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**Promising Practices in Workplace and Organisational
Approaches for the Prevention of Violence Against Women**



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Promising Practices in Workplace and Organisational Approaches for the Prevention of Violence Against Women

Executive Summary

While there has been over thirty years of public policy and legislative reform in Australia, the prevalence of violence against women still remains unacceptably high. In Australia, one woman is killed by her male partner every five or six days. One in four Australian women have experienced violence from an intimate partner. While much of this violence against women occurs in private life, such as in women's homes and at the hands of known men, the impacts of this violence are spread throughout the community. The responsibility for stopping violence against individual women may lie with perpetrators, but to end violence against women in our communities will take whole-of-community action and social change.

Established in 2013, Our Watch is a national organisation whose role it is to advocate for and drive change in the culture, systems, behaviours and attitudes that lead to violence against women and their children. This report has been designed to inform Our Watch's planning and program development in one sub-theme of this important work - namely workplace and organisational approaches to support the prevention of violence against women (PVAW).

The vast majority of existing program development and other prevention activities undertaken regarding PVAW in Australian workplaces are yet to be documented. In order to document practice in this area consultative interviews were undertaken with a number of key stakeholders. The case studies described in this report provide evidence of promising practice and other key themes from the stakeholder interviews, including the need to break down the idea of workplaces as homogenous and the diverse range of models, approaches and work in the sector which speak of the heterogeneity of and in workplaces. The case studies also confirm that well-designed programs aim to encourage local ownership and that there is a need to 'gain traction' if programs are to be successfully implemented. Overall several points of entry in programmatic work were identified, including responding to and preventing violence and promoting gender equity and cultures of respect.

The key recommendations of this report are clustered around four priority themes and include:

- **Building readiness** by developing a PVAW and promoting gender equality and respect national community awareness-raising campaign, community forums and professional development seminars; supporting research on effective program models; and identifying a 'take a first step' approach.
- **Building capacity** by developing common audit and monitoring tools and training materials and common social marketing, communication and awareness-raising tools to aid work in the sector; supporting development of train-the-trainer professional development to build capacity in the sector; collaborate with higher education

institutions to develop and deliver e-Modules on PVAW; and organise forums or colloquia for PVAW officers.

- ***Building the evidence*** by developing a 'National Scorecard' and evaluation tools for workplaces and organisations connected to a set of Benchmarking Tools or Measures of Success; developing and piloting training materials and evaluating efficacy; supporting workplaces in undertaking ongoing program evaluation; and consider appointing a PVAW and PGE&R Evaluation Officer or Advisor to support partner-programs.
- ***Building momentum*** by developing strategies to support sustainability; showcasing positive examples and outcomes from existing PVAW and PGE&R primary prevention programs; and developing a National Workplace Leaders Award Scheme.

Ending violence against women will take whole-of-community action and social change implemented through a range of public institutions, organisations and settings. Workplaces and organisations are key settings through which this action and change can occur.

1. Introduction

Despite over 30 years of Australian public policy and legislative reform, the prevalence of violence against women remains unacceptably high. National statistics indicate that 1 in 5 Australian women have experienced sexual violence, and 1 in 6 Australian women have experienced physical or sexual partner violence since the age of 15.¹ Additionally, 1 in 3 women have been sexually harassed since the age of 15.² While much of this violence against women occurs in private life, such as in women's homes and at the hands of known men, the impacts of this violence are spread throughout the community. The responsibility for stopping violence against individual women may lie with perpetrators, but ending violence against women will take whole-of-community action and social change implemented through a range of public institutions, organisations and settings. Indeed, while responding to the immediate safety needs of women remains a priority, Australian Governments, non-government agencies, and community peak bodies all recognise the need to simultaneously direct efforts at preventing violence against women - *before it occurs*.³

Our Watch

Established in July 2013, Our Watch (formerly the Foundation to Prevent Violence against Women and their Children) is a national organisation established to advocate for and drive nation-wide change in the culture, behaviours and attitudes that lead to violence against women and children. Our Watch's Strategic Plan identifies the organisation's vision, purpose and objective as:⁴

Vision: An Australia where women and their children live free from all forms of violence.

Purpose: To provide national leadership to prevent all forms of violence against women and their children.

Objective: To change attitudes, behaviours, social norms and practices that underpin and create violence against women and their children.

One of the organisation's major projects to date has been the development of *Change the Story: A Shared Framework for the Primary prevention of violence against women in Australia* (hereafter 'National Framework')⁵, a project conducted in collaboration with ANROWS and VicHealth. The National Framework, launched in November 2015, provides an overview of the evidence supporting the prevention of violence against women, and builds on previous work including VicHealth's influential 2007 report, *Preventing violence before it occurs: A framework*

¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2012). *Personal Safety Survey*. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia.

² Australian Human Rights Commission (2012). *Working without fear: Results of the sexual harassment national telephone survey 2012*. Sydney: Australian Human Rights Commission.

³ VicHealth (2007). *Preventing violence before it occurs: A framework and background paper to guide the primary prevention of violence against women in Victoria*. Melbourne: Victorian Health Promotion Foundation.

⁴ Our Watch (2014). *Five Year Strategic Plan*. Melbourne: Our Watch.

⁵ Our Watch, Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS), & VicHealth. (2015). *Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women in Australia*. Melbourne, Australia: Our Watch.

and background report to guide the primary prevention of violence against women in Victoria, as well as leading research by the World Health Organization.⁶ Combined, this body of work identifies that violence against women is serious and prevalent – but preventable; and that prevention efforts can be directed at addressing the key drivers to stop violence against women before it occurs. These drivers are well established in the international scholarly literature as gender inequality, as well as violence-supportive structures, cultures, and practices.⁷

Key features of the National Framework:

Addresses the key drivers of violence: The National Framework identifies gender inequality as the primary driver of violence against women, both in and of itself, and in intersection with other systems of oppression. Gender inequality is produced and reproduced at the levels of formal and institutionalised *structures*, attitudinal or social *norms* and behavioural *practices*.

Multi-level in approach: The National Framework articulates the need for prevention activity at multiple levels in order to create and sustain social change. This includes individuals & relationships, communities & organisations, institutions, and society as a whole.

Coordinated and mutually reinforcing: The National Framework provides a high-level overview of the mutually reinforcing drivers, settings, and population groups that prevention activities can target in a coordinated way.

Within the National Framework workplaces and organisations have been identified as a priority setting through which the key driver of gender inequality can be addressed across structures, normative attitudes and behavioural practices. Involving workplaces and organisations as sites for addressing violence against women is critical as these are prominent social settings where people spend a majority of their adult lives. Considering their role, workplaces can potentially be influential in increasing awareness, changing attitudes and behavior, as well as modeling gender equity and respectful relationships.

Purpose and Aims

Our Watch have commissioned this research report to further inform planning and program development in workplace and organisational approaches to support the prevention of violence against women.

The aims of the report are to:

- Summarise **research evidence** for prevention of violence against women through workplaces and organisations (section 3)
- Distill **key program components** of ‘promising practice’ through consultation with existing workplace and organisational programs (section 4)
- **Recommend future directions** in the development of workplace and organisational approaches to primary prevention of violence against women (section 5)

⁶ VicHealth (2007). Preventing violence before it occurs: A framework and background paper to guide the primary prevention of violence against women in Victoria. Melbourne: Victorian Health Promotion Foundation; World Health Organization (2010). Preventing intimate partner and sexual violence against women: taking action and generating evidence. Geneva: World Health Organization (WHO).

⁷ World Health Organization (2010).

- **Identify gaps and development opportunities** for Our Watch among other existing players promoting and/or supporting prevention of violence against women in workplaces and organisations (section 5).

Consultative Approach

Recognising that much of the existing program development and other prevention activities undertaken in Australian workplaces is not published or publicly available, we conducted 15 consultative interviews with key stakeholders (totalling 24 individual interviewees). These consultations took place between the 10th of August 2015 and the 10th December 2015 and included:⁸

- CEO Challenge, Brisbane
- Act@Work, Women's Health Grampians
- Act@Work, and White Ribbon Workplace Program, Child and Family Services Ballarat
- White Ribbon Workplace Program, Macquarie University
- Preventing Violence Against Women Strategy, City of Melbourne
- Darebin Says No to Family Violence, City of Darebin
- Violence Against Women Prevention Programs, Maribyrnong City Council
- Preventing Violence Against Women Pilot Programs Scheme, VicHealth
- 'Equal Footing' Training, En Masse (and VicHealth)
- 'Respectful Relationship Education in Schools, Our Watch
- White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation Program, White Ribbon Australia
- Y Respect Gender, YMCA (and VicHealth)
- Take A Stand Against Domestic Violence, Women's Health Victoria
- Centre for Ethical Leadership, The University of Melbourne
- Diversity Council Australia

The findings from these stakeholder consultations are discussed further below and identify the key elements of programs and strategies, a distillation of the features of success and points of challenge, as well as our interviewees' suggestions for how to better support workplaces and organisations to get involved in preventing violence against women. It is on the basis of these consultations, combined with the scholarly literature, and consideration of Our Watch's Strategic Plan and National Framework, that our recommendations for future direction in preventing violence against women through workplaces and organisations have been developed.

It is important to note that these consultations, while reflective of a variety of workplace and organisational prevention programs and strategies, are not representative of all Australian workplace settings and organisational environments. The consultations included: *corporate settings* (CEO Challenge, 'Equal Footing' training by VicHealth and En Masse, the White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation Program, and the Centre for Ethical Leadership); *community sports and recreation*; several local councils (City of Melbourne, City of Darebin, Maribyrnong City Council); secondary and tertiary *education settings* (Our Watch, White Ribbon); as well as male-

⁸ These programs and organisations have been named with informed, written consent, as per RMIT University Ethics Approval.

dominated industries and production settings (Act@Work by Women’s Health Grampians, and Take A Stand Against Domestic Violence, Women’s Health Victoria). Yet, these programs and settings do not include all Australian workplaces and organisations; faith-based organisations, the non-government organisation and social services sectors, small family run businesses, home based industries and work that is performed in private space (such as home help and community nursing), for example, may each require an adaptation of existing programs as well as additional support to become involved in prevention work.⁹ These are just some examples of workplaces and organisational settings that currently sit in a knowledge gap and which may benefit from research into the future.

Structure of the Report

The remainder of this report is structured as follows. First, the following section provides additional context with a discussion of key definitions and terminology, as well as outlining the distinctions and overlap between ‘responding to family violence’, ‘preventing violence against women’, and ‘promoting gender equity and respect’ in relation to workplaces and organisations (Section 2). Section 3 then provides a brief overview of the scholarly literature as well as an abridged history of workplace and organisational approaches to preventing violence against women in Australia. This section provides the context and evidence on which to base our discussion of the stakeholder consultations. Section 4 reports on the key themes as well as some illustrative case studies from our stakeholder consultations. Section 5 presents suggested future directions and 18 recommendations to inform Our Watch’s role in workplace and organisational approaches to preventing violence against women. Finally, Section 6 provides a summary and conclusion of the report.

⁹ Murray, S., & Powell, A. (2007). Family violence prevention using workplaces as sites of intervention. *Research and practice in Human resource management*, 15(2), 62-74.

2. Preventing Violence Against Women = Promoting Gender Equity & Respect

There are a number of key terms used throughout this report that are sometimes used in different ways across different settings, and so it is useful to briefly define and discuss these here. In particular, it is important to begin with: a shared definition of violence against women; an understanding of why violence against women is the business of workplaces; what it means to both *respond to* and *prevent* violence against women, and how we might understand shifting further ‘upstream’ towards promoting gender equity and respect.

Violence Against Women

Violence against women can be understood according to the United Nations definition, which refers to:

Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life (*United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women 1993*)

The term *violence against women* is thus broad and refers to a range of experiences. Much Australian legislation, policy and prevention is foremost concerned with intimate partner violence, sexual violence, and sexual harassment including physical, emotional and other forms of abuse within these.

Intimate partner violence ‘is one of the most common forms of violence against women and includes physical, sexual, and emotional abuse and controlling behaviours by an intimate partner’.¹⁰ It includes physical violence such as slapping, hitting, kicking and beating; sexual violence including coerced and forced sex; emotional and psychological abuse such as insults, threats, humiliation and intimidation; and controlling behaviours such as social isolation, economic control, and monitoring a person’s movements and/or participation in public and private life. Domestic violence, domestic abuse, partner abuse, and family violence, are all also common terms associated with this form of violence.

Sexual violence ‘encompasses acts that range from verbal harassment to forced penetration, and an array of types of coercion, from social pressure and intimidation to physical force’.¹¹ In most Australian jurisdictions, the terms ‘rape’ or ‘sexual assault’ refer more specifically to penetration of a person without their consent, while ‘indecent assault’ typically refers to non-penetrative sexual offences. In addition to sex acts involving physical force and overt coercion, sexual assault and rape can also take place when a person is not able to give consent – understood in Australian law as ‘free agreement’ – such as when they are intoxicated, drugged, asleep or mentally incapacitated.

¹⁰ World Health Organization (2012). [Understanding and Addressing Violence Against Women: Intimate Partner Violence](http://bit.ly/11VN2IB). Geneva: World Health Organization (WHO) (<http://bit.ly/11VN2IB>).

¹¹ World Health Organization (2012). [Understanding and Addressing Violence Against Women: Sexual Violence](http://bit.ly/1Q46sBk). Geneva: World Health Organization (WHO) (<http://bit.ly/1Q46sBk>).

Sexual harassment refers to 'unwanted or unwelcome sexual behaviour, which makes a person feel offended, humiliated or intimidated'.¹² In the workplace sexual harassment can be understood as comprising four distinct practices: *sexual hostility* (explicitly sexual verbal and nonverbal behaviours); *sexist hostility* (insulting verbal and nonverbal behaviours that are not sexual but are based on gender); *unwanted sexual attention* (unwelcome, offensive interest of a sexual nature); and *sexual coercion* (requests for sexual cooperation in return for job benefits).¹³ There is clearly a connection between workplace sexual harassment and other forms of sexual violence, including rape. Any unwanted sexual comments and/or behaviour may constitute workplace sexual harassment (and thus subject to regulation under equal opportunity and occupational health and safety legislation); some forms of unwanted sexual behaviour that occur in the workplace (e.g. those involving unwanted sexual contact) may also constitute crimes of rape and/or indecent assault.

Violence against women in the workplace

Violence against women can occur directly in the workplace setting. For example, Victorian studies have found that over 60 per cent of women surveyed report experiencing some form of violence at work and 75 per cent report experiencing unwanted or unwelcome sexual behaviour at work.¹⁴ Moreover, in a national study, the Australian Human Rights Commission found that around one in three Australian women reported experiencing sexual harassment in their lifetime, but that a further 'one in five (22%) respondents who said they had not experienced sexual harassment then went on to report having experienced behaviours that may in fact amount to sexual harassment'.¹⁵ Violence in the workplace may occur from internal sources such as managers and coworkers, as well as external sources such as clients or other members of the public.¹⁶

While it is less widely recognised, intimate partner violence in particular can similarly affect workers and workplace productivity whether internally or externally. Internally, intimate partner violence can potentially occur in large employing organisations, in rural and regional 'one company towns' and small or family run businesses, where partners (or ex-partners) may both work at the same workplace, and thus, increasing risks in those relationships where intimate partner violence occurs. Externally, intimate partner violence can also occur on-site at workplaces where partners or ex-partners are targeted at their place of work.¹⁷ Indeed, a workplace may be a place of danger for women; particularly after separation, it may be the one

¹² Australian Human Rights Commission (2012). *Working without fear: Results of the sexual harassment national telephone survey 2012*. Sydney: Australian Human Rights Commission.

¹³ See O'Leary-Kelly, A. M., Bowes-Sperry, L., Bates, C. A., & Lean, E. R. (2009). Sexual harassment at work: A decade (plus) of progress. *Journal of Management*, 35(3): 503-536.

¹⁴ URCOT. (2005). *Safe at Work? Women's experience of violence in the workplace*. Melbourne: Department for Victorian Communities; Hayes, 2004

¹⁵ Australian Human Rights Commission (2008). *Sexual Harassment: Serious Business*. Sydney: Australian Human Rights Commission. p.1.

¹⁶ Mayhew, C., & Chappell, D. (2001). [Occupational violence: Types, reporting patterns, and variations between health sectors. New South Wales Government, Taskforce on Prevention and Management of Violence in the Health Workplace: Discussion Papers](http://bit.ly/1SNMsDS) (<http://bit.ly/1SNMsDS>). See also Murray, S., & Powell, A. (2007). Family violence prevention using workplaces as sites of intervention. *Research and practice in Human resource management*, 15(2), 62-74.

¹⁷ See Murray, S., & Powell, A. (2007). Family violence prevention using workplaces as sites of intervention. *Research and practice in Human resource management*, 15(2), 62-74.

place where the abuser knows where she can be found.¹⁸ For example, in a recent survey completed by over 3,600 union members in Australia, (where 81 percent of respondents were female), 30 percent reported having personally experienced intimate partner violence.¹⁹ Among those who had experienced intimate partner violence in the last 12 months, 19 percent (or nearly one in five), reported that the violence directly impacted them at work, for example through abusive phone calls, emails and/or their abuser physically coming to the workplace.²⁰

While, in general, acts of physical assault rarely occur on site, workplaces can also be impacted by intimate partner violence in less direct ways. Even if physical violence does not occur at the workplace itself, perpetrator behaviours may impact an employee's ability to perform their work, such as a partner or ex-partner destroying work taken home, inflicting injuries or making them late for meetings.²¹ There is also a growing recognition of the reciprocal relationship between work and family life "...with the effects of one sphere positively or negatively influencing the other".²² A victim of intimate partner violence may also experience a broad range of physical, emotional and psychological consequences including physical injury, depression, anxiety and low self-esteem, all of which can adversely impact upon their work, whether through reduced concentration, time taken off work to attend court or doctors appointments or resulting in them leaving their job.²³ Victims of family violence may experience violence while at work, for example, through harassing phone calls, violent attacks and stalking.²⁴

Over the past fifteen years, research has been conducted on violence against women in both the Victorian context and nationally, particularly around the health costs of, and community attitudes towards, such violence. In addition to the direct impacts of violence on victims, this body of research has shown that there are also serious social costs of violence against women for the broader Victorian community. Research commissioned by VicHealth has found that family violence is the leading contributor to death, disability, and illness in Victorian women aged 15 to 44 years, contributing more than other risk factors, such as smoking and obesity.²⁵ In addition, the annual cost of intimate partner violence to the Australian economy has been estimated at \$13.6 billion including; health related costs, lost productivity, legal system expenditure, provision of emergency accommodation and other costs.²⁶

¹⁸ Johnson, P.R., & Gardner, S. (1999). Domestic violence and the workplace: Developing a company response. *Journal of Management Development*, 18(7), 590-596.

¹⁹ McFerran, L. (2011). *Safe at Home, Safe at Work? National Domestic Violence and the Workplace Survey (2011)*. Sydney: Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse and Centre for Gender Related Violence Studies, University of New South Wales: page 6.

²⁰ McFerran, L. (2011).

²¹ Swanberg, J., Logan, TK., & Macke, C. (2005). Intimate partner violence, employment, and the workplace. Consequences and future directions. *Trauma, Violence & Abuse*, 6(4), 286-312.

²² Swanberg, et al. (2005), p.286.

²³ Karamally, L. (2004). Companies try to bring domestic violence issues into the open. *Workforce Management*, 83(9), 60; Sherve, M. (2004). Employer response important in dealing with domestic abuse. *Business Insurance*, 38(35), 4.

²⁴ Swanberg, et al. (2005).

²⁵ VicHealth. (2004). *The health costs of violence: Measuring the burden of disease caused by intimate partner violence. A summary of findings*. Melbourne: Victorian Health Promotion Foundation.

²⁶ Commonwealth of Australia (2009). *The Cost of Violence Against Women and Their Children. The National Council to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children*. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia.

While violence against women thus represents a substantial cost to the community generally, there is also a direct business case for involvement in preventing and responding to violence against women. Research has estimated that the economic costs to the Australian business and corporate sector alone make up \$1.5 billion per annum, with recent figures calculating the direct cost to employers in staff absenteeism, lost productivity, replacement staff (including training) costs, and misused workplace resources at \$465 million.²⁷ The potential benefits to workplaces, then, in implementing programs and policies to prevent violence against women include both direct and indirect economic benefits. Direct benefits include increased productivity and decreased costs in relation to leave and staff replacement, as well as indirect benefits such as being identified as an employer of choice who shows social responsibility and provides community leadership. By being aware of intimate partner violence issues and having prevention strategies in place, employers can also better ensure that they are meeting equal opportunity and anti-discrimination requirements, as well as their duty of care in ensuring a safe work environment.²⁸ Importantly, a workplace may also be one of few sites where women can seek assistance and support, as it is a place where she is away from her abuser. Thus, workplaces are an important site for policies, programs and strategies directed at the prevention of violence against women.

Strategies and activities in the workplace and other organisations addressing violence against women can be directed in one of three main ways: Responding to violence that is already occurring, preventing violence against women, and/or promoting gender equity and respect. These are each addressed in the following discussion in turn.

Responding to violence against women in the workplace

Workplaces and organisations can play a direct role in reducing the risk of existing partner violence against women escalating, and preventing the physical, psychological and social harms that may result. Sometimes referred to as ‘tertiary prevention’, this might include for example, supporting individual staff and managers to (1) *recognise* the signs that an employee might be experiencing violence from a partner (2) *respond* appropriately to a disclosure of violence by believing the person, and (3) *referring* them to an appropriate service and/or to report their experience. Similarly, individual bystander action might involve confronting a perpetrator of violence about their behaviour and encouraging them to seek assistance to change. Alternately, it might involve co-workers and managers intervening in an observed incident of sexual harassment or abuse in the workplace itself, in order to stop violence from occurring. At the organisational and/or community level it might involve having flexible work policies and additional leave provisions for staff experiencing violence, or making referral information available to staff/members who may be experiencing violence. It is worth noting that policies and programs to respond to incidents of violence are less likely to be effective within an

²⁷ Henderson 2000, Laing & Bobic 2002; Commonwealth of Australia (2009).

²⁸ Johnson, P.R., & Gardner, S. (1999). Domestic violence and the workplace: Developing a company response. *Journal of Management Development*, 18(7), 590-596; Cossack, N., Maingault, A., & Lau, S. (2004). Domestic violence, payback and ‘right to work’. *HR Magazine*, 49(2), 41-42.

informal workplace culture that condones violence against women, sexist and/or discriminatory behaviour, or accepts gender inequity.

Preventing violence against women in the workplace

Preventing violence against women through workplaces, involves moving further ‘upstream’ than a ‘recognise, respond and refer’ approach as described above. Also known as ‘primary prevention’, these upstream activities work to challenge the underlying contributors to violence and strengthen the conditions that work against violence occurring, such as violence-supportive attitudes, sexist cultures and practices, rigid gender roles and stereotyping. Addressing such cultures and practices in workplaces might involve, for example, individuals’ challenging peers’ and/or colleagues’ sexist remarks or jokes that normalise or condone violence against women; and confronting workplace or other organisational cultures and practices that devalue, exclude and/or marginalise women. Such approaches articulate the connections between gender inequality and sexism (in attitudes, cultures and practices), with the nature and prevalence of violence against women.

Promoting gender equity and cultures of respect

Promoting gender equity and respect takes an even further ‘upstream’ approach to preventing violence against women – by directing efforts at the key ‘big picture’ drivers of violence.

Gender equality refers to *equal treatment* of women and men in laws and policies, and equal access to resources and services within families, communities and society (also known as ‘formal equality’).

Gender equity refers to fairness and justice in the *distribution of benefits* and responsibilities between women and men. It often requires tailored programs and policies to address existing inequalities (also known as ‘substantive equality’).²⁹

It is impossible for formal equality for women to be achieved, while normative and practical barriers continue to exist, in turn preventing substantive equality. A clear example can be seen in responses to sexual harassment. Formal laws and policies exist to address and prevent sexual harassment in Australian workplaces. Nonetheless, 1 in 3 women report experiencing sexual harassment, and many do not seek formal responses to address this harm.³⁰ The Australian Human Rights Commission has undertaken extensive research into this area, finding that only 1 in 5 victims of sexual harassment make a formal report. Most importantly, approximately one-

²⁹ World Health Organization (2006). WHO Multi-country study on women’s health and domestic violence against women. Initial results on prevalence, health outcomes and women’s responses (summary report). Geneva: World Health Organization.

³⁰ This compares to less than 9% of men; Australian Human Rights Commission (2012). Working without fear: Results of the sexual harassment national telephone survey 2012. Sydney: Australian Human Rights Commission.

third (29%) of those who make a formal report or complaint experience negative consequences as a result. According to the Australian Human Rights Commission:

These consequences included being transferred to another location, changes in shifts, resignation, dismissal, demotion, being disciplined, victimisation, being ostracised or ignored by colleagues, being labelled a trouble-maker and other negative consequences.³¹

In short, it is informal cultures (or social norms) and practices within workplaces that prevent many women from accessing more formal measures. Indeed while many workplaces and organisations are required to report on formal gender equity compliance, it is the informal cultures and practices that are often most influential for individuals in these settings, and the most challenging to address. The table below seeks to represent the distinctions between the three ways workplaces can address VAW (see Table 1). The first model focuses on responding to violence, the second preventing violence against women, and the third promoting gender equity. Each section explains which areas are most commonly focused on and gives some examples of the activities designed to address these areas.

This is not to suggest that a combination of activities, drawn from several or all of the models detailed below cannot exist simultaneously in the one workplace or organisational setting. Indeed, the strongest prevention approaches may well be those that incorporate activities from all three models (explored further in Section 4). This is because the *prevention* of violence against women - while conceptually distinct from *responding* - is often blurred in practice, with the prevalence of violence in our community such that any efforts at prevention activities are highly likely to include individuals who have direct experience as either victims or perpetrators. As such, it is good and ethical practice to ensure that in any setting where primary prevention activities are to be undertaken, there are policies, procedures and people who can respond appropriately to disclosures and provide referral and/or remedy (tertiary prevention), should the need arise.

³¹ Australian Human Rights Commission (2012), p.44.

Table 1: Response, Prevention & Promoting Gender Equity: Complementary Models for Change

Model	Area of focus	Example Activities
Responding to Violence	Knowledge / Attitudes	Awareness-raising communications across organisation about the extent and nature of intimate partner violence and how to support staff who may be experiencing it. Leadership active in speaking about intimate partner violence. Support/referral Information for potential victims and perpetrators made available throughout the workplace.
	Behaviours / Informal Culture / Practices	Managers and key contact staff trained to recognise the signs of family violence, respond appropriately to disclosures, and refer to services.
	Structures / Formal Policies / Procedures	Family Violence Leave Provisions , and Flexible Work Policy & Safety Planning in addition to legislative requirements (e.g. Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth), and Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cth)).
Preventing Violence Against Women	Knowledge / Attitudes	Awareness-raising communications across organisation about the extent and nature of violence against women, and the connection between sexism, rigid gender-roles and gender stereotyping in supporting violence against women. Leadership active in speaking about violence against women, and challenging sexist cultures and practices within workplaces.
	Behaviours / Informal Culture / Practices	Managers and key contact staff trained in recognising and responding to sexism and discriminatory or exclusive gendered practices. Staff trained in taking pro-social action as bystanders when they witness sexism and discriminatory or exclusive gendered practices.
	Structures / Formal Policies / Procedures	Employee Codes of Conduct and/or Values Statements commit to intolerance of sexism, discrimination and violence against women, in addition to meeting legislative requirements (e.g. Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth), and Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cth)).
Promoting Gender Equity & Respect	Attitudes / Norms	Awareness-raising communications across organisation about the foundations and causes of gender inequality, sexism, discrimination, unconscious gender bias and promoting respectful relationships. Leadership active in speaking about valuing females and males equally, promoting the same rights, opportunities and rewards across the organisation including women's equal participation in decision-making and pay structures.
	Behaviours / Informal Culture / Practices	Managers are trained to recognise and address unconscious gender bias in workplace decision-making and practice. Leadership training for women to encourage and promote women in leadership positions.
	Structures / Formal Policies / Procedures	Reporting to Workplace Gender Equality Agency. Building a gender equality strategy in consultation with staff. Review of hiring and promotion policies and practices to attract and retain quality women employees.

3. Workplaces and Organisations as Key Sites for Prevention

While much violence against women occurs in private life, it is now widely recognised that women's experiences of violence, even if occurring in the home, impact on the workplace in a range of ways, including lost productivity and staff turnover (as discussed above). Indeed, there are four key rationales for engaging workplaces and organisations as key sites for the prevention of violence against women.

Because violence in private life affects public life. Violence against women, even when occurring in private life affects workplaces in many costly ways, including: increasing absenteeism (employees not coming to work); increasing staff turnover (employees leaving their jobs); decreasing productivity; and decreased job satisfaction and staff morale.³² Indeed, violence against women is estimated to cost Australia \$13.6 billion per year, and \$465 million of this is borne by employers.³³

Because employers have a legal responsibility to create safe work environments. Sexual harassment, discrimination and bullying continue to occur in Australian workplaces and employers have a legal responsibility to take proactive measures to address these issues. Workplaces are already required to comply with anti-discrimination, sexual harassment legislation (e.g. Sex Discrimination Act 1984 *Cth*, and Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 *Cth*), and other relevant health and safety regulations.

Because positive workplace cultures that promote staff wellbeing, equity and respect are less costly and more productive. Creating a culture where employees feel confident to report and/or take bystander action if they see or hear about sexism, harassment, discrimination or violence in the workplace, can also result in a culture where employees feel more supported, have more job satisfaction and improved overall staff morale.

Because workplaces are an influential part of our lives and our communities. People invest a lot of time and energy at work and in their communities, and these settings can either be helpful or a hindrance in society more broadly. As a result organisations, not just individuals, can be thought of as either passive or pro-social bystanders to violence against women. Indeed, recent research indicates that the Victorian community expects workplaces and organisations to play a leadership role and do more to promote respect and gender equality.³⁴

Abridged History of Workplace & Organisational Approaches

It is important to recognise the *20-year history* in Australia of government, non-government and statutory body research, funded projects and policy initiatives for preventing violence

³² See Murray, S., & Powell, A. (2007). Family violence prevention using workplaces as sites of intervention. *Research and practice in Human resource management*, 15(2), 62-74.

³³ Commonwealth of Australia (2009). *The Cost of Violence Against Women and Their Children. The National Council to Reduce Violence Against Women and their Children*. Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia.

³⁴ See VicHealth (2012). *More than ready: Bystander action to prevent violence against women in the Victorian community*. Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, Melbourne; The majority of Victorian respondents surveyed (98.7%) expect employers to ensure that women are provided with the same opportunities as men and to ensure that none of their female employees are treated unfairly or harassed (98%). Over 9 in 10 (94.3%) also agreed that employers should take a leadership role in educating their workforce about respectful relationships between men and women.

against women through workplaces. The table below is not intended as a comprehensive list of all the programs and resources that have been developed over the last 20 years, rather, it provides an indicative overview of the rich history of research, policy and program development in the specific area of workplace and organisational approaches to preventing violence against women that has been built over this time.

Table 2: A Brief History of Workplaces Preventing Violence Against Women

Year	History of workplace prevention
1997	Domestic Violence Service, Gold Coast and the Domestic Violence Resource Centre, Brisbane jointly developed an Information Kit for employers entitled <i>Domestic Violence: A Workplace Response</i> . The strategy included activities directed at improving policies and procedures as well as training for supervisors and human resource personnel.
1998	<i>Freedom from Fear Campaign Against Domestic Violence</i> (Government of Western Australia) included a guide for employers, managers and supervisors that offered suggestions and information about support services, promoting access to employee assistance programs and creating a supportive work environment.
2000	Building on their prior work, the Domestic Violence Service, Gold Coast developed a revised <i>Domestic Violence in the Workplace: Information & Training Manual</i> .
2001	Commonwealth Government commenced <i>Partnerships Against Domestic Violence: A Business Approach</i> initiative - encouraging businesses to take an interest in family violence as a community issue and play a stronger role in its prevention.
2002	<i>Southern Family Life</i> partnered with male-dominated workplaces to provide family violence prevention. The model worked with different levels of management (CEO, management/supervisors, and ground staff), provided education and awareness forums for managers and supervisors, as well as direct support for employees at the workplace, including referrals for individuals for additional counselling or support.
2004	<i>Victorian Community Council Against Violence</i> (Department of Justice & Regulation, Victoria) researched models of domestic violence workplace prevention strategies, which resulted in the publication of <i>Family Violence is a Workplace Issue: Workplace Models to Prevent Family Violence</i> .
2005	Commonwealth Government launched the next stage of <i>Partnerships Against Domestic Violence – A Business Approach</i> , including resources and a seminar series.
2005	The Australian Football League launched the <i>Respect & Responsibility Program</i> in November 2005 to address the issue of violence against women.
2007	<i>Take A Stand</i> pilot funded by VicHealth, delivered by Women’s Health Victoria (2007 to 2012, see Women’s Health Victoria, 2011).
2008	<i>Fair Game Respect Matters</i> program was funded by VicHealth and introduced as a pilot program in the Northern Football League (NFL) in AFL Victoria. The program complements the AFL’s <i>Respect and Responsibility</i> program.

Year	History of workplace prevention
2010	<i>Centre for Ethical Leadership</i> (CEL) established at Ormond College, The University of Melbourne. Since its establishment, the CEL's major research project has been the <i>Gender Equality Project</i> , a comprehensive research & training initiative, in partnership with a network of industry partners and associates: 'To produce a significant and sustainable improvement in the gender balance in leadership roles of participating organisations'.
2010	The <i>Centre for Gender Related Violence Studies</i> at the University of New South Wales was funded by the Commonwealth Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations for an eighteen month project, named 'Domestic Violence Workplace Rights and Entitlements'. The slogan of the Project being ' <i>Safe at Home, Safe at Work</i> '.
2010	<i>Male Champions of Change</i> established by Sex Discrimination Commissioner Elizabeth Broderick.
2011	<i>White Ribbon Australia - Workplace Accreditation Program</i> , received pilot funding from the Australian Government Department of Social Services, to recognise workplaces taking active steps to prevent and respond to violence against women, accrediting them as a <i>White Ribbon Workplace</i> (June 2012 to December 2013).
2012	<i>Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 (Cth)</i> , replaced the Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999 (Cth), introduced requirements for employers (with over 100 employees) to promote gender equality in the workplace and to report each year on gender equity indicators. Also established the <i>Workplace Gender Equality Agency</i> (WEGA) and the office of the Director of Workplace Gender Equality.
2012	<i>VicHealth</i> funded <i>Creating Healthy Workplaces</i> initiative, which included a 3-year pilot project with YMCA Victoria - Y Respect Gender Project.
2012	The AFL launched a new Educational DVD and Trainers' Manual, <i>Taking the Tackle: Respect is for Everyone</i> .
2013	Amendments to the <i>Fair Work Act (Cth)</i> introduced the right for those experiencing family violence or supporting an immediate family member affected by violence, to request a flexible working arrangement.
2013	<i>Act@Work: Challenging sexism, discrimination and violence against women and children</i> was developed by Women's Health Grampians (WHG) and funded by the Victorian State Government, Department of Justice and Regulation (3-year project 2013-2015).
2015	<i>Australia's CEO Challenge</i> (with support from Government of Queensland) developed a new e-learning package to support workplaces to respond to domestic violence: <i>Recognise, Respond, Refer: Domestic Violence and the Workplace</i> .
2015	<i>Our Watch Sports Engagement Program</i> , funded through the Australian Government's \$1million Sports Grants Bank, awarded grants to the National Rugby League (NRL), Australian Football League (AFL), Netball Australia and Australian Rugby Union (ARU) to prevent violence against women and their children.
2015	After two further rounds of workplace recruits (in 2014 and 2015), the <i>White Ribbon Australia - Workplace Accreditation Program</i> has accredited over 37 workplaces.

What might ‘promising practice’ in workplaces and organisations look like?

The international and national research evidence regarding design and implementation of violence against women prevention suggest a number of features for effective practice that are transferable across different settings and prevention approaches, including workplace approaches.³⁵

For example, in their 2009 review Casey and Lindhorst identify six key features of prevention programming that can be adapted to program design in a workplace or organisational setting:

- Comprehensiveness or a ‘whole-of-organisation’ approach: utilising multiple strategies designed to initiate change at *multiple levels* within an organisation (e.g. individual, colleagues and management), and for *multiple outcomes* (e.g. staff knowledge and attitudes, formal policy and practices, as well as informal culture and behaviours);
- Staff engagement: collaborating with workplace/organisational members in the process of identifying targets for change and designing change strategies;
- Contextualised programming: designing intervention strategies that are consistent with the broader social, economic and political context of the workplace/organisation;
- Theory-based: grounding strategy design in a sound theoretical rationale;
- Health and strengths promotion: simultaneously working to enhance existing workplace/organisational resources and strengths while addressing risk factors; and
- Addressing structural factors: targeting structural and underlying causes of social problems for change rather than focusing only on individual behaviour or the ‘symptoms’ of larger problems.

³⁵ For useful reviews see e.g.: Casey, E. A., & Lindhorst, T. P. (2009). Toward a multi-level, ecological approach to the primary prevention of sexual assault prevention in peer and community contexts. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse, 10*(2), 91-114; Dyson, S., & Flood, M. (2008). *Building cultures of respect and non-violence*. Melbourne: Australian Football League and VicHealth; Albury, K., Carmody, M., Evers, C., & Lumby, C. (2011). Playing by the rules: researching, teaching and learning sexual ethics with young men in the Australian National Rugby League. *Sex Education, 11*(3), 339-351; Carmody, M., Evans, S., Krogh, C., Flood, M., Heenan, M., & Ovenden, G. (2009). *Framing best practice: National Standards for the primary prevention of sexual assault through education*, National Sexual Assault Prevention Education Project for NASASV. University of Western Sydney, Australia; and Carmody, M. (2014). Sexual Violence Prevention Educator Training. In Henry, N., & Powell, A. (eds). *Preventing Sexual Violence: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Overcoming a Rape Culture*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, UK.

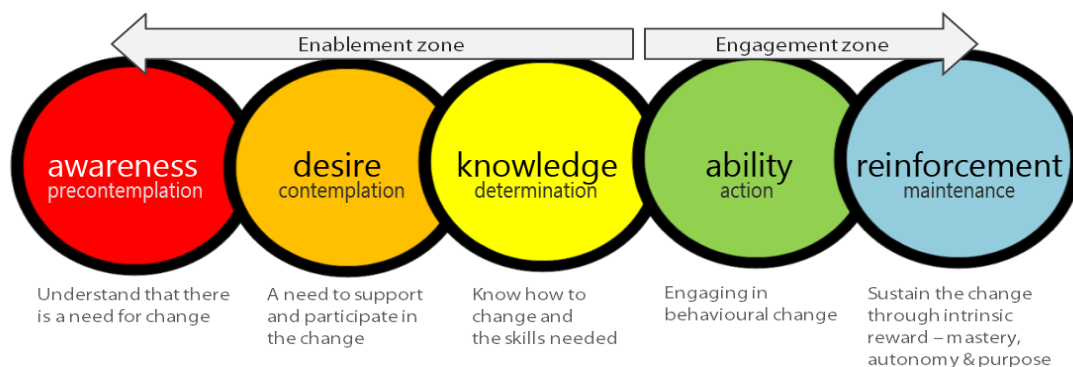
Conducting an organisational gender audit, or ‘taking the pulse’ is one way to identify the structural and cultural factors in a workplace or organisation that may either facilitate or work against gender equity policies, programs and information. The audit aims to assess:

- What *equity measures* are available and what they indicate about women’s representation across management levels, women’s involvement in high-profile organisational projects and pay equity?
- What *policies, procedures, and formal reporting mechanisms* are there to address violence, bullying, sexual harassment and discrimination in the organisation?
- What informal culture and/or support among different levels of *management* is there for reporting incidents, and taking action as bystanders?
- What informal *employee* attitudes, norms, cultures and/or support is there for reporting incidents, and taking action as bystanders?³⁶

Enabling Workplaces and Organisations: An Organisational Change Approach

An Organisational Change approach suggests that change is a process, and that at any given time organisations as a whole are likely to be at different levels of readiness and motivation for change. Acknowledging this is important, as organisations at different points in the stages of change are likely to benefit from different types of resources, support and interventions. The five stages of change included below: pre-contemplation, contemplation, determination, action and maintenance assist to help identify the level of readiness within an organisation (see Figure 1: Organisation Stages of Change). Each stage includes a collection of identifying factors, which are discussed in detail below.

Figure 1: Organisational Stages of Change³⁷



³⁶ Adapted from: InterAction (2010). *The Gender Audit Handbook: A tool for organizational self-assessment and transformation*. Washington DC: InterAction.org.

³⁷ Adapted from: Prochaska, J. M., Prochaska, J. O., & Levesque, D. A. (2001). A transtheoretical approach to changing organizations. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research*, 28(4), 247-261.

The 'awareness pre-contemplation' stage is the first stage of change where knowledge and awareness is raised about the need for and benefits of change. Members of the organisation will consider how the change is consistent with their own goals and values, and may begin to experience negative emotions about what will happen if the organisational change does not occur.

The 'desire contemplation' stage is reached when a specific organisational change has been identified as the appropriate one for the organisation. In this stage members of the organisation can reflect on how the change will positively impact their social and physical environment. Additionally, there is consideration amongst individuals about how their identity, happiness, and success can be enhanced by the change.

In the 'knowledge determination' stage, individuals believe in their ability to help make the change happen and are committed to doing so. In particular, those in positions of leadership believe in and are actively involved in making the process of organisational change successful. This stage involves demonstrated commitment from the organisation's leaders (both formal leaders and opinion leaders) to the successful implementation of organisational change.

The 'ability action' stage is about facilitating change within the organisation through empowering individuals to participate in the change. This involves intrinsic and extrinsic rewards for new ways of working and when important milestones in the organisational change are reached and also provides ongoing training for employees who are developing new skills and gives employees time off from other duties to get involved in the organisational change. This stage includes changing organisational rules and policies to support the organisational change.

The 'reinforcement maintenance' stage involves an internalisation of the benefits of the organisational change; the belief that members of the organisation have benefited from the change. Here, new behaviours and cognitions are substituted for the old ways of working, and the organisational environment is restructured to remove cues for non-participation and instead adds cues for participation in the change.

It is important to consider the stages of change within a workplace or organisation when delivering VAW prevention programs and initiatives. Acknowledging that stage-matched interventions lead to successful implementations remains significant. This was reflected in the stakeholder interviews, with a clear trend emerging that different organisations have very different *capacities, readiness, and ways-in* to prevention work. For example, it became apparent that for some workplaces engaging in a discrete project of raising awareness of family violence and improving workplace policy and responses to potential victims of family violence (such as through the White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation Program), became a *way-in* to progressing further workplace changes in policy and practice to promote gender

equity. Alternately for other workplaces, such as in some corporate environments, gender equity in relation to retaining skilled women in senior positions and leadership was a *way-in* to a broader program of change that connected gender equity, respect and the prevention of violence against women. This confirms that when assessing workplace readiness an understanding of the commitment to and engagement in change from all levels of the organisation is necessary.³⁸ It also reiterates the need to *individualise* change interventions to match employees' *readiness to change*. Most importantly, when considering the delivery and creation of prevention programs in workplaces from an organisational change perspective, assessing organisational capacity and readiness to change is a vital component of good practice. These findings, additional key themes and a discussion of the program models from our stakeholder consultations are included in the following section.

³⁸ Fullan, M. (2001). *Leading in a Culture of Change*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

4. Primary Prevention in Practice: Program Models and Key Case Studies

While there is a 20-year history of government and non-government programs for preventing violence against women through workplaces in Australia, much of the recent practice is yet to be published or publicly available. In order to document this work and distill key program components of promising practice in the sector, consultations were undertaken with existing workplace and organisational programs. It is important to note that the consultations are not representative of all Australian workplaces and settings as this is beyond the scope of the report. However, consultations were undertaken with workplace and organisational programs in corporate settings, community sports and recreation, local councils, secondary and tertiary educational settings and male-dominated industries and workplaces and may give an indication of emerging promising practice in workplace and organisational approaches to the prevention of violence against women.

The consultations identified different models of prevention programs in workplaces and a number of key themes emerged from these interviews. This section provides a discussion of the key themes and illustrative case studies that emerged from interviews and documents promising practice in workplace programs to prevent violence against women and promote gender equity.

Workplaces as ‘fluid’

Most stakeholders identified the need to break down the idea of workplaces as homogenous. The diversity of program models and work in the sector captured in the following case studies clearly indicates the heterogeneity of workplaces and that a one-size-fits-all approach is not suitable for the work, nor is it ideal. This suggests the need for diverse and different models for prevention programs in workplaces, with programs tailored to meet the differing resource and capacity needs of specific contexts and situations.

Factors for consideration include:

- Workplace sector (for example, government, non-government, industry and corporate contexts and the need to develop programs according to context);
- Workplace size (for example, small, medium and big businesses and resource constraints, including issues in the workplace and what can reasonably be achieved);
- Program models for regional and rural areas; and
- Different working environments (for example, manual work/‘blue-collar’ workplaces; office or professional environments/‘white-collar’ workplaces; hospitality and other service-oriented workplaces; skilled, semi-skilled and un-skilled workers and the fluidity between manual and professional workers within a workplace).

Successful prevention programs in workplaces need to be able to speak to workers’ lives and personal experiences. They also need to recognise and adapt not only to the *fluidity of* workplaces but also *fluidity in* workplaces as well as recognising and making

accommodations for the possible range of resource and other constraints businesses and organisations may face in developing and implementing a prevention program. The following program model developed by Women’s Health Grampians is demonstrative of the need for workplace programs to recognise and adapt to the fluid nature of workplaces as well as responding to the varied resource and other constraints workplaces may face. The Act@Work program developed by Women’s Health Grampians provides an example of promising practice in primary prevention programming, notably for comprehensiveness or a whole-of-organisation approach. Currently implemented in regional Victoria, this workplace program has been designed to adapt to differing sectors and working environments for predominantly small and medium sized businesses and utilises multiple strategies to initiate change at multiple levels within an organisation and for multiple outcomes.³⁹

Case Study: Act@Work (Women’s Health Grampians)⁴⁰

Background

Women’s Health Grampians (WHG) have developed the Act@Work program with funding from the Victorian Government Department of Justice. The program engages with workplaces across the Central Highlands Region. Act@Work is a prevention program that addresses the underlying causes of violence against women and aims to challenge community attitudes and practices that support violence against women. It uses the active bystanders model and is ‘solution focused’ in presenting program participants with possible pathways for responding to family violence. The program is designed to increase individual and workplace knowledge of sexism, discrimination and violence against women. The program encourages the individual to understand the impacts of these behaviours on the individual and draws on their workplace skills to assist them to take effective action and intervene safely. The program is designed to work alongside local businesses as they develop their own individual organisational responses to preventing violence against women in the workplace.

Before the program is implemented, awareness-raising activities are carried out during community forums. These forums will often include high profile speakers and are targeted at community leaders and management/CEOs of potential project partners. In addition to key speakers, the forums may include survivor narratives that focus on the ways in which violence was a workplace issue for them. For example, the impact of family violence on work performance, the role of support from coworkers and management responses or the inability to raise the issue of family violence in workplace, and how this made a difference or may have made a difference for them.

³⁹ Casey, E.A., & Lindhorst, T.P. (2009). Toward a multi-level, ecological approach to the primary prevention of sexual assault prevention in peer and community contexts. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse, 10*(2), 91-114.

⁴⁰ The case study was compiled from an interview with Women’s Health Grampians (interviewed by Anastasia Powell and Larissa Sandy) and the Act@Work Action Manual (WHG, 2015). Women’s Health Grampians. (2015). *Act@Work Action Manual*. Ballarat: Women’s Health Grampians.

The program

The program logic is based on a community development conceptual framework and uses the WHO healthy workplaces model. It is theory-based and shaped around four key areas of action:

1. Workplace culture: leadership, policies and procedures, culture;
2. Physical environment: working environment and setting;
3. Community connections: partnerships and links to the community; and
4. Health and wellbeing opportunities: information and resources to support workers.

To prevent violence against women, Act@Work takes a whole of organisation approach, with planning activities mapped against these four quadrants. This process is central in developing a flexible delivery model and tailored workplace programs. The program applies a primary through to tertiary prevention framework. It employs primary prevention activities with 'bystander' training and early interventions such as developing workplace policies and procedures on VAW and staff training to assist with identifying and responding to VAW, victim support, counselling and other referral services.

Implementation of the program

The program is implemented over a 6 to 12 month timeframe, with five key stages:

Stage one: Commitment. Organisations make a leadership commitment to Act@Work and sign the Act@Work Agreement. This phase includes the commitment of workplace resources, such as the formation of an Act@Work action group and a baseline staff survey. The baseline survey helps to identify levels of understanding and program entry point for workplaces. For example, whether the workplace is at the stage of raising basic awareness or the acceptance or action stage.

Stage two: Consultation. Formation of Act@Work action group comprised of management representatives, HR staff and ground level staff. Staff engagement is key to this process with the action group involved in identifying targets for change and designing change strategies. This group is responsible for the carriage of Act@Work in their organisation and ensures that the program is not reliant on one key figure for organisational commitment as well as facilitating local ownership of the program. External facilitators from WHG work with the action group to identify key internal or external stakeholders and build the group's skills around PVAW through training sessions. The action group training is carried out in small groups, with the sessions delivered a week apart in order to allow time for cognitive transformations. The action group are also responsible for carrying out an organisational needs assessment.

Stage three: Planning. The action group develop an Act@Work Action Plan detailing steps necessary to facilitate organisational change, a communication plan and sustainability of the program after 12 months. This plan is formally signed off by management/CEO and is a key way the program addresses structural factors within workplaces.

Stage four: Act. Organisations implement their Action Plan. This phase includes the delivery of Act@Work training and workshops with the delivery model including co-facilitation with members of the action group and cross-gender training teams from WHG.

Stage five: Sustain. Organisations undertake ongoing actions to prevent VAW. This phase marks the end of the organisation's engagement with program facilitators based at WHG.

Workplaces are provided with tools and resources including a DIY manual, template documents, training and workshops and have access to support staff based at WHG.

Key points:

The program is structured around key internal and external people.
The program framework clearly delineates and employs a stages of change approach.
A community-based model encourages local ownership of the program.

Encouraging local ownership

Stakeholders indicated the need to encourage local ownership to ensure sustainability of the program once engagement and involvement of an external organisation ends. Some stakeholders noted that it was important to encourage local ownership of PVAW programs with this being an important factor in facilitating attitudinal and organisational change. This was particularly so with programs that made efforts to address the underlying causes of violence against women and transform attitudes, beliefs and informal cultural practices. Other stakeholders noted that fostering the idea of program ownership was essential in ensuring program stability. An example of promising practice in designing programs around building local ownership is the Women's Health Grampians Act@Work program, discussed above, as well as organisational efforts at embedding PVAW programs through dedicated PVAW officers, which is discussed in the following case study drawn from work undertaken by Darebin City Council.

Case study: Darebin Says No to Family Violence (Darebin City Council)⁴¹**Background**

Darebin City Council has a long history of working on family violence, with the Council's engagement stretching back to 2002 with work on the Darebin Community Safety Plan in which the prevention of violence against women was identified as an issue of concern for local governments (Merkes, 2004).

The Darebin City Council preventing violence against women and promoting gender equity workplace program was introduced in 2014 (Darebin City Council, 2014). The program was established as part of the Council's efforts to implement the Staff Family Violence Policy (adopted by the Council in 2010) and strengthen workplace practices and supports to preventing violence against women and influence individual and workplace behaviours and practices.

⁴¹ The case study was compiled from an interview with Darebin City Council (interviewed by Anastasia Powell and Larissa Sandy), and publicly available information including: the Darebin City Council Gender Equity Strategy and Action Plan and Preventing Violence Against Women Strategy and Action Plan; Darebin City Council. (2014). *Health and Wellbeing* (<http://bit.ly/1JJCQrC>) accessed 23 August 2015; Merkes, M. (2004). The Darebin Family Violence Working Group: a partnership approach, *Australian Journal of Primary Health*, 10(2), 104-11.

The program

The Darebin City Council workplace program works across the prevention spectrum and incorporates primary, secondary and tertiary prevention efforts. The program adopts a gender equity and inclusion lens and takes a whole-of-organisation approach. Utilising a whole-of-organisation approach, the Darebin City Council program is designed to embed PVAW and gender equity work across the Council and employs a 'peer leaders' model in addition to the active bystanders model in order to strengthen organisational processes that prevent violence against women, support staff experiencing family violence and create a healthy workplace.

Implementation of the program

The Council workplace program is implemented across the Council with the assistance of a dedicated PVAW Officer. In identifying workplace cultures, attitudes and practices, focus groups were carried out with female staff and a needs assessment was carried out to gauge general knowledge levels and potential barriers and enablers to change.

Implementation of the program includes primary prevention activities such as strengthening of the staff induction process. This activity included the development of resources including the Staff Family Violence Policy Video, information sheets for staff induction packs and the intranet. Additional capacity building efforts include training programs for new Council staff designed to identify appropriate workplace behaviour and conduct. Bystander training was also carried out with staff to help develop skills in identifying appropriate behaviour in the workplace and workplace attitudes that contribute to a culture of gender inequality. Up-skilling includes further training, and refresher training for staff on procedures in referral, safety planning and recognising and responding to family violence. The Council workplace training programs focus on developing skills that can be applied across Council and taking concrete actions to prevent violence against women. The training is provided to all levels of staff, from management and leadership staff to those at the ground level.

Specific training and development activities and resources have been created for staff at each level of the organisational hierarchy. The programs are co-delivered with Women's Health in the North (WHIN) and more recently No to Violence. The program is embedded across the Council through a 'peer leaders' model, in which a key person is identified in each program area across the organisation. The peer leader acts as a point of contact and as a key figure facilitating change. This 'champion' helps ensure the work is ongoing and supported across the Council.

Key points

Embedding the work with a dedicated PVAW officer enables primary prevention work across the organisation. Peer leaders are identified and supported at all levels and in all areas of the organisation, which further enhances PVAW work.

Training and delivery is targeted for each level of the organisation and includes work on appropriate messaging for different levels of the organisation and staff capacities and abilities in order to create and sustain change.

Getting traction: picking the right entry point for the organisation

Stakeholders identified different entry points into the development of a workplace program. For some organisations, workplace activities or programs on the prevention of violence against women enabled their organisation to begin addressing issues related to violence against women and from this they transitioned over time to considerations about gender equity. For other organisations, responding to family violence was another way into the issue. These organisations found it more comfortable to discuss violence against women

and prevention activities, while conversations about gender equity were initially difficult and uncomfortable. Other stakeholders reported experiencing the reverse, that the organisation was more prepared and willing to talk about promoting gender equity, but struggled with discussions about PVAW and responding to family violence, which were experienced as deeply uncomfortable and confrontational issues for them. It is important to know the right entry point into the conversation for organisations – for some this may be PVAW, for others this may be promoting gender equity. This situational knowledge is essential for program success and uptake and for starting with where an organisation is at, and what they are comfortable with and it means that, by necessity, workplace programs not only need to be long-term but also view VAW on a continuum and be able to work across the spectrum: from responding to family violence, to PVAW and gender equity, and vice-versa. Further, picking the right entry point into the organisation may also lead to contextualised programming and the development of intervention strategies consistent with the broader social, economic and political context of the workplace or organisation.⁴²

In ‘getting traction’, it is important to recognise the right entry point into the issue of VAW for the organisation. Clearly, in certain environments, organisations may be more open to PVAW as a way to facilitate whole-of-organisation change, while in other contexts the right entry point may be promoting gender equity. In responses to this issue, most stakeholders commented that the ability to pitch the program to other people’s understandings and comfort levels is a key factor in program success. Promising practice in the sector means working with organisations to see where they are at and what topics and issues they are comfortable with and slowly working together to transform attitudes and facilitate organisational and cultural change. For example, stakeholders discussed long-term engagements with businesses they worked in partnership with, and some of these relationships may span several years before an organisation is ready to undertake workplace programming (see, for example, the case study on CEO Challenge, below).⁴³ In one such instance, a partnership was originally brokered more than three years ago by an employee in the organisation who acted as a ‘champion’. After three-years sustained engagement with the business in the form of a local partnership with a women’s refuge, the business has only just finalised a set of workplace policies on family violence. This example highlights some of the key ingredients in program success and ‘getting traction’: the important role of ‘champions’ in an organisation, working with organisations to gauge where they are on the continuum of approaches to violence against women and what they are comfortable with and slowly working together to transform attitudes and facilitate organisational and cultural change. It is important to note that after three years of sustained engagement this business felt ready to undertake workplace reform and policy change.

⁴² Casey, E.A., & Lindhorst, T.P. (2009). Toward a multi-level, ecological approach to the primary prevention of sexual assault prevention in peer and community contexts. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse, 10*(2), 91-114.

⁴³ Interview with CEO Challenge (interviewed by Anastasia Powell).

Clearly, for this business, the partnership and brokerage model implemented by CEO Challenge has acted as a way into the issue of PVAW and primary prevention activities in their workplace, yet for other businesses and organisations promoting women in leadership may be a way into the issue.⁴⁴

Tailoring the message

Stakeholders commented that some program participants struggled to see the connections between preventing violence against women and gender equity. Specific issues were identified, with some stakeholders commenting more work is needed on developing better messaging to explain the 'causes of causes'. Stakeholders observed that messaging in this area is not clear or is not consistent in making the links and connections between PVAW and gender equity. Stakeholders found the language used to be quite technical and not easy to communicate to diverse audiences. The specific points raised during consultations included work on developing better messaging in relation to:

- The connection between attitudes, gender equity and preventing violence against women;
- How attitudes matter and lead into or connect with behaviours;
- The links between stereotypes and norms and how to connect with incidents of violence;
- The relationship between roles and stereotypes and violence; and
- The actions people can take.

Developing tailored messaging for the organisational context was seen to be a key factor in program success.

Non-confrontational 'points of entry'

During consultations, stakeholders identified the need for the development of additional resources for challenging and changing informal practices and cultures in the workplace, and the community more broadly. Stakeholders identified the need to pay specific attention to the message, that it be non-threatening, non-confrontational and grounded in concrete examples with actions, steps or pathways for action identified at key stages.

Identifying pathways for action is a crucial factor in workplace training with most participants in workplace training programs being moved to act, but many not knowing what they can do. If participants are not provided with this information it may have a negative effect, with some program participants feeling paralysed and unable to act. The steps to be taken need to be realistic, achievable and appropriate to a person's level in the organisation, their existing roles and responsibilities and their ability to effect organisational and attitudinal change.

⁴⁴ Interview with Centre for Ethical Leadership (interviewed by Jessica Findling).

As most of the case studies show, active bystander training is crucial to the work, and in challenging and transforming informal cultures and thus a key to facilitating organisational change. Most importantly, all of the interviewees identified the need to continue developing tools and resources in this area to support their work with ongoing evaluation central to this process, a point discussed further in the next case study.

Case study: Take A Stand Against Domestic Violence⁴⁵

Background

Women's Health Victoria (WHV) initially developed the Take A Stand Against Domestic Violence (Take A Stand) as part of the Working Together Against Violence Project funded by VicHealth. The aim of the Working Together Against Violence Project was to strengthen the capacity of male-dominated workplaces in promoting gender equality and non-violent norms (WHV, 2015). The project was piloted in partnership with Linfox, which presented WHV with the opportunity to deliver a multi-sited workplace program. The pilot was delivered from 2007-2012.

The Take A Stand Against Domestic Violence workplace program is now a user pays service and is designed as a business-wide workplace prevention program that aims to prevent family violence by changing attitudes and behaviours that support violence. Since its inception, the program has undergone several name changes as program participants felt it was important that WHV include the word violence in the program title, with the organisation eventually settling on Take A Stand Against Domestic Violence, being reflective of attitudinal change among program participants and understandings of PVAW.

The program

Take A Stand is a targeted workplace training program designed around three elements: 'to lead, to train and to promote'. The program framework is based on the active bystanders model and aims to assist organisations and employees in identifying comments or actions in the workplace relating to violence against women in order to support them to 'take a stand'. Restrictions regarding funding and resources has led to the adoption of a user pays model and this remains a driving reason behind why WHV now offer a license for the delivery of the program to participating women's health organisations.

⁴⁵ The case study was compiled from an interview with Women's Health Victoria (interviewed by Jessica Findling) and publicly available information including: Women's Health Victoria (WHV). (2015). [Take A Stand Against Domestic Violence](http://bit.ly/1ZZrWSE) (http://bit.ly/1ZZrWSE), accessed 19 December 2015; WHV. (2013). [Take A Stand Against Domestic Violence: It's Everyone's Business](http://bit.ly/1RI3A4j) (http://bit.ly/1RI3A4j) (Brochure). Melbourne: WHV, accessed 19 December 2015; WHV. (2011). [Working together against violence: Final project report](http://bit.ly/1nhEnLt) (http://bit.ly/1nhEnLt). Melbourne: Women's Health Victoria, accessed 20 December 2015; VicHealth. (2012). The Respect, responsibility and equality program: A summary report on five projects that build new knowledge to prevent violence against women. Melbourne: Victorian Health Promotion Foundation.

Implementation of the program

Under the three program elements, Take A Stand works with businesses to:

1. **Lead:** WHV work with the business to gain executive commitment and develop workplace policies;
2. **Train:** Through the pilot program with Linfox and ongoing program evaluations, WHV have developed flexible delivery models for all staff (executive, middle management and entry level staff) on taking a stand against family violence. Managers and HR staff are also provided with training on how to support employees affected by family violence, including the referral process; and
3. **Promote:** Businesses are provided with activities and resources to help raise awareness of family violence, including linking into the White Ribbon Campaign (WHV, 2013).

Central to Take A Stand is the identification of a key resource person within the organisation, who acts as a broker or conduit between WHV and the organisation and works to generate interest in and support for the workplace training program. The general training program is delivered over three 45-minute training workshops with one male and one female co-facilitator. The content of the training is language appropriate for employees and the organisation as a whole, and is delivered based on guided activities and scenarios included in the Take A Stand Training Manual. After extensive program evaluations, the training program continues to be re-developed to allow the adaptation of training materials in order to cater to the diverse training needs of different workplaces. As a result, the content of the program can be tailored to the requirements and resources of the organisation. In addition, the program encourages organisational engagement with the White Ribbon Campaign in order to take a stand against violence against women.

Take A Stand is currently offered as a 'Partner Package' to several other women's health organisations across the state, including Women's Health and Wellbeing Barwon South West and Women's Health Loddon Mallee. The package is a three-year license allowing the organisation the delivery of Take A Stand and support from WHV when needed and is shared via a train-the-trainer package. Ensuring program delivery by other women's health organisations, as well as WHV, has helped safeguard ongoing program sustainability.

Key points

A shared resource for other agencies to gain a license for use and ensure program sustainability.
The use of the bystander model and language appropriately tailored to program participants.
The continual development of the program allowing incorporation of participant feedback and ongoing internal and external evaluation.

Most stakeholders mentioned that a key factor in the success of workplace prevention programs is making a 'business case' by raising awareness and making a case for workplace prevention programs in terms of increased productivity, reduced absenteeism, decreases in staff turnover, improvements in staff health and wellbeing and promoting healthy anti-violence and non-discriminatory workplace cultures as well as paying attention to duty of care and occupational health and safety requirements in the workplace.

In the case of male-dominated workplaces, such as the above example of Women's Health Victoria's partnership with Linfox, which is one of Australia's largest privately owned logistics company, a key part of the workplace prevention program was learning to deliver positive anti-violence messages without making program participants feel threatened. Language usage was a central concern and this became an important component of the workplace program particularly in male-dominated workplaces like Linfox. This is because

male participants may feel immediately confronted with the issue of family violence.⁴⁶ While most stakeholders recognised the need for support across the organisation as essential, at the same time they also recognised that the language used in family violence prevention messages and workplace training needs to be non-threatening in order to facilitate attitudinal and workplace cultural change.

Several stakeholders spoke about the usefulness of an 'active bystanders' approach as a non-confrontational 'way-in' to PVAW and PGE&R initiatives in the workplace. Simply put, a bystander is anybody who becomes aware of a behaviour or situation where violence against women has the potential to occur, is occurring or has occurred.⁴⁷ 'Passive bystander' refers to individuals who observe a situation and fail to intervene or take action in some way; while an 'active bystander' refers to the individual who intervenes or takes action in response to the observed situation. For example, as Jackson Katz, founder of Mentors in Violence Prevention, explains:

A bystander means essentially anyone who plays some role in an act of harassment, abuse, or violence but is neither the perpetrator nor the victim ... it does not imply what action they have taken or failed to take. That requires an adjective to modify the noun, which is why in [Mentors in Violence Prevention] we speak of "empowered" or "proactive" bystanders versus "passive" ones.⁴⁸

There are a number of advantages to the 'active bystander' approach. For example, using bystander approaches to engage a broader audience in an initial conversation about PVAW and PGE&R, may promote greater "readiness for change" or receptivity to prevention messages that can be harnessed by further education and programs.⁴⁹ In other words, rather than addressing program participants as only potential perpetrators or potential victims, one of the principles of a bystander approach to preventing violence against women is to "transcend the limitations of the perpetrator-victim binary"⁵⁰ by providing a more positive role and identity for participants that may in turn decrease resistance, defensiveness, or backlash.⁵¹ When used in this way it is particularly important to frame

⁴⁶ Victorian Community Council Against Violence (VCCAV). (2004). Family Violence IS a Workplace Issue: Workplace Models to Prevent Family Violence. Melbourne: VCCAV, pp. 18-20.

⁴⁷ Potter, S. J., Moynihan, M. M., Stapleton, J. G., & Banyard, V. L. (2009). Empowering bystanders to prevent campus violence against women: A preliminary evaluation of a poster campaign. *Violence Against Women*, 15(1), 106-21.

⁴⁸ Katz, J., Heisterkamp, H. A., & Fleming, W. M. (2011). The social justice roots of the Mentors in Violence Prevention model and its application in a high school setting. *Violence Against Women*, 17, 684-702, p.686-687.

⁴⁹ Banyard, V. L., & Moynihan, M. M. (2011). Variation in bystander behavior related to sexual and intimate partner violence prevention. *Psychology of Violence*, 1(4), 287-301.

⁵⁰ Katz et al. (2011), p.685.

⁵¹ Amar, A. F., Sutherland, M., & Kesler, E. (2012). Evaluation of a bystander education program. *Issues in Mental Health Nursing*, 33(12), 851-857.

bystander approaches as one component, or strategy, in a coordinated set of efforts directed at preventing men's violence against women.⁵²

Building partnerships

Some stakeholders spoke of the importance of building partnerships, seeing this as central to ongoing sustainability of both workplace prevention programs and the chronically under-funded family violence services sector as well as a way to facilitate attitudinal and cultural change. For stakeholders working in the corporate sector, partnership models present the opportunity to develop long-term relationships between a workplace and local family violence service such as women's refuges, which are basic frontline services that face significant funding challenges and shortfalls in service provision. Other partnerships include linking with support services including hotlines and regional community family violence services. These partnerships are essential in building rapport between service providers and employees in workplaces, in particular middle management and senior executives and in allowing employees to make connections and recognise how family violence is a workplace issue.⁵³ By building partnerships, the business community can realise the role they part as part of the wider community and in 'assisting in the development and implementation of solutions to social problems'.⁵⁴ The work of CEO Challenge, discussed below, is one example of an organisation working to broker partnerships between the business community and family violence service providers, which is designed to get businesses involved in community efforts to end family violence.⁵⁵ This is an example of promising practice in the sector in which family violence services are supported directly by sponsorship or donated resources as part of a long-term, three-year agreement. The following case study expands upon this partnership model in the broader context of their workplace prevention program.

⁵² Katz et al. (2011).

⁵³ VCCAV. (2004). Family Violence IS a Workplace Issue: Workplace Models to Prevent Family Violence. Melbourne, pg. 8.

⁵⁴ Ibid, pg. 16.

⁵⁵ Interview with CEO Challenge (interviewed by Anastasia Powell).

Case study: Workplace Domestic Violence Prevention Program (CEO Challenge)⁵⁶

Background

CEO Challenge grew out of work undertaken by the Brisbane Lord Mayor's Women's Advisory Council in 1999, with the organisation incorporated as a company in 2002. CEO Challenge's workplace prevention model is shaped around Polaroid's workplace prevention policies and procedures (CEO Challenge, 2013).

Internationally, Polaroid is renowned for its workplace safety practices, with the organisation commencing work on this issue in the 1990s. The Workplace Domestic Violence Prevention program takes a very unique approach by working in partnership with the corporate/business sector and domestic violence services sector. The aim is to link corporations and businesses directly with women's refuges and assist people who are the most traumatised by domestic violence (CEO Challenge, 2014).

The program

The Workplace Domestic Violence Prevention Program focuses on education and prevention activities and is shaped around three key areas: policy, programs and partnerships. The program aims to train participating businesses and organisations in responding to domestic violence around three pillars that guide the program: Recognise, Respond and Refer. The program employs a fee-based consultancy model that allows businesses and organisations to select from a suite of options available to them and thus contextualised programming ensures the creation of a program tailored to their needs and organisational capacities of businesses.

Implementation of the program

In implementing a fee-based consultancy model, the Workplace Domestic Violence Prevention Program developed a standard model for engagement, which they tailor to suit an organisation after several meet-and-greet sessions. This model ensures that the workplace program is tailored to and relevant for the organisation they work with. For example, participating organisations may opt to work with CEO Challenge in developing their workplace family violence policies, or participate in their workplace training program or develop a partnership with a local refuge.

A policy template is used to help guide organisations in developing family violence policies, with the Workplace Domestic Violence Prevention Program providing input and sharing their knowledge and experience of other organisations that have developed and implemented their own workplace policies. Specialist training sessions are a key part of the project, and staff engagement, with staff from participating organisations provided with skills necessary to respond to family violence. This includes the use of role-play scenarios where staff are given the opportunity to practice language around responding to a disclosure in the workplace. In these sessions, staff are encouraged to utilise internal resources (including the family violence policy) to provide options to employees who disclose violence in the workplace and referrals to local services. This hands-on intensive training is vital in the implementation of workplace programs and promoting a workplace free of violence.

⁵⁶ The case study was compiled from an interview with CEO Challenge (interviewed by Anastasia Powell), and publicly available documents including: CEO Challenge (2015) [Recognise. Respond. Refer Domestic Violence in the Workplace](http://bit.ly/1Q4b4Y8) (http://bit.ly/1Q4b4Y8) accessed 19 December 2015; [CEO Challenge \(2014\) Annual Report 2013-2014](http://bit.ly/114YcUH) (http://bit.ly/114YcUH), accessed 18 December 2015; [CEO Challenge \(2013\) Annual Report 2012-2013](http://bit.ly/22YMRYB) (http://bit.ly/22YMRYB), accessed 18 December 2015.

Workplace training programs focus on education and promoting awareness, including general awareness raising sessions for all staff (e.g. what is family violence and how to recognise signs and symptoms in the workplace). The Workplace Domestic Violence Prevention Program also works with HR, assisting in the implementation of workplace policies and flexible work arrangements as well as providing training on how to respond to family violence, in particular managing disclosures in the workplace and providing referrals to services. A key feature in the implementation of the program is a collaborative approach in which the project links businesses and organisations with local support services. This assists the organisation in providing pathways for employees to navigate and the utilisation of services such as the statewide hotline, regional family violence services and community services.

The Workplace Domestic Violence Prevention Program is currently working with the QLD government Department of Communities to develop learning platforms that can support rural and remote communities, including blended learning (face-to-face and e-learning contexts).

Key points

Blended learning is not only important in corporate contexts but also a way to ensure program rollout in rural and remote communities, areas that are disproportionately affected by family violence.

Partnership model as promising practice in the sector and a way to nurture genuine and meaningful collaborations as well as linking the corporate and community services sector and helping to meet funding challenges and facilitate attitudinal and cultural change.

The 'opt-in' model allows organisations to design and develop programs suited to their organisational context, needs and levels of readiness.

Creating an enabling environment

'Champions', key figures or peer leaders were recognised as crucial in creating an enabling environment. Some stakeholders put forward the idea that it was only necessary to have 'champions' at the senior management levels and, informed by a trickle-down approach, as long as senior management are championing the cause, organisational change will occur. Other stakeholders were critical of this trickle-down approach, commenting that this reflected a top-down approach to organisational change. For these stakeholders, it was stressed that 'champions' were needed at all levels of the organisation and not just at senior management with these ideas being reflective of comprehensiveness in prevention programming as a key factor in creating an enabling environment. A whole-of-organisation approach was seen as an important mechanism through which programs became embedded within an organisation. However, care needs to be taken with this strategy as burnout may be an issue. This is particularly so if 'champions' are likely to face high levels of resistance to organisational change. Stakeholders also noted that stronger program structures need to be developed so the program is not overly reliant on individuals and personalities to act as agents of change. Rather, focus needs to be placed on structures and processes that facilitate and enable change.

While senior management support is often seen as crucial for program success, some issues were faced in securing the support of middle management. Existing program models are either bottom-up or top-down and as a result these models are unable to adequately

address and engage the middle layer and this remains a significant issue for prevention programming. Middle management was identified as key to changing organisational cultures and attitudes but also an area where the biggest resistance was faced in promoting and engaging change. This was observed across sectors and in corporate and non-corporate contexts. There is an urgent need to develop models designed to engage with this layer of management in more meaningful and effective ways.

In short, the embedding of a person in an organisation was seen as crucial in creating an enabling environment. Almost all stakeholders commented that a ‘helicopter’ model was not appropriate for facilitating widespread attitudinal and cultural change. Workplace models need to incorporate a person within the organisation who is responsible for the workplace program as central to the process of embedding the program and creating and facilitating change, for example a PVAW officer (see Darebin City Council for an example of this model). Stakeholders implementing this model to embed the program noted the benefit of either a split funding model or direct organisational funding. The following case study discusses another approach in the sector designed to embed workplace programs and facilitate cultural change. The model developed within this program adopts ambassadors and advocates as a way to incorporate employees in the program as the organisation undergoes an accreditation process as a way to address workplace reform and change.

Case study: White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation Program⁵⁷

Background

The White Ribbon Australia Workplace Accreditation Program was initially funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services (formerly FaCHSIA) as a Pilot Program. The scoping, consultation and inception of the program commenced in late 2011 and was an important aspect to the program’s development, accessing industry and sector expertise to assist design and implementation across workplaces keen to be involved in cultural change. The delivery of the pilot took place from June 2012 to December 2013. Following completion of the Pilot and independent evaluation, the program has been implemented as a user pays model. It is designed to work with workplaces across all sectors to engage them in driving cultural change to prevent men’s violence against women. It also links workplaces into the White Ribbon Campaign through the appointment of White Ribbon Ambassadors and Advocates, the provision of e-Learning and online resources, and participation in the Annual White Ribbon Campaign.

⁵⁷ This case study was compiled from an interview with White Ribbon Australia (interviewed by Jessica Findling) and publicly available information on the White Ribbon Workforce Accreditation Program. This included information on the program available from White Ribbon Australia media releases and program booklets: Cromar, B. (n.d.). [Embedding Violence Prevention in Workplace Culture and Practice: An Introduction to the White Ribbon National Workplace Accreditation Pilot Project](http://bit.ly/1nhF5bC) (http://bit.ly/1nhF5bC), accessed 23 August 2015; White Ribbon (n.d.a). White Ribbon Workplace: [White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation Pilot Project Introduction for Participants](http://bit.ly/1UNOK4c) (http://bit.ly/1UNOK4c), accessed 23 August 2015; White Ribbon (n.d.b). [Why White Ribbon Australia Workplace Accreditation Matters to Your Business](http://bit.ly/1PW9aqz) (http://bit.ly/1PW9aqz), accessed 23 August 2015; White Ribbon Workplace (n.d.). [Becoming a White Ribbon Workplace](http://bit.ly/1mWNJfO) (http://bit.ly/1mWNJfO), accessed 23 August 2015.

The Program

The Workplace Accreditation Program recognises workplaces that are taking active steps to prevent and respond to violence against women, whether it occurs inside or outside the workplace. The Program provides a framework to prevent and respond to violence against women through tools to review, refine and implement policies, procedures, training and communication important to cultural change that promotes a zero tolerance approach to violence against women. Workplaces that take part in the White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation Program work towards achieving accreditation as a White Ribbon Workplace through evidencing achievement against 15 criteria under three Standards. Once accredited, the organisations are listed on the White Ribbon website and have the right to use the White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation symbol. There are three steps to the program: recognition, accreditation and workplace leader. This case study focuses on step one (the recognition phase) and two (the accreditation phase).

Implementation of the program

The White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation Program first ran as an inception and pilot project from 2011-2013. The pilot project allowed White Ribbon to develop the Accreditation Framework and workplace tools and resources, including a workplace orientation training, access to an online collaborative workspace, program microsite, access to a network of professionals across sectors/disciplines, program implementation resources and toolkits, an online library of best practice materials, and a confidential staff survey administered at the beginning and then again at the end of the accreditation phase. The program was then rolled-out across Australia in 2014 as a national workplace accreditation scheme.

The accreditation framework adopts an incremental approach to workplace reform and follows a three-step model that focuses on key areas of support for workplaces to adapt organisational culture, practices and procedures so that they promote safe workplaces for women and respectful relationships. Organisations are required to submit an expression of interest (Eoi) in participating in the program. After submission of an Eoi, registrations are processed by White Ribbon for organisations to take part in the Workplace Accreditation Program.

The first step of the program involves the participating organisation formally recognising and committing to addressing violence against women, whether incidents occur inside or outside the workplace. This serves as an entry point to the program, with this phase linked to the organisation carrying out key social marketing, awareness raising activities and employee engagement, including dissemination of the baseline survey. In this 'recognition' phase organisations are required to appoint a White Ribbon Committee and a senior decision-maker as 'champion' to sign a White Ribbon Statement of Commitment, demonstrating leadership commitment.

The second step of the program involves the 'accreditation' process. This stage of the program is designed to help organisations move from the recognition stage to initiate whole-of-workplace change. Organisations are required to undertake an audit of policies and practices, with a focus on how violence and harassment against women is addressed by the workplace. This includes an organisational self-assessment in three areas or standards, namely leadership and commitment; prevention of violence against women; and response to violence against women. These standards become the key criteria upon which progress on achieving accreditation is measured. Accreditation is contingent upon organisations demonstrating evidence in practice against the fifteen criteria attached to the three standards.

After completing this process, organisations provide a self-assessment for White Ribbon Accreditation and disseminate a follow up culture change survey with employees. Assessment against the criteria is conducted by independent assessors and if all the criteria are met the workplace is awarded certification which is in place for three years, evidencing an ongoing, sustainable commitment to the prevention of violence against women.

Key points

A national program could lead to the development of tools and resources that can be shared in the sector.

The accreditation framework is an idea that works for the business/corporate sector and may be an important factor in getting traction with industry.

The program makes men part of the conversation and workplace programs in safe, sensitive and non-threatening ways.

The Ambassadors model may be more effective in gaining CEO and senior management commitment.

Building senior management/executive level support

The White Ribbon case study discussed above clearly demonstrates the importance of executive level support for workplace programs and how this is a crucial factor in program success and ongoing sustainability, with the model providing an example of building executive level support by utilising responding to family violence as an entry point. All stakeholders discussed the importance of building the support of senior management and executive level staff, and indeed this was an overarching theme in consultations with stakeholders working in the corporate sector where this is viewed as an absolute necessity.

During consultations, stakeholders discussed the importance of building a case for senior management/executive level support, with this expressed in terms of a 'business case' or 'moral case' (or both), and this being used as a pitch compelling the corporate and business sector to recognise the costs of family violence.⁵⁸ Promising practice in the sector embeds the strongest prevention approach by promoting gender equity and cultures of respect through viewing workplace prevention programming on a continuum from responding to family violence and PVAW to promoting gender equity and respect. For some stakeholders working with senior management, the issue of gender equity prompted their initial involvement in workplace prevention programming and frames program design. Rather than taking an 'audit' approach, which seems to be common among workplace programs in all sectors, some stakeholders working in the corporate sector work intensively with executives and HR to develop narratives or work through individual scenarios to provide them with the skills necessary to provide leadership and organisational support (see, for example, the case studies involving CEO Challenge and the Centre for Ethical Leadership, below). In addition to this, one stakeholder has designed and developed training structured around the concept of unconscious bias. This concept is a vehicle through which they raise awareness of the informal cultures and practices shaping and structuring workplaces and the development of

⁵⁸ Interview with the Centre for Ethical Leadership (interviewed by Jessica Findling).

this training model is another example of promising practice in the sector because, to date, informal cultures and practices remain the most challenging area to address in prevention work. The following case study discusses this unique training model and method in the context of the organisation's workplace program.

Case study: Gender Equality Project (Centre for Ethical Leadership)⁵⁹

Background

The Centre for Ethical Leadership (CEL) developed the Gender Equality Project (GEP) out of their flagship program, the Vincent Fairfax Fellowship, which offers senior executives high-level leadership training. Fellowship participants include senior management in academia and industry, in both for-profit and not-for-profit sectors. While completing the Fellowship, participants identified gender equity as the highest-level ethical issue facing Australia, in particular women's involvement in leadership in the country. In developing the gender equality project, CEL worked from the recognition that gender equity was not confined to the simple matter of having more women in leadership positions (i.e. women on Boards of Directors or in Parliament), rather that there are serious systemic issues and structural barriers to achieving gender equality, with the issue of gender equity viewed as part of a continuum of the prevention of violence against women.

The program

The Gender Equality Project is an applied research program, structured around a participatory action research framework. The program works in partnership with senior leaders and corporate executives based on the understanding that, as most workplaces are hierarchically structured, it is potentially harmful to undertake gender equity workplace programs and training without the understanding and support of senior executive leaders, and indeed to undertake this work without their support may further create harmful workplaces.

The program aims to address systemic and structural barriers to achieving gender equity and works with academic and corporate (for-profit and not-for-profit) organisations to identify and transform key structural issues preventing women from achieving leadership positions in the organisation. The program is theory-based and informed by research from four key areas for action:

1. Harmful workplace behaviours;
2. Flexible work arrangements and family friendly policies;
3. Use of targets and quotas for women in leadership; and
4. Evaluation bias and backlash.

From these areas the training employs unconscious bias training in order to understand and challenge individual and environmental psychosocial organisational contexts. The program also develops and implements workplace policies and procedures on gender equity. In the program unconscious bias training is seen as a lead into/precursor for bystander training. Unconscious bias training aims to explore and better understand the architecture of the human mind and our patterns of thinking. It also aims to understand the biases in our thinking and how bias shapes and structures our thoughts, actions and decision-making process, and in corporate contexts, how this influences and impacts upon decision-making in the organisation.

⁵⁹ The case study was compiled from an interview with the Centre for Ethical Leadership (interviewed by Jessica Findling) and publicly available information including: Centre for Ethical Leadership (2015) [About the Centre](http://bit.ly/1PW9m9q) (<http://bit.ly/1PW9m9q>), accessed 15 December 2015; Centre for Ethical Leadership (2015) [Vincent Fairfax Fellowship](http://bit.ly/1KcFlha) (<http://bit.ly/1KcFlha>), accessed 15 December 2015; Centre for Ethical Leadership (2015) [Gender Equality Project](http://bit.ly/1N6zFFi) (<http://bit.ly/1N6zFFi>), accessed 15 December 2015.

Implementation of the program

The Gender Equality Project is implemented over a period of time with the training focusing on the four key areas discussed above. Participation in the program is industry driven, with corporate executives initiating contact and involvement in the program. The mode of delivery is flexible and depends on the organisational context, with the training program delivered by facilitators trained by CEL (e.g. train-the-trainer methodology). The training needs of the organisation and implementation of the program is discussed and devised with the organisation undertaking the training, with the discussions framed around either a business case or a moral case, or occasionally both, and this ensures contextualised programming. The training program is then tailored to organisational needs and levels of appropriateness.

Specific tools developed as part of the unconscious bias training include materials to identify bias and prevent engaging in bias decision making, for example, a decision-making matrix, which helps to reveal the complexity of the decision making process (i.e. decision-making as nonlinear and not based on the rational actor model) . Communications is another core part of the training, with participants developing a narrative of how they are going to sell or promote the idea of gender equality to their organisation. Participants develop narratives for key target audiences (Board of Directors, middle management and entry level staff) and CEL then assess their delivery and performance and provide substantive feedback. Participants also identify barriers to creating and implementing flexible workplace programs in the organisation and ways to overcome workplace practices in developing flexible working arrangements and family-friendly workplaces. Additionally, corporate executives are trained in how to have difficult conversations including how to identify and describe behaviour, in particular negative behaviour and the implications of this, without escalating the situation. In addition, senior management are assisted in making the connections between understanding how sexist comments and behaviours promote a workplace culture that devalues and dehumanises women. To further assist eliminating bias CEL work with executives and survey organisational practice, behaviours and decisions in order to identify bias 'hotspots'. This may include bias in performance reviews, decision-making processes, recruitment, task allocation, promotion, involvement in project work and training programs. CEL is also working on developing the training program for online delivery, as this may be a better platform for delivery to senior management.

Program evaluation is based on self-assessment and workers' perception (e.g. looking at whether the content of the training has had an impact on executive behaviour by surveying other staff). Evaluation of the program remains an area CEL continue to actively research. This is because evaluation of any program content remains difficult and the relevance and appropriateness of the tools used to measure the material included in the program prove problematic.

Key points

Change needs to be implemented via senior levels of management in order to be supported and truly taken up by the organisation.

Continuing to develop appropriate measures to evaluate program content remains a challenge, yet are necessary to measure the effective of program content in facilitating change.

Catering not only the training, but also the delivery mode to the organisation assists in meeting organisational requirements and restrictions.

Role of male leaders and men as ‘champions of change’

All of our consultations with stakeholders suggested that the role of leaders, senior and middle management, as well as the commitment of ‘champions’, were pivotal to the initial involvement, continued development and sustainability of PVAW efforts in workplaces. Many stakeholders also noted that workplaces and organisations are themselves gendered in both direct and indirect ways that were profoundly challenged by PVAW and PGE&R programs and policy changes. Perhaps most direct of these challenges is that, due to persistent gender inequity in many areas of public life, men remain overrepresented among workplace and organisational leaders as well as senior and middle management.⁶⁰ A further impact of this reality in many workplaces, is that for those women who are in senior roles, the professional cost of championing PVAW and PGE&R may result in either a perceived diminishing of the value of her contribution or an additional workload burden that lies ‘rightly’ in her area of ‘expertise’. In short, the commitment required by leaders and champions to make sustainable and lasting changes in workplaces is itself inherently gendered and has differential gendered impacts.⁶¹

Much research and advocacy has indeed argued that it is not women, but men, who should be encouraged and supported to take on the work of preventing violence against women.⁶² This foremost reflects the reality that it is mostly men who are in positions of leadership (and therefore power) to instill change. It is partly on this basis that some PVAW and PGE&R programs seek to directly engage men in driving change in their workplaces and organisations. For example, both the White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation Program, and the Male Champions of Change strategy (founded by former Australian Sex Discrimination Commissioner Elizabeth Broderick), seek to directly recruit and support male leaders to promote PVAW and PGE&R respectively. This context lends further importance to the themes discussed above of ‘tailoring the message’ and ‘non-confrontational points of entry’ into PVAW and PGE&R work. Garnering the support of workplaces and organisations, often at the level of mostly male leaders and senior management, may at times warrant flexibility in language, concepts and approaches that provide opportunities for these groups to get involved in PVAW and PGE&R without feeling immediately pressured to ‘change the world’.

At the same time, and as Australian scholar Bob Pease suggests, the genuine engagement of male leaders in the prevention of violence against women requires men to acknowledge and seek to change their own contributions to perpetuating gender inequality (including violence), rather than allowing them to remain in the more comfortable turf as non-violent “allies”.⁶³ For example, the Male Champions of Change strategy articulates that the responsibility of male leaders involves more than driving change to create opportunities for

⁶⁰ Temple, L. (2014). Not missing in action: The enduring penalty of 'being female'. *Griffith REVIEW*, No. 45, 2014: 146-158.

⁶¹ See de Vries, J. A. (2015). Champions of gender equality: female and male executives as leaders of gender change. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*, 34(1), 21-36.

⁶² See for example, Holmes, S. and Flood, M. (2013). [Genders at Work: Exploring the role of workplace equality in preventing men's violence against women](http://bit.ly/1wTQr7p) (http://bit.ly/1wTQr7p). Sydney: White Ribbon Australia.

⁶³ Pease, B. (2008). *Engaging men in men's violence prevention: Exploring the tensions, dilemmas and possibilities* (Issues Paper No.17). Sydney: Australian Domestic & Family Violence Clearinghouse.

women in their workplaces and organisations. Fundamentally, PGE&R involves an examination and undoing of the privilege and advantages that men benefit from under gender inequality. As described by one champion:

Let's not pretend that there aren't already established norms that advantage men. Men invented the system. Men largely run the system. Men need to change the system.⁶⁴

While not all workplaces and leaders may leap at the opportunity to 'change the system', engaging men as allies in PVAW is not unlike "ally" development in other social justice arenas which is often acknowledged as requiring multiple points of entry.⁶⁵ Indeed, taking a "stages of change" approach (as discussed earlier), such social justice allies may occupy different positions in terms of their readiness to change at different points in time.⁶⁶ Nonetheless, in other areas of social justice it is also acknowledged that ally behaviour requires not only an awareness of social inequity (such as racism or sexism for example), but also "awareness of how one's own privilege may be complicit in the marginalisation of others".⁶⁷ This is not to suggest that all PVAW and PGE&R programs must be framed specifically within an approach of 'engaging men'. Rather, it is to acknowledge the differential gendered structures and contexts of particular workplaces and organisations where successfully implementing programs may require flexible approaches designed to engage male leaders as well as being pitched towards different stages of change. Certainly, the extent to which PVAW and PGE&R programs seek to facilitate a personal critical awareness of gendered power relations, and the effectiveness of doing so for individuals at different stages of change, remains an area worthy of future research and evaluation efforts.

⁶⁴ [Message from Elizabeth Broderick](http://bit.ly/1ShzdVv) (<http://bit.ly/1ShzdVv>).

⁶⁵ Casey, E., & Smith, T. (2010). "How can I not?": Men's pathways to involvement in anti-violence against women work. *Violence Against Women*, 16(8), 953-973.

⁶⁶ Berkowitz, A.D. (2009). *Response ability: Transforming values into action*. Chicago, IL: Beck.

⁶⁷ Casey, E., & Smith, T. (2010), p.955.

5. Future Directions and Recommendations

It is important to acknowledge that workplace and organisational approaches to the prevention of violence against women have a long history in Australia. There has already been much progress in program and policy development, staff training packages and manuals, as well as awareness-raising and communications resources. Our Watch comes to workplace and organisational settings with an important opportunity to learn from work already being undertaken, harness existing knowledge, and build the *readiness, capacity, evidence* and *momentum* for continued and expanded prevention work.

Among many pilot projects and government as well as non-government initiatives, there are several other key players whose work has been particularly influential at either the national or state level in supporting and delivering workplace and organisational prevention of violence against women. These include:

- Workplace Gender Equality Agency (national statutory body, based in Sydney)
- White Ribbon Australia (national body, based in Sydney)
- CEO Challenge (national body, based in Brisbane)
- VicHealth (state body, based in Melbourne)
- Centre for Ethical Leadership (independent centre, based in Melbourne)
- Women's Health Victoria (peak state body, based in Melbourne)

Our Watch has already established some partnerships and collaborative arrangements with key bodies, such as VicHealth, as well as Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS). Yet Our Watch's position is unique; as a national coordinating body, independent of government Our Watch has the ability to drive nation-wide change in the cultures, behaviours and attitudes that underlie violence against women. The Our Watch strategic plan explicitly positions its role as the *prevention of violence against women and their children*. In undertaking this work, Our Watch has committed to a work model that seeks to:

*reach the largest possible number of people with quality, sustained and meaningful interventions that encourage shifts in the way people think about and behave in relation to gender and violence.*⁶⁸

The Our Watch change strategy incorporates key elements to achieve a 'reduction in the prevalence of violence against women and their children', these are:

- Working independently and with others to achieve change;
- Working to address underlying causes of violence;
- Tailoring prevention work for diverse communities and groups;
- Implementing a multi-faceted, long-term program of work with activities that reinforce each other;
- Testing and evaluating approaches to refine prevention work;
- Demonstrate shifts in attitudes, behaviours and practices contributing to violence against women and their children.

⁶⁸ Our Watch (2014). Five Year Strategic Plan. Melbourne: Our Watch.

The following recommendations have been framed with this change strategy in mind, and emerge foremost from the key findings and suggestions put forward throughout our stakeholder consultations. They address four priority themes for the continued development of PVAW in workplaces and organisations: Building workplace and organisation readiness; Building capacity; Building the evidence; and Building momentum.

Priority Theme 1: Building Workplace and Organisational Readiness

- **Recommendation 1: A national community awareness-raising campaign targeting Australian workplaces.** There is a need to develop and implement a PVAW and PGE&R national community awareness-raising campaign, with a specific call to action directed at workplace and organisational leaders. Ideally, this campaign would highlight the need for and benefits of organisational change and the positive impact of this in creating healthy workplaces.
- **Recommendation 2: Sponsorship of workplace forums and professional development seminars as ‘entry points’ for leaders and decision-makers.** There is scope to lay a strong foundation for workplace programs and leadership commitment by holding forums and professional development seminars in collaboration with peak organisational bodies and community partners. These community forums can be directed at workplace and organisational leaders to inspire and motivate awareness of the ‘business case for change’ and promote awareness of organisations’ role in challenging gender inequality, stereotyping, discrimination and violence against women with messaging targeted at making the connection between these issues and the need to create healthy workplaces.
- **Recommendation 3: Develop a ‘take a first step’ toolkit for workplaces.** This may take the form of a one or two page document that prompts organisations to take an achievable ‘first step’. Senior management is crucial in this first step and in making the commitment to champion change. This can include easy first steps such as awareness-raising messages on communications (for example in email taglines and workplace newsletters, or conveying awareness raising messages or making commitments to the workplace program and existing PVAW and gender equity mechanisms when speaking at events). Another step could include CEOs actively engaging in and promoting discussion about PVAW and gender equity with other senior management figures which plays a crucial role in identifying a ‘way-in’ to deeper conversations in their workplace. This step is crucial in gaining traction and finding the right entry point for an organisation. For example, the engagement might begin at gender inequality in leadership and creating more opportunities for women in management. Alternatively, the opportunity may lie in addressing informal gendered cultures such as stereotyping that creates negative working environments and discriminatory settings. On the other hand, reviewing policies and procedures specifically relating to anti-discrimination and sexual harassment may be the right entry point for the organisation. For other organisations, an entry point for PVAW may be identifying and responding appropriately to staff who may be experiencing

violence (for more on this, see the example from Women's Health Grampians Act@Work program).

- **Recommendation 4: Pilot and evaluate adaptations of PVAW workplace programs and resources to suit the needs of different workplace settings and assess organisational readiness.** Recognise that different workplaces and organisations may have different *readiness and capacity* and be at different *stages of change*. In building organisational readiness more research is needed on effective models for different organisations and businesses, and that highlights promising practice in primary prevention programs in diverse workplaces.

Priority Theme 2: Building PVAW Sector Capacity

- **Recommendation 5: Develop and resource a web-based portal as a one-stop-shop for workplaces interested in PVAW and PGE&R.** It is important that organisational bodies working in the PVAW and PGE&R sector continue to support each other in their efforts to prevent violence against women and to promote gender equity and respectful relationships. Our Watch can play a role in continuing to build the evidence base in several ways. These include the collection and collation of existing resources into a central repository. These existing resources could be pooled into a larger program and project resource created by Our Watch. Program materials and related evidence could then be made publically available in order to promote program refinement and help to create a larger resource base.
- **Recommendation 6: Develop a set of national standards to benchmark workplace PVAW and PGE&R programs.** Stakeholders expressed confusion when embarking on their prevention journey, that there were so many training providers and program models and that it was difficult to make an informed decision which was the best fit for their organisation. A set of national standards and a review of existing providers and programs against these standards, could be included on the web portal - providing clear and transparent information to inform organisational decision-making.
- **Recommendation 7: Support development of PVAW and PGE&R educator training.** Capacity building in the sector could be supported through the development of train-the-trainer professional development. This train-the-trainer professional development could be carried out within a broader common approach and supported through registered 'Our Watch' endorsed suppliers, consultants and project officers. This could act as a central training module that workplaces and organisations can direct an appointed project officer to for professional development.
- **Recommendation 8: Develop a common workplace PVAW and PGE&R audit and monitoring tool.** Almost all workplace PVAW programs administered an organisational gender audit and monitoring tools to assess organisational readiness and monitor program success. Common audit and monitoring tools could be developed to aid work in the sector, with this being highlighted and reinforced by a National Scorecard (PVAW and PGE&R).

- **Recommendation 9: Develop core common program education materials to make available for adaptation in workplace programs.** Common education materials are needed for PVAW and PGE&R, but it is essential these materials allow and support flexibility and adaptability by recognising the fluidity of and fluidity in workplaces. Materials also need to be designed to respond to different entry points into the work. This ranges from training tailored to senior management, middle management and staff in non-management positions. By education materials we mean infographics, short video resources (such as case studies, insights from experts and other leaders), handouts and activities. By developing education materials tailored to specific program participants Our Watch can better support the different capacity building needs identified in PVAW and PGE&R workplace programs. Ideally, these materials would identify issues and concerns and contain content appropriate to the organisational level in which individuals are located. These materials need to be flexible and adaptable to accommodate the different levels of understanding and awareness of PVAW and PGE&R. In other words, some organisations may benefit from 'PVAW 101' and more general awareness-raising training while other organisations may have more advanced training needs and understandings of PVAW and PGE&R.
- **Recommendation 10: Support the Development of PVAW and PGE&R Learning Modules for the next generation of workplace leaders and prevention champions.** There is an increased demand for higher education qualifications in most Australian workplaces. Our Watch can take a pro-active step by collaborating with the higher education sector to develop and pilot curriculum modules (for face-to-face or online delivery) on PVAW and PGE&R that are tailored to key professional disciplines. This includes Education, Youth Work, Social Work, Psychology, Criminology, Law, Business Management and allied fields. PVAW modules could be designed to fit within existing core curricula and associated with supporting materials for tertiary teachers to encourage greater awareness of violence against women. This would promote and encourage individuals to challenge the behaviours and attitudes that support violence against women and work towards creating a culture where men and women are valued equally - wherever they may work in the future.
- **Recommendation 11: Support a community of practice in workplace and organisational approaches to PVAW and PGE&R.** Our Watch can organise a PVAW and PGE&R officer annual conference or twice-annual forum to facilitate the sharing of efforts in the sector. These activities would enhance collegiality and provide a mutual support network to help address burn-out in the sector and encourage greater sharing of experiences and promote promising practice.

Priority Theme 3: Building the Evidence Base

- **Recommendation 12: Develop and make available a common evaluation tool.** Our Watch can contribute to the efforts to build the PVAW evidence base by developing an easy to administer evaluation tool for workplaces and organisations. This evaluation tool could be tied to the common PVAW and PGE&R workplace audit tool.
- **Recommendation 13: Encourage, support and demonstrate good evaluation practices in workplace PVAW and PGE&R.** It is important to recognise the long history in Australia of projects and policy initiatives for preventing violence against women through workplaces. However, there is also a dire need to build the evidence base by supporting the development and piloting of training materials and evaluating the efficiency of these materials. Our Watch could contribute to this important work by encouraging (through making available common evaluation tools), directly supporting (through funding an evaluation component for selected existing programs that meet a minimum threshold) and demonstrating good evaluation practices (through including evaluation components in Our Watch's own workplace projects).
- **Recommendation 14: Establish a national PVAW and PGE&R evaluation advisor.** Many workplaces and organisations have limited resources and when implementing PVAW and PGE&R programs will prioritise funding for project work instead. Unfortunately, this means that most workplaces and organisations face financial and human resource constraints with evaluating programs. Our Watch could play a crucial role in the sector in meeting the need for more evaluation, as well as taking the opportunity to build the evidence base through supporting a PVAW and PGE&R Evaluation Advisor position. This position could act as a central resource to advise on the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of partner-programs nationally.
- **Recommendation 15: Develop a 'National Scorecard' for PVAW and PGE&R in Australian workplaces.** This Our Watch National Workplace Scorecard would need to consider how to measure the outcomes of organisational and workplace primary prevention efforts and the development of appropriate ranking systems, as well as provide guidance for workplaces and independent assessment of measures. It should not seek to replicate or compete with existing schemes (such as the WGEA Gender Equity Audit, or White Ribbon Workplace Accreditation), as this would only serve to create confusion for workplaces. A preferred approach would be to consult with existing schemes and work towards an overarching set of benchmarks of which existing schemes that address one aspect of either PVAW or PGE&R (as described in Table 1) might be acknowledged as entry points or foundational components.

Priority Theme 4: Building Momentum

- **Recommendation 16: Fund for sustainability.** In order to build momentum for PVAW and PGE&R, it is essential that Our Watch and workplaces and organisations develop strategies to support sustainability. The vast majority of funded projects and policy initiatives for preventing violence against women through workplaces have been for pilot projects and this raises some concerns around sustainability. Therefore suggestions include developing a funding model that includes a sustainability plan. Ideally, the development of prevention work could be supported through the co-funding of project positions in demonstration workplaces for longer timeframes, for example, up to three years. There is the risk that, given the nature of PVAW and PGE&R work and the deep-seated nature of informal workplace cultures about sexism and discrimination, short-term funding and pilot projects, while being necessary, may not bear fruit over the longer-term.
- **Recommendation 17: Showcase existing promising practice workplace and organisational programs.** This report has documented several examples of promising practice in PVAW and PGE&R primary prevention programs in workplaces. Our Watch can build on this work by showcasing positive examples and outcomes from existing PVAW and PGE&R primary prevention programs. This work would not only help build momentum but also build national readiness for primary prevention programs in the workplace. If Our Watch proceed with developing a set of national standards, for example, a number of existing workplace programs or training tools that are near, meet, or exceed the standards could be showcased in a companion brochure and/or launch event.
- **Recommendation 18: Develop a National Workplace Leaders Awards Scheme.** Our Watch has a national mandate to develop and implement national initiatives and has recently developed a National Framework to Prevent Violence Against Women and their Children.⁶⁹ As a part of the organisation's national mandate and existing efforts to develop this national framework, Our Watch may want to consider the opportunity this presents to develop a National Workplace Leaders Awards Scheme that acknowledges workplaces and organisations that are making significant efforts to prevent violence against women and create healthy workplaces. During the consultations many of the stakeholders suggested the need for a national accreditation or awards scheme and Our Watch is ideally placed to help broker, develop, facilitate and implement such a scheme.

⁶⁹ Our Watch, Australia's National Research Organisation for Women's Safety (ANROWS), & VicHealth. (2015). *Change the story: A shared framework for the primary prevention of violence against women in Australia*. Melbourne, Australia: Our Watch.

6. Conclusion

This report has highlighted key areas, provided recommendations for future directions and identified significant gaps and development opportunities to inform planning and development activities in relation to Our Watch's role at the national level. It defines and discusses key terminology and approaches in primary prevention programs in workplace settings, including understandings of violence against women and definitions of programs designed to respond to and prevent violence. The report considers what it means to shift 'upstream' and engage in primary prevention of violence against women (PVAW) in workplaces, as well as promoting gender equity and cultures of respect (PGE&R). Also outlined is an abridged history of workplace and organisational approaches to preventing violence against women and the 20-year history of projects and policy initiatives in Australia. This discussion then provides a rich context for examining approaches in the sector and consideration of what 'promising practice' looks like, including comprehensiveness (whole-of-organisation approach), staff engagement, contextualised and theory-based programming focused on promoting wellbeing, building on existing strengths and addressing structural factors.

The case studies described in this report provide evidence of promising practice and other key themes from the stakeholder interviews, including the need to break down the idea of workplaces as homogenous and the diverse range of models, approaches and work in the sector which speak of the heterogeneity of and in workplaces. The case studies also confirm that well-designed programs aim to encourage local ownership and that there is a need to 'gain traction' if programs are to be successfully implemented. Most importantly, taking an 'active bystanders' approach was seen to play a crucial role in primary prevention programs in the workplace, with unconscious bias offering a way to better understand patterns of thinking and how bias shapes and structures our thoughts and actions and influences the decision-making process and may be a way to unearth the role privilege plays in marginalising women and other groups in workplaces. Overall several points of entry in programmatic work were identified, including responding to and preventing violence and promoting gender equity and cultures of respect. It is on the basis of these consultations, combined with the scholarly literature, and consideration of Our Watch's Strategic Plan and National Framework, that our 18 recommendations for future direction in preventing violence against women through workplaces and organisations have been developed.

Ending violence against women will take whole-of-community action and social change implemented through a range of public institutions, organisations and settings. Workplaces and organisations are key settings through which this action and change can occur.