



Preventing Violence Together:
A Strategy for the
Southern Metropolitan Region

Preventing Violence Together Strategy Evaluation Executive Summary

The Preventing Violence Together: A Strategy for the Southern Metropolitan Region 2016 - 2021 (PVT strategy) was the very first strategy of its kind developed to enable organisations in the Southern Metropolitan Region (SMR) to collectively prevent violence against women and their children.

The PVT strategy has evolved from one that saw WHISE and partners making a case for the Prevention of Violence against Women (PVAW) to now, four years post the Royal Commission into Family Violence, working alongside highly skilled primary prevention practitioners and professionals who are integrating and strengthening this work. At its inception, the strategy was designed to increase awareness around the importance of the work and build the skills and confidence of practitioners to embark on the prevention journey. It has since evolved to also provide a forum for practitioners to share and reflect on their journeys and bring in expertise from across the region to cross pollinate areas of intersectional expertise.

The full evaluation report presents detailed outcomes of the evaluation, with this executive summary providing a high level summary. The purpose of the evaluation was to conduct a rapid retrospective overview of the first regional primary prevention strategic plan. The evaluation involved: 1) a desktop review of all evidence collected, conducted by WHISE, 2) engaging a consultant to conduct semi-structured interviews with 16 selected partners and stakeholders, and 3) developing and distributing an online survey which was completed by 44 partners and stakeholders. The evaluation provided a useful lens for understanding how the collection of activities and interventions worked in practice and led to change. It also provided an opportunity for partners and stakeholders to actively contribute and make recommendations for improvements to the next regional strategy to ensure a consultative collaborative approach was taken.

PVT PILLARS

**Leadership
Through
Partnerships**

**Organisational
Transformation**

**Community
Change**

**Influencing
Evidence**

**Sustaining
Momentum**

THE FINDINGS OF THE EVALUATION

Leadership Through Partnerships

Under the PVT Strategy, collaborative partnership opportunities were maximised. WHISE's extraordinary ability to leverage strategic partnerships with organisations (both in and outside of the health sector) to inform and support the regional strategy was crucial to its success. The Working Groups and Communities of Practice (CoP) provided a forum for partners to meet and collaborate which resulted in stronger relationships and connections and provided opportunities for sharing and learning. This aspect of the PVT strategy and partnership was most highly valued among partners.



A key aspect of the leadership work of WHISE has been supporting local government partners to progress their Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plans, Family Violence and Gender Equity Strategies, and associated Action Plans. WHISE also connected with leaders in partner organisations to assist in policy development and direction within those organisations, and to ensure there was a focus on PVAW and Gender Equity (GE). Several partners who were interviewed spoke of the organisational change brought about through their interactions with WHISE, either as a direct result of support or through staff attending training delivered by WHISE. There is evidence to suggest that the PVT Strategy was helping to embed GE principles across partner organisations.

Organisational Transformation

The PVT strategy has contributed to partner organisational cultures that recognise and respect the value of women by making it a priority to build the capability and capacity of partners and stakeholders to work towards achieving GE and promoting system-level changes within their workplace settings (i.e., through supporting Workplace Gender Audits). Efforts to transform partner organisations have been cumulative through increasing leadership commitment, building staff capacity and capability, empowering the workplace to assess their workplace conditions, and exploring how to affect broader community change. This has increased partner understanding and knowledge of PVAW/GE and strengthened their capacity and capability to apply evidenced-based initiatives.

Community Change

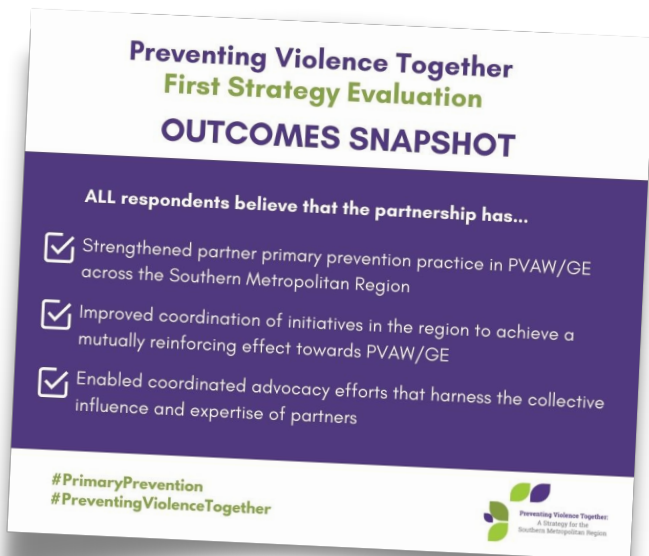
The PVT strategy has strengthened the capacity and capability of the SMR's community to prevent violence against women. This has been achieved through supporting Respectful Relationships in schools across the region. A key aspect of this has been the establishment of, and support for, the Critical Friends Network. A range of community facing campaigns (i.e., 16 Days of Activism) and resources (i.e., COVID-19 Health Social Media Toolkit) have also raised awareness across the region more broadly on the importance of PVAW. Additionally, WHISE has worked with partner organisations to identify and support community leadership to challenge and critique gender norms and attitudes that support violence against women.

THE FINDINGS OF THE EVALUATION

Influencing Evidence

WHISE and partners have been involved in evidence creation, translation and dissemination on issues relating to violence against women to inform best-practice approaches. This has strengthened the evidence-base for PVAW across the region. As partners have increased awareness of best-practice approaches and evidence, this has ignited partner innovation in their prevention work across the region.

The evaluation has demonstrated that the PVT strategy has delivered a range of outcomes that contribute towards improving primary prevention practice in PVAW/GE across the region. It has demonstrated that, when facilitated effectively, collaborative work can enable more systemic ways of working towards PVAW.



SUMMARY AND NEXT STEPS

The PVT strategy was the first strategy for the region and a significant and dynamic initiative for the SMR which led to significant and positive changes in the region within organisations, businesses, schools, and communities. Key features which contributed to the success of the PVT Strategy included the partnership and the mutually reinforcing approach taken to achieve change which remains relevant for the next iteration of the strategy.

Looking forward, the evaluation recommends incorporating emerging key areas of focus in the next strategy. It is also recommended that a Theory of Change and Evaluation Framework is developed as they will ground the work and clarify the outcomes and their contribution towards long-term change. This will likely enhance understanding of the work across the partnership. The foundations have been laid for the next strategy to build on the significant achievements of the first strategy and further strengthen PVAW/GE in the region and its long-term impact at the community level.

