Legal and broader needs of people experiencing Domestic and Family Violence

The first quantitative assessment based on population data shows that DFV is linked to a broad range of legal problems. Legal Australia-Wide (LAW) Survey respondents who had experienced DFV (‘DFV respondents’) had increased prevalence of a myriad of family, civil and criminal law problems with more severe adverse impacts on their health, financial and housing circumstances. The study reinforces the need for accessible, wrap-around and joined-up legal and human services for people experiencing DFV.

DFV respondents were more disadvantaged

- 37% single parents
- 46% <35 years old
- 26% unemployed in last year
- 14% homeless in last year
- 40% with a disability

DFV respondents faced more adverse life impacts

- 65% had a stress-related illness
- 35% had to move home
- 61% had a relationship breakdown

compared to other respondents’ legal problems:

- 19% had a stress-related illness
- 5% had to move home
- 9% had a relationship breakdown

DFV respondents had more legal problems

DFV respondents had 20 legal problems on average in 1 year

including 4 DFV incidents and much higher rates of family, civil and other crime problems

other respondents had 2 legal problems on average

DFV respondents' legal problems were more severe

reported at least 1 severe legal problem

- 81% DFV respondents
- 23% other respondents

DFV respondents sought professional advice more often

- 19% sought advice
- 75% handled without advice
- 3% took no action

DFV respondents were more likely to use:
- health or welfare professionals (56% of problems)
- legal advisers (52% of problems)