Intimate partner violence against women is a common problem in all countries and generates a challenging agenda for the health sector. Exchanging experiences between different countries, specifically strategies to respond to this problem, can constitute a tool for stimulating debate and promoting reflection. The scope of this article is to present and reflect on aspects of the Australian health sector response to intimate partner violence, and chart the scenario that surrounds this issue. We draw on a range of methods, combining a literature review and a dialogue with different stakeholders and site visits. We describe historical, contemporary and conceptual aspects of healthcare responses to intimate partner violence in Australia. Further we present some of the strategies, public policies and innovative projects that have been developed in this field in Australia. Some of the strategies include: screening vs. case-finding; primary care approaches for dealing with all family members; respect for diversity; and new randomized trials aiming for sustainable health system change for enhanced health professional care of people experiencing intimate partner violence. Despite the limitations of this approach to such a complex theme, we hope to stimulate thinking and discussion.

Keywords
Intimate partner violence, Public health policies, Gender-based violence.