

1 January, 2020

More funding for domestic violence services needed to cope with Christmas and New Year

Volunteer-based Hornsby-Ku-ring-gai Women's Shelter is calling for more funding to assist it to meet the increasing demands of the Christmas and New Year period.

HKWS President Louise McCann said for most people, Christmas and New Year were a time of celebration that brought families and friends together, but for many women it was the most feared time of year.

"Stress resulting from additional financial pressures along with an increase in the number of boozy social engagements can be a recipe for increased violence for many women," Ms McCann said.

"While many families are decorating Christmas trees and preparing feasts, many women spend the period in hiding to conceal their injuries."

Ms McCann said demand for the not-for-profit's services had increased so much that it was seeking funding for a bigger property to accommodate its female clients.

"We also urgently need resources to assist us to cope with a spike in the number of women seeking help around this time of year," Ms McCann said.

Ms McCann said women came from a diverse range of ethnic and cultural backgrounds and ages.

"The socio-economic profile of women also differs greatly. We have had highly qualified woman walk through our doors. Of great concern is the increased number of older women seeking our services."

Ms McCann said it was not always easy to recognise when women were facing domestic violence or abuse.

"We urge the community to be vigilant in keeping an eye out for vulnerable women this festive season," she said.