

MEDIA RELEASE

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VICHEALTH WELCOMES STATEWIDE COMMITMENT TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

A \$7.89m State Government plan to prevent the devastating impact of violence against women in Victoria has been welcomed by the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth).

The three year *Action Plan to Address Violence Against Women and Children 2012-2015* was officially launched by the Victorian Premier, the Hon. Ted Baillieu and the Minister for Women, the Hon. Mary Wooldridge in Melbourne today (9 October).

Under the plan the responsibility to prevent violence against women is shared across the community.

VicHealth CEO Jerril Rechter said violence was the biggest health threat to Victorian women aged 15 to 44-years-old, but in order to address the issue, attitudes towards women that create inequality must change.

“Research shows very strong links between creating a culture of respectful attitudes towards women and preventing violence against women before it occurs,” Ms Rechter said.

“Unfortunately, we know sexist behaviour and discrimination of women are prevalent in Victoria. VicHealth’s research shows one in three Victorians have witnessed these things during the past year, but less than half said or did something to stop it because they did not know how to.

“Every day there are thousands of bystanders who could stand up for respect and equality in the community. It only takes one person to speak up to make someone else think twice about their behaviour.

“The commitment from the State Government will support much needed activity to encourage all Victorians to take a stand on violence against women and to ensure ongoing development of programs that promote gender equality in the places where we live, work, learn and recreate.

“The Victorian community is ready to stand up and take action for the health of all Victorian women and we are pleased to see the State Government supporting prevention and innovation in this area.”

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