



2024: A year in review

As 2024 draws to a close, I want to take a moment to reflect and provide an update to supporters, stakeholders and partners about our work throughout this year.

Our [annual report](#) provides a good overview of much of the work we've undertaken.

Gender inequality and violence against women are inextricably linked to health and wellbeing outcomes for women and so these have been priority areas for the WHWBSW team.



[Read the report](#)

In pursuit of our goal to see all women and girls, healthy safe and equal, we have worked to [advance gender equity](#) across the region, by building capacity and providing support for organisations to meet their obligations under the [Gender Equality Act](#).

This work has taken place within a diverse range of organisations, including health services and LGAs across our region.

We have worked to provide guidance around undertaking [gender impact assessments](#), policy improvement and embedding equitable practices. To drive positive change the team has developed [resources](#) and training packages, facilitated networks and led communities of practice to share knowledge and learnings.

Gender equity

WHWBSW enjoys working closely with many partners.

Through 2024, we had the distinct pleasure of working closely with Wannon Water in developing an extensive gender equity training package, and this has provided an invaluable opportunity to learn together as well as achieve broad reach across a large workforce.

We also facilitated gender equity training for new councillors in a number of councils across our region after the October 2024 elections.



Health Promotion Officer Lovish Sekaran & Team Leader Rochelle Winnen delivering Gender Equity training at Wannon Water.



Health Promotion Officer Caitlyn Hoggan delivering Gender Equity training to new Councillors at Warrnambool City Council.

Preventing violence against women



Respect 2040 partners sign on to the Executive Governance Group – united and 100% committed to preventing violence against women.

We worked directly with [organisations and sporting clubs](#) to embed good policy and practice and help foster more respectful and safer environments for women and girls.

We also contributed to the development of the [Margins to the Mainstream](#) project plan aimed at the prevention of violence against women with disabilities, collaboratively developed a budget submission for the project and launched this submission with an event in November.

We contributed to action for the [prevention of violence against women](#) by formalising and strengthening the regional [Respect 2040](#) partnership with committed organisations from across our region, and by developing [useful resources](#) and supporting partners to develop meaningful action plans.



CEO Jodie Hill with the team at South West Sport: Ashliegh Glennon and Marc Tims



Health promotion Officers Alice Creevey and Hannah Colegrave delivering gender needs assessment training at Lonsdale Links.

Sexual and reproductive health

Sexual and reproductive health

was a priority focus for our team in 2024, and we are committed to ensuring all women in the BSW region experience good sexual and reproductive health.

We have had a wonderfully positive experience bringing together a Community of Practice for partners across the region who have a keen interest in developing a regional sexual and reproductive health strategy.

We also collaborated with Deakin Rural Health on [groundbreaking research](#) to better understand the facilitators and barriers to accessing key sexual and reproductive health services.

This research report was launched with an [event](#) in October and is the critical first step towards making improvements to regional access of sexual and reproductive health services for women in the Barwon South West.



Attendees at the inaugural Sexual and Reproductive Health Forum.



Expanding our reach

Alongside our strategic priorities, we've contributed more broadly to the collective impact of the state wide Women's Health Network by working collectively to advocate, collaborate, [analyse the state budget](#) and deliver impact that is both broad reaching and regionally nuanced.

We contributed to regional planning and progress by building strong relationships and participating in collaborative planning with partners, including the Public Health Unit, the G21 partnership, and the Sexual Assault and Family Violence Centre to name a few.

With Respect Victoria, we also co-hosted a workshop to map and better connect the prevention community across our region.



The Health Promotion Team with Roma Brittnell at the Queens Hall Women's Health Showcase event.



Health Promotion Officer Alice Henderson presenting at the regional prevention mapping workshop with respect Victoria.



CEO Jodie Hill, Deputy CEO Julie Spec and Keynote Speaker Dr Norman Swan AM at the G21 Regional Forum.



CEO Jodie Hill participating in a panel presentation at the launch of the Barwon Health Public Health Strategy Event.

Expanding our reach

We invested in advocating to influencers and decision-makers through 2024. We've grown our voice, by proactively making submissions to inquiries and advisory groups.

We have taken opportunities to share our work and contribute to regional conversation in [media](#), local forums, speaking events and broadened our reach through community involvement.



Team Leader Jacinta Lenehan, Premier Jacinta Allan and Jacinta Ermacora MP at the women's pain roundtable discussion in Warrnambool.



Deputy CEO Julie Spec with Deputy Prime Minister Richard Marles at the Real Deal Geelong Alliance Action Forum.



CEO Jodie Hill delivering an International Womens Day presentation to the team at Provico in Warrnambool.

Strategic planning

As we look ahead to 2025, it's exciting that we will launch a refreshed strategic plan in January providing many opportunities for us to build on the strength of our existing work and also to explore new, interesting and impactful activities that will help us to progress our goal to see all women and girls healthy, safe and equal.



This month, we were thrilled that Respect 2040 and our work to support the partnership were recognised as a winner for Outstanding Achievement in The Australian Charity Awards 2024.

This recognition is testament to the great work being done across the Respect 2040 partnership.

We are so proud to work with our partners to create a region where people, regardless of gender, are treated with respect and are free from gender-based violence.

The timing of the award was particularly significant as it was announced during 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence - a time when people globally unite to shine a light on violence against women and reinforce commitments and action to prevent it.

We accept and celebrate this recognition while remaining conscious that we are at the beginning of a long and consistent effort to make change.

Moving forward

As well as continuing work with our partners, we look forward to working closely with our community and the women in our region.

Importantly, this coming year will also see us extend our commitment to reconciliation, as we embark on the formal process of developing our Reconciliation Action Plan.



The WHWBSW Board and Executive team strategic planning.

Women's Health and Wellbeing Barwon South West is a not-for-profit organisation. If you would like to contribute to improving the lives of women in the Barwon South West you can [donate here](#).

Your donation will support us to provide capacity building and training opportunities promoting gender equality and respectful relationships for schools, workplaces, sporting clubs, community organisations and individuals; deliver campaigns, workshops, events, resources and research to ensure that women and girls in our region have equitable access to relevant health services and information; and; advocate for the women, girls and gender diverse people of our region to ensure better health outcomes for all.

Thank you to our colleagues, partners, stakeholders, advocates and supporters throughout 2024.

Collective and collaborative work is where we achieve our best results, and we look forward to working with you all in 2025.



CEO, Women's Health & Wellbeing Barwon South West

