



**Media Release (amended)**

**FCA welcomes new funding for specialist family violence financial counselling service**

FCA welcomes an announcement by the Government that will see more women affected by domestic and family violence given access to specialist family violence financial counsellors.

The Government is providing funding of \$5.5 million to the Zahra Foundation to set up a national service that will offer specialist financial counselling through video, phone and chat.

The new service will link in with existing services, such as the National Debt Helpline and 1800 Respect.

With the exception of Victoria, there are only a handful of specialist family violence financial counsellors available in each State and Territory so this new funding will increase reach and improve referral pathways. In Victoria, there are a number of specialist family violence financial counsellors but these services are already busy.

The new service will be particularly helpful for women in regional and rural areas, or who for other reasons, are unable to access a face-to-face financial counsellor.

“This announcement is further recognition of the vital role that financial counsellors play in the community and that financial counselling can make such an enormous difference in a person’s life”, said Fiona Guthrie, CEO of Financial Counselling Australia.

“Sadly financial abuse is an extremely common form of family violence, and one that manifests both during relationships and often continues after a woman leaves a relationship.”

“Access to financial counselling can make the difference between being able to re-establish after leaving a relationship or being forced to return, because of financial pressures.”

All financial counsellors receive training about family violence and understand its complex nature. Specialist family violence counsellors undertake additional training.

ENDS

For an interview with Fiona Guthrie contact Maura Angle on 0418 334 121 or email [maura.angle@financialcounsellingaustralia.org.au](mailto:maura.angle@financialcounsellingaustralia.org.au)



Financial Counselling Australia and the Financial Counselling Foundation

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