

**2022 / 2026**

**GENDER  
EQUALITY  
ACTION  
PLAN**



**WEST  
WIMMERA  
HEALTH  
SERVICE**



We, West Wimmera Health Service, acknowledge the traditional owners of the land, the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadwadjali, Wergaia and Jupagalk people.

We pay our respects to the Elders past, present and emerging. We thank the traditional owners for custodianship of the land, and celebrate the continuing culture of the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadwadjali, Wergaia and Jupagalk people.



West Wimmera Health Service is committed to providing a safe and welcoming environment for all people to participate, including those with diverse sexualities and genders.



## OUR VISION

To establish and maintain a high quality and responsive health service through the pursuit of excellence and effective use of innovation and technology.

## OUR MISSION

West Wimmera Health Service is committed to the delivery of health, welfare and disability services which are compassionate, responsive, accessible and accountable to individual and community needs, and which result in quality outcomes for the people of the West and Southern Wimmera and the Southern Mallee.

## OUR VALUES

**Total Care:** delivering care that is safe, effective and person-centred, always.

**Safety:** providing a safe workplace and services free from avoidable harm.

**Unity:** working well together in a great place to work.

**Accountability:** doing the right thing by our stakeholders and ourselves.

**Innovation:** using our imagination - if there's a better way we will find it.

# MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

West Wimmera Health Service is proud to deliver our first Gender Equality Action Plan 2022-2026 (GEAP).

The GEAP has been developed in alignment with the Victorian Government's Gender Equality Act 2020. The GEAP will be embedded into all aspects of the organisation to ensure that gender equality is a shared priority and responsibility of all departments across the Service and its partnership within the community. It sets out the gender equality practices and priorities to maximise the health, happiness and wellbeing of all WWHS employees and consumers.

The benefits of this integrated approach enables big-picture thinking and planning, strengthened collaboration across shared priorities, streamlined reporting and evaluation processes and improved gender equality outcomes across the Service.

The GEAP has been developed in an unprecedented backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic. For many elements of the community the lack of gender equality has been more evident during the pandemic. The GEAP will guide the Service in ensuring our workplace continues to be healthy, sustainable, resilient, innovative, adaptive and inclusive.

Over the next four years, West Wimmera Health Service will strive towards seeking significant improvement and achievement across the GEAP action areas, to improve the inclusion, health, wellbeing and resilience of the our workplace.

**Ritchie Dodds**  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**18 March 2022**

## WWHS GENDER EQUALITY STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

West Wimmera Health Service pledges to provide healthcare services that ensure equal access to opportunities and resources as well as treating everyone with fairness, compassion, dignity and respect regardless of their gender identity.

This Statement of Commitment underpins our expectation that gender equality is considered and prioritised in the formulation and review of all West Wimmera Health Service policies, procedures and service delivery.



# OUR WORKPLACE SNAPSHOT

West Wimmera Health Service's catchment covers nine towns:

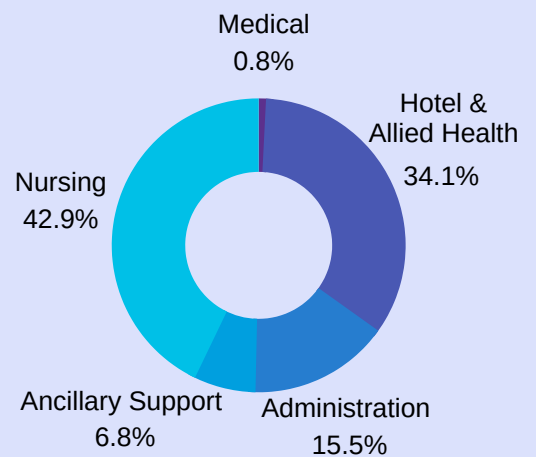
- Goroke
- Jeparit
- Kaniva
- Minyip
- Murtoa
- Natimuk
- Nhill
- Rainbow
- Rupanyup

The Service offers ten residential aged care facilities, three community health centres and five acute facilities.

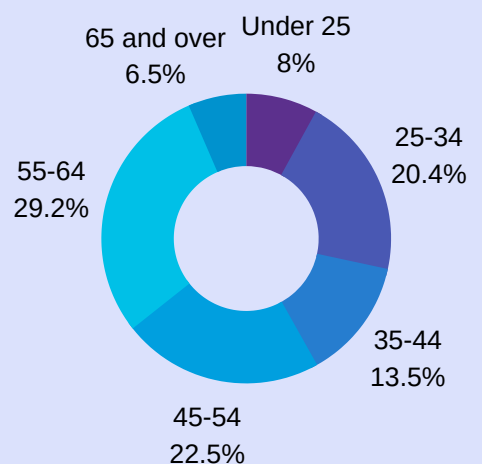
The Service delivers a wide range of health services to the local communities including: Allied health services, bed based and community aged care services, disability services, TAC Services, surgery, community nursing, dental and radiology.

**In June 2021 we had 558 employees and a large number of volunteers.**

## OCCUPATIONS



## STAFF AGES



# LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

The Victorian Government's Gender Equality Act 2020 (the Act) requires certain organisations with over 50 employees, such as West Wimmera Health Service, to develop a Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) every four years.

Our GEAP will help us plan, implement and measure change in promoting gender equality in our workplace.

The Act outlines what should be included in our GEAP and our responsibilities whilst preparing our GEAP in regards to consultation, audits, the gender equality principles, adequate allocation of resources, submitting our GEAP to the Public Sector Gender Equality Commissioner, publishing the GEAP on our website and completing progress reports.

West Wimmera Health Service also has legal obligations to the following legislations and instruments when developing our GEAP:

- The Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth) and other Commonwealth workplace relations legislation
- The Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic) and the Charter of Human rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)
- The Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth) and the Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cth)
- Enterprise agreements, workplace determinations and modern awards.



# GENDER EQUALITY AUDIT

In preparation for the Service's workplace gender audit an internal staff survey was completed in May 2021 for the purposes of updating employee personnel files and ensuring details on our electronic payroll system, Pay Global, was current.

The Workplace Gender Audit 2021 was completed in August 2021 for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021.

Our baseline audit data analysis highlighted the areas of our data recording and collection that need to progress to provide inclusive gender categories and further align to the data requested by the Gender Equality Commissioner.

In preparing the GEAP, the Service's policies, procedures, frameworks and strategies were analysed alongside data collected from the baseline audit and the People Matter survey.

A key focus was on investigating intersectional gender inequality, recognising that inequality can be made up of other forms of disadvantage or discrimination such as based on Aboriginality, age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, race, religion, sexual orientation and other attributes.

Four key themes were identified to consider our workforce consultation processes:

- Leadership
- Negative Behaviours
- Cultural Safety
- Leave and Workplace Flexibility

## LEADERSHIP

Audit data showed that:

- 86% of staff at WWHS are females,
- 75% of the Board Directors are females
- 75% of our employees had some sort of flexible working arrangement.
- 49% of staff felt they had an equal chance at promotion in the organisation.

More work is needed in minimising the gap between the perceptions of leaders and employees and improving communication throughout the organisation.



## **NEGATIVE BEHAVIOURS**

Audit data highlighted capture of negative behaviours at low levels over the last 12 months:

- 3% of staff experiencing discrimination,
- 5% experiencing sexual harassment,
- 25% witnessing negative behaviours,
- 23% witnessing aggression or violence.
- Bullying was experienced by 19% of staff
- 87% said they didn't submit a formal complaint indicating employees may be reluctant to officially report bullying or may not be aware of the proper channels.

Employees may not be aware of their rights and obligations to create safe work environments and only 64% reported feeling safe to challenge inappropriate behaviour at work.

## **CULTURAL SAFETY**

Audit data revealed that:

- 78% - 85 % of staff agree that WWHS has a positive workplace culture within the organisation in relation to employees of diverse age, gender, religion, culture, race, disability, LGBTIQ+ and sexual orientation 86% agree that WWHS encourages respectful workplace behaviours.
- Discrimination was experienced by 3% of staff indicating there is still work to do towards our goal of 100% of employees agreeing that there is no cultural or gender barriers to success within our organisation.

Unfortunately data collection of gender identity, sexuality and intersectional diversities within our staff was not possible with the current payroll system, therefore it's upgrade and future collection of such characteristics will be a priority moving forward.

## **LEAVE AND WORKPLACE FLEXIBILITY**

Audit data indicated that:

- 3 females and 0 males accessed Family Violence Leave
- 137 females compared with 20 males accessed carers leave
- 75% of our employees had some sort of flexible working arrangement.

Preventing family violence and violence against women and supporting our employees and their families is top priority. Data collection and records will need to improve in this area so that intersectional data for leave accessed and flexible arrangements can be captured.

Educating employees about their leave entitlements (particularly carer's leave, parental leave and family violence leave) and the flexible arrangements the service offers will be a priority and training for managers in supporting employees to take such leave without worry of confidentiality, privacy breaches or discrimination.

**75%**

**PERCENTAGE OF OUR EMPLOYEES HAD A FLEXIBLE WORKING ARRANGEMENT**

**558**

Number of people we employ

**14%**

Percentage of male employees

**0**

Number of employees that identified as non-binary

**75%**

Female Board Directors

**0%**

Non-binary Board Directors

**23%**

Male Board Directors

# EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION

Developing our GEAP involved the following employee and stakeholder consultation and engagement processes.

## The consultation incorporated:

- **People Matter Survey** – open for three months, this survey asks detailed questions across a comprehensive range of public health and wellbeing priorities. Engagement of this survey was led by the Gender Equality Working Group which represented employees across genders and facilities and it received a 76% engagement rate.
- **Workforce Gender Audit** – the employee profiles of staff were populated into the Workforce Gender Audit templates against the seven gender equality indicators:
  - Gender composition of all levels of the workforce
  - Gender composition of governing bodies
  - Equal Remuneration for work of equal or comparable value across all levels of the workforce, irrespective of gender
  - Sexual Harassment in the workplace
  - Recruitment and Promotion practices in the workplace
  - Uptake of Leave and Workplace Flexibility
  - Gendered segregation within the workplace.
- **Stakeholders Engagement Consultation** – Our People and Culture team facilitated deliberative engagement with a broad cross-section of professional bodies, partner agencies, employees, Board advisory committee, union and priority cohorts across all ages and stages, all organisational departments and the broader population. Extensive research and consultation was facilitated through workshops with Wimmera Healthcare Group, the Victorian Health Organisation Gender Equity Network (VHOGEN) and the Victorian Government Commission for Gender Equality.
- **Gender Equality Workgroup** – were engaged to form part of the advisory committee consultations and from that one-on-one consultations have been sought for feedback resulting in a number of workgroup meetings with approximately 20 stakeholders being consulted in the development of this plan. This included presentations and feedback in a gender equality employee working group.

All staff were engaged in the GEAP development process, through weekly emails, newsletter updates, and interactions with our working group representatives. In alignment with the Gender Equality Act 2020, a Gender Impact Assessment was applied throughout the Plan's consultation and development process.

The gender equality priorities outlined in the plan's framework are the direct result of the ongoing workgroup consultations, data collection and research processes, and training undertaken in the gender equality workspace.

# WWHS GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLAN

**Vision:** Equal participation and opportunities for people to access the same rewards and resources within the workforce, with the same opportunities and outcomes specific to their roles regardless of gender and identity.



## INDICATOR 1 - WORKFORCE COMPOSITION

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGY	WHO	WHEN
<b>INCREASE STAFF DIVERSITY</b>	Review the male to female ratio of staff within each department and set realistic targets for each area to work towards.	Quality & Safety (People & Culture)	2022 - 2026 Ongoing
	Identify areas where we can actively make changes to increase diversity.	Business & Strategy Quality & Safety	2023
	Explore the gender split of trained professionals in certain areas (pipeline effect) with data from Universities and TAFEs and establish who is training in these roles.  Set goals and targets to try to increase diversity in workplace groups where gaps are identified, through targeted marketing, recruitment and traineeship opportunities.	Quality & Safety (Education Department)	2022 - 2024
	Actively challenge traditional views or stereotypes, find where roles can be redesigned to enable flexible work, normalise uptake across all levels and genders and ensure that infrastructure is in place to support a more inclusive workplace.  Investigate recruitment pathways and training and capture the education pipeline of trained staff of all diversities and genders.  Set clear diversity aspirations and targets in each department and invest in frontline leaders to drive cultural and gender diversity and inclusion within the organisation.	Quality & Safety  Finance & Administration  Community Health  Medical Services  Business & Strategy  Clinical Services  Executive Directors	2024
<b>UPGRADE DATA COLLECTION</b>	Team up with other healthcare organisations that utilise Pay Global and approach the company as a group instead of an individual organisation to request system upgrades and advancements for better data capture and automated on boarding and rostering features.	Finance & Administration	2022 - 2026



## INDICATOR 2 - GOVERNING COMPOSITION

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGY	WHO	WHEN
<b>TARGETED MARKETING</b>	Use targeted marketing and education in our local community to increase the diversity of applicants for board recruitment when board elections are due every three years.  Investigate the impact that imagery can have for example the idea that you don't have to wear a suit and tie to sit behind a desk or to be a board director.	Business & Strategy	2026
<b>INCREASE BOARD DIVERSITY</b>	Develop video clips featuring board directors talking about their personal experiences of being a board director.	Business & Strategy	2023
	Conduct board accountability reviews in regards to providing good leadership on gender equality, supporting hospital leaders to be excellent role models and providing mentoring and sponsorship opportunities that will help ensure our Service is inclusive and culturally diverse and that it is maximised through use of their networks and ongoing support.	Board of Directors	2022 - Ongoing
	Identify decision making committees that are below board level, report on the diversity composition of these committees and set realistic targets for gender composition.	Quality & Safety Working Group	2023
	Create a Gender Equality Checklist to be used by all those involved in policy and procedure creation and review, to ensure each review and update meets Gender Equality Standards.	All Executive Divisions	2022 - Ongoing



## INDICATOR 3 - EQUAL REMUNERATION

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGY	WHO	WHEN
<b>INCREASE PROCESSES TO IMPROVE PAY EQUITY ACROSS THE ORGANISATION</b>	Implement the requirement of multi-level checks and authorities at all levels to recruit, review and audit and to address identifiable pay gap issues within the Service.	All Executive Divisions	2022 - Ongoing



## INDICATOR 4 - SEXUAL HARASSMENT

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGY	WHO	WHEN
<b>IMPROVE SAFE STAFF REPORTING METHODS</b>	Engage with staff via Survey Monkey to ask what they want in regards to safe reporting options for sexual harassment, giving them site specific options to select from to indicate how likely they would use avenues such as: - Contact Officers - Managers - Human Resource (HR) Department - Independent Options. Ascertain whether staff are making use of upgraded RiskMan V.2 for incident recording and reporting.	Quality & Safety  Executive Directors	2022 - 2023
	Develop a visible symbol for the safe reporting of sexual harassment according to the preferred avenue indicated in the survey results.	Quality & Safety  Business & Strategy	2023
	Review our reporting processes and develop a reporting roadmap, informed by people with lived experience of reporting incidents.	Quality & Safety (People & Culture)	2022 - 2023
	Provide training to staff on how to use the new RiskMan V.2 system via a module accessible on the intranet.  Ensure staff are educated and have knowledge about the levels of the reporting system, ie. Manager, Executive Director, Quality Manager, Board Director, Department of Health and Human Services.  Ensure staff are aware that entries to RiskMan are directly reported to managers in case of incidents where they don't feel confident involving their manager.  Investigate the reporting systems ability to collate multiple sources of information if required to capture a picture on perpetrators and or likely perpetrators.  Super user access can run reports to capture service data for specified events or incidents.	Quality & Safety (Quality Team)	2022 - Ongoing
	Develop prevention and early intervention plans to educate staff and avoid incidents occurring.	Quality & Safety	2023
	<b>PROVIDE IMPROVED SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS</b>	Review the implications of the lack of reported incidents and examine alternative reporting avenues for allegations of sexual assault and harassment.	Quality & Safety (Quality Team)
<b>IMPROVED RESPONSE TO ENABLERS AND PERPERTRATORS</b>	Reinforce serious misconduct policies and procedures on the Prompt policy system and provide manager education and leadership training for modelling positive workplace culture.  Advertise and reinforce the Services commitment to having a zero tolerance for sexual harassment in the workplace.	Quality & Safety (People & Culture)	2022 - Ongoing
	Make sure allegations of sexual harassment are supported with adequate resources and additional oversight and that support is available from an independent third party if sought.	Quality & Safety (People & Culture)	6 months - Ongoing
<b>IMPROVE STAFF KNOWLEDGE OF THEIR RIGHTS</b>	Implement the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission (VEOHRC) recommendations and advise employees of these rights.	Quality & Safety (People & Culture)	6 months - Ongoing



## INDICATOR 5 - RECRUITMENT AND PROMOTION

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGY	WHO	WHEN
<b>APPROPRIATE RECRUITMENT RETENTION &amp; CAREER DEVELOPMENT</b>	<p>Create a role for a dedicated recruitment officer position to oversee all our recruitment and employment activities.</p> <p>Implement a recruitment website to assist in reducing the administration time for staff and ensure a more timely response to potential employees.</p>	<p>Quality &amp; Safety</p> <p>Finance &amp; Administration</p> <p>Community Health</p> <p>Medical Services</p> <p>Business &amp; Strategy</p> <p>Clinical Services</p>	2022 - 2023
	<p>Increase the spread of advertising in regards to the support that's available to employees for higher education, training and upskilling.</p> <p>Offer all employment opportunities internally to current staff first.</p> <p>Provide further education about the Service's supported study programs.</p> <p>Create a workforce plan for the organisation to understand and build on current employees' experience and training in order to better succession plan.</p>	<p>Quality and Safety (Education Department)</p>	2022
<b>EXPERIENCES - STORIES &amp; VIDEOS</b>	<p>Compile staff testimonials about their movements within the Service and their experiences in upskilling, changing roles, gaining promotions and completing further study etc in order to showcase the opportunities that the Service can provide to support employees to upskill and have career progression. Testimonials can be in the form of videos or written story pieces.</p>	<p>Business &amp; Strategy</p>	2023 - Ongoing
<b>SECONDMENT</b>	<p>Conduct a review of the skill set of all staff.</p> <p>Provide additional information around upskill opportunities that could boost employee confidence in seeking promotions or further education opportunities.</p> <p>Develop programs to create movement opportunities and build internal capabilities to support operational team members by creating secondment opportunities in higher roles.</p>	<p>Each Executive Division</p>	2023 - Ongoing



## INDICATOR 6 - UPTAKE OF LEAVE AND WORKPLACE FLEXIBILITY

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGY	WHO	WHEN
<b>DEVELOP FLEXIBLE WORK ARRANGEMENTS</b>	Continue to be transparent and offer flexible working arrangements to support and benefit both staff and the Service.	All Divisions	2022 - Ongoing
<b>LEAVE IMPLICATION ON CAREER PROGRESSION</b>	Investigate leave types and any significant impacts to career progression.	Quality & Safety (People & Culture Team)	2023 - Ongoing
	Review awards and criteria around taking leave.		
	Provide education to staff regarding leave entitlements and their use, plus information to help them better understand what the organisation offers in regards to flexible arrangements for leave access for example, transition to retirement or taking leave at half rate, etc.	Quality & Safety (People & Culture Team)	2023
	Develop redress strategies to reduce impacts on career opportunities.	Quality & Safety (People & Culture Team)	2024



## INDICATOR 7 - WORKPLACE GENDER SEGREGATION

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGY	WHO	WHEN
<b>ENSURE GENDER BALANCE ACROSS THE ORGANISATION</b>	Consider the availability of employees and barriers for attracting a more diverse workforce for future diversity planning and the targeted marketing needed to attract the type of staff needed to increase the diversity of our workforce. The Service has identified a female gender bias within our workforce, with 85% of staff being female and only 15% of staff being male.	Quality & Safety (People & Culture Team)	2022 - 2026
	Explore the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) information in regard to the gender split of trained professionals in certain areas (pipeline effect).	Quality & Safety (People & Culture Team)	2022 - 2026
	Consult Universities and TAFEs as to which genders are training in specific healthcare roles and implement targeted marketing to try and increase diversity in workplace groups where gaps are identified.		



# OUR CASE FOR CHANGE

Workplace gender equality will be achieved when people are able to access and enjoy equal rewards, resources and opportunities regardless of gender identity, Aboriginality, race, ethnicity, age, religion, sexual orientation, disability, identity and other attributes.

Gender inequality in the workplace not only affects the victim but in turn can have a negative flow on effect to all people in the organisation. Research shows gender inequality has a wide reaching effect on things like violence against women, men's mental health and suicide rates, the health and wellbeing of gender diverse people, low staff morale and high staff turnover rates within organisations.


If we can break down gender stereotypes, facilitate training, pathways and opportunities for anyone to follow non-traditional career pathways, close any pay gap inequalities and offer flexible working arrangements and gender neutral parental leave entitlements for families, our staff will be happier resulting in increased productivity and performance.

The diversity of staff will also provide more varied experiences and knowledge, improving organisational outcomes and boosting our standing within our communities as a safe and inclusive place to work and access quality healthcare without prejudice or discrimination.

West Wimmera Health Service's gender equality journey is an ongoing process and while there have been many reviews, updates, inclusions and considerations put into place over the years we aim to continue building on these and be renowned as an inclusive workplace that values and celebrates diversity of all.

Our aspirations are supported by the West Wimmera Health Service values:

- Total care
- Safety
- Unity
- Accountability
- Innovation.



Section 6 of the Victorian Gender Equality Act 2020 outlines ten Gender equality principles that have guided West Wimmera Health Service in developing our Gender Equality Action Plan 2022-2026.

These are:

**(1)** All Victorians should live in a safe and equal society, have access to equal power, resources and opportunities and be treated with dignity, respect and fairness.

**(2)** Gender equality benefits all Victorians regardless of gender.

**(3)** Gender equality is a human right and precondition to social justice.

**(4)** Gender equality brings significant economic, social and health benefits for Victoria.

**(5)** Gender equality is a precondition for the prevention of family violence and other forms of violence against women and girls.

**(6)** Advancing gender equality is a shared responsibility across the Victorian community.

**(7)** All human beings, regardless of gender, should be free to develop their personal abilities, pursue their professional careers and make choices about their lives without being limited by gender stereotypes, gender roles or prejudices.

**(8)** Gender inequality may be compounded by other forms of disadvantage or discrimination that a person may experience on the basis of Aboriginality, age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, race, religion, sexual orientation and other attributes.

**(9)** Women have historically experienced discrimination and disadvantage on the basis of sex and gender.

**(10)** Special measures may be necessary to achieve gender equality.

The West Wimmera Health Service gender equality indicators outlined in this plan support these principles, they are:

- Gender composition of all levels of the workforce
- Gender composition of governing bodies
- Equal Remuneration for work of equal or comparable value across all levels of the workforce, irrespective of gender
- Sexual Harassment in the workplace
- Recruitment and Promotion practices in the workplace
- Uptake of Leave and Workplace Flexibility
- Gendered segregation within the workplace.

Our vision is to prioritise the embedding of gender equality principles into all areas of West Wimmera Health Service's policies, procedures, workforce, service delivery and culture by 2026, creating a workforce with equal participation and opportunities for people regardless of gender and identity and demonstrating a reputation for inclusive behaviour.

# GENDER EQUALITY INDICATORS

West Wimmera Health Service will prioritise the following gender equality indicators over the next four years with the desire to improve gender equality.

## > GENDER COMPOSITION OF ALL LEVELS OF THE WORKFORCE

Increasing staff diversity and levelling out workplace gender composition will be progressed by actively challenging traditional views or stereotypes. We will seek to identify roles that can be redesigned to enable flexible work and normalising uptake across all levels and genders.

We will actively look at recruitment pathways and the training pipeline the capture of trained staff of all diversities and genders whilst ensuring that infrastructure is in place to support a more inclusive workplace. Clear diversity aspirations and targets will be set in each department and frontline leaders will drive cultural diversity and inclusion within the organisation.

## > GENDER COMPOSITION OF GOVERNING BODIES

We are committed to ensuring the Board is accountable for providing good leadership on gender equality and supporting our leaders to be excellent role models. This will develop by providing mentoring and educational opportunities to ensure our Service is inclusive and culturally diverse which will be maximised through the use of their networks and ongoing support. The member ratios and diversity of the sub-Board committees will be reviewed and realistic gender composition targets will be set.

## > EQUAL REMUNERATION FOR WORK OF EQUAL OR COMPARABLE VALUE ACROSS ALL LEVELS OF THE WORKFORCE, IRRESPECTIVE OF GENDER

The Service will ensure employee contracts are current and workplace agreements and awards are up to date and reviewed to ensure equal pay under the Fair Work Act 2009. Equal employment opportunities for men and women will be provided and we will review the impacts of leave entitlements (especially parental leave) in this regard.

## > SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

The Service's commitment to having a zero tolerance for sexual harassment in the workplace will be reinforced, providing clear expectations of respectful workplace behaviour.

This will incorporate a review of the Service's sexual harassment policies, updating the Service's reporting system, reviewing contact officer roles for reporting and providing staff with appropriate training and education. Training will also be delivered for leaders and managers to drive a culture of respect within the workplace.

The Services' values will be reviewed to ensure they have a clear commitment to a safe and respectful workplace.

## > RECRUITMENT AND PROMOTION PRACTICES IN THE WORKPLACE

All position advertisements will be reviewed to ensure they use gender neutral wording and imagery and all job applications and interview invitations will be monitored to ensure no subtle gender biases or inequalities are occurring at the initial recruitment stages. The wording of our employment advertisements will be adjusted to boost recruitment of people from diverse backgrounds. This will include promoting LGBTIQ+ inclusive language and displaying transparent and inclusive promotion and employment opportunities.

## > UPTAKE OF LEAVE AND WORKPLACE FLEXIBILITY

Ongoing education and training of managers at West Wimmera Health Service will ensure that they are able to promote flexible work arrangements within their teams and are able to work with people to support their performance and meet the needs of the organisation while offering job flexibility. We commit to workplace flexibility and the quality employment and service of all staff and clients. Staff will receive education about leave entitlements and flexible arrangements that the Service can offer.

## > GENDERED SEGREGATION WITHIN THE WORKPLACE

We are committed to looking at our gender segregation data and finding where we can actively diversify and maximise workplace gender segregation in a female dominated healthcare setting. West Wimmera Health Service will always prioritise applicant training, skills and qualifications and has no gender bias in relation to applicant recruitment.

We will always seek to employ the best person for the job to ensure quality of care at our Service. The Service will actively look at targeting men in our marketing to engage a wider diversity within our Service and provide pathways, training, mentorships and bursaries for males in order to encourage their recruitment into a predominantly female workplace.



# MONITORING & EVALUATION

It is important to track our change towards progressing gender equality at West Wimmera Health Service therefore we will regularly monitor and evaluate our efforts in order to measure our achievements and amount of positive change.

Every four years, we will release a subsequent action plan that sits under the WWHS GEAP 2022-2026 and will outline the initiatives that will be implemented, monitored and evaluated to achieve our four-year plan. Every directorate within the action plan will have actions and evaluation responsibilities. The two-year action plan will be implemented and evaluated by People and Culture and associated departments as delegated in the Plan and updates will be reported to Board Directors, the Gender Equality Working Group and Chief Executive Officer.

The WWHS GEAP 2022-2026 will be reviewed annually and be amended if necessary to incorporate new emerging priorities for each action. If an amendment to the Plan is made, the revised version will need to be considered by Board Directors and submitted to the Victorian State Government as an update.

## In progressively reviewing the Plan, WWHS will:

- Hold quarterly internal reviews and consult with WWHS Gender Equality Working Group,
- Review its achievements against the evidence and record them on an achievement register,
- Provide an implementation plan which includes communication with our employees,
- Develop a detailed evaluation plan,
- Make any amendments to the Plan annually if necessary based on new and emerging priorities,
- Present progress reports every two years to the Gender Equality Commission with the first progress report due in October 2023,
- Undertake workforce gender audits every four years,
- Develop the next iteration of the GEAP 2026 – 2030.

**THE ACTION PLAN THAT FOLLOWS OUTLINES HOW OUR ACTIONS WILL BE MONITORED AND HOW WE WILL MEASURE HOW SUCCESSFULLY OUR ACTIONS HAVE BEEN IMPLEMENTED.**



# TERMINOLOGY, LANGUAGE AND DEFINITIONS

**Cis Gender** – A person whose sense of personal identity and gender corresponds with the sex they were assigned at birth.

**Gender** – Refers to the socially constructed roles, behaviours and attributes that society considers appropriate for women and men. Unlike biological characteristics and differences between women and men known as sex, gender roles are socially learnt, and differ among cultures and change over time.

**Intersectionality** – A methodology of studying the overlapping or intersecting social identities and related systems of oppression, domination or discrimination. (WHO 2009)

**Population Marginalisation** – Are groups and communities that experience discrimination and exclusion (social, political and economic because of unequal power relationships across economic, political, social and cultural dimensions (NCCDH, 2001)

**Gender Norms and Structures** – Ideas about how people should be and act according to the gender they are assigned or identify with. We internalise and learn these rules early in life this sets up a lifecycle of gender socialisations and stereotyping. (WHO, 2009)

**Gender Stereotypes** – Simplistic generalisations about gender attributes, differences and roles. (WHO, 2009)

**Pronouns** – A third-person pronoun by which an individual chooses to be referred to in order to indicate their gender identity

**Sex** – Sex refers to femaleness, maleness and sex diversity: evolved bodily features including genitals, secondary sex characteristics, genes, hormones and gonads (testes / ovaries) reproductive capacity and more (Van Anders et al. 2017)

**LGBTQI** – People who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (or questioning), and intersex.

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