



## **STUDY SEEKS MALE VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE**

The nature and extent of domestic abuse against WA men will be studied in ground-breaking research by the Men's Advisory Network (MAN) and Edith Cowan University.

Lotterywest is providing \$140,422 towards the 18-month project, which MAN hopes will shed light on this little-understood area and provide solid data to underpin calls for more targeted support services for male victims of domestic abuse.

Executive officer Gary Bryant said MAN had been concerned for some time that the issue of intimate partner abuse against men was not widely recognised by the community or by governments responsible for funding support services.

Mr Bryant stressed that MAN recognised the majority of family and domestic violence was against women and that it was not seeking to divert funding from support for female abuse victims.

But studies from other States and overseas indicated there was also a significant number of male victims without specific services to provide them with vital support and counselling, he said.

"Men have traditionally been seen only as the perpetrators of domestic violence – there is very little recognition that they can also be abused," Mr Bryant said.

"Partly that has been because men are reluctant to admit they have been abused. They might feel embarrassed or ashamed to ask for help.

"There is also not enough understanding of the different types of abuse, not only physical but emotional and psychological abuse, that men can be subjected to.

"Police and hospital emergency services do not expect to see abused men and do not know how to identify or deal with these kinds of cases – it is completely off their radar.

"The aim of this study is to help paint a clear picture of what constitutes abuse, what might prevent men from reporting it and what is needed to support male victims."

Following discussions with the WA Government's Family and Domestic Violence Unit, in May 2007 MAN established a steering committee to pursue research into the area of intimate partner abuse against men.

Lotterywest has now funded Professor Alfred Allan and Dr Greg Dear of Edith Cowan University's School of Psychology to undertake the study.

Mr Bryant urged male victims, their family and friends and service providers from the Perth metropolitan area to participate in the research by contacting Emily Tilbrook at Edith Cowan University on 0414 807 911.

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