

31 July 2013

VicHealth welcomes national foundation to prevent violence against women

The Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth) has welcomed the announcement of a new national foundation to engage and raise awareness in the community on the prevention of violence against women and their children. The Foundation was launched by Federal Minister for the Status of Women The Hon. Julie Collins and Victorian Minister for Community Services The Hon. Mary Wooldridge on 26 July.

VicHealth CEO Jerril Rechter said: “Violence against women is serious, common and preventable. We know that violence against women from an intimate partner is the biggest health threat to Victorian women aged 15 to 44 years old.

“VicHealth has played a pioneering role in building evidence and developing programs and policies to prevent violence against women in Victoria, and we see the creation of the Foundation as a vital step in addressing this significant issue at a national level.

“Since VicHealth conducted the last National Community Attitudes Survey on violence against women in 2010, we’ve witnessed a groundswell of public support from people who feel violence against women is not acceptable and want to do something to prevent it. With the results of the follow up survey due in 2014, the new Foundation up and running and the ‘Take a Stand’ campaign backed by Premier Denis Napthine, Victoria Police Chief Commissioner Ken Lay, Lord Mayor Robert Doyle and AFL CEO Andrew Demetriou, there will be many more opportunities for the community to be involved in tackling this issue.

“To have the Foundation based in Victoria is a reflection of the tireless work over many years by a number of organisations in this state to raise awareness of the huge impact of violence against women. It’s also a reflection of the advances we’ve made in terms of building respectful relationships – which research clearly shows can help prevent violence from happening in the first place.

“This commitment from the Federal and State Governments will support much-needed activity to encourage all Australians to take a stand on violence and work together to build gender equality. We’re very much looking forward to working with Foundation Chair Natasha Stott Despoja and her team to help improve the health and wellbeing of women and their children across the community and across the country,” said Ms Rechter.

ENDS