**Facts on Violence against Women with Disabilities**

**Why are we focusing on women with disabilities?**

Violence against women is a serious, widespread problem in Australia

Approximately **1 in 4 women** has experienced violence by an intimate partner.\(^1\)

Intimate partner violence is a **leading contributor to illness, disability and premature death** for women aged 18–44 years.\(^2\)

On average, **one woman a week** in Australia is killed by an intimate partner.\(^3\)

**Women with disabilities experience higher rates of violence**

Women with disabilities are more likely to experience violence than those without disabilities.\(^4\)

Women with disabilities experience higher rates of violence over longer periods of time, in more settings, and by more perpetrators.\(^5\)

Over one-third of women with disabilities experience some form of intimate partner violence.\(^6\)

More than 70% of women with disabilities have experienced a violent sexual encounter.\(^7\)

**Some women with disabilities experience even higher rates of violence and discrimination**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women experience **higher rates** of disability than non-Indigenous women.\(^8\)

They also experience **disproportionate rates of family violence compared to non-Indigenous women**.\(^9\)

LGBTQI+ people with disabilities experience higher rates of crime, violence and discrimination.\(^12\)

More than half of all incarcerated women in Australian prisons have a diagnosed psychosocial disability and a history of sexual victimisation.\(^10\)

Women with disabilities from refugee or migrant backgrounds are less likely to report acts of violence or access disability services.\(^11\)

Women make up 74% of all elder abuse victims, many of whom are also living with disabilities.\(^13\)

**Women with disabilities face unique challenges in seeking support for violence**

Women with disabilities are often exposed to other **risk factors** for violence, such as experience **living in institutions** or being dependent on informal or formal care in the home.\(^15\)

Women with disabilities are less likely to report violence or access support services, and their experiences of violence are more likely to be minimised, excused or not believed.\(^16\)

Women with disabilities are less likely to receive support due to:
- inaccessible information and communication
- physical barriers to services
- not knowing their rights.\(^17\)
Sources

12. Leonard, W., Mann, Dr. R., (2018). The everyday experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people living with disability, No.111 GLHV@ARCSHS, La Trobe University: Melbourne.