

Lived Experience and family violence evaluation

DJCS presentation to VPS
evaluation network

TRIM ID:



Justice
and Community
Safety

Overview

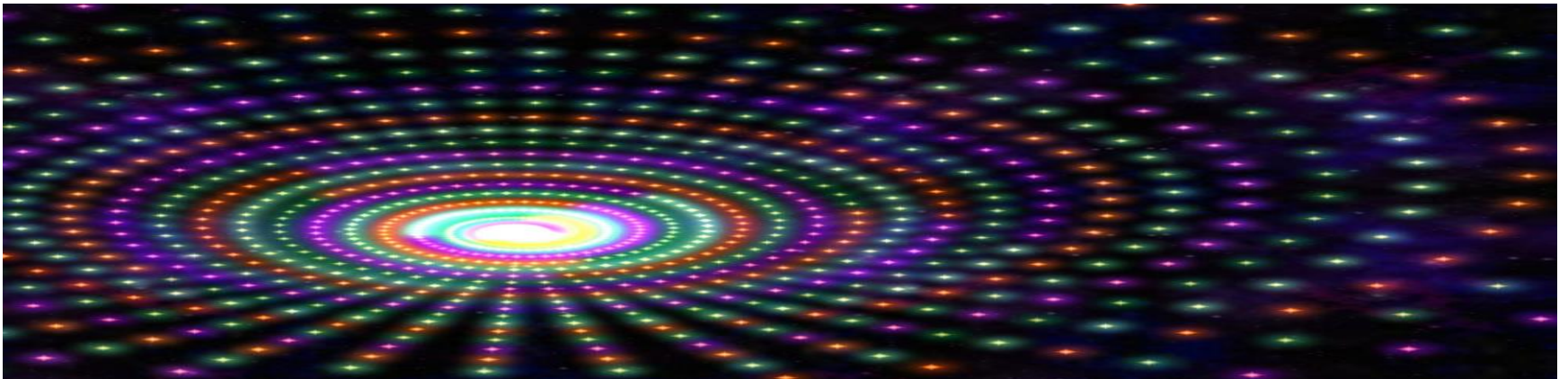
Why lived experience is emerging as an evaluation issue

Bringing lived experience into evaluation

Department of Justice and Community
Safety – lived experience and evaluation of
family violence

Lived experience is moving from the margin to mainstream

Ensure the voices of victim survivors are heard and inform policy development and service delivery (RCFV rec 201)



.... support people with lived experience of mental illness or psychological distress to take part and take a lead role in making decisions about policies and programs. This is particularly important for the policies and programs that directly affect them. (RCMHR Rec 201)

What is lived experience?

*'people's experiences, [and] how people live through and respond to those experiences'.** Boylorn, R. M. (2008).

Boylorn, R. M. (2008). Lived experience. In L. M. Given (Ed.), *The Sage encyclopedia of qualitative research methods*, Vol. 2 (p. 490). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

What lived experience experts say about evaluation

Attitudes held by organisations are a key factor in determining whether victim survivors are included and how they are included in research and evaluation

(ANROWS Conference 2021 Lived Experience Panel session)

"Cultural attitudes which elevate the opinions of university educated professionals over the lived experience of survivors."

Domestic violence Victoria: FV Experts by Experience Framework

Lived experience in an evaluation context

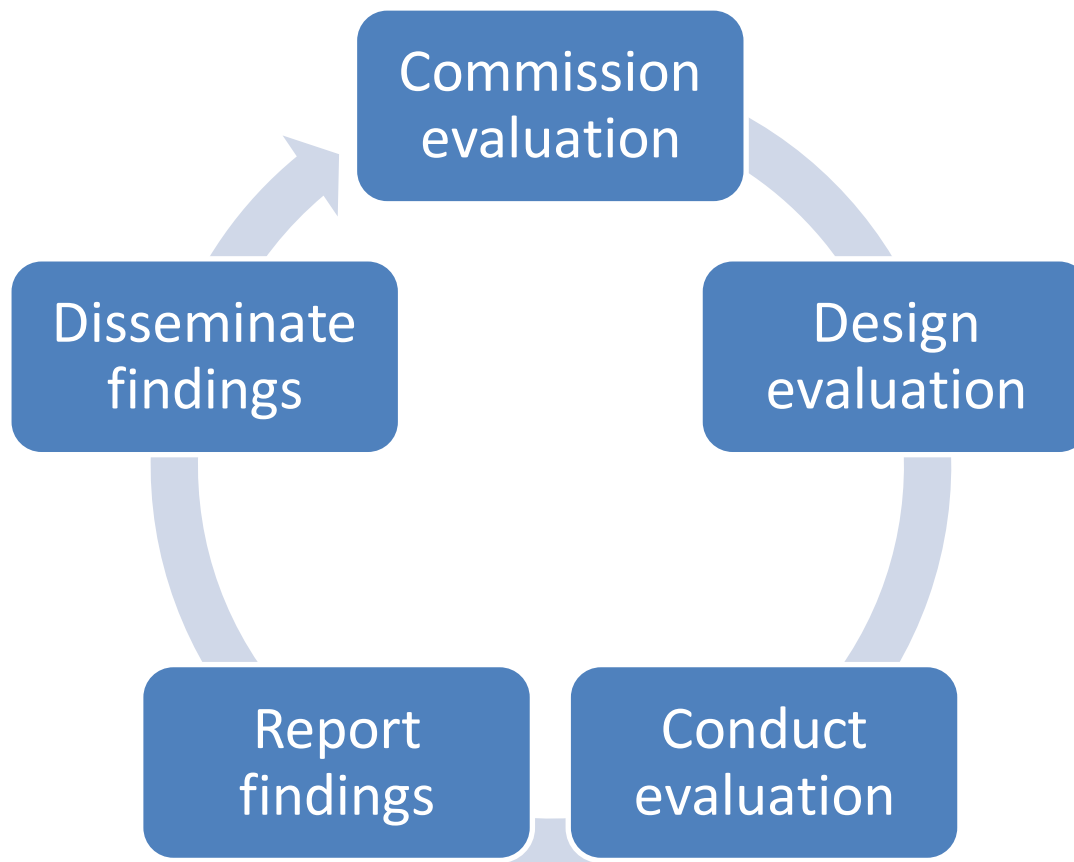
Participatory evaluation

Requires primary stakeholders to be included as co-evaluators, both to ensure the inclusion of their voices and values in evaluation and to help them strengthen their evaluation capacity.

*Where principles of empowerment and accountability to intended beneficiaries do not underpin the whole evaluation process, include participatory methods at all stages possible**

*([Better Evaluation](#))

Opportunities to include lived experience





Ethical lens =

Low risk evaluation
methods

*Is it **ethical**
NOT to
include those
affected by a
program or
policy in its
evaluation?*



Evaluator readiness – victim survivors

Evaluator expertise in qualitative methods involving direct contact such as interviews with victims (*trauma informed*) or perpetrators (*collusion*)

Risk of harm

Trauma experiences of victims (**retraumatisation**)

Potential escalation in **safety risk** to victim survivors who participate in the evaluation

Respect

Perspectives and voices of victims are *included* and their *culture and context* are appropriately recognised

Self care

Vicarious trauma risks for those conducting the evaluation.

What DJCS is doing

Developing:

- a DJCS wide policy on stakeholder engagement – including lived experience
- a resource for including lived experience in FV evaluation

TO

Address the gap between the type of policy and evaluation we want - inclusive of and informed by lived experience - and what is happening.

Moving from.....

One way data collection and analysis



[Act in haste, repent at leisure - Atlantic Council](#)

...to meaningful engagement

Example - Victim Survivor Advisory Council (VSAC) input into a DJCS evaluation of family violence reform (RCFV Rec 59):

- VSAC member facilitated the consultation
- *Remuneration* for participants
- '*Recruitment*' conducted by members
- *Safety* and welfare support to mitigate risk
- Clear *guidelines for conduct* of engagement session
- Trust and integrity
- Expectation that perspectives will be *acknowledged*

Resources

Family Violence Experts by Experience Framework, [Experts by Experience – Domestic Violence Victoria \(dvvic.org.au\)](https://dvvic.org.au)

Victim Survivor Advisory Council [Victim Survivors' Advisory Council | Victorian Government \(www.vic.gov.au\)](https://www.vic.gov.au)

InTouch - Multicultural Centre Against Violence *Inspire for Change Advisory Group*
[Inspire for Change, multicultural voices of lived experiences - inTouch - Multicultural Centre Against Family Violence](#)

Participatory Evaluation –Better.evaluation.org
[Participatory Evaluation | Better Evaluation](https://better.evaluation.org)

Mental Health Lived Experience Engagement Framework
[Department of Health and Human Services Victoria | Mental health lived experience engagement framework \(dhhs.vic.gov.au\)](https://dhhs.vic.gov.au)

WEAVRS, University of Melbourne [The WEAVERs Project \(unimelb.edu.au\)](https://unimelb.edu.au)

Thank you



Client voice: using lived experience in evaluations at Victoria Legal Aid

Jacqueline Storey, Evaluation Lead

Sharika Jeyakumar, Family Violence Program Manager

29 April 2021

Client-First approach

- recognising and valuing the diverse perspectives and experiences of people with legal needs
- listening to and involving people with legal needs in designing improved access to justice
- using different ways to gain insight into client experience to design more impactful services
- addressing how we organise or structure our services to improve the client experience.



Client-First approach

Who is the 'client'

- Actual clients of VLA (current / former)
- People with legal needs (potential clients)
- People with lived experience

Client First strategy [vla-client-first-strategy-2020-23.pdf](https://legalaid.vic.gov.au/vla-client-first-strategy-2020-23.pdf) (legalaid.vic.gov.au)

Client voices in VLA's work



- Client surveys/interviews (feedback) e.g. [client satisfaction survey](#)



- Client stories – campaigns, law reform, supporting clients to participate e.g. [Your Story, Your Say](#)



- Consumer leadership – [Independent Mental Health Advocacy \(IMHA\), Consumer advisory Group](#) “Speaking from Experience” and employing a Senior Consumer Consultant to provide advice to IMHA and VLA

Issues to consider when engaging with clients

- What is the role and level of engagement?
- Responsibilities and expectations
- Informed and ongoing consent
- Duty of care
- Power dynamics
- What will they get from this process? (from remuneration, information, experience – other types of reward)



Specialist Family Violence Courts

OFFICIAL

What are the specialist family violence courts?

Royal Commission into Family Violence as part of their 227 recommendations recommended the establishment of specialist family violence courts:

- Recommendation 60 – Extend the functions of Family Violence Court Division courts to other courts
- Recommendation 61 – All family violence matters are heard and determined in specialist family violence courts.

Where does VLA fit in?

VLA received specific purpose funding for the provision of additional legal assistance resourcing at these five locations by both VLA and CLCs.

What is the purpose of the legal practice model?

To deliver **client-centred quality** legal services in the Specialist Family Violence Courts that are easy to access, safe to use and are integrated within the family violence service system.

What we did

- Contextual observation at SFVC sites
- Interviews and discussions with clients on their court day
- People with lived experience of family violence at our ideation workshops
- One on one consultations with people with lived experience

What do we mean by client-centred?

- Recognise and value the diverse perspectives and experiences of people with legal needs individually and collectively; and
- Listen to and involve people with legal needs in designing and delivering our legal services in the SFVCs.

SFVC Client First Strategy - Initiative 4

Provide more opportunities for people with lived experience to share their experiences and have a say in the way we design, deliver and evaluate SFVC services in conjunction with the family violence service system.

Our commitments to working with people with lived experience

Outline the different roles and ways to engage with the process

Ensure that responsibilities and expectations are clearly defined

Obtain consent from clients on their involvement in the project

Ensure there are appropriate support structures

Reduce organisational jargon and lingo where possible

Regularly check in with people on our groups

Provide updates for people to see how their input was used to implement initiatives

What we're doing

- People with lived experience on our Steering Committee and three working groups, including the Evaluation & Monitoring working group
- Consulted with groups of people with lived experience through expert facilitators on initiatives, understanding what would have improved their experience of the legal system
- Read [Lucinda's story](#)

How this will inform our evaluation

Initiative 29: Engage an independent consultant to measure the effectiveness of the Legal practice Model and consult with people with lived experience to identify where improvements can be made

- People with lived experience through our working groups:
 - Provided input into our tender process and EOI
 - Reviewed the evaluation plan and provided feedback
 - Was part of the selection committee and interview panel
 - Participated in workshops to develop the program logic and scope of evaluation

What we've learned so far

- Resource intensive
- Importance of diversity of experience
- Appropriate time and planning
- Value of these voices in the room
- Need for additional supports
- Setting clear expectations around scope