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# 17/18

ANNUAL  
REPORT

**w/h**G  
women's health  
GRAMPIANS

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Women's Health Grampians aims to improve women's equality, health and wellbeing in the Grampians region and beyond.

# Contents

Chair of the Board Report	4	Gender Inequality in the Grampians report	17
CEO Report	5	Regional Updates	18
About WHG Health Promotion Program	6	Staff Development	21
Strategic Directions	7	Central Highlands Integrated Family Violence Committee	23
Health Promotion Program	8	Our Board	24
Sexual and Reproductive Health	10	Our Staff	26
Prevention of Violence against Women	14	Acknowledgements	27
Projects Strengthening CoRe	15		
It Takes Courage Project	16		

## Annual General Meeting

Women's Health Grampians (WHG) presented its 2017-18 Annual Report at the WHG Annual General Meeting on 21 November 2018 at the Gum San Chinese Heritage Centre, Ararat. Audited Financial Reports 2017-18 are provided as a supplement to the WHG Annual Report. The WHG Annual Report and Financial Reports are available via the WHG website ([www.whg.org.au](http://www.whg.org.au)) and hard copies are available on request.

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## Membership

WHG encourages all women and supporters to join as members and receive our informative newsletters. Membership is free. If you are interested in joining, visit our website [www.whg.org.au](http://www.whg.org.au) or email [admin@whg.org.au](mailto:admin@whg.org.au).

Thank you to Michelle Dunn of MDP for supplying many of the photos used in this report



Women's Health Grampians respectfully acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the traditional custodians of the land on which we live and work. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging and especially the Aboriginal Women of our region.



WHG is a member of Gender Equity Victoria (GEN VIC), the peak body for gender equity, women's health and the prevention of violence against women. GEN VIC works with organisations across Victoria to advance a shared vision of gender equality, health and freedom from violence for every woman and girl in every community across Victoria.

Through GEN VIC, WHG is able to advocate, influence and collaborate to improve outcomes in gender equity, women's health and in the prevention of violence against women at a state wide level.



# Chair of the Board Report



The 2017-18 year has seen continued growth and development of Women's Health Grampians, including a diversification of funding streams, which has allowed the delivery of a range of programs, projects and initiatives to be facilitated across the region. It is important to recognise that growth in the amount of 'fee for service' work that WHG has delivered has strengthened the organisation's financial position. It has enabled greater flexibility and innovation in how we work, and has provided the opportunity for us to broaden the areas in which we can work.

The growth of the Communities of Respect and Equality (CoRE) program throughout the region has continued and we now have over 100 CoRE members – this includes organisations from a variety of sectors including: health, local government, community, business, state government agencies, education/training and sport clubs. CoRE is influencing the conversations happening in communities and organisations. Its success and continued growth is also starting conversations outside of our region, where people want to learn more about CoRE, how it works and how they can replicate this kind of community attitudinal change in their local area.

The Board welcomes the support from regional Department of Health and Human Services for WHG's work in the critically important area of reproductive choices. WHG is leading collaborative work across the region in relation to women's reproductive choices, and the Board is pleased to see progress and increasing options emerging in our region as a result of this supported work.

The WHG Board is committed to providing good governance, and throughout 2017-18 has continued to strive to provide transparent, fair and accountable governance to the organisation. We are always working towards creating a sustainable and strong WHG, and making sure we align our Board work to the WHG values of Empowerment, Diversity, Partnership & Collaboration and Respect.

A highlight of 2017-18 was the Rural Women's Health Service's Board's network and governance training that was held in Hepburn during 2018 – this event was a huge success and looks set to become an annual event. We shared experiences, skills, resources and participated in excellent professional development across the two days. We have also focused on improving governance through extensive policy review and development, and we have concentrated our work in the areas of risk and finance this past year.

A key decision taken by the Board during the past year was to identify new premises for the Ballarat office, having well and truly outgrown Drummond St. While it is sad to leave the building that has served us well over the past 12 years and which is so centrally located, we must ensure that our staff have a comfortable, safe and appropriate workplace. We look forward to moving to our new premises in Mount Pleasant with larger work and meeting spaces and good parking!

During 2017-18 we farewelled Board members Talei Deacon, Katherine Cape and Leeanne Greenwood. We thank them for their work with the Board and for the time, skills and knowledge they contributed. We have welcomed new members Jude Channon and Frances Salenga who bring valuable skills and experience. All WHG Board members are volunteers. We all give our time, skills and expertise because we believe in the work of WHG and because we believe it is necessary to improve gender equity in our community.

I would like to personally thank all Board colleagues for their contributions and their willingness to work as a team, to share the responsibilities of good governance and to celebrate the successes along the way. It is a pleasure to be part of a committed and enthusiastic Board.

The Board is very proud of the work of WHG and recognises the commitment and dedication shown by all WHG team members - without them, the extraordinary achievements and progress that we have seen in the Grampians region during 2017-18 would not have occurred.

My sincere thanks and respect to Marianne Hendron, the CEO of WHG – her drive, commitment and strategic approach to the work of WHG enables this organisation to achieve terrific results and to be seen as experts in gender equity and improving the health & wellbeing of women in the Grampians region.

**Katherine Gillespie**  
Chair

# CEO Report



2017-18 saw many exciting developments relating to WHG's core business both within our direct scope of work and in the wider world beyond. It is impossible to separate the work we are doing, particularly in space of gender equality, without acknowledging its links to the global #MeToo movement and its exposure of the endemic nature of sexual harassment and assault and the increased awareness of gender inequality and its impact on all of us. Three years ago, one of the goals of our work in prevention of violence and cultural transformation was to promote understanding about the nature of sexism and how casual sexism is linked to more serious forms of violence against women. Conversations about these issues are now commonplace in workplaces, homes, schools and clubs and should be welcomed – it is vital in order for cultural change to take place that we question deeply-held assumptions and "givens" around gender and gender roles.

In parallel with this, the significant family violence reform agenda continued in Victoria and we welcomed several new initiatives. I continued to represent regional women's health services on the Ministerial Taskforce on the Prevention of Family Violence as we welcomed the new Minister for Women and Prevention of Family Violence, Natalie Hutchins. A key achievement has been the development of Respect Victoria, a statutory authority enshrined in legislation, to address primary prevention to change the attitudes, social norms and culture that lead to family violence. The Government has already provided \$12 million for Respect Victoria and it will continue to receive dedicated and sustained funding, to ensure prevention work endures over the long term.

Women's Health Services welcomed the launch of Gender Equity Victoria (GEN VIC), the peak body for gender equity, women's health and the prevention of violence against women. GEN VIC builds on the Women's Health Association of Victoria's 24-year history, providing a stronger platform for the peak to advocate, influence and collaborate for all women and its members while bringing together the rapidly growing gender equality and prevention of violence against women sector. GEN VIC works with organisations across Victoria to advance a shared vision of gender equality, health and freedom from violence for every woman and girl, in every community across Victoria.

This report is a snapshot of just some of the impressive body of work that has been undertaken in our region to progress our strategic priorities over the past year. I cannot commend enough the fantastic team at WHG in all their various roles who display such dedication and passion for the work we do. I regularly receive positive feedback from stakeholders on the high quality of work, the calibre of our staff and the significant impact made by a very small team. It is certainly an honour and a pleasure to work with them all.

This report highlights the growth in membership and recognition of the Communities of Respect and Equality (CoRE) Plan, which has gone from strength to strength. Its robust evaluation plan helps us identify progress and ensure our actions are impactful and we ensure that learnings are applied rapidly through this annual review. The Gender Inequality Indicators Report, launched on International Womens Day, is a fine example of a quality report providing reliable data for benchmarking progress in this important area.

CoRE has spawned several new projects that enabled us to extend the reach and develop a stronger intersectional focus in our work notably through the It Takes Courage group, empowering migrant and refugee women and the Equality for All project to train and support women with lived experience to deliver an intersectional focus in CoRE. CoRE has also extended to support the Elder Abuse Prevention Network. CoRE project funding has also enabled us to engage with new sectors such as sporting clubs and a grant from the Myer Community Fund enabled us to progress a business focus which continues to grow.

Following on from the launch of our research report in partnership with University of Melbourne, Unintended Pregnancy in the Grampians Region, we were very appreciative to receive support from our regional DHHS to expand this work, through the Reproductive Choices Project in the Wimmera which aims to improve referral pathways and knowledge of options among general practice in the Western part of our region. This project is enhanced through strong partnership with Ballarat Community Health, Wimmera Health Care Group and Ballarat Health Services.

Many other strategic partnerships extend the opportunities for our work in influence and social change and they are listed in the report. These committees are important platforms to ensure that gender equality is considered and are opportunities to strengthen our work around shared objectives.

The WHG Board guides our work with good governance, measured reflection and an appetite for innovation and leadership. They are a wonderful group of committed and passionate women and I am ever appreciative of their support and direction.

**Marianne Hendron**  
CEO

# About Women's Health Grampians

Women's Health Grampians aims to improve women's equality, health and wellbeing in the Grampians region and beyond.

This includes a focus on:

- The prevention of violence against women (PVAW)
- Improving sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services and access
- Driving cultural change that supports gender equality

We work closely with all levels of government, community and business partners to achieve better public policy and services for women, and to address the barriers to achieving gender equality.

Established in 1991, WHG is one of nine regional and three state-wide women's health services funded by the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services.

## Our Approach

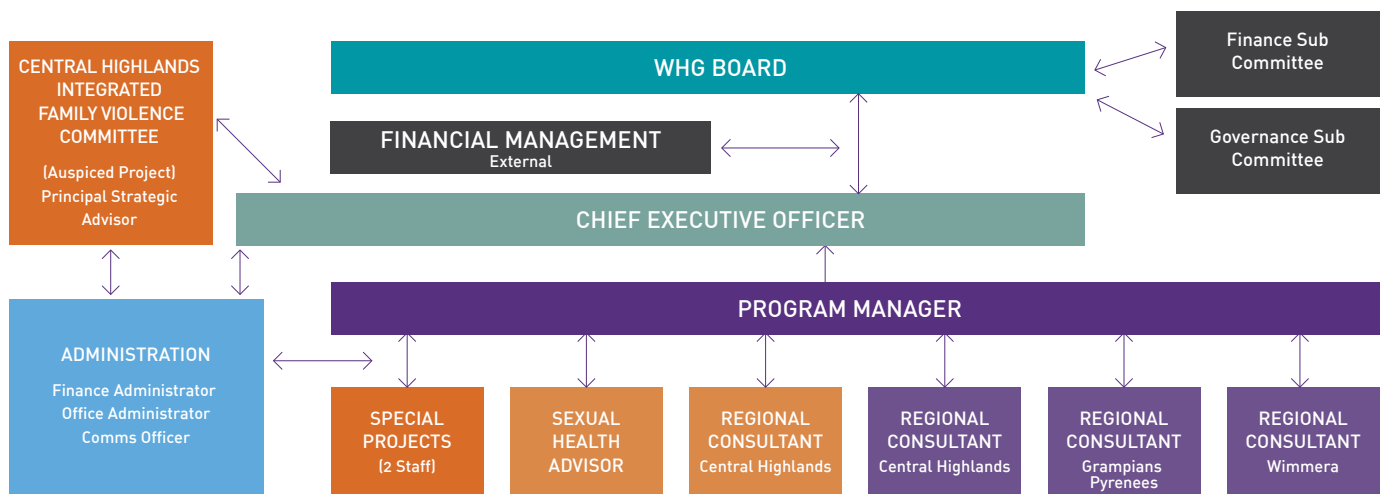
WHG works within a feminist framework. This means we are committed to a rights-based approach in advocating for women. We focus on the role of gender in the formation of traditional roles and stereotypes that lead to disadvantage, discrimination and violence against women.

WHG also takes an integrated health promotion approach to our work. This means consideration of the social determinants of health and wellbeing, taking a population-based approach to primary prevention, and being inclusive of diverse and often vulnerable groups and communities.

In our approach, we are committed to:

- Working collaboratively with a range of partners to extend our impact and achieve positive and lasting change
- Empowering women to have a voice in shaping better policies and services
- Being inclusive and promoting the needs of diverse communities, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, people from LGBTIQ communities, people with disability, and older people
- Using evidence and data to inform action that will make a difference in the lives of women

## Organisational Structure



# Strategic Directions

The 2017-2020 Strategic Plan outlines our key goals, actions and values for the coming years. It provides a solid foundation for WHG's role as the regional leader in translating evidence into practice to improve women's equality, health and wellbeing.

Our strategic goals are to:

- Provide leadership in women's health and primary prevention
- Improve gender equality across the Grampians
- Ensure the sustainability of WHG

To achieve our goals, our actions include to:

- Develop and foster new and existing strategic partnerships
- Implement innovative and robust programs
- Effectively capture and promote the impact of our work
- Target strategies towards those most disadvantaged in the region
- Recognise and develop the skills and expertise of our staff

## Our Region

WHG covers a region of 11 Local Government Areas (LGAs) spanning more than 48,000 square kilometres:

- Ararat
- Ballarat
- Golden Plains
- Hepburn
- Hindmarsh
- Horsham
- Moorabool
- Northern Grampians
- Pyrenees
- West Wimmera
- Yarriambiack

The region is made up of three sub-regions of Central Highlands, Central Grampians and Wimmera, with a diverse range of communities from major growth urban centres to isolated communities.

Women in regional and rural areas like the Grampians face additional barriers to accessing health and wellbeing services, and are at increased risk of family violence due to isolation and other factors.

We have a strong and growing network of organisations from across the Grampians that share a vision for safer, equal and respectful communities.



# Health Promotion Program

## Our Sub-Regional Approach

A sub-regional approach ensures we maximise opportunities to establish new, and consolidate existing, partnerships and local networks. Regional Consultants are assigned to support the three sub-regions of the Grampians area being Central Highlands, Grampians Pyrenees and the Wimmera. Regional Consultants provide individualised support to Communities of Respect and Equality (CoRE) members and other partners across the Grampians region.



## Advocacy and Influence in our Region

Advocacy is a key component of WHG's work. It involves evidence based, strategic action to help transform systems and improve the environments and policies that shape the lives, and wellbeing, of our stakeholders. Our focus on using reliable data and accurate information and ensuring high quality documentation and presentation helps ensure the credibility and reputation of our messaging. Much of this work is aligned with existing and emerging statewide policies and government legislation, ensuring that a rural focus and the specific needs of our region are considered.

Our advocacy work in regards to sexual and reproductive health was greatly supported and enhanced by the research report discussed on page 10 and led to the announcement of two new sexual and reproductive health initiatives aimed at increasing information and access to health services across the whole region.

Our work in prevention of violence against women and gender equality through the CoRE Plan has been supported through a comprehensive Advocacy Plan, developed in late 2017. It has enabled solid discussion in meetings with a range of key politicians, including the Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews, Ministers Natalie Hutchins, Jill Hennessey, Gavin Jennings, Jaala Pulford and Martin Pakula and MPs in our region Louise Staley, Joshua Morris, Mary Anne Thomas, Sharon Knight and Emma Kealy. Influencers and policy makers we have met with include Tim Cartwright, Victorian Family Violence Reform Implementation Monitor, Jerril Rechter, CEO, Vic Health, Marian Frere, CEO Office for Women, Rosie Batty Chair, Victims Survivors Advisory Council, Kate Jenkins, Australian Human Rights Commission.





WHG works closely with partners to promote cultural and systemic change to improve the health and wellbeing of women.

## PARTNERSHIPS

WHG is an active partner in regional level action and represented on a wide range of local and regional networks and committees:

- Ballarat Enabling Women Reference Group
- Central Highlands Child & Youth Area Partnership Leadership Group
- Central Highlands Elder Abuse Prevention Network
- Central Highlands Integrated Family Violence Committee
- Central Highlands Primary Care Partnership
- Central Highlands Regional Partnership
- City of Ballarat Community Safety Committee
- City of Ballarat Health Partners Network
- Grampians Indigenous Family Violence Regional Action Group
- Grampians Pyrenees Primary Care Partnership
- Hepburn White Ribbon Committee
- Hepburn Family Violence Action Group
- Moorabool Shire Council Health and Wellbeing Committee
- Northern Grampians Health and Wellbeing Working Group
- Pyrenees Shire Council Health and Wellbeing Committee
- Refugee and Immigrant Family Violence Projects in Ballarat Steering Group
- Sports Central Board
- Western District Integrated Family Violence Partnership
- Western Victoria Primary Health Network, Wimmera Community Council
- Wimmera Family Violence and Sexual Assault Local Area Planning Group
- Wimmera International Women's Day Organising Group
- Wimmera Primary Care Partnership
- Wimmera Southern Mallee Crime Prevention Reference Group
- Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Partnership

# Sexual and Reproductive Health

WHG aims to improve access to sexual and reproductive health for women in the Grampians region. To do this, we aim to increase local, regional and state-wide collaboration to improve women's access to sexual and reproductive health information and services, and build capacity of the sexual and reproductive health workforce in the region.

## Unintended Pregnancy study

In our region it has long been the case that information on the range of options available to women with unintended pregnancies is limited and direct services are scarce. Our key piece of work over this period was a research project in partnership with the University of Melbourne aiming to understand GP referral practices when a woman presents with an unintended pregnancy: Rural GPs and Unintended Pregnancy in the Grampians Pyrenees & Wimmera Regions (Keogh et al, 2017).\*

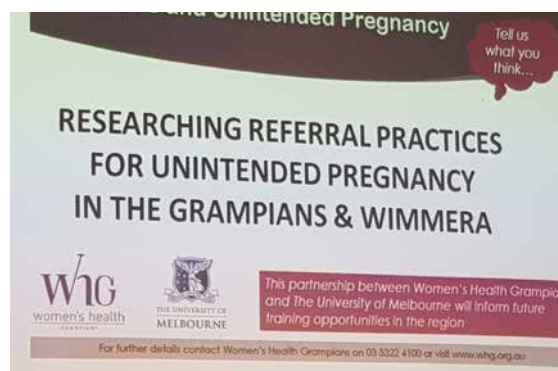
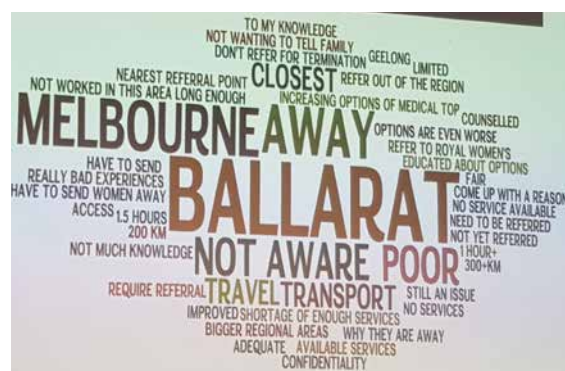
We were seeking to gain a better understanding of GP's views on service availability and options for women. This research focused on the Grampians Pyrenees and Wimmera regions where access to services is particularly poor.

## What did we do?

GPs from all practices were invited to participate in a survey and optional telephone interview. From a total of 84 approached; 23 (27%) completed the survey, and of these, five also took part in a semi-structured telephone interview.

## What did we find?

When women present with an unintended pregnancy, 38% of GPs surveyed indicated they 'refer to a colleague due to a conscientious objection to abortion'. No GP indicated they always discussed tele-health medical abortion and only 27% said that they 'always' discussed medical abortion with women. GPs expressed a range of views about the adequacy and location of services, with the majority indicating services in the region were limited or inadequate. Rural GPs who were interested in becoming MTOP providers faced barriers such as lack of access to timely ultrasounds and surgical backup options.



## What can we conclude?

The results indicate high levels of conscientious objection and wide variation in knowledge of services. In addition, the provision of tele-abortion and medical abortion is extremely limited in this region, even though these are considered ideal ways to address rural access to abortion. It is likely the promise of tele-abortion is far from fulfilled in Grampians region and possibly in other rural areas in Victoria. There is a need to improve GPs' knowledge of available services as well as adherence to legal and professional obligations.

The study identified clear opportunities to achieve this with all interview participants expressing strong support for the prevention of unintended pregnancy, and many highlighting the need for good support for women up until the point of termination.

\*Keogh, L., Croy, S., Newton, D., Hendron, M. & Hill, S. 2017. Rural GPs and Unintended Pregnancy in the Grampians Pyrenees & Wimmera Regions. Centre for Health Equity, University of Melbourne & Women's Health Grampians



## Reproductive Choices for Women

We commenced a new project to lead change in the Grampians Pyrenees and Wimmera region to improve access to reproductive choices for women.

This 12 month project aims to work in partnership with Ballarat Community Health, Ballarat Health Service, Wimmera Health Care Group, Western Victoria Primary Health Network and Department of Health, among other local service providers to:

1. Identify referral pathways and further understand barriers to improving reproductive choices
2. Improve general practice knowledge of abortion services
3. Improve general practice awareness of the law regarding abortion and referral obligations
4. Improve collaboration to find local solutions and strengthen referral
5. Improve awareness and use of referral pathways to assist patients to access appropriate services in a timely manner
6. Develop an evaluation framework to measure outcomes and share findings with other rural regions

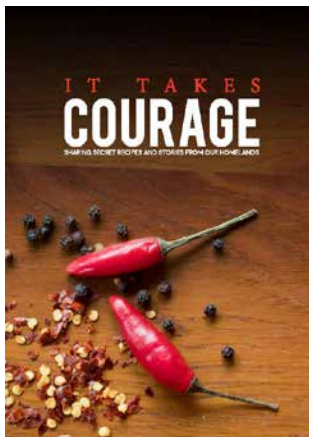


# OVER 400

COMMUNITY  
LEADERS AT  
**3 LEADING CHANGE**  
EVENTS IN  
BALLARAT,  
GREAT WESTERN  
AND HORSHAM



## LAUNCHED



# 20

Women from 14 different  
cultural backgrounds  
produced a recipe book

# MORE THAN 200

ATTENDED THE  
**LAUNCH**  
COPIES SOLD



## Top Tweet

Passionate about enabling  
cultural Change?

Seeking to expand our pool of  
male and female facilitators who  
can deliver training on primary  
prevention of violence against  
Women and Gender Equality  
#PVAW #CoRE

# 2025 IMPRESSIONS



2 new workplaces trained  
to promote gender equality

# Act@Work



# CoRE TRAINING

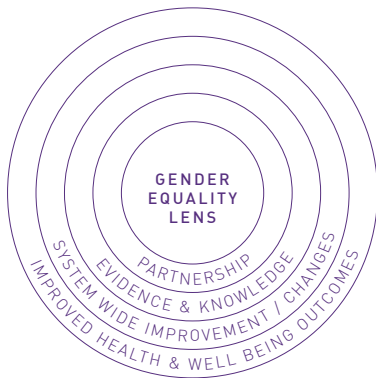


Inducted **13 new CoRE** trainers in Central Highlands

**5 CoRE** trainers in the Wimmera

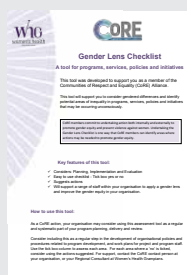
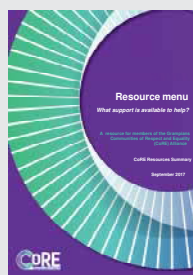
Launched training for CoRE members hosting **6 sessions** and **69 participants**

CoRE Communities of Practice hosting **6 sessions** and **123 attendees** from **81 organisations**



LAUNCHED THE  
**GENDER  
INEQUALITY**  
IN THE GRAMPIANS REPORT

**91** CoRE Alliance Members  
Representing diverse sectors: business, sport, education, health, community, government



## 5 new CoRE resources

CoRE Gender Audit

CoRE Gender Lens Assessment Tool

CoRE Local Stories video

Local Statistics Infographic video

Taking Action in Sport!

**Launched Rural GPs and Unintended Pregnancy report**

Launched new **12 month project** to increase reproductive choices in the Grampians Pyrenees and Wimmera catchments

# Prevention of Violence against Women

## Communities of Respect and Equality (CoRE)

The CoRE initiative has had another successful year with continued growth and pleasing progress and feedback from members.

The initiative has grown since its launch to have 91 members. It is estimated member organisations have a direct influence on more than 14,500 employees, and, member clubs and networks potentially reach an estimated 70,000 members. Memberships cover 100% of the geographical region identified in the CoRE Plan. The diversification of membership has strengthened over the past year with a broader spread across different settings in our community including: businesses; sporting clubs/organisations; education/schools; community organisations; local and state governments; and the health, community and social services sector.

The suite of CoRE resources has been expanded to include a new Gender Audit tool, Gender Lens checklist, and the development of policy examples. The most significant development was to recruit, train and contract a pool of 13 external trainers, and offer three different types of training across the region. We successfully transitioned the full day Community of Practice forums to shorter sub-regional events, better suited to our CoRE contacts. The Act@Work program has had an extensive review to bring it in line with CoRE and developments in PVAW at the national and state level. Three Leading Change events were held which continue to be a popular and successful strategy for engaging both new and existing leaders with an interest in this space.

### Are you a member of CoRE?

All organisations, clubs and networks in the Grampians region are invited to join the CoRE Alliance and work together on preventing violence against women. If your organisation hasn't yet joined the CoRE Alliance, visit our website to find out more about the plan, see who else is a member and download the membership form.



Governance processes have been refined and include the development of a second AGG Action Plan, review of the Risk Management Plan (including membership terms), and, second year implementation of the Evaluation Plan. The Gender Inequality in the Grampians report, launched in line with International Women's Day provides significant analysis of our current inequalities and will ultimately provide a baseline on which to measure the impact of the CoRE initiative over time. Additional funding was also received to progress projects including: engaging the sports sector; engaging the business sector; and strengthening the CoRE Alliance to apply an intersectional lens.



**CoRE Train  
the Trainer**

# Projects Strengthening CoRE

## CoRE training

A key achievement for the year was the introduction of our CoRE training program. We now provide three different types of training for staff in CoRE member organisations:

- Introduction to Prevention of Violence against Women (3 hours)
- Intensive Bystander Training (6 hours)
- Gender Equity Training for Managers (2 hours)

Sessions are held across the region. To enable us to deliver this new program we increased our pool of male and female facilitators, recruiting 13 new trainers to cover the Central Highlands and Grampians Pyrenees region holding an extensive training day in January. This has been a wonderful addition to the WHG team and our capacity to support CoRE members.

For more information or to register for upcoming sessions, please speak to your Regional Consultant.



## CoRE and Sports

We undertook a 12-month project to improve our level of engagement with the sporting sector – with a Victoria Government-funded Community Partnerships for Prevention grant. Working with existing CoRE members Sports Central, Ballarat Golf Club, Western Bulldogs Community Foundation and Ballarat Community Health, we were able to significantly improve our level of engagement, finishing the 12 months with 13 sports-related organisations joining CoRE.

We also:

- Developed a new resource to guide sporting organisations to take action to prevent violence against women
- Developed and circulated a sporting club case study for improving gender equality
- Presented information and/or leadership briefings for 10 sporting clubs, associations or leagues
- Hosted a Leading Change event for over 100 presidents, board members and senior staff from sporting organisations. The event featured high profile speakers and local leaders

## CoRE Business

We were fortunate to receive project funding from the Myer Community Fund to engage with the private sector in the region with the goal of building awareness of gender equality as a driver of violence against women and to promote action in this area through CoRE membership. The work has focussed on highlighting how workplaces can influence the attitudes, beliefs and behaviours that allow violence to happen in the community and develop strategies and action plans tailored to the business and contributing to the collective impact of CoRE in the Grampians. The funding also enabled us to develop a new CoRE Local Stories video, which highlights actions from a range of workplaces across the region.





# It Takes Courage Project

The "It Takes Courage" (ITC) project involved 20 women from 14 cultural backgrounds participating in weekly sessions. The project aimed to raise awareness of the issues associated with violence against women and gender inequality. This was an opportunity to build trust and establish rapport among the group and develop a range of skills along the way.

The ITC group produced a high-quality book featuring recipes from homelands and family traditions, creative writing, artwork and photographs by the women, with more than 400 copies already sold. The book was launched to over 140 people at a special dinner event in Ballarat, celebrating the achievements of the group and featuring guest speaker Nyadol Nyuon, nominee for the Hundred Most Influential African-Australians in 2011 and 2014. The project also involved a 'Take a Seat at our Dinner Table' event as part of the 16 Days of Activism campaign, which welcomed 60 guests to an evening of food from the homelands of ITC participants.

Complementing this project was 'A man is...'. 13 men from different cultural backgrounds participated in two workshop-style discussions centred around concepts such as: the underlying drivers of violence against women; understanding power and control; and theories of equality and gender.

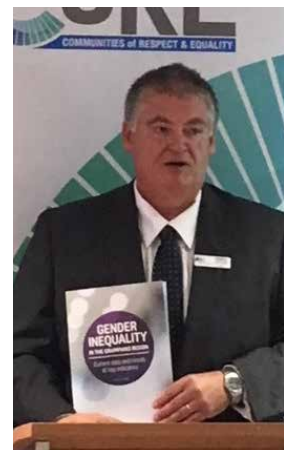
Participant feedback from both It Takes Courage and 'A man is...' has been very positive, and involvement in these programs has inspired many participants to take on leadership roles in their communities. A key feature of It Takes Courage is the extent of goodwill, volunteer participation and partnership support for the project across the arts, community and business sectors. In particular strong partnership with the Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre and Ballarat Community Health and business support from Myer Ballarat, Small Dog Designs and The Lost Ones has extended the reach of the project significantly.





# Gender Inequality in the Grampians report

We were very pleased to release the CoRE Gender Inequality in the Grampians report; a significant piece of research undertaken by WHG. It provides a current and local overview of the prevalence of gender inequality in our region. The report measures the rate at which the Grampians region is progressing towards equality in the areas of: employment; leadership; and unpaid work; and uncovered significant and persistent gaps between the experiences of men and women. These findings suggest the need for the Grampians region to challenge the entrenched gender stereotypes and structural barriers preventing us from reaching gender equality. The report will also allow us to measure the impact of the CoRE initiative over time as we measure the rate of change over the next 10 years.



We need to create a society that is safe, equal and respectful for women of ALL backgrounds

# Regional Updates

## Central Highlands

CoRE members in the Central Highlands have been very active over the last year. Membership has grown by 52% with 18 new members, particularly in the areas of sport and recreation. The breadth of actions from CoRE members is inspiring. Members are applying a gender lens to communications material, removing gendered language from policies and strategies, looking into pathways for women in leadership, and, strengthening pay structures to allow women to accrue more superannuation.

Over the last year we noticed more members appointing an action group to oversee CoRE within their workplace, club or network, rather than leaving it to one individual. This approach supports collective responsibility where everyone is part of the solution. Importantly it ensures fair and equal practices are being embedded right across the workplace and improves resilience if a key staff member leaves.

### Highlights from the past year include:

As a way to engage sporting clubs in the region to stand up and take action to prevent violence against women, a Leading Change Event was held at Sovereign Hill. Participants had the opportunity to hear from key figures in the industry including Peter Gordon (President, Western Bulldogs Football Club), Jerril Retcher (CEO, VicHealth), Margot Foster (Chair, VicSport) and Greg Anders (Former President, Ballarat Golf Club) share actions they are taking to promote the status and profile of women in a club context. The event welcomed over 100 representatives from sporting clubs and has resulted in significant growth in CoRE membership from local clubs and associations.

With our new sub-regional approach to delivering Community of Practice (CoP) sessions, a Central Highlands CoP is now held quarterly. The first Central Highlands Community of Practice explored the WHG Gender Audit resource providing participants with a tool to assess how workplaces can more robustly consider and promote gender across areas such as facilities, leadership, policies, culture or community engagement. It is always pleasing to see strong attendance at these sessions, a good indication that CoRE members find these sessions useful and relevant to their work.

City of Ballarat undertook the Act@Work program. With over 1,000 staff participating in training delivered by WHG, this is the largest organisation to undertake the program to date. Over the course of six months City of Ballarat developed and launched their gender equity strategy and action plan. Child & Family Services (CAFS) have recently commenced Act@Work and we look forward to working with them over the coming year.

For more information about this region please contact Dee Micevski [dee@whg.org.au](mailto:dee@whg.org.au)





## Grampians Pyrenees

Grampians Pyrenees led change in the region hosting guest speaker Rosie Batty at a dinner event in June 2018. Over 190 people braved the cold night to hear Rosie talk about violence against women and how we can all take action to prevent violence. Rosie was joined by local family violence survivor Danielle Jenkins, Tim Cartwright from the Family Violence Implementation Reform Monitor, Kashif Bouns from Western Bulldogs Community Foundation and Stephen Rodis from AME Systems who all spoke about the importance of leadership in improving gender equality and preventing violence against women.

CoRE members in Grampians Pyrenees came together throughout the year in Community of Practice sessions to share ideas and highlight the breadth of action being undertaken across the region. Sessions featured local organisations, thank you to Northern Grampians Shire and Grampians Pyrenees Primary Care Partnership for sharing their experience and CoRE journey. The Community of Practice also feature information about new resources being developed by WHG including the Gender Audit and Gender Lens Checklist.



The Pyrenees Shire Council undertook Act@Work in 2018. Through this program 80% of Council staff received training in prevention of violence against women and bystander action. An action group undertook a detailed organisational assessment and developed an action plan to improve gender equality across the Council. The action group are committed to implementing the plan with 90% of the first year actions already completed.

The Grampians Pyrenees Primary Care Partnership (GPPCP) featured this year in the CoRE Local Stories Guide. Since becoming CoRE members in 2016, GPPCP has taken big strides towards raising the profile of gender equality across the region. As a part of its five new strategic directions GPPCP aims to connect and bolster efforts to prevent and address family violence across regions and sectors. The GPPCP Local Story can be viewed in the resource 'CoRE Local Stories of Action to end violence against women and their children.'

Grampians Pyrenees region welcomed the following new CoRE members in 2017-2018: Beaufort and Skipton Health Service, Lake Bolac College and Stawell Neighbourhood House. WHG is working with these new members to identify and implement meaningful actions to address gender inequality in their organisations.

In 2018/19 the Grampians Pyrenees CoRE members will continue to come together through Community of Practice sessions to share ideas and learn about new resources. WHG will continue to support CoRE members through training, resources and individual support from our Regional Consultant.

For more information about this region please contact Kate Diamond-Keith [kate@whg.org.au](mailto:kate@whg.org.au)



## Wimmera

A highlight of the year was the Wimmera Leading Change Breakfast held at Horsham Town Hall on 22 August 2017, attended by 130 people. Guest speakers highlighted the importance of taking action to prevent violence against women and children and the need to address gender equality. Guest speakers included Simone O'Brien, Phil Cleary, Australia's Sex Discrimination Commissioner Kate Jenkins and VicRoads David Lavithis. Thanks to Department of Justice and Regulation, Horsham Rural City Council, Wimmera Primary Care Partnership, Uniting Wimmera and Barwon Centre Against Sexual Assault for supporting the event.

On 8 March 2018, 200 people came together to #pressforprogress at the International Women's Day lunch in Horsham. Michelle Shank, Maddi Ostapiw, Joanne Clark and Wimmera Health Care Group Chief Executive Officer Catherine Morley were guest speakers. Thanks to partners Rotary Club of Horsham East, the Sexual Assault and Family Violence Centre and Horsham Rural City Council.

CoRE membership has grown in the Wimmera with eight new members joining the CoRE Alliance. We are seeing an increase in diversity of membership and involvement across community, business and government sectors. Acknowledgement on websites, development of leadership statements, town signage, development of family violence policies and procedures and staff training are among some of the initiatives taken by members.

The successful Act@Work program was highlighted at the Municipal Association of Victoria PVAW Showcase in August 2017, the Stop Domestic Violence Conference in December 2017 and at the Community Crime Prevention Conference in June 2018. Act@Work training was delivered to staff at Horsham Rural City Council, West Wimmera Shire Council, Hindmarsh Shire Council, Uniting Wimmera and VicRoads. A thorough review of the Act@Work program was conducted in the second half of the year and we look forward to continuing to offer this strengthened program to organisations throughout the region.

For more information about this region please contact Melissa Morris [melissa@whg.org.au](mailto:melissa@whg.org.au)





# Staff Development

WHG is committed to recognising and developing the skills and expertise of our staff. We aim to ensure that staff skills and strengths are valued and further enhanced through support, ongoing education and development.

This commitment is embedded in our 2017 - 2021 Strategic Plan.

In 2017-18, the WHG team participated in a range of professional development opportunities to continue to build internal capacity and in turn strengthen our local activities and partnerships. Staff members attended regular Community of Practice sessions (organised by WHG or other organisations), national events and conferences, and local workshops and training sessions.

Training and events included, but were not limited to: the MAV Local Government Innovation Preventing Violence Against Women; Sexrurality Conference Macedon; 2017 Diversity and Inclusion in Sport forum; 2017 Stop Domestic Violence Conference and Education Management; and Ballarat White Ribbon Day.

## Gender Inequality Launch



# Central Highlands Integrated Family Violence Committee



The Central Highlands Integrated Family Violence Committee (CHIFVC) is auspiced by Women's Health Grampians and chaired by WHG CEO, Marianne Hendron. Marianne is joined on the Executive Committee by Deputy Chairs Denise O'Dowd (Berry Street) and Libby Jewson (WRISC).

## Members

CHIFVC members include:

- Ballarat and District Aboriginal Cooperative (BADAC)
- Ballarat Centre Against Sexual Assault (CASA)
- Ballarat Community Health
- Ballarat Health Services
- Ballarat Magistrates Court
- Berry Street Western Region (Deputy Chair)
- CAFS (Child and Family Services)
- Centacare
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Department of Education and Training
- Grampians Community Health
- Relationships Australia Victoria
- SalvoConnect Western
- Victoria Police
- Victorian Legal Aid
- Women's Health Grampians (Chair)
- WRISC Family Violence Support (Deputy Chair)

The CHIFVC is supported by Pennie Mathieson, Principal Strategic Advisor (PSA) and Christy Knapman, Project Support Officer, based at WHG. The PSA supports family violence integration and leads regional activities.

## 2017-2018 Highlights

### WORKING TOWARDS A COORDINATED RESPONSE TO FAMILY VIOLENCE

CHIFVC hosted its inaugural Community of Practice forum on 23 November 2017 at The Ballarat Mining Exchange. More than 60 attendees from a range of sectors came together to work towards a coordinated response to family violence for the region.

Facilitated by Kristen Sheridan from ShantiWorks, the forum explored key principles for working in partnership, a shared understanding of family violence, better practice models for a coordinated system, and opportunities for systemic change.

## Information Sharing: From Concept to Practice

CHIFVC welcomed 70 professionals to its second Community of Practice forum, Information Sharing: From Concept to Practice.

Held in April 2018, the forum explored new family violence information sharing legislation. Discussions were facilitated by Dr Anita Morris, Family Violence Principal Practitioner at the Department of Health and Human Services, and included reflection on better practice in gaining consent where appropriate, the relevance of information for the purposes of managing risk, and the importance of maintaining trust in relationships particularly when working with clients from diverse cultural backgrounds.

## Central Highlands Child & Youth Area Partnership (CYAP) Research Update

The CHIFVC jointly sponsors a research project by PhD candidate Michelle Hunt to investigate how services in Central Highlands can strengthen responses to women and children who have experienced family violence.

The project uses photovoice, a form of qualitative research, to understand people's lives from their own perspective. Research participants take photographs in response to the research questions and discuss these individually and as a group to capture underlying meaning and significance.



## Hepburn Family Violence Action Group

The Hepburn Family Violence Action Group is a subset of CHIFVC partners and other local organisations committed to working on the particular needs and context of the Hepburn region.

The Action Group has identified key priorities and challenges for the region to guide its advocacy work and place-based initiatives. Key activities in 2017-18 included: development of an advocacy plan, including a focus on emergency relief and increased family violence training in Hepburn.

## Safer Pathways for Women from Refugee and Immigrant Backgrounds

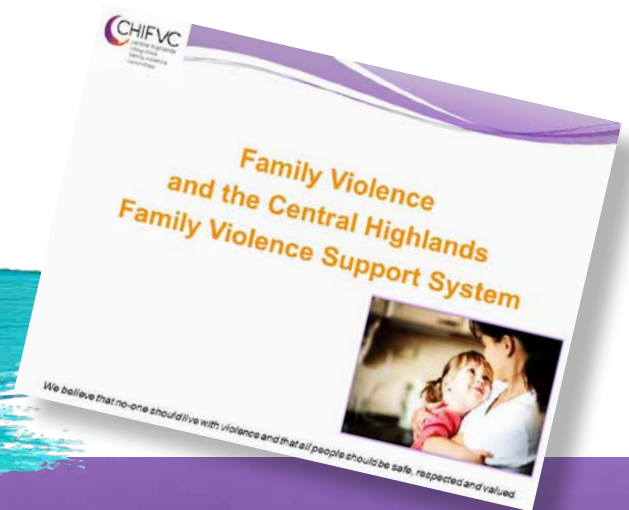
The Safer Pathways project is led by Ballarat Community Health, on behalf of the CHIFVC. In 2018 the engagement phase of the project was completed, with the establishment of a steering committee and the recruitment of project staff. The SHARE forum in June 2018 had a focus on family violence in refugee and immigrant communities, and provided the opportunity to discuss potential barriers to, and gaps in knowledge of services.

## CHIFVC Family Violence Presentations

CHIFVC members made presentations to numerous sectors in 2017-18, covering: family violence policy context; identifying and responding to family violence; and understanding the support system. Contact us to arrange a presentation for your organisation.



## CHIFVC Conference attendees





# Our Board

Our Board is made up of local women who bring a range of valuable experiences, knowledge and skills to WHG governance. Our Board members share a commitment to good governance and improving the health and wellbeing of women in the Grampians region. The Board has a strong commitment to social justice and transformational change and is willing to provide drive and energy to progress the vision and work of WHG.



**Katherine Gillespie**  
Chairperson

Katherine has a background in health and local government, is a graduate of Leadership Ballarat Western Region program and currently the Executive Officer of Central Highlands Primary Care Partnership. Katherine has been a Board member since April 2013, has been Chair since 2014 and lives in Ballarat.



**Jo Millard**  
Board Member

Jo has qualifications in nursing, service coordination, leadership, project management, and training and assessment. Jo is currently Clinical Acute Team Leader and Primary Care Nurse at Springs Medical Centre serving Daylesford and Trentham. She has been a member of the WHG Board since 2014.



**Rachel Whittaker**  
Board Member

Rachel's background is in psychology, social work and community development. Her past employment includes clinical, welfare, advisory and project implementation roles with extensive volunteering. Rachel has lived and worked in the Northern Grampians Shire since 2005 and joined the Board in 2016.



**April Ure**  
Board Member and Treasurer

April joined the Board in 2016 and is a recent graduate of the Leadership Ballarat Western Region program. Her background is in finance and local government. April currently resides in Ballarat and works in Property and Revenue at Pyrenees Shire Council.

## The Board has a strong commitment to social justice and transformational change



**Amy Rhodes**  
Board Member

Amy works in media and communications for local government and has experience in community and youth development. She has formal qualifications in journalism, public relations, youth mental health, and is a volunteer ambassador for beyondblue. Amy joined the WHG Board in December 2016. She lives in Stawell.



**Frances Salenga**  
Board Member

Frances joined the Board in 2017 and currently works at The City of Ballarat as Coordinator Cultural Diversity. A graduate from the University of the Philippines in Sociology and Anthropology, she is passionate about intercultural affairs. She also brings with her experience from being a member of the Regional Advisory Committee and was Deputy Chair of the Victorian Local Government Multicultural Issues Network. She lives in Ballarat.



**Jude Channon**  
Board Member

Jude works at Western Victoria Primary Health Network as a Primary Care Consultant and joined the Board in 2017. She brings with her skills in the field of women's health issues, project and program management, health promotion and is committed to women's health. She lives in Ballarat.

WHG would also like to acknowledge the contributions of Board members who departed during 2017-18:

Katherine Cape; Talei Deacon; and Leanne Greenwood. WHG thanks all past Board members and wishes them well in their subsequent pursuits.

# Our Staff



**Marianne Hendron**  
Chief Executive Officer



**Darlene Henning-Marshall**  
Program Manager



**Pat Loughnan**  
Finance Administrator



**Valma Ffrost**  
Office Administrator



**Pennie Mathieson**  
Principal Strategic Advisor,  
Central Highlands Integrated  
Family Violence Committee



**Christy Knapman**  
Project Support, Central  
Highlands Integrated  
Family Violence Committee



**Dee Micevski**  
Regional Consultant  
Central Highlands



**Shannon Hill**  
Sexual Health Advisor



**Kate Diamond-Keith**  
Regional Consultant  
Grampians Pyrenees



**Shiree Pilkinton**  
Intercultural Engagement Advisor



**Melissa Morris**  
Regional Consultant Wimmera



**Marieke Dam**  
Reproductive Choices  
Project Worker



**Amber Wells**  
Board Support

WHG would also like to acknowledge the contributions of staff members who departed WHG during 2017-18:

Sascha Davies CoRE Support Worker 2017-2018; Kirsten Wignall Administration Officer 2017 – 2018; Louise Feery Acting Program Manager Feb – July 2017; and Annette Jones Health Promotion Wimmera 2016 – 2017.



# Acknowledgements

WHG would like to extend our thanks to our many continuing and new partners in 2017-18.

These partnerships underpin our capacity to achieve our goals and contribute positively to the health and wellbeing of all women from across the region.

Members of the Grampians Communities of Respect and Equality (CoRE) Alliance as at 30 June 2018

AME Systems	Buninyong Soccer Club	Design for Performance – D4P Pty Ltd	Northern Grampians Shire Council	Warracknabeal Secondary College
Ararat Rural City Council	CAFS Child & Family Services	Earth Ed	Pyrenees Shire Council	West Wimmera Shire Council
Ballan District Health and Care	Centacare Catholic Diocese Ballarat	East Grampians Health Service	Rainbow Learning Group & Neighbourhood House	Western Bulldogs Community Foundation
Ballarat CASA	Central Highlands Children and Youth Area Partnership	Federation University	Regional Development Victoria – Grampians	Western Victoria Primary Health Network
Ballarat City Football Club	Central Highlands Community Legal Centre	Food is Free Inc.	Rotary Club of Horsham East	Wimmera West Grampians Neighbourhood House Network Inc.
Ballarat Clinical School – Deakin University	Central Highlands Family Violence Committee	Golden Plains Shire	Rural Northwest Health	Wimmera and South West Area Integrated Family Violence Partnership
Ballarat Community Health	Central Highlands PCP	Grampians Community Health	SalvoConnect	Wimmera Catchment Management Authority
Ballarat Cricket Association	Centre for Participation	Grampians Indigenous Family Violence Regional Action Group	Sovereign Hill	Wimmera Health Care Group
Ballarat & District Soccer Association	City of Ballarat	Grampians Pyrenees PCP	Sports Central	Wimmera PCP
Ballarat Golf Club	Department of Education and Training- Central Highlands Area	Grampians Region Palliative Care Consortium	Stawell Neighbourhood House	Women's Health Grampians
Ballarat Health Services	Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning – Grampians Region	GWM Water	The Lost Ones	Women Supporting Women Ballarat
Ballarat Regional Trades and Labour Council	Department of Health and Human Services – Central Highlands Area	Handy Girl Australia	UFS Dispensaries	WRISC Family Violence Support
Ballarat Roller Derby League	Department of Health and Human Services – West Division Health – Ballarat Office	Hepburn Health Service	Uniting Ballarat	Yarriambiack Shire Council
Ballarat White Ribbon Day Committee	Department of Health and Human Services – Wimmera South West Area – West Division	Hepburn Shire Council	Uniting Wimmera	YMCA – Ballarat
Barwon CASA – Wimmera Counselling Services	Department of Justice & Regulation – Grampians Region	Hindmarsh Shire Council	VicRoads – Grampians – Western Region	
Beaufort and Skipton Health Service		Horsham Rural City Council	Victoria Police – Horsham Police Service Area	
Berry Street		Lake Bolac College	Victoria Police – North Grampians	
BGT [Central Highlands Group Training Inc]		MDP Photography and Video	Victorian Men's Shed Association	
Buninyong Cricket Club		Miners Rest Primary School	Warracknabeal Neighbourhood House and Learning Centre	
Buninyong & District Community Bank		Minyip Murtoa Football Netball Club Inc.		
		Moorabool Shire Council		
		North Ballarat Football Club		

## Other Valued Partners and Contributors

Ali Peipers Consulting, Art Gallery of Ballarat, Australian Women's Health Network, Ballarat and District Aboriginal Cooperative (BADAC), Ballarat Magistrates Court, Ballarat Neighbourhood Centre, Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council Inc., Centre Against Sexual Assault (CASA) – Ballarat and Barwon, Centre for Excellence in Rural Sexual Health, Commerce Ballarat, Committee for Ballarat, Family Planning Victoria, Gender Equality Victoria members, Helen McPherson-Smith Trust, Horsham East Rotary Club, JPA Business Services, Kittely's Ballarat, Launch Interactive, Leadership Ballarat and Western Region, Tara Leaf, Jill Lee, Bob Maika, MDP Photography and Video, Multicultural Centre for Women's Health, Multicultural Sexual Health Network, Municipal Association of Victoria, Myer Ballarat, Myer Community Foundation, Relationships Australia Victoria, Small Dog Design, Stawell Regional Health, The Ballarat Courier, The University of Melbourne, The Women's (Royal Women's Hospital), Trades Hall Council, United Way & The Ballarat Foundation, Vic Health, Victorian Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, Victoria Police, Victorian Women's Benevolent Fund, Voice FM, Wilson's Fruit & Veg, Wimmera Development Association, Wimmera Mail Times, Women's Information Referral Exchange WIRE, Zonta Club of Ballarat.

A Very Special Thanks to our Central Highlands and Wimmera CoRE Trainers: Justin Amor, Gemma Beavis, Michael Brandenburg, Belinda Coates, Peter Cranage, Greg Currie, Louise Feery, Catherine Kennedy, Jo Lablett, Greg Lewis, Cassie Lindsay, Pete Marshall, Alison Briggs-Miller, Ali Peipers, Damien Shackell, Barry Sherwell, Tevis Wright.

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