

ACT WOMEN'S PLAN 2016-26: FIRST ACTION PLAN 2017-19

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The full participation of women and girls in all aspects of society is critical to the wellbeing of the whole community. While the ACT is doing comparatively well in areas such as parliamentary representation, gender pay gap and representation of women on boards and committees, we need to build on this great work by improving opportunities, support and social inclusion for women and girls in our community.

Achieving gender equality requires commitment and leadership. The *ACT Women's Plan 2016-26* sets out the key directions and priorities for improving outcomes for women and girls living in the ACT. The plan addresses some of the most important issues for women in our community, including health and wellbeing, housing and homelessness, safety, economic security and leadership. The plan has a particular emphasis on improving outcomes for women who are vulnerable or experience discrimination, including women with disability, women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, older women, women heading single parent families and women who are socially isolated. The plan also recognises that women may be even more vulnerable where there are multiple layers of disadvantage (intersectionality).

THE ACT WOMEN'S PLAN 2016-26 AND THE FIRST ACTION PLAN 2017-19

The *ACT Women's Plan 2016-26* will be implemented through a series of Action Plans¹. These will provide practical ways in which the ACT Government will work to engage community members, the community sector and the private sector to ensure our whole community is actively working towards true equality for women and girls.

It should be noted that the *ACT Women's Plan 2016-26* does not address domestic and family violence specifically; however it does address the determinants of domestic and family violence by addressing the issues of gender inequality.

This is the First Action Plan and will span a three year period from 2017-19. The First Action Plan will be structured around two priorities that were identified in the *ACT Women's Plan 2016-26*, with specific areas of focus under each priority.

Priority 1: Equity and Wellbeing

- > Communities where Women and Girls are Empowered and Safe
- > Supporting Gender Equality in the ACT Government

Priority 2: Physical and Mental Health

- > Addressing the Health Needs of Women and Girls
- > Information and Services are tailored to the needs of women and girls from diverse backgrounds

WORK STRUCTURE OF THE ACTION PLAN

The First Action Plan has three distinct, year-long phases. The timings are a guide only, and are not intended to restrict directorates in progressing work. Some actions, for example, will be progressed throughout the entire three year period and beyond.

Year 1: Building our Knowledge Base

- > Building our understanding, including research, crowdsourcing, analysis, review of best practice, the establishment of baseline data and dissemination of research and findings.
- > A working group of directorate representatives to determine measurable indicators against each outcome.

Year 2: Practical Solutions

- > Practical actions and solutions to improving gender equality, opportunities, and health and wellbeing outcomes for women.
- > These actions will be led by a number of different areas of government, and will include working with the community and other stakeholders.
- > Some actions may commence in year one, while others will commence in year two.

Year 3: Consolidation and Process Review

- > Analysis and evaluation of the actions which have been, or are being, implemented.
- > Identify any barriers that may need to be overcome in order to fully achieve the objectives of the *ACT Women's Plan 2016-26*.

Through each action, each year and each Action Plan, the ACT will continue to build a community that values and respects women and girls, commits to gender equality and promotes and protects the rights, wellbeing and potential of all women and girls.

¹ Where implementation of the Action Plans cannot be met through existing agency budgets, the initiatives will be subject to annual budget considerations.

EQUITY AND WELLBEING: GENDER EQUALITY BENEFITS EVERYONE

FOCUS AREAS	YEAR 1 – BUILDING OUR KNOWLEDGE BASE	YEAR 2 – PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS	YEAR 3 – CONSOLIDATION AND PROCESS REVIEW
<p>Focus Area One: Communities where Women and Girls are Empowered and Safe</p> <p><i>Outcome: Women and girls have opportunities to engage in decisions that impact on them, and participate actively in community life.</i></p>	<p>Culture of Respect and Equal Opportunity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Host bi-annual forums with women’s peak bodies to consider ways in which directorates and community organisations can advance the culture of respect and equal opportunity. (CSD) Investigate contemporary procurement practices which promote gender equity. (CSD) Develop template and guidance material for directorates and funded contractors to develop Gender Equity Strategies. (CSD) Identify the number and nature of sex discrimination complaints in the ACT. (JACSD, CSD) Promote the use of Women’s Safety Audits at events run by the ACT Government. (CSD) <p>Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a ‘Gender Equity and Education’ advisory group - with representation from all education sectors - to research the extent to which gender perception in schools impacts on the wellbeing of female students. (CSD, EDU) Research and engage with women’s groups to facilitate learning through the delivery of specific community based programs (Lifelong Learning Team) in ACT Libraries. (TCCS) Investigate gaps and barriers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women pursuing post school education and training opportunities. (CIT Yurauna Centre) Promote Vocational and Educational Training opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. (CIT Yurauna Centre) <p>Urban Design</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Active Travel Office will engage women’s groups prior to rollout of funding for footpath maintenance, cycling and walking route upgrades and age-friendly suburb improvements in shopping centres and existing suburbs. (TCCS) Investigate the use of the Safety Mapping Tool to guide ACT Government planning. (CSD, EPSDD) Include a focus on the particular needs of women in the 2017 Housing Summit. (CSD) Review the ‘Crime Prevention through Environmental Design General Code’ (possibly 2018) from a safe and inclusive communities perspective (with a focus on women) and review language used in this Code. (EPSDD) Determine the process by which women’s perspective can be incorporated into Master Plans, Territory Plan reviews and urban design processes. (EPSDD) Review customer service interface and how this supports access to planning services for women. (EPSDD) Include women, and in particular young women aged 15-21, in the planning and design study of local centres. Study will identify resilience, liveability and accessibility at the local level and provide a comparative basis to test planning and design responses in line with national best practice. (EPSDD) <p>Transport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct a strategic assessment of innovative transport options for Canberrans, including researching other jurisdictions, directorates and organisations to establish best practice. (TCCS) Conduct lifestyle analysis of women customers. (TCCS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide information and advice to women about legal protections against discrimination and sexual harassment. (JACSD) Establish a program to boost opportunities for women and girls in non-traditional trades. (CMTEDD) Establish procurement strategies that prioritise contractors with Gender Equity Strategies. (CMTEDD, CSD) Implement reform activities as identified through consultation processes from Year 1. (All directorates) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilise findings of research to develop and/or adapt policies, practices, training and resources to promote gender equity in schools. (CSD, EDU) Deliver specific community based programs in ACT Libraries. (TCCS) Undertake a post program customer feedback/evaluation to measure the meeting of community needs and customer expectations of specific community based programs in ACT Libraries. (TCCS) Implement programs which support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women to gain post school education and training experiences. (CIT Yurauna Centre, CMTEDD) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorporate the findings of the housing summit as they relate to women. (CSD) Develop and utilise pre-DA Community Consultation guidelines for major development applications, to ensure a broad demographic is represented in community consultation, including women and sub-groups of women. (EPSDD) Consult with the Office for Women during Master Plan, Strategic planning and Territory Plan variations. (EPSDD) Develop tools and checklists for consideration in Master Plans for Group centres, Town Centres, the City Centre and Local centres. (EPSDD, CSD) Promote work experience for young women to consider non-traditional roles in the Directorate. (EPSDD) Review and adapt the Estate Development Plan Code from the perspective of safe and inclusive communities focussing on women, with consideration being given to a mental health plan for new suburbs. (EPSDD) Undertake preliminary evaluation of potential infill sites in terms of empowerment and safety for women, and especially young women aged 15-21, within the established city, particularly focussing around town centres, transport corridors and other key urban renewal locations in the ACT, consistent with the ACT Planning Strategy. (EPSDD) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As a result of the research findings, implement a transport plan as appropriate. (TCCS) Liaise with relevant directorates in the development of TCCS services for women. (TCCS, CSD, Health) 	<p>Review the implementation of actions and identify gaps, successes and lessons learned as they relate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving the culture of respect and equal opportunity; Improving gender equity in educational settings; Improving urban design for women and girls; and Improving transport services for women and girls.
<p>Focus Area Two: Supporting Gender Equality in the ACT Government</p> <p><i>Outcome: Women are valued and empowered contributors to the ACT community and public service.</i></p>	<p>Improving the Evidence Base</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop or procure tools to capture gender disaggregated data for ACT Government services, programs and events. (CSD) <p>Gendered Policy Development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and develop appropriate Gender Impact Statements for use across directorates. (CSD) Review past training modules on Gender Impact Statements and Unconscious Bias to develop recommendations for Whole of Government implementation. (CSD) <p>Culture in the ACT Government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop training for Respect, Equity and Diversity Officers on discrimination, including sex discrimination and sexual harassment in the workplace. (JACSD) Investigate options for external accreditation/citation with national bodies such as ‘Male Champions for Change’ and the Workplace Gender Equity Agency. (CSD) Scope options for the establishment of a women’s network/mentoring program for all women in ACT Government Directorates, particularly targeting women in male dominated areas. (CSD to lead All directorates) Survey women on their experience working in the ACT Public Service to identify opportunities and barriers. (CMTEDD, CSD) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collect and analyse gender disaggregated data for ACT Government services, programs and events, including analysis of the types of programs and events that women are more likely to attend. (All directorates) Include specific consideration of how women will be engaged in relevant ACT Government Consultation Plans. (All directorates) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a central depository of relevant gender based research for use across government policy development, and include Gender Impact Statements in the new triple bottom line framework. (CSD, CMTEDD) Establish Office for Women consultation process for directorates completing Gender Impact Statements. (CMTEDD, CSD) Prepare annual Women’s Budget Statement. (CMTEDD) Develop training package on unconscious bias for use across government. (CSD) Implement Unconscious Bias checklists across government. (CSD to lead all directorates) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer training for Respect, Equity and Diversity Officers on discrimination in the workplace. (JACSD) Implement targets for women in leadership positions across the ACT Government where an under representation is identified. (All directorates) Implement processes for accreditation/citation with external bodies deemed to be the most appropriate for ACT. (CSD to lead Whole of Government) Formalise women’s network/mentoring program based on findings. (CSD, All directorates) Incorporate the findings of the Women’s Survey into policies and practices within the ACT Public Service. (CMTEDD, CSD, All directorates) 	<p>Review the implementation of actions and identify gaps, successes and lessons learned as they relate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving the evidence base; Improving gendered policy development; and Improving culture in the ACT Government.

PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH: RIGHT SERVICES AT THE RIGHT TIME

FOCUS AREAS	YEAR 1 – BUILDING OUR KNOWLEDGE BASE	YEAR 2 – PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS	YEAR 3 – CONSOLIDATION AND PROCESS REVIEW
<p>Focus Area Three: Addressing the Health Needs of Women and Girls</p> <p><i>Outcome: Health services are appropriate for the needs of women and girls.</i></p>	<p>Peri natal Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess ACT requirements to meet the obligations of the <i>National Framework for Maternity Services</i> (once finalised). (Health) Assess the ACT requirements under the ACT Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan (once finalised). (Health) Identify outstanding obligations from the <i>National Maternity Services Plan 2010-2016</i> including the obligation to consider publically funded homebirth. (Health) Monitor 2016 Budget Initiative to strengthen services for women experiencing peri natal depression through PANDSI. (Health) Review screening tools in peri natal services to ensure actual or 'risk of' intimate partner violence is captured. (Health, CSD) <p>Sexual and Reproductive Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Part 6 of the Health Act relating to abortions. (Health) <p>Women and Girls Mental Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research and develop a better understanding of current and emerging mental health issues for women and girls in the ACT, in consultation with the Office for Mental Health, peak bodies and the Australian National University. (CSD) <p>Women and Girls in sport and active lifestyles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a baseline of data relating to participation in sport and active recreation by young women and identify barriers and possible solutions to increase rates of active participation. (CMTEDD, CSD) Hold an Education Forum (teachers, students other stakeholders) to identify practices within schools which promote or discourage girls' participation in sport and active recreation. (CMTEDD) Develop a communications strategy to raise awareness of the impact low activity has on women and girls' health and wellbeing. (CSD, CMTEDD) Engagement of high profile sportswomen to promote benefits of being active and strong in schools. (CSD, EDU, CMTEDD) Engage with peak ACT sporting organisations on the introduction of a requirement for triennially funded organisations to achieve a target of 40 per cent representation of females on their boards by 2020. (CMTEDD, EPSDD) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health Services implement obligations under the <i>National Framework for Maternity Services</i>. (Health) Progress priorities identified in the ACT Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan (once finalised) which include actions relating to the provision of culturally appropriate maternal health services. (Health) Implement and monitor outstanding obligations from the <i>National Maternity Services Plan 2010-2016</i> including the obligation to consider publically funded homebirth. (Health) Services for women experiencing peri natal depression are strengthened through PANDSI. (Health) Implementation of a screening tool for women's safety and intimate partner violence by peri natal screening units. (Health) Health promotion activities are implemented to increase women's understanding of the risks associated with smoking in pregnancy and to ensure they know how to access support. (Health) <p>• Develop and implement legislative amendments to improve accessibility in the ACT to termination services. (Health)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Schools implement student wellbeing and leadership programs targeting the emotional wellbeing of girls and young women. (EDU) Implement programs which address findings of consultations and research undertaken in year one. (To be allocated following research) The ACT Women's Grants program to include the prioritisation of funding for innovative and evidence based projects to promote the emotional and psychological wellbeing of women. (CSD) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop strategies aligned to research findings. (To be allocated following research) Development of an online portal to connect sports women, grow participation and celebrate achievements. (CMTEDD) Ensure sport and recreational infrastructure meets the needs of female participants. (CMTEDD) Annual reporting by peak ACT sporting organisations includes a progress update on the achievement of the 40 per cent target at board level. (CMTEDD, EPSDD) Support and information is provided to women newly appointed to boards of sporting organisations. (CMTEDD, EPSDD) 	<p>Review the implementation of actions and identify gaps, successes and lessons learned as they relate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving peri natal services for women; Improving access to termination services for women; Improving the mental health of women and girls; and Improving opportunities for women and girls to participate in sport and active lifestyles.
<p>Focus Area Four: Information and Services are tailored to the needs of women and girls from diverse backgrounds</p> <p><i>Outcome: Women and girls from diverse backgrounds have access to appropriate information on their health needs, risk factors and options.</i></p>	<p>Accessible Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake research and consultation with community champions to better understand the ACT Health Community Profiles and health needs of women from diverse backgrounds. (Health, CSD) <p>Responsive Services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support community organisations to host forums with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and women with disability. (CSD, Health) Apply a gendered lens to the review the Elder Abuse Prevention Policy, in consultation with peak bodies. (CSD) Investigate the gendered differences for people and children with Autism Spectrum Disorder. (CSD) Intake officers in ACT Health routinely collect information on whether women have a disability and determine their access requirements. (Health) Review of literature and reports regarding culturally and linguistically diverse women's health (in particular maternal and child health issues). (Health) Investigate the ways in which trauma informed care can be incorporated into training for frontline workers. (CSD) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop health promotion materials and activities to address gender specific health, wellbeing and safety needs of women from diverse backgrounds eg. develop addendum to ACT Health Community Profile specific to women. (Health) Create an information pack for ACT GP Surgeries and Schools outlining: Health issues for ACT CALD women and their families; difficulties CALD women face accessing health care; what services are available for CALD families in the ACT; and how GPs and schools can assist CALD families to access assistance. (CSD, Health) Provide support and information to women from diverse backgrounds on family planning and contraception tools. (Health) Information on preventative and screening services is available for women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. (Health) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACT Health will collaborate with the Royal Australian and NZ College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologist to develop a program targeting migrant and refugee women. (Health) Ensure female asylum seekers are aware of health services they are able to access in the ACT is embedded into the process of applying for an Asylum seekers access card. (Health) Implement the findings of the investigation into trauma informed care training for frontline workers. (To be allocated following investigation) Training in the area of cultural competency and working with interpreters is provided to all ACT Health staff. (Health) Ensure access to health services for women and girls from diverse backgrounds. (Health) Ensure access to interpreter services in maternity settings. (Health) Provide outreach of ACT Health services (eg. CDU, allied health professionals, parenting professionals) to multicultural playgroups. (Health) Develop and implement strategies to ensure maternity services are responsive to the needs of women from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, including refugees and asylum seekers. (Health) 	<p>Review the implementation of actions and identify gaps, successes and lessons learned as they relate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving the accessibility of information for women from diverse backgrounds; and Improving the responsiveness of services for women and girls from diverse backgrounds.