

Question	Answer
Asset ID	689585
Page 1	
Title	
Please specify your title	
Given name	
Family name	
I do not wish to provide my name	I do not wish to provide my name
Contact number	
I do not wish to provide a telephone number	I do not wish to provide a telephone number
Email address	
I do not wish to provide an email address	I do not wish to provide an email address
Street address	
Suburb	
State	
Postcode	
I do not wish to provide a postal address	I do not wish to provide a postal address
What type of submission are you making?	I am responding to Discussion Paper 1
Who are you making the submission for?	I am making this submission for myself
What is the name of the organisation?	
What is the core work of the organisation?	
What is your position in the organisation?	

Question

Answer

Do you have authority from the organisation to make a submission on its behalf?

Please specify who you are making this submission for

Please select at least one from below

I have lived experience of domestic, family or sexual violence and/or of the criminal justice system, I have supported a friend or family member experiencing of domestic, family or sexual violence and/or engaging with the criminal justice system, I work with people experiencing domestic, family or sexual violence and/or engaging with the criminal justice system

Please specify (if **Others** was selected)

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How would you like us to use your information?

Anonymous – published on website

Page 3

What is your age range?

What is your gender?

Female

Please specify other gender

What is your current postcode?

What is your main language other than English spoken at home?

In which country were you born?

Do you identify as a member of any of the following groups? (Please tick all that apply)

Page 4

Question

Your knowledge and experiences

Answer

I am a female health professional [redacted] in Queensland. My experiences of coercive control that I wish to draw attention to in this submission are as a witness to male victims of female perpetrators of coercive control, both in my personal and professional life. While I have helped in supporting a female friend to safely exit from a physically abusive and coercively controlling DV relationship with her husband, it is the male victims of coercive control that I will focus on precisely because I don't see these stories highlighted in the public discourse. When I heard reports from care workers about how a wife was treating one of my male clients [redacted] it reminded me of the coercive controlling behaviours that my mother-in-law exercised towards my husband. The behaviours in both circumstances included gaslighting, isolation from family and supports, verbal humiliation and threats (rage) as well as degrading put downs. I immediately engaged a social worker to support my client, as he needs support in decision making and daily activities due to his cognitive impairment, and I was concerned that his wife could take further advantage of him, possibly leading to financial as well as further emotional abuse. It was worse than that. Today, I was informed by the care provider for my client that one of their workers (who was sitting in their car writing notes after being told to leave by the client's wife) had heard an argument between my client and his wife, then witnessed my client being pushed out of the house with red marks on his neck. [redacted]

[redacted] The social worker has contacted my client and informed me that my client did not want to discuss anything and said 'I'm fine'. It is alarming that coercive controlling behaviours toward my client have escalated to physical abuse and that his safety and wellbeing is at considerable risk, yet he doesn't want to do anything about it. This reminded me of how many years it took my husband to come to the realisation that he was a victim of abuse by his mother. Even then, extended family downplayed the abuse and told him to get over it, as they couldn't conceive that he, [redacted] male was continuing to be abused by a [redacted] older woman. Sometimes the abuse was directed at me, but mostly it was directed at my husband. He started to have suicidal thoughts, and it was at a particularly low point we sought help for him. Why would men report being abused when all they hear about is how controlling men are and vulnerable are women? My concern about the framing of Discussion paper 1 and how coercive control is reported in the media is that there is an assumption that men are perpetrators and women are victims. I am concerned that as a result of this bias, women who are in fact perpetrators of coercive control, could effectively gaslight their male victims and convince a judge that the male victim is actually guilty of perpetrating coercive controlling behaviours. My mother-in-law was diagnosed [redacted] with [redacted] but she felt shame about this diagnosis, did not accept the diagnosis nor any treatment for it. She died 2 years ago a very lonely woman with no close relationships with family or friends. Systematic reviews in the mental health literature have identified a relationship between BPD and intimate partner violence (eg Jackson, M. A., Sippel, L. M., Mota, N., Whalen, D., & Schumacher, J. A. (2015). Borderline personality disorder and related constructs as risk factors for intimate partner violence perpetration. *Aggression and violent behavior*, 24, 95–106. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2015.04.015>) and there are parallels between the DSM criteria for BPD and coercive controlling behaviours. Of note, BPD has a higher incidence in women. My colleagues and mental health peers have observed that I have a [redacted]

[redacted] Today I was particularly upset, as I'm not sure that my being able to accurately perceive something was amiss for my client and engage supports will result in him accepting the help he needs to be safe - especially in this current climate of intense bias regarding gender and abuse. This relates to my final key concern - that criminalising coercive controlling behaviours will not lead to better outcomes. It would just be band-aiding the symptoms, ie, the dysfunctional social behaviours, without addressing the underlying mental health problems. Looking back, I wouldn't have wanted my mother-in-law to be 'charged' with a coercive control offence, but 'supported' to address the underlying mental health disorder that seemed to define her social behaviours and destroy her most precious relationships. I'd prefer that people (both female and male) with underlying mental health conditions who are perpetrating coercive controlling abuse, be supported to get the mental health care they need. Criminalisation of coercive control, especially considering the current bias around gender on the topic, could leave male victims even less likely to seek help and more vulnerable to abuse than they are now.

Question

Answer

Upload file