

# DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ROUTINE SCREENING PROGRAM

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Snapshot Report 7: November 2009

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# 1 Introduction

Domestic violence is a significant public health issue. It affects the physical, psychological, and social health of many women and children in New South Wales. Victims of domestic violence are high users of health services but are often not identified.<sup>1 2</sup> This limits the capacity of health services to intervene and provide appropriate and effective health care. It can also lead to victims remaining isolated, being inappropriately diagnosed, and missed opportunities to prevent further injury or death and social costs.

Evidence suggests that routine screening can reach patients in the absence of symptoms. It has been shown that women tend not to disclose their experience of domestic violence unless they are directly asked about it.<sup>3 4</sup> Women who receive an initial positive response to disclosures of domestic violence are more likely to seek further help to escape violence. When victims, or those at risk of domestic violence, are identified, early intervention can assist women to understand their options and prioritise their safety. Screening conducted face-to-face by skilled health workers increases the identification of domestic violence.<sup>5 6</sup>

Since 2001 former Area Health Services<sup>7</sup> have undertaken routine screening of female clients for domestic violence as an early identification and intervention strategy to promote awareness of the health impact of domestic violence, ask questions about patients' safety in relationships, and to provide information on health services to help victims and abusers.

The *NSW Health Policy and Procedures for Identifying and Responding to Domestic Violence* (2003 amended 2006) formalised the Domestic Violence Routine Screening Program and requires all Area Health Services to implement screening in the four target programs of antenatal, early childhood health, mental health and alcohol and other drugs services.

NSW Health defines domestic violence as “violent, abusive, or intimidating behaviour carried out by an adult against a partner or former partner to control and dominate that person. Domestic violence causes fear, physical and/or psychological harm. It is most often violent, abusive, or intimidating behaviour by a man against a woman. Living with domestic

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<sup>1</sup> Laing L (2001) *Children, Young People and Domestic Violence Issue Paper 2*, Sydney: Australian Domestic Violence Clearinghouse

<sup>2</sup> Taft A, Watson L, and Lee C (2004) 'Violence Against Young Australian Women and Association with Reproductive Events: A Cross-Sectional Analysis of a National Population Sample', *Aust N Z J Public Health*, Vol. 28, pp324-9

<sup>3</sup> Friedman LS, Samet JH, Roberts MS, Hudlin M and Hans P (1992) Inquiry about victimization experiences, a survey of patient preferences and doctor practices, *Archives of Internal Medicine* 152, 1186-1190.

<sup>4</sup> Irwin J, Waugh F, (2001) Unless they're asked: Routine screening for domestic violence in NSW Health – an evaluation report of the pilot project, NSW Health

<sup>5</sup> McFarlane J, Christoffel K, Bateman L, Miller V & Bullock L., (December 1991), 'Assessing for Abuse: Self Report Versus Nurse Interview' *Public Health Nursing*, 8 (4): 245–250.

<sup>6</sup> Nelson HD, Nygren P, McInerney Y, Klein J (2004) Screening women and elder adults for family and intimate partner violence: a review of the evidence for the US Preventative Services Taskforce, *Annals of Internal Medicine* 140(5): pp387-396

<sup>7</sup> The snapshots were undertaken prior to the restructure of 2010, hence Area Health Services.

violence has a profound effect upon children and young people and constitutes a form of child abuse.” The definition underpins the screening tool.

All women attending antenatal and early childhood health services, and women aged 16 years and over who attend mental health and alcohol and other drugs services are screened as part of routine assessment. The prevalence of domestic violence and associated risks are high for female patients/clients in these clinical groups.

The screening tool (see Appendix 2) includes a preamble that contains key background information for women to assist them to make an informed decision about participating in the screening. This includes information on the health impacts of domestic violence, assurances relating to the standard questions asked of all women and the limits of confidentiality.

Domestic violence is identified by asking two direct questions to elicit yes/no answers:

Q1. Within the last year have you been hit, slapped or hurt in other ways by your partner or ex-partner?

Q2. Are you frightened of your partner or ex-partner?

If domestic violence is identified, two further questions are then asked, one to ascertain safety and the other offering assistance.

Q3. Are you safe to go home when you leave here?

Q4. Would you like some assistance with this?

Where domestic violence is identified, the referral pathway is guided by the woman’s preferences and needs. Health workers will refer women to relevant health services or to services outside the health system.

Health workers must make a report to the Department of Community Services Helpline where he or she has reasonable grounds to suspect a child is at risk of significant harm.

Police may be notified as the woman wishes and/or where there are concerns for the safety of the woman and/or her children, in accordance with NSW Health policy..

Health workers offer the z-card, *domestic violence hurts your health*, to all women screened. The card provides information on what domestic violence is, how it affects health and wellbeing, what steps can be taken including where to find help.

This report documents the one-month snapshot of routine screening conducted in the former eight Area Health Services across New South Wales in November 2009. The same methodology has been applied in each snapshot since 2003.

Key data from each of the years 2003 – 2009 is presented at Appendix 1.

The profile of screening presented by the snapshots provides the NSW Department of Health (now the Ministry of Health), the former eight Area Health Services and individual

participating services with valuable information for monitoring the strategy's implementation, evaluating compliance and informing service development.

## 2 Snapshot Methodology

Area Health Services collated data from the screening forms for each program that screened women for domestic violence in November 2009 during the snapshot period of 1 November – 31 November. This data was then provided to the NSW Department of Health (now the Ministry of Health) for preparation of the statewide snapshot report.

The data included the number of eligible women attending the services, the number screened, responses to the questions and key 'actions taken', including reports to Community Services, notifications to NSW Police Force, and other referrals including those made to a health or other service. 'Other comments' could also be provided.

Data fields have been consistent since the inception of the snapshot in 2003 with minimal yearly refining to clarify instructions and explanations (See Appendices 3 and 4 for data collection form and guidelines).

### 3 Snapshot 7: November 2009

#### 3.1 Overall Results

##### 3.1.1 Key Findings

The key findings for the November 2009 Snapshot include:

Category	Number
Eligible women who attended a participating service	21,216
Eligible women who were screened	14,471 (68.2% of eligible women)
Eligible women screened who were identified as having experienced domestic violence in the previous 12 months	838 (5.8% of women screened)
Women accepting an offer of assistance	274 (32.7% of women identified as having experienced domestic violence)
Total notifications or referrals	373*
Reports to Community Services	114
Notifications to Police	35
Referrals to other health or other services	224
(*Some women may have multiple referrals)	

### 3.1.2 Extent of Screening across Area Health Services in November

Screening was conducted in all target programs in the eight Area Health Services. Women's health nursing services screened in six Area Health Services. Three Area Health Services have extended screening to other relevant services such as sexual assault services, sexual health services and counselling services.

The Area Health Service programs providing data for the 2009 snapshot are listed in Figure 1.

Area Health Service	Antenatal services	Alcohol and other drugs service	Early childhood health services	Mental services	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	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Figure 1: Screening conducted by program in Area Health Services in 2009



### 3.1.3 Percentage of Women Screened

The percentage of women screened measures the number of women screened as a proportion of the number of women eligible presenting to a service.

A total of 21,216 women were identified as 'eligible' for screening by all programs participating in the screening snapshot. This comprises:

- 9,703 in early childhood health services
- 6,525 in antenatal services
- 2,659 in mental health services
- 922 in women's health nursing services
- 816 in alcohol and other drugs services
- 261 from other programs<sup>8</sup>

Of these eligible women 14,471 (68.2%) were screened.

Greater Southern Area Health Service provided combined data for mental health and drug and alcohol. A combined total of 330 eligible women were screened for these services. This consolidated data is included in total data. As it cannot be desegregated, the data is presented at section 3.2.5.

Women screened as a percentage of eligible women attending programs as shown in Figure 2. The percentage varied by program with the highest percentage of women screened in antenatal services (90.2%) and the lowest percentage of women screened recorded in mental health services (52.3%). The average is indicated by the red horizontal line.

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<sup>8</sup> Other programs include counselling services, sexual health, sexual health, sexual assault and youth health.

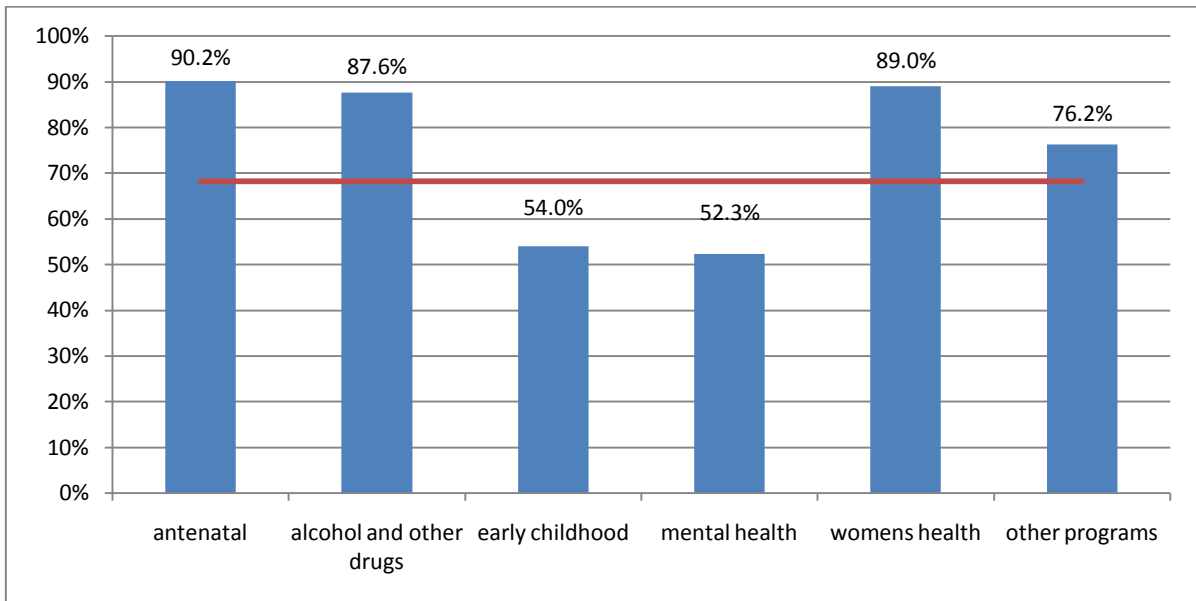


Figure 2: Percentage of eligible women screened by program in 2009

The number of women screened by program (and as a percentage of total women screened) is shown in Figure 3. In 2009 the number of women screened for each program was:

- 5,844 (41.1%) in antenatal services
- 5,244 (36.9%) in early childhood services
- 1,390 (9.8%) in mental health services
- 821 (5.8%) in women’s health services
- 715 (5.0%) alcohol and other drugs services
- 199 (1.4%) other services

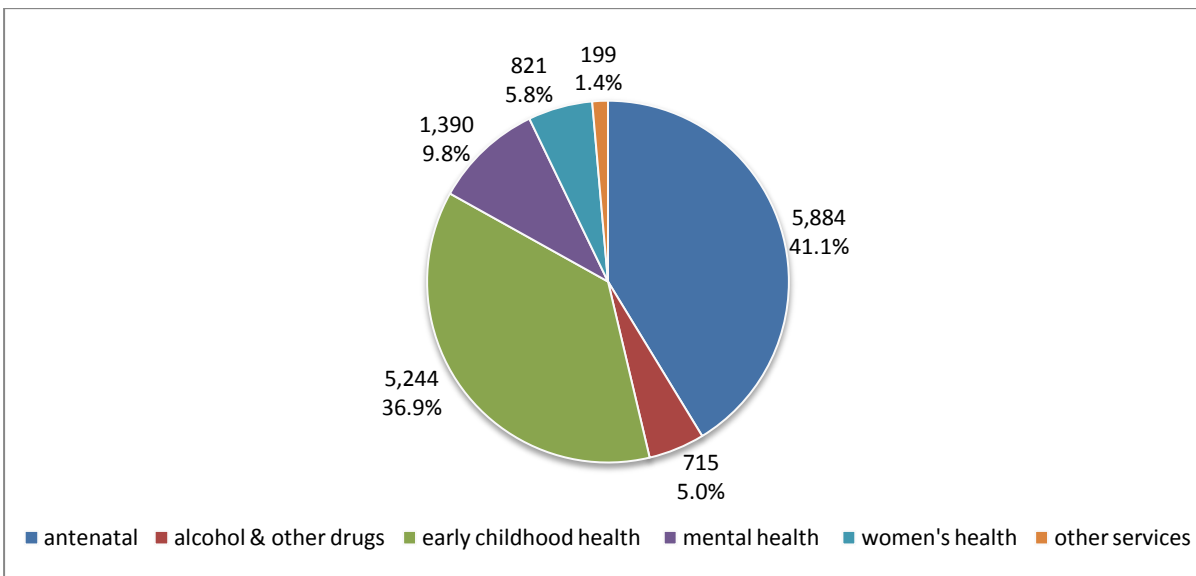


Figure 3: Number of eligible women screened by program in 2009

### 3.1.4 Domestic Violence Identified

This measures the number of screened women where domestic violence was identified according to the screening tool, as a proportion of the number of women screened.

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?'

Of all eligible women screened across all programs 838 (5.8%) were identified as victims of domestic violence according to the screening questions.

The percentage of screened women where domestic violence was identified varied across all programs as shown in Figure 4 and comprised:

- 21.4% (153 of 715 eligible women screened) in alcohol and other drugs services
- 3.2% (186 of 5,884 eligible women screened) in antenatal services
- 3.4% (177 of 5,244 eligible women screened) in early childhood health services
- 14.9% (207 of 1,390 eligible women screened) in mental health services
- 3.3% (27 of 821 eligible women screened) in women's health nursing
- 8.0% (16 of 199 eligible women screened) in other programs

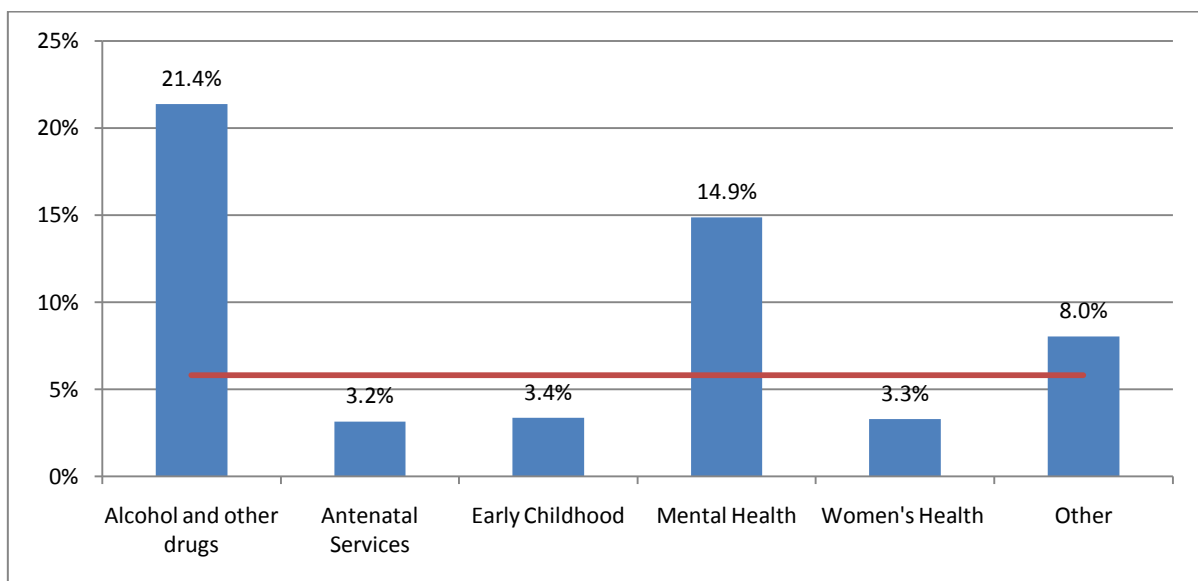


Figure 4: Percentage of women where domestic violence was identified in 2009 by program

### 3.1.5 Action Taken

'Actions taken' measures responses to women who were screened and comprise:

- support given and options discussed
- reports to Community Services
- notifications to Police
- other referrals

274 (32.7%) screened women who identified domestic violence also accepted the offer of assistance.

'Actions taken' are shown in Figure 5 and comprised<sup>9</sup>:

- 934 support given and options discussed
- 114 reports to Community Services
  - 35 (30.7%) by mental health services
  - 30 (26.3%) by antenatal services
  - 29 (25.4%) by early childhood health services
  - 13 (11.4%) by alcohol and other drugs services
  - 4 (3.5%) by women's health nursing services
  - 3 (2.6%) by other program
- 35 notifications to Police
  - 4 (11.4%) by antenatal services
  - 3 (8.6%) by alcohol and other drugs services
  - 5 (14.3%) by early childhood health services,
  - 15 (42.9%) by mental health services
  - 1 (2.9%) by women's health nursing service
  - 6 (2.9%) by other program
- 224 other referrals

Other referrals included intrahealth referrals and referrals to services outside of the health system.

Intrahealth referrals were made to a range of specialist treatment and support services including social workers, generalist counsellors, family care midwives, SafeStart, Links, perinatal psychiatry, young parents' network, child and family, child protection, dentist, sexual assault, mental health and alcohol and other drugs services, including pharmacotherapy. It was also noted that the service team where the client presented provided casework or additional support to some clients.

Referrals outside the NSW Health system were made to GPs, Police, private psychologists, Women's Health Centres, women's refuges, specialist domestic violence services, Brighter Futures, Women's Domestic Violence Advocacy Services, and Community Legal Centres family support, probation and parole, Centrecare, Burnside and Housing NSW. Referrals were also made to culturally specific services including an Aboriginal Medical Service.

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<sup>9</sup> Service figures does not include women who presented at GSAHS for mental health and alcohol and other drugs services

Comments from service providers conducting the screening indicate that some women who declined assistance were already linked to support services.

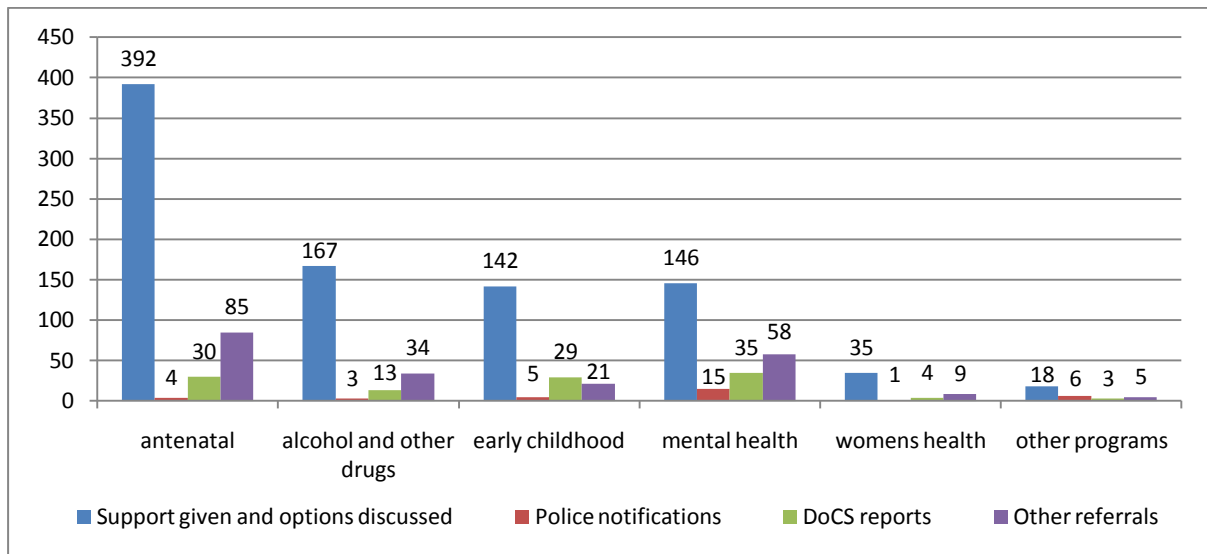


Figure 5: Number of actions taken in all programs in 2009

### 3.1.6 Reasons Provided for Not Screening

The presence of another person at screening accounted for 4,344 (67.6%) of 'reasons for not screening' as shown in Figure 6. 'Reasons for not screening' comprised:

- 2,564 (40.0%) presence of partner
- 1,780 (27.7%) presence of others
- 112 (1.7%) declined to answer
- 1,966 (30.6%) other reason

Information in the 'comments' section provided some of the other reasons for not screening including:

- women living alone, widowed or single women being in crisis at the time
- not conducting screening during home visiting
- lack of an interpreter
- client being mute
- time restraints, with other issues being more urgent
- not screening as women had been screened in previous months

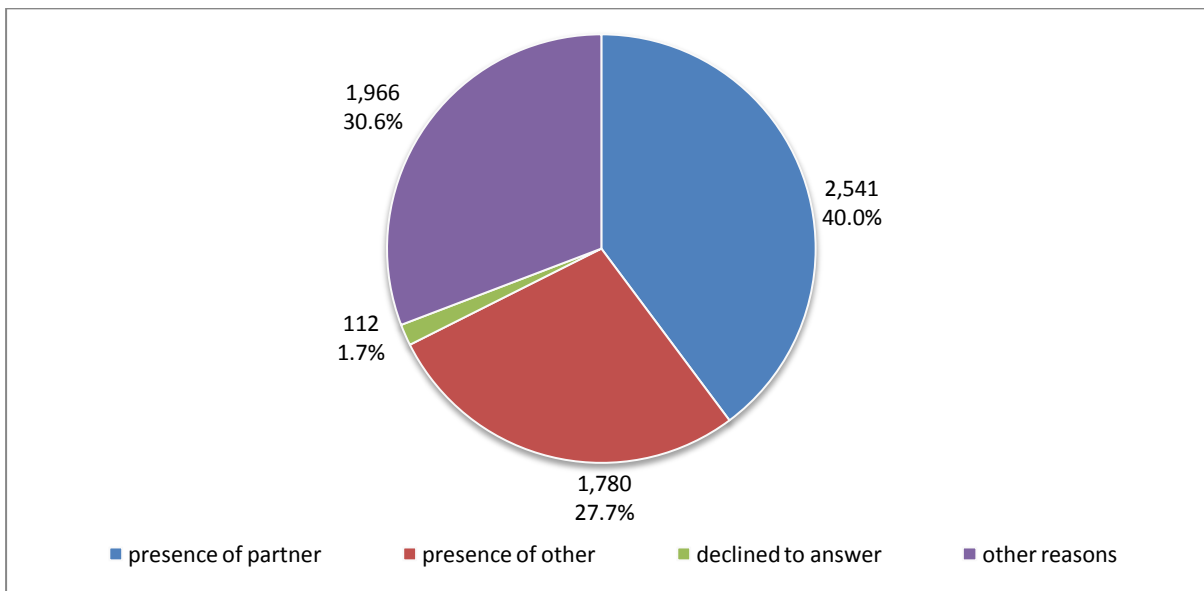


Figure 7: Reasons for not completing screening in 2009

## 3.2 Results by Target Programs

### 3.2.1 Antenatal Services

All antenatal services in Area Health Services screen for domestic violence.

6,525 eligible women attended antenatal services. 5,884 (90.2%) eligible women were screened.

The percentage of eligible women screened varied from 71.6% in Hunter New England to 98.1% in Sydney South West Area Health Service as shown in Figure 8.

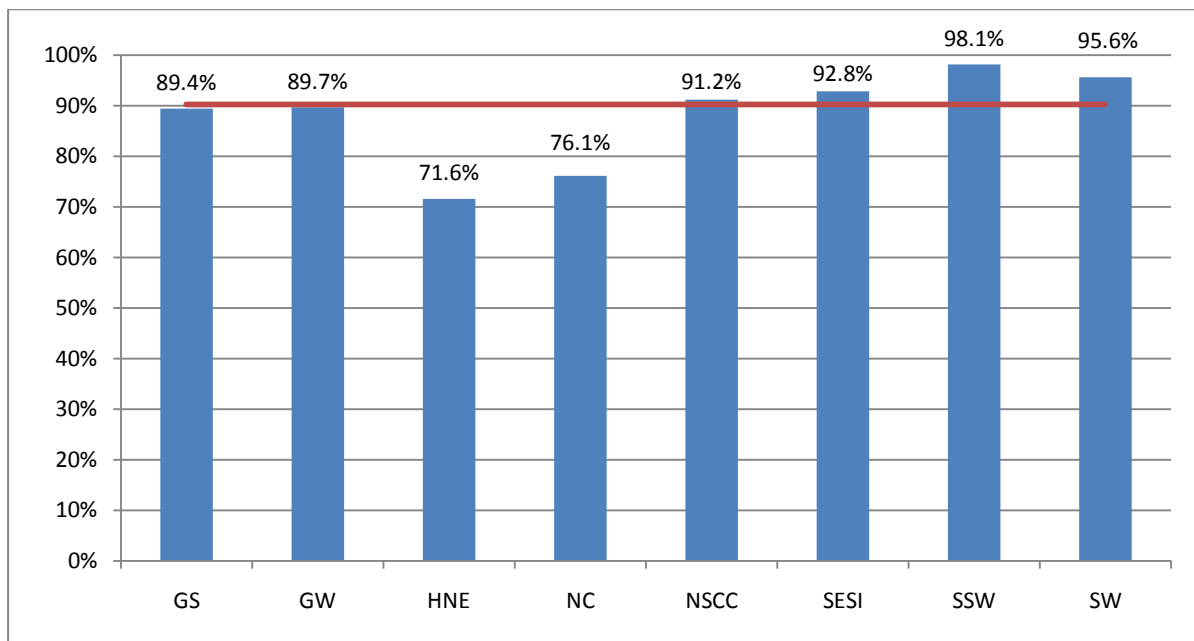


Figure 9: Percentage of eligible women screened in antenatal services in 2009 by Area Health Service<sup>10</sup>

186 (3.2%) women screened in antenatal services were identified as having experienced domestic violence in the previous 12 months as shown in Figure 10. The identification rate varied from 1.2% in South East Sydney Illawarra to 6.4% in Hunter New England Area Health Service.

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<sup>10</sup> Area Health Service abbreviations: GS Greater Southern, GW Greater Western, HNE Hunter New England, NC North Coast, NSCC Northern Sydney Central Coast, SESI South Eastern Sydney & Illawarra, SSW Sydney South West and SW Sydney West.

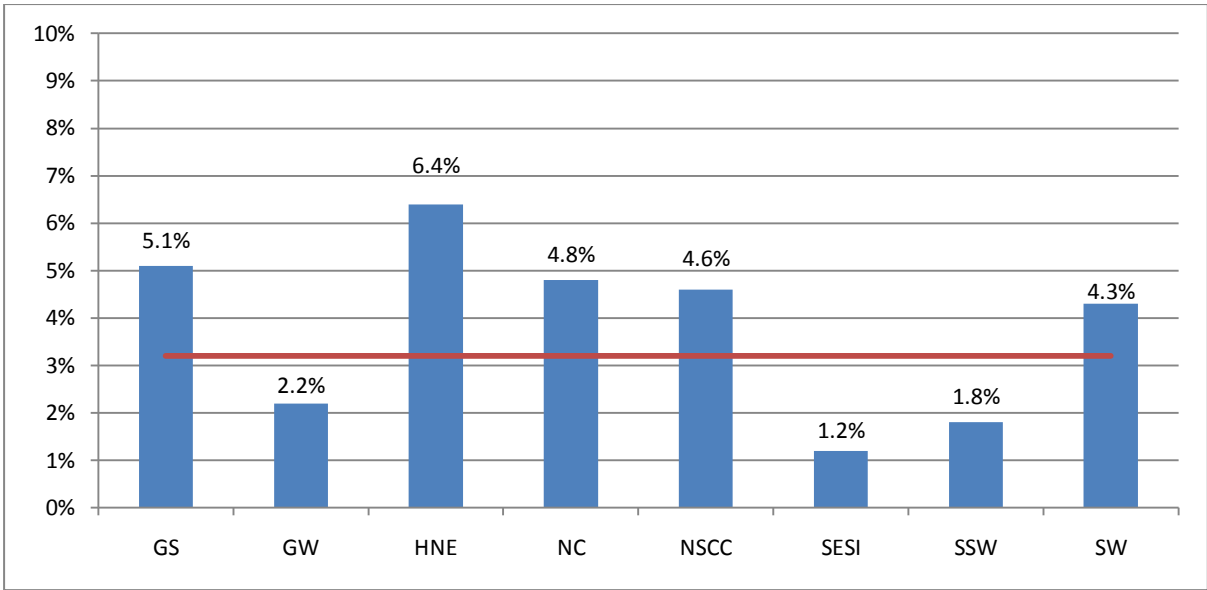


Figure 10: Percentage of women where domestic violence was identified in antenatal services in 2009 by Area Health Service

19 (10.2%) of the women identified as having experienced domestic violence accepted an offer of assistance.

'Actions taken' are shown in Figure 11 and comprised:

- 392 support given and options discussed
- 30 reports to Community Services
- 4 notifications to Police
- 85 other referrals



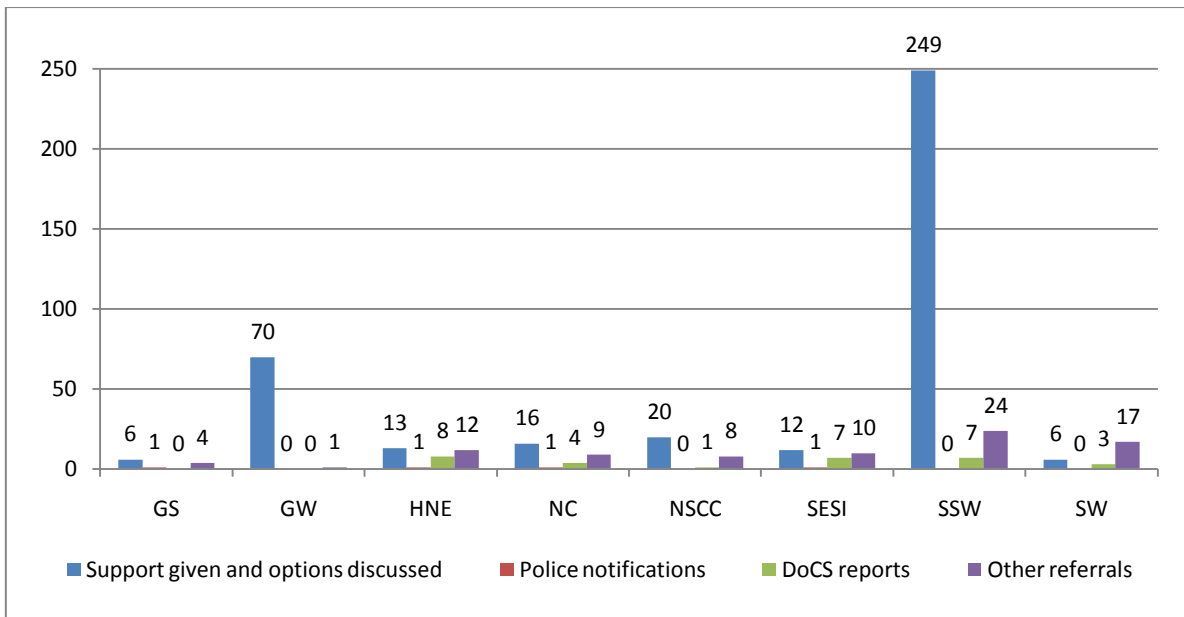


Figure 11: Number of actions taken in antenatal services in 2009

A reason for not screening was recorded in 565 instances. The presence of another person at screening accounted for 369 (65.3%) of 'reasons for not screening' as shown in Figure 12. 'Reasons for not screening' comprised:

- 259 (45.8%) presence of partner
- 110 (19.5%) presence of other
- 181 (32.0%) other reason (not cited)
- 15 (2.7%) declined to answer

In some instances either no reason, or multiple reasons, were provided for not screening.

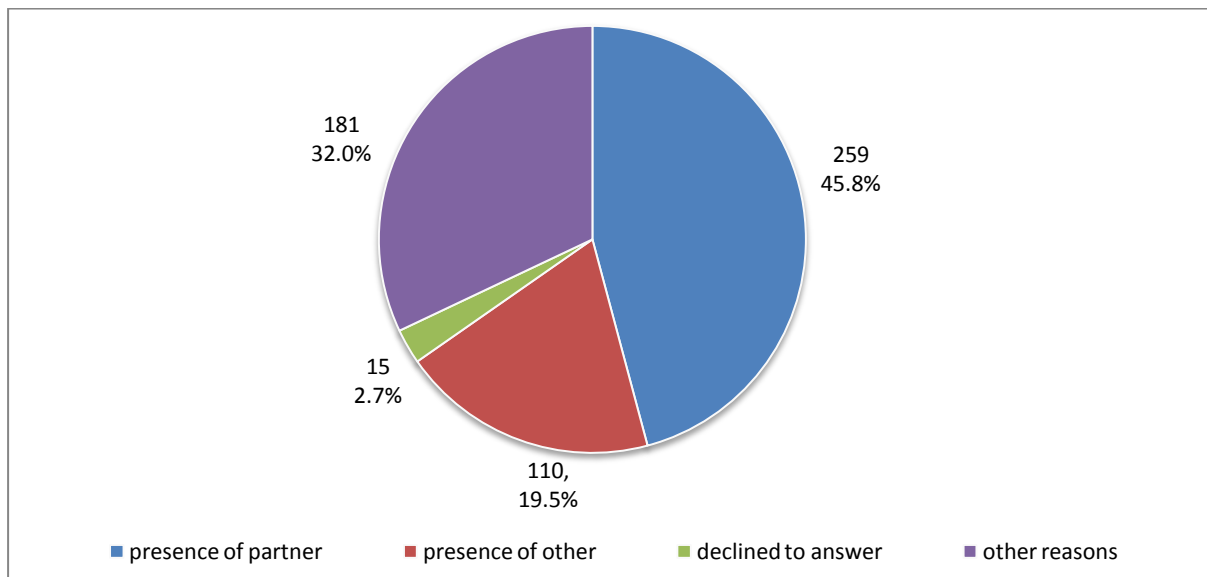


Figure 12: Reasons for not screening in antenatal services in 2009

### 3.2.2 Alcohol and Other Drugs Services

All alcohol and other drugs services in Area Health Services have implemented screening.

816 eligible women attended alcohol and other drugs services, of which 715 (87.6%) were screened. Screening rate varied across Area Health Services from 71.7% in Sydney South West Area Health Service to 100% in Greater Western Area Health Service as shown in Figure 13.

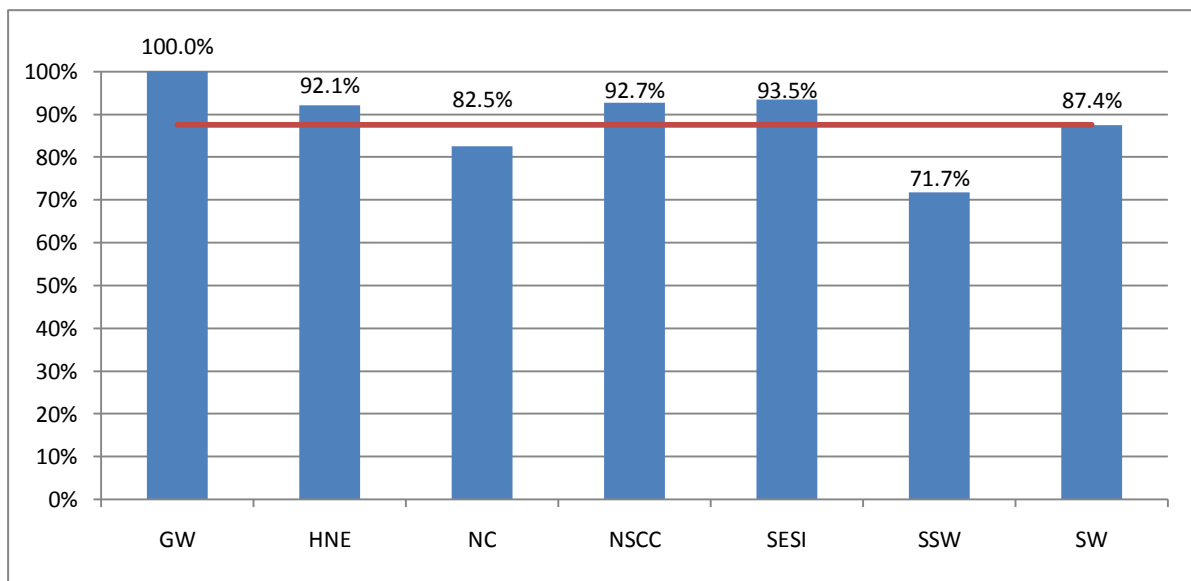


Figure 13: Percentage of eligible women screened in alcohol and other drugs services in 2009 by Area Health Service

On average, across all Area Health Services 21.4% of women screened were identified as having experienced domestic violence in the past 12 months.

The identification rate ranged from 11.4% in Greater Western to 25.7% in Hunter New England Area Health Service as shown in Figure 14.

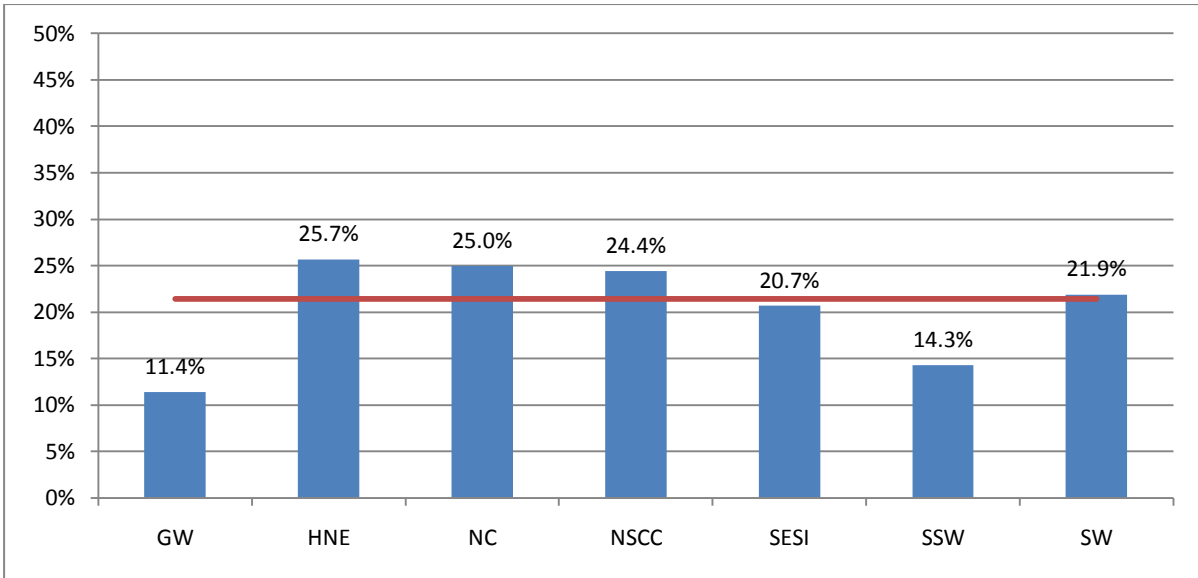


Figure 14: Percentage of women screened where domestic violence was identified in alcohol and other drugs services in 2009 by Area Health Service

79 (51.6%) of women who were identified as having experienced domestic violence accepted an offer of assistance.

'Actions taken' as shown in Figure 15 comprise:

- 167 support given and options discussed
- 13 reports to Community Services
- 3 notifications to Police
- 34 other referrals

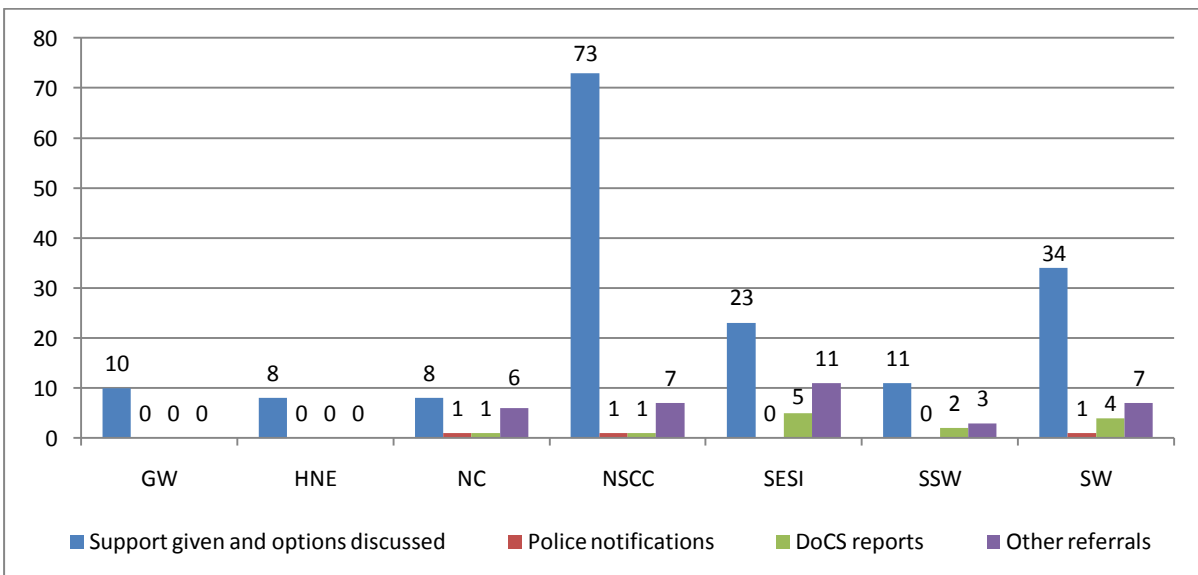
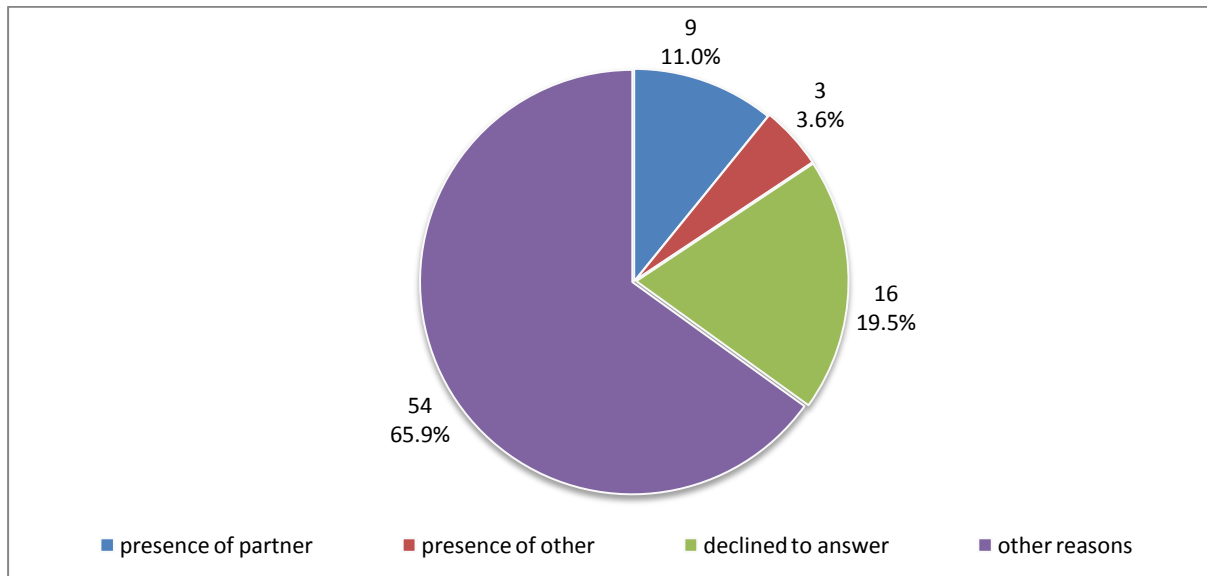


Figure 15: Number of actions taken in alcohol and other drugs services in 2009 by Area Health Service

82 reasons for not screened were provided. The presence of another person at screening accounted for 12 (14.6%) of the 'reasons for not screening' as shown in Figure 16. 'Reasons for not screening' comprised:

- 9 (11.0%) presence of partner
- 3 (3.6%) presence of others
- 54 (65.9%) other reason (not cited)
- 16 (19.5%) declined to answer

Sydney South West Area Health Services made up the majority of instances in both the 'other reason' and 'declined to answer' categories.



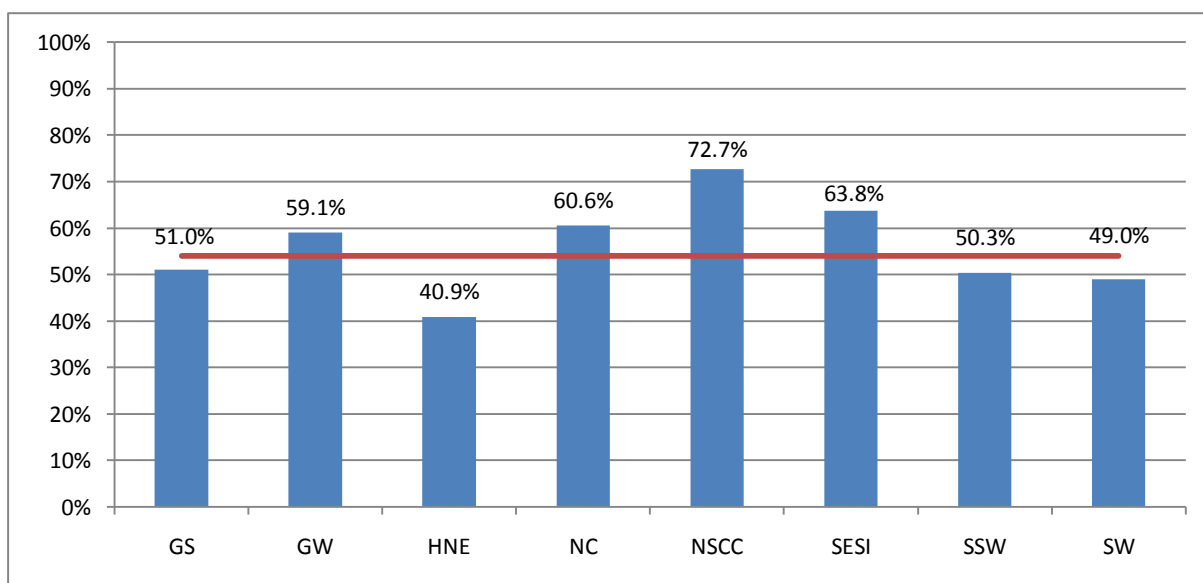
*Figure 16: Reasons for not screening in alcohol and other drugs services in 2009*

### 3.2.3 Early Childhood Health Services

All early childhood health services in Area Health Services have implemented screening.

9,703 eligible women attended early childhood services. Of these women 5,244 (54.0%) were screened. The percentage of eligible women screened as shown in Figure 17.

The screening rate varied from 40.9% in Hunter New England to 72.7% in Northern Sydney Central Area Health Service.



*Figure 17: Percentage of eligible women screened in early childhood health services in 2009 by Area Health Service*

177 (3.4%) screened women across early childhood services in all Area Health Services were identified as having experienced domestic violence in the previous 12 months.

The identification rate varied from 2.4% in Greater Southern and South East Sydney and Illawarra to 4.8% in Northern Sydney Central Coast Area Health Service.

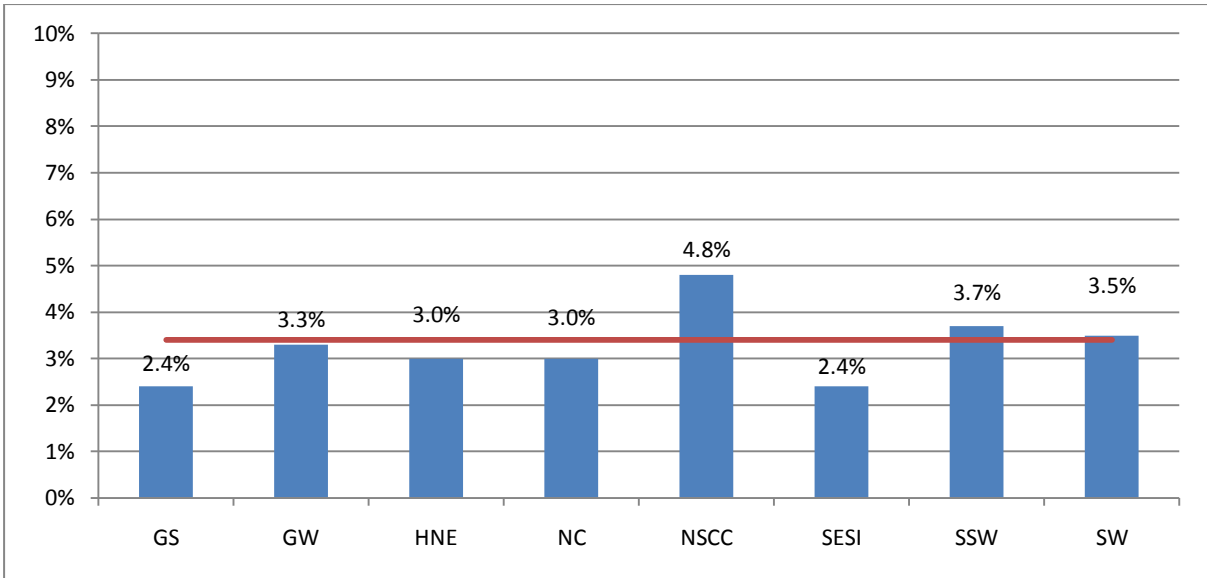


Figure 18: Percentage of women where domestic violence was identified in early childhood health services in 2009 by Area Health Service

197 women identified as having experienced domestic violence accepted an offer of assistance.

'Actions taken' are shown in Figure 19 comprised:

- 142 support given and options discussed
- 29 reports to Community Services
- 5 notifications to Police
- 21 other referrals

Greater West Area Health Service did not provide data on 'actions taken'.

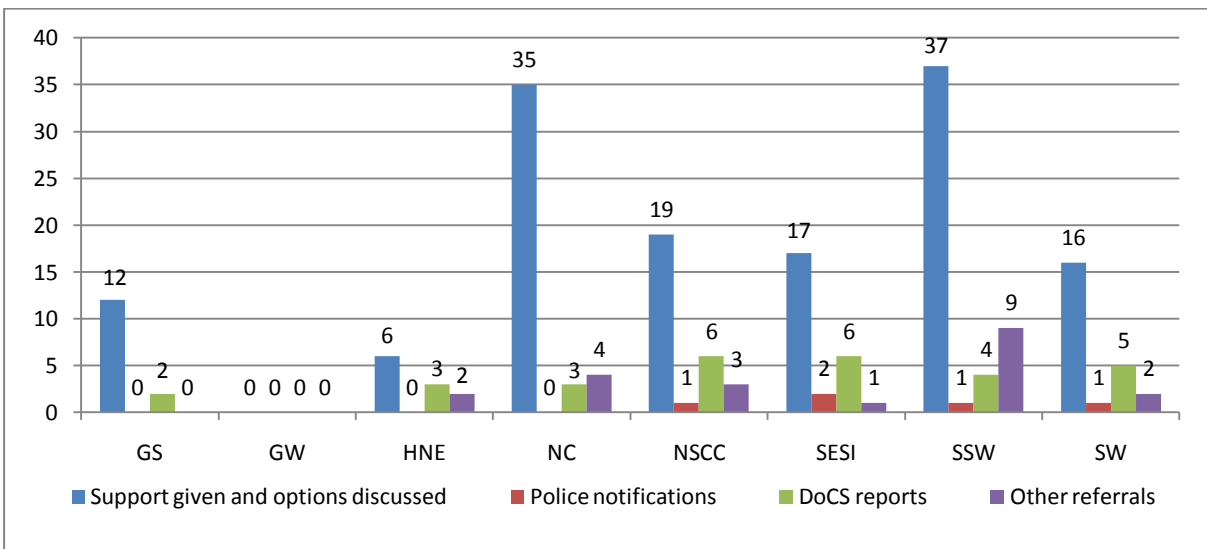


Figure 19: Number of actions taken in early childhood health services in 2009 by Area Health Service

4,527 reasons for not screened were provided. The presence of another person at screening accounted for 3,819 (84.4%) of 'reasons for not screening' as shown in Figure 20. 'Reasons for not screening' comprised:

- 2,207 (48.8%) presence of partner
- 1,612 (35.6%) presence of others
- 675 (14.9%) other reason (not cited)
- 33 (0.7%) declined to answer

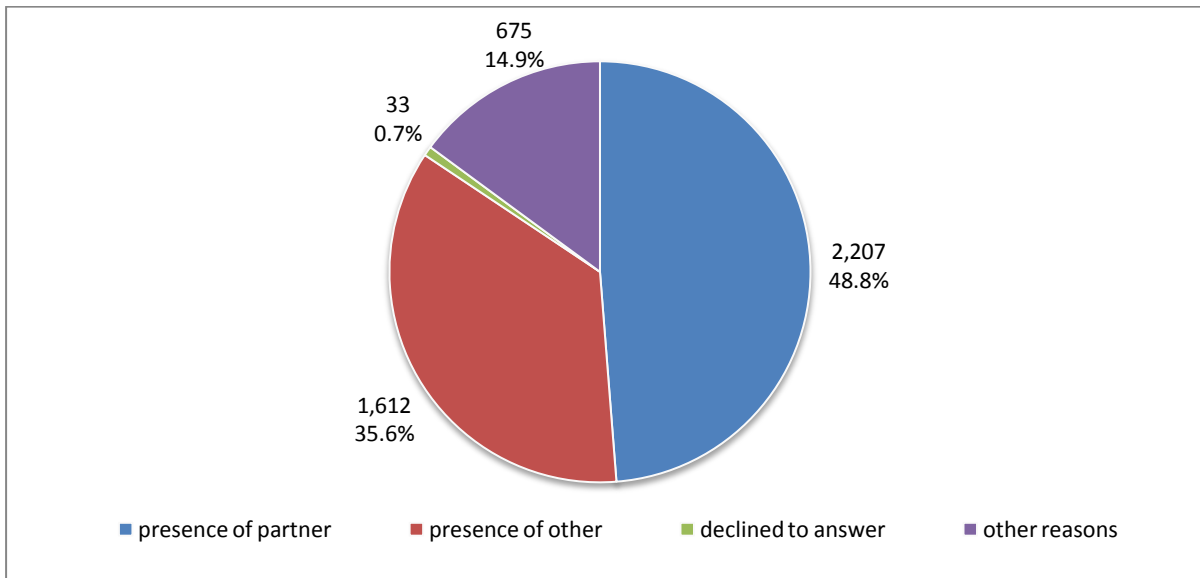


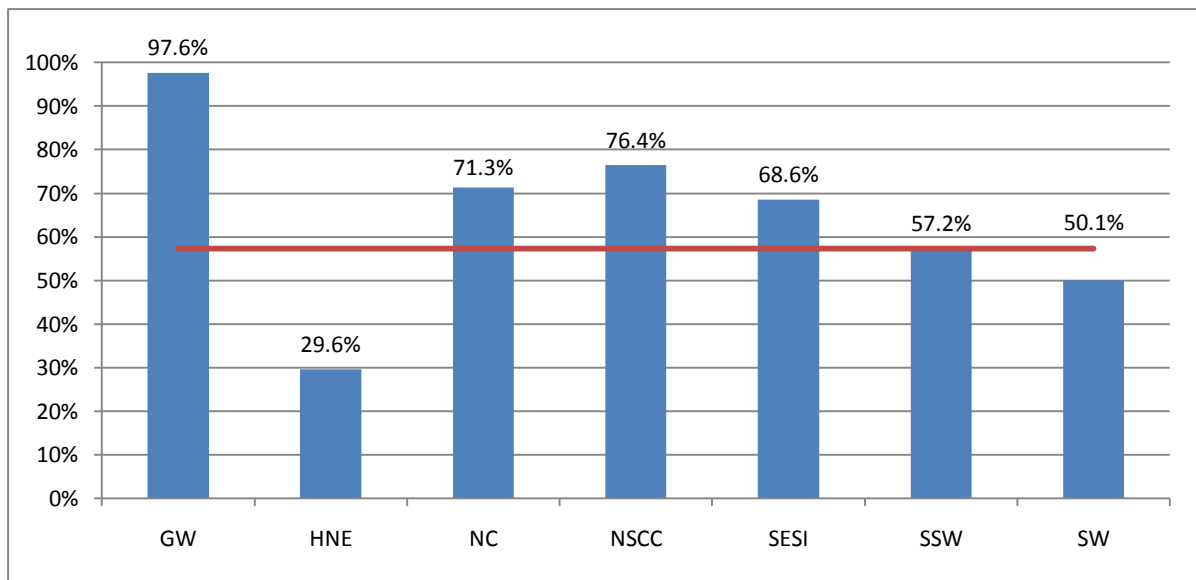
Figure 20: Reasons why screening was not conducted early childhood health services in 2009

### 3.2.4 Mental Health Services

All mental health services in Area Health Services have implemented screening.

2,659 women were eligible to be screened in mental health services. Of these, 1,390 (52.3%) were screened.

The screening rate varied from 29.6% in Hunter New England to 97.6% in Greater Western Area Health Service as shown in Figure 21.



*Figure 21: Percentage of eligible women screened in mental health services in 2009 by Area Health Service*

14.9% (207) women were identified as having experienced domestic violence in the previous 12 months.

The identification rate varied from 8.1% in Northern Sydney Central Coast to 23.9% in Sydney South West Area Health Service as shown in Figure 22.



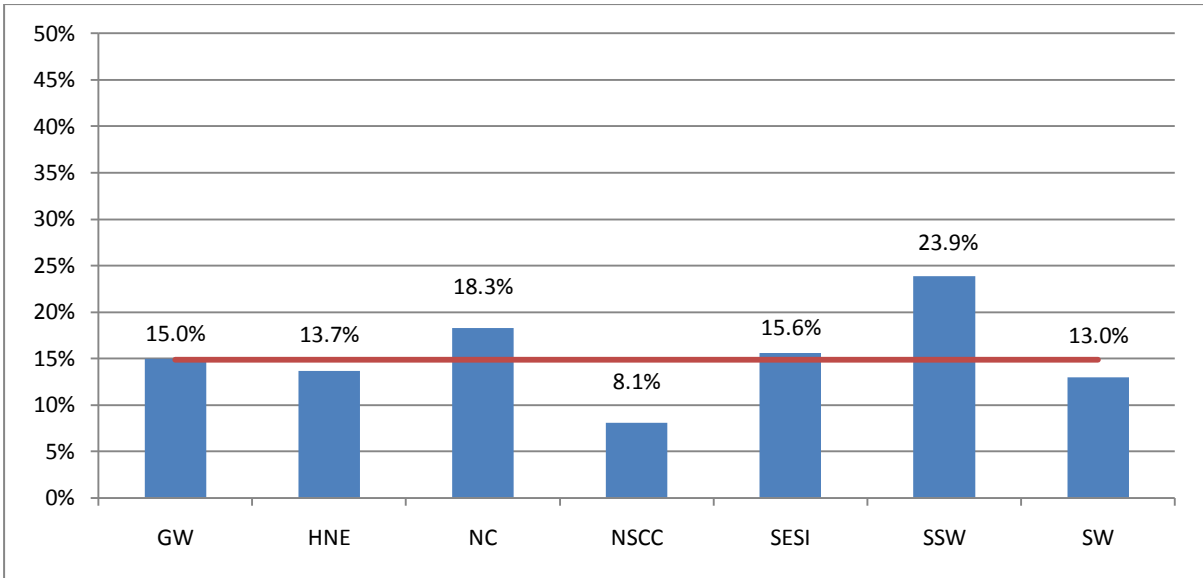


Figure 22: Percentage of women where domestic violence was identified in mental health services in 2009 by Area Health Service

84 (40.6%) women identified as having experienced domestic violence accepted an offer of assistance.

'Actions taken' as shown in Figure 23 and comprise:

- 146 support given and options discussed
- 35 reports to Community Services
- 15 notifications to Police
- 58 other referrals

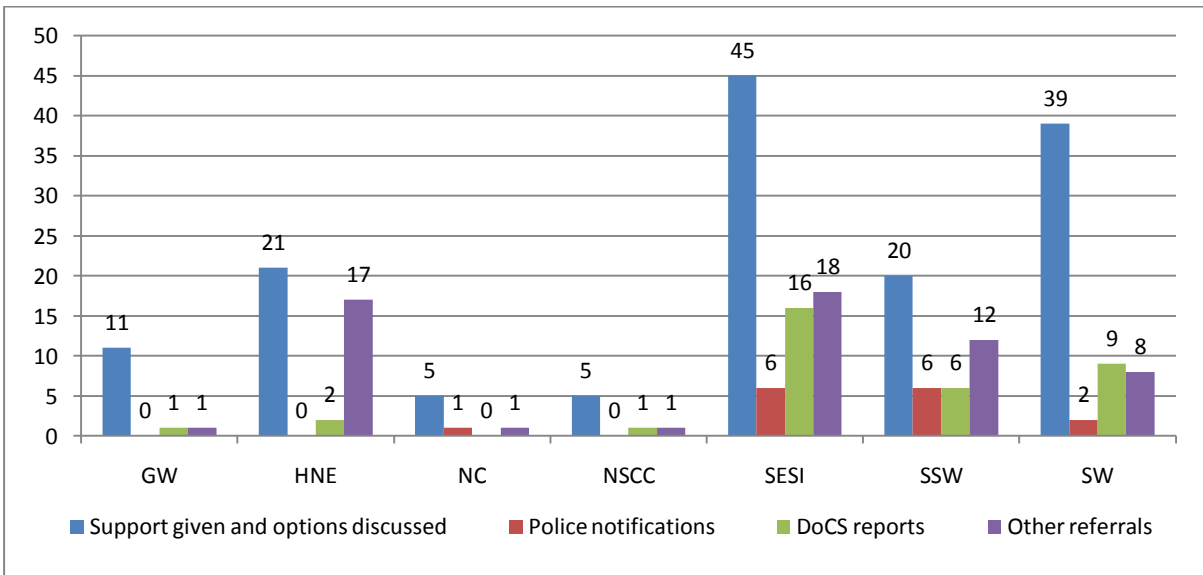


Figure 23: Number of actions taken in mental health services in 2009 by Area Health Service

1,071 reasons for not screened were provided. The presence of another person at screening accounted for 75 (7.0%) of 'reasons for not screening' as shown in Figure 24. 'Reasons for not screening' comprised:

- 49 (4.6%) presence of partner
- 26 (2.4%) presence of others
- 960 (89.6%) other reason (not cited)
- 36 (3.4%) declined to answer

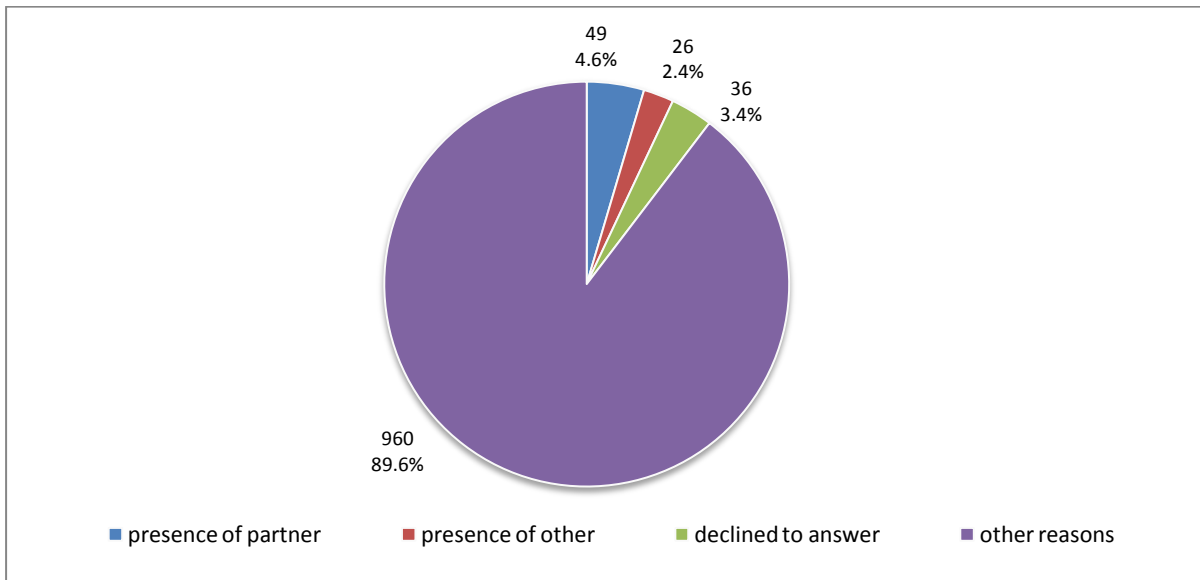


Figure 24: Reasons for not screening in mental health services in 2009

### 3.2.5 Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drugs Services

In 2009 Greater Southern Area Health Service combined data from mental health and alcohol and other drugs services data.

330 women were eligible for screening in these services, 218 (66.1%) of these women were screened.

Of the women screened 72 (33.0%) were identified as having experienced domestic violence in the previous 12 months based on the screening questions.

26 women identified as having experienced domestic violence accepted an offer of assistance. 'Action taken' comprised:

- 34 support given and options discussed
- 1 notified to Police
- 12 other referrals

Reasons for not screening were given for 38 occurrences. The presence of another person at screening accounted for 29 (76.3%) of the 'reasons for not screening'. 'Reasons for not screening' included:

- 23 presence of partner
- 6 presence of others
- 9 declined to answer

### 3.3 Results in Additional Programs

Many Area Health Services have elected to introduce screening into other service streams.

#### 3.3.1 Women's Health Nursing Services

Women's health nursing services in the six Area Health Services of Greater Southern, Greater West, Hunter New England, North Coast, South East Sydney Illawarra and Sydney South West have implemented screening.

922 eligible women attended these services in 2009, of which 821 (89.0%) of these eligible women were screened.

The percentage of eligible women screened varied from 82.0% in Hunter New England Area Health Service to 94.9% in Greater West Area Health Service as shown in Figure 26.

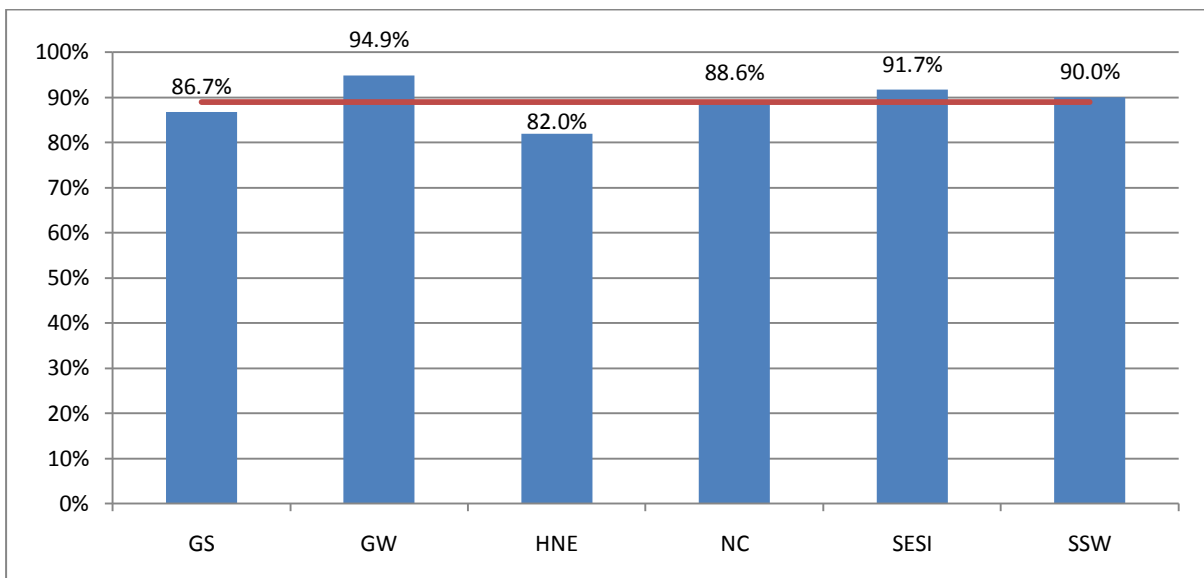


Figure 26: Percentage of eligible women screened in women's health services in 2009 by Area Health Service

27 (3.3%) women were identified as having experienced domestic violence in the previous 12 months. The identification rate varied from 1.1% in Greater Southern Area Health Service to 8.9% in Sydney South West Area Health Service as shown in Figure 27.

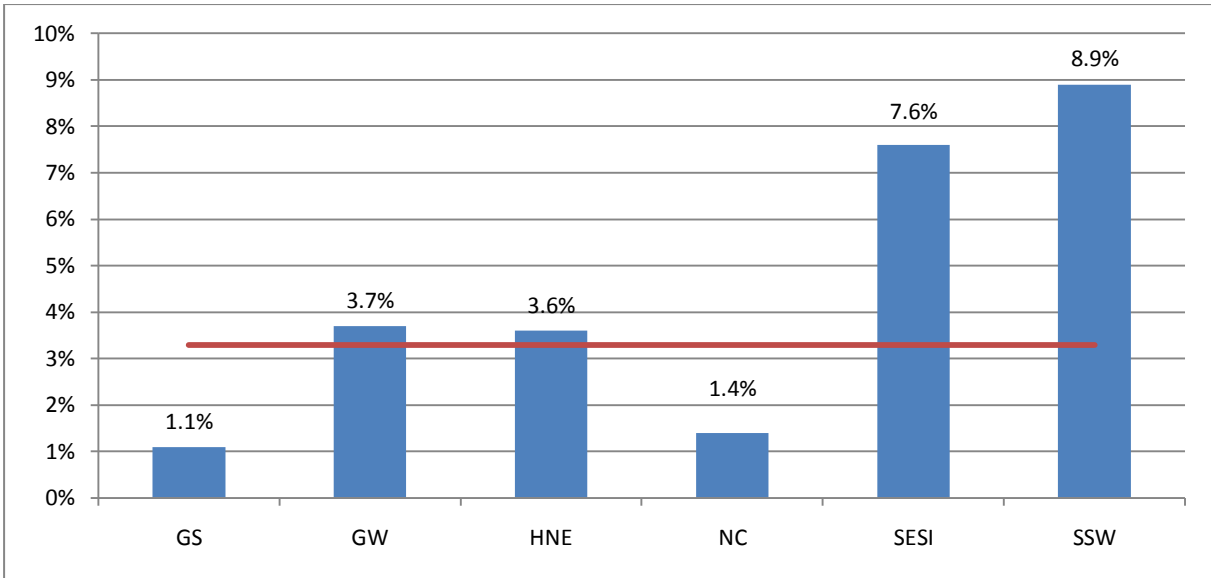


Figure 27: Percentage of women where domestic violence was identified in women's health nursing services in 2009 by Area Health Service

19 (70.4%) women identified as having experienced domestic violence accepted an offer of assistance. 'Action taken' comprised:

- 34 support and options discussed
- 4 reports to Community Services
- 1 notification to Police
- 9 other referrals

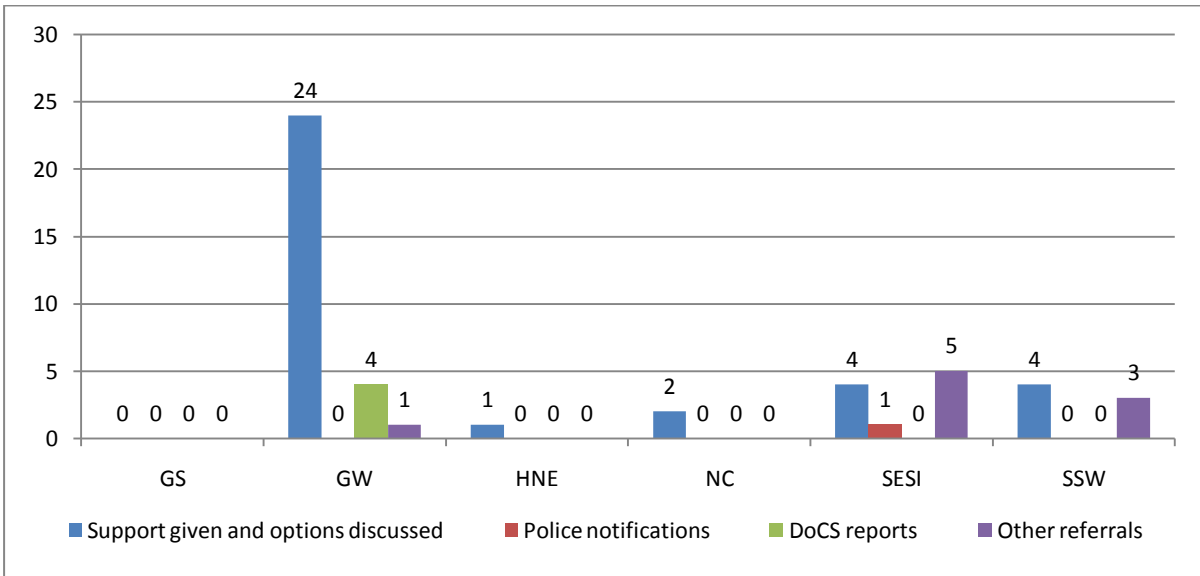


Figure 28: Numbers of actions taken in women's health nursing services in 2009 by Area Health Service

77 reasons for not screened were provided. The presence of another person at screening accounted for 24 (31.2%) 'reasons for not screening'. Three women declined to answer, and for a further 50 women 'other reasons' were given for not completing screening.

### **3.3.2 Sexual Assault Services**

Screening is implemented adult sexual assault services in Northern Sydney Central Coast and South East Sydney Illawarra Area Health Services.

28 (93.3%) of the 30 eligible women attending these services were screened.

Six (21.4%) women screened identified as having experienced domestic violence in the past 12 months.

Two women who were identified as experiencing domestic violence accepted an offer of assistance while 16 'action taken' were recorded , comprising:

- 6 support given and options discussed
- 5 notifications to Police
- 2 reports to Community Services
- 3 other referrals

### **3.3.3 Sexual Health Services**

One sexual health service in South East Sydney Illawarra Area Health Service is screening female clients.

148 eligible women attended this service, of which 135 (91.2%) were screened

Six (4.4%) women screened were identified as having experienced domestic violence in the previous 12 months. 'Action taken' comprise:

- 6 support given and options discussed
- 2 other referrals

### **3.3.4 Other Services**

Sydney South West Area Health Service submitted data for a counselling – psychology and social work team.

83 women attending this service, of which 36 (43.4%) were screened.

Four (11.1%) women were identifying as having experienced domestic violence in the previous 12 months.

While no women where domestic violence was identified accepted an offer of assistance, eight actions were taken comprising:

- 6 support given and options discussed
- 1 report to Community Services
- 1 notification to Police

## Appendix 1: 2003 - 2009 November Data Snapshots

### Key Statistics

Year	Eligible women attending services	Number Screened	% Eligible women screened	Number Identified domestic violence	% Identified of those screened	Women unsafe to go home	% Unsafe to go home	Number Accepted offer of assistance	% Accepted offer of assistance
2003	5,800	4,036	69.6%	283	7.0%	Not asked	NA	115	40.6%
2004	10,343	7,774	75.2%	504	6.5%	94	18.7%	358	71.0%
2005	16,290	10,090	61.9%	736	7.3%	217	29.5%	166	22.6%
2006	17,456	11,581	66.3%	695	6.0%	229	32.9%	180	25.9%
2007	17,332	11,702	67.5%	659	5.6%	367	55.7%	207	31.4%
2008	19,749	12,536	63.5%	734	5.9%	383	52.2%	176	24.0%
2009	21,216	14,471	68.2%	838	5.8%	468	55.8%	274	32.7%

### Action taken

Year	Number of Police notifications	Number of Community Services reports	Number of other Referrals	Referrals inside health	Referrals outside health
2003	5	23	99	Not asked	Not asked
2004	22	60	176	136	125
2005	27	144	210	140	50
2006	44	163	251	134	57
2007	26	146	202	160	71
2008	53	126	210	145	61
2009	35	114	224	201	115

## Reasons screening not completed<sup>11</sup>

Year	Presence of partner	Presence of others	Declined to answer questions	Other reason
2003	54%	38%	2%	6%
2004	32%	27%	1%	19%
2005	27%	21%	1%	11%
2006	34%	29%	2%	25%
2007	41%	29%	7%	23%
2008	39%	36%	3%	21%
2009	40%	28%	2%	31%

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<sup>11</sup> Calculations on 'reasons for not screening' are based on the actual reasons provided by the AHS for not screening. There are a large number of instances where no reason is provided. In addition, there are often more reasons given for not screening than women who were actually not screened, which indicates that staff are recording multiple reasons for not screening.



## Appendix 2: Screening form

### NSW HEALTH SCREENING FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Health Worker to complete this form.

Medical Record Number

Date  /  /

#### Explain:

- In this Health Service we ask all women the same questions about violence at home.
- This is because violence in the home is very common and can be serious and we want to improve our response to women experiencing domestic violence.
- You don't have to answer the questions if you don't want to.
- What you say will remain confidential to the Health Service except where you give us information that indicates there are serious safety concerns for you or your children.

#### Ask:

Q1. Within the last year have you been hit, slapped or hurt in other ways by your partner or ex-partner?  YES  NO

Q2. Are you frightened of your partner or ex-partner?  YES  NO

If the woman answers NO to both questions, give the information card to her and say:  
**Here is some information that we are giving to all women about domestic violence.**

If the woman answers YES to either or both of the above questions continue to question 3 and 4.

Q3. Are you safe to go home when you leave here?  YES  NO

Q4. Would you like some assistance with this?  YES  NO

Consider safety concerns raised in answers to questions.

#### Complete:

##### Action taken

- Domestic violence identified, information given
- Domestic violence identified, information declined
- Domestic violence not identified, information given
- Domestic violence not identified, information declined
- Support given and options discussed
- Reported to DoCS
- Police notified
- Referral made to \_\_\_\_\_
- Other action taken \_\_\_\_\_
- Other violence/abuse disclosed \_\_\_\_\_

##### Screening was not completed due to

- Presence of partner
- Presence of other family members
- Woman declined to answer the questions
- Other reason (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Staff

Name

Designation

## Appendix 2: Data Collection Form 2009

### Routine Screening for Domestic Violence: Snapshot 7: 1 - 30 November 2009

Area: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Program \_\_\_\_\_  
 Facility \_\_\_\_\_  
 Contact person: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Screening:					Action Taken:				Screening not completed due to:			
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Number - eligible women who presented to the facility	Number - women screened	Number - DV Identified - i.e. answered yes to Q1 and/or Q2	Number - answered no to Q3	Number - answered yes to Q4	Number - Support given and options discussed	Number - Police notifications	Number - Community Services reports	Number - other referrals**	Number - presence of partner	Number - presence of others	Number - declined to answer question	Number - other reason

### \*\* Other Referrals – when domestic violence is identified only

Within health services		Outside health services	
Service referred to	Number	Service referred to	Number

**Comments:**

## Appendix 4: Guideline

### Routine Screening for Domestic Violence

#### Guidelines for Data Collection Snapshot 7: 1 - 30 November 2009

**Re: All services and facilities conducting routine screening for domestic violence**

The NSW Health *Policy and Procedures for Identifying and Responding to Domestic Violence* (2003, revised 2006) requires the introduction of routine screening of eligible women for domestic violence in the program streams antenatal, early childhood health, mental health, and alcohol and other drugs services by the end of 2004 using the screening format provided by the Department. Other services in addition to the four target program areas may also screen.

The Policy identifies the need for Area Health Services to participate in data collection processes, which document the level and some outcomes of screening. To make this process as straightforward as possible, the data collection takes the form of an annual snapshot over a one-month period in each service / facility that has commenced screening. The 2009 snapshot will occur from **1 - 30 November 2009** inclusive.

Each screening facility is asked to complete the attached data collection proforma and submit to the nominated contact person in the Area Health Service for collating into program areas and sign-off. Collated data is to be forwarded to the Department by **1 March 2010**.

For further information or an electronic format (Excel), please contact Gwen Cosier, Senior Policy Officer, NSW Department of Health on 9391 9884 or [gwen.cosier@doh.health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:gwen.cosier@doh.health.nsw.gov.au)

#### **Explanatory Notes for completing data snapshot, November 2009 proforma:**

1. Facilities will need to develop their own data gathering strategy eg concurrent data collection, file audit, CHIME.
2. Whole numbers only are required.
3. '*Program*' refers to the broad program area. Area Health Services should complete a collated form for each program. Please ensure the program areas are clearly and separately defined ie the screening target programs of Early Childhood Health (the service provided by Child and Family Health Nurses), Alcohol and Other Drugs, Mental Health, and Antenatal Services. If additional program areas are screening, eg within community health or hospital services, please note the program area of these other services.
4. '*Facility*' refers to the specific service or site eg X Antenatal Clinic, Y Community Mental Health Centre.
5. Please note a contact person for the screening facility, with contact details, for checking of any information if required.
6. Column 1 is the total number of '*eligible women*' who presented during 1-30 November inclusive. *Eligible women*, means *all women* attending antenatal and early childhood services, and *women*

*aged 16 and over* attending mental health, alcohol and other drugs, or other services. It is understood services may count 'eligible women' differently, eg new clients only.

7. Column 2 is total number of all eligible women for whom the screening form was completed.
8. Column 3 is the total number of women who answered “**yes**” to question 1 *and/or* question 2.
9. Column 4 is the total number of women who answered “**no**” to question 3.
10. Column 5 is the total number of women who answered “**yes**” to question 4.
11. Action Taken, columns 4-9, is only to be completed where domestic violence is identified.
12. Column 6 is the total number of women who identified domestic violence by answering, “**yes**” to questions 1 and/or 2, **and** who received support and/or with whom any options were discussed. This includes receiving the domestic violence z-card or any other written or verbal information. It also includes women for whom no further action was taken eg referral.
13. The ‘**Action taken**’ section, asks for total numbers of Police notifications (Column 7), total numbers of Department of Community Services reports (Column 8), and total numbers of referrals to any service (column 9). Count **all** such actions taken. Individual women may be the subject of more than one of these actions, therefore need to be counted in each category. **Only include women for whom domestic violence was identified through screening.** Do not include referrals made where domestic violence was not identified.
14. The ‘**Screening not completed due to**’: section asks the reasons why screening may not have been completed. This refers to eligible women for whom screening was not commenced, as well as circumstance in which the screening process was not completed. Numbers are requested for screening not completed due to: ‘presence of partner’ (Column 10), ‘presence of others’ (Column 11), declined to answer question (Column 12). ‘Other reason’ (Column 13) could cover a range of possibilities eg lack of private space, interruption, domestic violence already identified therefore screening was not necessary etc. The ‘other reasons’ are to be statistically collated and do not need to be specified on the form, however may be stated in ‘Comments’. **If screening is not completed, please provide ONE main reason only for each woman, not multiple reasons.**
15. As a double check, please note that the total for Columns 10-13 should equal the difference between columns 1 and 2.
16. The ‘**Other Referrals**’ section at the bottom of the form asks for more detailed information regarding all ‘other referrals’ and whether these are within the public health system such as to an antenatal social work service, or to outside services eg Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Schemes, Police Domestic Violence Liaison Officer. Please note the total numbers of referrals. Individual women may be referred to more than one service, and thus counted more than once. **Only complete this when domestic violence was identified through screening, not when referral was made for clients for other reasons.**
17. The ‘**Comments**’ section allows for any comments a service may wish to make. Please attach another sheet if space is insufficient.

18. If multiple attempts were made to screen an individual woman, please include the **last** attempt made within the November timeframe only.

## Appendix 5: Area Health Service abbreviations

Abbreviation	Name
<i>GS</i>	Greater Southern Area Health Service
<i>GW</i>	Greater West Area Health Service
<i>HNE</i>	Hunter New England Area Health Service
<i>NC</i>	North Coast Area Health Service
<i>NSCC</i>	North Sydney Central Coast Area Health Service
<i>SESI</i>	South Eastern Sydney and Illawarra Area Health Service
<i>SSW</i>	Sydney South West Area Health Service
<i>SW</i>	Sydney West Area Health Service

## Appendix 6: Glossary

Phrase	Definition
<i>Accepted offer of assistance</i>	Measure of the number women accepting assistance as a proportion of screened women who were identified as experiencing domestic violence in the previous 12 months and/or who were identified as 'unsafe to go home'.
<i>Action taken</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Measures responses to women who were screened</li> <li>○ Includes support given and options discussed, Police notifications, Department of Community Services (now Community Services) reports, and other referrals</li> <li>○ Individual women may be in more than one category and therefore counted more than once.</li> <li>○ Action taken is only to be completed when domestic violence was identified, not for other reasons</li> </ul>
<i>Addition programs</i>	Includes sexual assault services, sexual health services and youth health services
<i>Area Health Service (AHS)</i>	<p>Area Health Services were established as distinct corporate entities under the <i>Health Services Act 1997</i> with responsibility for providing health services in a wide range of settings, from primary care posts in the remote outback to metropolitan tertiary health centres.</p> <p>The eight Area Health Services include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Greater Southern</li> <li>○ Greater Western</li> <li>○ Hunter New England</li> <li>○ North Coast</li> <li>○ Northern Sydney Central Coast</li> <li>○ South Eastern Sydney Illawarra</li> <li>○ Sydney South West</li> <li>○ Sydney West</li> </ul>
<i>Domestic violence</i>	<p>NSW Health definition:</p> <p>"Violent, abusive or intimidating behaviour carried out by an adult against a partner or former partner to control and dominate that person. Domestic violence causes fear, physical and/or psychological harm. It is most often violent, abusive or intimidating behaviour by a man against a woman. Living with domestic violence has a profound effect upon children and young people and constitutes a form of child abuse."</p>
<i>Ministry</i>	NSW Ministry of Health
<i>Other Referrals</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Asks for more detailed information regarding all 'other referrals' and whether these are within the public health system e.g. to an antenatal social work service, or to outside services e.g. Domestic Violence Court Assistance Scheme</li> <li>○ Individual women may be referred to more than one service, and thus counted more than once</li> <li>○ Other Referrals is only to be completed when domestic violence was identified, not for other reasons</li> </ul>

<i>Routine screening</i>	All women attending antenatal and early childhood health services, and women aged 16 years and over who attend mental health and alcohol and other drugs services are screened as part of routine assessment.
<i>Safe to go home</i>	Measure of immediate risk in screened women who were identified as experiencing domestic violence in the previous 12 months.
<i>Screening not completed</i>	Refers to women for whom screening was not commenced, as well as circumstance in which screening was not completed
<i>Screening tool</i>	Contains key background information for women to assist them to make an informed decision about participating in the screening, including information on the health impacts of domestic violence, assurances relating to the standard questions asked of all women and the limits of confidentiality. If domestic violence is identified through asking two direct questions, two further questions are asked, one to ascertain safety and the other offering assistance.