

# Case Study

## A Refuge Worker's Perspective on Faith Based Refuges

### Problems associated with a women's refuge being run by a faith based organisation

None of the staff at the faith based refuge where I worked had experience working with victims of domestic violence. This meant that they were lacking in the theory, knowledge and skills required to provide an appropriate form of support to those impacted by domestic violence. For example, the safety of clients was not adequately taken into account, nor was the importance of empowering clients to ensure that they do not feel just as controlled by a service as they did by their partners.

It is widely agreed that best-practice in the field domestic violence involves understanding domestic violence within a feminist framework. This organisation failed to understand domestic violence in this manner and as a result, women were pathologised for the domestic violence that they had experienced.

The staff were culturally incompetent. For example, 3 clients made complaints in relation to a caseworker, who on repeated occasions made racist remarks to

clients. For example, this caseworker suggested to a client that the client could not understand the caseworker properly because she was wearing a headscarf that covered her ears. When I reported this to management, no action was taken.