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News, updates and information from Women's Health East



Welcome to Women's Health East's June eNewsletter!

Half way through the year already!! It's been a busy time at WHE as you will see when you read through this newsletter.

Probably the largest single piece of work has been the development of the *Together for Equality & Respect: A regional strategy to prevent violence against women in Melbourne's East 2013 - 2017*. We are so excited about the prospect of what we might be able to achieve together over the next four years – and it seems so are our partners which is fantastic!

There has however been a range of other activities going on at WHE over the last three months so please read on.

You can of course also stay up to date on all the latest news from WHE via social media. Make sure to [like our Facebook page](#) and now you can also [follow us on Twitter](#)!! We post regular news and updates on women's health, the Eastern Metropolitan Region and what we've been up to. We'd love to connect with you!

Regards,
Kristine Olaris
Chief Executive Officer

[Facebook](#)[Twitter](#)[Website](#)[Email](#)

Liz Smith is leaving

Many of you will know Liz Smith as she has been working as a Health Promotion Officer at WHE for the last four years. Liz finished up at WHE on 26 June. Liz held the portfolio of Women's Mental Health & Wellbeing for WHE and was responsible for the successful Investing in Women Project. As a part of this project she developed the Social Connection Resources Kit and the Women's Mental Health & Wellbeing overview document. Over the last year Liz's work has focused more on the prevention of violence against women. She has played a significant role in the development of Together For Equality & Respect, and in the Gender Equality Forum at which it was launched. Liz will be greatly missed here at WHE and we wish her much success in her new job at Hobsons Bay Council.



Together for Equality & Respect launched!

Together for Equality & Respect: A Strategy to Prevent Violence Against Women in Melbourne's East 2013-2017 was officially launched on 23 May 2013.

Together for Equality & Respect is a 4 year strategy aimed at preventing violence against women in Melbourne's East. The Strategy provides partner organisations with the opportunity to work together to prioritise, coordinate and integrate our efforts to prevent men's violence against women.

All seven Local Governments and all eight Community Health Services, both Primary Care Partnerships, both Medicare Locals and the Regional Family Violence Partnership have all been actively involved in the consultation and/or development of this Strategy. These partners together created a powerful vision, articulating what they believe this Strategy can contribute to:

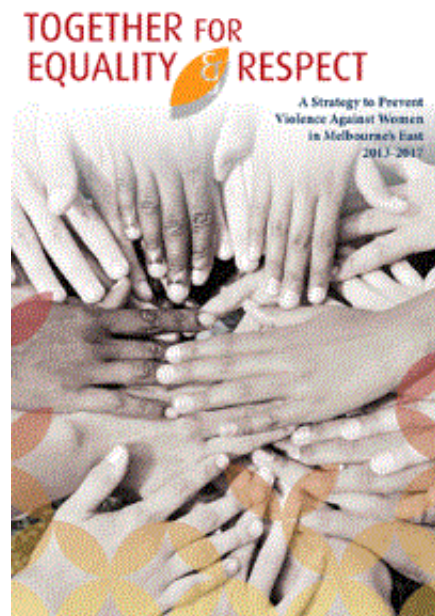
A society where women live free from men's violence – where every girl and boy grows up to be equally valued, heard and respected, and with equal access to opportunities.

Women's Health East launched the strategy at a Gender Equality Forum at Maroondah Federation Estate on 23 May 2013. Hosted by comedian and author Nelly Thomas, over 100 guests from across the East attended.

Keynote speaker, journalist Clementine Ford – just announced as a finalist for the *Eliminating Violence Against Women Media Awards 2013 (The EVAs)* – spoke powerfully and provocatively about the role of the media in preventing violence against women.

Panellists including Cara Gleeson from VicHealth, David Digapony of Equality Consulting, Gregg Nicholls the CEO of MonashLink Community Health Service and Kelly Nagle from the Municipal Association of Victoria shared their knowledge and experience on how we can prevent violence against women.

Women's Health East 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.



Together for Equality & Respect is now available for download at www.whe.org.au

Photos from the *Launch of Together for Equality & Respect*



Equality & Respect Action Planning Forum

The next steps in the work to progress the *Together for Equality & Respect Strategy* is the development of a *Together for Equality & Respect Action Plan* for the next four years. At a Forum in June we began this process by discussing options of ways that we could progress. It was agreed to take an integrated planning approach. The first step will be a detailed mapping exercise which WHE will undertake with support from Knox Community Health Service. Through this process we hope to develop and seek agreement on some shared objectives, shared actions, and a shared evaluation plan. There was acknowledgement at the Forum that progressing in this way is ambitious, and might be a bit complex, however all agreed they were up for it as they could see that this would give the best likelihood of effective change for women in this region.

And in another update WHE has advertised and is in the recruitment phase for an experienced worker to lead this project. We will let you know when someone is appointed!

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

From 7-10 May, the *7th Australian Women's Health Conference - Gender Matters: Determining Women's Health*, took place in Sydney, attended by delegates from across Australia including our very own health promotion team Liz, Jill and Kate, as well as our CEO, Kristine. 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. 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" (picture below).

WHE also presented a poster on the Eastern Media Advocacy Project (EMAP) highlighting some of the key outcomes the project has achieved to date.



Safe, Well and Connected

On 17 April, Kristine Olaris and Jill Exon from WHE together with Denise Roberts from the Regional Family Violence Partnership (ERFVP) were thrilled to meet with a number of elected Councilors in the Eastern Metropolitan Region to discuss women's health through the Safe, Well & Connected Campaign.

Despite a number of apologies (due to a clash with Julia Gillard visiting Maroondah on the day!) a number of Councilors attended, these included: Cr Sophy Galbally (Manningham), Cr Ann Fraser and Cr Christina Gleeson (Maroondah), and Cr Nicole Seymour and Cr John Mortimore (Knox). The meeting provided a great opportunity to hear about council work that is currently being undertaken around the prevention of violence against women and to share some of the work from WHE and ERFVP.

WHE and the ERFVP look forward to working in partnership with our local Councilors, Mayors and individual councils to promote women's health, safety and wellbeing over the next four years.

SEXISM

SEE IT. SAY IT. STOP IT.

greatly underrepresented in the Australian honours lists announced on Australia Day and the Queen's Birthday, particularly in the higher awards.

Of the awards announced on Australia Day this year, 425 went to men and only 146 (25.5%) to women, and of those announced on the Queen's Birthday holiday 373 went to men and 209 (36%) to women. This year women received approx 30.5 % of the awards, which is comparable with the total percentage over the life of the awards.

Women's Health East is encouraging individuals and organisations across the Eastern Metropolitan Region to nominate women whose achievements they admire for the Order of Australia Award – they may be colleagues, family members, friends, clients or members of your community. This is a great opportunity to recognise the depth and extent of female talent and leadership in this region.

For more information about the campaign click [here](#)

Nomination forms for the Order of Australia Award are available [here](#)

SSSS was launched on International Women's Day this year to encourage men and women to "reject the pervasive culture of sexism and discrimination towards women in leadership in this country". Please visit the web site at [seitsavitsopit.com](#)

The Sexism: See It. Say It. Stop It. campaign is calling on Australians to nominate women whose achievements they admire for an Order of Australia Award. The campaign was launched following a report by journalist and author Anne Summers showing that women were

08 NEWS

ASSAULT

Forty years ago no one reported sexual abuse, unless it was a stranger attack. **Angus Livingston** talks to the experts on what's changed and the challenges still to be overcome

Jill Meagher case sparks influx of calls

THE rape and murder of Jill Meagher was the "shocking" case that has led to a surge in calls to the South Eastern Centre Against Sexual Assault.

There was a lot of people phoning in. And the stories really that made her woman's, centre manager Carolyn Worth said. "They're actually not that sad."



Carolyn Worth manages the SECSA in Bendigo East. She said there were about 11 women called by women's groups each year in Australia, and up to 100 for her people here.

Worth said it was a mix of reaching a new generation and making it easier for them to report. "That's not the older generation had struggled to report sex crimes for decades. We had a couple of African women who were involved with quite violent men," Ms Worth said. "When they will come in their own way to kill themselves."

PHONE APP TO REPORT SEX ASSAULTS

How does it work? Provide anonymous details of sexual assault incidents via a number of screens, including when and where the incident took place and an emergency button that will connect to 000. You can choose to be contacted by a sexual assault counsellor.

Can I report a past offence? Even if the assault happened several years ago, the information is useful. You can speak with a counsellor about an event that happened in the past. There is no time limit on reporting sexual assault to police.

How do I preserve evidence to make a report? Don't shower or clean yourself if you've been sexually assaulted. Keep the clothes on you (even washing them clean your teeth, drink or eat) if there was any penetration.

Who can I talk to? Your GP can refer you to a psychologist or social worker who knows how to work with people who have experienced sexual assault.

Youngsters seek advice on net

Australian teens as young as 12 are turning to public internet boards for advice on dating, pregnancy and sexual abuse. It has led the South Eastern Centre Against Sexual Assault to put a social worker on call 24/7 to address some of the more serious cases.

Centre manager Carolyn Worth said the social worker, named 'Yahoo! Answers', has had the South Eastern Centre Against Sexual Assault to give answers to children working late.

"Someone will say, 'My father has a girlfriend, she's 17 and she makes me have sex with her, is that right?'" Ms Worth said.

She said it was all part of a wider trend of youngsters turning to the internet as their first option to find out information. A recent look at Yahoo! Answers Australia last week included 12-year-olds asking about sex with adults, whether 15-year-olds wanted penile stimulation to have an abortion and whether over-the-counter dating sites were legal.

"It's a good idea that I would think was partly for a private conversation with a locked door," Ms Worth said.

She said she would want to see more people willing to talk about sexual abuse, which would have been talked in their own words.

1800 RESPECT
A national sexual assault number with chat facilities or their website

1800 551 800
Kids helpline with chat facilities on their website

Speaking out about Violence Against Women: Eastern Media Advocacy Project Update

The **Eastern Media Advocacy Project (EMAP)** ensures that the **voices of women who have experienced family violence and sexual assault are heard through the media and public events.**

Recent opportunities undertaken by EMAP advocates include:

- Maroondah, Waverley and Whitehorse Leader, *Jill Meagher case sparks influx of calls*, 02 May 2013
- [Generating Equality & Respect Launch](#)
- [Monash Weekly](#), *Forward Step on Domestic Violence*, 20 May 2013
- Waverley Leader, *A survivor tells her story of years of hell*, 21 May 2013

WHE has recently trained 3 new advocates and would like to welcome them to the project!

To find out more or to **book an advocate** for an event or media opportunity, please contact Kate Ravenscroft on 8873 3704 or kater@whe.org.au

Publications and Resources

Women's Mental Health and Wellbeing Overview

A useful resource for practitioners working in the health and community sector in the EMR, this document contributes an **increased understanding of women's mental health and wellbeing**, and provides **recommendations around effective mental health promotion.**

Download the Overview from our [website](#)

New Fact Sheets and Gendered Demographic Data by Local Government Area

Designed for people working in the health and community sector, our **new fact sheets** include health and wellbeing information that is specific to women in the Eastern Metropolitan Region and cover a range of women's health topics. **To read or download them, visit our [website](#).**

We've also released **updated sex disaggregated demographic data for the Eastern Metropolitan Region.** The 2011-2012 data is available for all 7 local government areas in the EMR, and can be used by local government and the health and community sector in their 2013-2017 planning. **To read or download them, visit our [website](#)** (scroll down).

Well Women's Evening Clinic in the Yarra Ranges

Yarra Valley Community Health is now offering an after hours **Well Women's Clinic.**



Research Support

The clinic is run by specialist women's health nurses and offers a range of services, pap smears, breast awareness education, pregnancy testing, contraceptive advice, health information and referral to others services as required.

The after hours clinic will be held monthly at Yarra Valley Community Medical Service, 377 Maroondah Highway, Healesville. To book an appointment telephone: 1300 130 381.

Yarra Valley Community Health will continue to run well women's clinics at Yarra Junction and Healesville site during the day.

Meeting Room Available

For hire during office hours:
\$100 (up to 3 hours)
\$120 (4-6 hours)

This price includes;
-Tea/coffee making facilities
-Disposable cups and napkins
-LCD television, digital data projector & whiteboard
-Tables and chairs

Contact WHE on 8873 3700 or health@whe.org.au

Available

If you are a researcher WHE can support you to publicise your research study, invite participants, or disseminate information about your research.

Complete our [Request for Support Form](#) and email it to health@whe.org.au.

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