

WOMEN'S HEALTH COORDINATORS

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'In those Areas where Women's Health Coordinator positions have been filled ... the aims of the National Women's Health Policy are more successfully met'.¹

Many readers will be aware that the National Women's Health Policy (NWHP) is one of the more robust of our national health policies, having survived well since its inception in 1989.² This is no surprise since the policy modeled best practice in participation, and was based on consultation with more than one million women. In contrast to the biomedical mainstream, the NWHP promotes a social view of health, emphasising a primary health approach. Its long-term goal is to improve the health and well being of all women in Australia. Short term, the aim is to establish services and infrastructure capable of supporting progress towards this end. In NSW one of the principal means of establishing an infrastructure has been the funding of a network of Women's Health Coordinators (WHCs) throughout the 17 Area Health Services.

All Area Health Services have a Women's Health Coordinator or contact officer. This issue of the Bulletin provides current information on how they may be contacted. In some areas WHCs manage elements of direct service provision such as sexual assault or women's health nurse services. All WHCs provide an indirect service which has been defined as 'activities which impact on populations rather than individuals, influencing mainstream and other agencies to adopt approaches and priorities prescribed by the NWHP'.² To fulfil this role of influencing mainstream health services, WHCs typically involve themselves in policy, planning, training of health professionals, advocacy and intersectoral action around the social determinants of health.

A key achievement for most WHCs during the first two phases of the NWH program has been the development and adoption of a Women's Health Strategic Plan for their area. Where WHC positions have been created and maintained, Areas have been able to attract additional funding as well as being better able to support sustained program development. Examples of programs include the Cervical Screening Program and the NSW Government's Violence Against Women initiative. Where positions have remained unfilled for significant periods of time achievement is less apparent.

Now that the Public Health Outcomes Funding Agreement has subsumed the special purpose NWH Program it is critical that WHCs place more emphasis on building partnerships in the interests of sustaining progress towards the goal of the NWHP. These partnerships may be within the health service, such as between sexual health and women's health services or they may be between government agencies: for example, the NSW Government's Violence Against Women Strategy which involves the Police, Community Services, Attorney General's and Health Departments. Most important are the partnerships being developed with services in the non-government sector, since these are known to effectively target groups of women with particular health needs. These include women with disabilities, those on low incomes, Aboriginal women and women from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Public health practitioners with ideas about the need for partnership building in priority health areas are encouraged to contact their local WHC.

REFERENCES

1. *Evaluation of the National Women's Health Program: Second Phase 1993-94 and 1996-97*. Sydney: NSW Department of Health, 1997. State Health Publication number HSP 970 104.
2. Commonwealth Department of Community Services and Health. *National Women's Health Policy: Advancing Women's Health in Australia*. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1993. ☐

WOMEN'S HEALTH COORDINATORS CONTACT AND MAILING LIST

Area	Injury Program Manager	Mailing Address	E-mail	Phone	Fax
Central Coast	Ann Conning	Level 2, Health Service Centre, Stephens St Gosford Hospital, Gosford , NSW 2250	aconning@doh.health.nsw.gov.au	4320 3741	4320 2901
Central Sydney	Dare Kavenagh	Central Sydney Division of Population Health Level 3, Queen Mary Building Grose Street, Camperdown, NSW 2050	kavad@phu.rpa.cs.nsw.gov.au	9515 3272	9515 3282
Far West	Juanita Sherwood	PO Box 457, Broken Hill, NSW 2880		08 8080 1502	08 8087 8697
Greater Murray	Janet Chapman	Program Manager, Women's Health PO Box 503, Albury, NSW 2640	janet.chapman@gmhs.nsw.gov.au	6023 7100	6023 7150
Hunter	Dr Lynne Hancock (contact officer)	Hunter Centre for Health Advancement Longworth Ave, Locked Bag 10, Wallsend, NSW 2287	deborahL@wallsendnewcastle.edu.au	4924 6365	4924 6209 or 4924 6208
Illawarra	Theresa Hoynes	Women's Health Coordinator, Illawarra Area Health Service, Locked Bag 9 Unanderra Mail Delivery Centre, NSW 2526	hoynest@doh.health.nsw.gov.au	4275 4600	4275 2611
Macquarie	Gwen Cosier	Women's Health Adviser, Centre for Population Health Macquarie Health Service PO Box M61, East Dubbo, NSW 2830	gcosi@doh.health.nsw.gov.au	6881 2244	6884 7223
Mid North Coast	Lorna Neal	Taree Community Health Centre PO Box 35, Taree, NSW 2430	lneal@doh.health.nsw.gov.au mobile: 0418 690 989	6551 1473 or 6551 1315	6551 0982
Mid West	Sue Burke	Corporate Services Building Bloomfield Hospital, Forest Road, Orange, NSW 2800		6360 7930	6361 2942
New England	Maggie Daley	Tamworth Community Health Care PO Box 83, Tamworth, NSW 2340	mdaley@doh.health.nsw.gov.au	6768 3856	6766 3967
Northern Rivers	Margit Young	Northern Rivers Health Service PO Box 498, Lismore, NSW 2480	rossil@doh.health.nsw.gov.au	6620 2472	6621 7088
Northern Sydney	Robyn Hatley	Women's Health Coordinator, Level 2, Vindin House Royal North Shore Hospital, Pacific Highway St Leonards, NSW 2065	rhately@nsahs.nsw.gov.au	9926 6545	9926 6735
South Eastern Sydney	Pauline Foote	Royal South Sydney Community Health Complex Joynton Ave, Zetland, NSW 2017	footep@sesahs.nsw.gov.au	9382 8343 or 9382 8156	9382 8158
Southern	Kate Lohse	Women's Health Coordinator, Southern Health Service PO Box 1845, Queanbeyan, NSW 2620	klohse@doh.health.nsw.gov.au	6299 7981	6299 1426 or 6299 7993
South West Sydney	Margo Moore	Bankstown Central CHC, The Compass Centre Level 4, Featherstone St, Bankstown, NSW 2200	margo.moore@swsahs.nsw.gov.au	9780 2796	9780 2888
Wentworth	Michelle Noort (contact officer)	Director of Health Service Development Wentworth Area Health Service c/- Nepean Hospital, PO Box 63, Penrith, NSW 2751	mnoort@wahs.health.nsw.gov.au	4724 2811	44721 0610
Western Sydney	Kate Lamb	Women's Health Adviser Building B59, Cumberland Hospital, Locked Bag 7118, Parramatta BC, NSW 2150	katel@wsahs.nsw.gov.au	9840 3627	9840 3632
Female Genital Mutilation	Lesley Garton	Manager, NSW Education Program Female Genital Mutilation, Pine Cottage Locked Bag 7118, Parramatta BC, NSW 2150	lesleyg@cu-psych.wsahs.nsw.gov.au	9840 3910	9840 4100
Central Office	Elena Murty Mary-Kate Pickett	Senior Policy Analysts, Health Services Policy NSW Health Department Locked Bag 961, North Sydney, NSW 2059	emurt@doh.health.nsw.gov.au mpick@doh.health.nsw.gov.au	9391 9587 9391 9636	9391 9615 9391 9615

REFERENCES

1. Australian National Council on AIDS and Related Diseases Hepatitis C Sub-committee, Hepatitis C Virus Projections Working Group. *Estimates and Projections of the Hepatitis C Virus Epidemic in Australia*. Sydney: National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research, 1998. p.11.
2. National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research and NSW Health Dept. *Estimates and Projections of the Hepatitis C Virus Epidemic in NSW*. Unpublished report, 1999. p.1.
3. Lowe, D, Cotton, R. *Hepatitis C: a review of Australia's response*. Canberra: Commonwealth Dept of Health and Aged Care, 1999.

4. Legislative Council Standing Committee on Social Issues. *Hepatitis C: the Neglected Epidemic*. Sydney: NSW Parliament, 1998. ☞

Further information about the *NSW Health Hepatitis C Public Awareness Campaign* can be obtained from Brent Mackie, AIDS/Infectious Diseases Branch, NSW Department of Health, Locked Bag 961, North Sydney NSW 2059. Telephone: (02) 9391 9247. Email: bmack@doh.health.nsw.gov.au.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

DEAR EDITOR

The *NSW Public Health Bulletin* has helped to bring together a group of researchers to investigate the links between cardiovascular disease and periodontal disease. Staff at the Royal North Shore Hospital and the United Dental Hospital are joining forces in the Pericar Study to study the effect of periodontal treatment on haemostatic risk factors for cardiovascular disease in patients with advanced periodontal disease.

The Pericar Study was developed as a direct result of the recent publication of the four-part oral health series in the *Bulletin* during 1999. The papers in the series successfully promoted a greater awareness of oral health issues in the wider health community and facilitated interaction and discussion between health professionals.

We thank the *Bulletin* for providing the forum that resulted in this exciting research opportunity with its implications for health care.

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ERRATUM

In the January–February issue of the *NSW Public Health Bulletin* (Volume 11, Numbers 1–2, page 13) the contact list for Women's Health Coordinators in the Area Health Services had an incorrect table heading. The heading 'Injury Program Manager' should have read 'Women's Health Coordinator'. The editor apologises for this error.