Figure 2.2

Stages of implementation: **Specialist Family Violence Courts**

Decide what needs to change and for whom

The Royal Commission recommended all Magistrates' Court of Victoria headquarter courts establish Specialist Family Violence Courts (SFVC) with the functions of Family Violence Court Division courts.

The aim of the SFVCs is to reduce the complexity, delays and trauma of court proceedings to create a more compassionate and responsive justice system that ensures safety of victim survivors and accountability of perpetrators. The SFVCs involved changes to the physical environment of courts, workforce profile of court staff and their ways of working, and integration with the broader court and service system.

SFVCs have been established in Shepparton, Ballarat, Moorabbin, Heidelberg and Frankston.

Program enabler
Model informed by practice review, which highlighted challenges and opportunities

Program enabler
Model built on pilot at Shepparton, creating good fit for the system

2016 **2017** **2018** **2019** **2020** **2021**

Engage and explore

Adopt initiative
Developed and adopted SFVC service model

Set up implementation team
Implementation team recruited

Assess barriers and enablers to readiness
Detailed analysis of pre-SFVC family violence practices (at Shepparton court)

Process enabler
Time was given to understand and adopt new practices

Process enabler
Pre-implementation recruitment and training was heavily resourced

Engaging stakeholders
SFVC — Project governance framework and terms of reference approved
Courts Family Violence Reform Program Steering Committee established

Process enabler
Project governance and working groups facilitated agile, coordinated approach

Plan and prepare

Build readiness
Learning and development program implemented prior to gazettal of each court

Make a plan
SFVC Project Plan revised May 2018

Shepparton construction began late 2018

Ballarat and Moorabbin construction began early 2019

Heidelberg and Frankston construction began mid-2019

Decide how to monitor implementation quality
SFVC Data Collection Workplan, May 2020

System barrier
Accommodating family violence listings created some pressure on other courts

Organisation enabler
Strong learning culture was evident; specialist workforce was heavily resourced

Process barrier
Establishing client data collection process limited victim survivor voices in decision making

People enabler
Koori practitioners at designated sites enabled engagement with Aboriginal court users

Program enabler
Capability pathways supported practice consistency and program fidelity

Process enabler
Good reach into local professional and community networks

System enabler
Data collection, lived experience insights and review mechanisms drove continuous improvement

Initiate and refine

Moorabbin SFVC commenced early 2020

Commence operations/delivery
Shepparton and Ballarat SFVCs commenced late 2019

Monitor and improve
Data collection processes enhanced at court sites

Capability pathways established, which articulate how SFVC-specific capabilities, attributes and knowledge will be developed through training, coaching, mentoring and supervision

Note on sustain and scale activity:
At the time of this review a number of SFVCs had opened within the previous 12 months. Some 'business as usual' activity was occurring in the relatively early stages. For example, listings policies were being implemented, new court spaces were being used, and a range of specialist practitioners were employed. However, further stage 3 refinement activity was also occurring, particularly in areas such as data collection processes and capability pathways.