



**Future Directions,
Our Council Our Voice –
Driving Cultural Change**

Mid Term Conference Report

Canberra ACT

14 – 16 June 2017

Report on National Council of Women Australia Mid Term Conference

Canberra, 14 – 15 June 2017

Future Directions, Our Council Our Voice – Driving Cultural Change

National President's Message

Following is the National Council of Women Australia (NCWA) mid-term conference report.

The NCWA is a national non-government umbrella organisation and our vision is equity and security for all. NCWA has celebrated 120 years of operation and is a member of International Council of Women (ICW), the world's oldest international women's organisation, and the Asia Pacific Regional Council of ICW.

The conference this year was exciting as we prepared resolutions to submit to Government. We worked on updating our strategic plan and launched the National Council of Young Women Australia by the Minister for Women, Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash, at a breakfast at Parliament House.

The conference examined the underlying and root causes of poverty and homelessness in older women and violence against women. There was a diverse and respected mix of speakers with personal experience, practitioners and academics to inform and educate us not only on the problems that exist, but also the way forward. This report is a summary of the speakers and some recommendations for moving forward to make a difference.

Thank you



Barbara Baikie

President

National Council of Women Australia

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed, citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

— Margaret Mead

The title of this conference appropriately reflected the essence of the issues raised, which addressed gender equality and equity; violence against women; poverty and homelessness of older women; and the launch of The National Council of Young Women.

Day One NCWA Business Section

Barbara Baikie, President NCWA welcomed members for the first business session which began with a workshop led by Margaret Findlater-Smith dealing with the system of the Advisors program. Further work is required to ensure that this program achieves its desired outcome.

Dr Wendy Abigail, Flinders University, gave an address on Advocacy Training, which included useful and practical information on lobbying.

Brigid Hardy, Interaction Consulting, addressed the NCWA Strategic Plan 2013-2018. Some of the topics workshopped included: reflection of the organisation's function, timelines, succession plans, our biggest challenges, equity and security for all.

A wonderful afternoon tea was catered for by the Country Women's Association of NSW – combined Canberra branches.

National Council of Young Women of Australia (NCYWA)

Leadership with integrity – Frances Crimmins (YWCA)

The YWCA Leadership with Integrity session with CEO Francis Crimmins focused on establishing 'values-based' leadership. It included an overview of the YWCA roots, beginning as an organisation providing various activities such as dance and sport to Christian girls and developing into a global network of women leading social and economic change.

Each of the young women was asked to complete a form with a range of questions on their values. This resulted in a thought-provoking discussion, where a number of the participants explained how they arrived at their values and acknowledged that there was a greater discrepancy than expected between their values and their daily activities.

Assertiveness Training – Zoe Routh (Inner Compass)

The third session of the NCYWA workshop day was with Zoe Routh, the Founder and Director of Inner Compass. Zoe used her experiences across a number of different roles in the leadership and development areas to discuss the power and importance of being assertive in theory and in practice. Zoe warned of 'threat triggers' such as uncertainty, status, overwork and belonging, which have the potential to disrupt the ability to act assertively. To respond to these triggers she highlighted the importance of the three Ps:

Presence	being aware in the moment and engaging with purpose
Perspective	seeing the whole picture and appreciating other points of view
Power	understanding your own power and being able to present it

This session proved to be highly engaging, with Zoe sharing stories from the start of her own career, a practice run on conducting 'power poses' for a quick confidence boost and discussions between the young women who were participating.

Communications/media awareness – Genevieve Jacobs (ABC)

Genevieve Jacobs, morning host on ABC radio, ran the second session of the workshop day, discussing her experiences and what she has learned throughout her time working in the media. Genevieve noted that of the 46 daily positions on radio in metropolitan areas, less than one third are held by women. Coming from the perspective of someone who engages with members of the public from all backgrounds and on a daily basis, Genevieve was able to offer the young women many insights.

One of the most important of these was to ensure clear communication in a way that can be understood by the audience.

Herrmann Brain Dominance Instrument – Barbara Baikie (WiCK Consulting)

After dinner we ran through everyone's results for the Herrmann Brain Dominance Instrument. The instrument demonstrates how people tend to think, learn, communicate and make decisions. Barbara explained how our results and the skew between the four quadrants were a reflection of which sides of our brain we tend to use in our thinking processes. The four quadrants included:

1. Rational (Facts) — these people tend to be focused on evidence and prefer to logically work through solutions or numbers to come to a conclusion;
2. Practical (Forms) — tend to be very organised and usually make detailed lists and project plans;
3. Relational (Feelings) — tend to be emotive and understand the needs of others with a strong attachment to people; and
4. Experimental (Future) — the big thinkers – people in this group tend to be very innovative and less convinced about the need for details.

We then did a role play activity to further our understanding of our thinking style and how this can impact how we interact with reasoning and ideas. Everyone was divided into their respective dominant quadrants and groups were asked to write a newspaper article of a scenario using the opposite quadrant (for example, rational for relational, and practical for experimental, and vice versa).

While most groups displayed an over-emphasised depiction of the opposite groups thinking it was interesting to see how different people can perceive a scenario so differently based on the language, facts or emotion used. This session was definitely a highlight and enabled us to self-reflect, appreciate differences of opinion, leadership styles and learning styles and to be open-minded about how others perceive the same situation.

Day Two

The launch of NCYWA at a breakfast held at Parliament House was an enjoyable celebration. Members of NCWA and NCYWA attended along with Members of Parliament and Federal Senators including Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash, Michelle Laundry MP, Emma Husar MP, Senator Jane Hume, Senator Linda Reynolds and Senator Claire Moore, Nicole Lawder MLA and Scott Rankin CEO, Rose Ricketson and other representatives of Big hART, teachers and school students from Mary Mackillop school.

The launch was performed by Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash. Two members of NCYWA, Caitlin Figueiredo and Jessica Perry inspired everyone with their addresses on 'Our Future'.



Members of the National Council of Young Women of Australia with (from L-R), Michelle Laundry MP, Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash, Senator Linda Reynolds (WA) and Barbara Baikie, President of NCWA

After the breakfast, President Barbara Baikie, Robyn Nolan and NCYWA members met briefly with Prime Minister the Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP.



Resolutions (NCWA Members Only)

Following breakfast, the Resolutions Session was led by Margaret Findlater-Smith and Julie Morris.

Eleven resolutions covering a diverse range of topics were discussed and debated. This critical part of the work of NCWA enabled us to engage our newest members – those from the National Council of Young Women of Australia – to see how rational and well-constructed frameworks can assist in guiding groups towards a consensus.

The business was dealt with in respectful ways, despite delegates holding disparate views on some of the topics. The final Resolutions passed are at Appendix A.

Thursday 15 June 2017 afternoon session Vulnerability of Older Women, focus on poverty and homelessness

Each speaker session was facilitated by Catherine McGrath, a familiar figure from her former work with the ABC and SBS who now runs her own media consultancy.

The Conference opening included a Welcome to Country by Aunty Violet Sheridan, Ngunnawal Elder and a Welcome to Delegates by the Governor General, His Excellency Sir Peter Cosgrove AKMC who kindly accepted the invitation on behalf of his wife Lady Cosgrove who was unable to attend. In his address, he spoke about the recent Australian Honours Awards in which women were poorly represented and he encouraged the audience to nominate women who, because of their contribution to our society, should be recognised.

Older Women and Homelessness

Penny Leemhuis, OWLs (Older Women Lost), Social activist and housing affordability advocate
OWLs works towards raising awareness, fighting stigma and creating change.

Penny presented the issues that have contributed to the housing crisis for older women.

OWLs – Older Women Lost in Housing – OWLs that's what I and 680,000 Australian women aged 45 and over who are single and do not or will not own their home by retirement are. We are hidden – and underrepresented – we have no voice – 680,000 women (**currently**), a staggering number of older women lost to Australian society. This housing crisis was created by a tragedy of commons.

Inadequate options for affordable, secure, accessible housing are the result of systemic gender inequities, low wages, little or no superannuation savings, job loss, relationship breakdowns, acquiring an illness or disability, family violence, any one of these life shocks can push an OWL over the precipice into homelessness.

Solutions

- More women to campaign in support of older women in risk of homelessness
- Increased need for stock of public housing
- A peak body for older woman

Economic Security for Older Women

Susan McGrath, National Policy Manager, COTA Australia

Women are in an inferior and increasingly dangerous economic state; leave work with 50% less superannuation; 34% of single women over 60 live in poverty.

Solutions

- Need to consider the economic structure/impacts of unpaid work
- Should have a gender lens to examine program delivery
- Suggest taking a 'life course' approach looking at disadvantage for women because disadvantage compounds over a life time

Difficulties in Navigating the Legal System for Older Women Experiencing Homelessness

Anusha Goonetilleke, Street Law Supervising Solicitor, Canberra Community Law

Women in homelessness often face multiple legal problems/issues. Drivers of homelessness is domestic and family violence, mental and health problems, family breakdown and loss, the lack of affordable accommodation; 80% of their clients come from rent tenancy problems.

CALD women increasingly impacted – as they get older often resorting to mother tongue, lack of resources to deal with this.

Community legal centres have multidisciplinary staff such as a lawyer, social workers and financial advisors and have an outreach service.

Solutions

- Early intervention and outreach needed
- Need for more legal literacy education
- Guaranteed continuity of funding from Government for Community Legal Centres

These speakers were followed by a Panel discussion and small group exercise involving the delegates with a presentation of solutions.

Conference Dinner

Guest speakers were Senator Jane Hume, Senator for Victoria, who spoke about the value of mentoring and Sharon Claydon MP, Member for Newcastle, who included in her presentation programs for the homeless in her electorate.



Senator Jane Hume with NCYWA Victorian members



Sharon Claydon MP, Member for Newcastle with NCYWA members

Friday 16 June 2017 — Rydges Capital Hill Day 3
Vulnerability of Younger Women and Violence against Women
(open to the public)

MAREE Crabbe, Reality and Risk

Maree is co- founder and coordinator of the violence prevention project Reality and Risk: Pornography, young people and sexuality.

Maree quoted statistics which were alarming and confronting

- Pornography \$24.9 bill US / year industry
- 30 per cent of internet traffic is about pornography
- 90 per cent of boys and 60 percent of girls have seen pornography online
- 10 percent viewed it daily and 63 percent weekly. The average age of first access is 12.3 years

Pornography's influence is pervasive. Gonzo porn (violence and rough sex emphasised) is now 95% of pornography material produced, impacting on attitudes of young men around violence against women that it is sex and violence are linked and desirable. The message to the viewer is that women like this because the women participating are either neutral not reacting or showing pleasure.

Young people are most often educated about sex by porn. Problem is most young people hear about porn before they hear about sex and families avoid talking about porn.

Young women report men initiating porn and girls accept it because they want accommodation. Porn confirms gender roles of male dominance and sexual assault becomes normalised.

Solutions

- Limit youth exposure and access
- Encourage and critique what they see, have conversations
- Help to develop skills to resist
- Inspire them to realise that relationships are about respect and sharing

Her website <http://www.itstimewetalked.com.au/>

Root Causes of Violence against Women: Portrayal and Sexualisation of Women in the Media

Professor Margaret Alston OAM, Professor of Social Work and Head of Department, Monash University

Margaret spoke about the slow progress of women's rights from the time when a woman's primary role was assumed to be manager in the home and producer and carer of family until post World War 11 and modern times. She spoke about three women who were not well known, but had made some remarkable achievements in earlier times.

Louisa Lawson had the opportunity to be trained as a teacher, however her mother insisted on keeping her at home for domestic duties and millinery. She later acquired a printing press and for a while published a newspaper called the Republican, later replaced by The Dawn. She wrote poetry, articles and also published the first book of her son Henry.

Muriel Matters, a suffragist, lecturer, journalist, educator, actress and elocutionist. She was very active in working for the Women's Freedom League seeking women's suffrage. She is probably best known for chaining herself to the grille across the Ladies' Gallery in the British House of Commons.

Emma Miller, born 26 June 1839, formed the first Women's Union. In 1891 she was active in supporting the shearers' strike and later became a foundation member of the Workers' Political Organisation. In 1912, during Brisbane general strike, she led a march of women to Parliament House. The Emma Miller Award was established for the efforts of women who have made a significant contribution to their union.

Solutions

- Fight and expose misogyny
- Greater focus on women's historical record – funding gender history and analysis projects
- Gender mainstreaming of policy essential
- Greater role for Office for Women in assessing policy
- Workplace flexibility
- Hold media to account re gender balanced reporting and gender stereotyping

Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash, Minister for Women

Senator the Hon Michaelia Cash, Minister for Women, spoke about maintaining funding for services we value, more promotion of those services which address violence against women and a campaign to change society's perception of these issues was addressed. Senator Cash stated that no women should feel ashamed with violence against women, the shame lies with offender. There is a flip side to technology – is technologically facilitated abuse 'tweets with threats of rape and murder'

Solutions

- Some Government funding for new phones for women who flee violence
- Improving Government funded domestic violence telephone lines where previously only a small percentage of phone calls answered. Have moved to improve
- There is a need for civil penalties
- 'work is a great enabler' and key to economic independence
- Government has launched a 'stop at the start' campaign that has had (millions) views and is having an impact – <https://www.respect.gov.au/>. Stop the excuses and start a conversation



Speakers (L-R) Nathan Costigan, Emma Hussar MP, Kate Jenkins, Australian Sex Discrimination Commission, Professor Margaret Alston OAM and Maree Crabbe

Root Cause of Violence against Women

Kate Jenkins, Sex Discrimination Commissioner

Kate is leading a number of projects at the Australian Human Rights Commission, including conducting a national survey on sexual harassment and sexual assault at university and continuing the Commission's collaborative project on cultural reform with the Australian Defence Force.

Kate is the convener of the Victorian Male Champions of Change group and the Co-Chair of Play by the Rules, a joint project between human rights agencies and sports commissions to make grass roots sports safe, fair and inclusive.

Kate said there is still not enough progress on gender equality, particularly in workplaces, so little has changed. Progress on gender equality is reflected in the statistics

- 1 woman per week dies from violence by an intimate partner;
- 16% -20% pay gap;
- 1 in 3 women experience sexual harassment;
- 1 in 4 experience sexual assault; and
- women retire on considerably less income.

Kate stated gender inequality is at the heart of violence against women. We need to change the "story" and the framework for gender equality where we live, work, play and learn. She said that change takes action, for example, when Australia Post agreed to have a new 'free re-direction of mail' program when women leave a violent home. They were made safer by not having to reveal and pay for the redirection of mail. She called for more action. She said the priorities should be:

- address the epidemic of violence against women;
- women need economic security;
- we need women's voices in key places.
- Women are disadvantaged at every level within most organisations, and at every stage of career progression 'at every gateway women are disadvantaged by systems and assumptions'



Libby Lyons with NCW WA President Robyn Nolan

Driving Workplace Gender Equality

Libby Lyons, Director Workplace Gender Equality Agency

Libby Lyons is the Director of the Workplace Gender Equality Agency. She oversees a statutory reporting process which gathers gender equality data from over 12,000 employers and covers more than 4 million Australian employees. Libby, in leading the Agency, is focused on working closely with employers to create workplaces in which the skills, experience and ambitions of employees are equally recognised and rewarded, regardless of their gender.

The idea that change takes time lets people off the hook – ‘change takes action’

- Gender pay gap 23.1% full time pay gap is \$26,853
- Women in leadership 16.33 of CEOs and 28.5 on KMPs are women
- 70% of employers had an overall policy for gender equality
- 39.3 of employers have a domestic violence policy/strategy

Surveys of gender inequality show that men’s and women’s perception of the problem is very different. There is a need to hold managers to account for gender equality and to link to manager KPIs (less than a ¼ of equality plans are linked to KPIs).

Some useful websites:

- Gender Strategy Toolkit https://www.wgea.gov.au/sites/default/files/Gender_Strategy_Toolkit.pdf
- Diagnostic Toolkit https://www.wgea.gov.au/sites/default/files/Gender_Strategy_Toolkit_diagnostic.xlsx
- Setting Gender Targets <https://www.wgea.gov.au/lead/setting-gender-targets>
- Employee Survey <https://www.wgea.gov.au/lead/consulting-employees>

Solutions

- Urgent economic modelling needed.
- Collect data
- Link manager performance with KPIs

This session was followed by a panel discussion and a question and answer session, which included Maree Crabbe and Professor Margaret Alston as well as Emma Husar, Member for Lindsay NSW, and Nathan Costigan from the Tara Costigan Foundation, Canberra.

Nathan Costigan, growing impact with men (via football club) to stop abusive language and try to drive behaviour. Encouraged endorsement of good male behaviour/attitudes.

Emma Husar MP, video of Parliamentary speech on domestic violence has gone viral; starting to impact on view of policy and collection of data sets.

Male Champions of Change – What we can do

Ken Morrison, Chief Executive Officer Property Council of Australia

Ken outlined the progress that has been made through the Property Council in creating prosperity, jobs and strong communities. Property is both a major part of the household balance sheet and the Australian economy. It is Australia’s biggest industry and the nation’s second largest employer. Australia needs a strong property industry now more than ever.

The Property Council is committed to building a diverse and inclusive industry. This includes establishing and funding the Property Male Champions of Change who are working to achieve a significant and sustainable increase in the number of women in senior leadership positions in the property industry. The initiative builds on the transformational work achieved by the founding Male Champions of Change group established in April 2010 by Elizabeth Broderick, the Sex Discrimination Commissioner of the Australian Human Rights Commission.

The Property Council has also formed Women in Property and Diversity Committees across Australia and their work includes conducting female mentoring programs, research initiatives, new event formats and professional development initiatives. Furthermore, we have set ourselves a target of female committee representation across the Property Council of 40 per cent by 2017.

We have also taken The Panel Pledge, ensuring gender diversity on every panel at our events.

Other initiatives include an inaugural national roundtable meeting of our diversity committees at The Property Congress 2015 and the development of a diversity strategy for the industry that looks beyond gender.

Solutions

- Communicate the business case in business language
- Leadership from the top
- Does the research reveal the facts
- Need disruptive strategies – bold targets aren't enough
- Commitment

Violence against Women and Homelessness

The Hon Linda Burney MP, Member for Barton in Indigenous communities NSW, Shadow Minister for Human Services

The Hon Linda Burney MP outlined the impact of violence linked to intergenerational trauma in Indigenous communities 'so poor many can't imagine a future', 'the past is who we are', history cannot be ignored or passed over.

Depth of problem hard to imagine because where there is domestic violence in small communities, often there is nowhere to escape to. There is no housing and no services in remote communities.

Grandmothers are raising many children; still great lack of services and Indigenous community funded support.



Solutions

- History be acknowledged
- Better Indigenous community funded support for housing and services, particularly in remote communities

Cultural Change – How We Can Change

Sonia Irwin, Founder and Director of Redgrass Communications

Sonia talked about factors to consider when trying to change behaviour. Do the people who need to change have the skills required?

Questions to ask:

- Who needs to change and why? What is the time frame?
- What is in it for the people who need to change?
- Actions are needed to change behaviour.

Gender Equity – Political Participation

Professor Marian Sawer AO, FASSA, Emeritus Professor and Public Policy Fellow, ANU Canberra

In Australia the norms of leadership are largely masculine. 100 countries have legislation or party rules that regulate targets for women representation in politics.

One big issue is donation rules, because with no limit on donations/overseas donations, this can impact negatively on women as they tend to have smaller budgets to deal with.

Gender Equity – Leading Change in the Public Service

Lin Hatfield Dodds, Deputy Secretary for Social Policy, Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

In the Australian Public Service there is a lot being done and rates of employment for women are improving, but in some ways we are also 'sleepwalking'. Women are still locked out of many leadership roles. Most improvements are Anglo – not yet impacting significantly on CALD communities.

SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS:

Vulnerability of Older Women – Focus on Poverty and Homelessness

Federal Government

1. NCWA calls on the Federal Government to introduce superannuation reform. These reforms to include legislation for the removal of the \$450 minimum for superannuation to be paid from one employer and legislation for superannuation to be included in the Government parental leave payment.
2. NCWA calls on the Federal Government to consider placing a value on unpaid work and provide an age pension bonus to women for approximate hours of unpaid work over their lifetime, when they were out of the workforce.
3. NCWA calls on the Federal Government to introduce training programs and internships for older women (over 55) to assist them in re-entering the workforce. The training should include motivational, work ready and skills components.
4. NCWA calls on the Federal Government to address the gender pay gap by requiring reports on what the gender pay gap is and how Government and businesses are addressing it.
5. NCWA calls on the introduction of a pilot program with a not-for-profit organisation to introduce information/training forums for women while in crisis accommodation.

All Governments

1. NCWA contact State and Territory Governments to advocate for an increase in public housing stock. It is also necessary to encourage governments to review and reform the time a number of housing stock sit vacant.
2. NCWA calls on the Local Government peak body in each State and the ACT Government to advocate for Department of Planning and Environments to insert a provision in local Government Environmental Plans to allow a floor space bonus for the provision of transitional group homes. These group homes would be available longer term than shelter and crisis accommodation and along the lines of the proposal of the Hills Shire Council (July 2017).
3. NCWA calls on Governments (Local, State and Federal) and community organisations to provide service hubs including legal services to support women, as they often need a range of services and find it difficult to access the services they need.
4. NCWA to contact the Federal, State and the ACT Government calling for a gender impact statement for all budget initiatives and legislation introduced into the Parliament.
5. NCWA calls on Governments (Local, State and Federal) and community organisations to advocate for a promotional campaign to ensure women who may be homeless or at risk of homelessness to be aware of “Ask Izzy”. “Ask Izzy” was launched in March 2016 and is a free, location based online directory. It is an easy to use tool, free to use on the Telstra network, which can connect people to find food, shelter, health and other critical support services. Service providers submit up-to-date information using the “Ask Izzy” website. Infoxchange developed “Ask Izzy” in partnership with Google, REA Group and News Corp Australia.

Vulnerability of Younger Women and Violence against Women

Federal Government

1. NCWA contact the Attorney General to advocate for a domestic violence court. The court could include special judiciary working in the area and have all cases held on specific days. While this action may be more difficult to introduce in rural areas (a travelling circuit judge) it could be encouraged as trials in courts which have larger numbers of cases. NCWA advocates in appropriate situations, males are evicted from the family home.
2. NCWA calls on all family law professionals including judges, lawyers, registrars, family dispute resolution practitioners and family court reporters to receive training to strengthen knowledge in matters concerning family violence.
3. NCWA calls on Governments (Local, State and Federal) and community organisations to provide service hubs including legal services to support women as they often need a range of services and find it difficult to access the services they need.
4. NCWA advocate for an increase in funding from the Federal Government, Telstra and Women's Services Network (WESNET) for expanding the provision of smartphones and training for frontline services to help domestic violence victims understand how to use their smartphone safely. Currently the Government is providing \$2.5 million to WESNET to distribute smartphones and provide training.
5. NCWA write to the Minister for Women to advocate for additional funding and/or sponsorships and structures for the 1800 Respect National Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence Counselling Service to be able to respond to all calls to the Hotline. NCWA encourages all constituent councils to contact universities in each State and the ACT to assist in sponsorship and promotion of the Hotline.
6. NCWA write to the Minister for Women endorsing the immediate practical actions released as part of the "Women's Safety Package". These measures assist in providing a safety net for women and children at high risk of experiencing violence; however, much more work needs to be done.
7. NCWA calls on the Federal Government to guarantee the funding of community legal centres over the "forward estimates" and beyond.
8. NCWA calls on the Federal, State and Local Governments and businesses to introduce arrangements for more flexible working hours and to report on them.
9. NCWA contact the Federal Minister for Education to advocate for the removal of Government impediments to ensure flexible and affordable child care.
10. NCWA to review the recommendations when the final report from the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs inquiry is released on how the federal family law system should be improved to better protect those affected by family violence.
11. Better Indigenous community funded support for housing and services, particularly in remote communities.

All Governments

1. NCWA calls on Federal, State and the ACT Government to take an early intervention and prevention approach to develop a coordinated educational and advertising campaign to undertake cultural change in attitudes toward women, such as the anti-smoking campaigns. This would include information about the prevalence of pornography (around 30% of all internet traffic) and how to combat it.
2. NCWA encourage State and the ACT Councils to advocate for the expansion of the specialised domestic violence units to provide access to coordinated legal, social work and cultural services for women.
3. NCWA encourage State and the ACT Councils to advocate for legal change from State governments to allow outreach legal services to work with local hospitals including women from CALD communities.
4. NCWA calls on Federal, State and the ACT Government to develop within schools a coordinated educational program about respectful relationship towards girls and women.

Other:

1. NCWA calls on the community to elevate domestic violence to our national consciousness and continue to advocate that domestic, family and sexual violence is unacceptable in any circumstances.
2. NCWA recognises that gender equality still has a long road ahead; however, it is incumbent on all to continue to call out disadvantage at every opportunity. Acknowledge and support women and men in non-traditional roles.
3. NCWA calls on all employers to create flexible workplaces in which the skills, experience and ambitions of employees are equality recognised and rewarded regardless of gender.
4. Hold media to account re gender balanced reporting and gender stereotyping. Contact ABC to conduct a media watch with a gender lens.

The session concluded with a group session and workshop on solutions and the closing address by Barbara Baikie, President NCWA.

This was an excellent conference and the standard of the speakers and the papers they presented was outstanding. There was much to consider and much to be done in addressing the issues of poverty and homelessness in older women, violence against women and gender equity. This conference has set a high standard for resolving these issues through information sharing, raising awareness, addressing continued funding, working at the grassroots, in the workplace and the community and advocacy with governments at all levels as well as in the corporate and business sectors.

My thanks to Robyn Nolan, Catherine McGrath, Coral Fleming, Wendy Saclier, Lynne Lawler, Lyn Buckley, Ruchira Kakkad, Clare Caitcheon, and Kate Wright for contributions to this report.



NCWA Treasurer Angela Diamond, NCWA Secretary Yvonne Robson



The Governor General, His Excellency the Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC (Retd),
Noela O'Donnell AM, Alison Muir and Lyn Buckley, NCWQ President

Appendix 1 – Resolutions

Eleven resolutions covering a diverse range of topics were discussed. The following resolutions were passed by NCWA members.

1. NCWA urges the Federal Government to give priority to strategies combating global warming by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and promoting renewable energy, whilst ensuring energy security, given the implication for Australia’s environment and such unique ecosystems as the Great Barrier Reef.
2. NCWA noting that the 2016 Women’s Health Charter call for more research on gender differences in the diagnosis and treatment of non-communicable disease and chronic conditions including heart disease.
3. NCWA urge the Federal Government to make concerted action to provide economic security for women in retirement, as outlined in the Senate Inquiry Report “A husband is not a retirement plan” Achieving Economic Security for Women in Retirement April 2016. That actions to address the gender pay gap and to provide incentive to employers to have a “no gender pay gap” policy and assist women to maintain superannuation contributions during times of time out from the paid workforce, so that the outcome of “no woman being disadvantaged at the time of retirement” be achieved.
4. NCWA calls on the Federal Government to conduct a House of Representatives committee inquiry into residential aged care, the inquiry to be wide ranging and include all aspects of residential aged care.
5. NCWA calls on the Federal Government to introduce a “Catch Up” promotional immunisation program, to be part of the Immunise Australia Program to encourage adults over 20 to become, and continue to be, fully immunised.
6. NCWA urges all constituent councils in Australia to write to their State and Territory Governments requesting they put in place increased financial incentives and remove disincentives for affordable housing to alleviate housing stress and homelessness.
7. NCWA requests the Federal Government to introduce adequate rental assistance to assist those who are in recognised need, to keep them from becoming homeless and equate more reasonably with the average wage earned by the majority of women, recognising that this is lower than the average wage earned by men.
8. NCWA calls on federally funded sporting organisations to provide gender equality for travel, accommodation and remuneration for male and female sporting teams.
9. NCWA supports the adoption of a Modern Slavery Act, similar to that operating in the United Kingdom, at the earliest opportunity by the Australian Parliament.

Two resolutions were deferred, relating to Herpes Zoster (Shingles) vaccination for older Australians and accommodation options for mental health clients.

The National Council of Women Australia sincerely thanks our sponsors for their support of the Mid-term Conference and National Council of Young Women Sub Committee launch.



The NCWA would also like to thank our conference app sponsors

