

ECU Media Release

22 June 2010

ECU Researchers uncover intimate partner abuse

Researchers from Edith Cowan University (ECU) are working on a new study to investigate domestic abuse committed against men.

Intimate partner abuse takes on many forms, including economic, psychological and emotional abuse, through to physical and sexual violence.

In the past, most of the focus has been on female victims and male perpetrators of intimate partner abuse, but according to ECU's Professor Alfred Allan, there is anecdotal evidence that some males are also the victims of intimate partner abuse.

"Little is known about the prevalence of intimate partner abuse against males as men who experience this type of abuse are reluctant to seek assistance," he said.

"There is a concern that men who experience intimate partner abuse aren't receiving the assistance they need and as a result their loved ones and family members are also missing out."

The project aims to explore the perceptions of intimate partner abuse taking into account the experience of both victims and perpetrators.

Researchers will also work with family members and service providers to gain a thorough understanding of intimate partner abuse.

The study will be carried out in partnership with the Men's Advisory Network and the Family and Domestic Violence Unit with support from Lotterywest.

ECU's Dr Greg Dear and Professor Alfred Allan will lead the project, which involves one-on-one interviews with around 120 individuals.

ECU Vice-Chancellor Professor Kerry Cox said he was pleased ECU researchers are working towards increasing the level of understanding about a relatively unknown and misunderstood subject.

"This work is just another example of some of the work ECU is undertaking to help shed light on significant issues, for the benefit of the wider community," he said.

The project follows a report released by the Department for Community Development's Family and Domestic Violence Unit in 2006 which highlighted the need for research into this area.

Anyone interested in participating in the study can contact Emily Tilbrook on 0414 807 911.

- ends -

Media contact: Theresa Hingston, ECU Corporate Communications, on 6304 2288 or 0417 950 245.

ECU strives to develop valued citizens for the benefit of Western Australia and beyond, through teaching and research inspired by engagement and partnerships. ECU serves over 20,000 students across two metropolitan campuses, a regional campus in Bunbury, and centres in Margaret River and Geraldton.