

Blog Article

8/12/2021

Day 14 - 16 Days of Activism Domestic Violence & Court Support

Northern Rivers Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (DVCAS) received a warm referral from a case worker from a local Health Service. The Caseworker described her client, *Cherie (pseudonym) as having been in a long term relationship with her ex-partner with a significant history of unreported DV. Cherie now resides with her 12 year old son and also has adult children with the perpetrator.

Over the past two months there has been two domestic violence incidences where Cherie has been hospitalised. One of these occasions resulted in the perpetrator threatening to attack the ambulance workers. Police had attempted to take a statement from Cherie whilst she was in hospital however she described feeling too distressed at the time. She said she later went in to the police station to make a report however they were too busy at the time and agreed to follow up with her later in the day. She said she didn't hear from them again. Cherie consequently applied to the Local Court for a private ADVO for her protection.

Cherie's case worker said she was feeling considerably anxious about self-representing at court on the mention date and therefore requested DVCAS assistance for the following reasons:

1. To follow up with police as to why charges had not been pursued and an associated police ADVO applied for.
2. To provide court support to the client for her first AVO mention.
3. To provide advocacy and support to the client to make a statement to the police if required.

The DVCAS worker agreed to contact the local Domestic Violence Liaison Officer (DVLO) regarding whether there are any current or pending charges/AVO as a result of previous incidences. The DVLO replied that there is currently nothing underway as a statement has not yet been made by the client. The DVLO invited the client to come to the station to make a statement.

The DVCAS worker contacted the client via her caseworker agreeing to provide court support and advocacy on the mention date.

The client attended court with her DVCAS worker who provided a detailed explanation of court processes in relation to self-representing, and AVO conditions applied for were discussed. The worker encouraged the client to apply for an interim AVO if the matter was adjourned. The worker introduced Cherie to the DVLO who indicated that the AVO application had not been served. The defendant was not present at court. Cherie was successful in representing herself and requesting an interim order. The matter was adjourned for service.

Cherie, her sister, and the worker attended the police station after court wherein Cherie made a full statement about previous incidences.

DVCAS have agreed to continue to support the client at court, have since made a warm referral to the Northern Rivers Community Legal Centre for family law advice that will work with the AVO conditions being sought and allow the father contact with the child if safe to do so.

If you, or anyone you know are seeking court support after experiencing domestic and family violence, please contact DVCAS by accessing <https://northernriversclc.org.au/domestic-family-violence/> or phoning **1300 720 606**.