

# **Working with Users of Violence Workshop**

CLCQ Conference May 2024

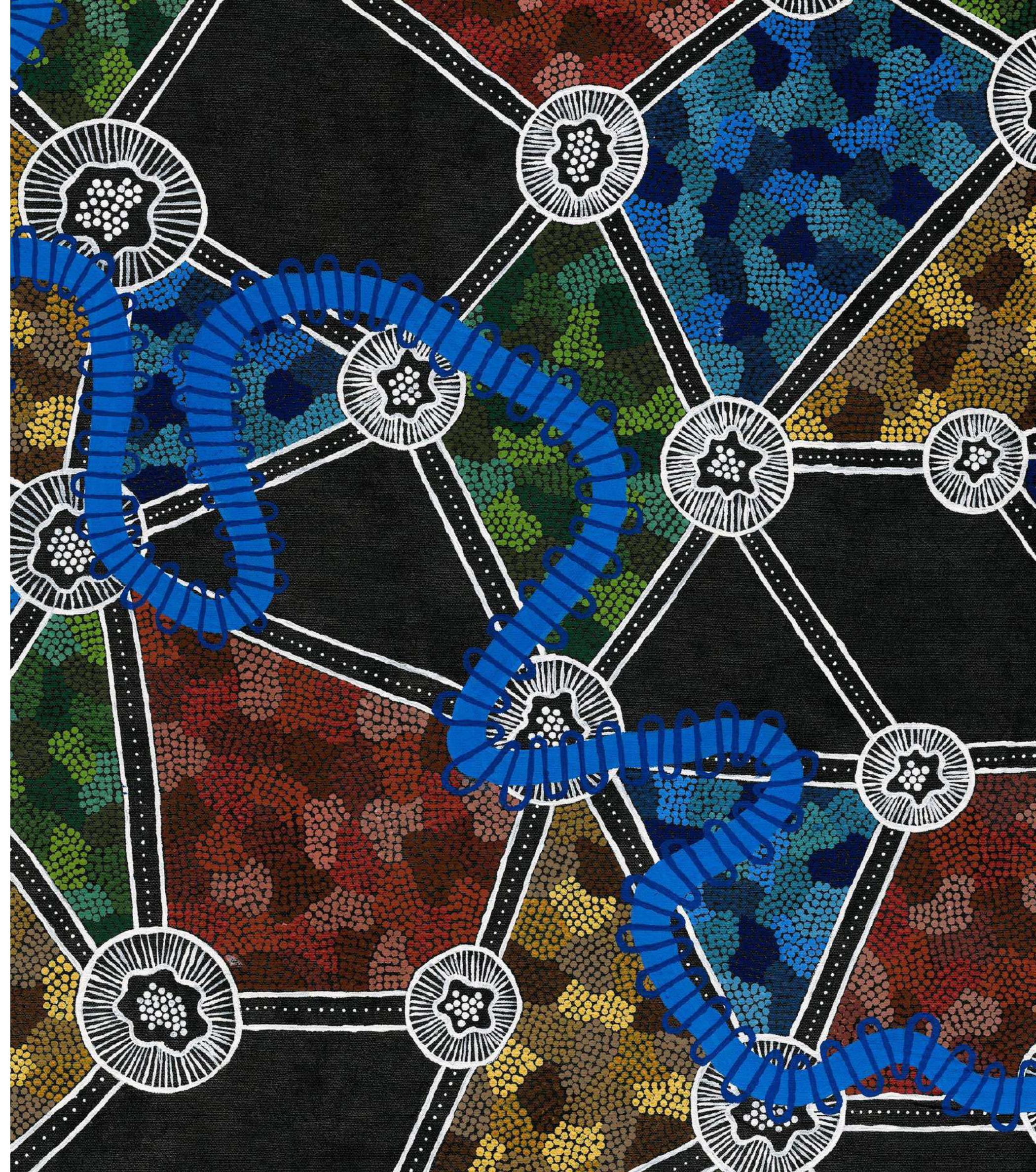




We acknowledge the Jagera (Yuggera) and Turrbal peoples who are the traditional Custodians of this land on which we work.

We recognise the ongoing connection to the land, waters and community of the Traditional Custodians and pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging. We also recognise, respect and celebrate the cultural distinctions of the First Nations peoples and value their rich and positive contribution to Queensland and to broader Australian society.

With respect, we strive to achieve justice and inclusion for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.





**Why your CLC would do this work**

the “gap”

**“accountability and support  
to promote safety  
(and healing)”**

People using violence **recognise** their own harmful behaviours and are **supported** to change through **effective, culturally appropriate, trauma-informed** and **evidence-led** interventions.







**For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples there is a mature and powerful focus on reconnection and healing including for users of violence.**



# Policy Priority in Queensland

## National Alignment

The National Plan to End Violence Against Women and Children 2022–2032

Early Intervention domain: “identify and support individuals who are at high risk of experiencing or **perpetrating** violence and prevent it from reoccurring”

## Qld Alignment

Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2016–2026

Women’s Safety and Justice Taskforce ‘Hear Her Voice’ reports 2021–2022

## DFV Perpetrator Strategy Consultation (Qld)



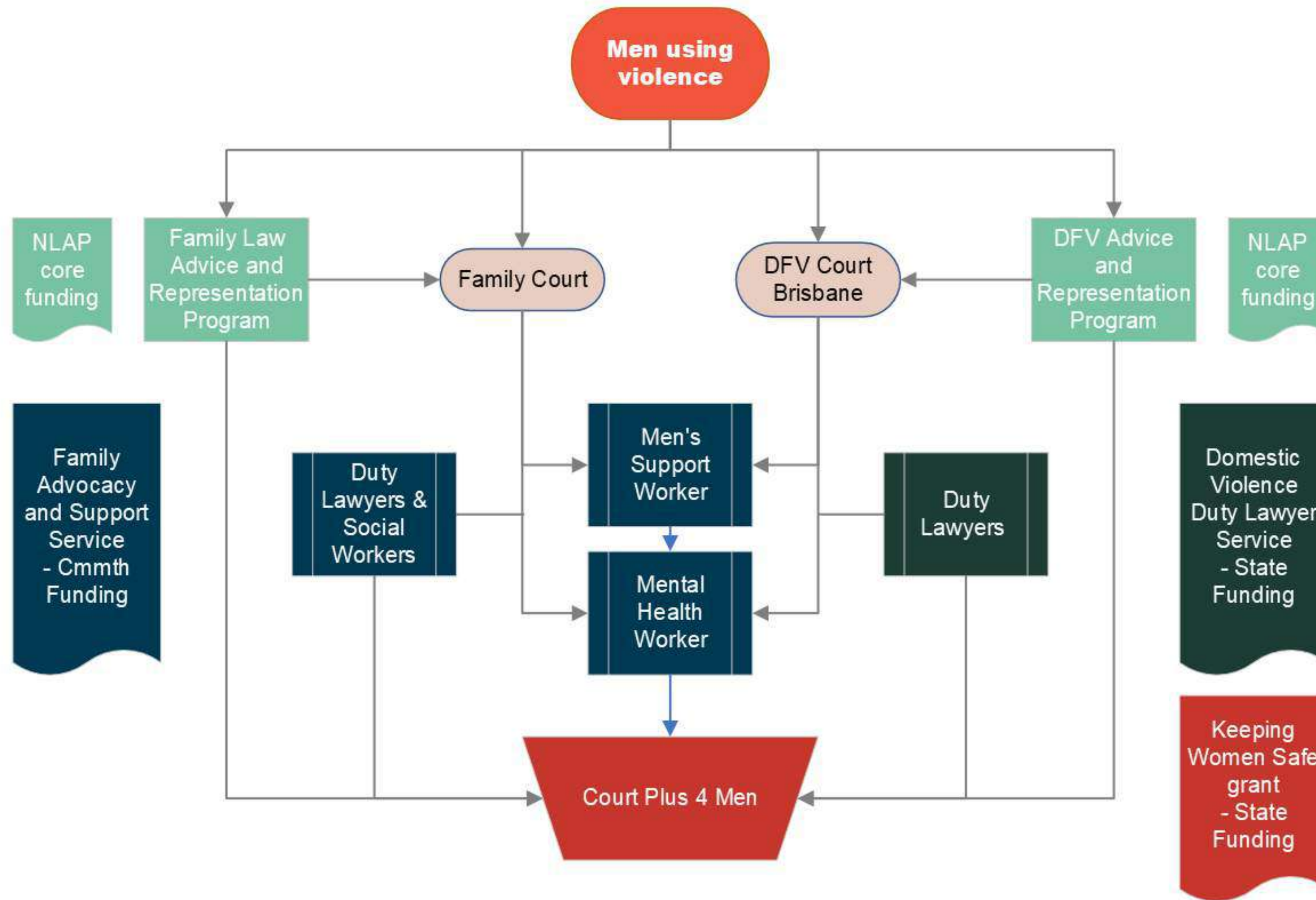
### FOURTH ACTION PLAN 2022–2026 (Qld)

- develop stand-alone Perpetrator Strategy
- establish statewide network of perpetrator interventions
- explore options to increase funding
- co-design and trial perpetrator programs specific to First Nations peoples
- develop a perpetrator-centric risk assessment tool
- develop intervention responses for young people who use DFV

# **Caxton's programs**

how we do our work







# Bail Support Program for Men

2018–2022

Multidisciplinary legal and social work supports for men with complex social support needs to apply for bail and be supported in the community including to maintain their bail conditions

**95%**  
**success rate**

## Evaluation:

- “designed according to most elements of good practice identified in the literature”
- “improved pro-social behaviours and less likely to reoffend in the short to medium term”

**40%**  
**had DFV offences**

**25%**  
**First Nations**



**“CLCs are built for  
this work”**



# Social Work

in DV and Family courts

- the importance of our work with users of violence
- our framework of practice
- our two models of intervention are either brief intervention/discrete or casework





# Working with DFV users

- changing the underlying social drivers of violence
- identifying individuals who are at high risk of experiencing or perpetrating violence, and addressing risk factors
- helping to reduce the risk of further DFV





# Discrete intervention

Integrated practice mostly under FASS

- single contact
- time restricted
- no follow-up





# Strengths-based framework

## Discrete Intervention

### Interview

- perform psychosocial assessment
- identify strengths
- assess support and safety
- assess home environment, family dynamics and culture
- set goals and expectations
- ensure wellbeing

### Intervention

- counselling and reality testing
- introducing support services
- explaining benefits of linking with support services
- encouraging linking with supports available within family and community
- providing warm referrals



# Casework approach

- providing respectful, sensitive, holistic support, culturally responsive engagement with users of violence
- addressing barriers to seeking help for their use of violence
- Court Plus for Men, a client-focused program that provides timely, responsive-to-needs, culturally appropriate and multidisciplinary support

## Case study for Court Plus case work program:

Referral from another service. Client had DV appearance the following week in a Magistrates Court where no DV duty lawyer is present, serious health concerns + no understanding of why he had a DVO + why a variation was being requested to add another named person to original DVO. SW was able to discuss with Caxton lawyer for urgent advice based on what client said. On day of court, SW met client and reviewed court documents – DVO + variation prior to appearance and called Caxton lawyer for on-the-spot advice. Magistrate noted SW support + client's health concerns resulting in outcome in client's favour - still a DVO but reduced and disregarded adding named person. Most importantly the client felt heard as he was able to explain his side of the story, resulting in feeling less stressed and angry about DVO thus enabling discussions on DV + impacts.

2.

Referral from private legal practice for client in custody. SW provided letter for court agreeing to work with client on first business day client is released. SW supported client on most days by phone for several weeks to get financial support + financial counselling + get advice on SPER + DV and family law advice + understand and ensure compliance with DV conditions + provide listening ear + reminder /attendance at court appearances + SW advocated with court systems (PP & Magistrate) on day to get outcomes supporting client to start process of access to his children. Currently working with client to talk about DV and its impacts.

# **Individual capability**

Working alongside users of violence



# **Individual capability**

**What is individual capability?**

**What is effective: adapting  
work styles to individuals**

Discussion:

**Reflect on what a person's  
capability is to assist or work with  
users of violence (no matter what  
your core work role is)**

Discussion:

**How do you respond to users of  
violence in your role?**

**What do you find challenging and how  
have you been successful?**

# **Organisational capability**

Being equipped to work with users of violence



# **We (likely) all work with users of violence**

## Discussion

**Identify the ways in which your organisation works with users of violence.**

**Key ingredients for an organisation  
to be well-equipped to work with  
users of violence**



# Core capabilities

Capability	What it includes
Strategic alignment	Does your organisation strategically align with working with users of violence?
Staff skillset & resourcing	Are staff trained on how to manage users of violence? Do you have staff that specialise in this area?
Risk management	Does your organisation have a risk management policy that governs how staff respond to users of violence?
Cultural responsiveness	Is your organisation set up to assist clients from specific cultural backgrounds? If not, what is the process for people who approach your service that need a culturally responsive approach?

## Discussion

**Consider the core capabilities and discuss the strengths and challenges within your organisation and ideas for improvement.**

# **Sector capability**

Working with users of violence in our sector



**What are our strengths?**

**What are our challenges?**

**Is our sector filling the gaps?**

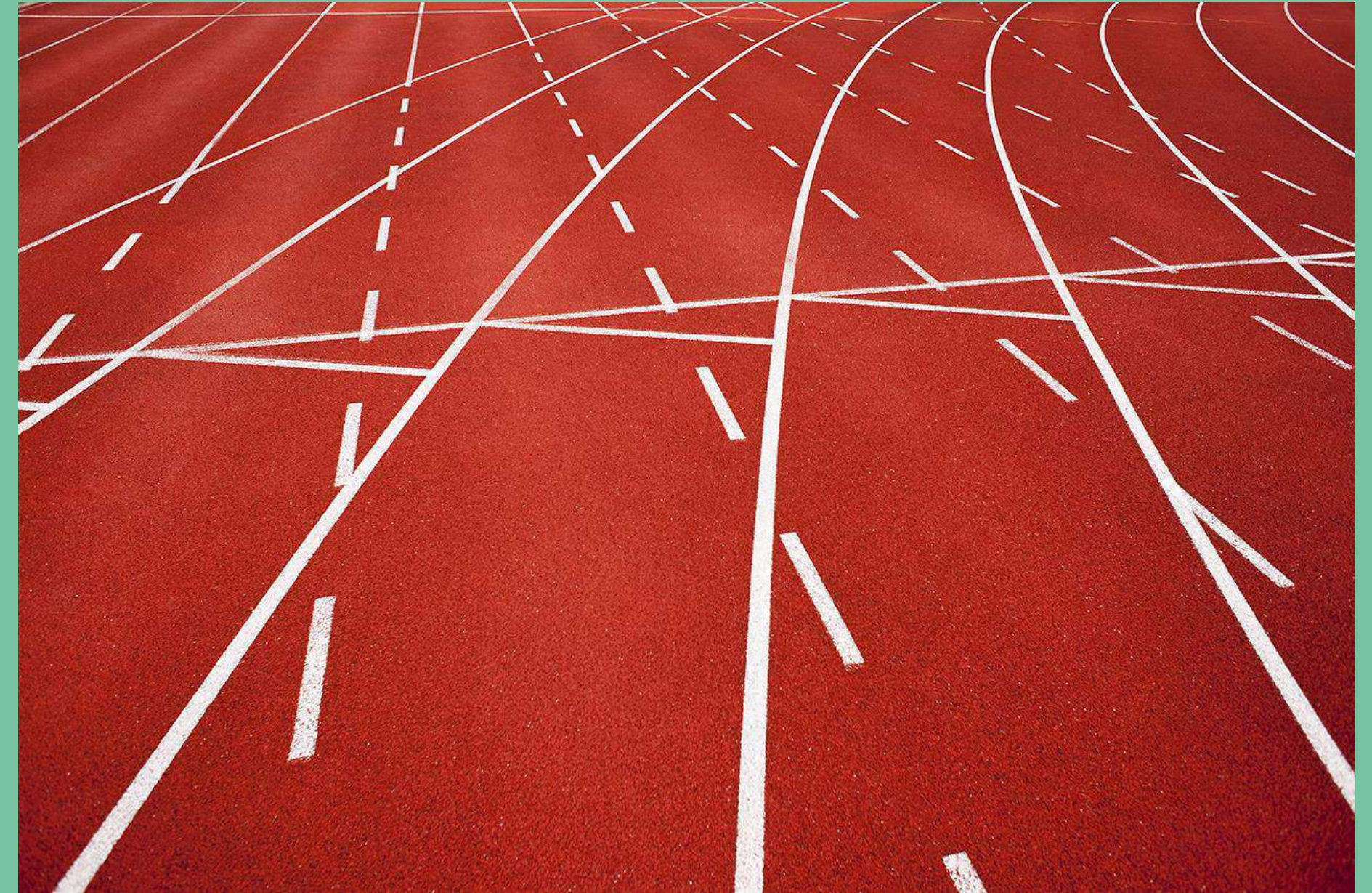
- relationships, partnerships, referral pathways
- priority groups
- integrated practice
- resourcing





**Do we work well  
together as a sector?**

**Does our sector work  
well with others?**





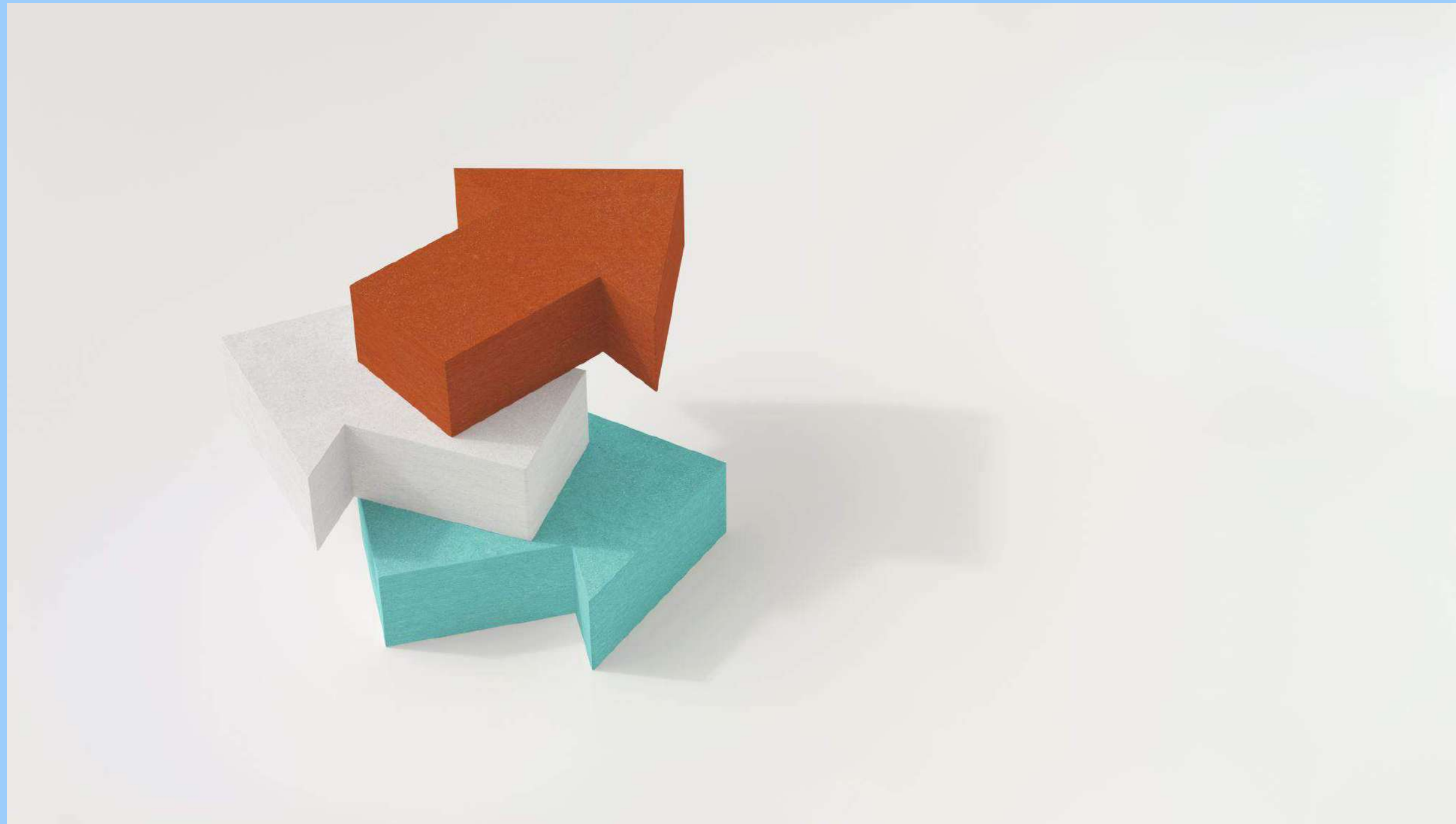
# Sector capability

## Discussion

How can we build our capability to work with users of violence as a sector?

If a large tender came out and our sector wanted to be at the forefront, what would the sector need to do this work well?

# Recognising and overcoming challenges





- unbiased approach
- cultural challenges
- maintaining boundaries
- overwhelmed/aggressive clients
- overbearing family members or support with clients
- stone-walling; one answer responses
- clients feeling forced to engage
- unrealistic expectations
- threats to personal safety

**Can you identify any more possible challenges in the court setting?**

**How to overcome these limitations/challenges?**