

# media release

Monday, 16 May 2016

## Local services convene to stop domestic violence

With Mosman Council support, local organisations will hold a forum in Mosman for workers to develop their knowledge and confidence in supporting people and families impacted by domestic violence.

The forum follows a meeting convened by Mosman Council in November last year and involving police, health services, local women's refuges, Lifeline, and representatives from the Lower North Shore Domestic Violence Network to seek advice from these organisations on how Council could support their efforts in preventing domestic violence.

The Domestic Violence Network successfully applied for a Council community grant last year to undertake the forum, to bring together staff from domestic violence support services, schools, counselling services, community-based organisations, and community centres across the lower north shore. The Forum will be held on the 19<sup>th</sup> May and will be opened by the Mayor of Mosman, Cr Peter Abelson.

Sue Spencer, Chairperson of the Lower North Shore Domestic Violence Network, which focusses on prevention, community education and raising awareness of the issue and available support, highlighted the importance of educating staff in services used by families, including early childhood services, youth services, schools, aged services and general practitioners.

"Domestic violence happens on the North Shore too, and across all age spectrums and socio-economic groups" she said. "In trying to address this insidious issue, we need to involve services that have direct contact with our residents and develop their capacity to offer information, support and referral to specialist domestic violence services to those affected".

According to Ms Spencer, local initiatives have been supported by the increased public awareness of the issue through the work of the 2015 Australian of the Year, Rosie Batty and state and national campaigns. Domestic and Family Violence Month is held during May each year to raise community awareness and promote a clear message that domestic and family violence will not be tolerated in our communities.

Domestic violence, family violence and domestic abuse are all terms to describe behaviour that occurs in a family or close personal relationship and is violent, threatening, coercive or controlling or causes a victim to live in fear. While it can happen to anyone, the majority of cases are perpetuated by a man against a woman and may take many forms such as physical violence, sexual abuse, psychological and emotional abuse, verbal abuse and intimidation, economic and social deprivation, damage to personal property and abuse of power.

For further information and support visit the Network's website at [www.northshoredomesticviolence.org.au](http://www.northshoredomesticviolence.org.au) or phone the NSW Domestic Violence Line 1800 65 64 63 (24 hours per day, 7 days per week).



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