

Welcome to the December edition of the Women's Health Grampians (WHG) Newsletter. We welcome your feedback, contribution and collaboration to both this publication and our developing partnerships.

Ceo Year in Review

Patty Kinnersly

WHG staff have once again worked hard and hand in hand with our partners to advance our work. They have achieved a great deal across our priority areas: preventing violence against women (PVAW) and sexual and reproductive health (SRH)- especially rural women's access to services.

I'm sure you are aware that violence against women and prevention of that violence has a great deal of momentum at the moment- our work across local governments, with the innovative A@W project in workplaces and through our commitment to develop a regional PVAW plan is at the forefront of this work. Our focus is on preventing violence- essentially, on raising awareness of the issue, increasing knowledge of the causes of VAW, and on eliminating the sexism and discrimination which is at the heart of this violence.

Our work in the area of improving rural women's access to SRH services is progressing. We have been working with local, regional and state wide organisations to improve access for women. This work is still in the early stages of development, however a new regional guide to SRH services will be launched early next year. The guide will assist women to gain information or access to services in a more timely and transparent manner.

WHG has chosen work to prevent VAW and work to improve access to SRH services as our priorities because women *must* be free from violence and they *must* have control over their bodies if they are to be healthy and well in every other way. Whilst we have chosen these areas as our priorities, the reason we come to work is much bigger than that- we are determined to contribute positively, and in practical ways, to a community where women:

- Have economic security
- Have increased participation in political and other leadership roles
- Have access to quality education
- Have decision making control over their bodies and
Live free from violence

Thank you to our amazing staff, skilled and committed board members, and to all our partners across the region. We are very much looking forward to continuing our work with you in 2015.



Patty in Warracknabeal

WHG welcomes our new Program Manager



Darlene Henning-Marshall

Darlene has been working in health promotion for over 15 years. She has worked for government and not for profit organisations at national, state and local levels. Most recently she has been working as a research and management consultant completing over 20 projects in the health and community services sectors. She has a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and a Masters of Business Administration. Darlene is committed to social and health reform and is looking forward to working with the team to improve the health and wellbeing of women in our region.

Victorian State Election and Women's Health

The result of the November state election has seen the swearing in of a new Victorian Government. In the lead up to the election WHG had contact with a number of local candidates to discuss issues that matter to Grampians women. WHG will continue discussions with new and re-elected, local and upper house members, to make sure the health issues facing local women are understood in Government.

Significantly for women's health, the new Victorian Government has identified family violence as a key priority. They have created a family violence portfolio within the Department of Premier and Cabinet, and have promised a Royal Commission into family violence. This will be in addition to the implementation of the previous Government's \$150m commitment to reduce the incidence of family violence across Victoria.

White Ribbon Day—Grampians

The momentum of the White Ribbon campaign to engage men in preventing violence against women continues to grow in the Grampians region. In November, WHG supported key White Ribbon initiatives and delivered training to over 20 Ballarat White Ribbon Ambassadors. Local White Ribbon events took place across the region and included a Wimmera community walk, Ballarat Charter signing and oath swearing, breakfast event at Yarriambiack Shire Council, Ararat and Moorabool community events and BBQs, Golden Plains Shire launched their preventing violence commitment and Councillors and staff at Pyrenees Council



2015 Events – Save the Date!

11th March 2015

International Women's Day Nelly Thomas, Sex and IWD

Nelly Thomas will headline WHG's International Women's Day event in Ararat on Wednesday 11th March. This is an opportunity for parents and carers to hear the comedian's entertaining presentation of "The Talk", how to have those tricky conversations on sex and relationships with teenagers.

WHG's new resource for women and local agencies, the Sexual and Reproductive Health Referral Pathways Guide will also be launched on this day.

[Find out WHG's partnerships for improving local women's sexual and reproductive health](#)

Thought about your own International Women's Day event? Tell us about your event so we can promote it or talk with WHG if you need some help to start planning.

18th March 2015

Act@Work Ballarat Leading Change Lunch

Following the success of the Act@Work Leading Change breakfast held in Ararat, another forum promoting the role of our community and business leaders in preventing violence against women will be held in March. This will be a lunchtime forum at Sovereign Hill, Bradshaw Street, Ballarat. For more information please see the WHG website www.whg.org.au

Our 2014 AGM

This year the WHG AGM focused on the theme 'Collective Impact'. There was a great turn out of WHG members and local community representatives to hear from our special guest speakers:

- Peter Brown, CEO, Horsham Rural City Council
- Ray Campling, CEO, Yarriambiack Shire Council
- Jo Bourke, Executive Director, Wimmera Development Association
- Carly Werner, Chief of Staff, Wimmera Mail Times
- Paigen Horwood, Health Promotion worker WHG

The venue for this year's AGM was the Grains Innovation Park in Horsham. After the AGM, a lunch was enjoyed by attendees with Act@Work promotion material and conference posters from the year displayed around the room.



Paigen Horwood



WHG AGM 2014



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