

Women's Health East



Annual Report

"SUPPORTING WOMEN TO LIVE THE LIVES THEY WANT"

2012 / 2013



About This Report

Welcome to the Women's Health East (WHE) Annual Report for 2012 - 2013. In this report we present the highlights of our work over the last year and explain what we have done to address the health and wellbeing of women in this region.

The report aims to demonstrate our commitment to our vision and to describe how we have gone about addressing our strategic directions. We hope you enjoy reading it!

In order to continually improve our work and our communication with our partners and our community, we encourage any feedback you might have about the report or our work. You can do this by sending us an email us at health@whe.org.au or speaking to any one of our staff.

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CHAIR REPORT

I am pleased to present the WHE Annual Report 2012 - 2013.

The Board of Governance is proud of the organisation's achievements and would like to congratulate the staff and Chief Executive Officer on a highly successful year.

Despite starting the year with a funding cut, WHE's dedicated staff have ensured their work has reach into each of the seven municipalities in the Eastern Metropolitan Region (EMR), through the development and maintenance of a broad array of effective partnerships and networks. In working to improve the health and wellbeing of women across the region, we very much rely on our partners to assist us to achieve outcomes for women.



In line with our strategic direction WHE has focused on providing regional leadership, expertise and influence in women's health and wellbeing. WHE's commitment to this way of working has certainly paid off with the development of *Together for Equality & Respect: A Strategy to Prevent Violence Against Women in Melbourne's East 2013 -2017*.

In line with our strategic direction WHE has focused on providing regional leadership, expertise and influence in women's health and wellbeing.

Our Board has displayed strong support for systems to ensure quality improvement, and risk assessment and mitigation in all aspect of the organisation's operations and governance. We have been very pleased with WHE's role in leading the development of a continuous quality improvement framework for the women's health sector. This is being undertaken in partnership with our fellow women's health services across the state, and whilst in its early stages, is promising to provide a framework that will be relevant to our work and effective in supporting continuous improvement.

WHE is fortunate to have a highly skilled and committed group of women who comprise our Board of Governance – a big thank you to all of you. WHE welcomed three new Board members this year; Yvette Pethebridge, Sarah Kleinitz and Wendy Roberts, all of whom have been fantastic contributors to our work. Outgoing Board members were Cindy Barnes and Larissa Seymour. We sincerely thank them for their hard work and for the important role that they played in supporting the organisation to meet its strategic directions.

The Board of Governance looks forward to the year to come. At the start of a four year planning cycle that is shared with many of our partners for the first time, we are keen to do all we can to make a difference to the lives of women in the East.

Jackie Kelly

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT



What a great year 2012 - 2013 has been! WHE has been a hive of activity working to achieve our strategic directions in order to improve the health and wellbeing of women and girls in the EMR.

A significant amount of our energy and focus this year has been directed to working with our partners to prioritise the prevention of violence against women in health and organisational plans across the region. The development of *Together for Equality & Respect: A Strategy to Prevent Violence Against Women in Melbourne's East 2013 - 2017* grew from consultation with our partners about what was

needed to support the inclusion of this important issue in their work over the next four years. The Strategy was launched in June 2012, at a Gender Equality Forum, which was combined with the opening of the *Dark Nights* Art Exhibition by the Maroondah Art Gallery (see photos below). This made for a really informative, stimulating and highly enjoyable afternoon. We have been very pleased with the commitment to addressing the prevention of violence against women in the region and have had the involvement of all EMR Local Governments, Community Health Services, Primary Care Partnerships, Medicare Locals and the Regional Family Violence Partnership (RFVP) in the formation of this Strategy.



A significant amount of our energy and focus this year has been directed to working with our partners to prioritise the prevention of violence against women in health and organisational plans across the region.

Photos from the launch of Together for Equality & Respect

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT

Major achievements of the year (which are further described in this report) included:

- The completion of the Investing in Women project
- A growing focus on the use of various forms of media to improve women's health and wellbeing
- Ongoing support to women who have experienced family violence or sexual violence to speak out and advocate for change via the Eastern Media Advocacy Project (EMAP)
- Bringing a gendered perspective to planning across the region through our involvement in planning forums and committees, and through the development and distribution of sex disaggregated information and gendered fact sheets
- Leading the development of *Together for Equality & Respect: A Strategy to Prevent Violence Against Women in Melbourne's East 2013 – 2017*
- Gender Equality Forum in conjunction with the Maroondah Council's *Dark Nights* Art Exhibition
- The commencement of work on a quality improvement framework for women's health services

I am impressed with the commitment shown to the health, safety and wellbeing of women and girls in this region. I look forward to working together to achieve positive change over the next exciting four year planning cycle.



Artwork from the Mandalas for Mums project

I would like to acknowledge the hard working and committed staff team at WHE, without whom the volume and quality of work achieved over the year would not have been possible. Special thanks and best wishes to Loren Imbriano and Liz Smith, two of our health promotion officers who left WHE during the year. I would also like to thank the dedicated group of women who comprise the WHE Board of Governance. They have provided essential support and direction over the year which is much valued. I am fortunate to be working with such a great group of women – staff and Board included.

Finally, thanks to our fantastic partners and stakeholders – we cannot do our work without you. I am impressed with the commitment shown to the health, safety and wellbeing of women and girls in this region. I look forward to working together to achieve positive change over the next four year planning cycle.

Kristine Olaris

BOARD AND STAFF



Members of the WHE Board of Governance as at 30 June 2013

Board of Governance 2012 – 2013

Jackie Kelly *Chair* • **Tricia Ong** *Deputy Chair* • **Yvette Pethebridge** *Treasurer*
(from October 2012) • **Judy Flanagan** • **Marg D'Arcy** • **Tricia Malowney** • **Annette Rudd**
(from July 2012) • **Wendy Roberts** (from July 2012) • **Sarah Kleinitz** (from February 2013) •
Larissa Seymour (until October 2012) • **Cindy Barnes** (until October 2012)



Some members of WHE Staff

Staff 2012 – 2013

Kristine Olaris *Chief Executive Officer* • **Melissa Tully** *Finance Officer* (from October 2012) •
Colleen Russell *Quality Project Officer* • **Deanna Imbriano** *Administration Officer* • **Jill Exon**
Health Promotion Officer • **Kate Ravenscroft** *Health Promotion & Communications Officer*
(from February 2013) • **Vanessa Czerniawski** *Research Assistant* • **Liz Smith** *Health Promotion*
Officer (until June 2013) • **Loren Imbriano** *Health Promotion Officer* (until December 2013) •
Tasha Monoharan *Finance Officer* (until October 2012)

Student - Cynthia Grenfell *La Trobe University* September - November 2012

STRATEGIC PLAN 2009 – 2013

In order to align with the planning cycles of our partner agencies, an additional year was added to the 2009 – 2012 strategic plan, making it the 2009 – 2013 strategic plan. New strategic directions were set for the last year.

Vision

To have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of women in the EMR through our influence on policy and practice.

To be actively engaged with stakeholders and sought out by decision makers in regards to women's health and wellbeing.

Reason to be

We are here to ensure that women in the EMR have the best possible opportunity to live the lives they want (reach their potential).

Who we are

WHE is a not-for-profit women's health organisation focusing on informing and influencing policy and service delivery in order to enhance the health and wellbeing of women in the EMR.

What we do

As a women-focused organisation we work with stakeholders in the region to build capacity of services and programs to ensure they optimally address issues affecting women.

The health promotion team at WHE works in gender-based health promotion, which involves:

- Working in partnership with other health and community agencies to promote gender-based planning in health promotion and service delivery, and to improve service system access and responsiveness for women
- Training and education programs for service providers on women's health issues and gender awareness in planning and service delivery
- Research into women's health needs
- Advocacy and consultancy within the health and community sector to promote women's health and wellbeing
- Raising awareness of health and wellbeing issues experienced by women
- Partnerships with service providers and establishing networks to improve services for women

Where a specific area of need has been identified, or when specific funding has been secured, WHE also works directly with women to enhance their health and wellbeing.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2009 – 2013

Strategic Direction 1 - Providing Leadership

WHE will provide regional leadership, expertise and influence in women's health and wellbeing.

Key Achievements included

- *Together for Equality & Respect: A Strategy to Prevent Violence Against Women in Melbourne's East 2013 - 2017*
- RFVP Prevention of Violence Working group chair
- Safe Well and Connected initiative in partnership with the RFVP
- Conference and forum presentations of WHE's work



Nelly Thomas at the launch of Together for Equality & Respect

Strategic Direction 2 - Fostering inclusive communities for all women

WHE will actively respond to the needs of women in the EMR with a focus on marginalised women.

Key Achievements included

- Financial literacy project targeting refugee women undertaken in partnership with the Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) and EACH
- Strengthened knowledge and expertise about the diversity of women in the East through research and workforce development
- Participation in local cultural events and celebrations
- Planning of an Aboriginal Organisational Strategy
- Strengthened relationships with key agencies

Strategic Direction 3 - Building capacity in the EMR

WHE will build the capacity of regional stakeholders to identify and address issues affecting women.

Key Achievements included

- Gendered planning resources developed and distributed to partner agencies
- Strengthened use of electronic communications
- *Managing Money: Every Woman's Business - A guide to increasing women's financial capability*
- *Women's Mental Health and Wellbeing Overview*
- *Investing in Women – Building a Socially Connected East Final Report*
- Training on the use of the media to prevent violence against women

STRATEGIC PLAN 2009 – 2013

Strategic Direction 4 - Partnering to make a difference

WHE will be involved in a range of partnerships which align with our priority areas and in which we add value and influence.

Key Achievements included

- Stakeholder survey undertaken to inform future planning
- Involvement in a range of planning forums including municipal health planning across the region
- Secondary consultation and support provided to partner organisations
- Partnership analysis to ensure alignment of partnerships with our priorities and that our involvement is of value to women's health and wellbeing
- Working with the Eastern Domestic Violence Service (EDVOS) and the Eastern Centre Against Sexual Assault (ECASA) to strengthen EMAP



Participants in a regional preventing violence against women consultation, December 2012

Strategic Direction 5 - Developing and securing our organisation

WHE will be an efficient, responsive, value driven and sustainable organisation.

Key Achievements included

- Grants secured to assist and expand our work
- Organisational structure reviewed in line with future requirements
- Quality improvement framework development
- Investigation and identification of potential site for the relocation of the organisation
- Constitutional review in line with revised legislation
- Environmental plan development

"I dream of a world where all are free to live out their hopes and aspirations for life. This means that women, unhindered by abuse and violence, can reach their full potential in their workplaces, homes, relationships, and social settings. It means that women can take their rightful place alongside men and not be overpowered or oppressed by them."

Jennifer, survivor advocate

INTEGRATED HEALTH PROMOTION

The health promotion team at WHE conducts their work within a feminist framework that puts gender equity at the forefront of all initiatives. We focus our efforts on the social determinants of health, aiming to address the conditions in which women are born, grow, live, work and age. We recognise that health is influenced by more than biology and therefore consciously consider other determinants such as culture, sexuality, the environment, education and income that can impact on women's health and wellbeing.



Gender equality cupcakes from the launch of Together for Equality & Respect

The majority of our effort is focused on upstream approaches that aim to prevent poor health and wellbeing outcomes for women. We seek to influence

With gender equity overarching all our work, we focus on redressing the gender inequalities that limit the lives of women through a range of health promotion strategies.

community attitudes, organisational directions and individual behaviours by using a balanced mix of strategies such as capacity building, policy development, advocacy and education. We primarily work in partnership with organisations such as local government and community health services as we believe these partnerships strengthen the effectiveness, reach and sustainability of our efforts to improve the health and wellbeing of women.

This year was the final year in a four year planning cycle. In 2012 – 2013 WHE focused on finalising work which was outstanding under our current priorities, considering and planning our major priorities for the next four years, and providing resources and support to our partners who were also moving into a new planning cycle.

In 2012 – 2013 our health promotion priorities were:

- Upholding gender equity
- Promoting mental health and wellbeing
- Preventing violence against women
- Enhancing sexual and reproductive health

UPHOLDING GENDER EQUITY

Gender Equity Training

After requests from our partner agencies, WHE reviewed and refined our gender equity training and debuted it in March 2013, as a pilot session, to Manningham Community Health Service. Attended by over 50 staff, the session provided an introduction to gender equity, the connections between gender equity and preventing violence against women and a look at how to apply a gender lens. Whilst only an introductory session, we received terrific feedback and welcomed the opportunity to work with Manningham Community Health Service on exploring the impact of gender on health and wellbeing and considering how tools like a gender lens can increase the efficacy and equity of our health services.

“Eye opening – made it more real issue for me”

“Thanks for helping us understand a massive problem”

*Quotes from participants of
the gender equity training*

“Great session, would love to do more”

WHE will continue to work with other Community Health Centres, Local Governments and other partners to run further gender equity training sessions in 2013 – 2014 and beyond.



UPHOLDING GENDER EQUITY

Gendered Planning Resources

WHE Fact Sheets

How is Climate Change a gendered issue?

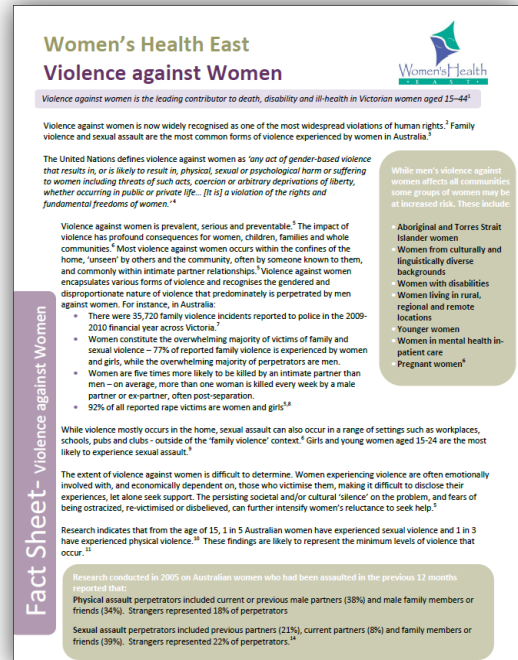
How does discrimination impact on sexual and reproductive health?

Why do women face financial insecurity in their older years?

In January 2013, WHE launched a suite of gendered fact sheets designed for people working in the health and community sector. The fact sheets include health and wellbeing information that is specific to women in the EMR, and cover a range of women's health topics of relevance to the region:

- Violence Against Women
- Women and Homelessness
- Women's Sexual and Reproductive Health
- Women and Financial Security
- Women and Substance Use & Misuse
- Women and Gambling
- Women and Climate Change
- Women and Tobacco
- Women and Mental Health
- Women and Physical Activity
- Women and Nutrition

The fact sheets are available to download on our website.



EMR Gendered Demographic Profiles

In December 2012 WHE released updated sex disaggregated demographic data resources for the EMR. The 2011 – 2012 data profiles cover each of the seven municipalities in the EMR, and were developed to support local government and the health and community sector in their 2013 – 2017 planning.

The demographic profiles are available to download on our website.

UPHOLDING GENDER EQUITY

Safe, Well & Connected

Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. Women's health involves their emotional, social and physical wellbeing and is determined by the social, political and economic context of their lives, as well as by biology.

The United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women, 1951

During the 2012 local government pre-election period, WHE in partnership with the RFVP, invited candidates to sign on to a statement of commitment to the *Safe, Well and Connected: Victorian Local Government Action Plan for Women's Health 2012-2016*. The plan outlined suggested actions that elected councillors could take to enhance the health and wellbeing of women in their community. Across the EMR thirty-three candidates signed on to the *Safe, Well and Connected Statement of Commitment*, of which twelve were elected.

In April 2013, WHE together with RFVP held a 'meet and greet' with elected councillors to further discuss women's health through the Safe, Well & Connected Campaign. The meeting provided a great opportunity to hear about council work that is currently being undertaken in the prevention of violence against women and to share some of the work from WHE and RFVP.

WHE and the RFVP look forward to working in partnership with our local mayors, councillors, and individual councils to promote women's health, safety and wellbeing over the coming years.



The seven local government areas in the EMR

UPHOLDING GENDER EQUITY

Financial Literacy Project

In 2012, WHE partnered with Women's Health in the North (WHIN), the Migrant Information Centre (Eastern Melbourne) and EACH, to deliver a series of financial literacy workshops to newly arrived groups in the EMR. The aim of the project was to increase the skills, confidence and knowledge of financial literacy of newly arrived and refugee women including those from Hakha Chin, Karen and Middle Eastern communities.



*A participant at one of the financial literacy sessions
(photo provided courtesy of WHIN)*



Nine financial literacy workshops were held with approximately twelve people at each session. One of the outcomes of this project was *Managing Money: Every Woman's Business – A Guide to Increasing Women's Financial Capability*. Developed in partnership with WHIN, the trainer's manual acts as a resource for community organisations working with newly arrived and migrant women to help build and develop basic financial literacy skills. The manual includes topics such as: budgeting, saving, credit, debts and loans, financial counselling and information on consumer rights and responsibilities. The manual is available on our website.

The Financial Literacy Project was made possible by a grant from the Office of Women's Affairs.

*Quotes from participants of the
financial literacy sessions*

"I really liked it. My husband used to control everything. I didn't know what to do, how to pay bills. Nothing."

"Today's session was very good because I did not know there are different types of bank accounts and credit cards and learnt a lot today."

UPHOLDING GENDER EQUITY

Climate Change

At WHE we have a strong commitment to effective action on climate change. This is because climate change poses an urgent and real threat to our health and wellbeing, and because climate change impacts are likely to more seriously affect those people who are already facing disadvantage, including women and children.

In response to this commitment WHE undertook a range of initiatives including:

A Conversation with the Climate Commission

WHE participated in a forum to discuss health and climate change with members of the Australian Government's Climate Commission.

Doha Declaration on Climate, Health and Wellbeing

WHE is a signatory to this Declaration which calls for the protection and promotion of health to be made one of the central priorities of global and national policy responses to climate change.

Knox Stringy Bark Festival

WHE presented 'Healthy Living for a Healthy Planet' to explore the links between climate change and women's health.

WHE Environmental Policy and Plan

WHE began the development of an environmental policy and plan to embed our commitment to effective climate action.

Women and Climate Change Fact Sheet

WHE developed this fact sheet which describes the issue, the way in which it is gendered, and the benefits of climate action.

Women's Health East
Women and Climate Change

Climate change is "a statistically significant variation in either the mean state of the climate or in its variability, persisting for an extended period (typically decades or longer)".¹

Climate change is an urgent and real threat to our health and wellbeing and is one of the greatest economic, social and environmental challenges that exist today.² A 2009 Lancet report called on health professionals to act as advocates for action on climate change – and called for a public health movement that "frames the threat of climate change for humankind as a health issue".³

Environmental Impacts

Victoria is already warmer on average than it was a century ago, and extremes of temperature are becoming even more extreme.⁴

We are facing altered weather patterns, including heat waves, droughts and lower rainfall, together with reduced snowfall, more severe and devastating bushfires, and increased risk of flooding.⁵

Health and Wellbeing Impacts in Australia

- Illnesses and deaths associated with heat waves
- Injuries, post traumatic stress disorders, increased family violence and deaths from extreme weather events such as severe flooding, bushfires and storms
- Mental health issues such as depression and anxiety, as a result of social, economic and demographic dislocations and also due to a lack of certainty about the future
- Increased incidence of food borne infectious diseases eg Salmonella
- Increased incidence of vector borne diseases eg Dengue Fever and Ross River Virus
- Worsening respiratory and heart disease
- Fresh water shortages in some rural/remote areas
- Food insecurity - decreased access to affordable and nutritious food
- Increasing socioeconomic disadvantage
- Displacement of populations^{6,7}

Climate change is caused by significantly increased greenhouse gases in our atmosphere predominantly due to the burning of fossil fuels and land clearing, and to a lesser extent agricultural practices.⁸

Climate change impacts are likely to more seriously affect those people who are already facing disadvantage, including women and children, Indigenous people, aged people and people living with disabilities.⁹

Health Benefits of Climate Action

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions could improve Australians' health and could save billions of dollars for health care budgets and save thousands of lives each year.¹⁰

The move to lower carbon emissions presents us with unprecedented opportunities to address inequalities, and to improve public health and result in less obesity, diabetes, cancers, respiratory disease, heart disease, and other chronic conditions.¹¹

"The risks to health from climate change are very large and will affect all populations, but particularly children, women and poorer people and those in developing nations. Urgent and sustained emissions reductions as well as effective adaptation are needed."

Doha Declaration

PROMOTING MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

Investing in Women – Building a Socially Connected East

The Investing in Women project was developed to create meaningful opportunities for isolated and/or disadvantaged women to experience social



connection. This two year project engaged the health and community sector and women in the community to encourage social connection and community participation as a way to prevent poor mental health outcomes. The final component of the Investing in Women project, in late 2012, was to collate the project evaluation results.

Grant recipients were provided with evaluation summaries to support them to effectively apply for future funding. This strategy should facilitate the sustainability of the individual social connection initiatives developed through this innovative project.

WHE would like to thank the broad array of funders, all of whom are mentioned in the final report, available on our website.

Key findings of the evaluation indicated:

- Increased self esteem
- Participated more regularly in community life
- Stronger peer support networks
- Positive impacts on their mental wellbeing
- Increased knowledge of local services / activities
- Stronger social networks
- Increased skills e.g. financial, craft, transport
- Greater understanding of health enhancing behaviour e.g. accessing services and the importance of social connection.



Participants of Investing in Women



Overall, the project was incredibly successful and confirmed the positive impacts that social connection has on women's mental health and wellbeing.

PREVENTING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Together for Equality and Respect

The prevention of violence against women was the central focus of our work in 2012 - 2013. This was driven by the alarming prevalence of violence against women, the serious impact this issue has on women's health and wellbeing and the growing concern about the issue in the region. Amidst rapidly increasing reports to Victoria Police of violence against women, a growing determination in the EMR to prevent violence before it occurs became evident. The strong commitment displayed in the region to acting together on this issue enabled the development of a regional strategy to prevent violence against women.

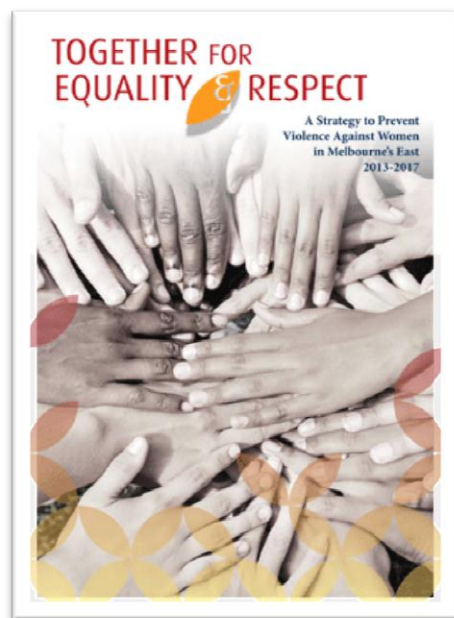
Together for Equality & Respect: A Strategy to Prevent Violence against Women in Melbourne's East 2013-2017 is a momentous achievement for the EMR and reflects the commitment, collaboration and passion of partner agencies to work together to prevent violence against women. *Together for Equality & Respect* is a four year strategy bringing together local governments, community and women's health services, Primary Care Partnerships, Medicare Locals and the RFVP. Its development marks a milestone in the progress to end violence against women in the EMR.

Developed through local consultation and collaboration, *Together for Equality & Respect* makes clear the case for action. Informed by a strong evidence base *Together for Equality & Respect* is an excellent resource to assist organisations to prioritise and plan for their work on the prevention of violence against women.

WHE looks forward to working together over the next four years to develop and implement the action plan that will accompany this Strategy.

Together for Equality & Respect is available on our website.

WHE would like to acknowledge the vital funding contributions from the Inner East Primary Care Partnership and the Outer East Primary Care Partnership towards this important work.



A society where women live free from men's violence – where every girl and boy grows up to be equally valued, heard and respected, and with equal access to opportunities.

Together for Equality and Respect Vision Statement

PREVENTING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Gender Equality Forum

Key to ending violence against women is achieving gender equality. A growing evidence base demonstrates that the causes of violence against women are gender inequality and rigid gender stereotypes. To investigate these connections, and to celebrate the launch of *Together for Equality & Respect*, WHE hosted a forum on the question: How will we achieve gender equality?

Held at Maroondah Federation Estate on Thursday 23rd May 2013, and generously supported by Maroondah City Council, the Gender Equality Forum and launch of *Together for Equality & Respect* were hosted by comedian Nelly Thomas.

Approximately one hundred guests from across the EMR attended. With a keynote speech from



Signatories to the commitment to work together to prevent violence against women in the EMR 2013 – 2017 at the Gender Equality Forum.

social commentator Clementine Ford and a Q&A session with a panel of leaders in the prevention of violence against women, the Gender Equality Forum provided a great opportunity to learn from the evidence and expertise in the region on preventing violence against women. As well as Kristine Olaris from WHE, the panel included David Digapony from Equality Consulting, Cara Gleeson from VicHealth, Kellie Nagle from the Municipal Association of Victoria, Gregg Nicholls from Monash Link Community Health Service and Clementine Ford. The panel provided a range of interesting and thought provoking ideas and responses to the question of how to achieve gender equality.

“Violence against women begins with inequality between women and men. Violence against women will end when women and men experience equality at both an individual and societal level. Together for Equality & Respect is a momentous step towards this goal.”

WHE CEO Kristine Olaris

PREVENTING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

The Gender Equality Forum concluded with all seven Local Governments and all eight Community Health Services, both Primary Care Partnerships, both Medicare Locals, the RFVP, DV East and WHE signing a commitment to work together to prevent violence against women in the EMR in 2013 - 2017. A momentous achievement, WHE would like to congratulate its partners on their passion and commitment to making a real difference to the lives of women and men and to the lives of generations to come.

Tweets from the Gender Equality Forum:

@margdarcy: When we work together we can make sustained change - Cara Gleeson

@michaeladriberg: Congrats on a fantastic launch of #togetherforequality&respect!
@MonashCouncil is a proud supporter

@clementineford: Thank you for inviting me! I was so inspired by the panel's qualifications.

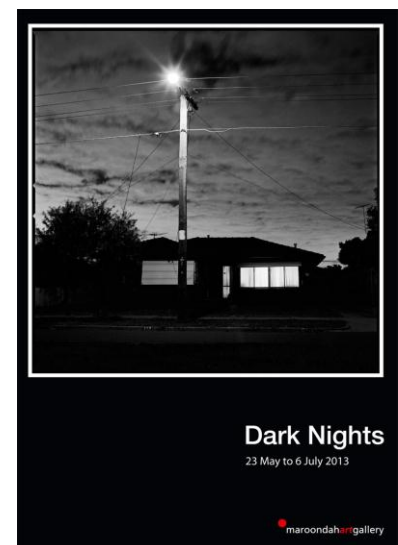


The signed commitment by the EMR to prevent violence against women

Dark Nights Exhibition

WHE was delighted to partner with the Maroondah Art Gallery and Maroondah City Council on the *Dark Nights* exhibition. The exhibition opened directly after the Gender Equality Forum and launch of *Together for Equality & Respect*. *Dark Nights* brought together art works that consider gender-based violence and included works by Jane Burton, Destiny Deacon, Julie Goodwin, Prudence Murphy, Anne Riggs and Conrad Winkler.

This unique and exciting partnership allowed us to bring together our diverse skills, knowledge and audiences to synergistically raise awareness of gender based violence and its prevention in the community. The arts provide a great vehicle for engaging the public on difficult and complex issues. WHE would like to thank the Maroondah Art Gallery and Maroondah City Council for the opportunity to work together on addressing violence against women.



PREVENTING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

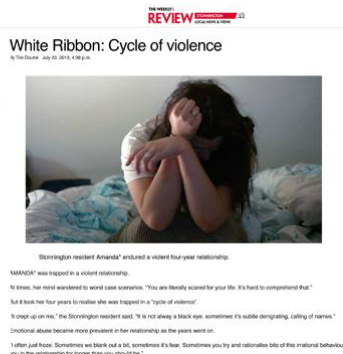
Eastern Media Advocacy Project

EMAP continues to be a key piece of work under our priority area of preventing violence against women. WHE works closely with our partners, ECASA and EDVOS, in the implementation of this project which aims to promote a change in community attitudes in order to prevent violence against women. By ensuring that the voices of women who have experienced family violence and sexual assault are heard through the media and public events, we hope to encourage a more sensitive, accurate and prevention-focused public discussion about violence against women.

Over the 2012 – 2013 financial year, EMAP generated 23 public speaking opportunities and 18 media reports involving advocates. During this period over 1,300 people heard a media advocate speak and thousands more heard from an advocate through the media.

In 2013, three new family violence advocates – trained in partnership with the Women’s Domestic Violence Crisis Service – have joined EMAP.

By ensuring that the voices of women who have experienced family violence and sexual assault are heard through the media and public events, we hope to encourage a more sensitive, accurate and prevention-focused public discussion about violence against women.



Media coverage involving EMAP survivor advocates

WHE would like to take this opportunity to thank each of the volunteer advocates who are part of EMAP. The contribution these women make to the EMR through their advocacy and media work on the issue of violence against women is profound.

Faliana • Gedina • Jennifer • Pamela • Sally • Vanessa • Christine
Kate • Mim • Rosie • Tammy • Jacqui • Ka • Joanna

PREVENTING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Workforce Media Training

In May 2013, WHE delivered two full-day training sessions to workers across the EMR on how to communicate effectively to the media about violence against women. Attended by 26 workers from a wide range of organisations including community health, local government, family violence, sexual assault and community legal services, the training covered strengthening media and advocacy skills including media releases and media alerts, providing comment to the media and developing key messages for the prevention of violence against women.

"I now feel much more confident about engaging the media on the issue of violence against women."

Quotes from participants of the workforce media training

Participants developed a broad range of EMR specific key messages for the prevention of violence against women and an exciting outcome of the training is a momentum and energy to work together as a region for consistent communications and media work on preventing violence against women.

WHE would like to thank Knox City Council and Manningham City Council for their support of this training.

Examples of key messages developed by training participants:

- Women have a right to be safe and to live free from violence.
- Say NO to violence against women. Say YES to respect and equality.
- Stand up – Yarn up.

Victorian Cross Sector Advisory Committee on Violence Against Women and the Media

WHE is a member of the Victorian Cross Sector Committee on Violence Against Women & the Media. Led by Domestic Violence Victoria this committee is made up of representatives from a range of sectors including women's health services, local government, family violence services, academia, sexual assault services, and media. It aims to generate a collaborative thinking space to examine and support the state-wide strategic coordination of activities, projects, and resources directed at the media setting and industry in the area of primary prevention of violence against women.

PREVENTING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

Regional Family Violence Partnership Prevention of Violence Against Women Working Group

WHE is the chair of this working group of the RFVP which group meets monthly to address two major strategies of the work of the RFVP: to establish partnerships across agencies and accountable leadership structures for sustainable prevention, and to strengthen community leadership to drive change. New members are always welcome!

The working group has also provided a great avenue to hear about other exciting developments happening in the EMR around the prevention of violence against women.

Some of the initiatives discussed at the working group include:

- **Generating Equality & Respect**
A three year VicHealth funded initiative in the City of Monash
- **Preventing Violence against Women in Our Community Project**
The Outer East Cluster Project
- **Baby Makes 3**
Promoting equal and respectful relationships between men and women during the transition to parenthood
- **iMatter Prevention Program**
Leadership program engaging young women aged 16-25
- **You & I**
A youth-focused project promoting equal and respectful relationships in the Yarra Ranges

ENHANCING SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

Sexual Assault Prevention Program in Secondary Schools (SAPPSS)

SAPPSS is a whole-school approach to the prevention of sexual assault that aims to prevent sexual assault before it occurs by encouraging positive behaviours and respectful relationships. It also enables schools to respond to sexual assault when it occurs, through school staff training, development of appropriate policies and procedures as well as strengthening referral pathways. In 2012, one of our health promotion officers was trained as a SAPPSS facilitator through ECASA.

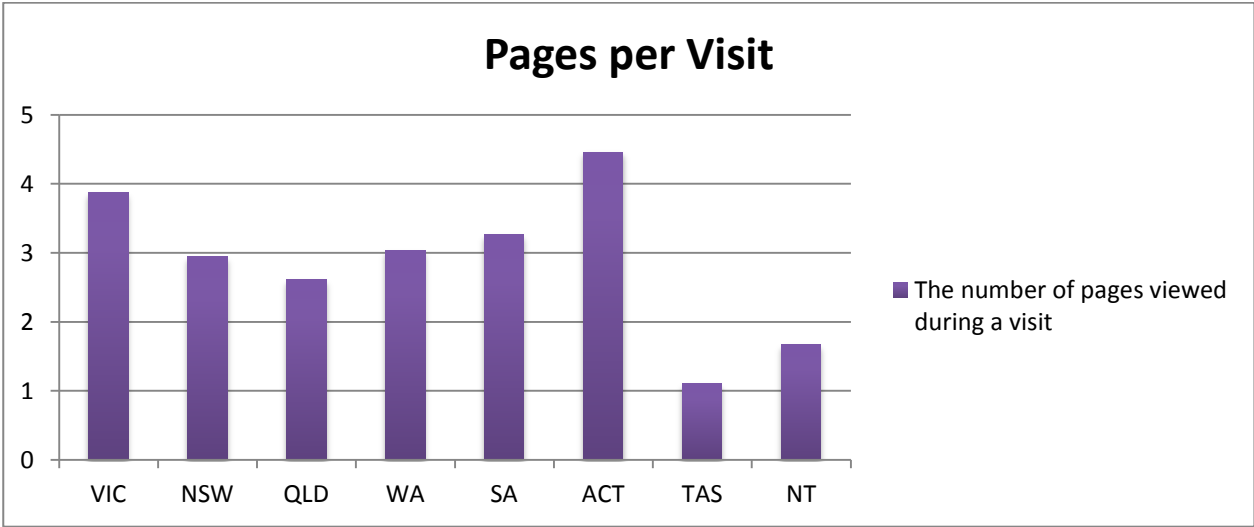
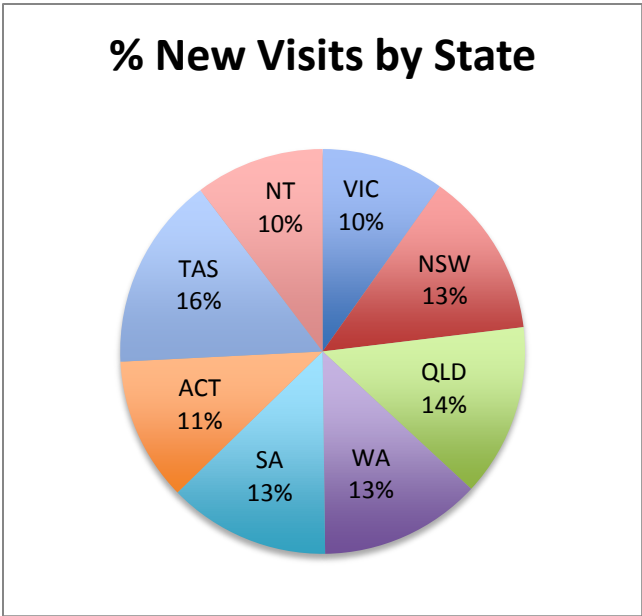
For more information about SAPPSS, contact Judy Flanagan at ECASA on 9870 7310.

Website Report

WHE has a strong online presence and we hope to increase this. Over the year, our website received 6,362 visits suggesting that our site content offers valuable resources and information on our programs, links, priority areas and news.

Top 8 Page Views

- Home page
- About us
- Contact us
- WHE Programs > Why Women's Health
- About us > Staff
- WHE Programs > Integrated Health Promotion
- Women's Health Resources
- About us > Strategic Directions



Media, Social Media & E-newsletter

WHE has been active across regional media and social media as we strive to raise awareness about key women's health and wellbeing issues. Over the year, WHE has had numerous media entries across the local newspapers, including reports on violence against women with disabilities, the launch of the Regional Strategy, heart disease in women and a range of stories on violence against women involving advocates from EMAP.



Examples of WHE media coverage 2012-2013

In 2012 – 2013, WHE maintained our Facebook page and delved deeper into social networking by starting a Twitter account. We use both social networking sites to share updates and information about issues and events relevant to women's health and the Eastern region. You can find us at www.facebook.com/womenshealtheast and twitter.com/WHEast.

We encourage you to join us!



WHE – now on Facebook and Twitter!

Over the year, WHE also updated our regular newsletter to become fully digital and interactive and continued to deliver it roughly quarterly to our members and subscribers.

If you would like to subscribe and receive our news and updates, email health@whe.org.au

SHARING OUR KNOWLEDGE

Population Health Congress

In August 2012, Health Promotion Officers, Liz Smith and Loren Imbriano showcased WHE projects Investing in Women and EMAP.



CASA Forum Conference

In October 2012, Health Promotion Officer Loren Imbriano along with Judy Flanagan from ECASA and survivor advocate Rosie, delivered a presentation on EMAP.

Knox Stringy Bark Festival

In October 2012, Chief Executive Officer Kristine Olaris, presented 'Healthy Living for a Healthy Planet'. The presentation addressed the links between climate change and health with a focus on gender, and identified ways that individuals can promote a healthy planet whilst making healthy choices.



7th Australian Women's Health Conference: Gender Matters: Determining Women's Health



7th Australian
women's
health
conference

From 7-10 May, the *7th Australian Women's Health Conference - Gender Matters: Determining Women's Health*, took place in Sydney. You may have seen our rapid-fire tweets, desperately trying to keep pace with all the amazing information and presentations!

WHE gave two presentations at the conference, as well as presenting a poster on EMAP. WHE Health Promotion Officer Liz Smith gave a very well received presentation on "Improving women's health and wellbeing through social connection" while WHE Health Promotion Officer Jill Exon participated in a lively and informative panel discussion on "Local Government: Gender, health promotion, preventing violence, inclusion and integrated planning".

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Stopping sexism

WHE Chief Executive Officer, Kristine Olaris, was one of the founding members of social media campaign **Sexism: See It Say It Stop It**. Launched on International Women's Day in 2012, the campaign aims to highlight the culture of sexism and discrimination towards women in leadership in this country, and to promote the equal and respectful treatment of our women leaders.

Kristine Olaris also published an article on the Crikey website on International Women's Day 2013 about the impacts of sexism on women's health, titled *Sexism is Bad for Your Health*.

To read the article visit:

<http://blogs.crikey.com.au/croakey/2013/03/08/sexism-is-bad-for-your-health/>

sexism
SEE IT. SAY IT. STOP IT.

"Sexism is a constant in women's lives that is experienced with a frequency and regularity that places an ongoing, potentially cumulative and significant burden on women's health and wellbeing."

Celebrating International Women's Day on Facebook

To celebrate International Women's Day in 2013 and promote the theme "The Gender Agenda: Gaining Momentum" WHE shared a week of posts about trailblazing Australian woman on our Facebook page.

Day 1, Joan Child: First woman speaker of the House of Representatives.

Day 2, Ita Buttrose: Australian of the Year and first woman editor of an Australian metropolitan newspaper.

Day 3, Aunty Joy Murphy: Wurundjeri elder of the Kulin alliance who has made significant contributions to social justice, land rights and reconciliation.

Day 4, Dawn Fraser: named Australia's greatest female athlete.

Day 5, Anne Summers: author, activist and outspoken advocate for women.



Celebrating International Women's Day on Facebook

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT

WHE is committed to continuous quality improvement in all areas of our work. Over the year we have had a focus on improving our internal systems and processes to maintain and improve efficiency. We have reviewed and updated our governance policy manual, and developed some new organisational policies including one on paid parental leave for employees. We have also investigated ways to improve the environmental sustainability of the organisation. Other key quality improvement initiatives have included increasing our use of social media and e-newsletters to disseminate information and raise awareness of key issues. In addition WHE drafted changes to our constitution to bring it in line with changes to the Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012 (Vic). These will be presented to our membership for potential approval in the near future.

Over the past twelve months, WHE has undertaken work to develop a new Quality Framework tailored specifically to our health promotion and advocacy roles in women's health.

Women's health services in other regions of Victoria, as well as several statewide women's health services, have expressed strong interest in utilising the Quality Framework and are actively contributing to its development and implementation. This means that, for the first time, the Victorian women's health sector will have a set of standards and a continuous improvement framework that clearly reflects our roles, functions and objectives.

VICTORIAN HONOUR ROLE OF WOMEN - TRICIA MALOWNEY

WHE would like to congratulate WHE Board Member, Tricia Malowney, on her well-deserved induction to the *Victorian Honour Roll of Women*. Tricia is a passionate advocate for the rights of women with disabilities.



Tricia Malowney with the Minister for Women's Affairs, Hon Heidi Victoria MLA, receiving her induction to the Victorian Honour Roll of Women

"As a systemic advocate, my joy is ensuring that women with disabilities have the same rights as other Victorian women... I apply a gender lens to disability issues and a disability lens to gender issues."

Tricia Malowney

FINANCIAL REPORTS

The following financial information is an overview of the operations of WHE and should be read in conjunction with the *WHE Financial Statements for Year Ending 30 June 2013* and their accompanying notes (available at www.whe.org.au). WHE prepares the financial statements in accordance with the Australian Accounting Standards as outlined in the Independent Auditor's Report.

	2013 \$	2012 \$
Summary Income Statement		
<i>Income</i>		
DH funding	538,189	548,595
Other	<u>117,895</u>	<u>114,265</u>
Total Income	656,084	662,861
<i>Expenditure</i>		
Employment Expenses	433,861	413,651
Other	<u>166,308</u>	<u>208,097</u>
Total Expenditure	600,169	621,747
Operating Profit/(Loss)	<u>55,915</u>	<u>41,114</u>
Summary Balance Sheet		
Cash	427,789	408,111
Receivables	20,342	3,657
Property, Plant & Equipment	<u>25,143</u>	<u>35,346</u>
Total Assets	<u>473,274</u>	<u>447,114</u>
Payables	15,348	37,496
Provisions	35,249	32,637
Accrued Charges	794	800
Income in Advance	<u>40,000</u>	<u>50,213</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>91,391</u>	<u>121,146</u>
NET ASSETS	<u>381,883</u>	<u>325,968</u>
Current Ratio	4.90 : 1	3.40 : 1

WHE recorded a surplus of \$55,915 for the 2012-2013 financial year. Income was less than the previous year due to reduced funding from the Department of Health. Additional funds came from a small grants, interest received on cash deposits and rental income. Expenditure was reduced in response to budget cuts and to enable adequate funds for the planned relocation of the organisation in the upcoming year.

The current ratio above is a calculation performed to assist in determining WHE's ability to pay its expenses i.e. our liquidity. WHE's current ratio of 4.90:1 means that at June 30 2013 we had \$4.90 in current assets to meet every \$1 in current liabilities.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSES

WHE is a health promotion organisation working collaboratively to address disease prevention and control, health inequities and disadvantage for women.

WHE, using a social model of health and a holistic approach, aims to prevent illness, disease and injury and promote the independence, health and wellbeing of women through a range of strategies and interventions.

WHE engages in and facilitates health promotion activities through:

- (a) community education, research, information sharing, awareness raising and action on women's health issues
- (b) education and training for health professionals concerning women's health issues
- (c) health programs aimed at improving women's health and wellbeing
- (d) participation of women in health networks at regional, statewide, national and international levels.

WHE aims to actively involve and empower women in seeking:

- (a) ultimate choice, responsibility and control over their own health
- (b) equity and access to women-sensitive health care options, recognising a woman's whole life-span and various roles
- (c) dignity and respect for women, with sensitivity towards those physically, emotionally or educationally disadvantaged
- (d) a holistic approach to health care and wellbeing and a broadening of options
- (e) decision making input into planning and development of health care organisations, and the influencing of policy and practices

WHE engages in charitable and/or benevolent activities concerning women's health which are consistent with these purposes.

MEMBERSHIP

Who can join?

If you are a woman who lives, works or studies in the EMR, you are eligible to join the membership of WHE. Organisations based in the region are also able to become members.

What does it cost?

Membership is free.

Why join?

Membership provides you with access to our quarterly newsletter and invitations to organised events. As an individual member you are also eligible to apply to become a member of our Board of Management, and/or to vote at our annual or special general meetings. WHE may also call on you from time to time to ask your opinion of our work and directions. Having a strong membership assists us in circulating important information about women's health and wellbeing to the community. It also provides us with support and advice from some of our most important stakeholders, women and agencies in the region.

How do I become a member?

To join either call us on **9851 3700** or download a membership form at www.whe.org.au

Please sign up today and support WHE – your regional women's health service.

DONATIONS AND SUPPORT

You can help us improve the health and wellbeing women in the EMR by donating to WHE. Giving a donation will help us to prevent violence against women, enhance sexual and reproductive health and improve mental health and wellbeing. Giving a small donation could make a big difference.

Please visit www.givenow.com.au/whe to donate.

WHE would like to thank each and every business, funding body and individual who has supported us. As a small organisation, with weighty and important responsibilities, your support is invaluable and deeply appreciated.

THANK YOU

WHE would like to extend our sincere thanks to our partners and supporters over the last year. Without you, WHE could not make the difference that we do.

Very special thanks go to:

Department of Health
Office of Women's Affairs
Department of Planning & Community
Development
Women's Health Association of Victoria
Outer East Health & Community Support
Alliance
Inner East Primary Care Partnership
Eastern Metropolitan Region Regional Family
Violence Partnership
RFVP Prevention of Violence Against Women
Working Group
Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service
Eastern Centre Against Sexual Assault
Eastern Domestic Violence Service
Women's Health in the North
EACH
Manningham Community Health Service
Whitehorse Community Health Service
Inspiro
Yarra Valley Community Health Service
Inner East Community Health Service
Knox Community Health Service

MonashLink Community Health Service
Knox City Council
Maroondah City Council
Boroondara City Council
Whitehorse City Council
Manningham City Council
Yarra Ranges Council
Monash City Council
Eastern Melbourne Medicare Local
Inner East Melbourne Medicare Local
Migrant Information Centre (Eastern
Melbourne)
Eastern Community Legal Centre
LifeCircle
Boorndawan Willam Aboriginal Healing
Service
Healesville Indigenous Community Services
Association
VicHealth
Municipal Association of Victoria
Doncare
DV East
Domestic Violence Victoria



Women's Health East acknowledges the support of the Victorian Government.



WE HAVE MOVED

Our new address is:

1/125 George Street
Doncaster East VIC 3109

Ph: (03) 9851 3700