

From our CEO



Responding to the Royal Commission

The Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence (RCFV) heralded a new era of support for the family violence sector and will boost our capacity to better assist women and children in need.

It's been a busy time for EDVOS as our referrals continue to grow. Many RCFV recommendations have direct links to our work in the specialist family violence sector and as a result, will provide exciting opportunities for future service reform and enhancement.

At EDVOS, we continually review and refine our service profile to better meet the needs of our diverse community. Developing new partnerships and co-locations is a priority for us and will help deliver better integrated client support. We are working on many initiatives that mirror the RCFV's call, with their recommendations providing strong endorsement for our work.

Elder abuse awareness

To coincide with World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, we participated in a joint operation with Victoria Police (read more below). I was also pleased to join a panel discussion with our Program Manager, Intake and Referral, Gina Kennard and other stakeholders as part of the recent Elder Abuse Forum. Organised by the Victoria Police Family Violence Unit in Croydon, the forum joined over 100 professionals from around 30 organisations in the region for a robust discussion about better defining our response to elder abuse. Gina also contributed to a detailed case study presented to the forum.

RAMP Co-ordinators commence

Our two Risk Assessment Management Panel (RAMP) Co-ordinators have officially commenced for the inner and outer east. The first RAMP meetings have been held for both regions and future meetings will be held monthly.

RAMPs are a group of local organisations who share information and take action to support women and children at high risk of serious injury or death from family violence. Women who are referred to a RAMP require an immediate risk assessment and an action plan to lessen or prevent the threat to their (and their children's) life, health, safety and welfare. RAMPs work to enhance the existing system's response to this high risk group.

For information on RAMP referrals for both the inner and outer east, please call **EDVOS** on **9259 4200**.



Interested in volunteering?

Volunteers significantly boost the capacity of EDVOS to deliver much-needed services, so if you or someone you know has time to spare, why not consider volunteering? Please email us at edvos@edvos.org.au or call **03 9259 4200** for more information.

Accreditation – a resounding success!

I'm proud to announce that EDVOS recently underwent a full accreditation process, meeting all required expectations with overwhelmingly positive feedback. Over four days, three Quality Innovation Performance (QIP) reviewers assessed us against the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) service standards and the Quality Improvement Council (QIC) Health and Community Service standards. As EDVOS has met all of these, the assessors have recommended to QIP that full accreditation be awarded.

The reviewers were particularly impressed with our approach to the strategic planning process including stakeholder, client and community consultation. They also praised our relationships and partnerships with other organisations like Boorndawan Aboriginal Healing Service, Victoria Police, the Regional Family Violence Partnership and local government. Our program manuals and the development of our Diversity Plan (focusing EDVOS on being more responsive to the needs of younger women, women with disabilities, ATSI women and children, CALD and LGBTI women) were also commended.

This is a proud result for EDVOS and acknowledges the strong evidence of improved service access. Our next mid-cycle review is in 18 months, with another full review in three years.

Jenny

Jenny Jackson
EDVOS CEO

Our Vision

A community free from family violence, where everyone feels safe.



Working together for what we believe

Improving ATSI family violence support

Support for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) women affected by family violence in Melbourne's east is set to strengthen, as EDVOS celebrates a renewed partnership with Boorndawan Willam Aboriginal Healing Service (BWAHS), the region's only specialist Aboriginal family violence service.

"As we approach National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observation Committee (NAIDOC) week 2016, both our organisations share a renewed and timely vision to enhance integrated, regional support for ATSI women experiencing family violence," said Jenny Jackson, EDVOS CEO.

"EDVOS will work with BWAHS to close the gap by offering a number of services not currently available within their organisation. This includes access to flexible family violence support packages, along with an integrated suite of services such as housing, counselling and legal support."



Many Aboriginal families who seek support from BWAHS are in a family violence crisis situation and require urgent assistance. After a comprehensive risk assessment, some women may elect not to use an Aboriginal-specific service, at which point BWAHS will work with EDVOS to access services that provide the best support.

"Women need to feel safe and choice plays a big part. ATSI communities are closely connected and some women may prefer not to use our service. In these cases, EDVOS has expert capacity and can provide access to a specialist family violence service." said Rose Solomon, BWAHS Manager.

Strengthening legal support for women

EDVOS and Victoria Legal Aid (VLA) have formally partnered to increase access to specialist legal services for women in Melbourne’s east who are responding to family violence. From July, a VLA family lawyer will be located at EDVOS to work closely with their specialist family violence case workers.

“Together, our co-location arrangements will help us provide eligible clients with more convenient and seamless access to expert legal advice and case work services, all delivered at EDVOS. Clients will still be required to complete the VLA intake process, but they now have the convenience of onsite legal support at EDVOS where they can see family violence advocates and a family lawyer at the same time and location,” said EDVOS CEO, Jenny Jackson.

“Initially our partner VLA family lawyer will be onsite once a fortnight, however in time we hope to increase their capacity to cater for ongoing demand.”

Tony Daquino, Managing Lawyer at Victoria Legal Aid in Ringwood, is proud to see this partnership develop: “In addition to assisting EDVOS clients, our lawyer will collaborate with EDVOS staff to provide advice, guidance and education through secondary consultations and professional development sessions.”

“This is a valuable opportunity to build the capacity of both staff groups through the sharing of professional knowledge and expertise.”

This partnership is a timely response to the recent Victorian RCFV recommendations. EDVOS is pleased to answer the RCFV’s call for stronger sector partnerships that deliver a more unified, co-ordinated and single area-based service.



EDVOS CEO Jenny Jackson and Managing Lawyer, VLA Ringwood, Tony D'Aquino



Operation Elder: EDVOS and Victoria Police

World Elder Abuse Awareness Day was held on June 15 to raise awareness about the concerning prevalence of elder abuse and how to challenge it. To coincide with this, EDVOS participated in Operation Elder, a Victoria Police initiative held in Melbourne’s outer east.

Together with the Victoria Police Croydon Family Violence Unit, EDVOS advocates visited dozens of older locals in their homes. Aged 60 years and above, each had experienced family violence that had subsequently been reported to police. EDVOS worked with them individually to provide a risk assessment and develop a safety plan.

“In the majority of cases the abuser is someone close, often an adult son or daughter, partner or a person they know well and rely heavily upon. Unfortunately, elder abuse is on the rise as the population ages and a unified, specialist response is needed,” said Jenny Jackson, EDVOS CEO.

“The organisation’s participation in Operation Elder builds on the valuable work we already do to support elderly clients who are often vulnerable to family violence in addition to further strengthen our relationship with Victoria Police.”




Click Here to renew your EDVOS membership today.



Follow us on facebook for news, service updates and ways to be involved.



AGM Save the Date
Date: Thursday 27th October
Time: 5pm
Venue: EDVOS, Ringwood

Pets in Peril

EDVOS is streamlining its Pets in Peril program to improve animal/pet safety in family violence situations. Evidence clearly indicates that perpetrators of family violence often threaten or harm family pets as a way of exerting power and control over family members.

“In many cases, women remain in abusive relationships because they are concerned for pet safety or don’t know how to find alternative care for their pets,” said Jenny Jackson, EDVOS CEO.

Pets in Peril sees EDVOS partnering with various animal shelters and vets to provide temporary shelter for affected animals.

“Developed by EDVOS founder Judy Johnson over a decade ago, it is vital we continue to increase the capacity of this service to respond and effectively support women facing this barrier.

“Pets in Peril is currently an unfunded program, however the organisation continues to support this critical, much-needed service. Donations can be made to this or any other EDVOS programs.”



-  The Board of Management acknowledges the Elders, past and present, of the Wurundjeri tribe of the Kulin Nation who are the traditional spiritual carers, original inhabitants and custodians of the land upon which we operate.
-  We humbly respect the many women and children who have been responding and continue to respond to the multiplicity of gendered acts of violence in their lives.
-  EDVOS is a child safe, child-focused organisation.
-  EDVOS acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government. 

