

The impact of the ‘What’s Your Plan?’ program on ADVO breaches and domestic violence

Min-Taec Kim

SUMMARY

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BACKGROUND

The aim of this study is to understand the impact of the ‘What’s Your Plan’ (WYP) program on breaches of Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders (ADVOs) and Domestic Violence (DV) related offending.

WYP asked defendants to imagine the future with and without breaching their ADVO, and to identify and plan for potential obstacles to compliance. WYP was an application of a behaviour change intervention (‘Mental Contrasting and Implementation Intentions’) from the psychology literature.

WYP was available to Aboriginal defendants with a finalised ADVO between March 2017 and October 2019, and implemented with an on-week, off-week structure to facilitate evaluation.

We compare outcomes for people in the ‘off-weeks’ (Business-As-Usual) with both people in the ‘on-weeks’, and those that actually received the WYP program (26% of those allocated).

For both breaches and DV related offending, we looked at the proportion of people who committed the offence, and the number of days until the offence occurred (if ever), within 3, 6 and 12 months.

KEYWORDS

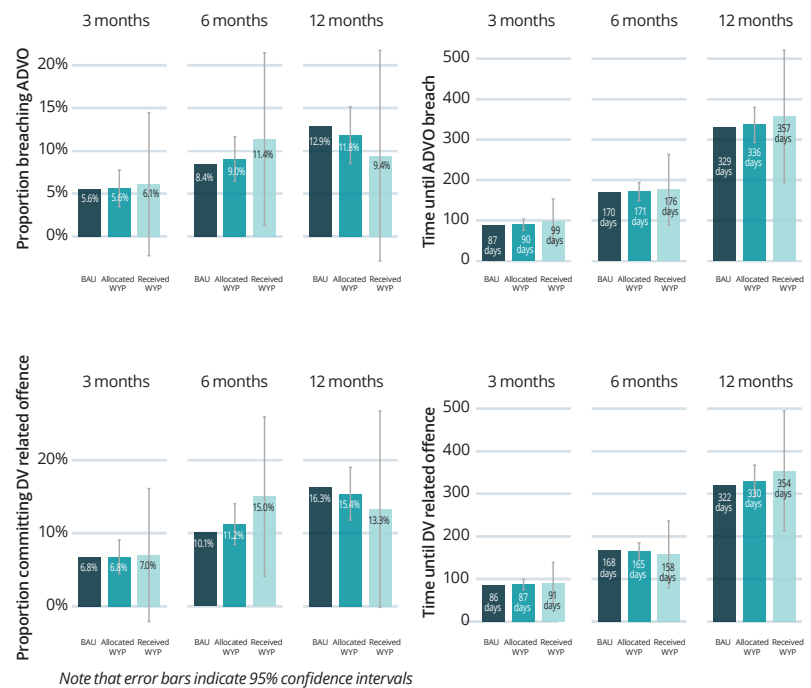
- Domestic violence
- Program evaluation
- Apprehended violence order (AVO)
- Behavioural insights
- Recidivism / Re-offending
- Aboriginal over-representation

KEY FINDINGS

We find no evidence for any impact of the ‘What’s Your Plan’ program on breaches of ADVOs or DV-related charges.

There were small differences in offending between those allocated to WYP and those that were not, but offending rates were sometimes higher for those allocated to WYP. These differences were larger when looking at the impact on those that actually received the WYP program. None of these differences were statistically significant at conventional levels.

Reoffending outcomes for participants in the WYP and comparison group (BAU)



CONCLUSION

We find no evidence that the ‘What’s Your Plan’ program is sufficient to reduce DV-related offending for Aboriginal defendants. This suggests that a program like WYP may depend on the availability of other programs, support and resources to be effective.