Dr Chris Burns
ATTORNEY-GENERAL AND MINISTER FOR JUSTICE

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Reporting of Domestic Violence Under Review

The Territory Attorney-General Chris Burns today released a discussion paper seeking Territorians’ views on mandatory reporting of domestic and family violence by health professionals.

“Compulsory reporting of violence in a domestic or family environment raises issues,” Dr Burns said.

“The discussion paper is designed to give an overview of the topic and identify some of the issues surrounding mandatory reporting.

“It also proposes a community model as an alternative to mandatory reporting.”

The discussion paper has been prompted by recent legislative changes to the Domestic and Family Violence Act.

The discussion paper poses many questions such as:

- Should reporting of domestic and family violence be compulsory for health professionals?
- If so, which category of health professionals should the obligation apply to?
- What is the threshold of domestic and family violence?
- Will mandatory reporting expose the victim to greater harm?
- Will mandatory reporting result in victims refusing to seek medical help?
- Will mandatory reporting expose the health practitioner to harm?
- How will the reporting obligation impact on support services?
- What is the role of police?
- Is a community model that includes police and other non-government organisations more appropriate than mandatory reporting?

“I urge interested groups, organisations and members of the public to make submissions so government can make an informed and comprehensive decision about this important issue,” Dr Burns said.


Submissions should be made by Friday, February 29.

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