



Discussion Points

» Barriers and challenges for women from migrant and refugee backgrounds



About inTouch

A state-wide family violence organisation dedicated to the development and implementation of a number of culturally sensitive and holistic models of service provision to both victims and perpetrators of family violence.

For women and children from diverse cultural backgrounds to be safe and free from family violence.



History of inTouch



Statewide service:



2012: Legal centre established



inTouch has evolved over more than 30 years. Started for and by migrant women. The only accredited CALD Specialist family violence service in Victoria.



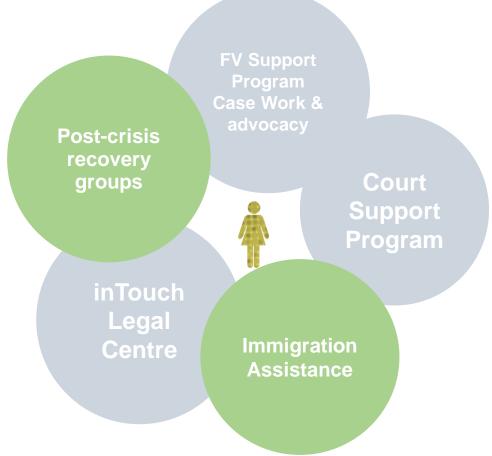
2016: Increase in funding coming out of the RCFV saw an increase in staffing and the establishment of the Capacity Building Unit

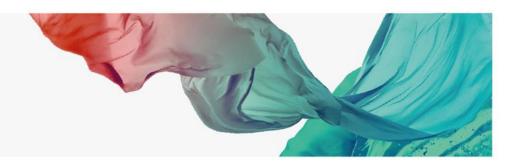


inTouch is unique in its multilingual, multicultural service delivery model, is the only FV organisation that offers integrated support that includes: case support, a legal centre and registered migration agent



Client Services: State-wide





About inTouch

Languages

The inTouch client services and legal centre teams between them can offer services in 26 community languages (refer right) and in English, of course. inTouch was able to assist in 6 out of the 7 most requested languages other than English.

1.	Arabic	14.	Nuer
2.	Juba Arabic	15.	Punjabi
3.	Bosnian	16.	Russian
4.	Cantonese	17.	Serbian
5.	Croatian	18.	Sinhalese
6.	Dari	19.	Somali
7.	Dinka	20.	Spanish
8.	Farsi	21.	Tamil
9.	Greek	22.	Thai
10.	Hindi	23.	Turkish
11.	Italian	24.	Vietnamese
12.	Macedonian	25.	Urdu
13.	Mandarin		

Barriers & Challenges



Barriers & Challenges

Examples:

Knowing violence

Awareness of systems

Migration Experience

Fear of authorities

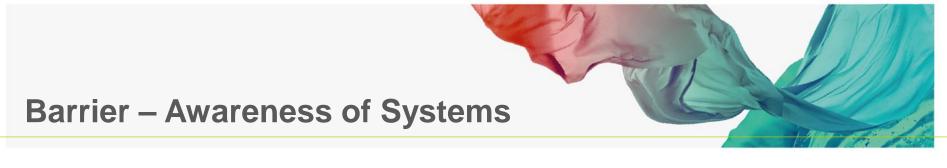


Barrier – Knowing Violence

- Gender inequality and male supremacy
- "Abuse" vs "Discipline"
- Tolerant and resilient to violence
- Unrecognised forms of abuse

"He wasn't abusive, he only did it because I upset him and he is the man and the boss of the house."

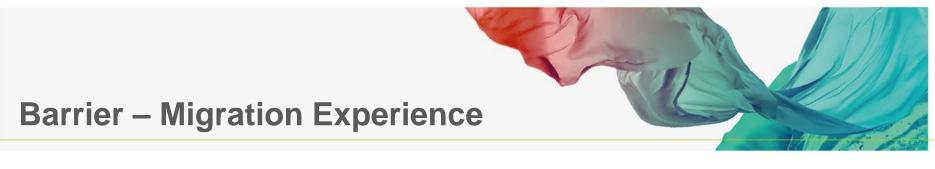
"It is something I am used to as he is the man of the house and it is his job to discipline us."



- Lack of knowledge of laws against family violence in Australia
- Lack of awareness of support systems available
- Lack of awareness of victim's rights and legal system

'I knew nothing about Australian law, which is why I didn't know what to do at the beginning'

'I lived in fear as I knew nothing'— Had I known about this, I would have left earlier'



- » Pre-migration history and prior issues of torture and trauma might impact on their taking action
- » Loss and grief issues and the migration journey and experience
- » Changed gender roles might create further escalation of violence
- » Women hold themselves accountable to maintain the family structure and often blame themselves if failing to do so

"In the refuge, I was told that I was safe and there was no reason to worry. But they didn't understand that I was grieving again

because this was yet another loss for me.

My family was the only thing I brought with me from my home country that I could call my own — and I couldn't keep my family together".



Barrier – Fear of Authorities

- » Fear of authorities such as the police and courts because of experiences in the home country and may be reinforced by eroded relationships between authorities and minority communities in this country.
- » Fears can be further fueled by abusive partner
- » Mediation through family members, faith and community leaders might often be the first and preferred step to get support
- » Accessing protection through legal support could be the last option.

'I was new in this country.

I was very scared of the police...'

Additional risk factors



Definition of violence in relationships differs depending on culture, for example the question 'has your partner/husband ever sexually assaulted you?' will need unpacking

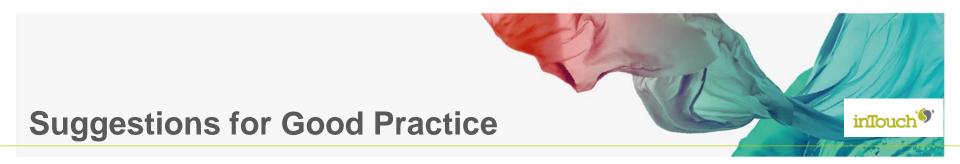
Forced marriage

Dowry abuse

Complex family dynamics



- Denial and Minimization are powerful and at times unconscious coping strategies when living with excessive control and violence on a daily basis
- Suicidal or homicidal ideation is not always observable
- Terminologies such as 'abuse', 'domestic violence', 'threat', may be too loaded because many victim/survivors may not share the same understanding of such words
- In short term interventions there may not be enough rapport or trust established for women from refugee/migrant backgrounds to answer intensive questions as they appear in some risk assessment tools

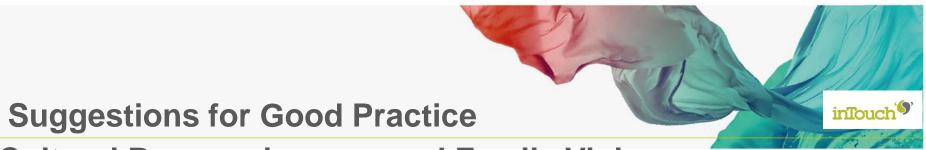


Avoid making assumption

- » that a woman from a CALD background has a clear understanding of the meaning of FV & its different types
- » that she has the full ability to understand information provided to her, incl. translated information; literacy issues in English or own language might exist

Ask for clarification

» Using interpreters to make sure that the information has been clearly understood by her and ask her to explain how she understands the information



Cultural Responsiveness and Family Violence

- » Listen to her and don't be afraid to ask questions and learn about her worldview and value system
- » Validate client's experiences of the differences and reinforce laws in Australia but be mindful that victims rights might be a new concept for clients
- » Empower her with information on her rights and support system
- » She might have limited experience being asked opinions and making decisions – whilst this is difficult, direct questions are important
- » Provide her the resources even if she is not ready to take any actions
- » Explain confidentiality and limitations