

# Men as Allies: A Regional Leadership and Prevention Initiative

## Wagga Women's Health Centre Inc

Wagga Wagga

Funding requested: \$535,577

**Summary:** This community-led project engages men in regional areas as allies in preventing domestic and family violence (DFV). Building on the success of the 2024 Wagga Men's DFV Leadership Forum, the initiative promotes primary prevention by challenging harmful norms and fostering shared responsibility. Key activities include a Regional Men's DFV Leadership Forum for Snowy Valleys and surrounding LGAs, the formation of a Regional Men's Consultation Group for ongoing peer support, and a tailored training pathway offering programs such as Mental Health First Aid and Active Bystander Training. The project also formalises the Wagga Men's DFV Consultation Group to ensure sustainability through co-designed resources and mentoring. Participants will receive regular check-ins and be connected with local services to support wellbeing. Aligned with Humelink priorities, this initiative builds local leadership, strengthens community connection, and creates a lasting social legacy.

**Community value:** The Regional Men as Allies project actively engages men as leaders and allies, shifting the burden of change from women alone to the entire community. By fostering trusted networks of male leaders who model respectful, trauma-informed behaviours and challenge harmful societal norms and attitudes, the project strengthens community connection and builds collective responsibility. Informed by the Man Box research from Jesuit Social Services, the project seeks to address how rigid expectations of masculinity contribute to men's mental health struggles and, when combined with social isolation and emotional suppression, can put them at an increased risk of using violence. These factors not only harm men but also increase the risk and severity of DFV in the community. Participants will gain confidence to intervene safely, support victim/survivors, and foster respectful relationships, helping reduce stigma, and encouraging broader community engagement.



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