



29 April 2024

Media Release

Urgent Action Needed to Address Women Dying and Traumatized by Violence in Australia

As advocates committed to dismantling oppressive structures, we recognise that violence against women is not merely a series of isolated incidents but a symptom of larger societal inequalities and systemic injustices. The current approach to addressing violence often fails to address its root causes and frequently re-traumatizes survivors, particularly those from marginalised communities.

Taylor Bliss from Yoorana Gunya Family Healing Centre Aboriginal Corporation/Binaal Billa Family Violence Prevention Legal Service in Forbes expressed the profound impact of such systemic failures, stating,

"The death of Molly in our small town is devastating. The legal system continues to let women down. How many more victims need to die before there is change to the justice system? The community are telling me that they are frightened that what happened to Molly could happen to them however they do not feel safe reporting to Police due to the limited support response from the justice system. AVO's do not keep our women safe. Now is the time for change and we cannot let anymore victims down.
#hernameismolly."

Yoorana Gunya and Binaal Billa support Aboriginal victims of family violence and sexual assault and only have capacity to support a small percentage of non-Indigenous clients. Our services are particularly advocating for improved crisis referral pathways to the appropriate community-led family violence prevention services, so that women receive immediate support and are not let down like Molly was."

Family violence does not discriminate, and it happens to victims from all walks of life, as per statistics predominantly women are victims. However, the intersectional nature of violence must be recognised: women from marginalised backgrounds, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, LGBTQI+ individuals, and women with disabilities, are disproportionately impacted. Addressing the underlying social, economic, and cultural factors that contribute to deep and persistent disadvantage is paramount.

We advocate for redirecting resources towards community-based solutions and support services. This includes funding for affordable housing, mental health care, substance abuse treatment, and evidence-based programs.

"As we stand in solidarity with survivors of violence, we call for a paradigm shift in how society responds to these issues," said Arlia Fleming, CEO of the Central Tablelands and Blue Mountains Community Legal Centre who works in partnership with Binaal Billa in Forbes. "We urge policymakers and community leaders to prioritise prevention, intervention, and support services that empower individuals and communities to address violence in all its forms."

While community-run refuges serve as vital safe havens for survivors seeking support, counselling, and resources however these facilities frequently face overwhelming demand, particularly in regional areas. Forbes and small regional surrounding areas are facing high demand for safe havens for women as there are no where for our women to seek private refuge and take their families to escape violence.

Arlia Fleming, emphasising the urgent need for action, said,

"As legal service providers for victim-survivors, we often find ourselves grappling with the challenge of ensuring safety. With refuges at full capacity, limited police intervention, and insufficient community resources to provide support for women and children or hold perpetrators accountable, the options are severely limited."

Governments must ensure there are no gaps in the service safety net that women and children rely on for their safety and recovery. This requires increased investment across the domestic, family, and sexual violence service system, including, early intervention initiatives, First Nations-led community-controlled initiatives, sexual violence trauma counselling, specialist case management services, and legal assistance services.

By investing in these grassroots initiatives and building community capacity, we can address the root causes of violence and promote lasting change.

Media enquiries

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