



The implications of a natural hazard event on domestic violence agencies

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In New Zealand there are 18 government and 10 non-government agencies that are involved in the prevention of, or intervention in, domestic violence. A recently completed pilot study indicated an increase ranging from a doubling to a tripling of the number of cases of reported domestic violence following a specific flooding event in New Zealand. This consequence was not planned for and many agencies were under-resourced and unprepared. Whilst it is important that relevant emergency management policy reflects any increase in domestic violence following a natural hazard event, it is equally important that agencies dealing with domestic violence are aware of the effect that an event, such as a flood, can have on the number of cases which may present before them, and on their premises and other infrastructure that are vital to service provision. The relationship is reciprocal with social impacts needing to be reflected in emergency management planning, and science (such as risk assessments for the geographical location of the agencies) informing social policy to ensure that services can continue during and after a natural hazard event.