

Welcome to the October edition of the new look Women's Health Grampians Newsletter. In this edition we congratulate Ballarat Community Health on their new Family Leave Policy, invite you to join us at our AGM and provide an update on our work in Sexual and Reproductive Health. We welcome your feedback, contribution and collaboration to both this publication and our developing partnerships.

## **New Family Leave Policy at Ballarat Community Health**

We wish to acknowledge and congratulate Ballarat Community Health on their introduction of a Family Leave Policy as part of their employee entitlements and benefits package.

Robyn Reeves CEO of Ballarat Community Health considers this important introduction to existing leave entitlements recognises the issue of violence against women and in particular family violence in the community and ensures that employees within their organisation are provided with support and protection.

"With a paid workforce of 120, the vast majority of whom are women, Ballarat Community Health believe that this is an important step in acknowledging the social problem of violence against women and ensuring that those who work for Ballarat Community Health are provided with the support and respect that they need if they or family members are experiencing violence"

"We believe that providing Family Violence Leave can make a difference to individual employees as well as sends a clear message to all our staff and clients that we take family violence seriously and are there to support and assist victims" said Ms Reeves.

Ballarat Community Health is a leader in taking responsibility for the prevention of violence against women and is one of the first two workplaces to sign up to the Women's Health Grampians Act@Work Program. Women's Health Grampians together with our partners in the Act@Work program commend Ballarat Community Health for this initiative and encourage other regional businesses and organisations to follow their lead.



Act@Work is being delivered in partnership with CAFS, WRISC and the City of Ballarat and is funded by the Victorian Department of Justice under the Reducing Violence against Women and their Children grants program.

## **WHG 2013 Annual General Meeting**

"Celebrating our people, our partners and our work"

Wednesday 6 November 2013

11.30am—1.30pm

The Robert Clark Centre, Ballarat Botanic Gardens

RSVP by 31 October 2013 to Donna Fotheringham, 5322 4100 or [adminb@whg.org.au](mailto:adminb@whg.org.au)

Please contact us if your details change or you no longer wish to receive information from Women's Health Grampians. If you would prefer to get information via email please let us know your email address. Ph: 1800 013 432 or email: [adminb@whg.org.au](mailto:adminb@whg.org.au)

## Partnerships improving rural women's sexual health

WHG along with key partners have been developing a regional network seeking to overcome the barriers for rural women accessing family planning services in the Grampians region. With the support of key partners: The Royal Women's Hospital, Family Planning Victoria, Grampians Medicare Local and Ballarat Community Health, this regional network now includes 15 organisations, encompassing Hospitals, Primary and Community Care, Primary Care Partnerships, Local Government and the Department of Health.

We share concerns that in the Grampians region:

- ◆ Major barriers exist for women accessing family planning services
- ◆ Teenage birth rates are up to 3.5 times higher than Victoria, and,
- ◆ We recorded the highest rate of Chlamydia in Victoria

We aim to work together to:

- ◆ Reduce teenage pregnancy rates
- ◆ Reduce distances women need to travel for sexual health services
- ◆ Improve access to information for professionals and community



As part of raising awareness and support for these priorities WHG have recently developed a Sexual and Reproductive Health newsletter to share stories of the excellent work going on in our region, and provide links to research, resources and professional development opportunities. Please visit our website to view the newsletter or contact us if you would like to be added to the email distribution list.

## TWEETING comes to WHG

Follow us on Twitter, look for our handle: @WHGrampians. Retweet, comment and share, it all helps to get the message out, advocate and influence, and engage in discussion.

WHG in the news

**REPORT REVEALS ALARMING RATES OF FAMILY VIOLENCE**

# CASES SOAR IN CITY

**NEWSPAPER** 

...of domestic violence has risen in Ballarat and surrounding areas, with the latest report showing a 25 per cent increase in cases over the last year. The report also highlights the impact of family violence on the community, including the cost to the health system and the impact on children and young people.

**Challenge to take a stand on violence against women**

## Workplaces urged to act

**NEWS**

**NEWSPAPER** 

...workplaces are urged to take a stand on violence against women. The report highlights the impact of workplace violence on women's health and well-being, and calls for action from employers and the community.

## Inequality of the sexes a key cause of violence towards women

# Victims of gendered roles

**NEWSPAPER** 

...evidence shows that inequality of the sexes is a key cause of violence towards women. The report highlights the impact of gendered roles on women's health and well-being, and calls for action from the community and the government.

