

---

## **Priorities for Victorian women's health 2014–2018**

Developed by  
Victorian women's health services

March 2014

---

Clear disparities in health outcomes exist in Victoria and across the world, with different groups experiencing wellbeing and illness in unequal ways. Women are one of those groups. While Victorian women are more likely to live longer than Victorian men, their higher prevalence and incidence of non-fatal health problems result in more years lived with ill health and disability. For Victorian women aged 15 to 44 years, for instance, intimate partner violence is the leading contributor to disability and illness and, tragically, death.

*Gendered differences in population health status means there remains significant scope in 2014 to improve the health of Victorian women.*

Victorian women's health services commend successive Victorian governments for their leadership on women's health to date and encourage government to continue to partner with the women's health sector to reduce the burden of ill health and disease for better health outcomes for Victorian women.

The Victorian women's health sector continues this work through *Priorities for Victorian Women's Health 2014–2018*, which recommends the development of a comprehensive women's health policy and action platform for 2014–2018 that includes a set of specific actions for government.

***The Victorian women's health sector seeks commitment to the development of a comprehensive women's health policy and action platform for 2014–2018.***

## What should the women's health policy and action platform include?

In order to reduce the burden of ill health and disease for better health outcomes for Victorian women, the women's health policy and action platform should include five specific actions for government. These are:

1. Development of a statewide sexual and reproductive health strategy.
2. Investment and leadership in the primary prevention of violence against women.
3. Research and action on women in a changing society, specifically the impacts of climate change on the health of Victorian women
4. Development of a gendered mental health and wellbeing plan.
5. Further investment in the Victorian Women's Health Program to implement initiatives arising from the actions above.

## How must the women's health policy and action platform be developed and implemented?

In order to succeed, the women's health policy and action platform must be developed and implemented in the following way. It must:

- be led by Government – with the Office of Women's Affairs returned to the Department of Premier and Cabinet to assure a whole-of-government approach;
- focus on gender equity across the whole of government and at all levels of government;
- include clear performance goals or targets for measuring achievements;
- ensure collection and analysis of gendered data; and
- invest in Victorian women's health services to lead local and statewide strategies.

This document has been endorsed by:

CASA Forum – Victorian Centres Against Sexual Assault  
AWHN – Australian Women's Health Network  
VCOSS – Victorian Council of Social Service  
Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society

 Women with disabilities victoria  
empowering women

 Gippsland Women's  
Health Service  
REG. NO. A0024440W  
ABN 21 214 835 436

 Multicultural  
Centre for  
Women's Health

 whise  
Women's Health in the South East

 WIG  
women's health  
GEELONG

 Women's  
Health  
Victoria

 women's  
health west

 Women's Health East  
Investing in Equality and Wellbeing for Women

 WOMEN'S HEALTH  
GOULBURN NORTH EAST  
Challenging inequality, embracing diversity

 WOMEN'S HEALTH  
IN THE NORTH

 women's  
health  
LODDON MALLEE

 WOMEN'S HEALTH  
AND WELLBEING  
Barwon South West Inc.