

Mobile women-only police stations needed in regional and rural areas

February 24 2016

Mobile women's police stations are needed to reach women in regional and rural areas to provide information, advice and support to help prevent domestic abuse, says Professor Kerry Carrington head of QUT's School of Justice.

"Australia has concentrated on providing post-assault intervention to address the devastating impact of [domestic violence](#)," said Professor Carrington, who is speaking at the Sydney Opera House this weekend at the All About Women festival.

"An example of this is Queensland's specialist Domestic Violence Court but we need to prioritise the prevention of violence in the home, especially in hard-to-reach vulnerable populations in remote and [rural areas](#), to reduce the proportion of deaths and the pervasiveness of assaults against [women](#) in the first place."

Professor Carrington has studied women-only [police stations](#) which began in Brazil and are now found throughout South America.

"Argentina has mobile women's police stations that rove the countryside, handing out information, and providing women with advice and support," she said.

"In Australia, we need more creative thinking about how domestic violence services operate in rural and regional Australia, in Indigenous, ethnically diverse and new migrant communities.

"Domestic violence police stations or units with a broad mandate for prevention are a cost-effective way of preventing lethal domestic violence from occurring or reoccurring.

"We need to prioritise the prevention of domestic violence."

Professor Carrington said mobile police units staffed mainly by women would be part of her proposal to establish domestic violence police stations in Australia.

"Unlike the hard, steely seat of the grey waiting areas of dimly lit police stations, domestic violence police stations or units would reduce the stigma and discomfort of reporting abuse, enhance victims' access to justice and reduce the lethality of domestic violence," she said.

In Australia 41 per cent of homicides were victims of domestic and [family violence](#); 23 per cent of homicide victims were killed by an intimate partner, while 18 per cent were killed by another family member.

"Too many domestic violence deaths have occurred due to the lack of information-sharing across the busy field of non-government and government agencies involved in responding to this largely hidden crime."

Provided by Queensland University of Technology

Citation: Mobile women-only police stations needed in regional and rural areas (2016, February 24) retrieved 24 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2016-02-mobile-women-only-police-stations-regional.html>

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