

Womenwithdisabilitiesvictoria  
empowering women



Annual Report  
**2016-17**

Women with Disabilities Victoria acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land we are on and the sea we live by, and their Elders past and present.

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# Womenwithdisabilitiesvictoria

empowering women

## Our vision

A world where all women are respected and can fully experience life

## Our mission

To advance real social and economic inclusion for women with disabilities in Victoria, we will:

- be a voice for women with disabilities
- create opportunities for women with disabilities to be visible and to be heard in their communities
- build partnerships to deliver the best results for women with disabilities
- engage the community to challenge attitudes and myths about women with disabilities

## Our values

Our values uphold human rights and social justice:

- equal opportunity
- effectiveness
- accessibility
- creativity
- respect
- diversity
- collaboration
- accountability



# Setting the course: Strategic Plan 2017–2020

## Our goals

### Empower women

Engage and empower women with disabilities to lead and influence their communities

### Influence policy

Influence government and the community to recognise and remove barriers to full participation by women with disabilities

### Influence services

Educate and build the capacity of service systems and organisations to be accessible to women with disabilities

## Our priorities

Our commitment to create opportunities for women with disabilities to realise their leadership and advocacy potential is central to our work within each priority area.

### Violence

We will **prevent and respond to violence and abuse against women with disabilities.**

### NDIS

We will **work to make the NDIS relevant and responsive to women with disabilities and empower women to engage with the new system.**

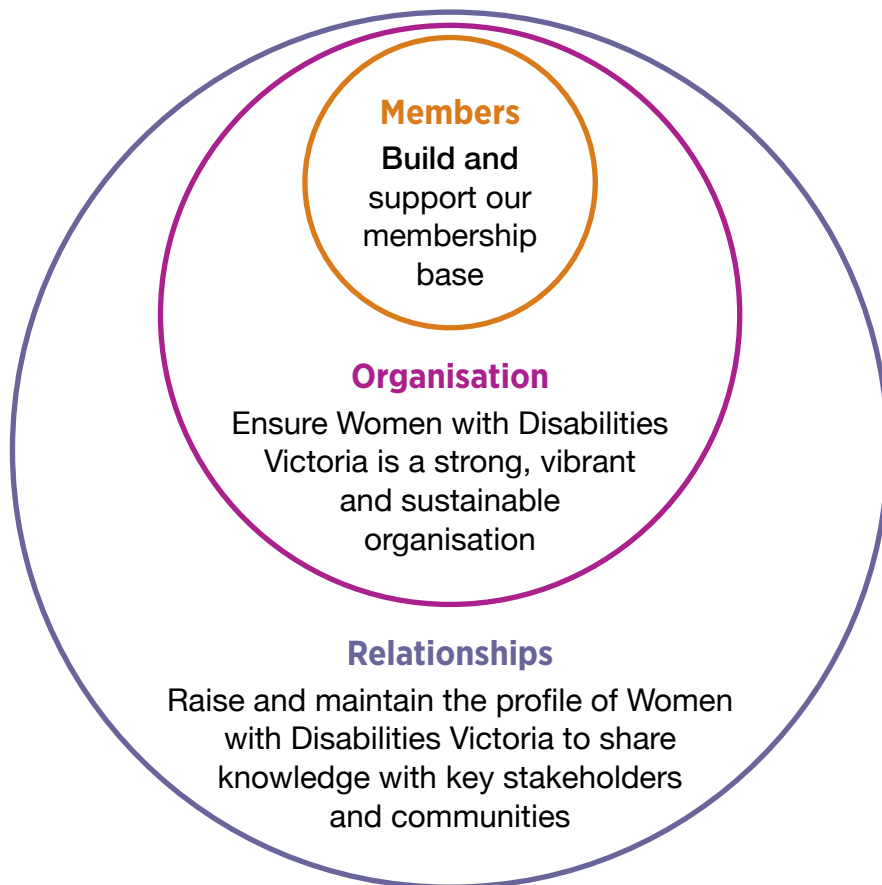
### Health

We will **promote access to health services for women with disabilities.**

In focusing on our priority areas, we will respond to the social determinants of health for women with disabilities, promoting access to housing and employment for women with disabilities through our representation and policy work.

Guided by our members, we will wherever possible respond to new and emerging issues to stay relevant and reflect the concerns of women with disabilities.

## Our enablers



## Our approach reflects our values.

We will:

- work with our members' experiences as women with disabilities
- provide specialist policy advice and representation to government
- create opportunities for women with disabilities to realise their leadership and advocacy potential
- adopt a collaborative approach to government and community organisations
- build the evidence base to develop and share knowledge and resources to inform best practice
- monitor our work and report on outcomes.



# Co-Chairs' report

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**Ann-Marie Baker and  
Saphron Hastie**

Co-Chairs

Women with Disabilities Victoria

This year we continued to work in an environment that is complex and subject to rapid change, so a major priority was to develop and implement Women with Disabilities Victoria's 2017–2020 Strategic Plan.

After an inclusive consultation process with our members and other stakeholders, we set the goals and priorities for Women with Disabilities Victoria over the next three years, to ensure we can make the most of our limited resources. Key features of the plan are to:

- adopt a whole-of-organisation approach so that all our programs build on one another to create pathways to social and economic participation for women with disabilities
- monitor and reflect on our work and report on our results
- recognise the importance of partnerships with other disability advocacy programs and with key organisations aligned with our priorities
- work collaboratively with government departments and agencies, particularly on the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), the Victorian State Disability Plan and Ending Family Violence: Victoria's Plan for Change
- recognise the ongoing significance of local area delivery of services to women with disabilities and work in partnership to support best practice at this level.

“ *Huge changes like the roll-out of the NDIS and new policies and programs in the wake of the Royal Commission into Family Violence mean that Women with Disabilities Victoria's expertise is in high demand. We continue to use these, and other, opportunities to make our voices heard.* ”

Huge changes like the roll-out of the NDIS and new policies and programs in the wake of the Royal Commission into Family Violence mean that Women with Disabilities Victoria's expertise is in high demand. We continue to use these, and other, opportunities to make our voices heard.

As a Board, and as members, we are proud of the work our organisation is doing and we thank the Women with Disabilities Victoria staff and leadership for working hard and effectively to deliver on our strategic objectives and create change for women with disabilities in our communities.

That work was publicly recognised this year with an Australian Centre for Leadership of Women Diversity Award. We were also thrilled that Women with Disabilities Victoria won the 2016 HESTA Community Sector Award for Social Impact, a national award that carried with it a \$10,000 cheque from ME Bank.

Our thanks and appreciation also go to our fellow Board members and, importantly, to our members. At our heart we are a member organisation, which was started in 1994 by a small group of women with disabilities and has developed into the influential organisation we are today.

“ At our heart we are a member organisation, which was started in 1994 by a small group of women with disabilities and has developed into the influential organisation we are today.”



Left: Tim Ferguson with Keran Howe at the HESTA Community Service Awards. Right: Keran Howe presented with a giant cheque by ME Bank and HESTA representatives.



# Our Board

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Ann-Marie Baker



Saphron Hastie



Binda Gokhale



Esperanza Torres



Marija Groen



Angela Fitzpatrick



Sonja Ilievska



Val Johnstone



Catherine Brooks

## **Ann-Marie Baker**

Co-Chair

*BA (Hons), GradDip App.Sc.*

Appointed to the Board November 2012. Appointed Co-Chair December 2014. Board Liaison for the Brenda Gabe Leadership Award. Risk Committee member, Executive Committee Co-Chair.

Ann-Marie has more than 27 years experience in the tertiary education sector in the areas of museum management, curatorship and project management.

## **Saphron Hastie**

Co-Chair

*BA (English & Women's Studies), PG Dip. Social Science Research*

Appointed to the Board November 2013. Appointed Co-Chair December 2015. Finance Committee member, Co-Chair of the Executive Committee.

Saphron has varied experience in not-for-profit governance and community leadership and currently works as a manager in the higher education sector.

## **Binda Gokhale**

Treasurer

*BEC, CPA, MBA, GAICD*

Co-opted to the Board as a Non-Executive Director and Treasurer since December 2011. Finance Committee Chair.

Binda is employed as Manager, Financial Services for Wyndham City Council. She holds a range of finance and management qualifications including an MBA from the University of Melbourne and Graduate Membership with the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

## **Esperanza Torres**

Vice-Chair

*B.Behav.Sci, M.App.Social Research*

Appointed to the Board November 2013. Appointed Co-Vice-Chair December 2014. Membership Committee and Executive Committee member.

Esperanza works as a consultant on research, evaluation and data analysis for the government and not-for-profit sectors, and on contract to the Department of Health and Human Services.



## **Marija Groen**

*BA*

Appointed to the Board November 2011. Chair February 2013–14, Co-Chair December 2014 – December 2016. Finance Committee member.

Marija has more than 25 years of experience in management, service delivery and advocacy in the not-for-profit sector covering areas of homelessness, family violence prevention, housing and disability, and services for older people. She currently manages the United – Spanish Latin America Welfare Centre.

## **Angela Fitzpatrick**

*GradDip HR*

Appointed to the Board November 2011. Co-Vice-Chair February 2013 – December 2015. Risk Committee member.

Angela has 15 years experience in strategic planning of human resources, and works as a consultant and consumer advocate in health and disability.

## **Sonja Ilievska**

*BEC, GAICD*

Appointed to the Board November 2012. Risk Committee Chair.

Sonja is experienced in risk management, policy development and governance and is Managing Partner in a risk management and consulting firm. She is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

## **Val Johnstone**

*B.SW, ADWS, Dip.Bus Studies*

Appointed to the Board November 2013. Membership Committee and Governance Committee member.

Val is a social worker, experienced in the public and private health and rehabilitation sectors. She is an NDIS adviser and has served on the Disability Advisory Council of Victoria, the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission's Disability Reference Group, and many health related working groups.

## **Catherine Brooks**

*BLLA*

Board member November 2009–2011. Re-appointed November 2016.

Catherine is a Principal lawyer at Moores where she launched the Not-for-Profit Assist legal membership service and is accredited as a workplace relations specialist. She is a regular blog writer for MS Society.

## **Directors who resigned or whose term was completed during 2016–17**

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### **Trudy Ryall**

Appointed to the Board November 2013.

Trudy has over 20 years of experience working in the not-for-profit sector in disability advocacy and other sectors, including animal care, administration, library and research. Trudy has served on a number of disability related committees for the City of Melbourne, City of Casey and City of Monash.



### **Hilary Fisher**

*BA, Diploma of Creative Arts, Master of Applied Commerce (Marketing)*

Appointed to the Board November 2016. Resigned March 2017 due to personal commitments.

Hilary has a marketing, communications and politics background and manages a communications portfolio in the public sector. She is a graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



# Our Members

Our members played a vital role in the development of our 2017–2020 Strategic Plan, coming together from across Victoria at the 2016 Members Lunch to consider these questions:

1. Do you support our areas of focus and do they address the big issues for you?
2. Is there anything you would like us to do differently?
3. How do you want to be involved in our work?

We were pleased to receive strong and broad support for the Strategic Plan framework – the goals, enablers and priorities, and agreed completely with one member's verdict:

*"I totally support your goals and areas of focus – but it is just a start, there is so much to do..."*





Our members also showed up in force for our 2016 Annual General Meeting, to have a *Conversation on Gender Equality* and hear from our guest speaker, Sex Discrimination Commissioner Kate Jenkins (centre photo).





# Executive Director's report



**Keran Howe**

Executive Director  
Women with Disabilities Victoria

In our 2014–2015 Annual Report, I said it had been the 'Year of the Submission' for Women with Disabilities Victoria.

That year saw the advent of enormous social policy shifts in Victoria through the Royal Commission into Family Violence and the Inquiry into Abuse in Disability Services, and nationally through the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

This year we have seen a raft of new programs and projects arising from the roll-out of the NDIS, through the implementation of recommendations from those landmark inquiries, and with the development of the National Quality and Safeguarding Framework.

So for Women with Disabilities Victoria, 2016–2017 has been the 'Year of Implementation'.

We grew significantly as an organisation this year, attracting \$2.4 million in revenue, nearly double the \$1.3 million budgeted. That allowed us to appoint an additional seven staff members, growing our team to a total of 15 part-time staff and an additional 12 short term contract staff. It also meant the relocation of some staff to new office space.

Increased funding for projects was, of course, very welcome but our rapid growth created a significant infrastructure challenge for the organisation. We held change management workshops to ensure our growth was informed and collaborative.

A review of our structure resulted in the appointment of a Strategy, Policy and Research Program Manager, a Senior Program Manager and three administrative support staff. Throughout this change, staff have maintained their commitment and dedication.

We have continued to work hard for the voices of women with disabilities to be heard in the broader community.



Participants, facilitators and mentors at the Enabling Women Cobram program.



Keran Howe speaking at a WDV staff development day.

“ This year we have seen a raft of new programs and projects arising from the roll-out of the NDIS, through the implementation of recommendations from those landmark inquiries, and with the development of the National Quality and Safeguarding Framework. So for Women with Disabilities Victoria, 2016–2017 has been the ‘Year of Implementation’.”

We now have representation on 40 significant government bodies and community committees. This includes my appointment as the Co-chair of the National Disability and Carers Advisory Council, a role I hold as an individual but which provides Women with Disabilities Victoria with insight to the national policy context.

I was also delighted to be invited to participate in the National Australia Day Council panel to select Victorian finalists for the Australian of the Year. It was humbling to learn about so many exceptional individuals contributing to our social capital and I was thrilled that one of our members, Maryanne Diamond, was selected as a Victorian finalist. Congratulations Maryanne!

We have also taken a significant step nationally. The NDIS Information Linkages and Capacity Building Program awarded us \$500,000 to implement a community inclusion program in four rural communities. This program will commence in January 2018.

Despite our increased funding this year, a lack of sustained core funding remains a risk to the organisation and to our vital advocacy in this time of reform. We are grateful to the Victorian and Commonwealth governments for the funding we receive and pay particular recognition to philanthropic trusts whose infrastructure support is invaluable: Portland House Foundation and the Gross Foundation.

I would like to thank the Board for its hard work and support through the year, and my sincere thanks go to all of the staff of Women with Disabilities Victoria whose continued dedication and passion allows us to advance our mission on behalf of all women with disabilities in Victoria.



# Our Staff

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**Keran Howe:** Executive Director

**Fofi Christou:** Senior Program Manager, Women's Empowerment and Workforce Development

## Women's Empowerment

**Sharon Granek:** Program Manager, Women's Empowerment (to December 2016)

**Akii Ngo:** Program Manager, Women's Empowerment (from January 2017)

**Jane Oldfield:** Partnership and Leadership Development Officer (to January 2017) / Women's Engagement and Empowerment Officer (from January 2017)

**Cath McNamara:** Partnership and Leadership Development Officer (to January 2017) / Resource Development Officer, NDIS Module (from January 2017)

**Carly Myers:** Women's Engagement and Empowerment Officer (from March 2017)

**Jess De Mercurio:** Women's Engagement and Empowerment Officer (CALD/Youth) (from March 2017)

**Karen McKenzie:** Project Worker, Women Leading by Example (to October 2016)

**Renee McCarthy** (Cobram), **Soreti Kadir** (Inner West): Enabling Women Co-facilitators (casual)

**Jenny Godwin** (Cobram): Enabling Women Mentor Co-ordinator (casual)

**Eleanor Schultz** (Outer East): Enabling Women Mentor Co-ordinator/Co-facilitator (casual)

## Workforce Development

**Bianca Evans:** Gender Equity Training Co-ordinator

**Jess Boccia:** Gender Equity Program Manager (from April 2017)

**Colleen Furlanetto, Eva Sifis, Michelle Wilcox, Samantha Winch, Simone Stevens, Stef Tipping:** Co-Facilitators, Workforce Development Program (casual, from January 2017)

**Jennifer Sykes:** Project Support Officer, Workforce Development (July – August 2016)

**Carmal Carlin-Smith:** Administration Assistant, Workforce Development (October – December 2016)

## Strategy, Policy and Research

**Mary-Ann Robinson:** Strategic Development Manager (to April 2017) / Program Manager, Strategy, Policy and Research (from April 2017)

**Jen Hargrave:** Policy Officer, Violence Against Women with Disabilities (to March 2017) / Senior Policy Officer (from March 2017).

## Operations

**Maria Burchell:** Operations Manager

**Dee Henry:** Administration Officer (from August 2016)

**Bridget Jolley:** Program Assistant (from January 2017)

**Lis Perry:** Executive Assistant to Keran Howe (from January 2017)

**Christine Spence,** Green Wedge Business Services: Accountant



Keran Howe



Fofi Christou



Sharon Granek



Akii Ngo



Jane Oldfield



Cath McNamara



Carly Myers



Jess De Mercurio



Bianca Evans



Jess Boccia



Mary-Ann Robinson



Jen Hargrave



Maria Burchell



Dee Henry



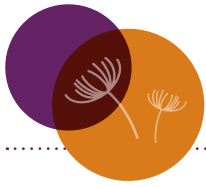
Bridget Jolley



Lis Perry



Christine Spence



# Empowering Women

*Enabling Women* is our exciting community leadership program that empowers women with disabilities to have a voice about issues that relate to them and other women with disabilities. More than 175 women have now participated since the program began.

Some highlights from this past year include:

- Three *Enabling Women* programs were delivered across Victoria – in Doncaster, Footscray and Cobram.
- Five programs have moved through the planning stages to be delivered by the end of 2017 – in Northcote, Footscray (Culturally and Linguistically Diverse), Wodonga, Central Highlands and Leongatha (Youth).
- The program was expanded to run for one day a week for six weeks (up from five), with the introduction of a specialised and tailor-made session on issues relating to the National Disability Insurance Scheme.
- The Women's Empowerment team, which runs the program, also expanded, gaining two new team members, a new program manager and a specialist program officer.
- Specialist programs for culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) women and young women (aged 15–25) with disabilities are being introduced and evaluated.
- Mentoring programs were run alongside the *Enabling Women* programs: with the support of the Women's Engagement and Empowerment Officers, the Mentor Co-ordinators and many thanks to our volunteer mentors, we now support 53 mentoring pairs.



Participants and facilitators at the Graduation Ceremony of the Enabling Women Footscray program.

“ Through the *Enabling Women* program, I have learnt about various ways I can contribute to my local and broader communities.”



## What our participants say

“ To me, it is evident that our personalities and interests are strongly represented on our scarves. I see persistence, creativity, thoughtfulness, calmness, enthusiasm, dedication, and positivity, reflected in these creations [strength scarves].”



“ The program has given me the opportunity to explore avenues for growth, alongside fellow participants, and with the assistance of our caring and capable facilitators.”

“ Because of the Enabling Women program, I went out and did things I was thinking about for a while but never did. I went out and bought a book and learned about violence against women and now, because I am armed with the facts, I know how and can stand up for myself and respond when people make excuses for violence.”



Top row: Strength scarves created by participants at the Enabling Women program. Middle row: Participants at the Enabling Women Cobram program. Bottom row: Pamela Debrincat (participant), Kylie Lewis (Guest Speaker) and Cath McNamara (Co-facilitator) at the Enabling Women Footscray program.

## The Leadership Network

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To sustain the work of our *Enabling Women* program, we have been working to set up community leadership networks of women with disabilities across Victoria.

Work has progressed to establish four networks, known as Hubs, in rural and regional areas – Barwon (Geelong), Moira (Cobram), Wellington (Sale) and Warrnambool, plus a Central Women with Disabilities Victoria Leadership Network convened in Melbourne with representation from women with disabilities throughout Victoria.



Conversations in Gippsland about establishing a Leadership Network Hub.

The aim is to:

*Bring together women with disabilities in the Victorian community to advance Women with Disabilities Victoria's goals of real social and economic inclusion for women with disabilities by realising their leadership and advocacy potential.*

Each Hub will:

- create a safe, welcoming space for women to come together to share experiences, gain information on their rights and connect with other women with disabilities in their local area
- share ideas about, contribute to and foster leadership opportunities
- advocate about issues of concern to women with disabilities in the local community
- promote and sustain the support delivered through the *Enabling Women* program to build leadership, advocacy and the rights of women with disability.

## Women Leading by Example

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We ran this customised workshop in Melbourne for more than 20 women with disabilities who aspire to or have a track record in leadership. It further built on the leadership skills for women developed in our *Enabling Women* program.

Its aims were to:

- assist women with disabilities to identify and prioritise their own leadership development
- give women with disabilities the confidence to take the next step in community leadership
- assist younger women with disabilities in preparing for the next stage of life by providing shared learning and networking opportunities to transition from secondary/tertiary school/work to the wider community
- highlight and provide strong leadership role models who can support and mentor the women's involvement in the community.

The workshop focused on exploring women's individual leadership journeys and was designed to meet the specific needs of women with disabilities – something rarely offered.

We surveyed all the women before and after and on every scale they reported that their leadership skills and confidence levels had increased. Many wanted to stay in touch with each other and most were keen to join our Leadership Network.

A video was produced as part of the project and can be watched at <http://bit.ly/watchwlbe>.



Participants at the Women Leading by Example Workshop.

## Stitch by stitch

Renee's confidence got a big boost from creating her beautiful strength scarf, with support from her Women with Disabilities Victoria mentor Ricci, an art therapist.



Renee McCarthy and her strength scarf at the Enabling Women Shepparton Program.

Increased confidence led to Renee trying new things such as joining the local Disability Advisory Committee and speaking up for bringing Enabling Women to Wangaratta.

Her mentor was supportive in other ways, a great person to bounce ideas off.

“She always encouraged me to try a new way if the first way didn't work,” Renee said. “Before I met Ricci, if something didn't work, I just gave up.”

Renee then went on to become a mentor for another *Enabling Women* participant.

She said it has been a great opportunity to get to know how others see and do things.

And she continues to step up. Renee successfully applied to co-facilitate the Cobram *Enabling Women* program. Now she is on the lookout for another opportunity. She describes her journey as continuing to ride the wave of life.



# Engaging with the NDIS

## Partnerships and policy

Through the year, Women with Disabilities Victoria worked to build partnerships, scope opportunities and identify gaps and issues for women with disabilities in their transition to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

We represented the interests of women with disabilities on the Victorian Government's *NDIS Implementation Taskforce*, and contributed to working groups on *Participant Readiness*, *Cross Sector and Innovation* and *Workforce Development*.



Diana Ciavarella, Helen Guest and Akii Ngo at the Enabling Women NDIS module test session.

WDV has also had high level input on a wide range of NDIS issues through the following:

- development of the NDIS Quality and Safeguarding Framework
- Productivity Commission review into NDIS costs
- development of the NDIS first plan process
- identifying 'hard to reach cohorts' and strategies to inform engagement
- Victorian State Disability Plan
- Victorian Government response to the Parliamentary Inquiry into Abuse in Disability Services.

Our focus is on gender and actively ensuring that women's voices and experiences are represented at the highest level. We work to influence the National Disability Insurance Agency to take a gender sensitive approach to all aspects of policy, quality, standards and practical implementation of the NDIS.

Through this, we continue to align our NDIS work with the recommendations of the Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence and their implementation.

## Embedded in rural Victoria

We worked this year to develop a new program, *Here We Are*, that will embed women with disabilities in four rural/regional locations to lead local community capacity building and promote inclusion.

It has been funded under the NDIS *Information, Linkages and Capacity Building* stream, which not only provides a welcome new income source but allows us to strengthen our partnership and capacity building approach.

Women with Disabilities Victoria will provide support through a virtual community of practice, producing an online resource toolbox to share information and strategies nationally. The project will commence in January 2018.

## Empowering women

Women with disabilities in Victoria are now able to learn how best to engage with the NDIS through a dedicated module prepared for delivery as part of our Women's Empowerment program.

Funded by the Department of Health and Human Services, the module looks at how the NDIS works, how to prepare for it, and how to exercise choice and control when the NDIS arrives.

To make it as informative as possible, we consulted women with disabilities across Victoria and developed material from a wide range of sources,

including our partner agencies and selected and adapted material that was clear, accurate and accessible.

Special attention is paid to issues around safety, choice and control over how their services are delivered. An example is the right to choose the gender of support workers or planners with the skills needed to develop a plan that really works.

### You Can Ask That

Two of our members feature in a fantastic video that was produced as part of the NDIS module to be offered in our Enabling Women program.

*You Can Ask That* is an accessible resource that will provide peer to peer advice and information, using firsthand

knowledge, skills and experiences about participating in the NDIS. It can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/WDVChannel> or via our website at [www.wdv.org.au](http://www.wdv.org.au)



Stacey Christie (top) and Nicole Lee (bottom), discuss their experiences with the NDIS *on You Can Ask That*.

## NDIS Code of Conduct

Women with Disabilities Victoria worked to develop the Federal Government's draft NDIS Code of Conduct as part of a new national system of Quality and Safeguarding. We advocated for a gender responsive approach, including a section on preventing disability abuse and guidelines to support appropriate violence prevention and responses.

We believe it is critical that people with disabilities are given accessible information about the Code and every opportunity to know and understand our rights.

We believe the draft obligations for workers about violence can be improved if they are developed with violence response and prevention specialists and if a diversity of people with disabilities are involved in monitoring and evaluating the Code and its implementation.

“ *Our message is: if the disability service system operates in a silo it will not tackle the big power imbalances in our service settings and families.*”



# Responding to family violence reform

## At the centre of reforms

Many of the 227 recommendations from Victoria's Royal Commission into Family Violence are now being implemented across the state, with multiple projects underway through the year.

A number of organisations, including Women with Disabilities Victoria, were concerned to ensure that the high risk populations that we represent were kept at the centre of reforms.

The Department of Premier and Cabinet responded to this need and set up a Diverse Communities and Intersectionality Working Group that reports to the Family Violence Steering Committee which advises on all service reforms being considered under the Ten Year Action Plan on Family Violence.

*“ While each group experiences discrimination in different ways, many of the barriers and issues of marginalisation are common. ”*

The Working Group represents over 15 organisations and statutory bodies representing diverse populations as well as relevant government departments.

It is an important recognition of our role and influence that our Executive Director Keran Howe is co-chair of the group, alongside Jane Sweeney from the Department of Premier and Cabinet.

While each group experiences discrimination in different ways, many of the barriers and issues of marginalisation are common. This combined approach of considering discrimination jointly represents an exciting new way forward.

## Expanding eligibility for support in crisis

The Victorian Government has expanded eligibility criteria for the Disability Family Violence Crisis Initiative, after our clear recommendation that it should not be limited to some disability types. This recommendation was adopted by the Royal Commission into Family Violence in its final report.

The Initiative was established in 2011 after our cross-sector advocacy highlighted the increased risk of violence facing women and children with disabilities and the lack of immediate assistance in a crisis situation. It provides access to short-term funds to finance practical supports, including attendant care, equipment hire, Auslan interpreters and accessible transport costs.

The increased eligibility now provides support to people in family violence crisis who have requirements related to mental health, chronic health or ageing issues, or have a temporary injury resulting from family violence. It can also now provide access to immediate disability related supports for children under the age of six who have a developmental delay.

## ● Changing policy

Women with Disabilities Victoria was asked to provide input into three significant state policies which provide a framework for implementation of the Royal Commission into Family Violence recommendations and more actions into the future.

These were:

- Ending Family Violence: Victoria's plan for change.
- Free from Violence: Victoria's strategy to prevent family violence and all forms of violence against women.
- Safe and Strong: a Victorian gender equality strategy.

These plans set out actions around fostering leadership of women with disabilities, workforce development in disability services, accessible refuge redevelopment and progressing an intersectional approach to women's policy.

“ These plans set out actions around fostering leadership of women with disabilities, workforce development in disability services, accessible refuge redevelopment and progressing an intersectional approach to women's policy.”



Images from the three state policies.

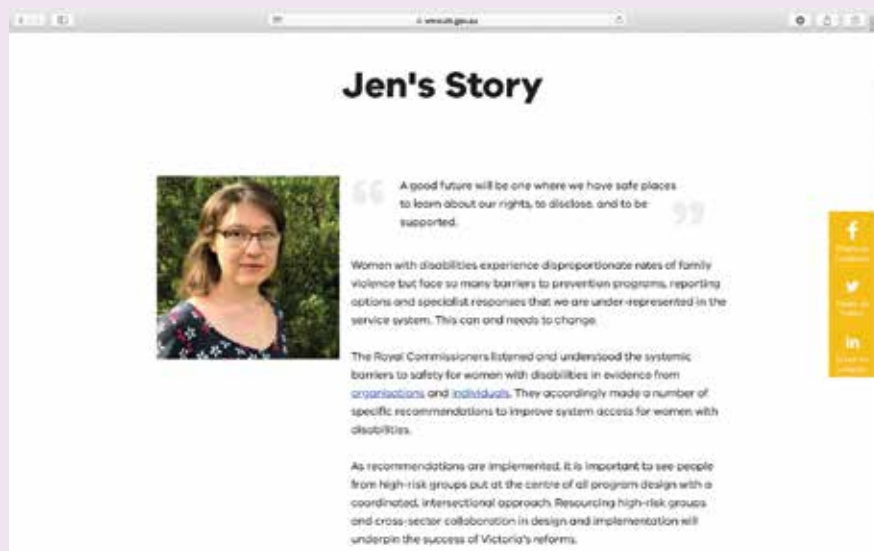
## Sharing stories of change

Our Senior Policy Officer Jen Hargrave shared her vision for a safe future for women with disabilities as part of the Victorian Government's family violence prevention initiative, *Stories of Change*. She wrote:

"A good future will be one where we have safe places to learn about our rights, to disclose, and to be supported. We look forward to a future where:

- a student at a special school will have access to information about respectful relationships
- a woman in a mental health service will be believed and supported to safety when she discloses experiencing violence
- a woman's NDIS planning meeting will include risk assessment, appropriate referral and options in a crisis
- a woman will have housing options because there are universal access housing standards.

Fundamentally we need a future where all forms of disability discrimination are not tolerated and choosing to use violence against people with disabilities is not considered an option."



Screenshots from the Victorian Government's *Stories of Change* website: <https://www.vic.gov.au/familyviolence/stories-of-change.html>





# Contributing to the evidence

Women with Disabilities Victoria's values reflect our commitment to **build the evidence base to develop and share knowledge and resources to inform best practice**. Women with Disabilities Victoria continues to work alongside research partners with expertise in our priority areas to ensure that the voices and experiences of women with disabilities are included in research. The results of this work inform our analysis and commentary and feed into our work on policy and good practice.

This year we have been represented on a number of reference groups and advisory committees supporting research aligned with our priorities:

1. *“Whatever it takes”: Access for women with disabilities to domestic and family violence services* in partnership with Deakin, La Trobe and Southern Cross Universities
2. *More than the sum of my parts – Culturally and Linguistically Diverse women with disability’s sexual and reproductive health and freedom from sexual violence* in partnership with the University of Melbourne

3. *Women and Disability: Stand-Up Comedy as a Tool for Advocacy* in partnership with the University of Melbourne

Women with Disabilities Victoria also contributed to the following academic advisory committees:

University of Melbourne:

- Disability Research Initiative Advisory Committee
- Centre for Research Excellence in Disability and Health Advisory Committee

Deakin University:

- Graduate Certificate of Disability and Inclusion Advisory Board



Cover of the *“Whatever it takes”: Access for women with disabilities to domestic and family violence services: Final report*.

“ WDV continues to work alongside research partners with expertise in our priority areas to ensure that the voices and experiences of women with disabilities are included in research.”



# Responding to abuse in disability services

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Women with Disabilities Victoria's powerful testimony and advocacy to the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into Abuse in Disability Services contributed to significant change in attitudes to violence in disability services.

In its response to the inquiry this year, the State Government committed to:

- increased powers for the Disability Services Commissioner to launch own inquiries
- a new client incident management system that focuses on safety and wellbeing
- a Victorian disability abuse prevention strategy
- \$1.5 million for Victorian disability advocacy innovation in 2016–17.

“ *Women with Disabilities Victoria's powerful testimony and advocacy to the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into Abuse in Disability Services contributed to significant change in attitudes to violence in disability services.* ”

The Government's response also recognises that women with disabilities experience family violence and linked the inquiry's report to implementation of the Royal Commission into Family Violence recommendations. It committed to bringing a gender lens to action that:

- develops relationship rights education for people with an intellectual disability, their families and carers so they can better identify and prevent abuse
- promotes the rights of people to choose the gender of support workers providing intimate supports.

Women with Disabilities Victoria has participated in consultations for the development of the Guideline on Gender of Worker. We also sit on the Victorian Government's Disability Registration and Accreditation reference group.

## Developing safeguards

Following the Disability Abuse Inquiry, Women with Disabilities Victoria recognised a clear need for best practice guidelines for resources that support women with disabilities to recognise abuse, understand their rights, and identify options for support.

Funded by the Department of Health and Human Services, we began work this year on

guidelines for the development of resources about violence and abuse for women with disabilities.

Our next steps will be to work with women with disabilities to develop a resource and then disseminate the work, with guidelines for the disability, family violence and sexual assault sectors. The aim is to build capacity in those sectors to develop high quality resources and engage and respond appropriately to women with disabilities.

The work has been guided by a high level Reference Group including representation from women with disabilities with input from academics, service providers, the Office of the Public Advocate, the Disability Services Commissioner and Women's Health Victoria.

“ Our next steps will be to work with women with disabilities to develop a resource and then disseminate the work, with guidelines for the disability, family violence and sexual assault sectors.”



Cover of *Our Right to Safety and Respect: Guidelines for developing resources with women with disabilities about safety from violence and abuse*.



# Changing workforce culture

We continued our work to change cultures within and across disability organisations through our Workforce Development Program on Gender and Disability.

The program works with women with disabilities and disability support workers, managers and executives to increase awareness of how to deliver gender equitable and responsive services.

The program is one of our major strategies for improving women's well-being and status and for reducing gender-based violence.

**Evaluation:** VicHealth funding enabled us to commission a modest external evaluation of the program by Dyson Consulting.

With a full report to come in the new year, the evaluation has investigated the short to medium term impacts of the program for organisations that undergo our training, and the potential to expand or scale up the program in future within the disability sector.

**Oversight:** The program's Project Advisory Group (PAG) has provided valuable cross-sector engagement and oversight through the year. We thank all members for their valuable contribution to the program's strategic direction.

## Program delivery highlights

The program, 'Human Rights & Quality Services: What does gender have to do with it?' was delivered to 174 participants (disability executives, managers and disability workers) and included:

- Training to 153 participants across four organisations – including senior leaders, coordinators and disability support workers at Wesley Mission Victoria, Scope, Vision Australia and Gellibrand Support Services.
- 'Taste tester' introductory workshop delivered in Colac as part of the Barwon Month of Action to 16 participants from five organisations, which generated expressions of interest from a network of organisations across Colac, Hamilton, Terang and Warrnambool.
- An Executive Leadership Briefing to five senior executives of The Tipping Foundation. Plans are underway to roll out training to all managers, the Board and frontline workers.



Dagmar Jenkins, Co-facilitating the *Human Rights and Quality Services: What does gender have to do with it?* leadership program with Scope.

## What they said about it

“ We are on the right track and there is still much to do!”

“ We need to layer this across all groups experiencing disadvantage.”



“ Focus on the importance of language and often the small, unintentional ways I/we support gender inequality and reinforcing it in day to day practice.”

“ Enlightening, it really opened my eyes. I will never look at things in the same way.”

“ Make sure that adequate choices are offered and don't go with gender stereotypes. Open all program options to all female and male clients.”



“ Thinking about this is just the start.”



Top row: Abigail Sullivan and Colleen Furlanetto co-facilitating *Human Rights and Quality Services: What does gender have to do with it?* leadership program at the Wesley Mission Victoria. Middle row: Attendees from Scope participating in the Stepping Up Activity as part of the *Human Rights and Quality Services: What does gender have to do with it?* leadership program. Bottom row (from left): Keran Howe (WDV Executive Director); and The Tipping Foundation Management Team – Graeme Kelly (CEO), Jayne Gallo (General Manager Client Services), Jane Emery (General Manager Community Relations), James Digby (Chief Financial Officer) and Jantine Eddebuttel (General Manager Human Services).

## ‘Women with Disabilities: Our Right to Respect!’

This year our popular peer empowerment program:

- recruited and trained three peer educators and two workers from Centres Against Sexual Assault
- was delivered to 35 women with disabilities in three outer metropolitan areas.

We welcomed much positive feedback we got on how it improved the capacity of women with disabilities to:

- advocate for rights to respectful relationships
- recognise their own strengths
- speak up about violence and accessing supports.

“ I found the support group very empowering and supportive.”

“ Opened my eyes to other support services I can use.”



Participants of *Our Right to Respect!* explore their strengths through these cards.

“ The most important thing I have gained is knowing that as a woman with disability I have rights to information on health and that there is support and help out there for those who are struggling with relationships, assault and violence.”

“ The most helpful thing I have learnt is that there is support out there for women with disabilities.”

“ What I liked the most was the group discussions based on the topics such as what it means to be a woman with a disability.”



Slides used at the Workforce Development *Train the Trainer* training that look at gender and disability.

## Train the Trainer Apprenticeship

The expansion and consolidation of the Program’s co-facilitator training team has been completed, with 13 new co-facilitators graduating in late March 2017.

We have had some attrition of the new recruits, with some women with disabilities acquiring full time work and others from the sector moving into other services.

We received very positive feedback from the four Co-facilitator Communities of Practice held through the year.

## Future directions

We commissioned an independent industry demand analysis for the Workforce Development Program on Gender and Disability from consultants Effective Change.

The aim was to inform the redevelopment of our training products and delivery platforms to more flexibly meet disability organisations’ requirements as the NDIS is fully rolled out.

The program’s Project Advisory Group was instrumental in the process, including the development of a five year Strategic Development and Implementation Plan.

This work led to an extension of funding from the Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC) of \$100,000 to undertake short term priorities identified in the plan.

Next year we will reconvene the Project Advisory Group with an extended membership of key disability industry peaks, training institutes and preventing violence against women (PVAW) workforce development representatives to consider next steps for funding and putting the plan into action.

We were disappointed that our funding proposal for a Community Partnership for Primary Prevention Grant submitted to DPC that proposed a partnership between Women with Disabilities Victoria, Future Social Service Institute (FSSI), National Disability Services (NDS) and Women’s Health Grampians to develop a sustainable regional model for the program was not successful.

## Capacity building for prevention

Women with Disabilities Victoria commissioned the *Prevention of violence against women and children regional action plan capacity building project: Women with disabilities* project which reported this year.

Its focus was on the disability related aspects of the Regional Action Planning Project which was a wider project to build the capacity of violence prevention workers around the regions, co-ordinated by Women's Health Victoria.

We wanted to build that capacity to deliver high quality work that is inclusive of women with disabilities.

The project delivered:

- A needs analysis of what will make regional action plans inclusive of women with disabilities and disability organisations; and the tools, resources and strategies needed to embed women with disabilities and disability organisations in preventing violence against women activities.
- A literature review to contribute to the body of knowledge on the best practice approaches for including women with disabilities and disability organisations into regional action plans for preventing violence against women activities.

- Guidelines for inclusive regional planning on how to take considered and timely action that is inclusive, practical, evidence-based and do-able, to prevent violence against women with disabilities.



Cover of Inclusive Planning Guidelines for the Prevention of Violence Against Women with Disabilities.

## Working across sectors

Women with Disabilities Victoria was invited to present at the Prevalent and Preventable conference hosted by Our Watch and the Australian Women Against Violence Alliance (AWAVA) in Adelaide.

The organisers reported that: “We know that one size does not fit all when it comes to preventing violence against women and the conference explored the tailored actions that can help address the

inequality, disadvantage and violence faced by women with disabilities, women from culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and the LGBTIQ community.”

“ One of the most important things about the conference for Women with Disabilities Victoria was the way it brought different groups together – allowing us to be different and to explore what we have in common in ending violence.” – Jen Hargrave, WDV Senior Policy Officer, who spoke on two panels at the conference.



## Intersectionality into action

An outcome of the Regional Action Planning (RAP) Project was a two day statewide forum to report on the various RAP projects.

It attracted more than 70 practitioners from across the women's health, local government, community health and state government sectors.

Women with Disabilities Victoria was among a range of specialist groups, including Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention

and Legal Service Victoria, Multicultural Centre for Women's Health, Gay and Lesbian Health Victoria, and Our Watch who made presentations.

Each session focused on building knowledge of inclusive and intersectional primary prevention and gender equity practice, and provided practical advice for putting intersectionality into action.

The project recommended to the Victorian Government that an overarching Framework on Intersectionality be developed for the Prevention of Violence Against Women Sector.

Women with Disabilities Victoria also provided input to the Action to Prevent Violence Against Women, an online resource for the primary prevention of violence against women.

Developed by Victorian women's health services with funding from the State Government, the resource aims to support organisations to get involved in the prevention of violence against women, and to support practitioners to deliver best practice initiatives.



Screenshot from the Prevent Violence Against Women online resource:  
<https://www.actionpvaw.org.au>



# Growing the organisation

Our expertise and input was in great demand this year as Victoria set about implementing the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Family Violence and the Parliamentary Inquiry into Abuse in Disability Services, and the roll-out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

That was recognised by significant additional funding from government and other providers, allowing us to grow as an organisation so we could take up every opportunity to influence policy and practice on behalf of our members and women with disabilities generally.

We take great pride that women with disabilities make up the majority of our workforce.

Some key developments were:

- attracting funding of \$2.4 million, double the projected annual budget
  - growing staff numbers from 12 to 15, with an additional 12 short-term and regional casual staff
  - restructuring through the creation of four specific program areas: Operations, Women's Empowerment, Workforce Development, and Strategy, Policy and Research
- outgrowing our 9th floor offices and, from March 2017, sub-leasing extra office space from the Health Issues Centre on the 1st floor of 255 Bourke Street
  - expanding all our operational areas, including IT, finance systems, human resources, program administration support and more. That expansion will continue into 2017–18.

“ We take great pride that women with disabilities make up the majority of our workforce.”



WDV staff at a staff development day.



# Speaking out



Follow Women with Disabilities Victoria on Twitter @WDVtweet.



Follow Women with Disabilities Victoria on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/womenwithdisabilitiesvictoria/>

## Getting our messages across

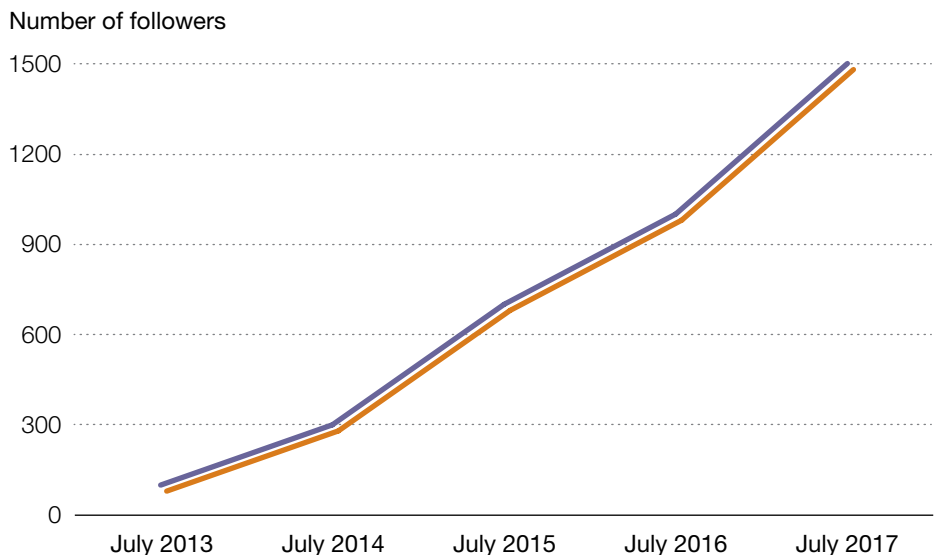
Women with Disabilities Victoria has an ever-growing, vibrant communications presence, through:

- our fortnightly eNews, primarily for members, regularly read by around 500 people
- the Violence Quarterly, with 800-plus subscribers, primarily people working in the fields of human rights, disability services and the violence against women sector

- our Twitter account – @WDVtweet – nearly 1,450 followers and a great way for us to communicate with advocates, journalists and leaders
- our Facebook page, with 1,550 followers, which keeps us connected to women in the community.

Together, these platforms allow us to share news, views, resources and opportunities and to connect with members, advocates and other people working in our priority areas.

**Figure 1: Facebook and Twitter followers (numbers for both platforms are very similar)**



## Making space for women

We were proudly part of a great event in Melbourne that was staged as part of the United Nations 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence campaign.

The ‘Making Space for Women: Planning community spaces and public art’ event was hosted by Women’s Health Victoria in partnership with Women’s Health in the North and Women with Disabilities Victoria, with support from the Victorian Government.

It recognised that the way public spaces are designed can have a big impact on the lives of women.

Speakers, like Women with Disabilities Victoria member Jax Jacki Brown, talked about why it matters to have women and diversity visible and welcomed in our public spaces. Jax spoke powerfully about how having a disability attracts so much attention in a public space that it is like performance art as a way of life.



Artwork by graphic recorder Jessamy Gee, inspired by conversations at Making Space for Women.

## Hailed for leadership

Women with Disabilities Victoria won the Australian Centre for Women’s Leadership 2016 Award for Empowering Women with Disabilities.

It was presented to Keran Howe, on behalf of the organisation, and to Samantha Winch, a former co-facilitator with the Gender and Disability Workforce Development Program, as a woman who has benefitted from Women with Disabilities Victoria’s empowerment work.

The Centre said that Women with Disabilities Victoria has raised the status of women

with disabilities, provided a voice for their representation in inquiries, research, policies and legislation, effected organisational and personal change, and influenced foundational state policies.

It hailed Sam’s involvement as a co-facilitator, saying: “Gaining skills and the confidence for self-advocacy and an understanding of her rights... Samantha Winch aims to help others so that they do not experience violence and, if they do, are able to identify it as violence, and seek services they need to help them feel safe again.”

“ *The Australian Centre for Women’s Leadership said that WDV has raised the status of women with disabilities, provided a voice for their representation in inquiries, research, policies and legislation, effected organisational and personal change, and influenced foundational state policies.*”



Left: HESTA Award Winner representatives: Sue Roff (Arts Project Australia) – Outstanding Organisation Award, Keran Howe (Women with Disabilities Victoria) – Social Impact Award, and Anne Mitchell (Concern Australia) – Unsung Heroes Award. Right: WDV staff with representatives from HESTA and ME Bank.

## **Awarded for social impact**

Our work was also rewarded with one of the top honours at the 2016 HESTA Community Sector Awards.

The Social Impact Award recognised the contribution of Women with Disabilities Victoria to government policies aimed at achieving greater social justice and change for women with disabilities in Victoria.

Announcing the award, HESTA said:

“The organisation’s 11 employees and 300 plus members work to ensure the voices and stories of women with disabilities are heard and considered when public policy and government recommendations and decisions are made.

Women with Disabilities Victoria works to change derogatory attitudes towards women with disabilities that often result in a high rates of violence and social and economic exclusion and were influential in the recommendations handed down in the Royal Commission into Family Violence.”

The award came with a \$10,000 cheque to support our work, generously provided by long-standing Awards sponsor ME Bank. Along with other ways to strengthen our communication with members, we are using this valuable additional funding to redevelop our website – to give it a facelift and make it easier to navigate for people with functional needs.



# Submissions and representation

## Submissions

- United Nations Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences Annual Report
- Submission to Department of Social Services in response to the NDIS Code of Conduct Discussion Paper
- Submission on Victoria's State Disability Plan

## Input to Consultations

- Our Watch – development of PVAW competencies and PVAW short course

## Presentations

- Australian Network on Disability: International Women's Day Presentation
- Disability Employment Services National Conference: keynote address
- Health Issues Centre: Diversity is Diverse Forum
- IPAA Forum: Gender disability based drivers of violence against women

- Magistrates Training Forum: Violence against women with disabilities
- Prevention of Violence Against Women Regional Action Planning Project forum
- Whitehorse Women's Forum, City of Whitehorse: Why the leadership of women with disabilities is important
- Women's Health Association of Victoria: Intersectional approaches to prevention of violence against women
- Women's Health Grampians: Inclusive strategic planning
- Women's Policy Think Tank, Good Shepherd: Putting women at the centre: a policy forum



Left: Jen Hargrave presenting at the Women's Health Association Victoria Intersectionality in Action forum. Right: Keran Howe presenting at the PVAW Regional Action Planning Project forum.

## Representation on Government and Statutory Committees

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- Cross Sectoral Royal Commission into Family Violence Implementation Alliance
- Disability Registration and Accreditation Project Advisory Group
- Family Violence Diverse Communities and Intersectionality Working Group
- Family Violence Industry Taskforce and Working Groups:
  - Cross Sectoral Practice and Workforce Development System Architecture
  - Knowledge and Skills
  - Qualifications
- Family Violence Steering Committee
- Magistrates Family Violence Taskforce
- Ministerial Prevention Taskforce
- NDIS Implementation Taskforce and Working Groups:
  - NDIS Participant Readiness Working Group
  - NDIS Housing Working Group
  - NDIS Cross Sector and Innovation Working Group
  - NDIS Workforce Working Group

- Office of the Public Advocate Policy Reference Group
- Victoria Police Priority Communities Reference Group
- Victorian Skills Commission: Certificate III (Individual Support) & Certificate IV (Disability) Review

## Representation on Community Boards, Committees and Coalitions

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- Disability Advocacy Resource Unit Network
- Domestic Violence Victoria Members' Meeting
- EVAs Media Group
- Future Social Services Institute:
  - Board
  - Graduate Certificate of Disability and Inclusion Advisory Board
- Municipal Association of Victoria Prevention of Violence Against Women Forum
- National Disability Services Victorian Abuse, Neglect and Violence Prevention Projects Group
- Prevention Alliance
- SCOPE 'Speak Up and Be Safe' Project Reference Group
- Victorian Council of Social Service Peaks and Statewide

- Women's Health Association of Victoria:
  - CEO's Committee
  - Prevention of Violence Against Women Governance Group
  - Intersectionality Group
  - Prevention of Violence Against Women Community of Practice
- Women's Legal Service Priority Pathways Reference Group



# 2016-17 financial statements

## Statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income for the year ended 30 June 2017

	2017	2016
	\$	\$
<b>CONTINUING OPERATIONS</b>		
Revenue	2,433,449	991,021
Employee benefits expense	(863,221)	(620,753)
Depreciation expense	(18,303)	(13,530)
Client support services	(127,022)	(75,254)
Other expenses	(163,141)	(142,940)
Surplus before tax	1,261,762	138,544
Income tax expense	-	-
<b>Surplus for the year</b>	<b>1,261,762</b>	<b>138,544</b>
<b>Other comprehensive income</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total comprehensive surplus for the year</b>	<b>1,261,762</b>	<b>138,544</b>

## Statement of financial position at 30 June 2017

	2017	2016
	\$	\$
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Cash and cash equivalents	2,054,644	679,416
Trade and other receivables	200	200
Other Assets	8,643	7,434
<b>Total current assets</b>	<b>2,063,487</b>	<b>687,050</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Plant and equipment	28,363	15,569
<b>Total non-current assets</b>	<b>28,363</b>	<b>15,569</b>
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>2,091,850</b>	<b>702,619</b>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Trade and other payables	129,873	61,203
Provisions	176,804	104,328
<b>Total current liabilities</b>	<b>306,677</b>	<b>165,531</b>
<b>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Provisions	6,289	19,966
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>	<b>6,289</b>	<b>19,966</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>312,966</b>	<b>185,497</b>
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>1,778,884</b>	<b>517,122</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>		
Retained earnings	1,778,884	517,122
<b>Total equity</b>	<b>1,778,884</b>	<b>517,122</b>



**Statement of changes in equity  
for the year ended 30 June 2017**

	Retained Earnings \$	Total \$
Balance at 1 July 2015	378,578	378,578
Deficit for the year	138,544	138,544
Balance at 30 June 2016	517,122	517,122
Balance at 1 July 2016	517,122	517,122
Surplus for the year	1,261,762	1,261,762
Balance at 30 June 2017	1,778,884	1,778,884

**Statement of cash flows  
for the year ended 30 June 2017**

	2017 \$	2016 \$
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Receipts from operating activities	2,409,946	979,979
Payments to suppliers and employees	(1,027,124)	(770,929)
Interest received	23,503	12,482
Net cash generated by/(used in) operating activities	1,406,325	221,532
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Payments for property, plant and equipment	(31,097)	(4,600)
Net cash used in investing activities	(31,097)	(4,600)
<b>Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents</b>	1,375,228	(216,932)
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year</b>	679,416	462,484
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year</b>	2,054,644	679,416



The full Annual Financial Report for 2016–17 can be found on the WDV website at [http://www.wdv.org.au/documents/WDV Annual Financial Report 2016-17.pdf](http://www.wdv.org.au/documents/WDV_Annual_Financial_Report_2016-17.pdf)



# Auditor's report

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## Deloitte.

### Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of Women with Disabilities Victoria Inc

#### Opinion

We have audited the financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of Women with Disabilities Victoria Inc (the "Entity") which comprises the statement of financial position as at 30 June 2017, the statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income, the statement of changes in equity and the statement of cash flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies and other explanatory information, and declaration by Members of the Board as set out on pages 11 to 22.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the Entity's financial position as at 30 June 2017 and of its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the financial reporting requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012* and the *Australian Charities and Not-for profits Commission Act 2012 (Cth)* (the ACNC Act) and the accounting policies described in Note 2.

#### Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report. We are independent of the Entity in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110

*Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

#### Emphasis of Matter – Basis of Accounting and Restriction on Distribution and Use

We draw attention to Note 2 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist the Entity to meet the financial reporting requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012* and the *Australian Charities and Not-for profits Commission Act 2012 (Cth)* (the ACNC Act). As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our report is intended solely for the Members of the Board and should not be distributed or used by parties other than the Members of the Board. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

#### Other Information

- (a) Management is responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Entity's annual report for the year ended 30 June 2017, but does not include the financial report and our auditor's report thereon.

Our opinion on the financial report does not cover the other information and we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial report, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial report or our knowledge obtained in the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact. We have nothing to report in this regard.

### **Responsibilities of Management and the Board for the Financial Report**

Management of the Entity is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report and has determined that the basis of preparation and accounting policies described in Note 2 to the financial report is appropriate to meet the requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Reform Act 2012* and the *Australian Charities and Not-for profits Commission Act 2012 (Cth)* (the ACNC Act) and is appropriate to meet the needs of the Members of the Board. Management's responsibility also includes such internal control as management determine is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, management is responsible for assessing the ability of the Entity to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intend to liquidate the Entity or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

The Board are responsible for overseeing the Entity's financial reporting process.

### **Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report**

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk

of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Entity's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by management.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Entity to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with management regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.



DELOITTE TOUCHE TOHMATSU



Rachel Smith  
Partner  
Chartered Accountants  
Melbourne, 24 November 2017



# Acknowledgements

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*Thank you to our members, pro bono contributors, financial donors and grant makers, and those who have volunteered their time and energy to work with Women with Disabilities Victoria in 2016–17.*

*Your support enables us to work more effectively for a world where all women are respected and can fully experience life.*

## **Funding partners, grant makers and donors**

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- Future Leaders (Dr Helen Sykes)
- Gross Foundation
- Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation – Youth in Philanthropy
- Portland House Foundation
- The Collie Foundation
- Department of Health and Human Services
- Department of Premier and Cabinet
- Fiona Smith
- ME Bank

## **Partners**

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- Australian Federation of Disability Organisations
- Barwon Centre Against Sexual Assault
- City of Darebin
- City of Wodonga
- City of Yarra

- Cobram Community House Inc
- Cross Sector Alliance to Respond to the Royal Commission into Family Violence
- Disability Advocacy Resource Unit
- Deakin University
- La Trobe University
- Maribyrnong City Council
- MHA Care – Cobram
- Moira Shire Council
- Moreland City Council
- Multicultural Centre for Women's Health
- Office of the Disability Services Commissioner
- Office of the Public Advocate
- Regional Disability Advocacy Service
- Self Advocacy Resource Unit
- South East Centre Against Sexual Assault
- Soroptimist International of Cobram Barooga Inc.
- South Gippsland Shire Council
- South West Advocacy Association
- University of Melbourne

- Victorian Advocacy League for Individuals with Disability
- Warrnambool City Council
- Women's Health East
- Women's Health Goulburn North East
- Women's Health Grampians
- Women's Health in the North
- Women's Health in the South East
- Women's Health Victoria
- Women's Health West
- Women's Legal Service Victoria
- Youth Disability Advocacy Service

### **Pro bono and voluntary contributors**

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- Jane Fenton, Consultant (strategic planning)
- Narelle Crux (organisational change)
- Liz Ryan, Consultant (organisational review)
- Shirley Hamel, Consultant (finance systems review)
- Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu (audit)
- Moores Legal (legal and human resources advice, pro bono subscription)
- Australian Network on Disability (AND) (pro bono subscription)

### **Volunteer Mentors for the Enabling Women Programs (Cobram and Doncaster)**

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- Ann-Marie Baker
- Anthea Maher
- Belinda Jordan
- Brooke Kayla
- Courtney Mills
- Dorothy Yiu
- Gail Carter
- Helen Thomas
- Jen Tait
- Jodie Pixton
- Karen McKenzie
- Kate Ashley
- Katie White
- Kim Polidano
- Lin Davidson
- Michelle James
- Mish Baker
- Morgan Aldridge
- Nicole Butcher
- Philomena Macdonald
- Sharon Granek
- Susan Arthur
- Tricia Malowney



# Support our work

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Help us to strengthen the voice of women with disabilities in Victoria and nationally:

- become a member
- join our leadership programs
- come to our events and forums
- contribute to our submissions and campaigns
- share information on social media
- be informed about issues affecting women with disabilities
- participate in our workforce programs
- donate to support our work.

## Join Women with Disabilities Victoria

Full membership is available to women with disabilities in Victoria and is free.

Associate membership is open to individuals (\$50) and/or organisations (\$140) who are supportive of our aims.

More information on how to become a member is available on our website [www.wdv.org.au](http://www.wdv.org.au) or by calling 03 9286 7800.

## Make a financial donation

We gratefully accept donations to support our work. Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible. Please visit our website at [www.wdv.org.au](http://www.wdv.org.au) for the payment options.

## Donate your expertise

We welcome any pro bono support that can help us to realise our goals.

## Contribute to our newsletters

Please email [wdv@wdv.org.au](mailto:wdv@wdv.org.au) with any suggestions and items of interest.

Follow us on social media:



facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/womenwithdisabilitiesvictoria>



Twitter

@WDVtweet

## Watch WDV TV!



Check out our YouTube channel <http://www.youtube.com/WDVchannel>

Watch our staff and other women with disabilities tell their stories.

Share our videos and suggest others that we could feature.



## **Women with Disabilities Victoria**

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Level 9, 255 Bourke Street, Melbourne VIC 3000

Postal: GPO Box 1160, Melbourne VIC 3001

Phone: 03 9286 7800

Fax: 03 9663 7955

Email: [wdv@wdv.org.au](mailto:wdv@wdv.org.au)

**[www.wdv.org.au](http://www.wdv.org.au)**