

# Strengthening Hospitals Responses To Family Violence A Rural Perspective

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# Violence with the Community

- Violence within the community is a real and significant issue
- No one is immune for violence within the community
- No one is immune from Family Violence

# Rates of violence against women and men

Since the age of 15:

**1 in 5** Australian women had experienced **sexual violence**.

**1 in 6** Australian women had experienced **physical or sexual violence** from a current or former partner.

**1 in 4** Australian women had experienced **emotional abuse** by a current or former partner.

**1 in 3** Australian women had experienced **physical violence**.

**1 in 22** Australian men had experienced **sexual violence**.

**1 in 19** Australian men had experienced **physical or sexual violence** from a current or former partner.

**1 in 7** Australian men had experienced **emotional abuse** by a current or former partner.

**1 in 2** Australian men had experienced **physical violence**.

***It is more likely for a person to experience violence from a male rather than a female perpetrator.***

Over 3 times as many people experienced violence from a male.

# The Beginning

- Haley born on the 30<sup>th</sup> May 2007
  - Died 2<sup>nd</sup> of August 2009 from a head injury,
  - Initially admitted to St Arnaud and then transferred to RCH, where Haley passed away.
  - Haley's father suicided shortly after the death of Haley.
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- This was foreseeable and potentially preventable
  - As a health sector, as a community, as a society we failed this family.



# HALEY

- Died 2/8/2009 from a head injury, initially admitted to St Arnaud and then transferred to RCH.
- The family recently relocated to St Arnaud
- The Family Experienced
  - Family Violence
  - Accommodation Instability
  - Financial Strain
  - D&A misuse
  - Other Social Difficulties
- Following separation Hayley and her sibling stay with their father
- Long standing DHHS involvement

# Coroners Recommendations

- Victoria Police develop better training
- Better engagement with Vic Police and DHHS
- Review of early intervention and family supports within the region
- Specific education to those investigating child abuse within Vic Police and DHHS
- That the sector works together increasing sector cohesiveness

# Response

- EWHS has been part of the response in strengthening the relationships between the various parts of the sector.
- This has included all areas including DHHS, Vic Police, Child Care, Schools and Health
- This has resulted in some great work and better working relationships.

# Strengthening Hospitals Response to Family Violence

- Family violence is a serious health issue that predominantly affects women and children and profoundly impacts upon psychological and physical well-being. Family violence in all its forms is always unacceptable.
- <https://www.thewomens.org.au/>
- <http://haveyoursay.thewomens.org.au/shrfv-project>





# What is Family Violence?

# Defining Family Violence Behaviour

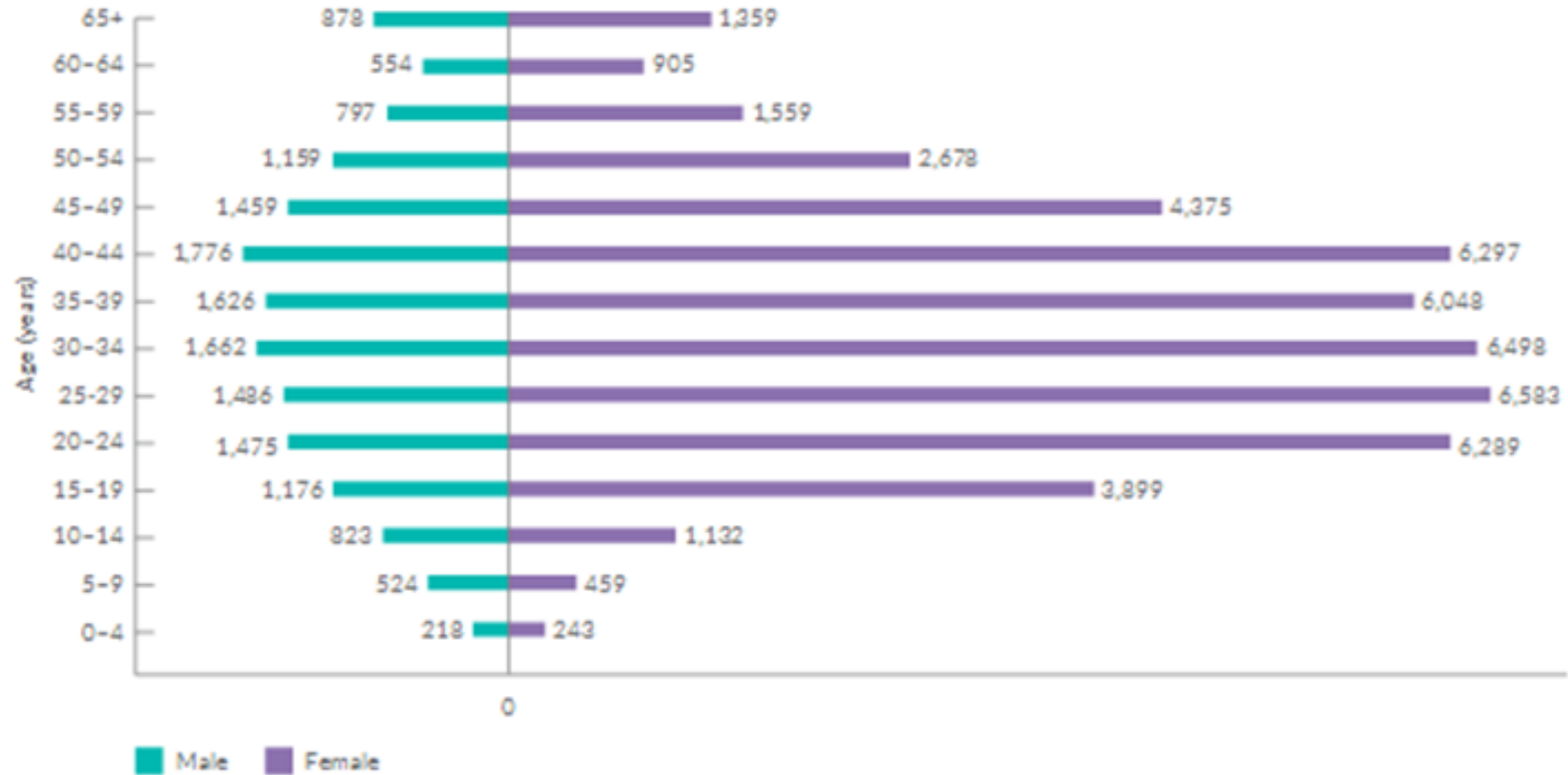
- Family violence is **behaviour by a person towards a family member of that person that:**
  - is physically or sexually abusive
  - is emotionally or psychologically abusive
  - is economically abusive
  - is threatening
  - is coercive
  - in any other way controls or dominates the family member and causes that family member to feel fear for the safety or wellbeing of that family member or another person.

*FAMILY VIOLENCE PROTECTION ACT 2008 (VIC)*

Family violence is **behaviour by a person towards a family member of that person that:**

- in any other way **controls or dominates** the family member and causes that family member to **feel fear** for the safety or wellbeing of that family member or another person.

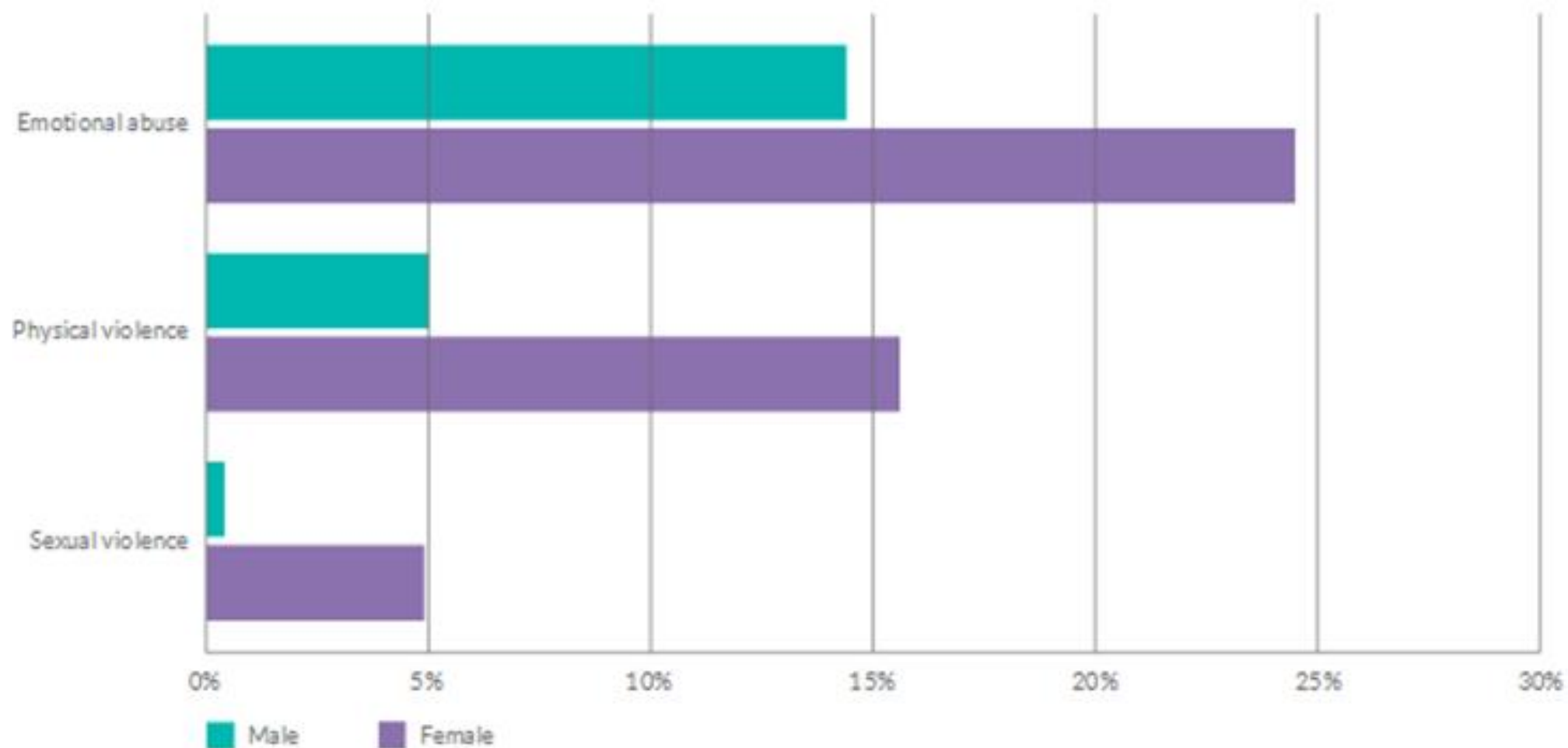
Figure 32.1 Affected family members, by age and sex: Victoria Police, 2013-14



Source: Crime Statistics Agency, *An Overview of Family Violence in Victoria: Findings from the Victorian Family Violence Database 2009-10 to 2013-14* (January 2016), Figure 4: Sex and age of affected family members - Victoria Police, July 2013 to June 2014, 27, provided to the Commission by the Crime Statistics Agency, 8 January 2016.



Figure 3.1 Experience of emotional, physical or sexual family violence by a partner or ex-partner since the age of 15: Australia, 2012



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, 'Personal Safety Survey, Australia, 2012' (Catalogue No 4906.0, Australian Bureau of Statistics, December 2013), Table 4.

# Those that are inflicting Family Violence


## Gender of perpetrators

Perpetrators of family violence against adult males tend to be both male and female, whereas perpetrators of family violence against adult females are mostly male. Research from the Victorian Family Violence Database (which examined court and police data from July 2009 to June 2014)<sup>26</sup> showed that in original applications for a family violence intervention order:

- ▶ Adult perpetrators of family violence against adult males were 43 per cent male ( $n=3111$ ) and 57 per cent female ( $n=4119$ ).<sup>26</sup>
- ▶ On the other hand, adult perpetrators of family violence against adult females were 90 per cent male ( $n=19,900$ ).<sup>27</sup>
- ▶ For both genders, the majority of adult perpetrators of the opposite sex were a current or former partner, whereas the majority of adult perpetrators of the same sex were another family member (that is, not a same-sex current or former partner).<sup>28</sup>



# MODULE 1: A SHARED UNDERSTANDING

- Demystifying Family Violence
    - Prevalence
    - Risk Factors
    - Gender Analysis
    - Myths
  - Health Impacts
  - Professional Responsibility
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# Module 2: Identifying and Responding Session Summary

- Clinical Risk Indicators
- Sensitive Practice
- Six step Brief Intervention
  - Identify through Sensitive Inquiry
  - Brief Supportive Response
  - Identify Risk Factors
  - Action Planning
  - Referral
  - Documentation
- Staff Support



# EWHS Approach

- Executive Sponsor
- Commenced the process with staff engagement
- Taking a whole of health service approach
- Our staff represent approximately 5% of the community
- Work force is highly education, motivated and leaders within the communities we serve.

# Staff Engagement

- Staff believe that both genders can experience Family Violence
- There was a clear expectation that both genders should be represented in any approach.

# Rurafication of the program

- EWHS will tailor the program to our staff and our catchment
- Capture Family Violence across the board, acting engaging all who have or are experiencing Family Violence.
- Utilising the Sensitive Enquiry modules, role out this education to all health service staff (Clinical and Non Clinical)

# Questions