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MEDIA RELEASE

Women's Legal Services Hopeful National Cabinet Package is the Real Deal

Women's Legal Services Australia has welcomed the announcement of \$3.9 billion for frontline legal services responding to gender-based violence, including First Nations-specific services.

CEO Elena Rosenman said the announcement recognised that specialist women's legal services are critical in the response, as are the staff working in the community-based service sector.

"The commitments today from National Cabinet give us hope," Ms Rosenman said.

"There is a lot of detail about announcement still to be shared and several key decisions still to be taken, including by the Standing Council of Attorneys-General. But we hope that it is a sign all governments are stepping up and providing the funding needed to address gender-based violence."

"We are hopeful that today's announcement means we can ameliorate the gender pay gap in the legal assistance sector and better pay our staff for the vital, difficult work they do, supporting women fleeing violence and supports the sustainability of critical front-line services."

"We are hopeful, and determined, to ensure that the funding announced today actually reaches women affected by men's violence, who are the intended recipients."

"We hope the new National Access to Justice Agreement delivers the reforms needed to address the findings of the independent review."

The neglect of the community-based services sector is decades old, and Women's Legal Services Australia accepts that it cannot be fixed by one government acting alone.

"We look forward to announcements from each State and Territory which reflect the scale of the crisis and ensures women in their jurisdictions have access to support when and where they need it."

"We must be laser-focused in ensuring funding gets straight to the frontline to help women in urgent need and avoids repeating the shocking pattern of money being promised to the services that have the expertise in gender-based violence and the depth and quality of support that can keep women safe, but being lost in the delivery."



“We hope the deal announced today by the Prime Minister is the real deal for women facing violence.”

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