

Joint approach to family violence

By Stella Tzobanakis

A strategy aimed to address the problem of violence against women, and its 'steady increase' in Melbourne's west, has been devised.

Preventing Violence Together 2030: Western Region Strategy to Prevent Violence Against Women – a regional partnership made up of 19 organisations who work together to prevent violence against women across Melbourne's west – was launched at The Substation in Newport last week.

The strategy is a co-ordinated approach to preventing violence against women across Melbourne's west, accompanied by an annual action plan and an evaluation plan.

The strategy stated men's violence against women in Australia was a human rights violation, with 39 per cent of women having experienced physical and/or sexual violence by a male perpetrator.

It also emphasised men's violence against women had a profound impact, causing numerous poor health, social, cultural and economic outcomes for women, their children

and the community. The strategy revealed there were "high rates of violence against women in Melbourne's west".

Victoria Police data over the five-year period of October 2011 to September 2016 demonstrated a "steady increase in reported family violence incidents across the west".

During that period, there were 12,545 family violence incidents reported by Victoria Police for the western region representing "an increase of 10.1 per cent from the previous year".

Dr Robyn Gregory, chief executive of Women's Health West, a lead partner in the

strategy, said the strategy marked an increased commitment to the long-term work required to prevent and eliminate violence against women.

"The majority of intimate partner violence, sexual assault and family violence in Australia is perpetrated by men against women," Dr Gregory said.

"It's a problem rooted in gender-based power inequalities between women and men. We know violence against women is preventable.

"By working as part of this long established partnership across the west, we can take action to end men's violence against women."

Focus on life in Footscray

An image of shoppers in the thick of action at Footscray Market has been declared the winner of Victoria University's Picturing Footscray competition for 2017.

The untitled image by Christian Lukasik was chosen for the \$3000 first place after judges sifted through close to 300 entries.

Roaming by John Umina collected the \$2000 second place and *You are My Sunshine* by Julia Wong won \$500 in third. *Holiday in the West* by Mikaela Foster was highly commended.

The Picturing Footscray prize was established in 2016 as part of the BluScray VU Centenary celebrations. Entries are on exhibit at VU at MetroWest and voting in the \$500 People's Choice Award are open until September 15.

To see the entries online visit www.facebook.com/VUintheCommunity.

Benjamin Millar



Left: Winner Untitled by Christian Lukasik.

Above: *Roaming* by John Umina came in second place.

(Pictures: Supplied)

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YES NO

I'D RATHER CHOOSE.

YES NO

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Despite long-term public support, the last two decades have seen 30 attempts to pass a Voluntary Assisted Dying law fail.

This is mainly due to fake news and fear campaigns, like the kind the Australian Christian Lobby and Right to Life group are spreading right now in Victoria.

They are activating their members to pressure MPs to vote against Voluntary Assisted Dying laws. It's a tactic that has worked many times before.

But polls show that over 75% of Victorians support this law.

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You need to make your voice heard now. Victoria's politicians will soon vote on a Voluntary Assisted Dying law. Hearing directly from the public will make a difference.

The law will be for competent adults with an incurable physical illness, which two doctors expect to cause death within 12 months, and is causing suffering that cannot be relieved.

This is the most conservative law of its type proposed anywhere in the world. Those who oppose the law can choose not to use it.

So why should we all suffer for their beliefs?

Make it clear to your local MP that this is a law you want. To join our campaign and find the contact details of your local MP visit

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IF YOU BELIEVE IN CHOICE, WE NEED YOUR VOICE.

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