



The Effectiveness of Services Delivered by DOVE Hawkes Bay Inc

Summary Report

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What was good about DOVE is it just makes you sit and think. Shows you the damage you are doing and that it is all about your own choices not about anybody else. It was bringing back a lot of things that I knew and I learnt a lot of new things as well.

Men's Service User

It was a very helpful positive experience, but in the beginning it was awful. You have to face this stuff. They kept saying keep coming, it gets better. Those promises are what kept me coming back...it was only because you were facing stuff that was so raw.

Women's Service User

Who would benefit from DOVE?

- A person with anger problems –*
- that just loves to fight and stuff –*
- yeah –*
- yeah, I know loads of boys like that.*

Focus group of high school boys who had participated in DOVE Programmes





Summary

Background

New Zealand has made international commitments under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women to secure equality for women, including addressing the high prevalence of violence against women (Fenrich & Contesse, 2009). Nationally, it is estimated that one in three women has been the victim of family violence (Fenrich and Contesse, 2009)¹. Family violence also negatively impacts children and men. The Eastern Police District (which included Hawke's Bay) has higher than average rates for call-outs to offences relating to family violence (New Zealand Police, 2011).

The World Health Organisation's framework for developing policies and programmes to address family violence acknowledges that the harm caused by family violence can last a lifetime and span generations. To address this, data-driven and evidence based primary prevention programmes are recommended (Garcia-Moreno and Mikton, 2010). Yet despite New Zealand's generally sound legislative framework for dealing with family violence, there has been a lack of evaluation of the effectiveness of programmes and services (Fenrich and Contesse, 2009).

The DOVE Research Project came about after discussions between DOVE Hawkes Bay (DOVE) and the Eastern Institute of Technology (EIT). Given the high levels of family violence in Hawke's Bay, DOVE and EIT believed it was important to undertake research into the efficacy of DOVE's family violence intervention services. In particular, we were interested in whether DOVE's services were resulting in long-lasting positive changes for individuals, families and whānau.

The project was funded by a New Zealand Lotteries Commission Research Grant. Collection of research data focused particularly on the six months 1 July – 31 December 2011.

1 The term 'family violence' is used throughout this report. Related terms include domestic violence/abuse, and intimate-partner violence/abuse.





Research Questions

The project research questions were:

- Do DOVE's intervention and education programmes make differences for participants (protagonists and victims) and their whānau?
- If so, what differences and for whom?

The research investigated common features that lead to positive outcomes across services, unique features of particular programmes or interventions, effectiveness for particular client groups, and aspects of services that could be improved or expanded.

Method

A mixed quantitative and qualitative method was used. The quantitative data included a three-year statistical overview, as well as analysis of service use data from 1 July-31 December 2011. Interview data was collected from men, women and youth clients; DOVE staff and external stakeholders. In addition, a number of narratives were collected and collated from individuals who had used DOVE's services, tracing their journeys with violence, working with DOVE and changes made to reduce family violence in their lives.

Findings

Client Population

Attendance at DOVE is a result of multiple factors, including presence of violence, involvement in criminal and family justice systems, motivation for change and service accessibility. DOVE clients' backgrounds span a socio-economic and cultural range.





In the period 2008 -2010:

- DOVE had over 1900 client enrolments
- 60% of clients were male and 40% female
- 47% of clients were European, 32 % Māori, and 7 % Pacific Island. 12 % did not state an ethnicity
- Clients were predominantly between mid-20s and 40 years old. The most common client age was 32 - 33 years
- Men's Service clients were referred from the Community Probation Service, referred from the Family Court and self-referred in roughly equal numbers.

In the period 1 July – 31 December 2011, 88% of women attending DOVE were self referred. 9% were referred by the Family Court and 3% by the Community Probations Service.

In the period 1 July – 31 December 2011, schools and agencies accounted for 41% of youth referrals, followed by 18% from CYF, 17% self-referrals, 14% from family and 7% from friends.

The research revealed that many male and female clients were grappling with issues that complicated attempts to become free of family violence, including high levels of past trauma. Alcohol and other drug issues were often linked to family violence, and the desire to be *free of alcohol, drugs and violence* is expressed as a single concept.

In addition, enrolments increased with level of socio-economic deprivation, and were especially high for those living in decile 10 areas (the most deprived, as measured by NZDEP Index (Salmond, Crampton and Atkinson, 2007)).





Effectiveness of DOVE's Services

The research data showed that DOVE makes a worthwhile and positive contribution to the safety of Hawke's Bay families. Triangulation of findings from multiple data sources indicated that DOVE helped to address family violence in the Hawke's Bay by providing male and female perpetrators with effective tools to reduce their violent or abusive behaviour, offering support and education to female victims, and providing education and counselling to youth affected by family violence or anger management issues.

Family violence is a complex issue requiring a multi-dimensional response. DOVE provides this through services including group and individual programmes for men, women and youth; individual support services, nurturing the development of a Pacific Men's service, interagency collaboration and other efforts.

The holistic, personalised and flexible aspects of DOVE's service provision were extremely highly valued by clients and stakeholders. This included some individual services, support to overcome barriers to attending programmes, and the provision of individual programmes. The transformation these programmes and services supported in individuals' and families' lives appeared to be one of DOVE's greatest strengths.

Participants in DOVE's group programmes can find the process challenging. A single DOVE programme was not always sufficient to transform a family's situation so as to eliminate family violence for them. Living without violence continued to be a challenge for some.

Nevertheless, as a result of DOVE's services, there were individuals, family and whānau whose lives were enhanced because they had developed strategies and behaviours to deal with anger and model non-violent behaviours to their children. For those who had experienced family violence, DOVE gave them opportunities to take control of their lives and move past previous situations of victimisation.

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Men's Services

DOVE's Men's Services focus on men as perpetrators of family violence. Psycho-educational group programmes appeared to make a positive difference for many participants. Many men rated tools such as: stop, time out, and acknowledging warning signs as highlights of their learning. Two highly regarded elements of DOVE's services for men were the provision of programmes in prison, and the Pacific Programme.

Women's Services

DOVE's Women's Services focus on women as both victims and perpetrators. After attending DOVE, women reported that they were safer and there was less violence in their homes than prior to attending. Women also indicated that they had improved self esteem and confidence, that they had different ideas about what was acceptable in relationships, and that they had made positive changes in their domestic relationships and their social support networks. Women attending group programmes found the support of other women in similar situations beneficial.

Youth Services

Youth Services focused on young people as perpetrators and victims of family violence and anger issues. These were highly regarded by stakeholders. In addition, the Safemates Programme delivered in schools was highly valued by school stakeholders and students interviewed. Its success relied firstly on the rapport built by DOVE facilitators, then on the content and presentation style. A great deal of concern was expressed at DOVE's subsequent winding down of the Youth Service.





Effectiveness for Māori

DOVE services were generally described as respectful towards Māori. Specific philosophical underpinnings and practices that helped Māori participants to feel respected were whakawhānaungatanga; manaakitanga; the appropriate use of karakia, mihi and pepeha; and the gifting of koha.

In the 6 month study period, 1 July – 31 December 2011, programme completion rates for Māori clients were lower than for non-Māori.

Given that Māori commence using DOVE services at higher rates than non-Māori, it is worth considering whether there is more DOVE could do to ensure Māori receive culturally suitable services. The individual services provided by suitably skilled staff were more able to be provided to Māori in culturally authentic ways.

Clients with Children

A large proportion of clients of the Men's and Women's Services were parents, and their children had been affected by family violence. There was evidence that negative effects on children of family violence were reduced through DOVE's work with their parents. In addition, children were a powerful motivation for change for both men and women.

Addressing Barriers to Access and Programme Completion

DOVE successfully addresses many barriers to participation. Nevertheless, barriers to access remain, particularly around transport, timing of group programmes and venues. Flaxmere stood out as an area that was underserved.

In the three-years from 2008-2010, the estimated programme completion rate was just over 71%. Women were more likely to complete than men.

Participants in both Men's and Women's Programmes may be excluded if they miss more than two sessions. Participants who are late for a session may be marked 'absent'. This can create barriers to programme completion.

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Funding frameworks may create barriers by working against flexible, holistic or collaborative approaches and creating perverse incentives in service provision.

Critical Staff Attributes

Building trusting relationships with staff was essential to clients' engagement. A great deal of evidence was recorded of positive relationships with DOVE staff, who were seen to have good rapport and be empathetic, calming, professional and authentic.

Collaboration

DOVE was held in very high regard in the community as experts in family violence prevention. The organisation played an essential role in community collaboration, including active engagement on interagency initiatives.

Narratives

Service users' narratives offer deeper insight into individuals' experiences of family violence, what it takes to achieve non-violent ways of living and the role services can play in supporting this change.





Recommendations

The research report concludes with recommendations to maintain and enhance the effectiveness and scope of DOVE's services. The recommendations relate to:

- programme provision
- holistic individual, family and whānau work
- access and cultural acceptability
- enrolling and exiting clients
- referrals and external assistance
- services for youth
- records and monitoring
- a potential couple's programme.





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