

Steps to Disability Inclusive Prevention of Violence Against Women-A Brief Guide

Did you know that:

- Intersecting factors of gender and disability inequality are key drivers for women with disabilities who experience violence at a higher rate than women without disabilities.
- Regional primary prevention of violence against women strategies and plans can be strengthened to address both the gender and disability drivers of violence and avoid marginalising women with disabilities.
- Women with disabilities and disability organisations can be engaged in regional primary prevention planning efforts as staff, volunteers, advisors, and partners, increasing the effectiveness and reach of violence prevention strategies
- The guide below sets out actions which your organisation can take to challenge the condoning of violence against women with disabilities, promote the independence and decision making of women with disabilities, foster positive personal identities and challenge gender stereotypes and roles, and promote and normalise the equality of women with disabilities in public and private life.

1. Create Inclusive Attitudes and Build Staff Capacity

You can achieve this by:

- Ensuring access to periodic training on disability and intersectionality
- Creating and using your organisation's accessibility action plan
- Including disability in your organisation's policies and plans

2. Build your organisation's knowledge and capacity of the intersectional impact of violence against women with disabilities

You can achieve this by:

GPO Box 1160, Melbourne VIC 3001

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- Assessing current staff knowledge about the prevalence and types of violence against women with disabilities, its drivers and risk factors and essential actions for its prevention
- Assessing staff knowledge of indicators of violence against women with disabilities and appropriate responses to disclosures
- Assessing how staff manage risk and prioritise the safety of victim/survivors of violence with a lived experience of disability whom they encounter
- Incorporating disability and intersectionality into the design, implementation, and monitoring of PVAW activities within your organisation
- Incorporating disability and intersectionality into the evaluation of PVAW activities undertaken through your organisation
- Taking part in advocacy for policy and practice reforms concerning prevention of violence against women with disabilities
- Building gender equality and safety of women from violence into your organisation's HR and well-being policies and procedures

3. Build disability inclusion in your organisation's internal and external communication practices

You can achieve this by:

- Providing training and information to staff concerning methods of accessible communication and the organisation's expectations regarding their use
- Ensuring website compliance with WCAG 2.1 standards for web accessibility, and procurement of IT services who demonstrate compliance with these standards in their website or software design
- Providing access to a hearing loop when holding public meetings or events, or at other times upon request
- Production of your organisation's communication material in a variety of accessible formats, including plain English, and monitoring and review document accessibility
- Promoting the use of accessible communication in your organisation's policies and procedures
- Providing verbal descriptions of visual material produced or displayed by your organisation, including PowerPoint slides, pictures, graphics, videos, and subtitled content
- Including positive portrayals of women with diverse disabilities in your visual media

4. Allocate resources to ensure disability inclusion occurs

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- Allocation of specific human and financial resources by executive and senior leaders to address disability inclusion in operations, programs, and strategy
- Identifying physical, financial, and human resources available in your local community to support disability inclusive PVAW practice
- Ensuring staff have access to evidence-based knowledge concerning violence against women with disabilities and programming strategies for its prevention
- Evaluating the effectiveness of your disability inclusive PVAW activities and building on the evidence generated

5. Create a disability inclusive environment for staff, volunteers and leaders

You can achieve this by:

- Clearly stating your commitment to disability inclusion in your organisation's media and in advertisements and position descriptions for paid and unpaid roles
- Making position descriptions available in accessible formats as standard procedure
- Including affirmative action for women with disabilities into recruitment policies and procedures
- Clearly stating your organisation's commitment to meeting candidate access requirements for applications and interviews
- Employment of a variety of methods and consideration of diverse forms of experience in assessment of candidate suitability
- Offering alternative work opportunities, such as volunteering, internships, work experience, job sharing and carving
- Providing staff with disabilities equitable opportunities for professional development, career growth and promotion
- Asking about employees' accessibility requirements
- Phrasing role requirements to reflect desired outcomes rather than specific inputs
- Redesigning roles to meet accessibility requirements

6. Frame your organisation's strategy and partnerships within an intersectional disability inclusive perspective

You can achieve this by:

- Collaborating with women with disabilities and their organisations when planning, implementing, and evaluating PVAW activities

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- Including the rights, needs and experiences of women with disabilities in your PVAW activities
- Participating in disability inclusive PVAW activities within your region
- Collaborating with other regional partners to undertake inclusive PVAW activities
- Expressing your commitment to inclusive practice in your organisational strategy

7. Host events which are accessible for all participants

You can achieve this by:

- Promoting events using accessible communication formats, and providing contact details for event organisers
- Encouraging participants to make their access requirements known and documenting these requirements to facilitate planning for further action
- Holding events in venues which are physically accessible and located in close proximity to accessible public transport
- Ensuring event venues have accessible bathroom facilities close to the main event area, available to participants for the duration of the event
- Ensuring event venues are consistently and evenly lit
- Arranging seating to accommodate participants using wheelchairs
- Ensuring access to the stage or podium is possible for everyone
- Allocating staff to offer assistance to event participants
- Providing facilities for assistance dogs
- Providing quiet break out spaces
- Using hearing loops and Aslan interpreters
- Locating catering areas as close as possible to the main event space
- Allocating staff to assist with access to catering and clearly labelling all food items
- Offering chairs/tables in the catering area
- Providing a choice of cups, mugs and drinking plastic straws

8. Ensure your organisation's building is accessible

You can achieve this by:

- Sourcing premises which comply with Australian standards of physical accessibility, located near accessible public transport
- Ensuring the entrance to your building is clearly signposted, is accessible without steps, is evenly and consistently lit and is wide enough to accommodate the passage of a wheelchair
- Ensuring your lobby area is evenly and consistently lit and is large enough to accommodate the passage of a wheelchair

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- Keeping corridors and open spaces throughout the building clear of clutter and obstacles, clearly signposting common areas
- Providing lift access for buildings comprising more than one level
- Ensuring doors are easy to open, and are wide enough to accommodate passage of a wheelchair

9. Provide accessible hygiene facilities

You can achieve this by:

- Clearly signposting accessible hygiene facilities
- Ensuring bathroom areas are compliant with Australian Accessibility standards
- Keeping pathways to the accessible bathroom and the bathroom area clear of obstacles
- Ensuring bathroom occupants can access an emergency alarm

10. Ensure your emergency and evacuation procedures are accessible

You can achieve this by:

- Using both visual and auditory alarms
- Allocating staff to assist occupants with disabilities to evacuate during an emergency
- Clearly signposting emergency exits
- Keeping pathways to emergency exits clear of clutter and obstacles
- Ensuring pathways to external evacuation sites are step free, and making internal evacuation sites available as alternatives
- Ensuring that the person responsible for managing emergency evacuation is trained in inclusive emergency evacuation procedures
- Developing personal emergency and evacuation plans with regular building occupants with disabilities
- Holding regular emergency evacuation drills

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