

A partnership to understand gender equity capacity building needs of Community Health - Health Promotion workforce in Goulburn Valley

Conversations about a joint project between Goulburn Valley Public Health Unit (GVPHU) and WHGNE were initiated in December 2022, facilitated by an already established working relationship from the previous Lower Hume Primary Care Partnership. It was recognised that there were mutually reinforcing directions embedded in both Department of Health funding guidelines for the Victorian Women's Health program and the Community Health-Health Promotion (CH-HP) program.

What was implemented:

To design a tailored capacity building strategy for Goulburn Valley prevention workforce focused on increasing confidence in applying gendered practices, the project team identified that first a needs assessment was required to gain a better understanding of baseline confidence levels, and that this would form the focus of the initial six-month project in addition to a built in component of the survey exploring potential connections with Gender Equality Act. WHGNE and GVPHU jointly achieved the following activities:

- **Total of 10 project team meetings held (December 2022 to June 2023)**
- **Mapping Gender Equity Awareness survey co-developed, targeting two separate cohorts: GVPHU staff and CH-HP/Prevention workforce (March-April 2023)**
- **Findings reports developed for each cohort, along with summary snapshots circulated back to respondents with recommendations (May 2023)**
- **One-hour online education session on Gender Impact Assessments delivered to GVPHU cohort with total of 17 participants – 14 women, 3 men (June 2023)**

What was learnt:

Based on the key findings and recommendations from each survey cohort, it was confirmed that whilst there was a good degree of overall individual interest and understanding of importance for applying a gender lens to projects for both cohorts, the extent to which respondents were confident in practicing these skills was not as strong overall.

Following email dissemination of key results, a one-hour online education session was delivered in June 2023 to total of 17 GVPHU staff. The session was co-developed by project team to directly address the survey findings and in particular, outline requirements and steps involved in undertaking Gender Impact Assessments as part of Gender Equality Act obligations of defined entities.

The project has benefitted from the best-practice resources available at the state-wide level, so that the approach is about connecting prevention workforce with these resources, regardless of whether they are part of a defined entity or not, and breaking the information into manageable phases so that there is less sense of overwhelm for individual staff. WHGNE has gained a better understanding of how, on a practical level, our mutual priorities overlap and can be strengthened, despite working on separate priority areas. Due to the success of the initial partnership project, the original project plan will be reviewed and updated to extend the timeframe for another 12 months (to June 2024).

**Case
Study**