



Pru Goward MP

Minister for Family and Community Services

Minister for Women

MEDIA RELEASE

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NEW APP TO HELP PEOPLE EXPERIENCING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Minister for Family and Community Services Pru Goward today launched a new smart phone app for people who are experiencing domestic and family violence.

“This app is the first of its kind in the world to combine information with access to help services, the ability to create a trusted network of friends who can be easily contacted with an agreed message and a GPS system to ‘call-for-help’ alert recipients of the sender’s location,” Ms Goward said.

“The Aurora domestic violence app has been developed by the NSW Government to help people who are experiencing abuse make informed, empowered choices.

“The app is easy to use, information can be obtained anonymously and contains useful and potentially life-saving information.

“A unique messaging tool allows the user to privately and safely call for help if under duress.

“The ‘Message friends’ section allows users to quickly send an SMS to a trusted friend or family member when they are feeling threatened or harassed. A choice of three in-built messages - ‘Call me’, ‘Come and pick me up’ and ‘Call the police for me’ - can be instantly communicated in emergencies with three quick touches of a phone pad.

“The app also allows free text so the user can customise it to include a secret codeword shared only with a trusted friend or relative.

“The app was developed in consultation with the NSW Police Force, with input from experts from the domestic and family violence sector, including the NSW Women’s Refuge Movement.

“The app was designed in response to evidence that shows the vast majority of violence is against women and girls within their homes. Often women flee a situation with only their immediate personal belongings, including their mobile or smart phone.

The launch of this new smart phone app comes following the recent trial of 50 new SOS alarms for women who have been subject to domestic violence in the past.

“Research also tells us that smart phone technology can be particularly effective in regional and rural areas where women don’t always have access to a computer, but they often own a smart phone,” Ms Goward said.

Ms Tracy Howe CEO of the NSW Women's Refuge Movement said "domestic violence is so often hidden; victims often feel a sense of shame and can be too scared to talk to those close to them. An easy-to-access app that helps them understand they are not to blame, and helps enhance their safety, is a valuable and welcome addition to the range of resources available to victims of domestic and family violence."

Ms Goward said preventing and reducing domestic and family violence is a key priority for the NSW Government.

"In Australia, one woman is killed every week by a current or former partner," Ms Goward said.

"In NSW specifically, the Domestic Violence Line received more than 22,000 calls from people seeking support in 2011/12.

"Australian studies indicate that domestic and family violence contributes more to death, ill health and disability among women who are under 45 years of age than any other factor, including smoking and obesity."

iPhone and Android versions of the Aurora domestic violence app are now available for free download from the iTunes App Store and Google Play Store.

Alternatively, use your phone to scan the QR code below to download the Aurora app.



To speak to someone about domestic and family violence call 1800 65 64 63.

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