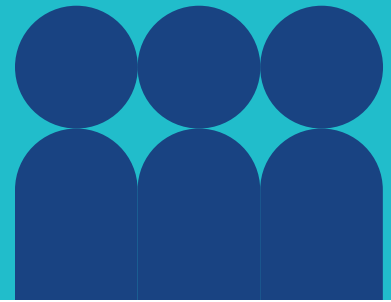


# The System Audit Family Violence Evaluation (SAFE) Project

## SAFE at a Glance

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The State Government of Victoria has supported public hospitals and health services to implement the Strengthening Hospital Responses to Family Violence (SHRFV) program. There has been minimal evaluation of the SHRFV program, and there is a need for an evidence based to inform future policy and practice concerning family violence identification and response.

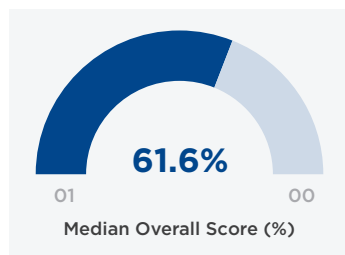
The SAFE Project addresses this gap by implementing a research initiative using a System Audit Tool (SAFE Tool) administered at 18 Victorian health services (from November 2019 to April 2021) to evaluate the SHRFV program.

### The SAFE Tool

The SAFE Tool provides an Overall Score derived from individual scores weighted across ten domains: one Patient Domain, two Staff Domains, and seven Organisational Domains.

### Findings in context

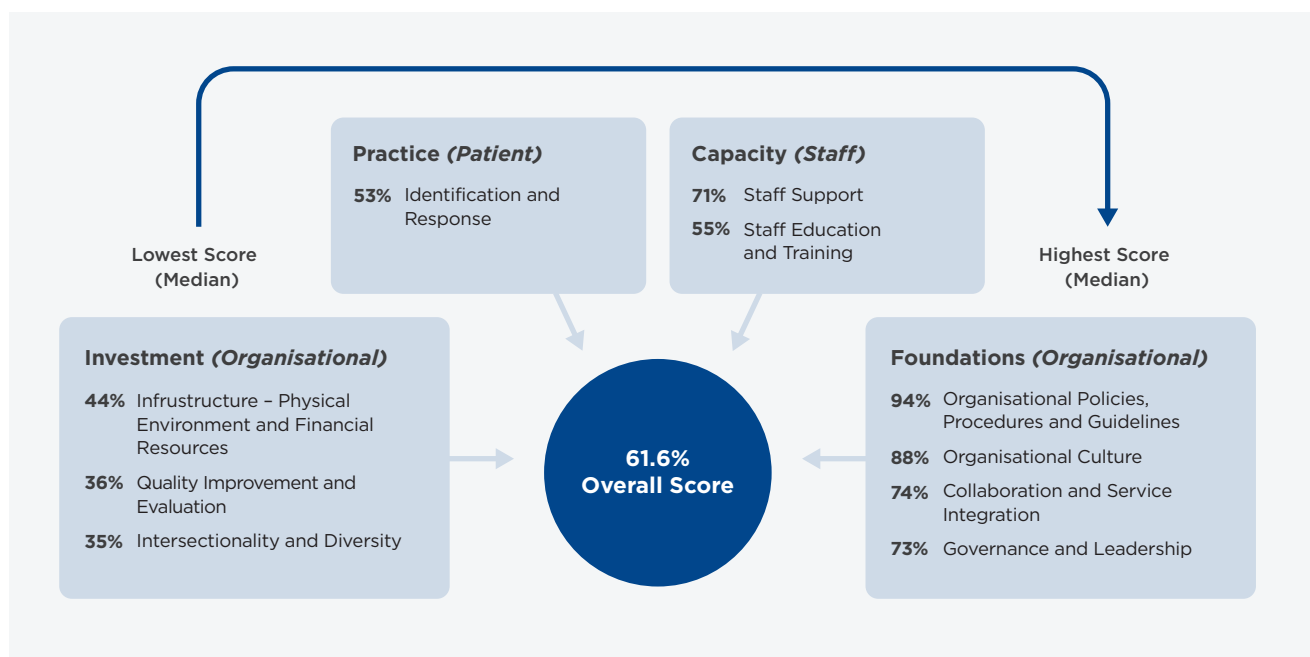
#### Overall Scores



- Overall Scores ranged between 50.8% and 79.6%. The median (middle) was 61.6%.
- There was general consistency across the SAFE Sites - three sites scored very well, none were outstanding, neither was any site significantly lower than the rest.
- Results suggest that while the health services have systems in place to respond to family violence, there continues to be a need for further resourcing and improvement.

#### Domain Scores

Ranking of SAFE Domains based on median (middle) scores from lowest to highest scores



- › The four highest performing domains covered the organisational foundations crucial in realising a whole-of-organisation response to family violence.
- › Next were the two Staff Domains important in building internal capacity and capability.
- › The lower ranking of the only Patient Domain indicated the *patient facing* work is an area for improvement.
- › The three lowest scoring domains covered organisational investment which would help embed the family violence work within the health service and facilitate a sustainable and effective family violence program.

## Recommendations

These performance audit rankings highlight where sites are doing well and provides a structure for future work and recommendations at the practice level and government level to improve outcomes.

### Family violence practice in health services

#### Greater Investment

- › Develop strategies to improve inclusivity and accessibility for diverse populations
- › Undertake SAFE Tool annually
- › Create safe confidential spaces and strategies across the health service and home (for telehealth)
- › Commit to funding of a family violence role within the health service

#### Strengthen Practice

- › Undertake routine family violence antenatal screening
- › Implement identification, risk assessment and safety planning in high-risk services
- › Develop responses to patients/clients who are perpetrators of family violence

#### Build Capacity

- › Sustain Family Violence Clinical Champions and Contact Officers programs with an evaluation plan
- › Continue to build staff education and training increasing reach and mandating training where appropriate

#### Maintain Foundations

- › Promote strong ongoing '*Governance and Leadership*', '*Organisational Policies, Procedures and Guidelines*', '*Organisational Culture*' and '*Collaboration and Service Integration*'

#### Develop Actions

- › Develop Action Plan from the SAFE Audit results to strengthen, monitoring and inform system change

### Government

#### Victoria

- › Annual implementation of SAFE Tool at health services
- › Annual state-wide reports based on SAFE Tool results
- › Annual review of family violence Action Plans for each health service
- › Triennial review of SAFE Tool

#### Nationally

- › Adapt SAFE Tool for national use
- › Implement national SAFE Tool across Australia
- › Establish national standards for responding to family violence in health services
- › Include family violence in The National Safety and Quality Health Service (NSQHS) Standards

## Conclusion

The SAFE Tool, a System Audit Tool, has been successfully implemented across eighteen Victorian health services by the Royal Women's Hospital and the University of Melbourne. We know that auditing and feedback are powerful mechanisms to change behaviour individually and across organisations. The SAFE Project shows where sites are progressing system change within their organisations to address family violence, and highlights the investment needed and the work still to be done to ensure women and families are on a pathway to safety and well-being across Victoria and nationally.

Collier  
Charitable  
Fund

Thanks to support from the Collier Charitable Fund, we now have a validated audit tool which provides a method to achieve change across health systems in the context of family violence