



Action for Equity:
A sexual and reproductive health
plan for Melbourne's west
2013–2017



Progress report three

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Women's Health West acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we work, the people of the Kulin Nation, and we pay our respect to Elders and community members past and present. We express solidarity with the ongoing struggle for land rights, self-determination, sovereignty and the recognition of past injustices. We express our hope for reconciliation and justice. Women's Health West acknowledge the support of the state government.

Women's Health West acknowledge the support of the state government



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Executive summary

Action for Equity is a four year sexual and reproductive health promotion plan for Melbourne's west, incorporating primary prevention initiatives that work to redress the social determinants of sexual and reproductive health in order to achieve health equity. The plan integrates long-term strategies across a range of settings and sectors to generate and maintain the social and cultural change needed to achieve optimal sexual and reproductive health through a regional partnership approach, the sharing of resources and knowledge, and a common planning framework.

The Action for Equity partnership commenced in 2009 and, to date, fifteen formal partners have committed to collaborate to achieve project outcomes. More information relating to the history of the plan and the governance structure can be found in the *Action for Equity 2013-2017* plan. Partner organisations include Brimbank City Council, Centre for Culture, Ethnicity and Health, cohealth, Department of Education and Training, HealthWest Partnership, Hepatitis Victoria, Hobsons Bay City Council, North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network (NWMPHN), IPC Health¹, Maribyrnong City Council, Melton City Council, Moonee Valley City Council, Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation and Wyndham City Council. Women's Health West are the lead agency on this strategy and partnership.

This progress report, the third of its kind by the partnership, provides an overview of the work undertaken during the third year of the strategy (October 1 2015- October 31 2016). The progress report also contributes to the process evaluation of Action for Equity. During this reporting period, twelve of the fifteen partners contributed to data included in this report, which reflects both independent and collaborative partnership initiatives. A standardised yearly reporting template was used to gather the data in this report. This report is structured to align with the Action for Equity plan and it details the progress and achievements made by the partnership against each objective and associated strategies.

This report demonstrated the formalised partnerships between fifteen organisations in the west that include women's and community health, local government, a primary health network, ethnic-specific services and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and specialist statewide services, which is embedded via a formal governance structure. There have been numerous new sexual and reproductive health promotion programs and initiatives implemented as part of Action for Equity during 2015 and 2016, as well as continued work on a number of other projects from 2014. These programs work with people with a disability, migrant and refugee young people, Aboriginal communities, women in prison, and other marginalised communities. Programs have demonstrated an increase sexual and reproductive health literacy among communities in the west, while training delivered has demonstrated an increase in knowledge and confidence of medical professionals to deliver on a range of different sexual and reproductive health areas including abortion and Pap Screening.

This third progress report complements both the *Action for Equity: A sexual and reproductive health plan for Melbourne's west 2013–2017 evaluation report 2* and *progress report 2*, by providing details of the projects the partners are working on. These reports and other associated work from the Action for Equity partnership can be accessed from the partnerships' resource hub at <http://srh.whwest.org.au/the-action-plan/>.

¹ Formerly known as ISIS Primary Care, referred to as IPC Health throughout this document

1. Advocacy

Objective: Increase access to affordable contraceptives and fertility control throughout Melbourne's West

Strategy: Advocate that federal government fund new-generation contraceptives through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme

In 2013, Women's Health West, on behalf of the Action for Equity partnership, wrote an application to support Marie Stope's application to have mifepristone and misoprostol (also known as RU468, medical termination of pregnancy or MTOP) subsidised through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme. The partnership deems access to abortion to be fundamental to women's capacity to achieve the highest attainable standard of health. Subsidising MTOP is necessary to ensure equitable and responsive abortion service provision throughout Australia and specifically in Melbourne's West. Ensuring access to medical termination of pregnancy is a key indicator of women's autonomy and freedom and is central to women's right to bodily integrity, self-determination, and civil and economic participation.

Strategy: Undertake an advocacy strategy informed by women's qualitative narratives to increase access to affordable surgical termination of pregnancy, through either public funding or alternative funding models

In 2014, Women's Health West met with the Victorian Women's Trust to discuss the issue of public funding for surgical termination of pregnancy (STOP) and MTOP. Women's Health West worked to secure philanthropic funding sources for post-16 week termination of pregnancy in the private system. Following on from this meeting, a proposal for post-16 week STOP philanthropic funding was registered with Australian Women Donors' Network. Funding to support increased access to STOP remains an ongoing priority in Melbourne's west.

A grant application was submitted by Women's Health West to the Victorian Women's Benevolent Trust in July 2016 to fund a small project that would measure awareness, attitudes and acceptability of both surgical and medication termination among community women in the west. Unfortunately this application was unsuccessful, and Women's Health West will endeavor to resubmit this application elsewhere in 2017.

Strategy: In partnership with community health services, Medicare locals² and local general practitioners (GPs), advocate for at least two providers of medical abortion in each local government area

In 2014, various project proposals were submitted by Women's Health West to explore professional development workshops with general practitioners pertaining to MTOP provision in the western region of Melbourne. Proposals were submitted to Macedon Ranges North West Melbourne Medicare Local (MRNWML) and Inner North West Melbourne Medicare Local (INWML), and Sunshine Hospital and The Royal Women's Hospital were approached to seek their respective clinical and training expertise in this regional partnership. This resulted in the securing of clinical training services from The Royal Women's Hospital to train GPs in the provision of MTOP.

² Medicare locals no longer exist. They have all been replaced by regional Primary Health Networks. The North West Melbourne Primary Health Network has, as a result, taken on the work formerly undertaken by the Medicare local. Retrospective data will be referred to as INWML whilst data from 2015 onwards will be referred to as NWMPHN.

In 2014, INWMML, with input from Women's Health West and The Royal Women's Hospital, Began to develop guidelines to support GPs to undertake MTOP within the Health Pathways Melbourne Project (website) was launched late November 2015. The guideline provide GPs with information about the RANZCOG guidelines for medical termination of pregnancy, legal status of abortion in Victoria, referral pathways, among other information areas of clinical practice. Since its launch in November 2015, the 'termination' landing page on the Health Pathways website has had X hits

Since the last reporting period, NWMPHN has become a key advisor on the State Government's Service Capacity Review on Sexual & Reproductive Health, which included a confidential State Government Draft Strategy, followed by a comprehensive stakeholder consultation process across Victoria to further inform and develop a detailed statewide strategy.

In 2014, Women's Health West, on behalf of the Action for Equity partnership, was successful in applying for a Helen Macpherson Smith Trust Social Impact Grant. The grant funds workshops for practitioners in MTOP. On 29 April 2015, the professional development workshop was delivered at NWMPHN offices in Parkville, Melbourne. The workshop was delivered by The Royal Women's Hospital, in partnership with Women's Health West, NWMPHN and cohealth. This evening included an overview of:

- The history of Mifepristone and Misoprostol (the two medications used for MTOP)
- Strategies to de-centralise abortion services in Victoria and Melbourne from the CBD to outer regions
- MTOP considerations and training requirements for GPs and pharmacists
- Drug side effects – with a particular focus on comparisons to surgical abortion
- Exploration of case studies
- Question and answer opportunities

Thirteen professionals attended this workshop with eight completing a needs assessment feedback form. Attendees included general practitioners (six), one nurse and one pharmacist. Five of the eight professionals currently practice in the western region of Melbourne. Attendees completed a professional development needs assessment survey at the end of the event, as well as a training evaluation form. The professional development evaluation found that 90 per cent of participants reported that the learning objective of the training describing the medical termination of pregnancy procedures were 'entirely met', 100 per cent reported that the content was relevant to their learning needs as practicing GPs and health professionals, and 90 per cent of participants reported that the training 'entirely met' their requirements as a quality learning experience.

In May 2016, a second professional development workshop was hosted by Women's Health West, NWMPHN and The Royal Women's Hospital. Twenty three professionals attended this workshop. This was an increase of 77 per cent compared to the workshop held in 2015. Eighteen of the 23 professionals in attendance (78 per cent) were GPs. The remaining five attendees were pharmacists. At least half of the attendees practiced in the western region of Melbourne. Of these 23 attendees, five completed the needs assessment and 19 completed the evaluation form. Post-session evaluation data indicated that practitioners were eager to pursue training pertaining to MTOP, but that more collegial and health systems support was required. As a direct result of this workshop, at least four practitioners had begun discussions with their colleagues relating to MTOP provision in their clinics and pharmacies. The

evaluation reports are available on the Action for Equity resource hub at <http://srh.whwest.org.au/the-action-plan/>.

Women's Health West began preliminary service auditing in November 2015 to determine the number of current MTOP providers in Melbourne's western region (including GPs and pharmacists) as well as radiology services in the region. This service map was designed to plot access points across municipalities to support service integration, accessible health services and to evaluate the partnership project and its impact. Preliminary auditing identified 277 clinics and pharmacies within the western region of Melbourne³, of which 146 (52.7 per cent) were contacted via telephone, fax or email. Of these 146 sites, 13 (8.9 per cent) were current MTOP providers. Forty sites (27.4 per cent) did not confirm their provisional status (either because they did not return correspondence, the appropriate personnel could not be contacted or staff were unaware of the provisional status of their GPs or pharmacists) and 93 (63.7 per cent) did not have an on-site MTOP provider. Bulk-billing radiographers were also identified and data was plotted on the service map.

Opportunities for future work

A third professional development workshop has been scheduled for 27 February 2017 and will again be co-hosted by Women's Health West, NWMPHN and The Royal Women's Hospital and held in Melton. Melton was identified as a suitable location for this third session as it is accessible to practitioners that work in the outer western region. Women's Health West is also exploring the opportunity to partner with Women's Health in the North on a forth training workshop in Parkville in mid-2017. Servicing auditing of the western region of Melbourne will also continue.

Strategy: Ensure Action for Equity supports the prevention of violence against women by strategically linking this plan to *Preventing Violence Together: Western Region Action Plan to Prevent Violence against Women*

Nine Action for Equity partner organisations work to prevent men's violence against women as part of the *Preventing Violence Together (PVT)* regional plan. These include:

- Brimbank City Council
- cohealth
- HealthWest Partnership
- Hobsons Bay City Council
- IPC Health
- Maribyrnong City Council
- Melton City Council
- Moonee Valley City Council
- Wyndham City Council
- Women's Health West (lead agency)

During the second reporting phase of Action for Equity (1 November 2014 to the 31 October 2015) key PVT partner initiatives included a regional partner submission to the Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence, as well as individual organisational submissions. PVT partners also participated in the second whole-of-organisation Gender Equity Staff Attitudes Survey, undertaken by the Australian Research Centre for Sex, Health and Society and conducted with thousands of staff. The partnership, led by Women's Health West, undertook a

³ Does not include the City of Melbourne

range of capacity building initiatives and regional forums such as the Western Leaders United to End Men's Violence Against Women Forum in June 2015. Partners also contributed to the 'Preventing Violence Together 16 Days Activist Challenge' that ran from 25 November to 10 December. Further information and evaluation of the PVT partnership is available at: www.pvawhub.whwest.org.au.

To prevent violence against women and promote sexual and reproductive health, Melton City Council also developed an International Women's Day community poster series, White Ribbon Day information session series, a breakfast event and community coffee cup campaign. Similarly, Wyndham City Council held White Ribbon Day activities, which were organised by staff. A Preventing Family Violence Committee was also established by Wyndham City Council. Brimbank City Council organised a series of White Ribbon Day activities for staff and community members, and a 'Health relationships' breakfast event for local service providers and businesses in partnership with Sunshine Business Association and Maurice Blackburn. The Department of Education and Training worked with Wyndham Central, Keilor Downs and Hoppers Crossing Secondary College to pilot a respectful relationships program, which were evaluated by Our Watch. The Gender Equity in Community Health Project, as part of the Preventing Violence Together regional partnership, developed a Gender Equity Resource for Community Health Services, which IPC Health and other partners launched in their workplace.

During the most recent period, the PVT partnership and regional action plan continued implementation across the region. Melton, Maribyrnong and Hobsons Bay City Councils are all signatories to PVT objectives and have participated in activities within their local areas.

Wyndham City Council participated in White Ribbon Day in 2015 and raised awareness through media releases, social media activity, engaging local businesses and supporting staff. In addition to this, they developed activities to support the "16 Days of Activism" initiative and organised a celebration for the community for International Women's Day. The NWMPHN is represented on the PCP Family Violence working group and organised quality improvement activities addressing family violence within GP practices. There will be an evaluation of this activity at a later stage in line with activity brief timelines.

Opportunities for future work

In 2016, the PVT partnership commissioned a comprehensive five year evaluation to identify the key achievements, strengths, limitations and opportunities of a regional approach to prevent violence against women in Victoria. A series of recommendations were developed to strengthen the PVT partnership and a strategic regional approach to prevention in the west. During 2016-2017, the PVT partnership has commenced implementation of two key recommendations, including the development of a partnership agreement with all partner organisations to clarify the key roles and responsibilities of all partners, and the development of a new high-level PVT regional strategy to set the strategic vision and priorities for primary prevention of violence against women across the west.

2. Policy and legislative reform

Objective: Influence and inform systemic policy and legislative reform that promotes equity, social inclusion and non-discriminatory cultural norms

Strategy: Mobilise the seven local governments in the West to identify sexual and reproductive health as a priority within their municipal public health plans and/or ensure other council plans and policies promote equity and social inclusion

During the 2014 and 2015 reporting period, Action for Equity partners provided written submissions and participated in consultations of the *Victorian Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2015-2019* to advocate for the inclusion of sexual and reproductive health as a key public health priority. This plan was released in September 2015 and 'improving sexual and reproductive health' was named as a health and wellbeing priority for 2015-2019.

Moonee Valley *Public Health and Wellbeing Plan – Progress Report July 2015*, identified that relevant action for Action for Equity was on track, noting that council representatives regularly attended partnership senior management meetings and working group meetings. In addition, Moonee Valley City Council implemented their *2014-2015 Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing action plan* that included action on relevant Action for Equity strategies within their municipality. The *Moonee Valley Diversity, Access and Equity Policy* was endorsed by councillors on 25 March 2014. A number of action plans are guided by this policy, which include:

- *The Disability Action Plan* (adopted in August 2014).
- *Multicultural Action Plan* (currently in development).
- *Lesbian, Gay Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer (LGBTIQ) Action Plan 2015-2017*. This plan aims to improve access for Moonee Valley's LGBTIQ communities. The action plan was adopted in June 2015 and was informed by discussion evenings held during May and October 2014, a community survey and was guided by a working group that met three times in 2014 and 2015, which included Action for Equity members.
- *Thrive: Youth Engagement Strategy* was adopted by council in October 2015. The strategy identifies being healthy, including sexual health, as one of the six action areas and identified actions relevant to sexual and reproductive health.

Moonee Valley City Council held a Health and Safety Forum on 29 July 2016 targeting community and health and safety organisations with a focus on storytelling, gender equity, mental health, emergency response, cultural and linguistically diverse communities and alcohol and other drugs. Sixty three attendees participated in the forum. Findings from the gender equity workshop include:

- Violence against women remains a top issue for the western region and the municipality, driven by gender inequality.
- Changing existing structures, norms and practices around gender is a long term complex process, and there needs to be leadership to shift norms and practices.
- Council can show leadership to other settings (e.g. workplaces, schools) with a gender equity strategy and via gender equity advocacy.

- Gender stereotyping occurs right through the life stages and there are opportunities for partnerships and programs in the early years' education sectors.

Findings from the workshops will inform the *Council Plan 2017-21* integrating the *Public Health and Wellbeing Plan*. Moonee Valley City Council also continued to implement the *Lesbian, Gay Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer (LGBTIQ) Action Plan 2015-2017*. Into 2016-2017, Moonee Valley City Council will be developing the Council Plan 2017-21 including the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan with a focus on equity and inclusion. Place-based community engagement will inform the development of *MV2040* – council's long term strategy (which is due June 2018).

Melton City Council has included sexual and reproductive health and/or gender equity as a key determinant of sexual and reproductive health equity in:

- *Council Plan 2013-2017*.
- *Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013-2017*.
- *Preventing Violence Against Women and Their Children Strategy and Action Plan*.
- *Youth Strategy 2015-2017*.
- *Safer City Plan*.
- Community Engagement Framework.

All council plans are reviewed and reported on regularly.

Hobsons Bay City Council will ensure that equitable programs and services are key principles within the:

- *Community Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013-2017*
- *Council Plan 2013-2017*
- *Advocacy Strategy 2014-2018*
- *Children and Young Peoples Plan 2014-2017*
- Gender Equity Policy Statement 2014, as noted above.

Wyndham City Council has identified sexual and reproductive health, particularly among young people, as a priority in the *Community Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan 2013-2017*, with further action in this area occurring in year three and four of this council plan.

The *Brimbank Youth Strategy 2015 – 2019* was adopted by council in 2014. The strategy identifies being healthy as a key action area, ensuring the delivery of services and supports relates to sexual and reproductive health. The strategy also aims to promote a friendly, respectful and safe Brimbank for young people through the provision of services and supports that promote respectful relationships. In 2014, Brimbank City Council, informed by the lessons learnt from the *Family Violence Prevention Action Plan (2010-2013)* and evidence-base, developed the *Brimbank City Council's Plan to Prevent Men's Violence against Women: Towards Gender Equity (2015-2019)*. This plan sets out a bold and innovative approach for the delivery of council's actions to enhance gender equity and primary prevention of violence against women in the municipality.

Hepatitis Victoria has presented on viral hepatitis at the Western Action Forum and an informal evaluation of participant feedback was conducted. It was identified that there is a greater need for collaboration between local councils, health providers and policy makers in the region. During the 2015-2016 reporting period, Hepatitis Victoria partnered with local government, community health and the hospital sector to ensure access to health services by "at risk" populations. This work is ongoing.

Case study: Upstream action in sexual and reproductive health promotion

In June 2016, Women's Health West produced and disseminated LGA- specific gender equity factsheets which highlighted the different needs, opportunities and experiences of women and men in the west with a specific focus on gender equity, preventing violence against women, mental health and wellbeing and sexual and reproductive health. The factsheets were designed to help inform the next Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plans (2017-2021) designed by council as well as policies, programs, and service planning and delivery. Four of the seven western region local councils have outlined sexual and reproductive health promotion priorities in their Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plans (MPWHP) 2013-2017:

- Brimbank City Council's Youth Policy and Action Plan recognises '*Promoting Physical and Sexual Health*' as a priority area;
- Hobson Bay City Council has highlighted the key principles of equitable programs and services within their *Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2013-17*, *Council Plan 2013-17*, *Advocacy Strategy 2014-18*, *Children & Young Peoples Plan 2014-18*, and *Gender Equity Policy Statement 2014*. They are also currently developing the "Community Vision 2030", which will include an incorporated Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan. This document was written by the community and references access to services and data on sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing;
- Maribyrnong City Council has implemented the second year of the *Youth Strategy* that highlights 'inclusion and engagement';
- Melton City Council has a *Preventing Violence against Women and Children (PVAW) Strategy* and an *Action Plan* and *Youth Strategy*. These current strategies will influence the development of the next Council Plan and the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2017–21, which are currently being developed;
- Wyndham City Council has conducted consultations for the new *Community Health, Wellbeing and Safety Plan 2017-2021*, identifying health and safety needs of women and the sexual and reproductive health needs of young women as priorities

Strategy: Advocate for law reform that upholds and protects sexual and reproductive health rights, including marriage equality and safeguards against forced sterilisation of people with a disability

In 2013, Women's Health West submitted a paper to the Senate inquiry into involuntary or coerced sterilisation of people with a disability in Australia to advocate for its prohibition by law and a draft of preventative measures. Women's Health West also wrote to the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into social inclusion for people with a disability and recommended greater attention to intersectional experiences of gender and disability in policy planning and development, particularly access to sexual and reproductive health services, information and education. In 2014, Women's Health West put in a submission to the Review of the National Curriculum to the Australian Government Department of Education, which recommended that respectful relationships education be incorporated into the Australian curriculum with age-appropriate and relevant sexuality education that respects diversity. In addition, Women's Health West participated in consultations for the *Victorian Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex Health and Wellbeing Plan* to highlight the lack of youth and LGBTIQ - friendly specialised sexual and reproductive services in Melbourne's west. In January 2014, Women's Health West also wrote a submission to the Supporting Working Parents: Pregnancy and Return to Work National Review undertaken by the Australian Human Rights Commission.

Melton City Council continues the ongoing implementation of the Disability Advisory Committee and has established a new LGBTIQ portfolio in the Community Capacity team.

IPC Health have identified LGBTIQ health, specifically the needs of the transgender community, as an area for exploration in 2016-2017 and beyond.

Objective: Undertake organisational policy and practice reform to foster environments that respect and uphold sexual rights and gender diversity

Strategy: Identify gaps in inclusive practice within various health promotion settings

During October 2013 and October 2014, Hobsons Bay City Council youth services conducted a self-audit in consultation with key professionals to identify and redress potential gaps in inclusive practice. Moonee Valley City Council's *Diversity, Access and Equity Policy* is guiding the development of a *Disability Action Plan* (adopted in August 2014), a *Multicultural Action Plan* and a *Sexuality and Gender Identity Action Plan*. Cohealth established an internal reference group and engaged a consultant to work with teams to identify areas for improvement in inclusive practice and developed an organisation-wide strategy. Wyndham City Council, as part of the *Community Health, Safety and Wellbeing Plan*, will actively identify and develop opportunities to celebrate Wyndham's same sex-attracted communities. IPC Health and Hobsons Bay City Council completed three HEY grant (state government funding to support the mental health and wellbeing of same sex -attracted and gender diverse young people) applications to run a youth-led project that would audit the inclusivity and accessibility of services for same sex-attracted and gender diverse young people. These applications were unsuccessful.

During 1 November 2014 to the 31 October 2015, Hobsons Bay Youth Services repeated the self-audit to identify and redress potential gaps in inclusive practice within their services. Audit recommendations included regular staff professional development and amendment to accurately collect information on gender and sexuality on intake forms that collect young people's information. Council has committed to continue to provide professional development to new and existing staff in this practice area. Melton City Council has undertaken engagement with stakeholders in key settings, including secondary schools, youth services, community services and Victoria Police, to identify and promote inclusive practice. This will be used to inform future project planning.

Brimbank City Council's Youth Services was successful in obtaining a HEY grant for 'Pridentity in Action' – A whole of school approach to supporting sexual and gender diversity. Pridentity in Action was delivered in partnership with St Albans Secondary College, Keilor Downs Secondary College and Safe Schools Coalition. The HEY grants are part of larger Victorian Government funded initiative to support the mental health and wellbeing of same sex attracted and gender diverse young people. Over two years, Brimbank Youth Services employed a part-time project officer to work to create more supportive, inclusive and safer school environments. This was achieved through the development and facilitation of curriculum materials, review of student wellbeing policies, delivery of staff professional development, facilitation of Gay Straight Alliances and the development of visible signs of support for same sex attracted and gender diverse young people within the school community. At the conclusion of the project a resource kit was developed to support the program to be adopted by other schools and municipalities in the western region. IPC Health continues to progress towards achieving Rainbow Tick Accreditation via support from its internal Diversity Committee, and will conduct gender equity training with various teams throughout its service.

Women's Health West health promotion staff attended the annual Lesbian, Bisexual and Queer (LBQ) Women's Health Conference in Melbourne in May 2016 with the aim of expanding knowledge of inclusive practice within the team. The conference explored best practice and research relating to the mental health, sexual health, alcohol and other drug use, and broader health issues of LBQ women. The one day event included workshops and

presentations from academics, community health workers, other service providers and community members. Brimbank Youth Services continued to work in partnership with Orygen Youth Health to co-chair the Q-West Network. Q-West brings together 26 partner organisations from the youth, education, policing and health sectors to implement a bi-annual action plan centered on collaboration to reduce the health inequalities experienced by LGBTIQ young people. Melton City Council, in alignment with Council's *Youth Strategy 2014-17*, explored options for sexual health promotion initiatives in partnership with Council's Youth Services team, particularly in relation to access to condoms. Women's Health West have also worked in partnership with Melton City Council during 2015-2016 to implement the condom vending machine project across three sites: Melton Library and Learning Hub, Hannah Watts Park and Caroline Springs Leisure Centre. Various social marketing activities have also taken place during this time to promote the project and sexual and reproductive health to the community, including young people and men who have sex with men.

Strategy: Increase the capacity of community organisations, workplaces and sporting clubs to uphold sexual rights and promote gender diversity through mechanisms such as gender and diversity training and audit tools

During the October 2013 and October 2014 reporting period, cohealth led various workshops on inclusive practice for same sex-attracted and gender diverse young people across the state through the Zoe Belle Gender Collective (formerly known as Zoe Belle Gender Centre) youth prevention project. In addition, cohealth had an active presence in Midsumma Festival and GOWEST (Midsumma program within in the western region of Melbourne) activities and has delivered inclusive LGBTIQ workshops co-led by peer facilitators with Headspace, Victoria University and Q-West in the west. Cohealth delivered LGBTIQ-inclusive workshops at two national conferences and two regional tours and participated in the reference group for LGBTIQ and mental wellbeing research with Beyond Blue. Wyndham City Council staff were trained in inclusive practice with an aim to redress homophobia, racism and other forms of discrimination. Hobsons Bay City Council conducted professional development training on sexual and gender diversity, respectful relationships and violence prevention. Participants included council staff, staff from local schools and service providers. The community development team led a series of internal LGBTIQ diversity training sessions to raise awareness of the topic and sensitivity required to work with gender diverse communities in a respectful and inclusive way. Participants included staff from the aged care, libraries and customer service teams. The feedback from the LGBTIQ awareness sessions was positive. The feedback from GOWEST events was positive and comments indicated that the events had raised awareness of LGBTIQ health concerns and provided opportunities for the LGBTIQ community to connect with each other and be engaged with council.

In 2014, South West Melbourne Medicare Local (SWMML, now Primary Health Network) funded community grants in the Laverton and Laverton North areas (jointly shared area by Wyndham and Hobsons Bay city council) included a focus on gender diversity and equity. North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network provided gender diversity training to staff in Residential Aged Care Facilities to support enhanced care of LGBTIQ residents. North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network has also negotiated with Queerspace (Drummond Street Services) to deliver focused psychological strategies for LGBTIQ clients under the Access to Allied Psychological Services program. Skilled and experienced clinicians offer support and counselling to queerspace clients who reside within the NWMPHN catchment and other outlying areas. During 1 November 2014 to the 31 October 2015, cohealth's Living Safer Sexual Lives program was delivered in partnership with four local governments across their municipalities. Cohealth held a series of staff workshops and

developed a draft gender diversity action plan and gender equity and health literacy strategy. Cohealth participated in the statewide transgender youth forum to enhance medical and care pathways for young people, developed a fact sheet resource on gender diversity and participated in an advisory committee for From Blues to Rainbows research, and presented at the National Health Alliance conference.

IPC Health conducted a Rainbow Tick Standards Audit in 2012 and 2015, with these results informing their organisational *LGBTIQ Action Plan*. IPC Health also provided 13 LGBTIQ awareness training sessions for 36 per cent of their organisation's staff. Brimbank City Council's Youth Services staff participated in staff professional development aiming to increase staff capabilities in working towards creating communities free of homophobia, transphobia and gender-based discrimination. Brimbank City Council in partnership with Orygen Youth Health convenes the Q-West Network. The Q-West Network is a group of local government, health, human services and education providers working towards improving service delivery to, and reducing health inequalities among young people who identify as same sex attracted, intersex or gender diverse across the Western Metropolitan Region. Network members are signatories to a bi-annual action plan that focuses on the development, delivery and evaluation of service delivery, service development and advocacy initiatives.

Hobsons Bay City Council in partnership with Brimbank City Council, Moonee Valley City Council, Melton City Council and Maribyrnong City Council established a steering group to plan the western region LGBTIQ community forum that was held in 2015. Melton City Council's gender and inclusion portfolios are managed by the Community Planning Department, and gender and diversity are integrated within key strategic documents and policies. The City of Melton has ongoing engagement with sports clubs (via recreation and youth department), community services and workplaces (via the economic development team), and is a member of the Health and Wellbeing Reference Group currently implementing the Healthy Together Victoria Workplace Achievement Program. Through the Hobsons Bay Youth Network and one-off events, Hobsons Bay Council has provided professional development training on sexual and gender diversity, respectful relationships and prevention of violence for its staff, local schools and other professionals who work with young people. Council's youth services has used the rainbow tick accreditation survey to review its own service. School staff reported that they are more confident in facilitating some of these programs in their schools. The Community Development team have led a series of internal LGBTIQ diversity training sessions. Training was conducted with aged care staff, libraries and customer service team members. Feedback about the LGBTIQ awareness sessions was positive – including that the information was accessible to council staff. Hobsons Bay Council, through GOWEST and Midsumma Festival, invited local organisations and sporting clubs to host events to support the LGBTIQ community. Partners included cohealth, neighbouring councils, and not-for-profit organisations. Evaluation of GOWEST shows it has raised awareness and provided opportunities for LGBTIQ people to connect and be engaged with their local community. In partnership with the western region local government, Hobsons Bay City Council held a community forum to increase LGBTIQ visibility across the west. Reports generated from this event will feed into western region local government area action planning and inform future work within the sector. All western region councils and Women's Health West are also members of the Preventing Violence Together Gender Equity in Sports Practice, which aimed to increase women and girls access to local sports and recreation facilities.

In 2015, Melton City Council commenced working on a new LGBTIQ portfolio. This included an event for International Day against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT) in collaboration with the Rainbow Network (Gay and Lesbian Health Victoria). Melton City Council's *Youth Strategy 2014-17* aims to collaborate with LGBTIQ communities to design and

deliver appropriate programs and services. The *Youth Strategy* was evaluated through documentation of program proposals and number of engagements. Hobsons Bay City Council, through the GOWEST program at Midsumma Festival, invited local organisations and sporting clubs to host events to support the LGBTIQ community. New partners have included Carers Victoria, neighbouring councils and not-for-profit organisations who support LGBTIQ communities. Feedback about GOWEST events has been positive and evaluation data suggests that events have raised awareness and provided opportunities for LGBTIQ people to connect and be engaged. Hobsons Bay City Council also holds quarterly meetings with other western region councils to identify and address current issues for the LGBTIQ community. The issues identified are reported to the western region LGAs action planning/future work in the sector. In addition to this, Hobsons Bay also coordinate a LGBTIQ Advisory Committee. Women's Health West joined this advisory committee in January 2016 and are committed to working with the committee to identify issues relevant to the LGBTIQ and contribute to programs and projects that recognise gender and sexual diversity.

Brimbank Youth Services worked with Gay and Lesbian Health Victoria to develop a draft *GLBTIQ Inclusivity Plan* and applied for funding through the state government's HEY Grants to progress this work further.

North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network participates in a number of LGA Best Start Early Years Partnerships which provide a platform for advocacy. This applies specifically to with the role of Maternal Child Health/GP and the six weekly post-partum check, where sexual and reproductive health is to be discussed.

Moonee Valley City Council have commenced training for all aged care sector staff to support inclusive practice in line with Council's *LGBTIQ Action Plan 2015-2017*. Council will also deliver a diversity training program targeting councillors and staff in 2016-2017.

Strategy: Develop or adapt current policies and procedures within various settings to ensure they are inclusive of all people and actively work to redress discrimination

Cohealth applied a gender diversity lens over the draft *Prevention of Violence Against Women Policy* to enhance inclusivity across practice. During 2014 and 2015, Hepatitis Victoria undertook advocacy initiatives designed to reduce discrimination involving those with experience of viral hepatitis. A community survey was conducted and demonstrated that discrimination is a barrier to help-seeking behaviours and service access. Cohealth has worked to ensure that the sexual and reproductive health of people with an intellectual disability is captured in the work plans of Council's Metro Access Officers. Cohealth's partnership with Western Region Centre Against Sexual Assault (West CASA) has developed a referral process between the Living Safer Sexual Lives Program, disability services and sexual assault services to ensure people with a disability who experience sexual assault receive appropriate counselling and support. During the next year, an action plan will also be developed for the *Gender Equity Strategy*.

During the 2015-2016 reporting period, Moonee Valley City Council have reviewed the community grants program and adopted a community funding policy to drive transparency and increase responsiveness to community.

Case study: Putting policy into practice in local government

Councils, as workplaces, have legislative requirements to include actions against discrimination in their policies and plans.

- Brimbank City Council recognises that council staff can experience violence and abuse. Brimbank City Council's Enterprise Bargaining Agreement and associated human resource policies (*Family Violence Policy* and family violence procedure) has provisions to support staff who experience family violence. Brimbank City Council has also updated library membership procedures to allow customers who identify as transgender to identify as such in the library's membership database.
- Hobsons Bay City Council implemented a range of internal and community actions as part of the "Racism: It Stops with Me" campaign in 2013, which also continued into 2014, 2015 and 2016. The council launched its *Multicultural Policy 2016-20* after an intensive review of the past policy, actions and community consultation and is currently implementing a number of actions and initiatives developed in consultation with community. These activities are being built into the *2017-18 Business Plan*.
- Maribyrnong City Council implemented a *Gender Equity Action Plan Family Violence* policy
- Melton City Council's Policy Review Panel, responsible for the review of new policies or updating existing policies, terms of reference and other relevant documentation works to ensure policies and practice are inclusive and work to redress discrimination. Melton City Council inclusive policies and plans include a *Code of Conduct*, a *Customer Service Charter*, a *Discrimination, Harassment & Bullying Policy*, an *Employee Assistance Policy*, a *Family Violence Policy and Procedure*, a *Preventing Violence against Women Policy*, a *Language Services Policy*, a *Reconciliation Policy* and a *Workplace Health and Wellbeing Policy*. Melton have also developed a draft *Intercultural Plan* which will be endorsed shortly.
- Wyndham City Council, in addition to current legal requirements, has an *Enterprise Bargaining Agreement*, which includes a family violence clause and *Wyndham's Leisure Strategy 2013-2017* contains actions specific to women and girls' participation.

3. Sector and workforce development

Objective: Develop a trained and skilled workforce by increasing understandings of sexual and reproductive health promotion theory and practice

Strategy: Assess organisational needs in relation to sexual and reproductive health promotion workforce development and training

In 2013, HealthWest and Women's Health West designed and delivered a needs assessment survey with Action for Equity members. In 2014, SWMML and NWMPHN hosted several education sessions for primary health care providers on sexual health and women's health. The SWMML workshops were evaluated using a standardised format. The feedback from the sexual health workshops was generally positive and the information on contraception proved to be quite popular among practice nurses. Hobsons Bay City Council and IPC Health collaborated to map strategies on how best to support schools in sexual and reproductive health education. NWMPHN collaborated with the Royal Women's Hospital to provide a number of events for providers focusing on contraception, gynecological issues and pregnancy-related care. Cohealth undertook a baseline survey for female genital

mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) and health literacy to determine understanding among staff regarding the practice and its health impacts to inform a training needs assessment for the strategic planning process and development. Cohealth developed a training video for health professionals to increase their understanding of FGM/C and provide support in starting conversations about FGM/C with clients. This video was codesigned with health professionals and communities that traditionally practice FGM/C.

During 1 November 2014 to the 31 October 2015, the NWMPHN implemented a professional development training session for clinicians relating to contraceptive options that was attended by 31 people. They also provided a cervical screening training update for clinicians which was attended by 16 practitioners. All attendees were surveyed on learning outcomes and the quality of the workshops.

The Centre for Culture, Ethnicity and Health (CEH) conducted tailored training for organisations and workers to build capacity to engage with migrant and refugee communities about sexual health. This was well received and training continues to be requested. CEH will continue to provide training in the area of sexual and reproductive health as per organisational requests. Hepatitis Victoria conducted a workforce development needs assessments and training on viral hepatitis. Evaluation findings indicated a need for more workforce development. Hepatitis Victoria has developed and will continue to provide workforce development and refine their training by gaining input from an external panel of experts, primarily from the health sector. Hobsons Bay Youth Services are undertaking discussions with IPC Health about how to best support young people who are disengaged from mainstream schooling with sexual and reproductive health education.

Women's Health West, in partnership with the NWMPHN and The Royal Women's Hospital, have implemented a series of medication termination of pregnancy (MTO) professional development workshops for general practitioners and pharmacists since May 2015 (page 6). At the most recent workshop (2016), attendees were asked to complete a needs assessment at the start of the session to gauge their current practice needs and referral pathways. Five of the 23 practitioners completed a needs assessment form. They were asked to list their ideal care and referral pathways if they were to become an MTO provider. The purpose of this question was to identify existing relationships and gaps in service communication and familiarity. Unfortunately, those that completed this section of the form (n=2) only denoted the pathways with a tick instead of specifically naming services. However, the presence of ticks on all of the service types (including pharmacy, pathology and radiology) demonstrates that professionals have already established relationships with these services in their local area. Responses to the statement '*Do you think there is appropriate access to MTO and STOP (surgical termination of pregnancy) in the western region of Melbourne [or your region]?*' were varied. Two of the five respondents stated that they believed there was adequate service availability in their area, one professional believed there was not enough service provision in the local area and the remaining two were unsure. When asked what the current barriers for MTO provision were, the majority agreed that it was lack of knowledge of the procedure, lack of access and communication (information relating to service access and training), as well as privacy and 'beliefs' (presumably relating to individual moral position of GPs and colleagues). Professionals also mentioned the concern about where to access medication, patient noncompliance, legal aspects and the religious and ethical considerations within their own organisation. An overarching theme consistent for all respondents was the desire to respond to the needs of community women. Professionals described various ways in which they could be supported to provide MTO; they mentioned the need for training that includes both initial

and refresher information. They also named hard copy and digital resources as key to their MTOP provision, for themselves and their patients. One GP also stated that to become a provider he would need to be aware of the local dispensing pharmacy. This highlights the need for local networks and regular communication to ensure stock is on-hand for patients to access. Given the three month shelf life of the medication, having a local dispensary does not always guarantee available stock. Hence, increasing local pharmacy providers and referral pathways to these pharmacies is key to an effective MTOP service system. Finally, attendees were asked to rank topics from most to least useful to help inform future training provided by the partnership. The most useful topics identified in 2016 were:

- Overview from Western Health and The Women's Hospitals on support they can provide in this work, including the management of emergency
- Practice overview from GPs in the region who are already providing MTOP, including insurance and cost considerations
- MTOP case-studies: brought by training participants for questions, answers and discussion
- MTOP case-studies assessing suitability for women: tailored by facilitators

During the 2015-2016 reporting period, Hepatitis Victoria developed and delivered targeted workforce professional development with particular emphasis on overcoming stigma and discrimination towards people living with viral hepatitis. Evaluation findings from this work suggest that there is a high demand for this type of education and training, and this will be expanded in 2016-2017.

Strategy: Work with Action for Equity members, universities and other partners to develop and implement a workforce development and training package

In 2013, Women's Health West, on behalf of the Action for Equity partnership, secured a \$5,000 grant from Inner North West Primary Care Partnership to contract Kerryn O'Rourke to design a sexual and reproductive health promotion training package. This two-day Action for Equity training includes information on sexual and reproductive health promotion project planning and evaluation, theory and practice of health promotion and the social determinants of sexual and reproductive health inequity. In March 2015, Kerryn O'Rourke delivered this training to 16 participants, with 11 of the then 17 Action for Equity partners and five state-wide organisations in attendance. Pre and post evaluation questionnaires indicated satisfaction, with 82 per cent rating the training as 'very good' or 'excellent'. All participants showed an increase in knowledge relating to sexual and reproductive health promotion definitions, the social gradient, and the socioeconomic and political action to redress the social determinants of sexual and reproductive health inequity.

During 2015-2016, Hepatitis Victoria developed HEPReady: suite of training courses developed for community and health workers to further their knowledge of viral hepatitis. These courses were produced in consultation with stakeholders. The suite of courses will continue to be expanded in the future.

Case study:
The health inequities of sexual and reproductive health: A review of the literature

In 2015, Women's Health West contracted Deakin University to undertake a rigorous literature review to investigate and determine the key health influences of health inequities associated with sexual and reproductive health in Australia and internationally. Deakin University concluded this work in 2016 and the report was officially launched in September 2016. The research report makes an evidence-based case for six social determinants of sexual and reproductive health:

- Rigid gender norms;
- Cultural and societal norms;
- Violence, discrimination and stigma;
- Public policy and the law;
- Socio-economic status; and
- Access to culturally appropriate, accessible healthcare and services.

It is these social determinants that governments, organisations and practitioners must integrate into their policy, programs and practice and redress in order to achieve sustainable and equitable health outcomes for communities throughout Victoria. Women's Health West are currently producing a Call to Action document for the Action for Equity partnership which will outline the importance of a comprehensive state joint sexual and reproductive health policy and why the focus should be on integrated planning and primary prevention strategies.

4. Community education and capacity building

Objective: Increase community education and capacity building efforts to foster sustainable school environments in which young people have opportunities to gain the knowledge, skills and resources they need for healthy relationships and sexual choices – now and in the future

Strategy: Build the capacity of agencies to deliver Girls Talk Guys Talk

In 2013, Women's Health West developed Girls Talk Guys Talk (GTGT), a whole-of-school sexuality and respectful relationships program. GTGT training was delivered to over 45 practitioners from the South West Secondary School Nursing Program as part of the Department of Education and Early Childhood (now Department of Education and Training), cohealth, and youth workers from Wyndham City Council, Hobsons Bay City Council and Brimbank City Council.

During 2014 and 2015, Women's Health West developed curriculum and a resource toolbox to provide further support to agencies delivering the GTGT program. Women's Health West is currently developing an online resource hub that hosts Women's Health West respectful relationships and sexual and reproductive health education programs for young people. This includes Girls Talk Guys Talk, You, Me and Us, and Deadly Health, programs for primary school children, senior school students, students with a disability, young people in higher education, young people engaged in youth programs and sporting clubs, newly arrived young people and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people. The online resource hub is designed to resource practitioners working in a range of settings and community organisations

to deliver evidence-based respectful relationships and sexuality education.

Two staff from Brimbank Youth Services have completed the Girls Talk Guys Talk Capacity Building Program and joined the Community of Practice.

Between October 2015 and October 2016, a number of schools piloted the Department of Education and Training's Respectful Relationships education program. Various Department of Education and Training nurses also delivered sexual health and respectful relationships education sessions and these were evaluated by the Department of Education and Training.

Strategy: Support schools in Melbourne's west to implement the Girls Talk Guys Talk model and achieve the sexual health benchmarks set by the Victorian Prevention and Health Promotion Achievement Program

During 2013 and 2014, Women's Health West, cohealth and Brimbank City Council Youth delivered GTGT at Jackson School. This is one of the first specialist schools to receive a whole-of-school respectful relationships and sexuality education program in the state. A leadership group has been established and meets regularly to oversee the implementation of the program. A student needs assessment, which has been developed specifically to meet the needs of young people with an intellectual disability, has been implemented.

In 2014, a curriculum framework was developed based on the findings of the needs assessment. This has been written in a way that is appropriate for students of varying abilities. Professional development for teachers has also been delivered.

Following the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust funding in 2014-2015, cohealth and Wyndham Youth Services began supporting Warringa Park School to implement the GTGT Program at their Bethany Road Campus. This included establishing a leadership reference group, mechanisms for student input, staff professional development and a whole-school needs analysis. As part of this funding, Women's Health West led the delivery of GTGT in Manor Lakes P-12. Cohealth, Brimbank Youth Services and Women's Health West continued supporting Jackson School with the program. This included supporting staff with professional development and curriculum development. Units relating to racism and prejudice and mental health were delivered to 100 students from years 7-10. Students also received sessions on respectful relationships and sexuality, with support from Family Planning Victoria. An evaluation plan has been developed collaboratively between Women's Health West, cohealth and Jackson School. The programs in Jackson School and Warringa Park will be evaluated after the implementation period in June 2017.

Strategy: Establish a community of practice to support the delivery of whole-school approaches to sexuality education in Melbourne's west

In 2013, Women's Health West established a community of practice for Action for Equity partners, of which four meetings were held in March, April, June and November 2014. Topics included introducing GTGT as a health promoting schools program, capacity building for creating sustainable partnerships, the Australian Research Centre for Sex, Health and Society presented on the findings of the Fifth National Sexual Health Survey of Australian Secondary Schools Students for 2014. Maree Crabbe also presented a workshop on 'Eroticising inequality: Young people, pornography and sexuality.' In late 2014, a review of the community of practice was undertaken and Women's Health West determined that limited resources were best targeted at building the capacity of a small group of schools and agencies who are committed to delivering whole-of-school sexuality and respectful relationships education programs.

In 2014 and 2015, Women's Health West and cohealth have led the establishment of a network

to support specialist schools in Melbourne's west to deliver respectful relationships and sexual and reproductive health education, specifically focusing on the implementation of Girls Talk Guys Talk.

In 2016, Melton City Council reviewed their current Respectful Relationships curriculum and considered recommendations of the Royal Commission into Family Violence. The council also engaged with stakeholders and awarded grants to fund the expansion of Love Bites (respectful relationships program) in City of Melton secondary schools. Women's Health West have also been involved in the discussions of expanding out respectful relationships and sexuality education in the City of Melton, particularly in the setting of Melton Youth Services. An evaluation of the Love Bites program was conducted by the National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (NAPCAN).

Additional programs

Hepatitis Victoria delivered the StreetShot program to secondary schools during 2015-2016; this program supports sexuality education as an integrated approach to viral hepatitis awareness. This program will be expanded and continued into 2016-2017. Moonee Valley City Council presented at a Sexual and Reproductive Health Forum to local governments in Melbourne's North East showcasing the process for including sexual and reproductive health in the *Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan* and subsequent actions. During the 2015-2016 reporting period, IPC Health conducted consultations to explore the current sexual and reproductive health needs and barriers for young people who access alternative education services in Hobsons Bay and Wyndham. Workshops and one-on-one interviews were undertaken with 13 young people who access The Link Centre, in Laverton. Themes that emerged included the need for open communication, contraceptive access, access to and knowledge of health services and respectful relationships. These findings have been disseminated to the students and staff at The Link Centre and to the Action for Equity Senior Management Committee and a report will be developed with recommendations for future action.

New strategy: Support whole-of-school respectful relationships education in primary schools in Melbourne's west

In 2014, Women's Health West, School Focused Youth Services and The Smith Family partnered to fund the delivery of You, Me and Us, a respectful relationships education program to year 5 and 6 students in three schools that form part of the Wyndham Community Hub. Professional development training was delivered to 18 teachers and adult leaders and respectful relationships education sessions were delivered to over 250 primary school students.

Brimbank City Council's Youth Services obtained external funding to support the training and development of local secondary school staff and partner organisations in the Love Bites Program. Love Bites is a school-based domestic and family violence and sexual assault prevention program based on best practice standards for education programs as recommended by the Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearing House. After the completion of the training participants were provided with the program manual and additional resources to support participants to deliver Love Bites in Brimbank schools.

The Department of Education and Training's Secondary School Nursing Program have advocated to the schools they work with to use evidence-based resources for respectful relationships and sexual health education, such as the Stepping Out Resource and Catching on Later. A DVD has been produced by the Department of Education and Training and Family Planning Victoria as a guide for educators working with young people, and was funded by

School Focused Youth Services. Cohealth received a Victorian Health Finalist Award for the Sisters and Brothers Program, which is an arts based program that uses song writing, dance and performance to increase resilience, promote healthy relationships and redress violence and discrimination in primary schools. During 2014 and 2015, Hobsons Bay Youth Services has responded to school requests to provide programs that include 'Be the Hero', 'Building Respectful Relationships: Stepping out against Gender-Based Violence' and other respectful relationships sessions. These programs have continued into 2016, in addition to the 'Pride and Prejudice' program. Schools continue to provide positive feedback regarding these programs and continue to request them from the council. Four Hobsons Bay Youth Services staff also attended a 'Partners in Prevention' capacity building workshop that explored the role of the community sector in supporting schools with the new and mandatory implementation of respectful relationships curriculum. Hepatitis Victoria engaged with a number of schools to deliver education on selected blood borne viruses (BBVs) in 2015 and aim to expand on these activities.

Work has continued on the Women's Health West Respectful Relationships and sexual and reproductive health online resource hub with an expected launch in mid-2017. In 2016, the Victorian Government announced \$21.8 million investment over two years to implement Respectful Relationships education across schools and early childhood services. The planning and implementation of this is being monitored by the partnership.

Opportunities for future work

Some lead and partner schools will be implementing the Respectful relationships program. Department of Education and Training school nurses will be working closely with the Lead Project teams and Liaison officers to assist in the implementation.

Objective: Increase community education and capacity building activities to improve the sexual health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people

Strategy: Undertake community consultations with young Aboriginal people in Melton and Wyndham to better understand their sexual health and wellbeing needs

Melton City Council has appointed an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Officer in 2015 who will lead this work moving forward, and will also undertake community consultations. Cohealth has completed a literature review on sexual and reproductive health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

The NWMPHN participated in the roll-out of Koolin Balit (Victorian Government's strategic directions for Aboriginal health) funding, which has been implemented in a number of areas including Wyndham and Melton. Both councils have steering committees with NWMPHN representation with clear MOUs in place. The steering groups work towards developing broad strategies around improved outcomes for Aboriginal children and their families; and sexual and reproductive health is considered in this space. This is a State Government initiative that has yet to provide a first report as both Koolin Balit Projects are still within a scoping phase of the project.

Strategy: Partner with the Gathering Place, Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation, Melbourne Sexual Health Centre and other key partners to deliver health events for young Indigenous people to increase their sexual health knowledge, promote respectful relationships and to prevent sexual assault

In September 2014, Women's Health West employed a project worker to resource sexual and

reproductive health strategies under the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust on behalf of the Action for Equity partnership. Melton City Council's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Officer will engage with key partners to deliver sexual and reproductive health messages within other planned events, such as the provision of the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation's snake condoms at a Harmony Day Event. Cohealth was the successful recipients of the Koolin Balit grant for a project titled Wellness Dreaming, which is a co-designed health and wellbeing initiative. Hepatitis Victoria has provided small grants to Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations and others agencies to raise awareness of viral hepatitis. However, there were no successful applicants within Melbourne's western region. In 2015-2016, Melton City Council commenced implementation of its *Reconciliation Action Plan* including an internal reference group and advisory committee. The council has also appointed a Kirrip Aboriginal Corporation Project Officer.

Also in 2015-2016, Women's Health West, in partnership with Aunty Nellie Flag from Relationships Australia Victoria, have delivered numerous Sacred Sistas workshops in the western region of Melbourne. Sacred Sistas is a culturally safe space for young Aboriginal women (aged 12–25) to come and yarn, seek advice and be creative through arts-based activities. Topics include respectful relationships, puberty, contraception, safe sexual practice, Pap screening and STIs. The '*Tree of Life*' is also presented by Aunty Nellie Flagg. Health information is presented by a project worker from Women's Health West. Women's Health West also partnered with Wyndham City Council's Aboriginal Community Centre Committee (WACC) to host a "Sacred Sistas" workshop, providing a valuable opportunity for young aboriginal women to come together to increase knowledge and awareness about their sexual and reproductive health. Women's Health West have also led the work on the Nan, Aunty, Mum – You Are a Treasure to Our Family project, alongside WACC, Wyndham City Council and Breastscreen Victoria. This project is designed to promote breast screening and explore the barriers to breast screening experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.

Hepatitis Victoria have worked with VACCHO and VAHS to determine Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community needs pertaining to viral hepatitis education. They have also worked with individual community controlled health services where possible. Hepatitis Victoria regularly partner with services such as Melbourne Sexual Health Centre to deliver education to all young people identified as at risk of viral hepatitis and blood borne viruses.

Strategy: Support the delivery of culturally appropriate pregnant and parenting groups for young Aboriginal women in Melbourne's west

In 2014, SWMML was an active member of the steering committee for the Werribee Mercy Hospital Aboriginal Health Community Pathways Project. The project aims to provide culturally appropriate service access, discharge planning and referral pathways for Aboriginal patients within the hospital with a focus on maternity services. The Wyndham City Council Aboriginal Community Centre Committee project officer is a member of both Western Health and Mercy Aboriginal Health Steering Groups.

Deadly Health is an annual event specifically aimed at bringing Aboriginal young people together and providing a program tailored to their sexual health needs through the use of culturally appropriate material, Aboriginal facilitators and a participatory approach. Deadly Health key partners include the Department of Education and Training and Early Childhood Development's Secondary School Nursing Program and the Koori Engagement Unit, Melbourne Sexual Health Centre, cohealth and Women's Health West. The Deadly Health

working group held eight planning meetings in 2014 to ensure the 2014 event would be culturally sensitive and relevant to the needs of Aboriginal young people in Melton. The Gathering Place provided advice on appropriate content and contacts for Aboriginal elders who could conduct a Welcome to Country. Before the event, a focus group was conducted with Aboriginal young people at Melton Secondary College to better understand their sexual health needs. The Deadly Health event held in November 2014 was an adapted version of the Melbourne Sexual Health Centre Walumperi Unit's Deadly Dudes and Sacred Sistas programs. Cultural activities were facilitated by a local Aboriginal elder and a one hour hip-hop workshop was facilitated by Maribyrnong Youth Service. Secondary School Nurses and Koori Engagement and Support Officers co-facilitated the program. Thirteen young people attended the Deadly Health Melton event, including seven girls and six boys from Melton and Staughton secondary colleges. Pre and post event evaluation highlighted some improvement in young people's knowledge and attitudes towards sexual decision making. However, a one-off session is limited in its ability to shift attitudes and build trust with young people to express themselves freely. Deadly Health's success depends on effective collaboration between partners and active participation in the working group. Deadly Health Melton strengthened partnerships between key organisations to deliver tailored sexual and reproductive health education to Aboriginal young people.

Hepatitis Victoria continue to engage with young mothers for the purpose of education, but this work is not specific to young Aboriginal women in Melbourne's west.

Objective: Improve access to and the delivery of culturally appropriate sexuality education for young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds

Strategy: Develop and deliver tailored culturally appropriate sexuality education for newly arrived young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds

SWMML delivered culturally-appropriate sexual health literacy project with refugees and asylum seekers. SWMML led this project in partnership with New Hope Foundation, IPC Health and volunteer medical students. CEH provides ongoing delivery of culturally competent sexual health training programs and sessions to community groups and workers in the sector. CEH training uses an evaluation framework featuring process and impact indicators.

Melton City Council appointed a new Intercultural Officer in 2015 to liaise with youth services to lead work moving forward in partnership with key stakeholders. Hepatitis Victoria successfully delivered education and training to culturally and linguistically diverse communities and will continue to do this in the upcoming year. Cohealth co-designed a health literacy resource on Hepatitis C with an internal innovation grant.

Between 1 November 2014 and 31 October 2015, IPC Health, in partnership with Wyndham school nurses, developed and disseminated a Sexual and Reproductive Health Education Guide for secondary school staff to deliver sexuality education for students with English as an additional language. This was evaluated and the barriers and challenges identified by participating schools depended on the competing curriculum demands in classroom, priorities set by the school itself and the level of external support schools have to provide Sexual and Reproductive Health Education. Scoping was to be undertaken to establish alternative settings for action. Into 2016, IPC Health have continued to disseminate the guide to external service providers to support the sexual and reproductive health of migrant and refugee young people.

These services providers include North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network, Women's Health West, Centre for Culture, Ethnicity and Health and Spectrum. Women's Health West have used the guide in the Human Relations program at Western English Language School (WELS) in Braybrook. IPC Health will focus similar efforts in the future on reaching young people who access alternative education and LGBTIQ young people.

The Centre for Culture, Ethnicity and Health (CEH) delivered tailored, culturally appropriate sexual health education sessions to community in sex-disaggregated groups and to health professionals. The training focussed on engaging with migrant and refugee communities on sexual health topics. It was evaluated and found to be very helpful in providing useful information about sexual health, blood borne viruses (BBVs) and sexually transmissible infections (STIs). This work will continue to be implemented in a variety of settings into the next reporting period.

Women's Health West, in partnership with cohealth, Maribyrnong City Council and CEH, continue to deliver the Human Relations program at the Western English Language School (WELS). Over 150 students who spoke over 30 different languages have participated in the program since 2013. The program aims to prepare young people for their entry into mainstream schooling in Australia by increasing their knowledge and skills relating to sexuality, healthy sexual decision-making and respectful relationships. The most recent was implemented in term 2, 2016 to 32 students (17 females and 15 males), all from diverse cultural backgrounds. Programs were delivered separately to male and female students and interpreters and facilitators of the same sex taught each classroom. Five 90 minute lessons were delivered to students over five weeks spanning the topics of puberty and physiological functions, pregnancy, contraception, sexually transmissible infections (STIs) and healthy and respectful relationships. Evaluation data from both students and teachers was positive and indicated that knowledge and awareness of sexual and reproductive health had improved over the five weeks. Young women had a comprehensive understanding of a number of topics and concepts, including pregnancy options and respectful relationship scenarios. Similarly, young men demonstrated recall and understanding of the content that was covered in the weekly quizzes, with most answering all questions correctly each week. Male students also demonstrated great understanding of the topics being discussed through the use of imagery and drawings.

In 2015-2016, various forms of puberty and sexual health education sessions were delivered to students with English as an additional language by Department of Education and Training nurses, tailored to the school's needs.

Women's Health West's FARREP worker delivered the first iteration of the *Caught between two cultures (CBTC)* program to 17 young African women studying at Victoria University's Footscray campus in 2016. As a direct result of attending the program, participants increased their support for the elimination of female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) and found the program increased their awareness about the cultural and social aspects of FGM/C. In addition to this, the CBTC program manual was developed. The manual will support health and community workers to facilitate delivering similar sexual and reproductive health education programs to young African women aged between 16 and 25 in a culturally appropriate manner.

In 2016, Women's Health West and Moonee Valley City Council discussed the possibility of facilitating workshops in 2017 with young newly arrived women in Flemington with FARREP workers from Women's Health West. This would be facilitated by Moonee Valley Youth

Services and Women's Health West.

The Melton City Council's Youth *Strategy 2014-17* includes working with culturally and linguistically diverse, migrant and/or refugee communities to design and deliver appropriate programs and services. The council has also developed a draft *Intercultural Plan*.

During the 2015-2016 reporting period, Hepatitis Victoria continued to deliver tailored culturally appropriate viral hepatitis education for newly arrived young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds and have advocated for increased resources to a broad range of possible funders in order to continue this work.

Strategy: Advocate for increased resources that support mainstream sexuality education to be more inclusive and responsive to the needs of migrant and refugee young people

In 2013 and 2014, the SWMML worked closely with general practice to gain a better understanding of the role of specialised refugee health clinics and on-site GP specialists in working with and improving the health of newly arrived refugee communities. Practice visits conducted by GPs were monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis. As previously described on page 26, Women's Health West produced the *Caught Between Two Cultures* program manual. The manual will support health and community workers to facilitate delivering similar sexual and reproductive health education programs to young African women aged between 16 and 25 in a culturally appropriate manner.

Objective: Increase community education and capacity building activities to holistically redress the social factors that cause poor health outcomes for people in, and coming out of, prison.

Strategy: Provide holistic health and wellbeing workshops for people in prison to better support their sexual and reproductive health and wellbeing and to prepare them for post-release

During 2013 and 2014, Women's Health West, Melbourne City Mission, Flat Out and Harm Reduction Victoria partnered to deliver programs at the Dame Phyllis Frost Centre (correctional facility) and with women, post-release. Four workshops were also delivered for women currently in prison at Dame Phyllis Frost Centre, which covered sexual and reproductive health, mental health, respectful relationships and violence against women. These sessions were delivered to 18 women. Centre for Culture, Ethnicity and Health (CEH) facilitated culturally-appropriate sexual health workshops at the Dame Phyllis Frost Centre and the Metropolitan Remand Centre in Melbourne's west (with both men and women). The sessions were evaluated and the feedback was positive. The evaluation also highlighted that more sessions are required in men's prisons as men are perceived to be of greater risk of STIs and BBV's such as HIV and viral hepatitis. Hepatitis Victoria also provided pre-release education sessions in prisons and will continue to do so in the upcoming year.

Women's Health West, Victorian Aboriginal Health Service, Aboriginal Health Professionals and the Dame Phyllis Frost Centre worked together between February and May 2016 to deliver a culturally appropriate 12 week health promotion program to 34 Aboriginal women in prison. The aim of these women's groups was to increase knowledge relating to sexual health and reproductive health. The cultural sensitivity of the program allowed for women to affirm the importance of Aboriginal health from cultural perspectives, identify barriers and share their

view points. In addition to this, the partnership attended 12 prison working group meetings to design Koori Health Days. These Koori Health Days have been measured as an innovative example which can be introduced to support Aboriginal women in other prisons of Victoria. During August and September 2016, Women's Health West, the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service and Dame Phyllis Frost Centre worked together to develop the pilot of four Koori Health Clinics to Aboriginal women. A total of 21 Aboriginal women attended Koori Health Clinics (a clinical-focused program which stemmed from the Koori Health Days). Women's Health West advocated support of this new initiative.

Additionally, Women's Health West, Dame Phyllis Frost Centre, Victorian Aboriginal Health Service and Aboriginal health professionals delivered a sexual and reproductive health pilot program for two weeks to 10 young women at Parkville Youth facility (PYF) in December 2015. This was repeated again in April and September 2016.

Hepatitis Victoria continued to engage with prison populations in 2015-2016 for health education purposes.

Strategy: Seek funding for more comprehensive prison programs that respond to the social determinants of sexual and reproductive health

In late 2014, Women's Health West convened a working group to support advocacy and sexual and reproductive health promotion program planning and delivery for women in the prison system including those currently incarcerated and those exiting. Working group members include Hepatitis Victoria, Harm Reduction Victoria, cohealth's Health Works, Melbourne City Mission, Brosnan Intensive Support Services and Flat Out. Melton City Council has also indicated in principle agreement to provide letters of support for funding applications. Women's Health West's employed a project worker as part of the Helen Macpherson Smith Trust Grant and has worked with appropriate services to deliver sexual and reproductive health programs to Aboriginal women in Dame Phyllis Frost Centre and young women who are in remand or incarceration in Parkville Youth Justice Centre. This worker has undertaken projects within the prison setting and this work has been highlighted above.

Strategy: Advocate for more community correction orders for people who have committed less serious offences, particularly for women who are pregnant and parenting

The prison working group, as detailed above, has identified advocacy objectives associated with this strategy. Work on this strategy is yet to occur.

Objective: Increase integrated efforts associated with the Family and Reproductive Rights Education Program (FARREP) across the west

Strategy: Undertake joint FARREP planning and program delivery

In 2013, Women's Health West and cohealth established a formal partnership to progress a prevention project with men from communities known to practice female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C). Cohealth subsequently produced a report detailing promising prevention practice regarding working with men from FGM/C-affected communities. In 2014, North-West health promotion funded FARREP providers established a Governance Committee and Workers Network to support the integrated and coordinated response to FARREP across Melbourne's North- West region. The governance committee and workers

network continue to meet and collaborate on a coordinated response to FARREP.

The Action for Equity resource hub will also showcase FARREP-funded organisations health promotion resources, tools and practice examples for how to effectively work to prevent the practice of FGM/C. During 1 November 2014 to 31 October 2015, cohealth chaired the FARREP network meetings. Cohealth delivered two professional development sessions with health professionals, and developed and co-facilitated a community event in recognition of International Zero Tolerance day. Cohealth developed a YouTube video resource, which was codesigned with community, targeted at health professionals to enhance their understanding of the cultural, social and clinical needs of communities impacted by FGM/C. Cohealth continues to support 14 community groups and has delivered four cultural events. They continue to provide secondary consultation to GPs and refugee health program workers in Melbourne's west.

Women's Health West works towards building the capacity of health care professionals to understand the social, cultural and clinical needs of women who have undergone FGM/C and improve access to culturally-appropriate sexual and reproductive health services. Three professional development sessions were delivered at Sunshine Hospital in 2015 to 53 nurses, doctors and midwives. In addition, five professional development training sessions were delivered to 48 maternal and child health nurses in Melbourne's west. Training evaluation showed that of the Sunshine hospital staff, 100 per cent reported that their practice would be more respectful and responsive as a result of attending the professional development training, while 81 per cent of maternal and child health nurses reported that their practice would be more respectful and responsive following the training.

Opportunities for future work

Cohealth and Women's Health West will continue to participate on the North-West FARREP governance group and workers network to ensure integration of health promotion programs and services to communities known to practice FGM/C. In February 2016, cohealth recruited a male worker to support a network of male champions for the elimination of the practice within the western region catchment. Women's Health West will continue to strengthen the partnership with Sunshine Hospital and plans to collaborate with other western region hospitals to deliver professional development training to health professionals.

There are a number of community and sector-focussed FARREP events that will be taking place in early 2017, including Zero Tolerance Day, and Women's Health West and the North-West FARREP governance will play an active role in these events.

Case study: North West FARREP governance (NWFG)

Women's Health West, cohealth, Baynule Community Health, Darebin Council and Women's Health in the North partnered to form the North West FARREP governance (NWFG). NWFG met quarterly to provide high-level advocacy for the north west region's FARREP agenda. The governance group developed a strategic plan to support leadership in the north west and submitted a report to Department of Health and Human Services. The report outlined shared process and impact indicators and the evaluation framework is incorporated in the NWFG report. It found that the partnership has produced impacts across the north west, including:

- Increase in knowledge and understanding of the legislative status of FGM/C;
- increase in community attitudes that support the elimination of the practice;
- Improvement in knowledge about the social cultural and clinical context of FGM/C among health professionals;
- Increase in collaboration in health promotion activities and governance between the funded agencies in the North and West and;
- Referrals to and collaborative works with FARREP workers at The Royal Women's Hospital and different local agencies.

North West FARREP governance supports the North West FARREP Network (NWFN) in the provision of:

- Twenty sessions on cultural, social and clinical contexts of FGC delivered to 500 health practitioners;
- Forty community education sessions to 470 men, women and young women including schools to enhance literacy skills, self-confidence and leadership to make informed health decisions, and support the eradication of FGC;
- Over 18 talks to 380 attendees on women reproductive health, taboos about disclosure, arranged marriage, legal and financial concerns;
- Eighty referrals to different agencies;
- Ten presentations on the cohealth FGM/C video training '*Starting the Conversation on FGM/C*' (which was a finalist for the 2016 Public Health Award). The support for the FGC training video project demonstrated successful outcomes of a co-design process with the affected communities, and increase in knowledge among health practitioners in delivering respectful and culturally health care;
- Four local zero tolerance events and;
- Participation in Anti-Harassment workshops.

Partnership with other agencies also strengthened the capacity of services to support the diversity and growing needs of the newly arrived communities from practicing communities. Agencies included:

- Multicultural Centre for Women's Health (Zero tolerance Day workshop)
- DHHS (presentation of FARREP work and advocacy at DHHS forums for co-designing of Zero Tolerance Day 2017);
- Foundation House, Centre for Culture and Ethnicity and Refugee Asylum Seeker (tailored professional training and bilingual access & equity project);
- VicHealth (gender equity training);
- Cancer Council (pap screen pilot project, and screening prevention of cervical and breast cancer);
- Fitzroy Legal Service and Family Violence network (Men's Legal Rights project) and;
- Health West (Working together with Men).

5. Service and program delivery coordination

Objective: Increase culturally appropriate and responsive cervical screening service delivery and coordination throughout Melbourne's west

Strategy: Conduct cervical screening education sessions with women from under screened priority populations

During 2013 and 2014, SWMML through the Laverton community grants project, coordinated a group of GPs to provide health screening advice to culturally diverse community groups. This included information on Pap testing for women of various backgrounds and newly arrived migrant or refugee women. In March 2014, SWMML ran an International Women's day media campaign on women's health screening for breast and cervical cancer. The media campaign included articles in local newspapers, a poster and social media content (via Twitter). Cohealth's Health Works program works closely with women who inject drugs to encourage screening and preventative health within a broader framework of harm minimisation and holistic health and wellbeing services and support. Cohealth provides cervical screening services in Footscray, Joslin Clinic and Kensington general practice clinic.

As reported on page 15, Women's Health West, in partnership with Aunty Nellie Flag from Relationships Australia Victoria, have delivered numerous Sacred Sistas workshops in the western region of Melbourne. These workshops are a safe space to discuss sexual and reproductive health topics including Pap screening.

Strategy: Develop and implement appropriate resources and professional development with cervical screening providers about the social, cultural and clinical context that impedes under-screened population groups' access to regular Pap tests

In 2013 and 2014, SWMML supported practice nurses who are Pap test providers with education, resources and mentorship with the aim to increase screening rates. SWMML also regularly promoted cervical screening messages to primary health care providers through their e-newsletter. During 2014 and 2015, Women's Health West, in partnership with PapScreen Victoria, delivered a one day professional development training session to 25 nurses that provide cervical screening in Melbourne's northwest and 32 nurses from Wangaratta. Prior to this training, 60 per cent rated their knowledge of the social and cultural context of FGM/C as poor to average. Following the training, 67 per cent rated their knowledge as very good or excellent. Women's Health West in collaboration with PapScreen Victoria also developed a resource guide for Pap screen nurses working with women affected by FGM/C titled 'Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C): A guide for practitioners'.

In 2016, Women's Health West FARREP workers in partnership with Pap Screen Victoria delivered three professional development training sessions to 299 cervical screening nurses in Melbourne and Wangaratta.

Opportunities for future work

Women's Health West will continue to explore further opportunities to deliver professional development training in Melbourne's west and to rural cervical screening providers in order to enhance culturally-appropriate practice in rural and regional Victoria.

Objective: Deliver health promotion programs that promote the sexual and reproductive health and human rights of people with a disability

Strategy: Consult with people with a disability, and, where appropriate, carers and service providers, to better understand their sexual and reproductive health needs

In 2014, Moonee Valley City Council conducted consultations for the *Moonee Valley Disability Action Plan*. Similarly, Hobsons Bay City Council undertook consultations with community members during the development of the *Disability Access and Inclusion Strategy 2013-2017*. Melton City Council undertook consultations for its *Disability Action Plan 2013-17* but did not highlight sexual and reproductive health as a priority area. In 2014-2015, cohealth completed community consultations with people with a disability (relating to their service needs) and a consultation report has been completed. Between 2014 and 2015, Brimbank City Council continued to implement the *Brimbank Disability Action Plan 2012-2016*. The plan's key achievements during this reporting period include the delivery of the Brimbank Disability Expo that provided information to support families and carers in the City of Brimbank. A range of community and government partners collaborated to deliver this event. Brimbank City Council also delivered disability awareness training for its staff. The programs included Mental Health First Aid and Resource for Equitable Access to Libraries. Council also supported the Brimbank Disability Network Group, the Social Justice Coalition and maintained partnerships with a broad range of government and community organisations. The plan also supported the development of 'Their Work, Their World' - a short film that celebrated the Brimbank Disability Network Group's success and provided insight into the experiences of people living with a disability. Moonee Valley City Council will again consult with people with a disability in 2016-2017 to inform the *Council Plan 2017-21* and *MV2040* long-term strategy.

In 2016, cohealth held a Sexuality and Relationships Forum in partnership with Maribyrnong City Council, which was attended by 42 people, including 15 representatives from organisations, 10 families and carers and 17 people with a disability. A total of 23 individuals and organisations have expressed an interest in ongoing regional work to promote respectful relationships and sexual health among people with a disability.

The following feedback was provided by attendees. Overall they wanted:

- More forums held;
- More opportunities for people with an intellectual disability to get together for both social and educational purposes;
- To be able to enable people with an intellectual disability and family/carers to access educational and social programs;
- The distribution of information about programs and initiatives in this area;
- Support for the Living Safer Sexual Lives: Respectful Relationships Peer Educators to continue their important work; and
- The continued advocacy on sexuality issues for people with an intellectual disability.

Strategy: Increase people with a disability's sexual and reproductive health knowledge, confidence and capacity through the design and implementation of gender specific health promotion programs

Cohealth, Brimbank City Council, Hobsons Bay City council and Maribyrnong City Council consulted with La Trobe University regarding delivery of the Living Safer Sexual Lives: Respectful relationships program. Representatives from the organisations are now working

together to deliver the program across the western region. Cohealth, Women's Health West and Brimbank City Council worked together to adapt the Girls Talk Guys Talk program for delivery at Jackson school as detailed earlier in this report. During 2014 and 2015, cohealth delivered four Living Safer Sexual Lives programs in partnership with peer educators, Metro Access workers from Hobsons Bay, Maribyrnong, Brimbank and Moonee Valley City Councils and the Western Region Centre Against Sexual Assault. Women's Health West and Brimbank Youth Services worked collaboratively with to deliver education programs around sexual and reproductive health to women with an intellectual disability.

In 2015-2016, the Department of Education and Training delivered sexual health programs to students with a disability at Victoria University Secondary School. They will continue to deliver these sessions as requested.

Strategy: Undertake community education and capacity building efforts that promote the sexual and reproductive rights of people with a disability to foster attitudes, practices and policies that support and protect the realisation of these rights

Cohealth, in collaboration with Metro Access workers, piloted and evaluated the Relationships and More Personal Stuff (RAMPS) program. Cohealth is also exploring options to convene a disability-focused community of practice. Wyndham City Council in collaboration with cohealth will deliver three sexual and reproductive health workshops. The purpose of these workshops is to consult, share information and build capacity of people with a disability, carers, families and service providers. The Living Safer Sexual Lives Program, as detailed above, provides all partners with capacity building via sexual and reproductive health training to deliver the program.

A number of western region councils, including Hobsons Bay, Maribyrnong, Brimbank, Moonee Valley worked with cohealth to facilitate the "Living Safer Sexual Lives: Respectful Relationships" program. This four session workshop series brings people with an intellectual disability together to talk about relationships and sexuality. The program is led by peer educators (i.e. people with an intellectual disability) who are supported by co-facilitators (workers with experience in disability, sexual health, sexual assault). The program model was developed by La Trobe University who also train the peer educators and co-facilitators. The project targets people with an intellectual disability to access information and support relating to respectful relationships. A total of 37 people participated in five programs delivered across four LGAs.

A participatory evaluation of the Living Safer Sexual Lives: Respectful Relationships program found that:

- Program participants increased their knowledge relating to sexuality and respectful relationships, and improved communication with important people in their lives.
- Peer educators also increased their knowledge, gained confidence, and valued being able to make a contribution to the community through helping others.
- Organisations involved in the program made changes to their organisational practices to be more inclusive of people with intellectual disability.

6. Research, monitoring and evaluation

Objective: Research, monitor and evaluate the experiences of women in the sex industry in the west to inform strategies that reduce discrimination and violence, increase social inclusion and equitable access to social resources and service provision

No work on this strategy has commenced as yet.

7. Communication and social marketing

Objective: Increase inter-sectoral collaboration on the social determinants of health and wellbeing through communicating to various sectors their role in sexual and reproductive health promotion

Strategy: Communicate the importance of sexual and reproductive health promotion and advocate for increased partnerships in Action for Equity from various sectors, including local governments, Medicare locals and Aboriginal community controlled organisations

In October 2013, the Action for Equity plan was launched with eight formal partners consisting of women's and community health, a primary care partnership and specialist state-wide services. In 2014, the regional partnership consisted of eighteen formal partners across the sectors of women's and community health, local and state government, a primary care partnership, Medicare locals, a hospital, Aboriginal Community Controlled Originations and specialist state-wide services. In 2015, with the conclusion of Medicare locals the partnership has fifteen formal partners from a wide range of sectors who are committed to regional action on sexual and reproductive health promotion.

In 2015, Women's Health West contracted Deakin University to undertake a rigorous literature review to investigate and determine the key health influences of health inequities associated with sexual and reproductive health in Australia and internationally. Deakin University concluded this work in 2016 and the report was officially launched in September 2016. The research report makes an evidence-based case for six social determinants of sexual and reproductive health and has been promoted to partners as an important, evidence-based tool for sexual and reproductive health promotion.

Strategy: Identify potential partners in sexual and reproductive health promotion within the settings for action (e.g. within media, arts and popular culture, sports and recreation) and develop communication strategies that work to ensure inter-sectoral collaboration

The development of a communication strategy to support the implementation of Action for Equity and support cross-sectoral partner collaboration through online interactive forums was a key partnership priority. Women's Health West designed the Action for Equity online

resource hub, which went live in November 2014. The resource hub is updated monthly with research, best-practice in sexual and reproductive health promotion, regional programs and services and public policy submissions. Percentage of online downloads and resource hub engagement is collated and analysed annually. Partners can access accurate information about research, best-practice in sexual and reproductive health promotion, programs and services and public policy and enquiries. Partners can also access project-specific information including working group meeting minutes, agendas and updates. Between July 2014 and June 2015, the resource hub had 1,827 users with a total of 4,146 page views.

Melton City Council identified the Melton Library and Learning Hub and Caroline Springs Leisure Centre as locations for condom vending machines. Staff at these various sites continue to support the initiative. Hobson Bay City Council, in collaboration with IPC Health, identified opportunities for a service operating out of Newport Community Hub to provide free STI testing for young people.

During 2015-2016, IPC Health have continued to extend the availability of chlamydia tests for young people under the age of 30 at all sites. Chlamydia testing is currently offered at Hoppers Crossing, Altona Meadows, and Sunshine campuses. Outreach services are also offered at Headspace and St Albans sites and IPC Health are looking to extend outreach services across Hobsons Bay and Wyndham (potentially through the support of local government youth services).

Objective: Increase communication and social marketing via social media to ensure condoms are accessible and affordable and raise awareness of safe sexual practices

Strategy: Partner with local governments to improve condom access and availability by increasing the number of vending machines in public places

In 2013 and 2014, Women's Health West developed a series of key documents for the condom vending machine project. These included:

- A business case for local councils outlining the public health benefits of such a project
- A report for each local government area mapping possible locations for the machines
- An options paper referencing different potential sites for installation of the machines
- A costing document comparing the costs of machine installation from different providers.

Women's Health West, on behalf of the Action for Equity partnership was successful in obtaining a Helen Macpherson Smith Trust Social Impact Grant, which has been used to fund the provision of condom vending machines. In early 2014, Brimbank, Hobsons Bay, Maribyrnong, Melton, Moonee Valley and Wyndham city councils provided in-principle support for the project and explored implementation options. These six local councils committed to actions that included implementing sexuality education in secondary schools and other settings, advocating for law reform that uphold and protects sexual and reproductive health rights, increasing access to publically accessible condom vending machines with affordable condoms, undertaking organisational policy and practice reform to foster gender- inclusive workplaces, and numerous other actions. These actions would influence factors that contribute to sexual and reproductive health at an individual, community and societal level. The partnership of six local councils and Women's Health West agreed to undertake a 12 month condom vending machine pilot project, which took place between July 2015 and September 2016. Women's Health West signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with

three local councils (Brimbank, Maribyrnong and Melton) and 10 condom vending machines were installed during this period. A total of 576 condom packs were sold across the three municipalities, equating to 1,333 condoms. Community feedback was positive and minimal vandalism was reported across the five chosen sites which included libraries, leisure centres and a public park. Melton City Council vending machines were placed at Hannah Watts Park, Caroline Springs Leisure Centre and Melton Library and Learning Hub. Four hundred and ninety four packs (equating to 988 condoms) were sold across these sites. The period with the highest sales was January – February 2016, with an average of 2.6 packs sold per day. Brimbank City Council sales at Visy Cares Hub (Sunshine) were consistent across the pilot with an average of 10 packs sold per month. Consultation with young service users at Visy Cares Hub resulted in the subsidised costs of condoms at this location. A total of 82 condom packs were sold in the Maribyrnong municipality, with the highest sales were reported between November and December 2015. It is predicted that increased patronage during the school holidays and summer period at the Footscray Library (where machines were placed) may have influenced this.

Women's Health West and all three councils played an active role in social marketing strategies during the pilot. Women's Health West and council partners attended numerous community events, including Victoria University O-Fest, Midsumma Festival and community forums at Brimbank Youth Services. Women's Health West and partners designed and implemented a number of social media campaigns during the pilot period with substantial community reach. The #SafeSexInTheWest campaign, designed by Women's Health West, generated 28,575 unique impressions across both Twitter and Facebook. Other social media campaigns were informed by timely social references and events, including Pokémon Go, the AFL Grand Final and Sexual Health Awareness Week. Dating apps Squirt and Grindr (targeting men who have sex with men) were used to promote machines, generating 67,272 impressions and 129 click-throughs. There was also local media interest from the Leader newspapers across Brimbank, Maribyrnong, Melton, and Hobsons Bay during the pilot. The pilot report: "Improving Condom Access and Availability in Melbourne's West 12 Month Pilot" is available at www.whwest.org.au/srh/wordpress/. The project continues until December 2017.

Opportunities for future work

Women's Health West will continue to support Action for Equity council partners to install condom vending machines in their local area as well as supporting social marketing initiatives. Social marketing initiatives in 2017 will focus on the three priority population groups: young people, men who have sex with men, and increasing accessibility to condom vending machines amongst street based sex workers.

Strategy: Conduct social marketing to promote the importance of safe sexual practices

During 2013 and 2014, SWMML organised and ran social marketing campaigns to promote safe sexual practices, including a safe sex media campaign during Valentine's Day. A poster was designed and advertised in the local newspaper, tweets were posted and an online article was published. INWMML ran a small range of social media activities via Facebook and Twitter during 2014 on issues such as World AIDS Day, Pap screening and HPV vaccination for young men. During 2014 and 2015, local governments participating as part of the condom vending machine project, in partnership with Women's Health West, worked to develop a social marketing campaign aimed at improving access to free or low cost condoms.

Sexual Health Awareness Week (SHAW) took place between 14 and 21 February 2016. A social media campaign was designed and centred on four key themes of respect, consent, choice, and pleasure. Posts were designed to engage with social media users and increase knowledge and awareness of the condom vending machines, and topics that included consent, STIs and sexual identity. During this campaign, Women's Health West posted 16 items on Facebook and 12 on Twitter. Melton and Maribyrnong City Council were actively involved in the dissemination of this content. Posts had a total reach of 14,068 on Facebook alone, and across both Twitter and Facebook the campaign generated 28,575 impressions. These posts resulted in 235 click-throughs to Women's Health West's website, YouTube clips and other supporter's websites. Posts were shared/retweeted 53 times by partners, supporters and other services, and 34 media outlets were exposed to the content. National Condom Day on 14 February 2016 was the first event to be acknowledged during SHAW. Women's Health West designed a National Condom Day digital poster which was shared on both Facebook and Twitter. The poster highlighted the locations for free condoms and condom vending machines and also encouraged people to join the conversation using the campaign hashtag #SafeSexInTheWest. This post was subsequently shared by Healthy City of Melton, Moonee Valley Youth Services, Phoenix Youth and Sexual Health Society of Victoria. This post had the potential to reach over 3,200 users via Facebook.

Between 10 and 27 June 2016, advertisements were placed on two dating apps targeting gay and bisexual identifying men: Squirt and Grindr. Users were geotargeted based on suburb. These click-through ads directed users to a landing page on Women's Health West's website that listed the prices and locations of the condom vending machines. Overall, a total of 251 click-throughs were reported; 122 of which were via Grindr. Squirt ads were able to generate 67,272 impressions, resulting in 129 click-throughs. During the app campaign period, condom sales rose in Melton by 126 per cent. While we cannot determine causality with these sales, it is likely that the ads helped to generate awareness. App promotion was a collaboration between Women's Health West and Melton City Council.

Melton City Council's 'Healthy City of Melton' Facebook page posted promotional messages for the Condom Vending Machines at the three local sites using #SafeSexInTheWest during SHAW. Melton City Council also shared the Women's Health West Facebook post in the lead-up to and on National Condom Day (14 February), reaching 156 people. A post on 16 February 2016 (as part of Sexual Health Awareness Week) reached 201 users. City of Melton Youth Services Facebook also shared the Facebook posts relating to Condom Vending Machines. Maribyrnong City Council also posted and shared messages on using #SafeSexInTheWest. Women's Health West, in partnership Maribyrnong City Council, also provided sexual health information to students during Victoria University's Orientation Week (O-fest) in February 2016. Campaign flyers were distributed to Women's Health West partners, including cohealth and IPC Health. Maribyrnong City Council distributed over 150 flyers to various community sites within their municipality, including leisure centres and libraries. Similarly, flyers were disseminated to a range of different service providers in Melton via the Melton Youth Advisory Network (MYAN). These services include Centrelink, local secondary schools and TAFES.