

2018 ANNUAL REPORT



WOMEN'S
MENTAL
HEALTH
NETWORK
VICTORIA



Illustrations by women consumers Listening Events: Nowhere to be Safe 2008

ABN: 39 597 342 174

CONTACT US

100 Drummond street
 Carlton VIC 3053
 E: admin@wmhmv.org.au
 Tel: 03 9667 6377
wmhmv.org.au



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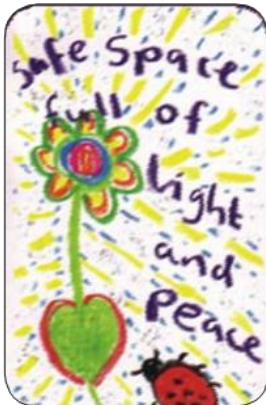
Our mission

Improving the mental health & wellbeing of women



Our vision

The Network shapes the future of women's health outcomes through the empowerment of women and by building the capacity of the service system.



Our objectives

The Women's Mental Health Network Victoria (the Network) was established in 1988 and is a unique organisation where women with a lived experience of mental illness, women carers and professionals work together. It has been a great promoter of women's mental health and our strength as a charitable organisation is founded on this collaboration, based largely on volunteer support.



The objectives of the Network are:

- (a) to provide information about the prevention and management of women's mental health issues to health professionals, service providers, carers, consumers and the public; and
- (b) to promote research into women's mental health issues; and
- (c) to promote opportunities for training and education in women's mental health issues and women-sensitive practice; and
- (d) to develop partnerships with key mental health and women's organisations to promote responsiveness to women's mental health needs; and
- (e) to create opportunities for women consumers, carers and service providers to work together in addressing mental health issues, and to share their experiences and information; and
- (f) to promote systemic change in order to make mental health policies and services more responsive to women's needs

MESSAGE FROM THE COMMITTEE

It has been another solid year of promoting women sensitive needs despite the pressures the committee has experienced - without core funding the nature of the work we can undertake remains limited. The Network is, in essence, a volunteer organisation — and will need to continue to expand in membership as well as mobilize volunteers to drive our cause.



As we review funding strategies for the future we have been fortunate to launch our social media platforms with Hannah and Kate's assistance - a big thanks! We can now energize a wider audience keeping women - sensitive needs in the public arena.



We also acknowledge and thank the staff at drummond street services (dss) where our office is located. We thank our committee member Cheryl Miller-Yell, who has liaised on our behalf as well as taking on the role of Treasurer.

This year we have experienced a disproportionate workload for such a small committee. Special thanks goes to Julie Dempsey and Sandy Jeffs who continue to forge links across the mental health sector and work on the ground conducting much of our stakeholder and outreach activities. Notably Julie has been able to contribute to crucial government committees on our behalf as well as facilitating in our recent training workshops.

We also thank Robyn Minty and Shelley Anderson for conducting the interim consultation on the *Service guidelines for gender sensitive safe practice* on behalf of the Mental Health Branch, Department of Health & Human Services, late last year.

The consultation included Module Four of the *Building gender - sensitive and safe practice* training for which the Network holds the license. Julie Dempsey our Consumer Training Facilitator drives the unique perspective required during each workshop discussion, this is a crucial aspect of the Network's approach.

Building gender-sensitive and safe practice

A training program and resource to support the Service guidelines on gender sensitive and safe practice. Promoting a holistic approach to wellbeing.

women respect LGBTI
alcohol and safety other drugs
best mental
practice health
gender
trauma informed care

Supporting mental health and alcohol and other drug services to provide gender-sensitive and safe care to consumers

We are working behind the scenes as a very small team, collaborating with relevant stakeholders as we seek opportunity to champion improved services. With this activity we have experienced growth - 33 new members this year. This increased number compared to previous years is our reminder of the importance of our collective voice for promoting gender sensitive safe services.

Our hope is that a reinvigorated committee with its full suite of functions will continue to 'run with the baton' in 2019 and that a mobilized network membership will assist the work at hand.

The committee elected to celebrate our 30th anniversary as a way of reflecting on our strengths and to state our strategic directions as we head into this our fourth decade of collaboration.

Our publication *Women's Safety Matters; 30 years and beyond* is our historical documentation and will be a building block for future influence as a statement of our relevance.



Our committee is fully engaged and empowered to always do better. As a result, we have been giving much consideration to the role that the Network can play to ensure its future. We consulted stakeholders as well as our members who all reinforce our relevance in the following core areas:

- **Women's Safety - Secure Women - Only Corridors And Women Sensitive Spaces**
- **Highlight Women Sensitive Needs For Rural And Regional Areas**
- **Strengthen Gender Sensitive Training and Curriculum Development For The Health Workforce**
- **Engage More In Social Media Platforms**
- **Promote Focus For Women Sensitive Services Nationally**

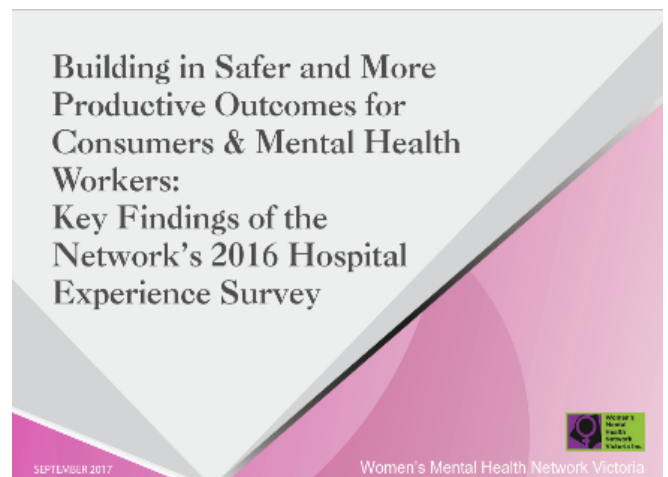
We recognize that the same factors that affect our sustainable funding persist and that this will continue to weigh on our achievements in 2019. However, we are confident we will improve our situation with proactive funding projects, government service funding applications and by leveraging member base for their potential pledge.

We want to thank our members, partners and stakeholders for their continued trust and encouragement in our work. And we want to thank those dedicated volunteers on the ground who with their commitment, resilience and energy have driven change.

After 30 years we are celebrating our achievements and aim to bring vision to a changing landscape. With each new membership we are able to mobilise our forums and vision.

Unfortunately, the journey that started in 1988 is not complete; there is still a great deal of work especially needed to support safety for women in our mental health services.

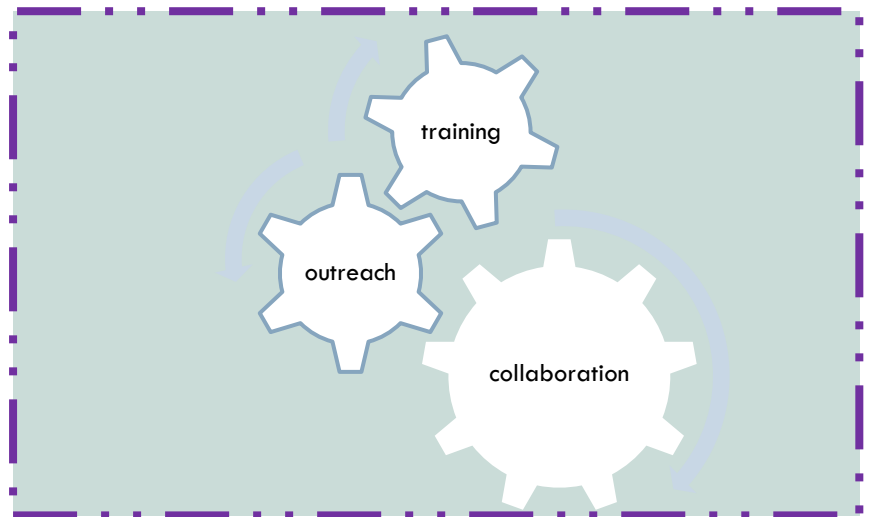
Our vision thus remains the same- to promote awareness of the issues that impact on women's mental health, and to support the development of women-sensitive services that recognize women consumers' lived experience, their potential to be partners in their recovery and their role in advocating for services that are responsive to their needs.



HIGHLIGHTS

Gender sensitive & safe practice training nurse managers workshops & consultation for the Mental Health Branch

Visit to Canberra
Ministry of Health
- gender sensitive
practice and
services placed
on the agenda



Consultation with MIND Australia for women's PARC- some progress is being made towards female only accommodation with the announcement of another future women only Prevention & Recovery Care (PARC) situated in the North Western region of Melbourne

Continuing collaboration with stakeholders, both government and our partners such as the Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council (VMIAC) Consultation Forum: Sexual Safety in psychiatric services in May

Fostering an ongoing relationship with the BIG Issue women's soccer group at their north Melbourne base. Julie and Sandy share stories about mental health issues, hospital experiences and the benefits of playing team sports. Organising the BIG Issue women's soccer event & networking with Forensicare

HIGHLIGHTS



The Mental Health Complaints Commission had its Inaugural Annual Forum on the topic of Women's Sexual Safety in Psychiatric Inpatient Units on the 23rd of March 2018.

- The Network is extensively quoted in supporting evidence of the dire situation of female patients in mixed-sex psychiatric units described in the Commissioner's Sexual Safety Project Report: The Right to be Safe; launched at the forum
- Julie Dempsey represented the Network and women consumers as a panel member addressing the audience and answering questions on responses to the report's findings and recommendations and staff/sector roles and perspectives in responding to breaches of sexual safety

COLLABORATION

Release of Consumers & Health Workers Survey Report.

Participation in the Mental Health Complaints Commission (MHCC) Sexual Safety Project Reference Group formed in 2017- consisting of MHCC staff, consumers, Area Mental Health management and other key stakeholders with an interest in highlighting and addressing sexual safety issues in the mental health sector. One of the main recommendations of the report was establishment and a trial of a Women's Only Unit.

Contributions at a number of committees including Promoting Human Rights (Chief Psychiatrist project).

Department of Premier and Cabinet Diverse Communities and Intersectionality Working Group - gives mental health expertise and input into the implementation of the Royal Commission into Family Violence recommendations rollout.

A REFLECTION – OUR 30 YEARS

Over its 30-year history, the Network has emphasised all the ways in which women can become aware of and access mental health services that most effectively serve their needs. Through ongoing advocacy for realistic services, staff training with a strong consumer input and presentations at key forums across Victoria, interstate and internationally, it has built a platform that has influenced government and service providers to include gender sensitivity and safety in their treatment programs.

Staff training packages have been rolled out across the state – all with a strong consumer component. A great deal of research and grass roots enquiry has preceded the design of gender sensitivity and safety elements in training programs. Consumer members of the Network have played a major role in talking to the consumers and the staff who will deliver the training.

Our consumer members of the Network have, over time, gained skills in advocacy and public speaking that allows them to reach out to many hundreds of women over short periods of time. Two programs were developed to encourage and equip women consumers to share their stories without undue anxiety.

A training package titled *Women Speak Out* and a program titled *Breaking The Silence* planned for rural applications were developed. Women averaged five days of training over five weeks with the aim of providing participants with more assurance in sharing personal information and dealing with the media.

The Network has demonstrated that women telling their own stories in their own words is a powerful catalyst for change.

The Network has been successful at developing funding proposals targeted at the key issues around gender sensitivity and women's safety, when receiving care in psychiatric inpatient units. We are aiming to concentrate on attracting funding for a Network Chief Executive who can centralise the different activities in which we are involved.

We welcome input from all Network members – they provide a rich source of expertise which can help us to better target our activities to support all women consumers, carers and women interested in seeing the Network prosper.

Jude Stamp
Committee Member and Consumer



MCMADNESS #2

Hello, do you have a Big Mac delusion
or a Cheeseburger delusion?
Is that one voice with grandiose ideas
or two voices of persecution?
Have you spent all your savings
& bought three new Ferraris & a Rolls lately?
Are sad one moment & high the next?
Are you self-harming or
feeling unrelenting misery?
Then drive thru the *fastpsychiatry* public ward
we'll have you McDiagnosed,
treated, medicated & McSane
in two shakes of a pill bottle.
McSanity is our business.

Now that you are here
terms & conditions apply
you can only stay a few days
but don't worry we'll get you McSane
before you can say
can I have some compassion with that?
& if you have a hint of childhood trauma
there's a guarantee to retraumatise you.
By the way, if you are a woman
you'll be stalked, harassed & threatened
& put into HD for your own McSafety
& don't stress if the staff think your fears are
delusional
you are McMad after all.
If you are lucky there might be a women's
corridor
without men in it in which to feel McSafe.
There will be drugs that will fatten you up
turn you into a zombie
& bring on premature death.
We'll have you out of here in the blink of an
eye
because someone McMadder will need your
bed.
You will be so distressed
you'll never want to set foot in a public psych
ward again.

But cheer up because we'll offer you some
McTherapy
to help you cope with rejection, poverty,
isolation & PTSD.

& now for some McTherapy:
hello
how are the voices today?
keep taking the medication
we have to finish now
credit or savings
see you in 6 months.

It's a McMad world
everyone has forms to fill in & boxes to tick
I's to dot & T's to cross
performance requirements to meet
risk assessments to make
& pressure, pressure, pressure
Fastpsychiatry is the name of this game.
Ah McSane, we've done it again.

A Wild Psychotic Fancy

In my wild psychotic fancy
I see women healing with art, music & poetry
curative gardens, therapy dogs
empathetic peer support
soothing sensory rooms
no ice-fuelled men wreaking havoc
no seclusion rooms
no security guards
no fishbowl
nurses not just medication monitors
psychiatrists who heal the soul
trauma informed care to restore wounded
psyches
& Old Father Time has no watch.
McMending with the lot
& some kindness & sensitivity with that.
Call me mad, call me insane
slowpsychiatry is the name of this game.
©Sandy Jeffs 2015, 2018

BUILDING CAPACITY- CONSULTATION AND TRAINING



The Office of the Chief Psychiatrist engaged the Women's Mental Health Network Victoria to deliver a number of Gender Sensitive Safe Practice Nurse Manager Workshops throughout August-December 2017. These were facilitated by trained educators Robyn Minty, Shelley Anderson and consumer training facilitator Julie Dempsey.

Managers and leaders from Inpatient Mental Health Services were asked to come together to examine the *Service Guidelines for Gender sensitive safe practice* in context with the *Promoting Sexual Safety Guidelines*. Both these guidelines are currently being updated.

Some key aspects of the consultation were:

- Promoting a holistic approach to wellbeing
- Exploring current practices/issues
- Promoting sexual safety dialogue that informed a Strengthening of the reporting mechanisms

The workshops were state-wide so provided an opportunity to:

- Network with colleagues on shared language and understandings of gender – sensitive and safe practice as relevant to their workplace
- Provide a robust and balanced feedback on both guidelines – application, content gaps, improvements with particular emphasis on the guideline



The consultation led to a rich collection of qualitative data including feedback and recommendations regarding:

- Strengthening and adding to the guidelines
- Seeking clarification for policy to practice alignment
- Strengthening guidelines implementation state-wide to ensure consistent practice
- Enhancing Consumer participation at training as well as local policy level

It was a great to meet these passionate nurse managers. There were robust discussions about the challenges and achievements of their gender sensitive safe practice in the field.

Shelley Anderson
Committee Member and Licensed WMHNV Facilitator

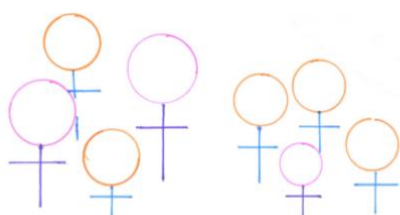


A RURAL PERSPECTIVE

Manorama and I always value our involvement in the WMHNV as a regional voice for women's mental health.

Over the years, the number of specialised women's mental health worker positions has reduced significantly, and so the opportunity to network with peers, especially in regional areas, is limited.

Being part of the Network provides our small LEFT service with support and guidance, as well as opportunities for collaborative work to enhance the mental health and lives of women.



Some of the activities over the last year include:

- Participating as a regional representative of the Network and Bendigo Health, on the Mental Health and Family Violence Project Advisory Group, led by the Office of Chief Psychiatrist. This PAG guided the design of a new service guideline addressing some of the Royal Commission into Family Violence recommendations around family violence and mental health services.
- Providing feedback for the Gender Sensitivity Audit Tool developed by the Network, drawing on information and perspectives provided by the Peer Workers in Bendigo Health Psychiatric Services.
- Organising staff training for carer support services workers in Bendigo and surrounds, on the topic of "Family Violence in a Carer Support Context".
- Continuing to design and facilitate group programs and workshops for women in the community around various aspects of mental and emotional health and wellbeing.
- Continuing to educate Psychiatric Services staff in gender sensitive practice, to advocate for women's mental health needs, review and encourage quality improvement, and survey staff, patients and carers around gender sensitivity and safety across Psychiatric Services.

As a project worker in the regional sector of the Strengthening Hospital Responses to Family Violence Project at Bendigo Health, developing a specialised staff training module and Facilitation Guide on "The Unique Complexities of Family Violence in Regional/rural Settings". Due to the strong intersection of family violence and mental health, the module highlights many of the rural-specific issues, needs, strengths, risk factors, and helpful strategies relevant to women's mental health in a regional/rural context.

Over the last few years, it has been great to see the growing interest and awareness in gender sensitive and safe practice across mental health services in Victoria, and within Bendigo Health, to be part of the greater integration of these issues in the training of mental health staff, the increased mindfulness of gender sensitive and safe environments and practice, and the innovations such as the Safe Wards program and Strengthening Hospital Responses to Family Violence project.

There is still a long way to go in the journey of empowering women, and advocating for our mental health and wellbeing needs, but there are positive and hopeful signs of progress occurring in many spaces, and the Network plays a significant role in driving this energy and focus.

Happy 30th Anniversary to the Network, from the Women's Mental Health Service Bendigo Health, which has been a keen participant for the last 14 years!

Bridget Nutting
Committee Member/Bendigo Health



FINANCIAL REPORT

Committee's Report For the year ended 30 June 2018

Your committee members submit the financial accounts of the WOMEN'S MENTAL HEALTH NETWORK VICTORIA for the financial year ended 30 June 2018.

Committee Members

The names of committee members at the date of this report are:

Cheryl Miller-Yell
Shelley Anderson
Julie Dempsey
Jude Stamp
Sandy Jeffs
Robyn Minty
Bridget Nutting
Michelle Swan
Fiona Jessep
Hannah Harbinson
Carol O'Dwyer

Principal Activities

The principal activities of the association during the financial year were: Promotes awareness of women's mental health and the development of services that are safe, effective and respond to the gender needs of women.

Significant Changes

No significant change in the nature of these activities occurred during the year.

Operating Result

The deficit from ordinary activities after providing for income tax amounted to

Year ended	Year ended
30 June 2018	30 June 2017
\$	\$
(32,576)	(20,950)

These financial statements are unaudited. They must be read in conjunction with the attached Accountant's Compilation Report and Notes which form part of these financial statements.

WOMEN'S MENTAL HEALTH NETWORK VICTORIA

ABN 39 597 342 174

Income and Expenditure Statement

For the year ended 30 June 2018

	2018 \$	2017 \$
Income		
Grants received		25,810
Donations received	1,143	595
Membership fees		1,055
Interest received	1,049	1,331
Total income	2,192	28,790
Expenses		
Accountancy	1,400	1,700
Administration costs		56
Advertising and promotion	86	
Bad Debts	5,000	
Bank charges		30
Bookkeeping fees	4,698	614
Contract payments	5,972	
Depreciation - other	671	
Employment expenses	440	37,720
Flowers and gifts		149
Lord Mayor's Charitable Trust		352
Workers compensation		199
Meeting expenses		785
Subscriptions		563
Training and conference expenses	10,280	
Travelling expenses	390	
I.T expenses		2,004
Printing and stationery	1,797	2,498
Insurance	531	72
Professional Development	1,104	
Rent on land & buildings	2,250	3,000
Staff amenities	30	
Travel, accom & conference	118	
Total expenses	34,768	49,741
Profit (loss) from ordinary activities before income tax	(32,576)	(20,950)

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WOMEN'S MENTAL HEALTH NETWORK VICTORIA

ABN 39 597 342 174

Income and Expenditure Statement

For the year ended 30 June 2018

	2018	2017
	\$	\$
Income tax revenue relating to ordinary activities		
Net profit (loss) attributable to the association	<u>(32,576)</u>	<u>(20,950)</u>
Total changes in equity of the association	<u>(32,576)</u>	<u>(20,950)</u>
Opening retained profits	76,613	97,563
Net profit (loss) attributable to the association	<u>(32,576)</u>	<u>(20,950)</u>
Closing retained profits	<u>44,037</u>	<u>76,613</u>

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WOMEN'S MENTAL HEALTH NETWORK VICTORIA

ABN 39 597 342 174

Detailed Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2018

	Note	2018 \$	2017 \$
Current Assets			
Cash Assets			
Bank Australia #6758 S65		40,428	80,785
Load & Go Visa Card		500	500
Petty Cash		200	200
		<u>41,128</u>	<u>81,485</u>
Current Tax Assets			
GST payable control account		3,587	
GST Clearing			(1,448)
		<u>3,587</u>	<u>(1,448)</u>
Total Current Assets		<u>44,715</u>	<u>80,037</u>
Non-Current Assets			
Property, Plant and Equipment			
Office Furniture & Equipment		3,945	3,945
Less: Accumulated Dep'n		(3,946)	(3,946)
Computer		2,238	
Less: Accumulated depreciation		(671)	
		<u>1,566</u>	
Total Non-Current Assets		<u>1,566</u>	
Total Assets		<u>46,281</u>	<u>80,037</u>

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WOMEN'S MENTAL HEALTH NETWORK VICTORIA

ABN 39 597 342 174

Detailed Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2018

	Note	2018 \$	2017 \$
Current Liabilities			
Payables			
Unsecured:			
Trade Creditors		44	44
		<u>44</u>	<u>44</u>
Current Tax Liabilities			
PAYG Clearing		1,417	2,597
		<u>1,417</u>	<u>2,597</u>
Provisions			
Superannuation Payable		230	230
Workcover Payable		553	553
		<u>783</u>	<u>783</u>
Total Current Liabilities		<u>2,244</u>	<u>3,424</u>
Total Liabilities		<u>2,244</u>	<u>3,424</u>
Net Assets		<u>44,037</u>	<u>76,613</u>
Members' Funds			
Accumulated surplus (deficit)		44,037	76,613
Total Members' Funds		<u>44,037</u>	<u>76,613</u>

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30 YEARS OF ACHIEVEMENT

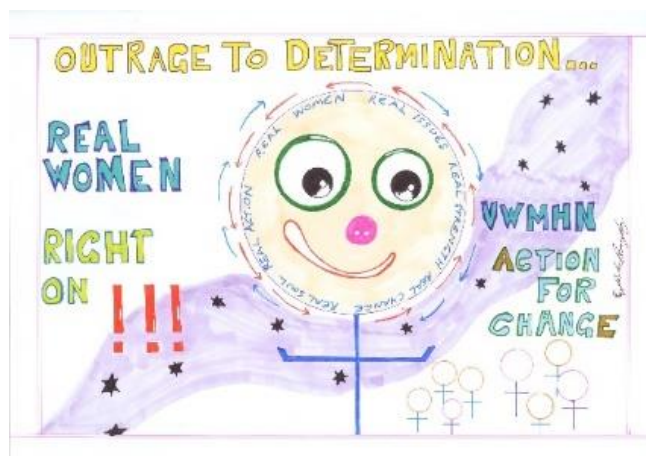
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|------|--|------|--|
| 1988 | Victorian Women and Mental Health Network Collective established | 2011 | <i>Service guidelines on gender sensitivity & safety. Promotion of a holistic approach to wellbeing advisory committee</i> |
| 1989 | Inaugural Conference 'Strategies for Change' funded by Office of Psychiatric Services | 2011 | The creation of separate areas for women in adult acute psychiatry inpatient units |
| 1990 | High profile Forum with Canadian Activist | 2012 | Lobbying government provision for A\$6m to establish gender specific mental health spaces in existing mental health services, including women - only corridors |
| 1992 | Sexual violence & rights and safety Forum | 2012 | Commitment by State Government to a women's only prevention and recovery care centre (Springvale) |
| 1992 | Submission for the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Inquiry concerning the Rights of People with a Mental Illness | 2013 | Gender Sensitive & Safe Training package developed and launched |
| 1995 | Domestic violence and mental illness Forum | 2014 | Training roll-out to Acute Psychiatric Inpatient Units across Victoria led by the Centre for Psychiatric Nursing Victoria |
| 1996 | Women-only respite programs Forum | 2014 | Licensed by Department of Health for gender sensitive training |
| 2006 | Project report <i>Building partnerships between mental health, family violence & sexual assault services</i> - investigated connection between those sectors | 2015 | <i>Victorian Royal Commission into Family Violence Report & Recommendations</i> |
| 2007 | Survey and 'Listening Events' consultation of women's experience on safety in hospitals | 2016 | Survey a decade on for women's experience in hospitals |
| 2008 | <i>The gender sensitivity and safety in adult acute inpatient unit's project</i> | 2016 | Raising awareness of gender sensitive issues in the Australian context with World Health Organisation |
| 2009 | <i>Promoting sexual safety, responding to sexual activity, and managing allegations of sexual assault in adult acute inpatient unit guideline</i> | 2017 | Consultation and training Report DHHS on promoting sexual safety and gender sensitive guidelines statewide |
| 2009 | Chief Psychiatrist Office expert advisory committee | 2018 | Mental Health Complaints Commission 'sexual safety' Forum panel member and subsequent <i>The Right to be Safe Report</i> contributions |
| 2010 | VWMHN Call to Action – The 5 Point Plan State Government Victoria Election Campaign | 2018 | <i>Women's Safety Matters; 30 years and beyond</i> Publication |
| 2010 | VWMHN Gender sensitive training programs rolled out statewide | | |
| 2011 | Women's Mental Health Network Victoria changed names and incorporated as a charity - positioning itself as a key statewide voice | | |

CONFERENCES & FORUMS

- 1990 Forum on mental health with Canadian activist Helen Levine
- 1992 Forum on Sexual Assault
- 1995 Forum on Domestic Violence and Mental Illness
- 1996 Forum on women-only respite programs
- 2007 Listening Events Statewide Forums
- 2009 VMIAC Conference
- 2010 Gippsland Mental Health Conference
- 2010 6th World Conference on the Promotion of Mental Health and Prevention of Mental and Behavioral Disorders Washington USA
- 2010 Victorian Collaborative Psychiatric Nursing Conference
- 2011 TheMHS Conference, Mental Health Learning Network
- 2011 Victorian Collaborative Psychiatric Nursing Conference
- 2012 TheMHS Conference, Mental Health Learning Network
- 2012 VicServ Conference
- 2012 Victorian Collaborative Psychiatric Nursing Conference
- 2013 Meaning of Life Journeys to Recovery Forum
- 2013 TheMHS Conference, Mental Health Learning Network
- 2013 Victorian Collaborative Psychiatric Nursing Conference
- 2013 7th Australian Women's Health Conference
- 2015 Royal Commission into Family Violence Forum
- 2016 Womens Disability Leadership Workshop
- 2016 The Alfred & L.A.M.P.s Diversity Conference
- 2016 Your Hospital Experience: Have Your Say Forum
- 2017 The Alfred & L.A.M.P.s Diversity Conference

PUBLICATIONS

- 1998 *Speaking Out: Women's Experiences Of Mental Health Services* Publication
- 2000 *Directory of services for women in mental health* Publication (collaboration with VIC SERV)
- 2007 *Listening to Women's Consumers Experience in Mixed Sex Psychiatric Wards*
- 2007 *Nowhere to Be Safe*
- 2008 *Outrage becomes determination: Advocating to raise awareness of women's experience in mixed sex psychiatric wards*; Health Issues: Journal of Health Issues Centre (Autumn Issue 2008) by Heather Clarke and Julie Dempsey
- 2009 *Victorian Women and Mental Health Network: Increasing Safety and Gender Sensitivity in mixed sex psychiatric units: Gathering Information about clinical mental health service initiatives*
- 2010 *Call to Action 2010: A Five Point Plan to Ensure safety for women in acute psychiatric wards*
- 2011 *Outrage to Determination. Real Women Right On! VWHMH Action for Change*
- 2013 *Building Gender - Sensitive and Safe Practice: Final Project Report*
- 2014 *Building Gender - Sensitive Safe Practice - training program*
- 2016 *A Story of Madness* by Sandy Jeffs; WMHNV entry for The Horne Prize – "Australian life" picture of how it is for women.
- 2017 *Building in Safer and More Productive Outcomes for Consumers and Mental Health Workers: Key Findings of the Network's 2016 Hospital Experience Survey*
- 2018 *Women's Safety Matters; 30 years and beyond*



Outrage to Determination 2011
Author Julie Dempsey

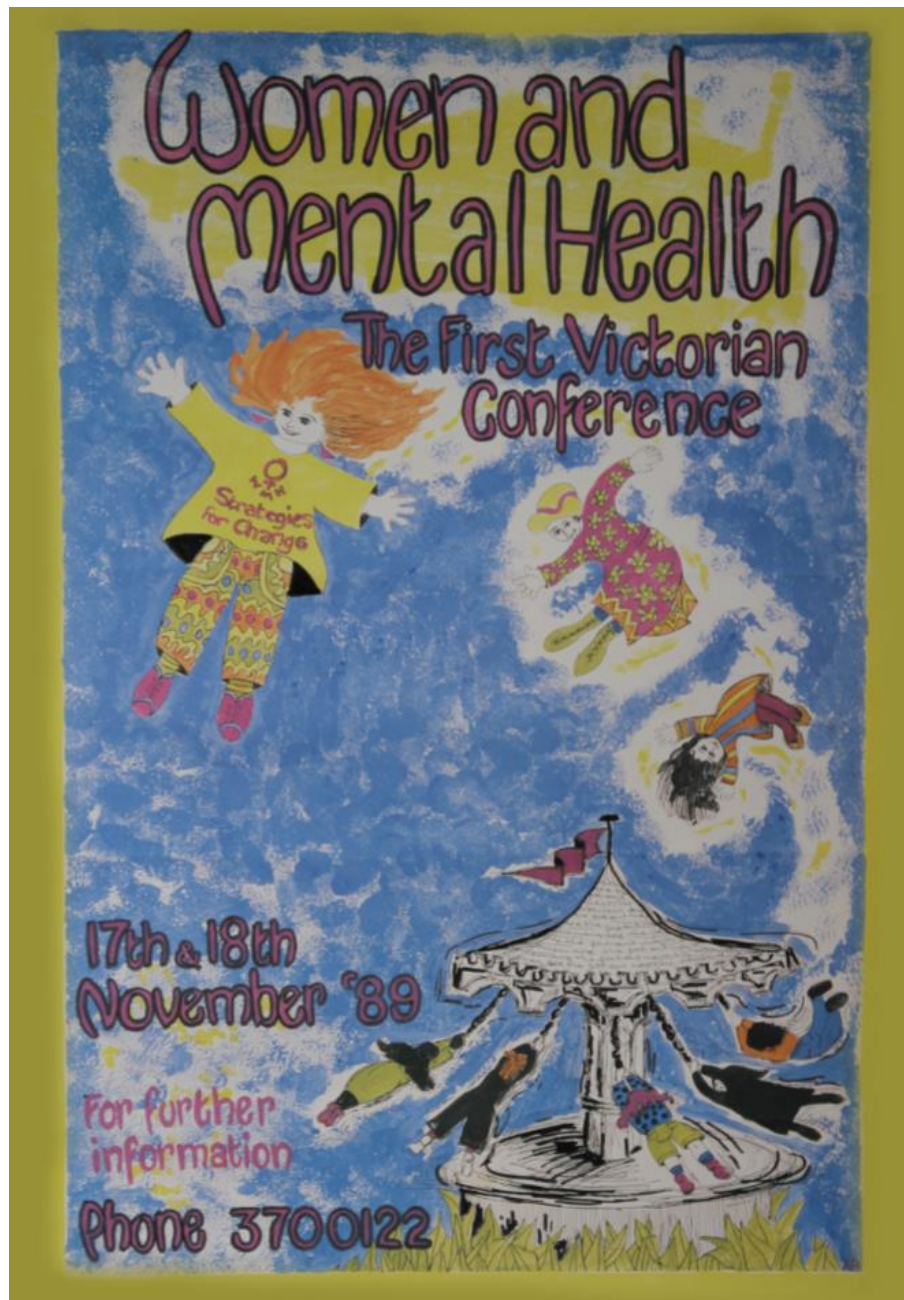


Illustration by Ann Ball