



**family
planning
victoria**

Sexual & Reproductive Health
Care. Education. Advocacy.

eUpdate

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from the CEO

Under the leadership of our Board, Family Planning Victoria (FPV) has recently undertaken a strategic planning process, clarifying our vision and mission and defining our key priority areas for 2009-12.

Our vision is clear: sexual health for Victorians; and we will contribute to this vision by providing leadership in public policy, advocacy, education and clinical care in sexual and reproductive health.

To assist us, we have identified the following key priority areas:

- education and training
- community and advocacy
- workforce development
- research and evaluation
- information technology
- effective use of resources
- risk management.

As an integrated sexual health service, we will use our clinical expertise to drive the development of our capacity building education and training programs for health, allied health and education professionals.

We will also work in partnership with other agencies to improve sexual and reproductive health literacy in young people, parents and carers, people in their reproductive years and other vulnerable populations.

All our work will be guided by our core values: leadership, openness, expertise, trust, passion and community.

We know our partnerships are vital in bringing together the skills and resources necessary to realise this important vision, and we look forward to working with you to improve the sexual health of Victorians in 2009 and beyond.

Lynne Jordan

health promotion **soapbox**

Empowering individuals and strengthening communities

Developing personal skills to empower oneself and strengthening communities are action areas in the World Health Organisation's Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion.

Empowering individuals requires the provision of information, education and

support to enhance their life skills. This gives individuals the necessary tools to exercise greater control over their health and wellbeing.

Strengthening communities involves working with and respecting the existing resources (i.e. cultural, political, social and spiritual) within these communities. This process requires agencies such as

FPV to respect, advocate for and support the rights of vulnerable communities to participate in and make informed choices about their sexual and reproductive health.

Our goal is to help build strong communities that can advocate for their wellbeing, create supportive environments and effect social change.

Mind the Gap! leadership + resilience + diversity = HIV prevention



The Department of Human Services Blood Borne Virus and Sexually Transmitted Infections (BBV/STI) Unit has provided funding for the Mind the Gap! intervention over the 2009-12 period. Mind the Gap! is a rural and regional primary prevention and community engagement program aimed at creating social and health actions. It seeks to reduce the transmission of HIV and other BBVs among young gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer (GLBTIQ) people by engaging their social networks.

The primary partners collaborating on Mind the Gap! are:

- Family Planning Victoria (FPV)
- Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (VACCHO)
- Centre for Adolescent Health
- Youth Empowerment Against HIV/AIDS (Y.E.A.H).

Our supporting partners are FAR Social Enterprises, The Twenty10 Association and the Burnett Institute.

The title, Mind the Gap!, reflects the Australian Government's 'Close the Gap' indigenous health initiative and reminds the community that health inequities also exist between GLBTIQ communities and the mainstream population.

The Mind the Gap! strategies are designed to appeal to the wider community, while offering targeted information, training and resources to GLBTIQ youth, their friends and family and health care and education providers who address issues of diversity, inclusion and self-care.

For more information, contact Tess Atkinson at FPV on 03 9257 0106 or email tatkinson@fpv.org.au

FARREP project

FPV is pleased to announce we will be facilitating the Family and Reproductive Rights Education Program (FARREP) for 2009-11.

We will be recruiting for the full time state-wide FARREP facilitator's role during June 2009. This position will work with the existing FARREP service system to develop the Victorian FARREP Health Promotion Plan. We welcome

this great opportunity to partner with key providers and culturally and linguistically diverse communities in addressing female genital mutilation within a sexual and reproductive health rights framework.

out now!

The second edition of *Contraception: an Australian clinical practice handbook* is now available. A Sexual Health and Family

Planning Australia (SH&FPA) publication, it includes a significant contribution from Family Planning Victoria's senior medical

officer, Dr Kathleen McNamee. Contact FPV's Resource Centre on 03 9257 0146 to order your copy today!

sexual health awareness week



In an effort to raise community awareness of sexual and reproductive health, the Bendigo Loddon Primary Care Partnership's Sexual Health Task Group (SHTG) facilitated the region's first Sexual Health Awareness Week. To coincide with Valentines Day, the week was held from 9-15 February 2009.

As the rate of sexually transmissible infections continues to rise in Victoria, the SHTG aimed to convey to the community the importance of practising safe sex and maintaining regular sexual health check ups.

The SHTG supported a range of community activities, including organising:

- a community information and resource stall
- a complimentary workshop on STIs for health and community workers
- a professional development evening

for GPs & practice nurses in support of Central Victoria General Practice Network

- the promotion of free Chlamydia testing along with a special Valentines Day clinic session in support of Bendigo Community Health Services
- radio promotions encouraging Chlamydia testing.

Sexual Health Awareness Week was a huge success! For further information, contact Kylie O'Brien from Country Awareness Network at kylieobrien@can.org.au.

Gippsland health promotion strategy



Unwanted pregnancy, sexual violence, homophobia, STIs and infertility are major contributors to morbidity and social, economic and health related costs in Australia.

In recognition of the growing need to address sexual and reproductive

health issues in the Gippsland region, Gippsland Women's Health Service, in partnership with the Gippsland Health Promotion Task Group and the Department of Human Services Gippsland, will lead the development of a regional Sexual and Reproductive Health Promotion Strategy for 2009-12.

The aim is to develop a comprehensive, evidence-based regional plan that will direct and inform sexual and

reproductive health promotion activities.

To support this process, a reference group has been established. FPV shares membership of this group with other key stakeholders involved in the delivery of sexual and reproductive health services in the Gippsland region.

For further information, contact Jodie Pullman at Gippsland Women's Health Service on 03 5143 1600 or email hpo@gwhealth.asn.au

introducing **Christine Harris**



Christine Harris
Media and Marketing Officer

I joined the FPV team as the new Media and Marketing Officer in early January 2009, bringing to the position a Bachelor of Arts/Sciences and Post Graduate Diplomas in Reproductive Sciences and in Journalism.

While pursuing freelance journalism, I have worked with Melbourne fashion boutique Shuba in a sales, marketing

and communication capacity for close to seven years (and counting!). This role has involved events management and the launching of a wide range of promotional and advertising campaigns on a corporate level.

I have come on board at an exciting and pivotal moment in FPV's history, as we work towards establishing our newly re-

branded image and website and embark upon the next phase of organisational strategic planning for 2009-12.

I eagerly anticipate working with FPV and making valued contributions towards communicating and developing our reputation as a leader in sexual and reproductive health care, education and advocacy.

your chance to win

We are launching a competition to re-name our organisational newsletter. We are seeking a name that reflects our commitment to sexual and reproductive health and our integral

role in providing care, education and advocacy. The most original name will be chosen by our CEO. The competition is open to FPV staff and partner organisations, and we

encourage all entrants to be creative with your suggestions. The winner will receive a \$50 FPV Resource Centre Gift Voucher. Send your entries to e_update@fpv.org.au by 29 May 2009.

why women don't report partner rape?



Are we all complicit in partner rape? Research conducted in 2008 by Women's Health Goulburn North East and Upper Murray Centre Against Sexual Assault suggested that we are.

This research, based on over 70 interviews with women, health professionals and police, moves the focus from the individual woman to a society that allows men to rape their partners – with apparent impunity.

Although the law was changed in 1985 to criminalise rape within marriage, the attitudes of some men and community

leaders remain in a past where women had little autonomy and men had a misplaced sense of entitlement.

The immense shame surrounding rape is exacerbated in cases of partner rape. This research conveyed that women had nowhere to turn to and no-one to confide in. Women and health professionals reported that police, ministers and doctors were aware of what was happening, yet failed to act.

Workers who are not receptive to signals from a woman seeking help essentially deny her the opportunity to address partner rape. Through failing to acknowledge partner rape, we are complicit in the continuance of this act of violence against women.

You can help in just four steps:

1. ASK: Are you safe within your relationship?
2. NAME IT: What you've just described to me is rape and it's a crime.
3. RESPOND: Give contact details of the local CASA (1800 806 292), Domestic Violence Service (1800 015 188) and Victoria Police SOCA Unit (000 – Ask for the SOCA unit).
4. FOLLOW UP: 'Last time you spoke about your safety. I'd like to know how you are now.'

Raped by a Partner: a research report (2008) is available for download from www.whealth.com.au or by phoning Women's Health Goulburn North East 03 5722 3009.

Please direct any enquiries about e-update to Claire Rickard at crickard.fpv.org.au