Photography/wwwintechchat.com".

and the role investor philanthropy contributes to the success of the program. For women – especially single mothers who have fled family violence – to have the benefit of an entrepreneurship program such as this, that supports a women to create a profitable business is an effective tool to change lives and reduce family violence.

Visit 8. Children's Aid Society

The Fellow met with Nazy Kaffashan and the team at The Children's Aid Society in Midtown New York City. The Fellow also attended a team meeting with the staff and then presented the McAuley Works program in Australia. Staff members of Children's Aid Society asked many questions about what we do in Australia at McAuley Works and how we work to reduce the impact of family violence as post crisis management. The Fellow's interest in the Children's Aid Society was in relation to the Family Wellness Program which commenced in 2001 and assists and supports family members affected by family violence. Children's Aid Society is a large organisation with over 2000 staff in New York and over 100 ongoing programs being conducted. The office visited had high levels of security but was very family friendly with a large children's play area and relaxed waiting area for families to use while waiting for assistance. Funding for Children's Aid comes from the government, corporate giving, and private organisations.

Family Violence Work/Family Wellness Program: Children's Aid Family Wellness Program is a free service for families affected by family violence. Participants of the services are mostly referred from shelters and are usually on the welfare system. The program works to create long term safety and heal the effects of trauma on the whole family. Nazy also explained that the organisation has services for perpetrators to educate themselves around accountability for perpetrating family violence.

The Children's Aid Society aims to reduce the impacts of generational trauma, including psychological, physical and other forms of abuse that infiltrates family systems. Their education programs have long term positive effects on families in the future. Families who attend the Family Wellness program are not necessarily required to be separated for the program to be effective, as the goal is to free the family from abuse whether they choose to remain together or not.

The Family Wellness Program supports all members of the family, including children and teenagers, and includes training on dating abuse for teenagers. Crisis

assistance is also included with safety planning, shelter, food and clothing, court protection orders and claims for victims of abuse.

Unfortunately, there are also concerns in New York City for the safety of undocumented women. Children's Aid are also working with the New York Police Department (NYPD) to assist with ongoing education in regard to family violence.

Children's Aid Society services to family members include: assessment to identify risks, short-term crisis intervention, individual and family trauma-informed therapy and counselling, group education/counselling, therapeutic visitation services, economic empowerment education, access to victim assistance service, advocating within the legal, child welfare, housing, and public benefits systems and referral to other required services. For women affected by family violence all the areas listed above must be addressed in order to empower women to be able to gain employment and to move into financial independence.

Nazy explained that the organisation aims to empower all participants through education, by attending support groups, education on power and control issues, the cycle of abuse, equality in relationships, safety planning and understanding warning signs of abuse. There is also psychoeducation in regard to trauma and the effects on the brain (especially the pre-frontal cortex), shame around family violence (including shaming children), attachment theory, art therapy and mindfulness programs.

Employment for Survivors within The Family Wellness Program – A new program called the **Economic Empowerment Program** employs Economic Empowerment Services Workers who assist clients with: education, employment, money management, skills building, and financial abuse management. The program is very effective, and the organisation is seeking to expand this program in the future.

Nazy explained that while nearly fifty percent of women who are survivors of family violence are working, they experience ongoing financial abuse due to perpetrators



Front entrance of Children's Aid Society, Midtown New York / Victoria Mead with Nazy Kaffashan at Children's Aid Society in New York

controlling all financial aspects of the relationship. Due to this, financial abuse education is a priority within the program. The Economic Empowerment Service Workers also assist women with resumes, interview skills, job search skills and holistically support women in many areas so that they gain employment or improve their current employment status and increase education prospects.

The Fellow's learning –

The Fellow's experience in attending the Children's Aid Society in New York was positive. The fellow believes the organisation to be very effective in their work against family violence in re-educating to break patterns of historical family violence.

The Economic Empowerment program is a very effective program and has similarities to the McAuley Works program in Australia. However, the Children's Aid

Society Economic Empowerment Program has the support of the psychoeducation program, which is an important aspect of assistance in addressing issues women experience when leaving Family Violence. It would benefit our program in Australia to implement a similar program alongside those of McAuley Works and support us to better assist women to move into employment and education easier as key barriers would be more likely to be addressed.

7. Personal, Professional and Sectorial Impact

The Fellow will share Fellowship learnings to various community and family violence organisations to teach the value of employment as an important component and pathway for women leaving family violence and poverty. The Fellow will also aim to create an entrepreneurship portal for women affected by family violence as a way to independence and financial empowerment.

Personal Impact

The Fellow has gained important knowledge around the impact of entrepreneurs in assisting women to leave family violence and become independent and empowered. The education around family violence in the United States has also impressed the Fellow as this creates a greater awareness and ensures women are informed and make empowered choices for their future and of their children. The organisations in the United States addressing Family Violence through a Holistic model have inspired the Fellow and created a focus for the Fellow to pursue innovative avenues of recovery for family violence survivors in Australia.

Professional Impact

The Fellowship has increased the scope of information available to the Fellow and provided her with first hand access to models of working that are innovative and impactful. The fellow is excited about the opportunity to share these learnings across organisations and more broadly.

Sectorial Impact

The Fellow's learning has increased the overall knowledge regarding the Fellow's current work in family violence. The Fellow will also be able to share learnings with her current organisation of work as well as industry partners. The Fellow will continue to seek opportunities to share her Fellowship learnings and in particular to develop the entrepreneurship model of a "go to portal website" to eventually share throughout and beyond the sector, to encourage women affected by family violence to create their own start-up businesses and empower themselves financially.

8. Recommendations and Considerations

Upon reflection after travelling to the United States I believe we have an effective system in Australia which will be further enhanced after the Royal Commission into Family Violence. There is nevertheless room for improvement.

Recommendations include:

1. Psychoeducation Programs for Women affected by Family Violence

Improved educational awareness for women affected by family violence and the important role that employment and education play in reducing this. Psychoeducation needs to be offered to all women (and men) to understand the factors and drivers of family violence. The programs can be offered within all sectors and as 1 in 3 women experience some form of family violence/abuse so this education could be rolled out across all sectors of the community including religious and corporate sectors.

2. Philanthropy for funding

Philanthropy in the United States drives much of the funding of very effective programs. Many people in the United States will not buy from an organisation unless it is giving a percentage of its profits to the underprivileged. Currently in Australia its believed that the government is responsible for the underprivileged and the public is not educated in regard to philanthropy. Philanthropy in Australia is low compared to the United States, and so an increase in corporate bodies donating a percentage of profits to the underprivileged would be of benefit in Australia to assist the underprivileged.

3. Open Door System to reduce shame of Family Violence experience

An open door system would work well for women who are experiencing family violence on any level and who feel shame in stating that this is what is happening in their lives. A taskforce of workers could be at different locations each week perhaps community centres, libraries, cafés etc. Women could be provided with information on what to do and where to go for assistance with regard to all areas of family violence. This could be funded by the government to help reduce the impact on the system overall.

4. Social enterprise to increase funding

Upon witnessing the successful impact Social Enterprise has on the women escaping Family Violence, organisations in Victoria could work to integrate social enterprise into their business. These would enhance skills for women, especially if they present with a lack of work skills.

Community organisations running a social enterprise would help enable women to gain valuable work skills and increase opportunity for future work or business ownership.

5. Corporate sector Involvement for work experience

Corporate sector involvement in supporting work experience would create an overall increase in funding to support those that need this and eventually reduce welfare debt, among other things. The corporate sector could offer paid work experience for clients who have little or no work experience. This experience could include workplace culture experience, time management, and skill development, allowing the participant to ultimately move on to permanent employment. Chrysalis

and many other organisations in the United States utilise this service for their participants with exceptional outcomes.

6. Create Compensation program for financial assistance

A compensation program for survivors of family violence to assist in gaining financial compensation from the perpetrator to reduce women and children walking away and into poverty. This would help reduce the pressure on welfare and community service organisations and would assist in reducing perpetrator abuse.

7. Entrepreneurship Portal for women to start micro businesses

The Fellow intends to create a “Go To Entrepreneur/Start Up Business Portal” for women who have experienced family violence and who are wanting to start a business as a way to escape family violence/unemployment and poverty, and not go back. The portal will consist of all relevant information in beginning a business start-up and entrepreneurship in Melbourne.

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