

From: Caitlin Perry
To: [SPSC SPSC](#)
Cc: [Wendy Morton](#)
Subject: Domestic and Family Violence Amendment (Information Sharing) Bill 2017
Date: Wednesday, 24 January 2018 5:12:11 PM

To: Secretary, Social Policy Scrutiny Committee

Dear Secretary

Domestic and Family Violence Amendment (Information Sharing) Bill 2017

NTCOSS is a peak non-government representative body for the health and community services sector in the Northern Territory. Our member include domestic and family violence services throughout the NT.

NTCOSS makes this submission in relation to the consultation process in relation to proposed legislation dealing with information sharing concerning domestic violence.

We are concerned about the timing and duration of the public consultation process – it is both brief and badly timed. Consultations across the Christmas – New Year period need to be extended to take into account the end of year shut down.

We note a public information session will be held on 31 January 2018, a week after the final date for submissions. Public information sessions should be conducted before the consultation closes.

We acknowledge a consultation process was conducted in 2015 and 2016 that led to the development of the Bill now being considered. That process appears to have been quite limited. While some key agencies participated in the consultation process, it appears not enough work was done to ensure meaningful participation by a range of specialist family and domestic violence services in the NT. It is not clear whether or not any specialist domestic violence legal centres and practitioners were consulted.

Regardless of any shortcomings or strengths of the earlier consultation process, a fresh consultation process should be undertaken in relation to the Bill. It will have significant implications for Domestic and Family Violence services, including women's shelters, safe houses, legal services and support services. It will of course have even more impact on victims of domestic and family violence.

We note that Victoria allocated significant funding to the creation of the new information sharing regime in that jurisdiction. Resourcing a new regime in the NT should also be addressed, as should development of an information sharing culture.

NTCOSS welcomes the commitment to update information sharing legislation in the NT. A proper – ie timely and comprehensive – consultation process will result in a robust, effective and well supported information sharing legislation.

We call on the NTG to extend the consultation period for this important reform, and to conduct

information sessions before the consultation period ends.

Please contact me if you require any further information.

Caitlin Perry

Project Officer

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I acknowledge the Larrakia people, traditional owners and custodians of the country on which I live and work.