



Women's Health Grampians Newsletter July 2020



Welcome

Hello once again from the midst of these strange Covid times! I hope all our members and partners are safe and well. Our working from home model is continuing, with occasional and very welcome walking meetings around Lake Wendouree and in the Grampians as a variation on the Zoom catch ups! As you'll read further, the tremendous WHG staff group are adapting in amazing ways to deliver high quality webinars, develop podcasts and modify training to an online format, as well as increasing our use of social media for communication of advocacy and research. We have been very grateful to work with our colleagues at GENVIC who are compiling excellent resources around the gendered impact of Covid in various contexts. If you haven't seen these updates, check out our resources page on our website [here](#). We are always keen to hear from you – if you have ideas for webinars or other resources particularly in terms of the impact of Covid, please do let us know.

Despite feeling like it's still February, we have begun plans for our AGM, the date being **Wednesday 18 November**. We're not sure yet of the format, but it is likely to be via Zoom. We are planning some exciting speakers so stay tuned, we will be in touch with details soon. The WHG Board has been busy, having completed a mid term 'health check' of our strategic plan, and despite the uncertainty of the next two years we have a refreshed roadmap to guide us till 2022. We have also undertaken a major refresh of our Constitution which we'll be putting to members to endorse at the AGM – it will be circulated in the next few weeks. I want to acknowledge the WHG Board and our Chair Amy Rhodes for their strong commitment over the past several months. As they say, nobody signed up for this and their support and commitment has been highly valued by all staff. We farewelled Board member Debbie Bach early in the year and the Board co-opted new member Jess Grimble from Horsham, who is most welcome.

Finally a significant event during Covid has been the retirement of our much loved and respected financial manager Pat Loughnan. Pat joined WHG in 2003 and is known to many staff, Board and partners over nearly two decades. Until we can have a proper hooley, we farewelled Pat via Zoom with current and former staff and Board members – see picture below. In the lovely words of one staff member:

Pat, there are no words wise enough, no shoulder big enough, no gift generous enough, to express my thanks for all that you have done and all that you are! For me, WHG has always had Pat, the trusted ear, the generous support, the reassuring calm knower of all things, the desk tidy fairy, the payer of pays, the answerer of ENDLESS timesheet questions! It absolutely won't feel the same again - but I am so very grateful for having been here for the time of Pat!

Stay safe and well

Marianne Hendron, CEO, Women's Health Grampians

Image 1: Pat Loughnan Image 2: WHG staff



News & Events

CoRE Alliance Online *Community of Practice*

WHG is pleased to invite you to our ONLINE Community of Practice for CoRE members.

This 1 hour interactive session will explore:

- Our new Intersectionality Guide
- How Intersectionality can be embedded into your organisation
- Workshopping ideas for action in your organisation/industry
- Guest speakers sharing their experiences.
- Networking and connecting with CoRE members

TUESDAY 4 AUGUST 2020

10am -11am

Please register for this online session using the link below

RSVP 3 August 2020

Register in advance for this event:
[https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUlcEihrz8tHtY5c0fbCwLGdcyru4PV2iM](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84461212693)



CoRE Training moving online

In this new online world we are accustomed to due to COVID 19, WHG have also had to adapt how we deliver some of our programs and services. Earlier this month the team at WHG piloted an online version of our **bystander training** to see the applicability of our face-to-face training in another format. We thank Sports Central for being our pilot site. It was a successful and enjoyable experience.



WHG will be continuing to work with CoRE members interested in online training at the moment – this will be on a request basis and where there are the necessary support mechanisms around training to ensure the safety and support of staff.

If your organisation is interested in hosting a PVAW Intro session in a virtual format please contact Melissa Morris at melissa@whg.org.au to discuss.

What we are offering at the moment:

- **Online Prevention of Violence Against Women intro session** – delivered on request to small groups within organisations where adequate supports and context exists. This is a slightly modified version of our standard Introduction to the Prevention of Violence Against women training to make it suitable for the current environment of online / working from home delivery. Smaller sessions are preferred.
- A more focussed standalone 1.5 hr **Taking Bystander Action** session open to all CoRE members – capped at 15 participants / session. This session will focus on what we mean by 'active bystander', why it is important and tips on how to be an active bystander. This session will be offered to staff and members of the CoRE Alliance via registration.

Our first **Taking Bystander Action** training session will be occurring in the near future so keep an eye on our socials for that date.

WHG Conversations webinars

You may have attended our WHG Conversations webinars which shine a gender spotlight on COVID 19. Our latest webinar was on the impact of COVID 19 on female participation in sport. We know that the sport and recreation sector has been hit hard by COVID 19, and this webinar considered the impact of women involved in sport and how female players have been affected by this crisis.

If you would like to check out any of our webinars – on topics of gender and parenting through COVID 19, accessing sexual health services during lockdown, family violence in the pandemic and beyond and hearing from our Equality Advocates about their experiences of the pandemic, they are all available on our [website](#).



Project updates

Equality for All

We have embraced recent challenges and moved onto an online platform. Our Equality Advocates continue to be available to speak via Zoom for staff meetings and other functions. Recently Equality Advocates met with a CoRE member via Zoom to cast an intersectional lens across an event, ensuring that event was accessible and more appealing to a wider audience.

We are also developing an intersectional podcast series which will further explore the lived experiences of each of our Equality Advocates. We believe by sharing these powerful stories, a deeper understanding of the barriers and gaps within our society can continue to be explored. Watch this space!

Further information regarding Equality for All and how to arrange a speaking engagement can be found on the Women's Health Grampians [website](#).



EQUALITY FOR ALL

ADDRESSING INTERSECTIONALITY IN THE
COMMUNITIES OF RESPECT AND EQUALITY REGIONAL ALLIANCE

Act@Play

No sport, no problem! Act@Play 2020 is still alive and kicking off strong with our sporting clubs. We can announce that Ballarat City Football Club is one of the two new recruits to the program. It is great to diversify the codes we are working with this year. Last year we rolled out the program to AFL Goldfields (football) and Basketball Ballarat (basketball), working with a soccer club will bring new learnings about the program and broaden the reach of gender equality initiatives.

We will work with the club over the next 6 months to deliver the program, which will include the development of a gender equity action plan as well as club-wide bystander training.

For more information please contact Dee Micevski at dee@whg.org.au.

Sexual & Reproductive Health

Increasing Reproductive Choices Project Evaluation Report Launch

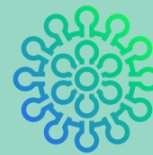


We have been working with the University of Melbourne to evaluate our project which aimed to improve sexual and reproductive health referral pathways and service delivery in the Wimmera and Grampians Pyrenees. We are very proud to be releasing the final report, and, while we won't be able to do this in person, we are looking forward to bringing you some amazing speakers to share what we achieved, what has worked well and the recommendations for future work in this area.

Professional networks: COVID-19 & Sexual Healthcare

WHG are working as part of professional networks responding to disruptions to sexual health services as a result of COVID-19. Our role is to ensure the needs of rural and regional women are represented, to understand the latest advice and advocate for any support our regional sexual health professionals might need.

Find out more about the Victorian working party led by **CERSH** focussed on the public abortion and contraception healthcare system. The latest information and resources for those working in SRH can be found [here](#).



**COVID-19 and
SRH Care
Working Party**

Find out more about the National coalition led by **SPHERE CRE** including consensus statements and recommendations endorsed by over 60 members for long acting reversible contraception, early medical abortion and telehealth requirements [here](#).

Petition: Support the work of the SPHERE Coalition by [signing or sharing this important petition](#)

In an open letter to the Australian government SPHERE outline why we need continued access to Medicare funded telehealth to ensure women can access early medical abortion services.



SPHERE

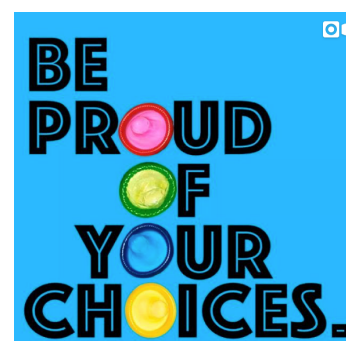
NHMRC Centre of Research Excellence in Sexual and Reproductive Health for Women in Primary Care

**Women's Sexual and Reproductive
Health COVID 19 Coalition**

Campaign: Be Proud of your Choices

Can you play a role in sharing positive sexual health message with rural young people?

1800 My Options and CERSH have developed posters, social media, videos and fact sheets that deliver positive messages about contraception and sexual health care needs. Follow @1800MyOptions on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#), download the [campaign posters](#), or talk to us about getting your community involved in this campaign.





Family Violence Committee

The Collaborative Network

The first meeting of the new Central Highlands Collaborative Network was held on 24 June 2020. The Central Highlands Collaborative Network is a joint initiative of Central Highlands Department of Health and Human Services, Central Highlands Integrated Family Violence Committee, Central Highlands Homelessness Alliance, Central Highlands Family Services Alliance, and Central Highlands Out-of-Home Care Alliance. The initiative recognises that we can achieve better things with and for Central Highlands communities if we do them together.

Strategic Plan

In February this year, CHIFVC spent a day in strategic planning with Dr Wei Leng Kwok, a consultant specialising in family violence regional integration. The resultant Strategic Plan 2020-2023 identified four strategic priorities: System integration and improvement; Workforces; Data, outcomes and evidence; and Governance. A copy of the strategic plan can be found on the CHIFVC [website](#).

Collaborative Demand Management and Joint Allocations Meetings

With the onset of Covid-19 restrictions, CHIFVC identified a need to respond together to the likely fluctuations in demand over the course of the pandemic. A key strategy to achieve this is the Collaborative Demand Management meetings, which involve discussion of demand arising at key family violence services and development of shared strategies for addressing these. They also enable engagement with partners in the family violence system, including VicPol, Department of Education, counselling services, hospitals and so on.

Another strand in CHIFVC supporting specialist family violence services to move towards a system-wide view of family violence demand and a shared management of it was the development of a Joint Allocations process. The Joint Allocations protocol has been designed to align with The Orange Door service model, enabling a smooth transition once The Orange Door opens. It will enter a pilot phase in August 2020. CHIFVC would like to thank those who have participated in the development of the Protocol, and especially The Orange Door for their partnership and contribution.

Data Press Phase 1 completion

The Data Press is designed to collect, collate and display data from the local family violence system and phase 1 of this project has been completed. This supports service and system profiling and decision-making, in addition to giving CHIFVC and its members a robust source of information about how we as individual agencies, as a service system and as part of a larger family violence response system, are functioning. Plans for the next phase of the Data Press are underway.

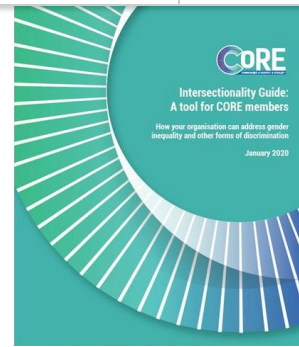
We would like to thank the Centre for e-Research and Digital Innovation at Federation University, especially Helen Thompson, Paul Feely and Dan Ferguson, for their work on this. CHIFVC would also like to express their gratitude to the Ross Trust for their contribution.

Resources

Intersectionality Guide

A new CoRE Resource is now available - *Intersectionality Guide - How your organisation can address gender inequality and other forms of discrimination* is available on our [website](#).

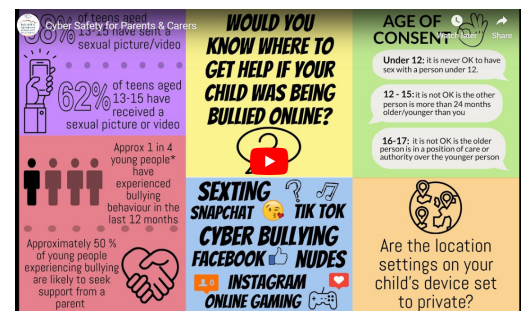
This guide was developed as a part of Equality for All Project with the



Other News

BGCLS cybersafety, cyberbullying and sexting webinar

CoRE member Ballarat & Grampians Community Legal Service (BGCLS) had planned to deliver a free information session to Parents and Carers in and around Ballarat on cybersafety, cyberbullying and sexting as part of Law Week; then COVID-19 restrictions hit and we delivered the session on an online platform. The topics we covered are not easy conversations to have with young people, but they are more important than ever and educating our communities to enable informed discussions is something the BGCLS is very passionate about. Not only were we able to explore the law with our attendees, but also underpin this with the importance of reinforcing respectful & healthy relationships with our children. If you missed the webinar in May, a recording of the session can be found on the BGCLS [website](#).



VWT subfund grants

The Victorian Women's Trust's Annual sub-fund grants round is currently open until 24 August. The Sub Funds provide small grants to eligible organisations for innovative programs for Victorian women and girls that directly address the purposes of each Sub Fund. You can find out more [here](#).



Jean Hailes for Women's Health Survey

Jean Hailes for Women's Health is a national not-for-profit organisation committed to helping improve women's health throughout the various stages of their lives. They are calling for women to complete their Women's Health Survey for 2020. It should only take 15 minutes to complete. Find it [here](#).



Safer Voices Survey

The Melbourne Research Alliance to End Violence against women and their children (MAEVe), based at the University of Melbourne, has developed the Safer Voices survey focusing on women's experiences of domestic violence and abuse during the period of the COVID19 restrictions. The survey is intended for women living in Australia who have experienced feeling unsafe or afraid in their intimate relationships in the past or may be experiencing this for the first time during isolation.

To complete the survey, please visit the Safer Families website [here](#).



Our Site

Women with Disabilities Australia (WWDA) launches the Easy Read version of Our Site. You can visit the Easy Read site by clicking "Turn Easy Read On" at the WWDA [website](#) or you can take a look at the Easy Read directly by visiting [Our Site](#).

Our Site provides practical resources and information for women and girls with disability about their rights. It also showcases real stories from women with disability across Australia. The launch of the new Easy Read site means that Our Site's fantastic resources are now even more accessible for women and girls with disability.



Act@Work

WHG WEBSITE

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