



**Multicultural**  
Centre for  
**Women's Health**

### **National Women's Health Policy Submission Template**

The Multicultural Centre for Women's Health (MCWH) is a women's health organisation which is committed to improving the health of immigrant and refugee women around Australia.

The Australian Government is currently developing a new National Women's Health Policy. The government has prepared a consultation paper, available from the Dept of Health and Ageing website (<http://www.health.gov.au/womenshealthpolicy>), to which responses are invited. MCWH will make a submission to government with a specific focus on immigrant and refugee women's health. MCWH will also build the capacity among NGOs and individuals around Australia to develop their own submissions to government.

#### **How will MCWH make a submission on the National Women's Health Policy?**

MCWH will bring together research, consultation findings, and the views and experiences of key stakeholders in immigrant and refugee women's health to make its submission. As a stakeholder in immigrant and refugee women's health, you are invited to provide feedback to the MCWH to assist us in that process. MCWH has developed a template to guide you in providing feedback to us. The template provides headings and discussion points for consideration. You may need to complete only those areas that have particular relevance to the work of your organization. Responses may be brief and in dot-point form. You can send your responses to **Pauline Gwatorisa**, (the contact person for this project) at [pauline@mcwh.com.au](mailto:pauline@mcwh.com.au) by **18 May 2009**. We look forward to your input.

#### **How will MCWH build capacity of NGOS and individuals around Australia to develop their own submissions to the Australian government?**

The MCWH will collate all the responses from stakeholders and develop a submission which brings together research, consultation findings and stakeholders' views. This submission will then be circulated among stakeholders **by 12 June 2009** as a sample for their use in developing their own submissions to government.

MCWH will then finalise its own submission and send it to the government. Stakeholders will have the opportunity to make their own submissions, using the MCWH sample submission as a guide. Submissions to government are due on **30 June 2009**.

For more information, please contact Pauline Gwatorisa on phone 03 9418 0915 or email [pauline@mcwh.com.au](mailto:pauline@mcwh.com.au).

# A TEMPLATE FOR SUBMISSIONS

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## I. Introduction

- Brief background of your organization, including mission statement, services provided, and target population.

## II. Understanding women's health in Australia

### **Possible discussion points**

- *Importance of including gender as one of the social determinants of health*
- *Importance of recognising diversity among women*
- *Importance of having specific immigrant and refugee women's health services – please specify what kind of services these are*
- *Examples or experiences from your organisation relevant to understanding immigrant and refugee women's health issues and/or needs in Australia.*

## III. Principles to underpin the new policy

- ❖ *Do you agree with these principles in the Consultation Discussion Paper (pp. 24-26?). Are there any others that you think should be included in the new National Policy? (Please include these as an appendix to this template)*

### 1. Gender equity in health

#### **Possible discussion points**

- *How women's health issues and needs differ from men's in immigrant and refugee communities*
- *Importance of taking account of the broader environments in which women live*
- *Examples or experiences from your organisation relevant to understanding and addressing gender inequities in health*
- *Issues that impact on women's health and wellbeing (e.g. access to services, resources, etc), particularly from your own experience*
- *Ways in which current strategies can be improved to increase immigrant and refugee women's health and wellbeing, particularly from your own experience*
- *New strategies that could be implemented to improve immigrant and refugee women's health and wellbeing, particularly from your own experience*

### 2. Health equity between women

#### **Possible discussion points**

- *Particular groups of immigrant and refugee women that are at increased risk of poor health and wellbeing outcomes and their needs*
- *Examples or experiences from your organisation relevant to understanding and addressing health inequities among women*

- *Groups that have not been identified in the Consultation Discussion Paper, for example women living in poverty, women living with chronic debilitating illness, women living with effects of trauma from sexual assault and/or domestic violence.*
- *Ways in which your service responds to the needs of these groups and the ways in which your service is limited in its capacity to respond to the needs of these groups*
- *Ways in which the new Policy can promote equity in health among women and men of marginalised groups, i.e. groups in which both women and men are at greater risk of poor health and wellbeing (e.g. immigrant and refugee populations, people with disabilities, etc).*

### **3. A focus on prevention**

#### ***Possible discussion points***

- *To what extent can preventative health be enhanced among immigrant and refugee women?*
- *How should the Policy address violence against women?*
- *Examples or experiences from your organisation relevant to prevention in relation to immigrant and refugee women's health*
- *Ways in which prevention strategies can be made appropriate to particular groups of women (e.g. culturally appropriate to immigrant and refugee women, age-appropriate to young women, etc), particularly from your own experience*
- *Other prevention strategies that could be implemented (e.g. particularly your own strategies, effective past strategies, strategies identified as best practise, strategies from international sources, etc).*

### **4. A strong and emerging evidence base**

#### ***Possible discussion points***

- *Current gaps in knowledge, research and data about immigrant and refugee women's health*
- *Examples or experiences from your organisation relevant to creating a strong and comprehensive evidence base*
- *Ways in which existing research and data collections can be improved to better recognise gender and the diversity of women (e.g. ABS surveys on particular topics)*
- *New gender focused research and/or data collection*
- *Ways in which gender analysis tools can be integrated into policy development both within and outside of health.*

## 5. A lifecourse approach

### **Possible discussion points**

- *Ways in which immigrant and refugee women's health issues change over the lifespan*
- *Women's particular health issues or needs that are associated with different life stages*
- *Examples or experiences from your organisation relevant to understanding and addressing immigrant and refugee women's health across the lifespan*
- *Ways in which health issues or needs of immigrant and refugee women in particular age groups are currently missed in policy, particularly health policy, and gaps and unmet needs that your organisation has experienced as a service provider.*

## IV. Priorities of a new Policy

- ❖ *What are the key priorities that should be included in the new Policy?*  
(Please include these as an appendix to this template)

## V. Building on the 1989 National Women's Health Policy

### **Possible discussion points**

- *Examples or experiences from your organisation regarding the 1989 National Women's Health Policy*
- *What worked*
- *What didn't work*
- *What has been achieved*
- *What is still to be achieved*
- *Ideas, principles and/or priorities that should be included in the new Policy*
- *What is outdated or obsolete?*

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<sup>i</sup> The template has been adapted from the Australian Women's Health Network Template for Submissions to the Commonwealth Government regarding the New National Women's Health Policy (NWHP). For more details please visit the Australian Women's Health Network website [www.awhn.org.au](http://www.awhn.org.au)