

Domestic Violence Inquiry report a missed opportunity: published without receiving a single submission

The AASW is today questioning the Senate Committee in charge of the Inquiry into Domestic Violence. This inquiry did not accept any submissions from the domestic and family violence sector and then released its report two days ago, three months ahead of its August due date. In doing so, this inquiry failed to make any substantial contribution to addressing the scourge of domestic and family violence facing Australian women and children. AASW National President Christine Craik said, "We are very disappointed that no domestic and family violence experts and/or victim/survivors were able to contribute to the Domestic Violence Senate Inquiry and that a report has been published three months ahead of schedule without any submissions being accepted. "We need real action on domestic and family violence to prevent the destruction of families and the deaths of women and children. It would have been wise for the Committee to hear from experts such as family violence social workers on this critical issue." COVID-19 has put a spotlight on the very real dangers facing women and children across Australia, and the contributions of social workers who daily support women through these dangers had the potential to make real change to the lives of so many by adding their voices to this inquiry. To say that public hearings or public submissions would have been of limited benefit given the coronavirus pandemic is a clear message to all women living with increased risk during this pandemic, that their lives do not matter. Ms Craik said, "Too many women have been murdered this year already and for this Senate Committee to not have taken this process seriously is unacceptable and disrespectful to victim-survivors and their children. "We call on the federal government to take family violence seriously, fund the sector properly, and listen to experts in this field. No more women and children should be dying of this." Last year, there was a review of the family law system which made more than 60 recommendations, some of which addressed the system's capacity to protect women and children. None of the recommendations were implemented. AASW submitted to this review. AASW's credentialing program recognises specialised social work skills in family violence with its Accredited Family Violence Social Worker credential.

Contacts

Angela Yin
03 9320 1005
mailto: media@asw.asn.au