

## Integrating Sexual & Reproductive Health in Local Government Health & Wellbeing

This resource has been designed to support Cardinia Shire to integrate and align sexual and reproductive health promotion and activities within its Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan and annual Action Plans as relevant.

### Your Plan



WHISE has conducted an analysis of your Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan and identified the following leverage points as potential opportunities to align and integrate sexual and reproductive health:

#### Objective 5.1 – Increase awareness and attitudes towards gender equality.

- 5.1.1 Promote evidence-based campaigns that increase knowledge and awareness of gender inequality and how it contributes to family violence.
- 5.1.6 Support efforts to improve women's sexual and reproductive health, rights and autonomy to enhance gender equity and prevent violence against women.

#### Objective 5.2 – Increase capacity of individuals, organisations and communities to promote respectful relationships.

- 5.2.1 Collaborate with regional partners to support the Victorian Government's implementation of respectful relationships education through MCH, early years and schools.
- 5.2.4 Develop partnerships and alliances with specialist services, including women's health services, to advance intersectional prevention practice.
- 5.2.5 Strengthen Cardinia Shire Council's commitment and capacity to undertake a whole-of-organisation approach to advancing gender equality and preventing family violence.

### Potential actions



WHISE has identified the following as potential actions for implementation, in order for Cardinia Shire to integrate and align sexual and reproductive health within its Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan:

- 5.1.1 Promote 16 Days of Activism social media campaign.
- 5.1.6 Promote access to the Sexual and Reproductive Health Hubs, Monash Health Community and Peninsula Health.  
Host capacity-building for healthcare practitioners in your local government area to become providers of long-acting reversible contraception or medical abortion, in partnership with WHISE and other organisations.  
Promote Sexual and Reproductive Health Week social media campaign, held annually in September.  
Promote cervical screening to under-screened populations in your local government area, in partnership with WHISE and other organisations.
- 5.2.1 Host an event for parents and caregivers in your area on the benefits of providing Relationships and Sexuality Education to their children and young adults.  
Support schools in your area to be part of the Critical Friends Network.  
Collaborate with Youth Services, community organisations and/or schools in your area to support the delivery of content on sexual and reproductive health and consent for young people through respectful relationships education.
- 5.2.4 Partner with WHISE to deliver capacity-building for Council staff on applying an intersectional gender lens on health promotion.
- 5.2.5 Partner with WHISE to deliver a menopause information session to staff at Cardinia Shire Council.  
Explore opportunities to develop and integrate a menstruation and/or menopause policy for employees at Cardinia Shire Council.

## What is SRH?



“**Sexual health is a state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being in relation to sexuality; it is not merely the absence of disease, dysfunction or infirmity.**

**Sexual health requires a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual relationships...**”

~ World Health Organization

## What does SRH include?

Sexual and reproductive health incorporates a range of issues and services, including but not limited to:

- ✓ Respectful relationships and prevention of gender-based violence
- ✓ Cervical screening
- ✓ Vaccinations
- ✓ Contraception
- ✓ Sexually transmissible infections
- ✓ Blood borne viruses
- ✓ Fertility and pregnancy
- ✓ Chronic reproductive health issues
  - Endometriosis
  - Polycystic ovary syndrome (PCOS)
- ✓ Menopause
- ✓ Menstruation
- ✓ Abortion

## Local data analysis



Sexual and reproductive health outcomes vary considerably across the Southern Metropolitan Region. While there are complex factors that contribute to health and wellbeing outcomes, one of the main social determinants of sexual and reproductive health outcomes is the availability of affordable, high-quality and accessible services.

A comprehensive report of available sexual and reproductive health data for each local government area is available via the [Victorian Women's Health Atlas](#).

**However, at a high-level, residents of Cardinia Shire require:**



Increased access to doctors and pharmacists who will prescribe and dispense medical abortion, as access to these services is lower than the Victorian average.



Increased access to long-acting reversible contraception through healthcare providers, as IUD uptake is lower than the Victoria average.



Targeted health promotion and access to testing and treatment for sexually transmissible infections and blood borne viruses, as chlamydia prevalence is higher than the Victorian average.

The development of this resource is part of the implementation of WHISE's four-year regional sexual and reproductive health strategy, [Good Health Down South 2021 - 2025](#) and Year Three and Four Action Plan (Action 2.2).

## Who is WHISE?



Women's Health in the South East (WHISE) is an intersectional feminist health promotion agency working in the Southern Metropolitan Region to promote gender equity, prevent violence against women, improve sexual and reproductive health, and mental health and wellbeing.

## Contact



For more information on WHISE's work in sexual and reproductive health, or for support to integrate sexual and reproductive health in your Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan and annual Action Plans, please contact WHISE's Sexual and Reproductive Health Lead, Laura Riccardi via email: [lrccardi@whise.org.au](mailto:lrccardi@whise.org.au).