

# Appendix H: Prevention of domestic and family violence campaign

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## PREVENTION OF DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

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## BACKGROUND

The following resolutions were passed at the 2015 Synod:

That the Convention of Synod reaffirms its condemnation of all forms of violence in the family and authorises GCC to commit resources for a churchwide campaign to address the prevalence of Family Violence amongst us, which may include sharing of resources, education initiatives and the provision of pastoral care to the survivors of violence, as well as the perpetrators of abuse.

and

That Synod request CTICR study the Lutheran theological and scriptural understanding of subordination and the role of male headship in marriage and the contextual implications for family violence.

The former was submitted by the committee that is responding to Royal Commissions and Inquiries, supported by the LCA's Commission on Social and Bioethical Questions. The latter was proposed from the floor of Synod and addressed by the Commission on Theology and Inter Church Relations (CTICR).

A small working group was established, comprising representatives from CTICR, the Working Group for the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence and CSBQ and has submitted a draft statement to CTICR.

A concept document was approved by the General Church Council in 2016 and a coordinator, Ian Rentsch, was appointed in November 2016.

The 'Hidden Hurts Healing Hearts' campaign is based on the principles set out in the LCA Standards of Ethical Behaviour which promote compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience within relationships.<sup>1</sup> It supports the LCA Statement on Marriage.<sup>2</sup>

The campaign consists of training, research, identifying and developing resources, recommending and implementing specific actions.

The campaign involves the congregations/parishes, institutions/organisations, departments and ministries of the LCA.

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<sup>1</sup> See LCA Standards of Ethical Behaviour and related policies which include: Prevention of Harassment and Abuse Policy; Privacy Policy; Training and Development Policy; Child Protection Policy; Prevention of Risk of Harm from Known Sex Offenders; ICT Policy.

<sup>2</sup> Marriage, Divorce and Re-Marriage found in *Doctrinal Statements and Theological Opinions* Vol 1 – H Ethical and Social Issues

## ACHIEVEMENT AGAINST PLAN

Outcomes	Planned Annual Activities/ Outcomes	Achievement of Annual Activities/Outcomes
1. Increased level of respectful behaviour that is exhibited within the LCA toward each other leading to a culture of zero tolerance for domestic violence and violence in all forms	Statements on domestic violence	Heartland e-news statements drafted and disseminated under the name of Bishop Henderson, and timed to coincide with the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women in November 2016 and 2017.
2. Greater awareness and understanding of the prevalence of domestic and family violence affected families and individuals within the LCA	Communications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of The Lutheran</li> <li>• Heartland eNews</li> <li>• Website</li> <li>• Direct communications to congregations and parishes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communications theme: Hidden Hurts/Healing Hearts</li> <li>• The Lutheran feature articles: November 2017</li> <li>• Heartland e-news features: November 2016 and 2017</li> <li>• Website launched November 2017 (preventDFV@lca.org.au)</li> <li>• Awareness-raising packs to congregations November 2017</li> <li>• Letter sent to all Lutheran schools in April 2018.</li> </ul>
3. Improved knowledge of the resources that are available within the community for those affected by domestic and family violence and how they can be accessed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify services and resources for each State/Territory</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lists of services for each State/Territory and information resources listed on website</li> <li>• Additional information and resources also listed.</li> </ul>
4. Increased capacity within the LCA to respond to domestic and family violence-related matters, including pastoral care expertise and resourcing to support the victims of violence and perpetrators of abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publication of the Domestic Violence Handbook for Pastors and Church Workers</li> <li>• Training for pastors, church workers and lay people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Domestic Violence handbook published and distributed to all pastors</li> <li>• Training package being finalised by Lutheran Community Care (SA/NT). Will be trialled in South Australia, Queensland and Victoria</li> </ul>
5. A Lutheran theology that is culturally relevant to family and domestic violence in the present day that undergirds and is integrated into relevant programs and activities that are both developed and delivered during the campaign and into the future.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepare introduction on Lutheran theological basis for respectful relationships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Scriptural and Theological Foundations” supplement written and included in the Domestic Violence Handbook.</li> <li>• Coordinator and another Working Group member participated in task group to consider Synod Resolution 2015:0209: <i>that Synod request CTICR to study the Lutheran theological and scriptural understanding of sub-ordination and</i></li> </ul>

## **SUCSESSES**

- Campaign launched in November 2017 (after a 'soft launch' in August 2017)
- Domestic Violence Handbook revised and reprinted and distributed to pastors and church workers throughout the LCA and New Zealand
- Congregations and schools now requesting additional materials

## **CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED**

- A number of pastors and members questioned the campaign, or the information that has come from the campaign.
  - More awareness training and information sharing needs to be done in face-to-face situations so that the issues can be talked through.
- The launch of the campaign was planned to coincide with the International Day for the Prevention of Violence Against Women, which was Saturday 25 November. In Australia, the day is also known as White Ribbon Day. Unfortunately, the White Ribbon organisation in Australia had issued a policy advocating the availability of abortions for women who have been the victims of domestic violence a short time before White Ribbon Day last year, which caused individuals and organisations to distance themselves from the Hidden Hurts/Healing Hearts campaign. Bishop Henderson issued a clarifying statement to confirm that the intention was to highlight information provided by White Ribbon about stopping male violence and discernment should be exercised in regard to other material on the site, particularly where it may conflict with teachings and positions held by the church.
- The launch also coincided with a busy time in the church calendar, prompting a number of congregations to delay the launch until 2018.
- Statistical data associated with social issues, such as domestic violence, can be contestable. The Working Group recognised that it may have been preferable to use data sparingly, so that it did not distract from the campaign.

## **PROJECT RISK ASSESSMENT**

<b>Description of Risk</b>	<b>Likelihood of risk occurring and potential impact for the ministry and LCA</b>	<b>Summary of Action to Mitigate the Risk</b>
<b>1. The perception by some that domestic and family violence is not relevant within the LCA</b>	High	<b>Stories of Lutheran victims featured in The Lutheran (November 2017)</b>
<b>2. Lack of resources to undertake the campaign</b>	Low in the short-term	<b>The LLL has provided generous funding to support the campaign. The coordinator to continue to explore external funding.</b>
<b>3. The campaign is not taken seriously by those who do not see</b>	High	<b>The Coordinator and another Working Group member participated in the Task</b>

women as created equal by God		Group to consider Synod Resolution 2015:0209
4. Information and resources are not disseminated uniformly	High	The campaign has uses as many distribution channels as possible to make information and resources available across the church
5. Information does not reach widely across the church, particularly congregations	High	The campaign will continue to use as many communication channels as possible to disseminate information.

## ALIGNMENT TO LCA STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2013–2018

### Priority Area 1: Grow as God's People Goal 3

Develop a strong culture of service in individuals, families and communities, both locally and overseas, as a natural outworking of an active faith. This will also encompass respectful relationships in marriages, families and church communities.

### Priority Area 3: Enable us to Go and Grow – Assets and Resources: Goal C1

Enhance care of our people, especially church workers and their families.

## COOPERATING LCA BOARDS AND AGENCIES

**General Church Council:** To oversee and provide resourcing for the project.

**College of Bishops:** The Bishops were invited in August 2017 to be champions of the project and that they will model appropriate behaviour and promote it as part of their role.

**Professional Standards Department** were invited to integrate information about domestic and family violence into their training. There is continuing contact with PSD to ensure information regarding domestic and family violence is incorporated into PSD training.

**Lutheran Education Australia** were approached to incorporate material that has been developed specifically for schools (eg by NAPCAN) into the curriculum. The LEA Director has sent out a letter to all pre-schools, primary and secondary schools, alerting them to the campaign and inviting them to seek more information and provide training for staff.

**Lutheran Community Care (SA/NT & Qld)** are implementing partners in the campaign, particularly engaged in the development and delivery of training and, where possible and appropriate, service provision.

**Lutheran Media Ministry** may become a partner to develop and disseminate resources, including stories of hope using the theme of domestic and family violence.

**Grow Ministries and District Departments** with their focus on child, youth and family ministry have the potential to support the campaign through integration of domestic violence issues into their resources and training. Grow Ministries will send out information as part of their kits to congregations.

**LCA Communications Department** supports the campaign by disseminating information, primarily through a special campaign website, about initiatives and resources that are developed within the LCA and that are available in the wider community.

**Church Worker Support Department** will be asked to consider how LCA HR policies and practices recognise and show sensitivity to the issue, and submit proposed changes to GCC for approval.

**Commission on Worship** will be approached to develop and provide resources that are pertinent to those affected by domestic and family violence.

**Australian Lutheran College** is considered a key partner in the following ways:

*Pastoral training:* ensuring pastoral students are sensitised to the domestic violence issues they are likely to face during their ministry

*Grassroots:* to assist in the development and delivery of training: either integrated into their existing training programs and/or as specific training (delivered face to face or in an on-line environment)

*ALITE:* Possible engagement to undertake action/reflection research over the course of the campaign to better understand this issue within the LCA and the impact on its people.

**Aged Care services** will continue to provide information and training about elder abuse as well as about family and domestic violence. They will comply with their legislated requirements to report such elder abuse.

**Districts:** With the encouragement and oversight of the Bishop, districts will sponsor, promote and support the campaign.

**Congregations/Parishes:** there are many congregations that have promoted and supported their members participation in the campaign.