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Statement from Women's Electoral Lobby (WEL)

WEL welcomes the COAG National Summit on Reducing Violence against Women to be held in Brisbane this coming Friday 28 October.

However WEL is very disappointed that the Summit has chosen not to address crisis services for women and children escaping violence. The need for such services, and for them to receive long-term secure Commonwealth/State funding, is critical to our national goal of eliminating domestic violence. These services are critical in homicide prevention, especially with so many Australian women being killed by their partners each year. Women need safe places to escape to and to receive expert crisis assistance.

The Summit plans to hold roundtable discussions on such topics as 'using behavioural insights to reduce domestic violence', 'innovative uses of technology' as well as important discussions on the Family Court, on Indigenous insights and experiences and the effects of domestic violence on children, but there is nothing on the agenda about crisis services, including women's refuges.

WEL has long argued that crisis services for women and their children fleeing domestic violence are needed, and along with many women's organisations has been campaigning for a Women and Children's Safety program, a long term Commonwealth /State Funding program for women's refuges. (See: http://www.wel.org.au/our_2_cents).

WEL expresses deep concern that the COAG Summit does not see crisis services and their long term secure funding as a key issue in the prevention of violence against women.

WEL calls on the COAG Summit to include support for long term secure Commonwealth /State funding for women's crisis services in its deliberations and follow up actions.

For further information or for comment please contact:

Helen L'Orange AM

Convenor, WEL Violence Against Women Action Group

M: 0425 244 935

E: helen.lorange@bigpond.com

Women's Electoral Lobby | 8-10 Victoria Street, Newtown, NSW 2042

EMAIL: wel@welnsw.org.au WEBSITE: wel.org.au

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/WomensElectoralLobbyAustralia/>

Twitter: [@welaust](https://twitter.com/welaust)