
11 June 2024



Co-convened with the Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Healing and Recovery Alliance

Healing and Recovery Roundtable

Summary Report

Background

On Tuesday 11 June 2024 the Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commission (the Commission) with the Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Healing and Recovery Alliance (the Alliance) co-convened a roundtable on healing and recovery from violence. The Commission and the Alliance worked collaborative to invite more than 60 participants from across the family violence, sexual assault, and research sectors, as well as a significant number of people with lived experience of violence.

The roundtable was part of an ongoing series from the Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Commission to create a space for national conversations on areas of priority identified in the National Plan.

This document provides an overview of the key issues canvassed at the roundtable.

Key Themes

Roundtable attendees considered the ways in which healing and recovery might be addressed at all stages of people's journey, and take into account the different contexts, cultures and circumstances which inform their experience. In discussion, it was noted the significant role of systems in reducing or extending trauma for those who experience violence. Participants also acknowledged the opportunity to improve interventions for people – particularly men – who use violence.

Key insights raised by roundtable participants include:

- Housing, financial independence and income security are integral for healing and recovery.
- Each person's journey to healing and recovery is unique and specific, requiring person-centred care. This should be prioritised by governments, services, and the communities around them.
- Healing and recovery is not a linear process. As such, there is a need for systems to accommodate multiple engagements beyond the crisis or initial support mechanisms currently offered. This required increased and transparent funding for services.
- There is a need for shared and consistent definitions relating to domestic, family, and sexual violence.
- Systems intended to support survivors continue to be weaponised by people who use violence, including child support, Family Court and justice systems. This ongoing exposure to violence not only exacerbates trauma but also impedes healing and recovery.
- There needs to be a better focus on responding to the needs of children as people who experience domestic, family and sexual violence in their own right, not merely as witnesses.
- Accountability for those who use violence should be placed in a broader context of preventing that violence in the future by prioritising healing and recovery.
- There should be recognition of the unique nature of sexual violence and the need for a specialised service response to support healing and recovery from these experiences.

- There is a strong desire among people with lived and living experience of violence for access to alternative systems of justice, including restorative and healing justice.
- Diversification of funded services would allow for an increase in focus on supporting the healing journey of marginalised communities including First Nations people, people with disability, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and sexuality and gender diverse communities.

What's next

This was part of an ongoing program of engagement for the Commission. These roundtables are not only a mechanism for input; they are part of our commitment to a genuine ongoing conversation, in which we are accountable to participants.

The Commission and the Alliance are grateful for the expertise and contribution of all of the participants who took part in the roundtable.

A more detailed report relating to the Roundtable will be made available in the coming weeks.