

# Family Violence Program



Goulburn Valley CLC's Family Violence Prevention Legal Service helped steer 336 people towards safety via court applications for Intervention Orders (IVOs).

In 2015-16 we continued to deliver our Family Violence service to the Shepparton, Cobram and Seymour magistrates' courts. We also extended this service to the Benalla Magistrates' Court. This new service has been well received, with support from the local Victoria Police Family Violence Unit, Court Registry staff and local service providers. The Cobram Magistrates' Court service was briefly suspended due to a fire that rendered the building unusable. Matters were diverted to the Shepparton courts.

Our Lawyers take a holistic approach and frequently refer matters from court to the appropriate counselling, family law, criminal law, child protection and housing services, which helps address the ongoing impact of family violence on clients' lives.

Most family violence services are undertaken on a Duty Lawyer basis. However, clients identified as being particularly vulnerable receive follow-up and ongoing casework support across a number of court dates. Frequently, staff from other services flag particularly vulnerable clients with our staff prior to court to ensure they get the level of care they require.

**'I have no hesitation in saying that your professionalism, legal knowledge, compassion and understanding of a frail 85-year-old lady's apprehension... gave her the confidence to pursue the Intervention Order.'** - Goulburn Valley CLC client's support person

