

ACT Ministerial Advisory Council on Women (MACW) Communiqué

The ACT Ministerial Advisory Council on Women (MACW) provides strategic advice to the ACT Government on issues affecting women in the ACT. The Council also provides a link between the Minister for Women and women in the ACT Community.

The work of the council reflects the objectives of *The ACT Women's Plan*. The Council will monitor the progress of achievements towards these objectives through consultation with women in the community and relevant organisations.



MACW Priorities

MACW's work plan aligns with the ACT Women's Plan, as a continuum of work addressing:

- +Women's reproductive and sexual health in the ACT
- +Domestic and family violence and sexual assault
- +Post school education and training opportunities for women in prisons, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women
- + Women's housing and homelessness

ACT Gender Equity Forum

The ACT Gender Equity Forum: Sharing Stories of Success was held on 12 February 2018. The forum was co-designed and co-facilitated by (MACW) and the ACT Office for Women (OfW). Dr Gail Crimmins was the guest speaker in providing insights of positive story sharing. The Café style forum provided the 60 participants with practical application of story sharing in the community, business and government reflective practice across six topic areas including:

- +Housing and homelessness
- +Respectful relationships
- +Women supporting women in business
- +Leadership
- +Breaking down gendered occupations
- +Changing the system not the woman



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There was a broad range of participants from Government and non-Government agencies and Councils, including the Youth Advisory Council and A Gender Agenda.

A report has been written by the Chair of the Council summarising the content of the day. This forum was an action under the ACT Women's Plan 2016-2026 and the First Action Plan 2017-2019.

ACT Womens Plan 2016-26

The Plan sets out the Government's commitment to work towards gender equality for all ACT Women. The ACT Women's Plan: First Action Plan 2017-19 provided input for the role of MACW with the first priority to focus on communities where women and girls are empowered, safe and supported to achieve gender equality.

MACW have consulted with Canberra Women in Business and ACT President and Human Rights Commissioner in relation to Priority Area 2 of the MACW Work plan: Engagement with Government and Community, to ensure robust and informed responses to the ACT Women's Plan 2016-26.

Women's Health & MACW

MACW members prioritised women's health in the ACT in alignment with priorities in the ACT Women's Plan: First Action plan. The MACW are leveraging expertise from Women's Centre for Health Matters report on the *Hidden disadvantage among women in the ACT*.

The Council has provided advice in relation to service provision in key areas resulting in an outreach map being designed with the aim of strengthening service information and referral for women in the ACT to be delivered by Women's Information Officers in the next six months.

MACW Housing and Homelessness

MACW is investigating ways to contribute to improved responses to housing and homelessness issues for women in the ACT.

The Council has focused on accessible and affordable housing for women, engaging with ACT Housing as well as participating in the ACT Housing Affordability Summit, which generated submissions to ACT Housing Strategy. The Council notes that there are opportunities to develop stronger cross-Directorate approaches to housing and homelessness with focus on older women and innovative flexi housing solutions as well as mixed use housing.

MACW Terms of Reference

The MACW are currently reviewing the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Council to provide opportunities for broader engagement of membership. The ToR review is in anticipation of a Council nomination process to fill vacancies on the MACW, later this year. Position vacancies will be advertised on the Diversity Register at www.diversityregister.act.gov.au

MACW Members 2017-18

Dr Elizabeth Beckmann (Chair)
Ms Dana Esperanza (Deputy Chair)/
Mrs Louise Bannister/ Ms Julie Blackburn/
Ms Alisa Draskovic / Ms Lauren Gale/
Ms Jayanti Gupta/ Ms Patricia Jones/
Ms Fiona Petersen/ Ms Megan Taylor

Further information: Contact Secretariat of MACW on (02) 6205 3614 or email: Women@act.gov.au