

2022 –26 **WHIN** STRATEGIC PLAN



**WOMEN'S HEALTH
IN THE NORTH**

voice • choice • power

Women's Health In the North, WHIN, is the women's health promotion and advocacy organisation for the northern metropolitan region of Melbourne (NMR). WHIN is a not-for-profit member-based organisation committed to improving the health, safety and wellbeing of women and gender diverse people.

WHIN acknowledges Victorian Aboriginal people as the Traditional Owners of the land on which we provide our services –the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin nation—and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging. WHIN acknowledges that Aboriginal sovereignty was never ceded and expresses hope for justice and reconciliation.

We would also like to acknowledge the victim survivors of family violence and recognise that the work we do is informed by their experiences.



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Women's Health In the North

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VISION

Women and gender diverse people in the north have voice, choice and power in all aspects of their health, safety and wellbeing.

MISSION

WHIN works to eliminate gender inequalities and improve the health, safety and wellbeing of women and gender diverse people.

VALUES

Feminist.
Ethical.
Inclusive.
Courageous.
Collaborative.



Strategic Plan Consultation Process

WHIN engaged independent consultant Cath Smith of Changesmith Consulting, to facilitate all aspects of the development of the strategic plan.

Consultation involved a member and partner organisation online survey attracting 61 responses, interviews with 14 key external stakeholders and two staff and Board workshops.

Themes emerging from the consultation process are reflected in our 2022–26 priorities.

The two stakeholder consultation summary reports will be published on [WHIN's website](#) with this Strategic Plan.

Our Population

The Northern Metropolitan Region of Melbourne's total population numbered over 1.1 million people in 2016 when the latest census results are available (ABS, 2016a). Of this population 561,144 are recorded as 'female'¹. The population has continued to increase rapidly, especially in the growth corridors.

In 2019, Whittlesea and Hume local government areas were growing at over 2% per year (The State of Victoria DELWP, 2019). Growth rates across the region have slowed down, primarily associated with the COVID-19 lockdown impacts on immigration.

By the end of this 2022–26 plan, we expect high rates of population growth will again be evident.

The region is highly diverse in ethnicity, socio-economic status, gender and sexuality, disability status and age. Of 6,391 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians (0.7%) living in the region, 51.9% were female (3,319) (Greater Dandenong, 2018). A wide range of languages other than English are spoken in homes across the region including Arabic, Cantonese, Farsi, Greek, Hindi, Italian, Mandarin, Punjabi, Sinhala, Turkish, Urdu and Vietnamese (ABS, 2016b²).

Detailed information about our NMR population can be found in our [WHIN Environmental Scan](#), to be published on our website with this Strategic Plan.



Our Principles

Human rights and social justice

We place human rights at the centre of our work and promote women's economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights. We recognise the unequal, gendered distribution of wealth and power.

Feminism

We work to disrupt and dismantle colonial and patriarchal systems that enable sexism, misogyny and oppression. We proactively work to build alternative systems that empower women and gender diverse people.

Collaborative leadership

We believe that collective effort contributes to long-term positive impact.

Intersectionality

We aim to understand the intersecting forms of identity and discrimination shaping health, safety and wellbeing.

Inclusivity

We strive to ensure that individuals and communities have the opportunity and agency to determine their health and wellbeing.

Environment and place

We acknowledge the interdependence that exists between social, built and natural environments.

Our Priorities 2022–2026

1.

Gendered Violence Prevention

The Building Respectful Communities Partnership (BRC) grows in strength each year as a strategic regional partnership to prevent violence. WHIN leads the implementation and evaluation of the BRC strategy 2021–25 and convenes the NMR Preventing Violence Against Women Committee. WHIN also develops and delivers training to partners to build capacity in applying whole-of-organisation approaches to primary prevention of violence.

2.

Family Violence System Leadership

WHIN's Northern Integrated Family Violence (NIFVS) team supports the NIFVS Regional Integration Committee. The Committee provides system leadership to increase the safety of victim survivors, the accountability of perpetrators and to strengthen Victoria's family violence reforms. We lead and coordinate the delivery of the NIFVS Regional Integration Committee Strategic Plan 2019–2023.

3.

Sexual and Reproductive Health

WHIN provides valued leadership and resourcing for strategic regional work to promote the sexual and reproductive health (SRH) of women and gender diverse people, including the development of a new regional strategy during 2022, for 2023 onwards. WHIN convenes the NMR SRH Leadership Group and the regional SRH Network. WHIN also provides community education and professional development on sexual and reproductive health.

4.

Gender Equity, Health and Wellbeing

WHIN's expertise and leadership operates through strategic partnerships and alliances at regional, state and national levels. We produce and deliver resources, facilitate research and deliver professional education and training. We aim to empower individuals and communities to influence positive change relating to health and wellbeing.

During 2022–26, WHIN will pursue opportunities to address gender inequities in mainstream systems and the wider community, in particular in the following areas:

- respond to the **economic impacts of COVID-19** through community partnerships and advocacy
- deliver improvements in gender equity through working with regional agencies and community partners to implement the **Gender Equality Act**
- apply a gender lens to **tackling climate change and disaster planning** response and preparedness. We will take opportunities to engage with health system, emergency services and local government climate action and disaster planning processes
- **improve mental health and reduce social isolation.** We seek to influence better, safer access to mental healthcare for all women, girls and gender diverse people in our region, and encourage gender equitable approaches within community-based social inclusion programs
- advance **greater economic equality** for women and gender diverse people in our region, through longstanding engagement and education initiatives such as 'Let's Talk Money'.

Notes

1. This is an updated figure reflecting population modelling and tracking of births, deaths and movement.
- 2 This ABS 2016 data was combined with some languages from the 'Let's Talk Money' program to indicate the variety of languages in our region.

References

- Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2016a). *2016 Census QuickStats*. Retrieved from: <https://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/D3310114.nsf/Home/2016%20QuickStats>
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- The State of Victoria, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP). (2019). *Victoria in Future: Population Projections 2016 to 2056*. Retrieved from: https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0032/332996/Victoria_in_Future_2019.pdf



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