

SECTION 6

Results in additional programs

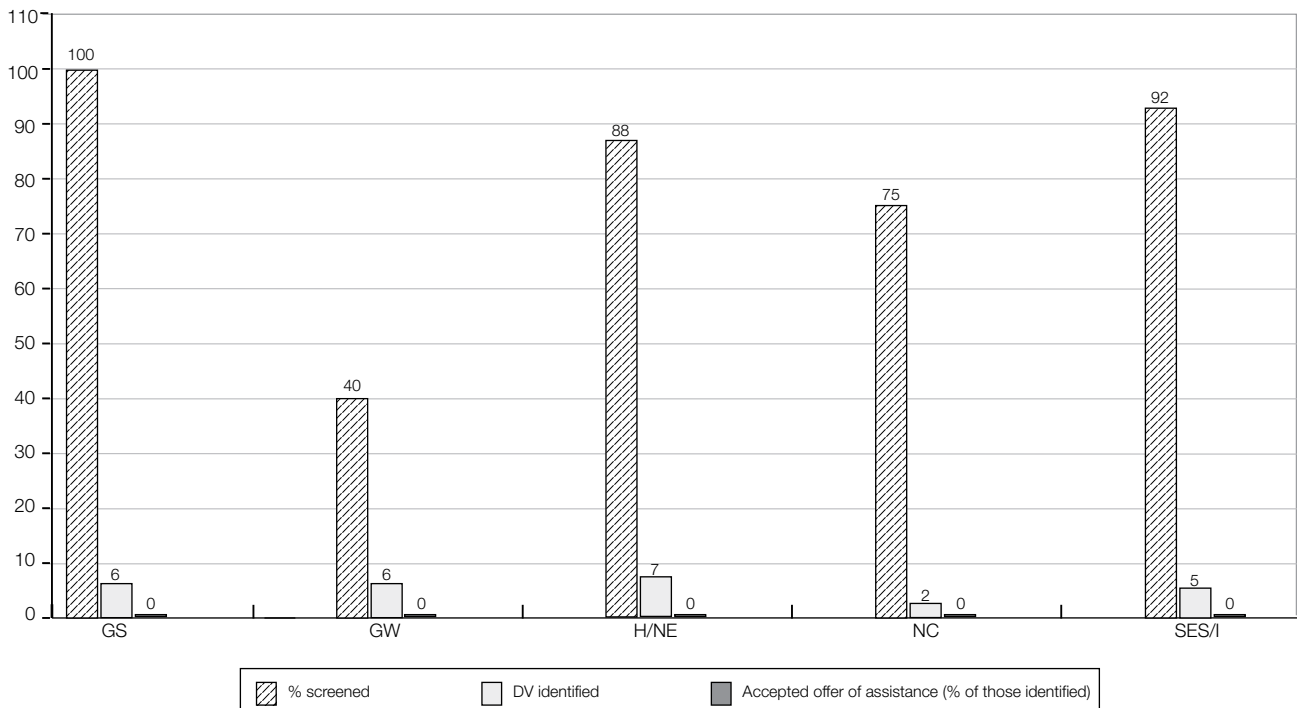
Many Area Health Services have elected to introduce screening into other service streams. Women’s health nursing services in particular have had a high rate of uptake of screening, which may reflect the holistic approach to health care typically taken by this service. South Eastern Sydney Illawarra is screening in sexual health and sexual assault services, Northern Sydney Central Coast is screening in sexual assault and youth health services, and Greater Southern is screening in social work and generalist counselling services.

Sydney West has introduced screening in community health services. The large number of clients seen and the inclusion of early childhood health statistics in the data provided accounts for the large number in additional services in 2005.

6.1 Women’s health nursing services

- Five Area Health Services have introduced screening in women’s health nursing services. However, the total number of eligible women and women screened decreased by approximately half from 2004 indicating a decrease in screening and/ or that data was not provided.
- 361 (80%) of the 451 women attending these services were screened, which is similar to 87% in 2004.
- 20 (5.5%) women were identified as having experienced domestic violence in the previous 12 months, which is a slight decrease from the 7% recorded in 2004.
- No women were recorded as accepting assistance, however 11 (55%) women were provided with support and options were discussed.
- Four referrals were made.

Figure 11: Women’s health nursing services



6.2 Sexual assault services

- Northern Sydney Central Coast and South Eastern Sydney Illawarra Area Health Services have introduced screening in adult sexual assault services.
- 23 (100%) of the women who attended these services were screened. This is an increase on the rate of 88% recorded for 2004.
- Seven women (30%) were identified as having experienced domestic violence in the previous 12 months, which is less than the 48% in 2004.
- One woman who was identified as experiencing domestic violence accepted an offer of assistance, four were provided with support and options.
- Two notifications were made to Police.
- No other referrals were noted indicating that the service may have provided what the clients needed at that time.

6.3 Sexual health services

- One sexual health service in South Eastern Sydney Illawarra Area Health Service has introduced screening.
- 120 (96%) of the 125 women who attended this service were screened, which is consistent with the rate recorded for 2004 (95%).
- Four (3.3%) women were identified as having experienced domestic violence in the previous 12 months. This is a significant decrease from 2003 (12%).
- One notification was made to Police.
- Three other referrals were made.

6.4 Other services

This section combines data from a range of community health services, particularly that provided by Sydney West Area Health Service.

- 865 (31%) of the 2,785 women who presented were screened. The low rate is probably reflective of the inclusion of early childhood health data.
- 59 (6.8%) women were identified as having experienced domestic violence in the previous 12 months.
- Eight (13.6%) women accepted the offer of assistance, 42 were given support and options were discussed.
- One notification was made to Police.
- 11 reports were made to DoCS.
- 11 other referrals were made.

Snapshot 4: November 2006

7.1 Key findings

The key findings as at November 2006 are:

- 11,581(66.3%) of the 17,456 eligible women who attended the participating services were screened.
- This represents a 12.9% increase in the number screened from November 2005 to November 2006, and an increase from the 2005 screening rate of 62%.
- All of the Area Health Services have introduced screening in the target program areas of antenatal, early childhood health, mental health and alcohol and other drugs services and six have introduced screening in women's health nursing services.
- 695 (6%) of the women screened disclosed experiencing domestic violence in the previous 12 months, according to the screening questions.
- There was a reduction in the rate of identification of domestic violence (6%), compared with 2005 (7.3%) and a decrease in actual numbers (695 in 2006 compared with 736 in 2005).
- The percentage of women accepting the offer of assistance at 26% is higher than 22.6% in 2005.
- The number of Police notifications was 44 (6.3%) of those identified, higher than 27 (3.7%) in 2005.
- The number of child at risk of harm reports to the Department of Community Services (DoCS) has continued to increase with 163 (23.5%) reports made in November 2006. The reporting rates were 20% in 2005 and 12% in 2004.
- The number of referrals to other services at 251(36%) is an increase from 210 (28.6%) in 2005.
- The presence of partners (34%) and presence of others (29%) were recorded as main reasons for not screening. For 25%, 'other reason' was noted.

Overall results

8.1 Extent of screening in November 2006

- Screening was implemented in the eight Area Health Services in all of the target programs (see Figure 13).
- Women's health nursing services are screening in six Area Health Services.
- Some clusters in Greater Western and Sydney South West had not commenced screening.

8.2 Screening rate

- A total of 17,456 women were counted as eligible clients/patients by all services participating in the screening snapshot. This is a small increase of 1,166 from 2005, when 16,290 eligible women attended these services. There was an increase in client numbers across all target program areas, particularly early childhood health.

- Early childhood health saw the highest number of women (8,256), followed by antenatal services (5,174), mental health (1,990) and alcohol and other drugs (1,067). 785 attended women's health nursing services and the total number of women attending additional programs was 184.³
- Of the 17,456 women attending these services, 11,581 women were screened. The number screened is a 12.9% increase from that in 2005. The screening rate of 66% is an increase on the 62% in 2005.
- Women's health nursing and antenatal services each screened 84% of women, alcohol and other drugs 76% with early childhood health and mental health screening 55% and 50% respectively (see Figure 14).

Figure 13: Screening in Area Health Services

Area Health Service	antenatal	early childhood health	mental health	alcohol and other drugs	women's health nursing	additional programs***
Greater Southern*	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Greater Western	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Hunter / New England	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
North Coast	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Northern Sydney / Central Coast	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
South Eastern Sydney / Illawarra	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sydney South West	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Sydney West	✓	✓	✓	✓		**

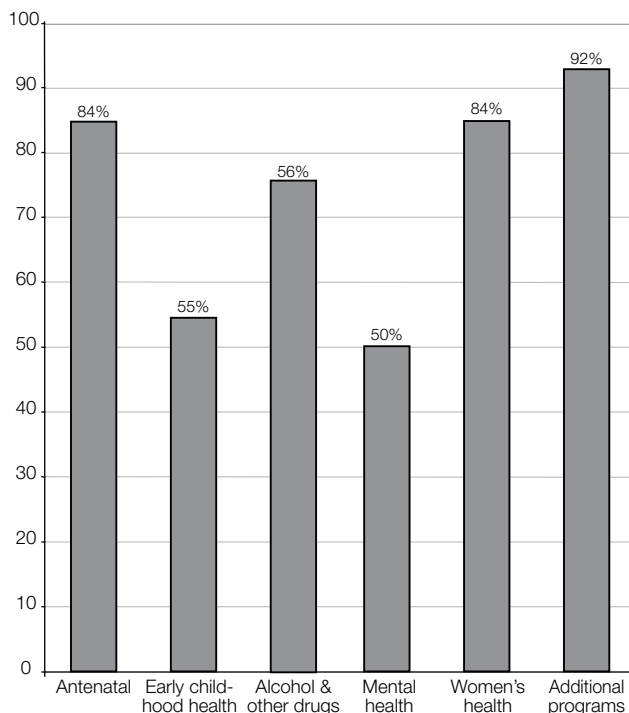
* Not all Greater Southern services participated in the 2006 snapshot

** Sydney West community health services did not participate in the 2006 snapshot due to data separation issues

***Additional programs are sexual assault services, sexual health services and youth health services

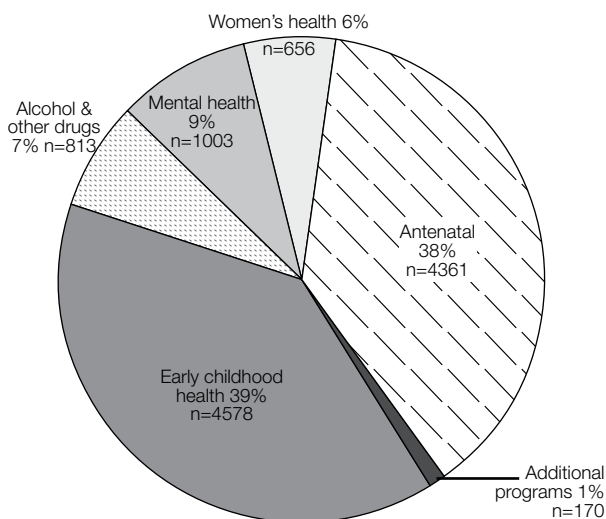
3. Sydney West Area Health Service did not include community health services in the 2006 snapshot due to data separation issues between community health and early childhood health services in 2005.

Figure 14: Screening rate by program



- Antenatal and early childhood health services are the programs where most women were screened in 2006, comprising 38% and 39% respectively of all women screened. Mental health services account for 9% of the screening, alcohol and other drugs for 7%, and women health nursing for 6% (see Figure 15).

Figure 15: Percentage of women screened by program



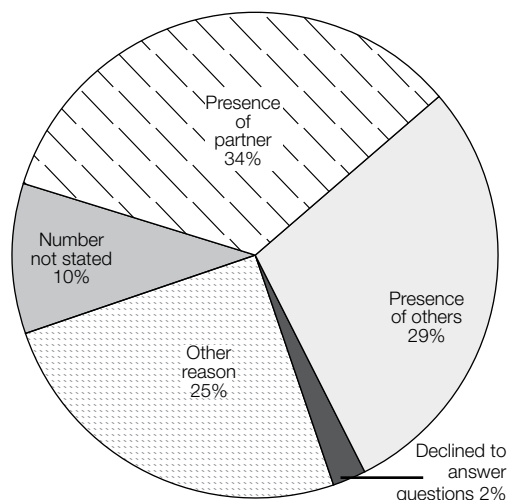
8.3 Reasons screening not completed

- The most frequently given reasons for not screening were the presence of partner 2,045 (34%) or others 1,676 (29%) (see Figure 16).
- 105 (2%) women declined to answer the questions.
- 1,476 (25%) women were not screened for other reasons. Information provided in the 'comments'

section provided some other reasons for not screening including: domestic violence previously identified therefore did not need to be screened, no interpreter available, other issues more pressing needed to be addressed, insufficient time, living alone ie no partner or ex-partner, patient left before full assessment, patient unwell (particularly mental health), new staff not yet trained, client was phone contact not face to face, and staff shortages meant lack of time to conduct screening.

- Incompleteness of the data reflected by the high percentage 573 (10%) in 'not stated' suggests the reasons for not completing screening may not be accurately documented.

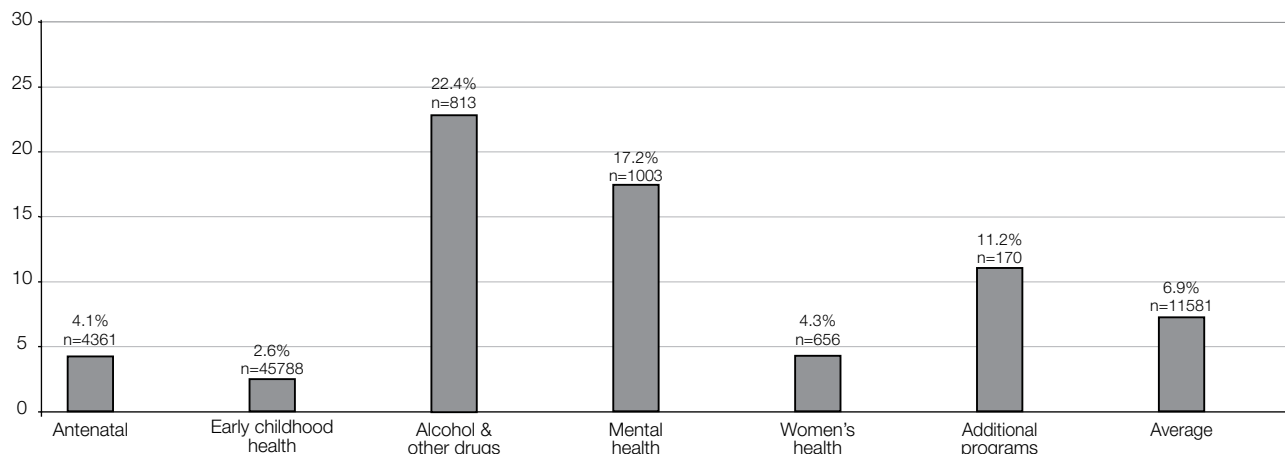
Figure 16: Reasons for not completing screening



8.4 Domestic violence identified

- A women was identified as a victim of domestic violence if she answered 'yes' to either or both of the following questions: 'Within the last year have you been hit, slapped or hurt in other ways by your partner or ex-partner?' and 'Are you frightened of your partner or ex-partner?'
- 695 women, (6%) of the women screened, identified domestic violence according to the screening questions. This is a decrease but remains relatively consistent with previous snapshots when the prevalence ranged from 6.5% to 7% (see Figure 17).
- The disclosure rates varied across all programs being 2% in antenatal, 2.6% in early childhood health, 22% in alcohol and other drugs, 17.1% in mental health, 4.3% in women's health nursing, and 11.2% in additional programs (37% in sexual assault, 6.4% sexual health and nil in youth health. Numbers are small in the three program areas).

Figure 17: Women disclosing domestic violence in response to questions by program



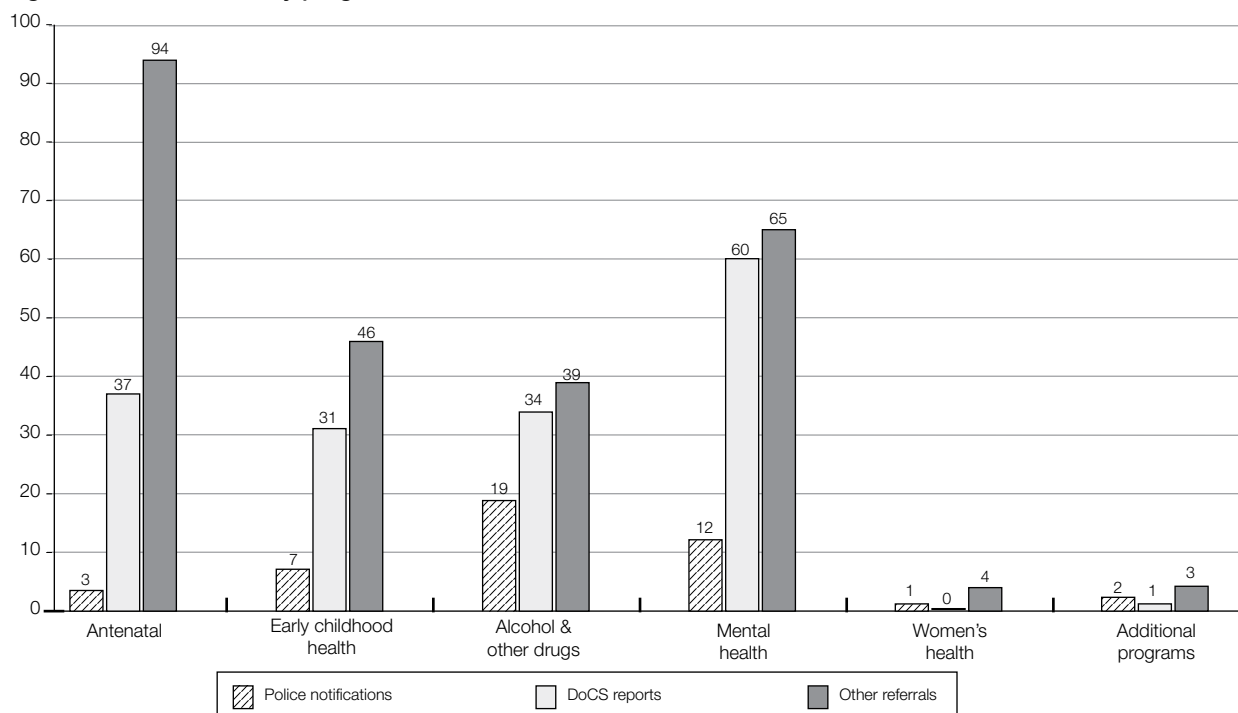
- Compared with the 2005 snapshot, the positive identification rate has increased in mental health, decreased in antenatal, drug and alcohol, and women's health nursing, but remained consistent in early childhood health services.
- Sydney West, whose clients account for 20% of all eligible women, noted an overall decrease in disclosure rates, which it stated warrants further investigation.

8.5 Assistance accepted and action taken

- Although the number of disclosures of domestic violence was lower in 2006 than 2005, actions taken in all categories – reports to DoCS, notifications to Police and referrals – were higher.

- 180 (26%) women who identified domestic violence also accepted the offer of assistance. Given the figure of 516 (74% of those identified) who were given support and information, and the subsequent number of referrals and reports to statutory authorities, this figure may not be accurately recorded (see Figure 18).
- 163 reports were made to DoCS. The relative number of DoCS referrals has increased slightly from 22% in 2005 to 23.5% in 2006. 60 reports came from mental health services alone, 35% of mental health clients disclosing domestic violence. 37 reports were made by antenatal services, 21% of all antenatal clients. 31 reports were by early childhood health services, 26% of early childhood clients. 34 reports or 19% were made regarding alcohol and other drugs clients who disclosed domestic violence.

Figure 18: Action taken by program



- Notifications to Police have increased in number from 27 in 2005 to 44 in 2006, 6% of all women disclosing.
- There was an increase in the rate of referrals to other services from 28.6% in 2005 to 36% in 2005 with a total of 251 other referrals provided in the data collection forms. Those listed included 134 to other health services and 57 to services outside NSW Health.⁴ Some women received more than one referral.
- As noted in previous snapshots, intrahealth referrals were most often made to social workers, specialist support programs for perinatal clients, and some to other mental health, alcohol and other drugs or to sexual assault services.
- Referrals outside the health system were made to domestic violence court assistance schemes, women's legal services, women's refuges, family support services, Police Domestic Violence Liaison Officers, Department of Housing and to counselling services including women's health centres, groupwork services and victims of crime services. Referrals were also made to culturally specific services including Aboriginal Medical Services and one to a Muslim women's refuge.
- Comments indicated that some women were already linked with support services. Some women chose not to be referred.

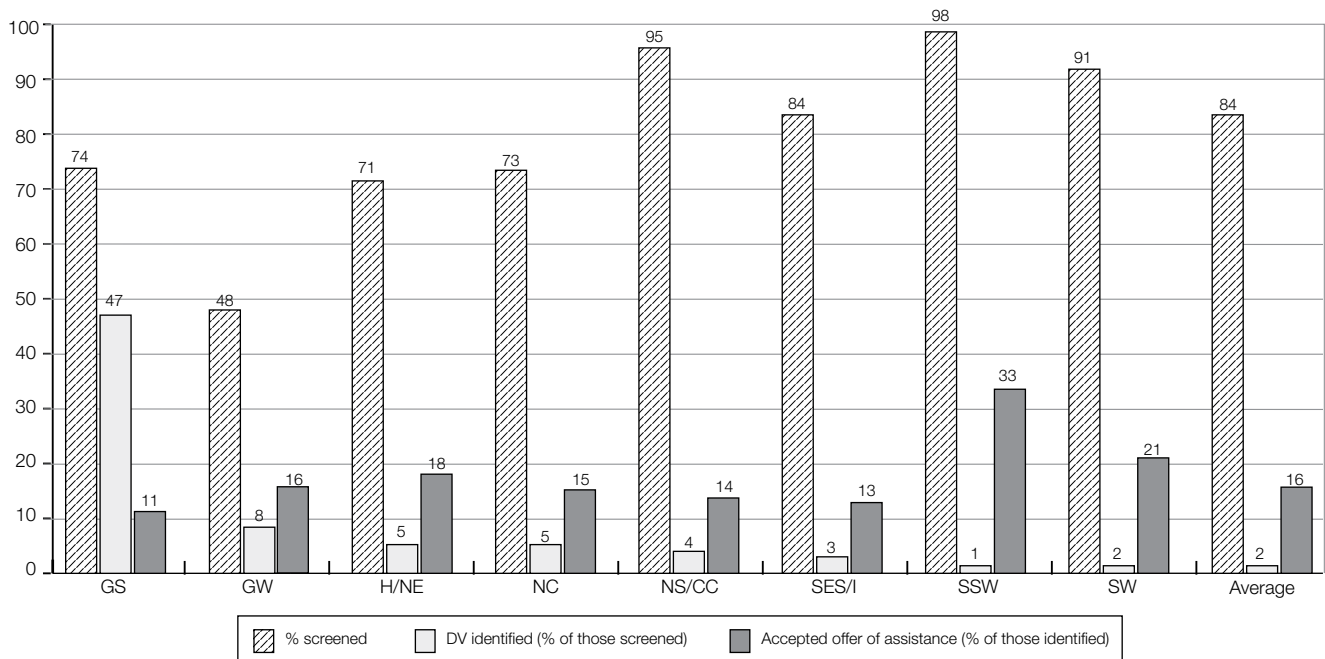
4. The number of other referrals does not always match the numbers noted in the section on referrals within health or to outside services. Staff may have recorded referrals made for other reasons, or not documented the total number of referrals.

Results by target programs

9.1 Antenatal services

- All Area Health Services have introduced screening in antenatal services.
- 4,361 (84%) of the 5,174 women who attended antenatal services were screened, maintaining the 2005 screening rate of 83%.
- The presence of a partner (43%) or others (23%) as a reason for not completing screening accounted for 66% of women not screened. This is higher than 51.4% in 2005, indicating that although some services have been successful in implementing strategies to interview the woman alone, it remains an issue for many services.
- 177 women (2%) were identified as having experienced domestic violence in the previous 12 months. This is a decrease from preceding years (5.6% in 2005, 5% in 2004).
- 28 (15.8%) of the women identified as having experienced domestic violence accepted an offer of assistance.
- 37 (21%) reports were made to DoCS and three notifications were made to Police (2%).
- 94 (53%) other referrals were made.
- While the screening rate has remained relatively stable in antenatal services, the identification rate has decreased. North Sydney Central Coast conducted an audit after finding the disclosure rate had decreased since the introduction of the electronic database, ObstetriX. Midwives had reported direct entry was affecting answers to sensitive personal history questions. The audit found 10 additional women had reported domestic violence in the past 12 months.

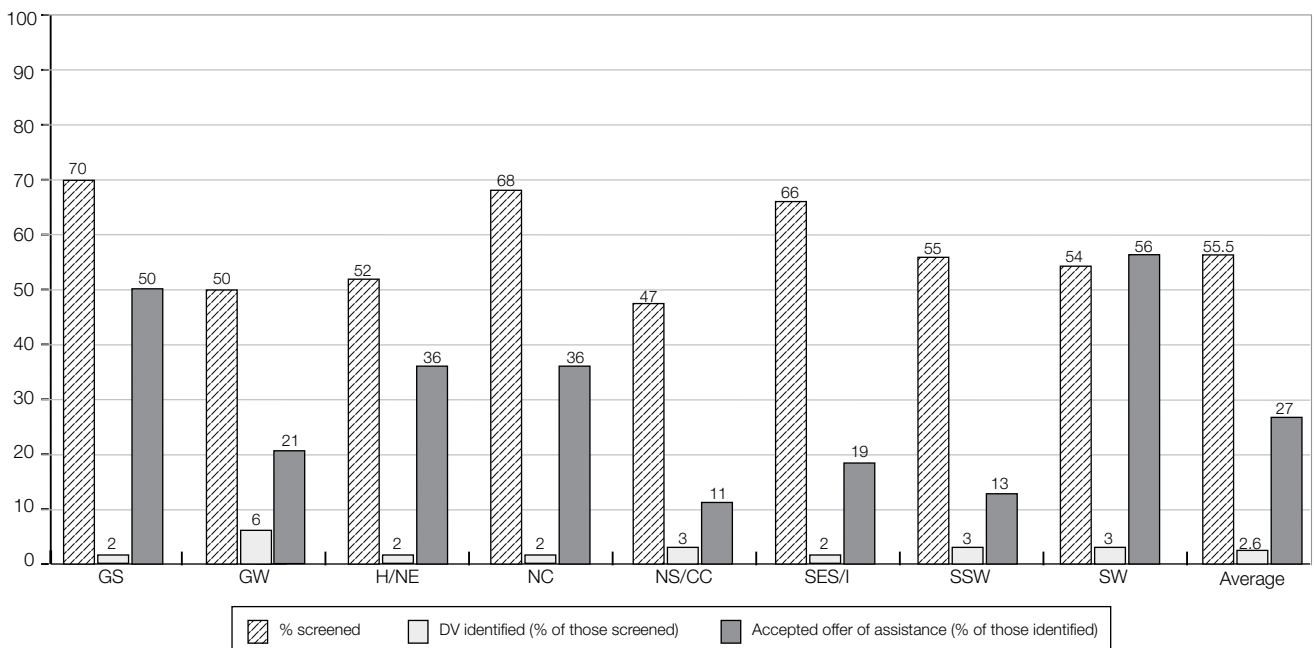
Figure 19: Antenatal services



9.2 Early childhood health services

- All Area Health Services have introduced screening in early childhood health services.
- 4,578 (55.6%) of the 8,256 women attending these services were screened, which is similar to the 55.5% in 2005. The numbers of women presenting at early childhood health services which provide screening and those successfully screened have each increased by 30% from 2005, indicating an increase in services now implementing this program and/or increased number of clients.
- The presence of a partner (44%) or others (38%) as a reason for not completing screening accounted for 82% of women not being screened. This suggests that having or creating the opportunities to interview the woman in private remains an issue for this service environment.
- 117 women (2.6%) were identified as having experienced domestic violence in the previous 12 months. This is similar to 2.3% in 2005.
- 30 (27%) women identified as having experienced domestic violence accepted an offer of assistance.
- 31(26%) reports were made to DoCS and seven (6%) notifications were made to Police.
- 46 (39%) other referrals were made.

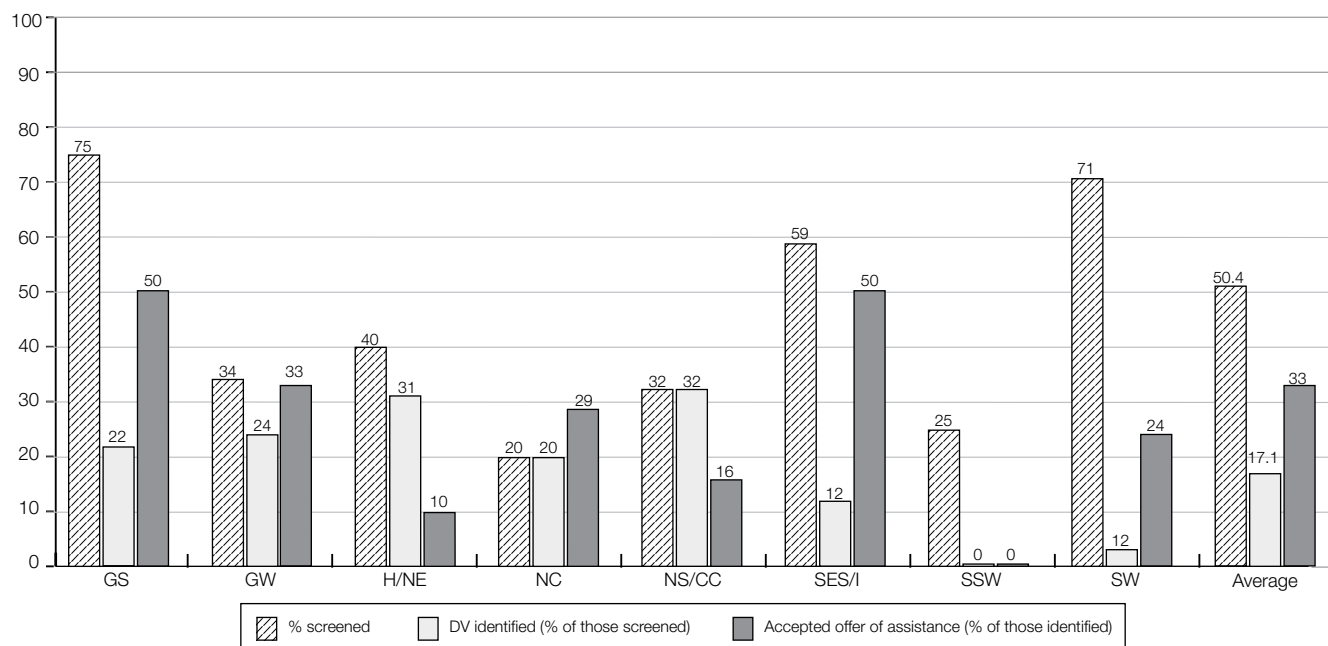
Figure 20: Early childhood health services



9.3 Mental health services

- All Area Health Services have introduced screening in mental health services.
- 1,003 (50%) of the 1,990 women attending these services were screened. While the number of eligible women has increased by 20%, the number screened has increased by only 10%. The screening rate has continued to decrease, from 57% in 2005 and 66% in 2004.
- 172 (17%) women were identified as having experienced domestic violence in the previous 12 months, which is an increase from the 2005 rate of 13%.
- 57 (33%) women identified as having experienced domestic violence accepted an offer of assistance.
- 60 (35%) reports were made to DoCS and 12 (7%) notifications were made to Police. The number and proportion of DoCS reports has increased markedly from 35 (18.6%) in 2005.
- 65 (38%) other referrals were made.

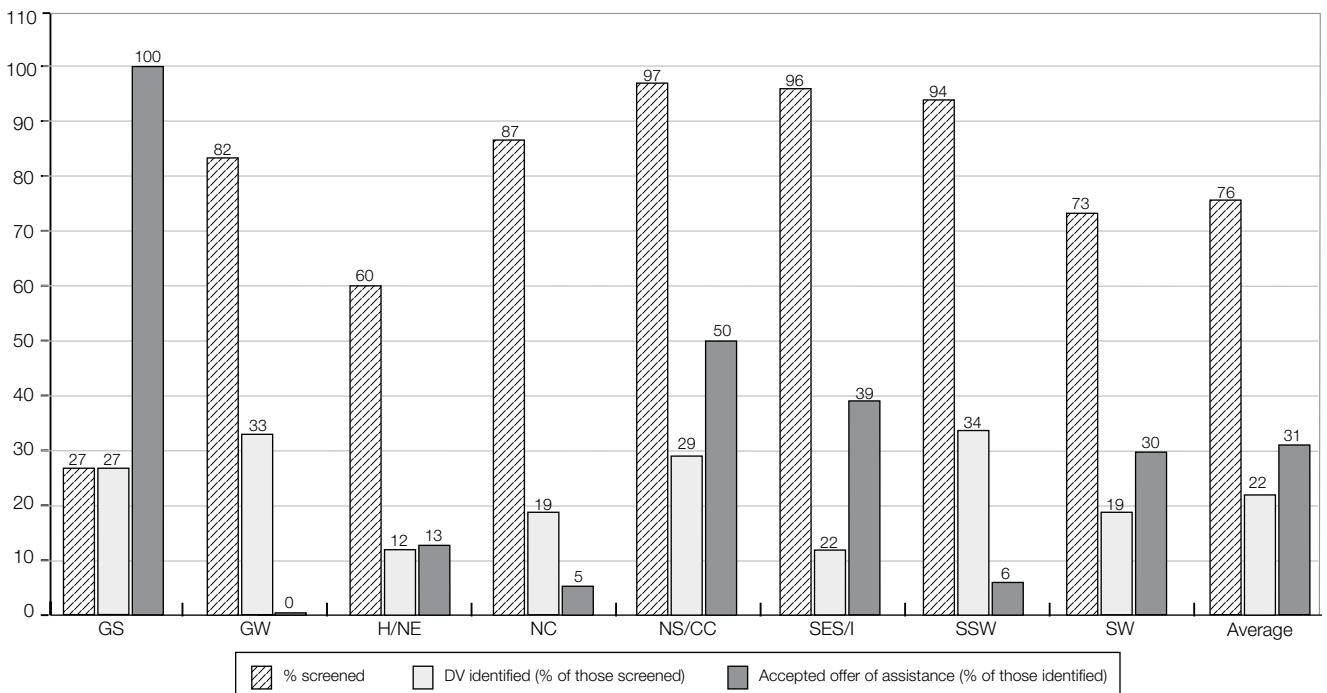
Figure 21: Mental health services



9.4 Alcohol and other drugs services

- All Area Health Services have introduced screening in alcohol and other drugs services.
- 813 (76%) of the 1,067 women attending these services were screened. This is lower than the screening rate of 83% in November 2005.
- 182 (22%) women were identified as having experienced domestic violence in the previous 12 months. This has decreased significantly since the 2005 snapshot, where the figure was 238 (32%) women.
- 56 (31%) women who were identified as having experienced domestic violence accepted an offer of assistance. This is an increase from 46 (19.3%) in 2005.
- 34 (18.7%) reports were made to DoCS and 19 (10%) notifications were made to Police, both significantly increased on 2005 figures, 21 (8.8%) in and nine (3.8%) respectively.
- 39 (21%) referrals were made to other services.

Figure 22: Alcohol and other drugs services



Results in additional programs

Many Area Health Services have elected to introduce screening into other service streams. South Eastern Sydney Illawarra is screening in sexual health and sexual assault services, Northern Sydney Central Coast in sexual assault, and Sydney South West has included youth health services this year.

As noted above, Sydney West did not include additional programs in the 2006 snapshot.

10.1 Women’s health nursing services

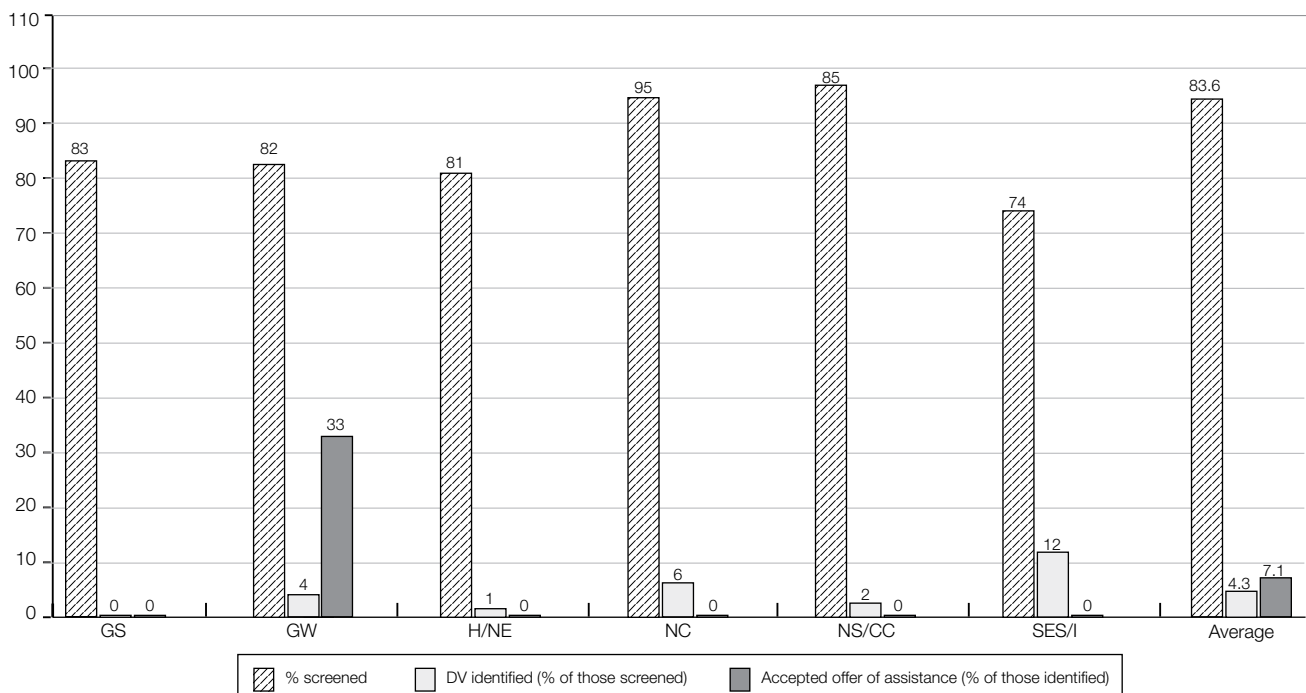
- Six Area Health Services have introduced screening in women’s health nursing services with North Sydney Central Coast data providing data in 2006.
- 656 (84%) of the 785 women attending these services were screened, which maintains the high rate in this program. The total number of eligible women and women screened increased significantly by 42% and 45% respectively from 2005, bringing it closer to 2004 levels.
- 28 (4.3%) women were identified as having experienced domestic violence in the previous 12 months.

- Two women were recorded as accepting assistance, however 20 (71%) women were provided with support and options were discussed.
- One police notification was made and no reports were made to DoCS. Four referrals were made.

10.2 Sexual assault services

- Northern Sydney Central Coast and South Eastern Sydney Illawarra Area Health Services have introduced screening in adult sexual assault services.
- 27 (93%) of the 29 women who attended these services were screened.
- Ten (37%) women were identified as having experienced domestic violence in the previous 12 months.
- Seven (70%) women who were identified as experiencing domestic violence accepted an offer of assistance, 10 were provided with support and options.
- Two notifications were made to Police and one report was made to DoCS.
- One other referral was made.

Figure 23: Women’s health nursing services



10.3 Sexual health services

- One sexual health service in South Eastern Sydney Illawarra Area Health Service is screening female clients.
- 140 (90%) of the 155 women who attended this service were screened, which maintains the consistently high screening rate.
- Nine (6.4%) women were identified as having experienced domestic violence in the previous 12 months.
- While no women were recorded as accepting assistance, six were given support and options discussed.
- Two other referrals were made.

10.4 Other services

- Only one service, a youth service in Sydney South West, has provided data for this section. Of the four eligible young women attending, three were screened. There were no disclosures.