



ANNUAL REPORT

2017 - 2018



WOMEN'S HEALTH
GOULBURN NORTH EAST
Challenging inequity, embracing diversity.

Women's Health Goulburn North East acknowledges and thanks the funding bodies, organisations and individuals that allow us to continue to support women and girls of Goulburn North East Victoria.

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For more information on the projects and activities referenced throughout this report, please visit our website www.whealth.com.au or contact us at whealth@whealth.com.au or on (03) 5722 3009.

Women's Health Goulburn North East respectfully acknowledges the Traditional owners of our region.

COVER ART:

Strength in identity carries you through

The suns and moons represent many days of culture. The smaller inner circles signify other Aboriginal communities. The centre circle represents our community in which we live and the leaves symbolize a healthy community. The circle with the snake represents dreamtime and spirit. The two arches symbolize Aboriginal people strong in their identity. The wavy dots in the circle represent water needed for survival and the plant depicts health and growth.

Artwork produced as part of Making Two Worlds Work project 2008. The resource kit was updated and re-launched in July 2017. Available at: <https://www.whealth.com.au/mtww/>

Thank you to Claire Killeen and Laura Younger for completing the editing and design for our Annual Report.



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Our Team

THANK YOU TO THE DEDICATED STAFF, VOLUNTEERS AND BOARD OF WOMEN'S HEALTH GOULBURN NORTH EAST IN 2017-18.

Staff:

Susie Reid **Executive Officer**
Christine Alexander **Finance & Administration Team Leader**
Jess Elsworth **Health Promotion Graduate** (to November 2017)
Bernadette Fraser **Health Promotion Worker**
Caitlyn Hoggan **Health Promotion Worker**
Jasmine Isaacs **Administration & Research Officer/
Health Promotion Worker** (to June 2018)
Claire Killeen **Media & Communications Officer**
Rachael Mackay **Health Promotion Trainer & Facilitator**
Alison Maclean **Principal Strategic Advisor**
Karen O'Connor **NILS/Microfinance Worker**
Debra Parkinson **Researcher / Manager Gender & Disaster Pod**
Anthea Pratt **Office Administration & Finance Assistant**
Erin Soutter **Health Promotion Team Leader** (to February 2018)
Renata Spiller **Health Promotion Team Leader** (from February 2018)
Mary Steel **Casual Administration Officer**
Julie Tyler **Health Promotion Worker**
Emma Wagg **Quality & Project Worker**
Tracey Whinray **Cleaner**

Volunteers:

Maureen Adcock
Judy Burns
Anne Foley
Marion Gay
Maira Thomson
Debbie Tully
Denise Toogood
Anne Shaw
Margaret Brickhill
Bronwyn Weidemann
Mary Steel
Tammy Petersen-Taylor (student)

Board members:

Sarah Noble **Chairperson**
Gillian Keppel **Vice Chairperson**
(to October 2017) (Resigned January 2018)
Colleen Furlanetto (from September 2017)
Vice Chairperson (from October 2017)
Jenny Sleep **Treasurer**
Kate O'Neill **Assistant Treasurer**
Nadia Tilson **Secretary**
Simone Campbell **Assistant Secretary**
June Stamp (from September 2017)
Katherine Robertson (Co-opted October 2017)
Colleen Balfour (Co-opted October 2017)
Kerrie Hicks (Co-opted January 2018)

Our Strategic Plan 2017-2021

Strategic goals & objectives

STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2021

mission

Positively transforming the health, wellbeing and safety of all women and girls

values

Feminism • Human Rights • Respect • Women-Centred • Inclusiveness • Excellence

guiding principles

Women's Voices • Partnership & Collaboration • Leadership • Theory to Practice
Best Practice • People & Culture • Workplace Practices • Accountability

VISION - Rural women and girls have optimal health and wellbeing

Leadership in Primary Prevention

Address the underlying determinants that influence women's health

- a) Demonstrate and advocate for best practice in gender transformative primary prevention approaches
- b) Work with organisations, communities and systems to build health promotion capacity to embed gender equity into practice
- c) Research current and emerging issues affecting women and turn research into practice

Organisational Excellence

Deliver exceptional outcomes while maintaining a strong, productive organisational culture

- a) Develop leadership capacity of staff, Board and volunteers
- b) Build workforce capacity through professional development
- c) Ensure that governance and finance systems are in place and are effective
- d) All staff and volunteers enjoy a supportive working environment consistent with WHGNE values

Growth, Sustainability and Innovation

Expand the reach and influence of our work and maintain sustainability into the future

- a) Lead the response to emerging issues and create and embrace new opportunities
- b) Ensure that the organisation has quality systems & resources to respond innovatively to opportunities in a timely manner
- c) Invest in IT and communication resources and skills to increase reach and social impact



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Chairperson's Report

The Board of Management and staff of Women's Health Goulburn North East were very happy to launch the organisation's Strategic Plan in November 2017 after many months of collaboration and hard work.

In 2018, the WHGNE staff and Board embraced this plan and took action to implement our shared Mission: *Positively transforming the health, wellbeing and safety of all women and girls*. Examples of this vitally important work are evident throughout this Annual Report, including the ground-breaking Men and Masculinity forum.

This year the Board has comprised ten members, including three new members who are enjoying the challenge of their first board experience. The Board provides a supportive environment to develop the knowledge and skills of its members, including governance and leadership opportunities.

Many board members were fortunate to attend a Board Governance training session at Daylesford in June, which enabled us to meet and network with board members and executive officers from other rural Women's Health services across Victoria.

It was reassuring to evaluate our existing systems against the best practice recommendations discussed, as we already comply with many of these. The Board is in the process of reviewing the resources provided and identifying any gaps that need to be addressed.

One of WHGNE's core values is feminism, and the question 'What does it mean to be a feminist?', has been part of a continuing conversation amongst the Board members over the past couple of years. The evolving nature of feminism was the topic of a workshop facilitated by Tracey Castellano and has led to some robust and thought-provoking discussions, which we will continue to explore over the coming year.

Once again, WHGNE has been ably led by our Executive Officer, Susie Reid, and her dedicated and excellent team and the Board congratulates them on all that has been achieved to optimise the health and wellbeing of rural women and girls over the past year. I wish to personally thank my fellow Board members and all other volunteers who support our organisation - with this generosity of time, the longevity of Women's Health Goulburn North East is more assured.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading 'Sarah Noble'.

Sarah Noble
Chairperson



Executive Officer's Report

It gives me great pleasure on behalf of the team at WHGNE to report on the first year of our new 2017-2021 Strategic Plan. Our achievements are detailed in the following pages under the headings of the strategic goals that we have set for this planning period.

The priorities of health promotion and those of our sister organisations continue to be aligned with the state and focus on gender equity, prevention of violence against women and sexual and reproductive health.

These are the cornerstones of our work, complimented by dedicated programs promoting women's economic empowerment and raising the profile of gender in natural disaster settings through the work of our Gender and Disaster Pod.

We have also continued to focus on program and partnership development, the health and welfare of the staff, and the ongoing organisational governance and sustainability under a feminist framework.

WHGNE 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 across Victoria.

Through GEN VIC, WHGNE 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 statewide level to ensure that the voices of women in our communities are heard further afield than the Hume region.

WHGNE has continued to be successful in attracting various project funds and continues to advocate for the importance of core funding to ensure the sustainability of prevention efforts.

I would like to thank and acknowledge the staff and our volunteers at WHGNE whose commitment to improving the lives of the women remains steadfast. I continue to be amazed at the quality and quantity of the work this small rural agency produces. We have an extremely dedicated and capable staff who are committed to improving the wellbeing of women in this region in a range of primary prevention fields.

Our work continues to be dynamic, leading us to partner with emergency management, the family violence sector, organisations, local governments, sporting clubs, financial institutions and major employers in our region. We will continue our active engagement and bring our expertise in gender to our priority areas across the region.

In the year ahead, WHGNE will continue to lead, support and evaluate the work that is going on in our region so that women can lead equitable and safer lives.

Susie Reid
Executive Officer

Leadership in Primary Prevention

Demonstrate and advocate for best-practice in gender transformative primary prevention approaches

New Integrated Health Promotion Plan 2017-21

This year 2017-18 marked the beginning of a new four-year planning cycle for Health Promotion program at WHGNE. Staff undertook a robust planning process that involved developing a Theory of Change that would give us a roadmap for our work over the next 16 years.

Theory of Change is a tool for critically reviewing and breaking down complex social problems into a series of achievable steps. It allows us to identify strategic priorities for the organisation and work backwards from our vision to determine the process through which social change will occur.

Starting with our vision that **rural women and girls have optimal health and wellbeing**, we have been able to then build a clear picture of the immediate and later states of achievement that are necessary to reach our goal.

This planning process identified that WHGNE can have the most impact across the region by working towards our goal that **capacity building exists at all stages of life in all settings on the harms of binary gender norms and practices**.

The Integrated Health Promotion Plan 2017-2021 is the final product of this planning process. It outlines a number of actions that will progress work towards achieving our goal, focusing on key priority areas of Gender Equity, Sexual and Reproductive Health, and Prevention of Violence against Women.

As primary prevention work is about implementing change over a long-term period, developing a health promotion plan based on Theory of Change ensures that the work we are doing today is focused and contributes to the bigger picture.



Figure: Theory of Change roadmap

Community Partnerships for Primary Prevention

WHGNE were successful in obtaining funding for a 12-month project that aimed to increase capacity of key regional partners to design and implement primary prevention initiatives that address violence against women. A series of Community of Practice events were held over September 2017 to June 2018 that engaged practitioners in current topics, such as introduction to gender equity; collective impact; workplaces role in prevention of violence against women (PVAW); and program evaluation. At the same time, WHGNE were able to provide dedicated and specific support to practitioners leading and driving actions within their organisation and community settings, which assisted in the development of two community action plans and four workplace gender equity plans.

In total, the project directly engaged 90 people in capacity building, with representation from all local government areas and all 12 councils in Goulburn North East Victoria. Partners identified that having access to gender equity expertise from WHGNE staff was of great value and key to the project's success.

Overall, the Community of Practice model facilitated:

- Increased PVAW activities and networks available at community level
- Uptake and implementation of best-practice programs and initiatives by multiple partners across the region
- Strengthened local partnerships and reaffirmed commitment to a whole-of-organisation approach to gender equity

In a short period, Community Partnerships for Primary Prevention project successfully built a shared understanding of PVAW and united stakeholders from across the region in consistent actions. Project insights are being used to design and support the next period of work, including a focus on engaging senior leaderships teams in gender equity capacity building activities to ensure that project outcomes can be sustained and embedded in organisations.



*Wodonga Council's
Claire Taylor
presents at a
Community of Practice
in February 2018*

Men and Masculinity Forum 2018

Over 100 people attended the Men and Masculinity forum held in June 2018.

Bringing leading thinkers to our local region, compelling presentations from Jason Ball - Young Australian of the Year, Steve O'Malley from Metropolitan Fire Brigade, the University of Western Sydney's Dr Michael Salter and Tom Bell from Tomorrow Man inspired those present with their differing perspectives on inclusion, emotional intelligence, shame, grief and role-modelling for boys.

The key theme of the forum was to explore the notion of what it means to be a man in modern Australia with a particular focus on rurality. The Forum has started the conversation in rural Victoria about the gendered constraints placed on men and boys and what actions we can take in rural communities to enable men and boys to address and redress these gendered norms.

Discussions on the day focused on broadening the range of expected behaviours for men and not underestimating men's emotional intelligence. Shame was also a key topic of discussion. Men are shamed in a myriad of ways and from a young age, such as when expressing emotions like crying. The forum provided a critical reminder that we, as a society, need to enable men to express their emotions in healthy and constructive ways.

By focusing on men and masculinity, WHGNE are acknowledging the gendered constraints placed on rural men and boys, which aligns with our overall health promotion goal to ensure that *capacity building exists at all stages of life in all settings on the harms of binary gender norms and practices.*



1

1. *Keynote speakers Tom Bell, Dr. Michael Salter, Jason Ball and Steve O'Malley*
2. *Postcard resource*

2

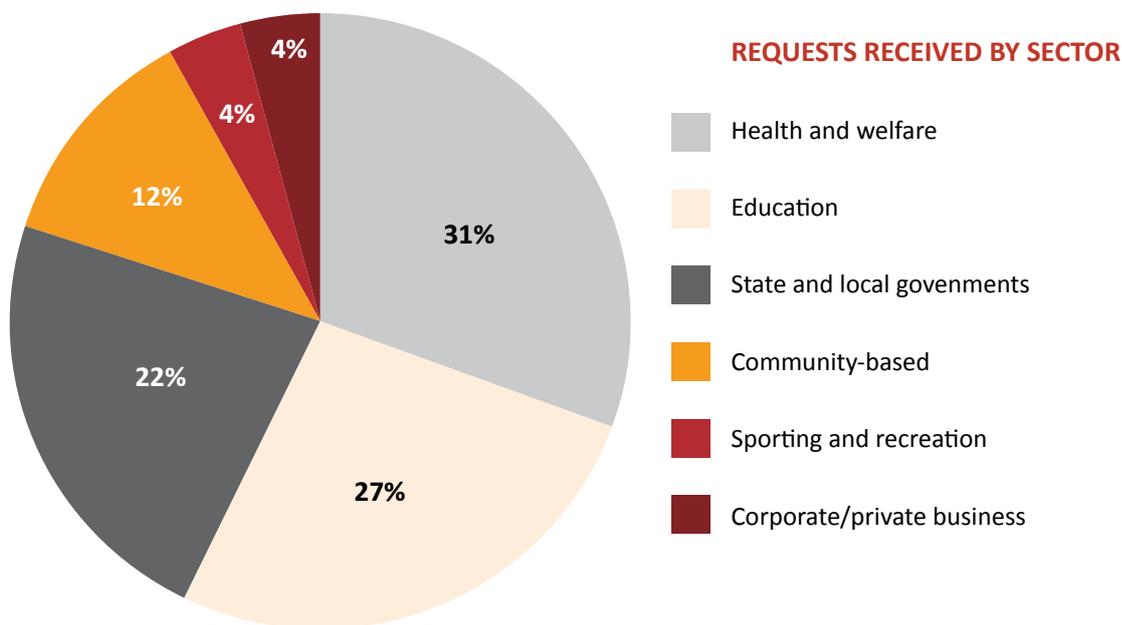


Work with organisations, communities and systems to build health promotion capacity to embed gender equity into practice

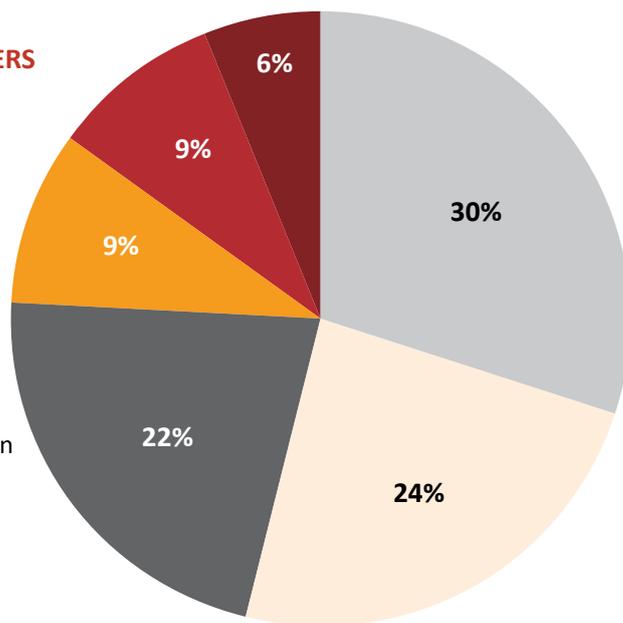
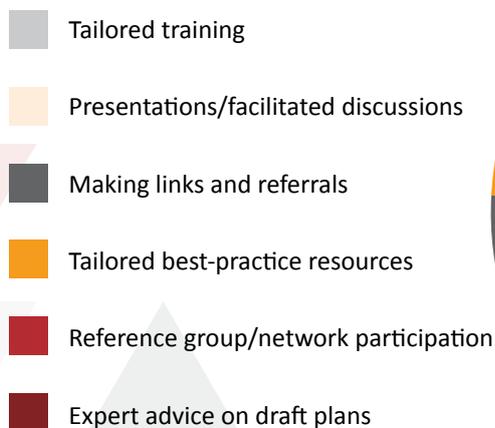
How WHGNE have been supporting partners

Requests for expertise

Total of **72 separate requests** made to WHGNE by organisations across Goulburn and North East Victoria for expertise and guidance in progressing gender equity activities:



ACTIVITIES DELIVERED TO PARTNERS





Training delivery

Total of **63 separate training sessions, reaching over 1500 participants**, delivered by WHGNE across Goulburn and North East Victoria region, including:

- **Identifying Family Violence training** – 28 sessions delivered to over 500 practitioners
- **Victoria Against Violence gender equity talks** – 14 sessions delivered to 386 people, as part of 16 Days of Activism 2017 campaign
- **Gender Equity training** – 14 sessions delivered to 500 professionals
- **Bystander training** – 2 sessions delivered to 50 practitioners
- **Prevention of Violence Against Women Community of Practice series** – 4 sessions delivered to 100 practitioners working in local government, health, sporting assemblies and Primary Care Partnerships



Community of Practice participants

2017 Victoria Against Violence Roadshow

In support of the 2017 Victoria Against Violence state-wide campaign, WHGNE and the Goulburn and Ovens Murray Integrated Family Violence Committees partnered with 12 community organisations to deliver a total of 20 events across the region. Delivered as part of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-based Violence campaign (25th Nov – 10th Dec), the roadshow aimed to educate communities in Goulburn North East Victoria about the link between gender inequality and family violence; and raise awareness about the Victoria Against Violence state-wide campaign. An average of 25 participants attended events, with representation from local community organisations and service providers, state government departments, schools, local government, and non-professional community members.

Events were further supported by a social media campaign that featured key messages over each of the 16 days that raised awareness of the link between violence against women and gender inequality. Total reach on social media was over 11,000 people (average reach of 593 people per day), which indicated that our online community is increasingly receptive to the messages and ready to learn more about gender equality and family violence.

Plans are already well underway for 2018 16 Days Campaign, which will build on the gains from the previous year and further encourage partners and community members to take on a leadership role in driving action within their local area.

1. *WHGNE's staff*
2. *Gateway Health's Felicity Kennedy shows support for 2017 Victorians Against Violence campaign*

1



2



International Women's Day 2018

Since 2000, WHGNE have engaged regional women and communities in events that celebrate International Women's Day. This year, the purpose of March 8 event was to involve and collaborate with communities to share stories about what people across the region are doing to challenge gender norms and promote gender equality.

Twelve women submitted their stories prior to the event which were published in a booklet and distributed to participants on the day. At the breakfast event held in Wangaratta, 90 participants listened to four speakers tell their own story, which showcased a range of experiences from parenting, sporting clubs, and school settings. Many more stories were shared informally in table discussions as participants were encouraged to reflect on their own gender journey.

As part of the evaluation, 36 participants identified that they were inspired to take further action as a result of attending International Women's Day. Types of actions included:

- Talk further with children, grandchildren and families (13 comments)
 - *'go home and listen to the subtle messages/stereotypes we are displaying and teaching my children'*
- Make a personal decision (6)
 - *'to play any sport I want to'*
- Stay connected (5)
 - *'keep the conversations going and support/band together with the groups who #pressforprogress'*
- Advocate (5)
 - *'continue making small changes, as they are making a difference (even if slowly)'*
- Provide support and encouragement (3)
 - *'speak more and share more about being independent and capable'*
- Apply ideas to the workplace (3)
 - *'think about my own workplace in terms of gender equity'*

The method of storytelling was used as a way to connect the broader concept of gender equality to the real lived experiences of women and girls, men and boys living in Goulburn North East Victoria. Collecting information through storytelling adds to the suite of local resources developed by WHGNE and offers an opportunity for participants to connect on a personal level to WHGNE projects.

1. *Key speaker Celia*
2. *WHGNE staff*
3. *WHGNE Board members*

1



2



3



Keep Your Boat Afloat – Financial Abuse Videos

Due to the positive response and continual high-demand for financial abuse postcards, WHGNE implemented the Keep Your Boat Afloat Video project, which aimed to further promote awareness of financial abuse as a form of family violence among young women. Local women were consulted and recruited through the NILS program to participate in focus groups in Shepparton and Benalla. Topics discussed included what financial abuse looks like, how financial abuse impacts housing, how to manage bills after financial abuse, and how to take control of your finances.

Five young women were recorded sharing their thoughts on money and their experiences of financial abuse. These women were keen to be filmed, so that they could tell their story and contribute to raising awareness of financial abuse to prevent others from experiencing it.

This project helps to build a shared understanding of financial abuse in a relatable and easily-accessible video format. These videos offer an alternative and complimentary resource to postcards, and both will be available to share on social media and be embedded into WHGNE training packages.



1. *Development of the videos*
2. *Filmmaker Rebecca Randall (far left) and WHGNE's Karen O'Connor (far right) with project participants*

1

2



Research current and emerging issues affecting women and turn research into practice

Gender and Disaster (GAD) Pod – Knowledge translation

Leadership in primary prevention of violence against women is demonstrated by the GAD Pod's work in a male-dominated sector. We know that gender inequality and stringent gender stereotypes drives violence against women. All of our work is located within organisations with very few women in front-line and leadership positions, and where 'ideal masculinity' is celebrated.

We seek to raise awareness of the link between gender inequality and violence against women through research, conference presentations, journal articles and training. In 2017-2018, the GAD Pod:

- Presented at many conferences, with highlights including a presentation on gender at 42nd Natural Hazards Workshop in Colorado, US (10th July, 2017), and as part of Panel with Craig Fugate (FEMA Administrator for 30 years) at Australian Institute of Disaster Resilience forum 'Resilience, Response and Recovery', Melbourne (11th August, 2017).
- Published two articles in the Australian Journal of Emergency Management: on the achievements of the GAD Taskforce; and evaluation of the Lessons in Disaster training.
- Offered 'Gendered Violence and Lessons in Disaster' training, including a new 'Train the Trainer' module, to bring the total number of participants since 2010 to 356. Researched the 'Experiences and Needs of LGBTI Communities Before, During and After Emergencies' for the Dept. of Premier and Cabinet. It was launched on 17 April, 2018 by key researchers, Dale Dominey-Howes and Liam Leonard. The GAD Pod funded complementary research into 'Lesbian and Bi Women's Experience of Emergency Management' with four informants, illustrating how a lifetime of discrimination frequently leads to exclusion from services in disasters and exclusion from emergency management.
- Introduced the Third Claire Zara Memorial Oration at the 2017 Victorian Emergency Management Conference. The Oration was given by Mary Barry, CEO of Our Watch. She emphasised the continued importance of a focus on family violence in the disaster sphere to an audience of emergency personnel.
- Researched "Long-term Disaster Resilience - Identifying Protective Factors for Men, Women and Volunteers" after a funding grant from NDRGS (Natural Disaster Resilience Grants Scheme) to fill an identified gap in the literature in Australia.

Deb Parkinson presents on behalf of GAD Pod at Emergency Management Conference



Sexual and Reproductive Health Data Snapshots

In preparation for the development of WHGNE regional sexual and reproductive health (SRH) plan, the team completed a needs analysis, which included looking at relevant data and mapping current SRH initiatives across Goulburn North East Victoria. Data snapshots by local government area have been uploaded to the WHGNE website, providing a resource for partners to readily available local and current data for further use in project planning and service development.

In 2017, 425 females in the Hume region reported a sexual offence. In 2017, 425 females in the Hume region reported a sexual offence. The rate of victim reports per 10,000 women was 15.5 for this region. Research has found most incidents of family and sexual violence go unreported, therefore this is likely an underestimate (Phillips, 2014). This points to the ongoing need for programs that prevent and disrupt the condoning of violence against women, including all forms of sexualised violence.

Chlamydia also remains a key SRH issue for the region. In the Hume region the chlamydia rate per 10,000 persons was 15.5 for females and 9.4 for males (Vic Health, 2014). Chlamydia prevalence research among young people in Australian rural and regional primary care services found that 73.4 per cent of cases were diagnosed among individuals who were attending the clinic for non-sexual health reasons (Hocking et al., 2014). A key priority for WHGNE will be to engage in health promotion activities that increase testing and treatment.

The WHGNE regional SRH plan has now been finalised. Strategic objectives and actions in the plan address areas of need across the Hume region and aim to create optimal health and wellbeing for all rural women and girls.

Figure: Data snapshot (front cover)

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WOMEN'S HEALTH
GOULBURN NORTH EAST
Challenging inequality, promoting equality.

Goulburn Valley North East Victoria - Hume region
Women's Sexual and Reproductive Health Snapshot

The **Hume region** is comprised of 12 municipalities including Moira Shire, The City of Greater Shepparton, Strathbogie Shire, Benalla Rural City, Wangaratta Rural City, Murrindindi Shire, Mitchell Shire, Mansfield Shire, Alpine Shire, Indigo Shire, Towong Shire and The City of Wodonga, covering 40,380 square kilometres (Regional Development Victoria, 2018). There are 142,489 women in the area, including 2,899 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women (Murray Exchange, 2016). This snapshot portrays some of the sexual and reproductive health outcomes experienced by these women.

Sexual and reproductive health is a significant issue for all women across the lifespan (Women's Health Victoria, 2009). **Sexual health** encompasses emotional, physical, mental and social wellbeing in relation to sexuality, including the right to respectful, enjoyable and safe sexual relationships free of coercion, discrimination and violence (WHO, 2006). **Reproductive health** suggests people can enjoy a responsible, satisfying and safe sex life with decision-making control over their reproductive choices (WHO, 2006).

Births

In 2016 the number of live births in the Hume region was 3,514 (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016).

The total fertility rate indicator* was 2 babies per 1,000 women, higher than Australia's total fertility rate of 1.8 babies per 1,000 women (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016).

Amongst women aged 15-19 in the Hume region a rate of 12.5 babies per 1,000 women was born in 2015. This is higher than the State average rate of 9.5 (Victorian Department of Health

*The average number of babies born to a woman throughout her reproductive lifetime (Women's Health Atlas, 2016).

Unplanned Pregnancy is experienced by over 50% of Australian women (Marie Stopes International, 2008). Not every pregnancy is unwanted however many women need to decide what the best option is for themselves and their family based on their personal circumstances (Children by Choice, 2017).

Women in the Hume region can access bulk billed medical terminations in [Wangaratta](#) and [Wodonga](#). Surgical termination can be accessed in Albury or Melbourne. Cost, privacy and access were found to be the greatest barriers faced by rural and regional women who chose to access surgical terminations (Victorian rural women's access to family planning services, 2012).

Women's Health Goulburn North East, Sexual and Reproductive Health Snapshot, Hume region

Storylines: Her Voice Matters

Storylines: Her Voice Matters is a joint initiative of WHGNE, Women's Health Loddon Mallee and Murray Primary Health Network that aims to give voice to women's sexual and reproductive health experiences and priorities across our region.

Using a collaborative, enquiry-based approach with co-design methodology, the project aims to accurately bring diverse women's voices to the centre of analysis to improve sexual and reproductive health services and effective treatment, regardless of where a woman lives and how much money she has.

A dedicated *Storylines* website and range of resources have been created to provide options for women to share their health experiences, ideas and suggestions on line, by email, face to face, over the phone or in an established group with a women's health facilitator.

Project partners recognise the importance of reaching all women, especially those experiencing additional barriers and disadvantage. Priority groups in our region include women who identify as:

- Sex and gender diverse,
- Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander,

- Refugees, migrants or newly arrived,
- Culturally and linguistically diverse women,
- Rurally isolated women,
- Young women,
- Women with disabilities,
- Women who are financially disadvantaged,
- Women who are incarcerated,
- Women who work in the sex industry,
- Women who have lived experience of family and intimate partner violence, and
- Older women.

Key themes for regional women sharing on line, by email and in established groups include: a lack of clear information and effective treatment for menstruation issues and Endometriosis; disability, sexuality, racial and BMI discrimination from health practitioners and other professionals, and barriers to contraception, pregnancy choices and abortion services. The project continues with evaluation and reporting throughout 2018.



Participants at the Storylines Women's Health Luncheon with WHGNE's Bern Fraser (right)

Organisational Excellence

Develop leadership capacity of staff, Board and volunteers

Diversity in Disaster Conference Presentations

This two-day conference on 17-18 April 2018 brought together emergency services professionals and researchers to understand the unique risks and vulnerabilities that people from diverse backgrounds face in times of disaster. It was attended by 343 people from across Australia from local councils, community organisations, universities, and emergency services organisations.

“Powerful stories were told about how disasters do discriminate. Research shows that vulnerable and minority communities bear the brunt of the impact

– in monetary and health terms and often sadly with their lives.” Ruth McGowan

[\(https://ruthmcgowan.com/blog/\)](https://ruthmcgowan.com/blog/)

The Diversity in Disaster conference is another key milestone in the endeavour to promote gender and diversity issues in the emergency management sector. We’ve come a long way since ‘The Hidden Disaster’ conference in 2012 with family violence now acknowledged as an important factor for disaster planning. Another indicator was that the Emergency Management Leaders’ Panel to close the conference included two senior women.

The conference provided an opportunity to communicate our research and showcase the new and proven methods of planning and responses to women, men and children. Deb and the GAD Pod presented on why gender is a central factor in rates of written fire plans hovering around 5%, and the findings from the research on experiences of LGBTI people in emergencies. Rachael presented the training packages based on the research findings on family violence after disaster and responses to men in the disaster context. In addition, the Gender and Emergency Management Guidelines were launched by Professor Maureen Fordham, University College of London.

The conference was the culmination of months of preparation by WHIN and our partners from the Gender and Disaster Pod (Women’s Health Goulburn North East and MUDRI at Monash University), along with Victorian Council of Social Service (VCOSS) and Resilient Melbourne.

It was externally evaluated as achieving its aims, and responses indicated that 82% felt confident to take action to improve diversity practices after attending.

Deb Parkinson (front left) and Rachael Mackay (front right) with GAD Pod partners at the conference



Joan Kirner Young and Emerging Women Leaders Program

Recognised for her leadership potential, WHGNE Health Promotion Worker Caitlyn Hoggan was selected as a participant in the Joan Kirner Young and Emerging Women Leaders program. The program honours and recognises the legacy of the late Joan Kirner AC, Victoria's first and only female Premier.

Since November 2017, Caitlyn has been regularly attending sessions in Melbourne focused on further developing her leadership capabilities through core modules, networking, and skill building activities. Caitlyn has also been linked in with a local mentor, meeting on a monthly basis, and has participated in role shadowing with experienced leaders.

Caitlyn provides an overview of her experiences in an interview:

What were you hoping to gain from the course?

I wanted to gain greater confidence in viewing myself as a leader and participate in a program that would expand my networks and challenge my thinking. I also wanted to develop skills that could be implemented in my role; particularly skills in influencing decision making, gaining buy in, advocacy and conflict resolution and management.

What was your greatest insight? Did any topics stand out?

The topic of adaptive leadership was particularly interesting to me – the idea that leadership comes from everywhere, and not just those in positions of power. And that for true and effective change, we must give opportunity for everyone to become involved, taking ownership of the change process and sharing the leadership responsibilities.

I also really enjoyed learning about what motivates people in their careers, and what creates happy employees. Daniel Pink suggests that Purpose, Mastery and Autonomy are the three biggest motivators at work, and far greater outweigh money and rewards.

Do you have any recommendations to other young women in Goulburn North East Victoria who are interested in developing their leadership skills?

Take any opportunity you get. I think every opportunity is a learning opportunity, where everyone you meet has the opportunity to teach you something or share something you may not have known before.

A leadership course or professional development will be able to expand your networks, meet some new and interesting people and also provide you with new ways of thinking. A good leader is always learning and always challenging themselves, and I think this course has been a great way to do both.

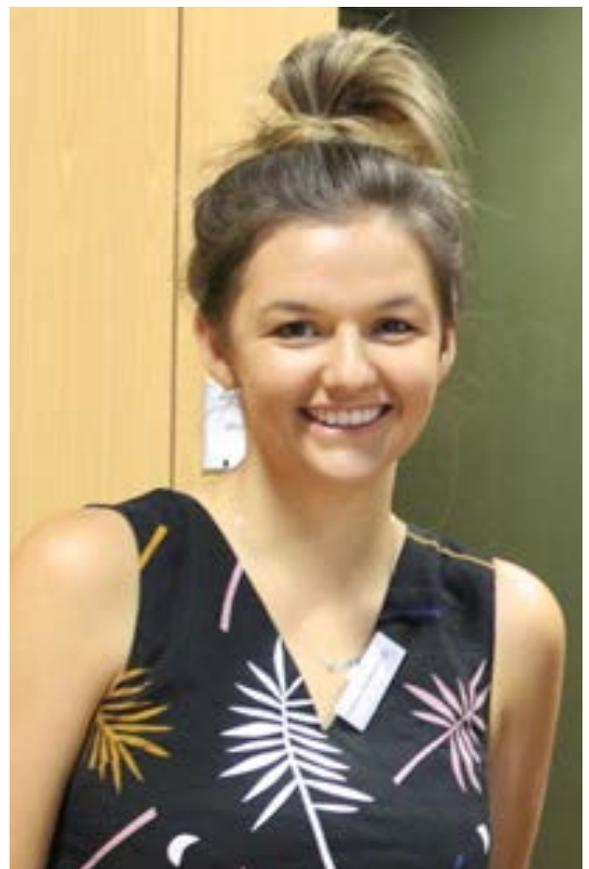
I think it's also important that workplaces support women's leadership development, so we women can have a greater voice and we see more and more women in leadership positions, and we can equally share the load.

What's next for you?

To complete my leadership program which will finish in October this year.

Continue to work with the team here at WHGNE to engage leadership in conversations regarding gender and gender equality.

Keep on the hunt for new and exciting opportunities to develop professionally.



Build workforce capacity through professional development

Organisational Excellence staff workshop

In June 2018, WHGNE undertook a whole of staff training with Time2Talk focused on building organisational excellence. The workshop formed part of activities in our strategic plan to develop leadership capacity of staff and provide opportunities for professional development. Being a largely part-time workforce, the day offered a rare chance for staff to come together to reflect on how we are currently working and identify a vision for where we want to be. Staff were introduced to DiSC behavioural model to better understand each team member's communication preferences, and how to interact with other styles to get the best outcomes. There was also time to practice giving purposeful and meaningful feedback, so that staff feel recognised and valued for their contributions.

To continue to put our learnings into practice, further teamwork has been planned in a series of reflective practice sessions in monthly staff meetings. This work feeds into our quality improvement plan and allows us to identify ways we can continually build team effectiveness and a productive organisational culture.

All staff and volunteers enjoy a supportive working environment consistent with WHGNE values

Workplace Achievement Program – Healthy Eating Benchmark

WHGNE is a participant in the *Achievement Program*, which is a Victorian State Government and Cancer Council Program. The organisation achieved the *Healthy Eating Benchmark* in January, which provides formal recognition from the Victorian Government of the organisations status as a healthy eating workplace. WHGNE is now working toward the *Mental Health and Wellbeing Benchmark*. After an internal audit and consultation with staff the organisation has established and launched a mental health and wellbeing action plan to achieve this new benchmark.



WHGNE staff with Time2Talk facilitator Kerrie Nobes (far right)

Growth, Sustainability and Innovation

Lead the response to emerging issues and create and embrace new opportunities

Launch of peak body – Gender Equity Victoria (GEN VIC)

In April 2018, WHGNE celebrated the launch of Victoria’s first peak body for gender equity and women’s health – Gender Equity Victoria (GEN VIC). GEN VIC marks the evolution and expansion of the Women’s Health Association of Victoria to a broader membership base of organisations that work to advance gender equity and uphold values that are founded in feminist principles.

At the launch, GEN VIC presented 2018-2021 strategic plan and four key priorities: advance gender equity; promote women’s sexual and reproductive health; prevent violence against women; and build an influential and sustainable peak body. WHGNE continues to be represented on GEN VIC by our Executive Officer, Susie Reid, as an advocate for safe, healthy and gender equal rural communities.

Attendees of the GEN VIC launch including WHGNE’s Executive Officer, Susie Reid, second from right



Strategic partnerships – Ovens Murray and Goulburn Integrated Family Violence Committees

2017/18 has been an exciting year for the Integrated Family Violence Committees in both the Ovens Murray and the Goulburn areas. The committees have delivered fresh strategic direction and purpose to the application of integration in the family violence space. Committees are now inclusive of local government, Primary Care Partnerships, Health Services and Education, and emerging family violence networks in smaller towns as well as the traditional membership of family violence services agencies and departments. The increased reach of our integrated model means that we are able to better understand and respond to the needs of our communities.

This year has also seen the refresh of our Hume region Men's Behaviour Change Consortium. This group now work to share best practice and to access high calibre contemporary keynote speakers to support the capacity of our local workforce. We have been thrilled to hear from Dr Katie Lamb and Anthony Likkas and to learn more about innovation in the perpetrator accountability space. We also enjoy support from No To Violence at our Consortium meetings, and thank them for making their staff available to travel and be with our team.

Our major focus continues to be supporting the Victorian Family Violence reform agenda. Our Principal Strategic Advisor Team works closely with the Committees and Family Safety Victoria to ensure that our areas are well informed to maximise the benefits for our communities and our people. Workforce capacity is a significant challenge both state-wide and locally; we need more qualified and enthusiastic folk to work in our sector.

We are proud of our achievements for integration this year and see a year of challenges and opportunities ahead. It is a dynamic and exciting time to work in this space and we look to harness the current passion for change.

Ensure that the organisation has quality systems and resources to respond innovatively to opportunities in a timely manner

Quality Systems Framework – Self-assessment and improvement plan

The Women’s Health Services Quality Systems Framework has been developed specifically to focus on quality standards appropriate to health promotion activities within a women’s health service context. The organisation undertook a self-assessment against all four quality standards; Guiding Principles, Quality Organisation, Quality Health Promotion and Quality Direct Service to Individuals in November 2017. After obtaining an achieved status across all standards, the organisation is continuing to implement improvement plan activities, as we work towards completing a peer review process in the 18/19 financial year.

Engagement with media platforms

WHGNE Facebook page continues to be an important platform for reaching and communicating WHGNE activities to geographically diverse communities across Goulburn North East and beyond. Statistics captured for the year include:

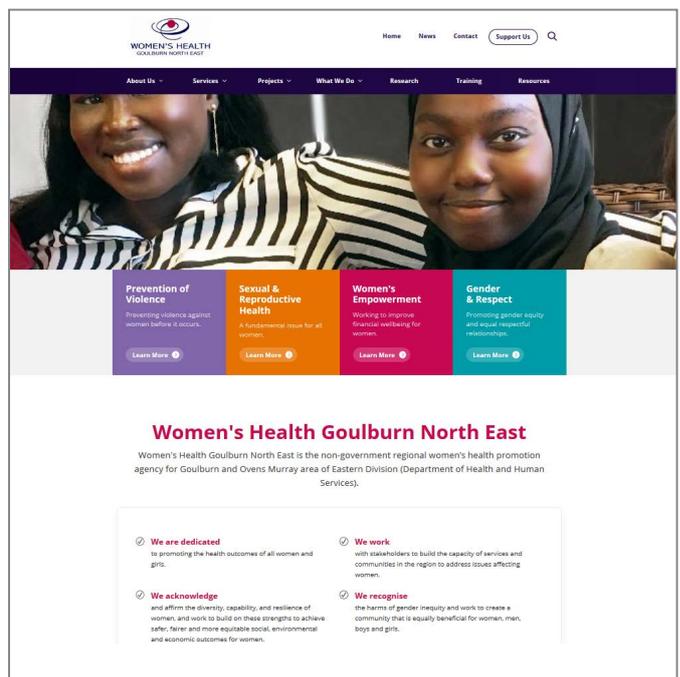
- Yearly total reach – 70,795
- People engaged – 10,074
- Total page likes – 5,807
- Page visits – 1,225
- Video views – 4,577

Relationships with local media agencies continue to be developed, with WHGNE featuring in a total of 65 print articles and radio interviews across the region.

Invest in IT and communications resources and skills to increase reach and social impact

Website redevelopment

In March 2018, the new WHGNE website was completed, including new features to ensure suitability to mobile phones and tablets. The redevelopment of the website meets best-practice standards, and is designed to feature key priority areas, projects, and WHGNE best-practice resources. Over the 2017-18 period, we have recorded a total of over 19,000 new visitors to the website, making it a valuable tool for communicating WHGNE work.



WOMEN'S HEALTH GOULBURN NORTH EAST INC.

Statement of Profit or Loss and other Comprehensive Income for the year ended 30 June 2018

		2018	2017
	Note	\$	\$
Revenues	2 (a)	1,253,850	1,047,057
Staffing costs	2 (b)	951,589	858,586
Program costs	2 (b)	110,498	75,085
Depreciation expenses	2 (b)	28,587	22,487
Other expenses	2 (b)	112,098	103,256
Surplus before income tax		51,078	(12,358)
Income tax expense			
Surplus for the year		51,078	(12,358)
Other comprehensive income after income tax			
Total comprehensive income for the year		51,078	(12,358)

Statement of Financial Position as at 30 June 2018

		2018	2017
	Note	\$	\$
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash and cash equivalents	3	1,159,053	1,185,480
Trade and other Receivables	4	34,801	11,000
Other assets	5	7,500	11,590
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		1,201,354	1,208,070
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Property, plant and equipment	6	93,805	83,405
TOTAL NON CURRENT ASSETS		93,805	83,405
TOTAL ASSETS		1,295,159	1,291,475
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Trade and other Payables	7	65,641	57,185
Deferred Income	8	457,539	533,297
Provisions	9	141,176	121,753
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		664,356	712,235
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Provisions	9	42,621	42,140
TOTAL NON CURRENT LIABILITIES		42,621	42,140
TOTAL LIABILITIES		706,978	754,370
NET ASSETS		588,182	537,104
EQUITY			
Accumulated Surplus	10	588,182	537,104
TOTAL EQUITY		588,182	537,105

Statement of Cash Flows for the year ended 30 June 2018

	Note	2018 \$	2017 \$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:			
Receipts from government		851,472	944,035
Other Receipts		281,860	355,550
Donations, Bequests and Trust Receipts		1,687	1,160
Interest received		28,007	13,096
Payments to Suppliers & Employees		(1,145,828)	(1,051,010)
Net Cash Generated from Operating Activities	11 (a)	17,198	262,831
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES:			
Payment for property, plant and equipment		(55,670)	(33,890)
Proceeds from sale of property, plant and equipment		12,046	13,040
Net Cash Used in Investing Activities		(43,625)	(20,850)
Net Increase/(Decrease) in Cash Held		(26,427)	241,981
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of the financial year		1,185,480	943,499
Cash and cash equivalents at end of financial year	3	1,159,053	1,185,480

Statement by Members of the Board for the year ended 30 June 2018

The members of the Board declare that:

1. The financial statements and notes are in accordance with the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012* and:
 - a. comply with Australian Accounting Standards; and
 - b. give a true and fair view of the financial position as at 30 June 2018, and of the performance for the year ended on that date of the agency
2. In the board members' opinion there are reasonable grounds to believe that the agency will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.

This declaration is made in accordance with a resolution of the Board of Management.



Sarah Noble (Chair)



Jennifer Sleep (Treasurer)

Dated this 4th day of September, 2018

The Full General Purpose Financial Statements and Notes are available on request.



Women's Health Goulburn North East Board and staff thank funders, partners, and individuals for their ongoing support and commitment to improving the health and wellbeing of rural women and girls.

We look forward to progressing these partnerships and harnessing new opportunities for collaborative action into 2018/2019 and beyond.

