

1999

2000

A N N U A L  
WORKING WOMEN'S HEALTH  
R E P O R T

# coordinator report

## adele murdolo looks towards new opportunities

I am pleased to introduce the Working Women's Health Annual Report of activities for the period 1999/2000—a very productive, and noteworthy year.

The Industry Visits and Community Workshops Programs continued to bring information exchange to NESB women in their workplaces, homes and community settings. Extra DHS funding to include information about alcohol and drugs in the Northern and Western Metropolitan Regions meant expansion for these programs. The Family and Reproductive Rights Education Program continued to offer information and referral to women from communities affected by FGM, and we can look forward to a FARREP conference later this year (that is once our African Community Worker Medina Idriess returns from San Francisco and her new grandchild).

The WWH Training Program provided ongoing professional training for bilingual Health Educators. New staff were welcomed in March with an intensive ten-day training program, hopefully a positive introduction to us and their valued work. With a core group of thirteen Health Educators, we now offer health information sessions

in fourteen languages. Publications saw major achievements—we published and launched three new reports. These reports are essential reading for anybody wanting to read more about health issues for NESB women; in the specific areas of alcohol and drug health promotion; or health issues for women workers in the textile, clothing and footwear industries. For trainers and health professionals, our latest report, *Knowing Her Better*, offers impressive research on NESB women's experiences of the Victorian health care system complemented by a practical easy-to-use training manual for health workers. *Knowing Her Better* was launched at our June Forum, *Equity and Justice for Immigrant Women in Health Now*, an energetic, inspiring day of papers and discussions canvassing a range of NESB women's health issues.

We published the first two issues of our revamped Newsletter, *Working Well*. Each edition featured tear-out multilingual (four languages each issue), health information sheets—topics covered were dust in the workplace and pre-menstrual tension. *Let's Talk About Sex* a pamphlet for young NESB women about their sexuality and sexual health (in six

languages) is also now available. Translation? Much needed multilingual health information written for NESB women.

The Library and Resource Collection expanded this year, with an accent on Greek, Turkish, Italian and Spanish resources covering women's health, occupational health and women's political activity. We continue seeking out resources in as many languages as spoken by NESB women. The English language collection also expanded.

In the area of organisational development, we identified the need for structural improvements to strengthen our infrastructure, to stand us in good stead as a growing agency. We also implemented a new data collection system, aimed at the collection of consistent statewide data. A challenging process, trying to fit our very unique health related activities into a quantifiable and standardised set of categories. We're still working on that one.

Overall, during this millennium year we have consolidated our core programs, and completed projects, clearing the way for new and innovative health

promotion and research in the next twelve months. Next year we will make stronger links with NESB working women in rural communities and embark on research into health issues impacting on NESB women.

This year we worked with many agencies, without which we could not do our job. Our collaborations have been rewarding and importantly, have contributed to the process of improving the quality of health promotion for NESB working women.

Thanks all WWH staff who have put so much energy into this year's success—regularly performing above and beyond the usual duty call. Their work is more than just a job. I would also like to thank the Board of Management for their commitment to WWH, for their skill, hard work and capacity for humour at the right moments. Finally, on behalf of WWH I extend our thanks to (working) NESB women who continue to be our ultimate inspirations and teachers.

**Adele Murdolo**  
**Coordinator**  
**Working Women's Health**

# chair report

## terri soumilas on the last twelve months with an eye on the future

The past year at Working Women's Health has seen a consolidation of a lot of planning and hard work by both the staff and Board of Management of Working Women's Health. During the period of 1998-99 we saw significant restructuring to the organisational mechanisms of Working Women's Health, which have now come to fruition.

There has been a significant increase in the numbers of Factory Visits, these have been in the textile and footwear industry, and we have also now begun visits to the manufacturing industry via Holden.

We are now hosting the 3CR radio program *Mother Tongue* on Monday nights, tune in!

Further, we are now concentrating on increasing our Community Visits Program that is, visiting 'isolated women'; this is being done by working with established groups and AMES English classes.

Our publications for the year were:

*Seamstress: a report on health issues of women workers in the textile clothing and footwear industry.*

*Nobody ever asked me if I wanted to know: an alcohol and drug health promotion project with culturally and linguistically diverse working women.*

*Knowing Her Better: a research report about NESB women's sexual and reproductive health (which features a corresponding training manual).*

Our library collection has also increased, with the addition of a number non-English and English titles.

Our emphasis is on the dissemination of information, with our primary focus being to NESB working women, in their various types of workplace and gathering points. Information which aims to empower women to make informed choices about their lives.

Our work has obviously paid off, we saw an increase in funding to our Service from the newly elected government. This year the increase was directed to the work we do in regional areas.

Organisationally, we are always working towards ways in which to make the organisation as efficient as possible as we continue to grow. The restructure of 1998 is now being 'sharpened up' by re-examining our financial and administrative structures. Further, our information technology processes need to be fairly specific given the type of work we do. We aim to be able to collect relevant detailed data which accurately reflects the needs of working women in the state, and the ways we need to respond to their needs. As we look towards 2001, we are feeling fairly confident, we have come a long way and I sincerely believe that the only way is forward, and those who will benefit the most are working women.

I feel a great sense of humbleness in being involved in an organisation which aims to improve the lives of disadvantaged women. I thank the staff who have worked in difficult situations, that is, hot offices, demanding Board members and so on. Staff who give a damn about their work. I also thank the Board of Management members who give up their valuable non-paid time to work with this organisation.

I proudly present the Working Women's Health Annual Report for the year 1999-2000.

**Terri Soumilas**  
**Chairperson**  
**Working Women's Health**

# *industry visits & community workshops*

**rachna muddagouni, community and industry organiser on the wwh  
outreach programs working with nesb women at work and in community**

It has been a great experience coordinating the Industry and Community Workshop Programs in the last year.

We organised weekly visits to textile clothing and footwear industries from June 1999 to November 2000 and March 2000 to June 2000.

Each of those visits was a valuable experience because even though we had time constraints and in some cases inappropriate venues, we felt we were sharing some great information with women about their reproductive health,

sexual health, and occupational health and safety.

Women in factories are very isolated and often have very little access to services; they really appreciated our visits and looked forward to having us there each week. The *Seamstress* Report has also helped the bilingual Health Educators to gather further information about the health issues for women working in the Textile Clothing and Footwear Industry. The Community Workshops have also been a very rewarding experience for our team. We were able to offer visits to marginalised

and isolated women in the community and through these, a range of health information on various health issues. The women really appreciated the informal manner in which the sessions were conducted and felt that they enjoyed participating in all the discussions. Women found that their life experiences were valued and our Health Educators were able to meet their individual needs. For some women information about occupational health and safety for women working at home, was very informative. All the women enjoyed the videos and written information that was provided in their

respective languages, according to their needs and preferences.

What more can I say about the program?

I feel privileged to coordinate the wonderful team of Bilingual Health Educators. They are very highly skilled, dedicated and their life experiences have been my greatest strength. I would really like to take this opportunity to thank each one of them and all the Board and Staff members of Working Women's Health who have given me this wonderful opportunity and experience.

**Rachna Muddagouni  
Community and Industry Organiser  
Working Women's Health**

# i n d u s t r y v i s i t s c o m m u n i t y w o r k s h o p s

WORKPLACE AND DATES	PARTICIPANTS	LANGUAGES	NAME OF GROUP	SESSIONS AND LANGUAGES
berkeley apparels 19-29 July 1999 (sunshine)	112	chinese english macedonian tagalog vietnamese	AMES (coburg collingwood flagstaff)	13 arabic chinese croatian greek italian macedonian spanish tagalog turkish vietnamese
caprice curtains 13-28 Oct 1999 (moorabin)	105	english greek italian macedonian tagalog turkish vietnamese	croatian women's group (melbourne, city)	3 croatian
CMT management 17 May-26 Apr 1999 (footscray)	16	vietnamese	greek women's group (brunswick coburg)	5 greek
diamond cut 7-28 July 1999 (fairfield)	96	chinese croatian english khmer serbian tagalog turkish vietnamese	migrant resource centre (altona)	6 vietnamese
field knitting mills 31 May-28 June 2000 (richmond)	87	chinese english greek italian macedonian spanish vietnamese	migrant resource centre (footscray)	3 croatian
flair menswear 20-27 July 2000 (preston)	90	chinese greek italian macedonian vietnamese	turkish women's group (mordialloc)	9 turkish
forbes fashion 1-22 Sep 1999 (dingley)	87	croatian english macedonian tagalog turkish vietnamese	women's group (flemington)	4 arabic eritrean trigean
glo weave 4 Aug-13 Oct 1999 (collingwood)	40	chinese english greek macedonian vietnamese	women's group (frankston with WHISE)	4 chinese croatian english italian turkish
hilton/sara lee apparels 8-15 july 1999 (colaroo)	104	chinese croatian english greek italian macedonian tagalog turkish vietnamese	women's group (hume)	4 chinese vietnamese
holden 15 Mar-12 Apr 2000 (port melbourne)	46	chinese english greek italian macedonian		
mondo victoria 5-26 july 1999 (brunswick)	11	chinese english turkish vietnamese		

## october 2000

🎉WWH CELEBRATES ITS AGM 🎉ANNUAL REPORT LAUNCHED 🎉COMMUNITY VISITS AT MORWELL 🎉INDUSTRY VISITS AT FLAIR MENSWEAR AND SARA LEE APPARELS 🎉CATALOGUE LIST OF WWH PUBLICATIONS NOW AVAILABLE 🎉MOTHER TONGUE WWH RADIO PROGRAM ON 3CR (AM FREQUENCY 855) MONDAYS EVENINGS SIX TO SIX-THIRTY

## november 2000

🎉A&D REPORT PUBLISHED 🎉INDUSTRY VISITS PROGRAM (IVP) AND COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS PROGRAM (CWP) END FOR THE YEAR 🎉MOTHER TONGUE WWH RADIO PROGRAM ON 3CR (AM FREQUENCY 855) MONDAYS EVENINGS SIX TO SIX-THIRTY

# professional training & development

## maria kremidas training and development worker reports on a year of mutual learning

Training in the year 2000 got off to a great start. Our Program recruited six new bilingual Health Educators. It was terrific to add new faces to our existing talented team. The arrival of new workers means the Program can continue to give sessions, in more languages and to expand the skill base of our group. The introductory training concentrated on the needs of the Industry Visits Program and the Community Visits Program.

Introduction training was held in February and March, this year we concentrated (again), on the health issues facing working women in the textile, clothing and footwear industries. I am very pleased to say that we had some wonderful new and previous guest speakers and trainers who lent their expertise in the areas of reproductive health, family planning, sexual health and occupational health and safety. Our new Health Educators brought their extensive talents and skills to the training and these attributes made the training a rich and rewarding time for all of those who participated.

I thank them all for their contribution. It was a privilege to share in the training for a second year. I congratulate all our

workers for their thoughtful and enthusiastic involvement. I would also like to thank the existing multi-talented group for making the new staff welcome. The training was enhanced greatly by the input of those who had already experienced working in the Visits Programs.

Our Alcohol and Drug Project, went into full swing again this year and all our bilingual Educators participated in A&D training. For many of us we came into the training having a basic knowledge around the issues, eager to learn more. We covered a range of subjects including harm minimisation, information in regards to illegal drugs and their implications for families and society. We also discussed the need for our workers to provide appropriate information on the potential risks of prescription and over-the-counter drugs and their increasing usage in our community. The training was informative, challenging and increased our awareness around these issues. Thankyou to all the Drug and Alcohol agencies who participated.

We continued to provide cross-cultural training to organisations, tailored to meet the specific needs of individual

groups. Added to this, the *Knowing Her Better* modules, were finally launched at our recent Forum and I hope that people will access these modules, as a practical training tool. Their aim being after all, to improve the understanding and quality of health services to NESB women. The endeavour of the manual is to increase the understanding in this sector; but more importantly to reflect the voices of the many women who describe their difficulties in accessing health services and the barriers; and the complications and lack of awareness they often face with health professionals. The training modules can be adapted to suit individual organisations and form a companion to Charin Nasook's wonderful and insightful Report. Please contact us to obtain a copy of both the Report and the Training Manual.

Annual Reports provide an opportunity to reflect and also extend special thanks and so in that spirit I'd like to thank:

Turning Point  
Moreland Hall  
Youth Northern Outreach Team (YNOT)  
Buoyancy  
TRANX  
Textile Clothing and Footwear Union of

Australia: Victorian Branch  
Women's Health in the North (WHIN)  
Women's Health Victoria  
Fairwear  
RMIT Student Union: Bundoora Campus  
Family Planning Victoria  
Joy Damousi  
BHP: Global Leadership Program  
Lalor Living and Learning Centre  
Melbourne Sexual Health Centre  
North Yarra CHC (Fitzroy)  
Australian Action on Pre-Eclampsia (AAPEC)  
Equal Opportunity Commission Victoria  
Australian Services Union: Victorian Services and Energy Branch

### Special Thanks

**Medina Idriess** (FARREP Project)  
**Mary Burns** (Hepatitis C Helpline)  
**Estelle McNally** (Endometriosis Natural Therapies Support Group)  
**Sophie Howlett** (Australian Volunteers International)  
**Sue Lattimer** (Breastscreen)  
**Deb Pietsch** (Women's Health East)

**Maria Kremidas**  
**Training & Development Worker**  
**Working Women's Health**



sense of humour



communicating



listening



wisdom



generating



cross-cultural value



universal

some of the



well-trained team



celebrating diversity



common aims



resourcefulness



mutual exchange

*december 2000*

🎧 MOTHER TONGUE WWH RADIO PROGRAM ON 3CR (AM FREQUENCY 855) MONDAYS EVENINGS SIX TO SIX-THIRTY 🎧 THE END OF ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL YEAR OF ACTIVITY AT WORKING WOMEN'S HEALTH

*january 2001*

🎧 ANOTHER PROMISING YEAR BEGINS! 🎧 WWH PROMOTIONAL BROCHURE NOW AVAILABLE IN MORE COMMUNITY LANGUAGES 🎧 MOTHER TONGUE WWH RADIO PROGRAM ON 3CR (AT RADIO FREQUENCY 855 AM) MONDAYS EVENINGS SIX TO SIX-THIRTY

# library resource collection

## carmela ieracitano reflects on the wider meanings of resources, in essence, wwh's 'woman-to-woman' approach

As an organisation we encourage and promote the health and wellbeing of all women, in particular those who are marginalised in our community. NESB women are after all a community of experience, knowledge and strength. We try to share this at WWH.

I like to think I am part of this linkage. When women call I don't just answer a phone I respond to their information needs. These needs range from industrial issues to pregnancy, postnatal depression to contraception, menopause to STD's. We've built up an excellent referral base (that is all of you, working in women's health).

I've always believed the strength of our organisation is our ability to interlink: that's what makes the WWH Programs such a success. Connecting each role and individual commitment to the Programs that we use to empower women. And no this is not a creative way of getting out of reporting and describing what my role is (well not completely anyway, sometimes it's hard to describe the many things going on).

Our link begins with our Board of Management (twelve multicultural and multi-idealistic women) who provide the

framework for the organisation; followed by Adele WWH's Coordinator who provides the 'translation' of this framework, for the day-to-day 'fruition' of its (WWH's) purpose.

From these stem the branches of our tree. Rachna, with her exuberance and energy, linking our organisation to working women both in the workplace and in the community; who organises and supports our bilingual Health Educators who exchange knowledge and information with women via our outreach programs.

At last count our bilingual Health Educators numbered twelve (we're continually trying to grow as an organisation), twelve incredibly talented multi-skilled and dedicated women who are our voice, our expression if you will.

Then Maria with her humour and her boundless energy and compassionate soul encourages our bilingual Health Educators to recognise their own skill and share it with other women, along with of course, the facts, information and knowledge on women's health and wellbeing. These training sessions equal empowerment, mutual exchange and cross-cultural wisdom.

Anna our creative mistress wordsmith who makes sense of what I write and who insists that I can. She who connects us to cyberspace, but occasionally occupies earth as we know it.

Pei makes order out of the chaos that twenty women can make with money.

In one word Medina is 'wisdom'.

Then we have Eugenia who gives our space serenity and order.

To the numerous and diverse women that we have contact with every day: we thank you because in essence, this is an exchange of information.

This year I have been working on our multilingual resource collection, many times I have come across cracks in the pathway, I have also come across excellent material. At last count I have purchased around 150 new resources. WWH now has books in Greek and Turkish thanks to Adele's overseas expedition; as well as books in Italian and Spanish. This includes material on reproductive health, family planning and occupational health and safety, disability, and OHS specifically relating to people in rural areas.

I've also been working on the mailing and membership list and it's fantastic to see the growing list of women and organisations supporting we do.

I worked on this year's Access and Equity Forum, created the promotional kits (thanks to the many hands that helped), organised catering, and many other tasks too numerous to mention (it's amazing how much there is to do). I cannot speak about my role without including everybody else because many times I am involved or I've volunteered for in a lot of projects, some may well say I'm guilty by association!

I strive to find more in my search as ultimately it is this information, whether it comes in the form of pamphlets, books, videos, (or other media) that is, the exposure of this information that gives women the confidence to make decisions for their own understanding of themselves, their health and ultimate wellbeing.

**Carmela Ieracitano**  
**Office Manager**  
**Working Women's Health**

أيضاً إثارة فضايَا النشاط  
في خدمة المتعة الجنسية،  
أن المتلقي للجوع الجنسي  
نتائج هذه الممارسات هي  
الأيدز والأمراض الجنسية

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culturally and linguistically appropriate information gives nesb women the confidence to make decisions for their own understanding of

themselves, their health and ultimate wellbeing, the working women's health resource collection and library strives to facilitate this process.

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Chăm Sóc Máu Nhi

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### february 2001

WORKING WELL THE WORKING WOMEN'S HEALTH NEWSLETTER ISSUE NUMBER THREE ARRIVES CWP AND IVP PROGRAMS BEGIN A NEW YEAR OUR BILINGUAL HEALTH EDUCATORS PARTICIPATE IN TRAINING TO FURTHER THEIR SKILLS AND TALENTS MOTHER TONGUE WWH RADIO PROGRAM ON 3CR (AM FREQUENCY 855) MONDAYS EVENINGS SIX TO SIX-THIRTY

### march 2001

WWH CELEBRATES INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CWP AND IVP PROGRAMS CONTINUE TO REACH NESB WOMEN IN THEIR WORKPLACES AND IN THEIR COMMUNITIES MOTHER TONGUE WWH RADIO PROGRAM ON 3CR (AM FREQUENCY 855) MONDAYS EVENINGS SIX TO SIX-THIRTY

# *family and reproductive rights education* *program* **medina idriess reports on our community work with african communities**

As the planned aims and objectives of FARREP for the last year are nearly complete, we're now looking forward. Forward in thinking and direction to working towards meeting the identified needs of the communities with which we interact and work.

In view of this I'd like to reflect on the past twelve months. I've linked and made liaisons with organisations who provide services to Africans in order to identify needs of women and children in these communities. For example, I participated in several FARREP Workshops along with other African community workers and also participated in relevant research and consultation with the Department of Immigration undertaken by EMC, Collingwood.

I also continued to work with the ACCV to provide community education and women's health promotion sessions with regards to cancer prevention. As a Health Educator too, I provided many sessions about family planning, STDS, HIV/AIDS, menopause and safety at home in different languages. As a

WWH Educator I provided session in women's health in Arabic at AMES, at both Preston and Springvale Community Health Centres too. Here I interacted with amongst others, newly arrived African women.

As part of my workplan I provided outreach work for working women. These sessions included an introduction to women's health; family planning (meaning all kinds of contraception), STDs, HIV/AIDS and occupational health and safety (amongst other health related subjects and concerns).

The interest of these women encouraged me to continue to provide other outreach sessions for working women. And it still does.

I assisted newly arrived refugee women to get access to primary health care, for example making bookings for them with their local Community Health Centres or the Royal Women's Hospital for pap smears and breast screenings to name two health needs. Settlement issues, meant referral made to the Salvation Army, Smith Family,

Crossroads Family Services, and other organisations which provide relevant assistance.

As a staff member of WWH and as a FARREP worker, I training throughout the year, to hone my professional skills. This training assisted me to advocate and consult with service providers regarding African cultural issues and women's needs. After all, my training ultimately serves the women with which I work. For example, along with the FARREP Worker in the Western Region and in response to the new issues raised by newly arrived migrant women, we met the new ambassador for Khartoum and Cairo. This was to advocate for the relatives of women who were in overseas refugee camps.

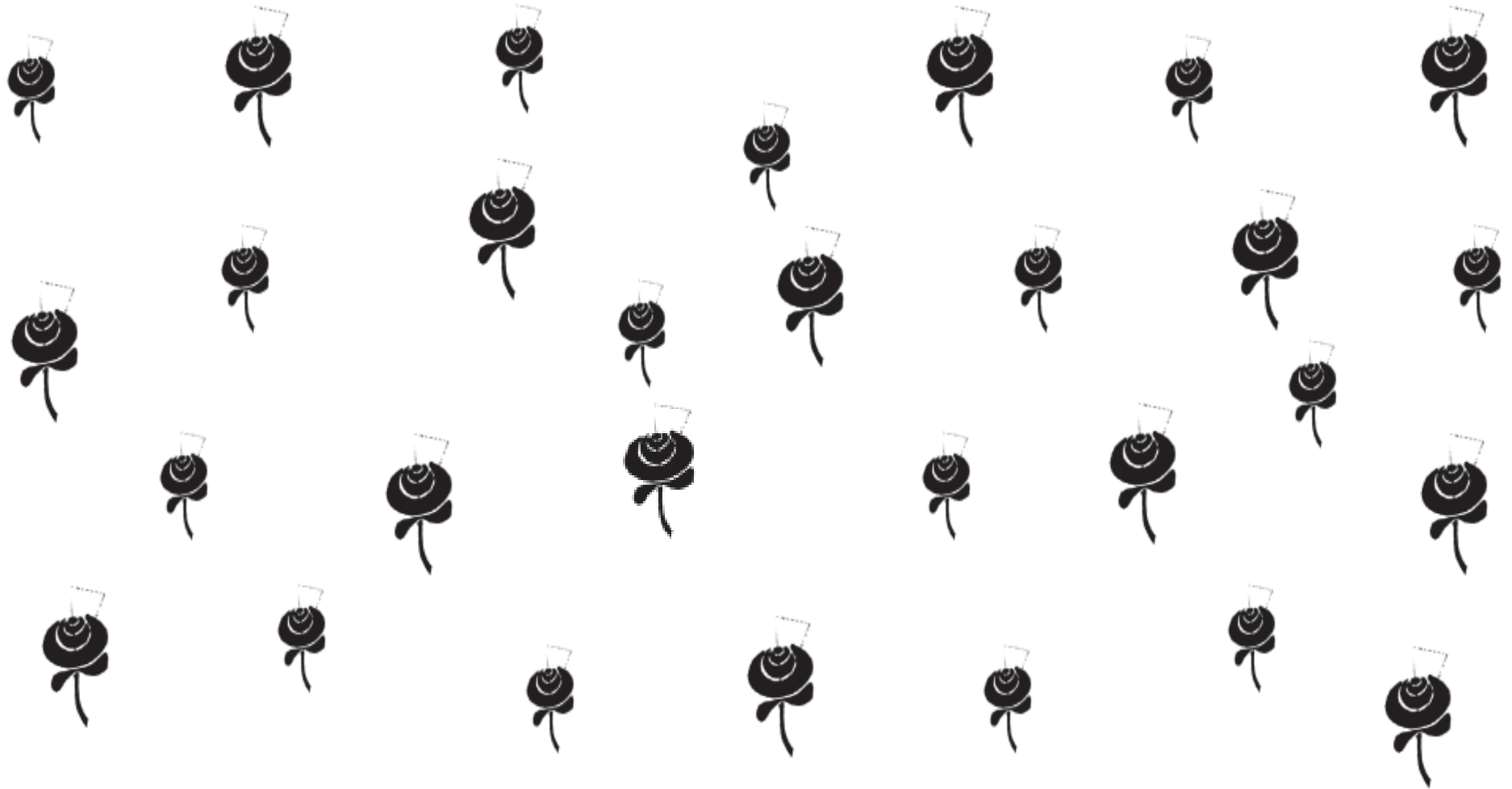
As a committee member of the Immigrant and Refugee Women's Coalition, I contributed via consultation and advocacy raising issues of concern for African women. This included lobbying government about health, family and housing issues (we made strong recommendations with pertinent case studies to illustrate our

case and our concerns).

Also as part of this coalition I was interviewed on Radio 3CR about refugee women in camp settlements (and the health issues they experience) and the experience of immigrating to Australia and the problems they face during this process. I also elaborated on how immigrant women overcome these situations and talked about the stress they experience due to all these problems, which in turn adversely affects their health.

I am looking forward to a new workplan to cover issues of concern which were identified by my work, and planning new health promotion sessions. The year may change but the work is always in demand ...

**Medina Idriess**  
**African Community Worker (FARREP)**  
**Working Women's Health**



*april 2001*

♻️CWP AND IVP PROGRAMS CONTINUE TO REACH NESB WOMEN IN THEIR WORKPLACES AND IN THEIR COMMUNITIES ♻️MOTHER TONGUE WWH RADIO PROGRAM ON 3CR (AT RADIO FREQUENCY 855 AM) MONDAYS EVENINGS SIX TO SIX-THIRTY

*may 2001*

♻️WWH ANNUAL CONFERENCE CELEBRATING THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF ACTION ON WOMEN'S HEALTH TAKES PLACE, A FOCUS ON NEWLY ARRIVED WOMEN A HIGHLIGHT ♻️MOTHER TONGUE WWH RADIO PROGRAM ON 3CR (AT RADIO FREQUENCY 855 AM) MONDAYS EVENINGS SIX TO SIX-THIRTY ♻️CWP AND IVP PROGRAMS CONTINUE TO REACH NESB WOMEN IN THEIR WORKPLACES AND IN THEIR COMMUNITIES

# publications and promotions

anna volpe reports on wwh publishing in print, on the air  
and in cyberspace and on the past year's events

As we all know 'www' means World Wide Web, it's *that* ubiquitous Internet term, but when you think about it, the acronym could also represent the **Working Women** of the **World**, and as we all know they're natural communicators—in the real world and in cyberspace!

The ability and need to communicate is something immigrant women innately understand—it forms the basis of the Working Women's Health 'woman-to-woman' approach, our philosophy that underpins everything we do here. Where could this be more significant than health and wellbeing? It's about mutual exchange and promoting the idea(l) that we all have a lot to learn from each other, regardless of background. Regardless of where you come from or where you go to, immigration impacts on your health, but it doesn't nullify our capacity for valuable exchanges.

But why am I banging on about the electronic ether of cyberspace? What's this about a 'woman-to-woman' approach and the Working Women of the World? And what has that got to do

with reporting on the activities of Working Women's Health since our last Annual Report?

Plenty.

From a publications and promotions point of view, using various media Working Women's Health has continued in an upward arc this year, promoting the health and wellbeing of women of NESB. It's what we do. We established a presence in cyberspace ([www.workingwomenshealth.asn.au](http://www.workingwomenshealth.asn.au)). We're on the airwaves with our Radio Program Mother Tongue (3CR Mondays 6.00PM to 6.30PM, frequency 855AM). We nurtured our growing list of publications to produce resources. On the impact of drugs and alcohol and immigrant women's wellbeing (*Nobody Ever Asked Me if I Wanted to Know: An Alcohol and Drug Health Promotion Project with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Working Women*, 2000). On the impact of occupational health and safety breaches on immigrant women working in the textile clothing and footwear industry (*Seamstress: A Report on Health Issues for Women Working in the Textile, Clothing and Footwear*

*Industries*, 2000). We researched and designed modules for health professionals working with immigrant women (*Knowing Her Better: Cultural Awareness Research and Training Guide for Health Professionals on NESB Women's Sexual and Reproductive Health*, 2000). We launched a pamphlet for immigrant women about sexuality, ethnicity and identity (*Let's Talk About Sex*). If you're looking for succinct introductory information about us, we've also produced a series of promotional guides to our organisation and its different services, they're an easy overview to our activities. And our revamped Newsletter, relaunched as *Working Well*, provides a snapshot of who we are, what we do, and what issues we passionately advocate about.

We also ran a Forum celebrating the International Day of Action on Women's Health 2000 called *Equity and Justice for Working Women In Health Now!* A successful debate on health impacts work has on immigrant women—both paid work and domestic demands. Recommendations were produced and will form part of Proceedings soon to be published. We celebrated

International Women's Day by hosting our inaugural *Immigrant Women's Health Information Expo 2000*.

Our promotional and publishing activities developed our profile both from a participatory viewpoint and with media. No doubt all this activity will hold us in good stead for the forthcoming twelve months. And once I get through the evaluation process and Media Strategy I'm currently developing, I'm sure I'll be able to enjoy it all more (ah the delights of planning!). Oh and many many thanks to all at WWH for their support, to all the agencies we collaborated with and the media who turned their attentions our way.

**Anna Volpe**  
**Publications and Promotions Worker**  
**Working Women's Health**

together just universal care sexuality understanding  
 holistic safety reproduction supportive strategic promote issues family workplace  
 express outreach diversity dignity political responsive words  
 obligations links celebrate soul skill airwaves networks respect  
 power occupational health philosophy outlook innovative sharing  
 fact imagination determination cyberspace  
 working women's health nurture spreading the word about patience immigrant women's wellbeing  
 forums control solutions strength reality communication identity language  
 courage listen wisdom fair cross-cultural harm minimisation gender active knowledge  
 empowerment self awareness relationships innate community  
 balance ubiquitous recognition needs talent multimedia research mutual learning  
 translation alternatives professional perspective wellbeing ground level succeed

*June 2001*

♻️ CWP AND IVP PROGRAMS CONTINUE TO REACH NESB WOMEN IN THEIR WORKPLACES AND IN THEIR COMMUNITIES ♻️ MOTHER TONGUE WWH RADIO PROGRAM ON 3CR (AT RADIO FREQUENCY 855 AM) MONDAYS EVENINGS SIX TO SIX-THIRTY ♻️ RESOURCE DIRECTORY FOR TRAINERS LAUNCHED ♻️ ISSUE FOUR OF WORKING WELL AVAILABLE ♻️ FARREP SEXUAL HEALTH MODULES TRAINING AVAILABLE ♻️ WWH PROMOTIONAL POSTER NOW AVAILABLE

*July 2001*

♻️ CWP AND IVP PROGRAMS CONTINUE TO REACH NESB WOMEN IN THEIR WORKPLACES AND IN THEIR COMMUNITIES ♻️ MOTHER TONGUE WWH RADIO PROGRAM ON 3CR (AT RADIO FREQUENCY 855 AM) MONDAYS EVENINGS SIX TO SIX-THIRTY

# the drug & alcohol project

Drugs know no cultural barriers, speak a universal language and don't discriminate based along ethnic lines. Their effect on all women is an ever-present challenge to immigrant women and health service providers alike.

*Nobody ever asked me if I ever wanted to know* is the name of the joint alcohol and drug health promotion project (and subsequent report) run by Working Women's Health and Women's Health in the North during 1999 (funded by the Northern Metropolitan Region Department of Human Services, Aged Care and Mental Health Division).

This project aimed to provide information about the health impacts of alcohol and drug use to women who work in the textile, clothing and footwear industries in the Northern Metropolitan Region (NMR) of Victoria. It aimed to increase the capacity of NESB working women to access alcohol and drug information services in their regions, as well as provide an opportunity for women to discuss their own experiences of alcohol and drug use, (and in their preferred languages). This particular target group was chosen in response to recent concerns that mainstream

alcohol and drug information services are rarely accessed by, or available to, NESB women (*Success Works*, 1998). The textile, clothing and footwear industries were chosen as the main focus of this pilot project because there are substantial numbers of NESB women working in these industries in Melbourne's Northern Metropolitan Region.

The title of the Project and Report was taken from a comment made by a woman during the consultation phase of the Project. It was the first time that she had ever been asked about her drug information needs and how those needs could be met. *Ever*.

The 'information overload', often described as endemic in Australia seems to have bypassed immigrant women. According to Project findings, immigrant women workers in Victoria do not have access to even the most basic information about the health effects of alcohol and other drugs. *Nobody ever asked me if I wanted to know*, showed that most multilingual pamphlets about alcohol and drugs are either out of date or are not culturally appropriate for the majority of Victoria's immigrant women. Neither

are there video/audiotape resources available for women who do not read English or in their own languages. In most languages, no information is available *at all*.

This project *did* improve participants access to information about alcohol and drugs. It made use of the existing structures, networks and resources relating to women's health services and alcohol and drug services, in order to conduct health promotion with these women in their workplaces and in community settings. Following comprehensive consultation with the key stakeholders a training package was developed and conducted with bilingual Health Educators, enabling them to conduct health promotion in women's workplaces. A series of follow-up community set education sessions were also conducted.

Data on the impact of these programs was also collected for evaluation and further health promotion activity.

The project also suggests that alcohol and drug health promotion is more effective when provided following a holistic approach, rather than in isolation from other health and

wellbeing issues. This means that a series of workshops or education sessions should be offered rather than one-off sessions so that trust and rapport can be established. Further, these sessions should cover a range of mental health issues, including stress, depression, overwork, and the use of alcohol and drugs.

Recommendations include multilingual alcohol and drug use resources be developed and made available to (NESB) women. The developing of closer collaborative relationships between relevant health agencies in order to improve (NESB) women's access to alcohol and drug services is also recommended.

We hope that this Project and its Report will facilitate improved consultation with working women, along with the implementation of projects and programs that are developed through the important participation of working NESB women.

Many thanks to WHIN our joint collaborators and to the women who participated, providing its many telling insights and for giving the Project its depth of substance and true value.

<b>Table 1: Industry</b>	<b>Visits</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>for Drug and Alcohol</b>	<b>Sessions</b>
<i>factory</i>	<i>sessions per language</i>	<i>number of languages</i>	<i>total number of sessions</i>	
Hilton Hosiery	4	7	28	
Flair Men's Wear	2	5	10	
Diamond Cut	4	5	20	
Gloweave	3	5	15	
Mondo Victoria	3	3	9	

#### Languages used in IVP alcohol and drug sessions

<b>Cantonese</b>	4 per cent
<b>English</b>	17 per cent
<b>Laotian</b>	2 per cent
<b>Macedonian</b>	32 per cent
<b>Mandarin</b>	8 per cent
<b>Tagalog</b>	2 per cent
<b>Turkish</b>	10 per cent
<b>Vietnamese</b>	25 per cent

#### Issues raised in IVP alcohol and drug sessions

<b>Alcohol (family)</b>	16 per cent
<b>Alcohol (self)</b>	15 per cent
<b>Depression</b>	7 per cent
<b>Domestic Violence</b>	1 per cent
<b>Drugs (family)</b>	19 per cent
<b>Drugs (self)</b>	15 per cent
<b>Isolation</b>	5 per cent
<b>Racism</b>	2 per cent
<b>Reproductive and Sexual Health</b>	3 per cent
<b>Stress</b>	9 per cent
<b>Suicide</b>	1 per cent
<b>Use of Tranquillisers</b>	7 per cent

[Statistics from the Report:

**Nobody Ever Asked Me If I Wanted To Know: An Alcohol and Drug Health Promotion Project With Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Working Women.**

A joint project by Working Women's Health (WWH) and Women's Health In The North (WHIN), conducted between April-December 1999. Report published in 2000.]

#### *august 2001*

☪CWP AND IVP PROGRAMS CONTINUE TO REACH NESB WOMEN IN THEIR WORKPLACES AND IN THEIR COMMUNITIES ☪MOTHER TONGUE WWH RADIO PROGRAM ON 3CR (AT RADIO FREQUENCY 855 AM)  
MONDAYS EVENINGS SIX TO SIX-THIRTY

#### *september 2001*

☪CWP AND IVP PROGRAMS CONTINUE TO REACH NESB WOMEN IN THEIR WORKPLACES AND IN THEIR COMMUNITIES ☪MOTHER TONGUE WWH RADIO PROGRAM ON 3CR (AT RADIO FREQUENCY 855 AM)  
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# *finance worker's report*

pei ruo liu sums up taxing financial matters and records the year's monetary issues

1999 to 2000 financial year has been a challenging year. The introduction of the new tax system from 1 July 2000 brought in many new and challenging issues that affect every organisation in many ways.

In the past financial year, we have been working with the following new tax system related issues:

Undergoing training for tax reform preparation and implementation; actively communicating with relevant government departments and organisations in order to obtain,

analyse and correctly utilise the new tax-system relative information for our organisation; solving problems relative for complying with new tax system requirements; improving and upgrading our computerised finance system in order to comply with new tax system requirements; developing new financial practice under the new tax regime.

We were able to maintain usual financial operation while coping with many tax reform issues. Also, our financial system has seen improvements in the following areas:

reporting; banking arrangements; changes of our fringe benefits arrangement in order to comply with the new requirements set by the Government.

We have also been working hard on the following issues: involvement and contribution of organisational budgeting; providing and analysing financial records and data in the past for assisting future planning and budgeting process; and communication within our organisation for explaining, discussion, reporting relative financial

information and issues in order to avoid unnecessary misunderstanding or errors. As the new financial year has just begun, there are still many new financial issues waiting for us to work with in a coordinated approach. We will definitely succeed with all our efforts and cooperation.

In closing, please refer to Annual Report Insert for detailed financial statements for the year 1999/2000.

**Pei Ruo Liu**  
**Finance Worker**  
**Working Women's Health**

# wwh staff

**Dr Adele Murdolo**/Coordinator  
**Rachna Muddagouni**/Community & Industry Organiser  
**Maria Kremidas**/Training & Development Worker (to Jul 00)  
**Carmela Ieracitano**/Office Manager  
**Pei Ruo Liu**/Finance Worker  
**Medina Idriess**/African Community Worker (FARREP)  
**Anna Volpe**/Publications & Promotions Worker  
**Brendaly Rodrigues**/Health Information and Resources Worker (to Apr 00)  
**Cath Keaney**/Project Worker Publications (Temporary)  
**Nebahat Erpolat**/ Alcohol and Drug Project Worker (to Oct 99)  
**Eugenia Celedon**/Cleaner

**Yanping Xu**/Chinese  
**Wan Ling Zhang**/Chinese  
**Marianna Jerbic**/Croatian  
**Kalleni Ituarte**/Greek  
**Barbara Ghiani**/Italian  
**Loranie Leas**/Khmer  
**Cigdem Guler**/Kurdish  
**Ljupka Naumoski**/Macedonian  
**Natasha Nikolovska**/Macedonian  
**Silvia Carbone**/Spanish  
**Jeannette Shepherd**/Tagalog  
**Hatice Turk**/Turkish  
**Tam Thi Vo**/Vietnamese  
**Hien Tran**/Vietnamese

BILINGUAL HEALTH EDUCATORS



## board members

**terri soumilas** [chair]  
**anita seibert**  
**jennifer natale**  
**rita kelepouris**  
**anne myers**  
**caroline maher**  
**annette sassano**  
**susan engel** [treasurer]  
**wahibi moussa**  
**karen hanson**  
**leonie girardello**  
**toni bonanzinga**

### october 2001

🌟WWH CELEBRATES ITS AGM 🌟ANNUAL REPORT LAUNCHED 🌟CWP AND IVP PROGRAMS CONTINUE TO REACH NESB WOMEN IN THEIR WORKPLACES AND IN THEIR COMMUNITIES 🌟MOTHER TONGUE  
WWH RADIO PROGRAM ON 3CR (AT RADIO FREQUENCY 855 AM) MONDAYS EVENINGS SIX TO SIX-THIRTY

### november 2001

🌟CWP AND IVP PROGRAMS CONTINUE TO REACH NESB WOMEN IN THEIR WORKPLACES AND IN THEIR COMMUNITIES 🌟MOTHER TONGUE WWH RADIO PROGRAM ON 3CR (AT RADIO FREQUENCY 855 AM)  
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# *the big thank you goes to:*

**to those we made contact with,  
those we worked with,  
and especially to the women who taught us  
and made us wiser during the year**

- ✧3CR (Community Radio)
- ✧Accent of Women Program, 3CR
- ✧African Community Worker Network
- ✧African Women's Council
- ✧Adult Multicultural Education Service (AMES) Brunswick
- ✧AMES Collingwood
- ✧AMES Frankston
- ✧Anne Mbugua-Jenkins
- ✧Anne Newton, William Angliss Institute of TAFE
- ✧Anorexia & Bulimia Nervosa Foundation of Victoria
- ✧Anti-Cancer Council of Victoria
- ✧Arthritis Foundation of Victoria
- ✧Ascot Vale Community Centre
- ✧Association of NESB Women of Australia
- ✧Asthma Victoria
- ✧ASU, Victorian Services and Energy Branch
- ✧Australian Action on Pre-Eclampsia (AAPEC)
- ✧Australia Post
- ✧Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU)
- ✧Australian Health Resources
- ✧Australian Institute of Family Studies
- ✧Australian Manufacturing Workers Union (AMWU)
- ✧Australian Turkish Association
- ✧Banyule Community Health Centre (CHC)
- ✧Barbara Stroud, Department of

- Human Services (DHS)
- ✧Barwon Health Surfcoast
- ✧Berkeley Apparels
- ✧Berri
- ✧BHP Global Leadership Program
- ✧Boroondara City Council
- ✧Braybrook Temple
- ✧Breastscreen
- ✧Buoyancy
- ✧Caprice Curtains
- ✧Carlton Community Centre
- ✧Centre Against Sexual Assault
- ✧Centre for Culture, Ethnicity and Health
- ✧Centre for Single Mothers and Their Children
- ✧Centre of Phillipine Concerns
- ✧Cheltenham Neighbourhood House
- ✧Chloe Saltau, *The Age*
- ✧City of Darebin
- ✧City of Moreland
- ✧City of Yarra
- ✧City of Yarra and Carlton Network Against Family Abuse
- ✧Clarendon Community Mental Health
- ✧CMT Management
- ✧Colac Community Health Service
- ✧*Community Quarterly Journal*
- ✧Council on the Ageing
- ✧Croatian Women's Groups
- ✧Deb Pietsch, Women's Health East
- ✧Diamond Cut
- ✧Ecumenical Migration Centre (EMC)

- ✧Ellen Kleimaker, Victorian Trades Hall Council Women's and Equity Officer
- ✧Endometriosis Association
- ✧Equal Opportunity Commission
- ✧Estelle McNally, Endometriosis Natural Therapies Support Group
- ✧Fairwear Campaign
- ✧Family Planning Victoria
- ✧Field Knitting Mills
- ✧Filipino Women's Organisation
- ✧Flemington Women's Group
- ✧Forbes Fashion
- ✧Frankston City Council
- ✧Fremantle Women's Health Service
- ✧Friends of the Earth
- ✧Gabriella Gomersoll, Rete Italia Radio
- ✧Geelong Rape Crisis Centre
- ✧Gippsland Women's Health Service
- ✧Glo Weave
- ✧Grief Counselling, Coroner's Court
- ✧Hilton/Sara Lee Apparels
- ✧Holden Motor Company
- ✧Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC)
- ✧Hume City Council
- ✧*Il Globo*
- ✧InfoXchange
- ✧Inner Western Region Migrant Resource Centre
- ✧Institute of Criminology
- ✧Islamic Women's Welfare Council
- ✧IWD Official Website
- ✧Jean Hailles Foundation

- ✧Jennifer Macey, Undercurrents, National Current Affairs, 3CR Radio
- ✧Jesuit Social Services
- ✧John Willis, Western Metropolitan Region DHS
- ✧Joy Damousi, University of Melbourne
- ✧Julia Scott, Coordinator SBS Radio News
- ✧Julie Hassard, ACCV
- ✧Julie McKeown, TCFUA
- ✧Kangan Batman Institute of TAFE Broadmeadows
- ✧Karen Todd, ACCV
- ✧Kensington Community Centre
- ✧Kensington Community Centre, African Women's Group
- ✧Key Centre for Women's Health
- ✧Kildonan Family Services
- ✧Lalor Living and Learning Centre
- ✧Lesbian Cancer Support Group
- ✧Liz Wright, Victorian CHS Industry Training Board
- ✧Loddon Mallee Women's Health Service
- ✧Maria Trombin DHS
- ✧Mary Burns, Hepatitis C Line
- ✧Mary Dimech, Director, Race Discrimination Unit, HREOC
- ✧Maternity Unit, Ballarat Health
- ✧Melba Marginson, Victorian Immigrant and Refugee Women's Coalition
- ✧Melbourne Sexual Health Centre
- ✧Melissa Afentoulis, CEO, Women's Health West

# the big thank you goes to:

to those we made contact with,  
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- ✧Mental Health Services (Victoria)
- ✧Mercy Hospital for Women
- ✧Mmaskeppe Sejoie DHS Central
- ✧Monash University
- ✧Mondo Victoria
- ✧Mordialloc Turkish Women's Association
- ✧Moreland Community Health Centre
- ✧Moreland Hall
- ✧Migrant Resource Centre Frankston
- ✧Migrant Resource Centre Glenroy
- ✧Migrant Resource Centre Preston
- ✧Neos Kosmos
- ✧NESB Links
- ✧NEWomen Goulburn North Eastern
- ✧Nikki Protyniak, *Melbourne Times*
- ✧Northern Metropolitan Region (NMR) DHS
- ✧NMR Family and Reproductive Rights Education Program (FARREP) Reference Group
- ✧North Melbourne Women's Group
- ✧North Yarra CHC (Fitzroy)
- ✧North Yarra CHC (Collingwood)
- ✧Northern Metropolitan College of TAFE (Language Department) Collingwood
- ✧Office for Women's Policy
- ✧Pamela Brañas
- ✧Patricia Karvelas, Accent of Women Program, 3CR
- ✧Patricia Papsis, Absolutely Women's Health Service Royal Women's Hospital (RWH)
- ✧Patsy Yaksender, ACCV
- ✧People Working Together
- ✧Portland Community Health Centre
- ✧Pregnancy and Discrimination Forum
- ✧Preston Market
- ✧Professor Mary Kalantzis, Foundation Dean, Faculty of Education, Language and Community Services, RMIT University
- ✧Psychiatric Disability Service
- ✧Queen Victoria Market
- ✧Quit Campaign
- ✧Rachel Maher, Women's Briefs Program, 3CR
- ✧Richmond Community Care
- ✧RMIT Student Union: Bundoora Campus
- ✧Sally Richardson, NMR DHS
- ✧Samia Baho, Key Centre for Women's Health University of Melbourne and FARREP Activity Coordinator at VICSEG
- ✧Santina Bertone, Executive Director, Workplace Studies Centre, Victoria University of Technology (VUT)
- ✧School of Life and Biomedical Science, VUT, St Albans
- ✧Seaja Chang
- ✧Sherry Cuthbert, Vision Australia
- ✧Sing Tao
- ✧Soo-Lin Quek, EO, IWDVS
- ✧Sue Lattimer, Breastscreen
- ✧Sophie Howlett, Australian Volunteers International
- ✧Springvale Community Health Centre
- ✧St Vincent's Breastscreen In the North
- ✧Stella Paolacci, NMR DHS
- ✧Sunraysia Community Health Service
- ✧Susan Halliday, Federal Sex Discrimination Commissioner, HREOC
- ✧Suzy Stillman, QUIT
- ✧Swinburne University
- ✧Taskforce
- ✧TCFOZ
- ✧Tenants Union of Victoria
- ✧Teresa Valentine, Arthritis Foundation
- ✧Textile, Clothing and Footwear Union, Victorian Branch
- ✧Than Vi, Coordinator SBS Radio Vietnamese Program
- ✧The National Council of Women
- ✧*The Spanish Herald*
- ✧Trades Hall Council of Victoria
- ✧TRANX
- ✧Turkish Women's Association
- ✧Turning Point
- ✧United Slavic Group
- ✧VICNET
- ✧VICSEG
- ✧Victoria University, (VUT)
- ✧Victorian Immigrant and Refugee Women's Coalition
- ✧Victorian Immigrant Women's Domestic Violence Service
- ✧Victorian Industrial Relations Taskforce
- ✧Victorian WorkCover Authority
- ✧Western Hospital, Sunshine
- ✧Westgate MRC Vietnamese Women Group
- ✧Women's Health Information Centre (Royal Women's Hospital)
- ✧Women and Industrial Relations Program, Special IWD Broadcast, 3CR
- ✧Women on the Line, 3CR Radio
- ✧Women's Centre for Health Matters
- ✧Women's Health Association of Victoria
- ✧Women's Health East (WHE)
- ✧Women's Health Goulburn North East
- ✧Women's Health Grampians
- ✧Women's Health in the North (WHIN)
- ✧Women's Health in the South East (WHISE)
- ✧Women's Health Victoria (WHV)
- ✧Women's Health West (WHW)
- ✧Workplace Studies Centre
- ✧Youth Northern Outreach Team (YNOT)
- ✧We hope that's everyone, if there's anyone we've not listed many thanks for **your** contributions to WWH, listings aside (apologies for any omissions!), we acknowledge your positive impacts on Working Women's Health, her health and her wellbeing. Hopefully, the year has been as fruitful for all our collaborators, and for the all the women with whom we've made valuable exchanges. We aim to build on this in the coming year.

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WORKING

WOMEN'S

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