

NSW Women's Advisory Council

Communique 16 September 2024

The NSW Women's Advisory Council was convened in person and virtually attended by:

Council members

- The Hon. Jodie Harrison MP - Chair
- Belinda Cashman - member
- Janine Farah - member
- Jill Duncan - member
- Julie Perkins - member
- Karen Price - member
- Lisa Annese - member
- Mariam Mourad - member
- Marlene Krasovitsky - member
- Tara Hunter – member
- Gill White (Deputy Secretary, Social Policy and Intergovernmental Relations, The Cabinet Office) – ex-officio
- Tanya Smyth (Director, Women NSW) – ex-officio

Other attendees

- Professor Martha Hickey (Department of Obstetrics, Gynaecology and Newborn Health, University of Melbourne and the Royal Women's Hospital, Victoria) - presenter
- Leona Wedderburn (Senior Associate, Women NSW)
- Alex Haigh (Assistant Associate)

Apologies

- Violet Roumeliotis AM – member
- Elise Coppins - member
- Elizabeth Hill - member

The Women's Advisory Council met on 16 September 2024 for the third meeting of the calendar year.

Minister's update

The Minister for Women provided a Domestic and Family Violence and Sexual Assault portfolio update, including on recent National Cabinet and Women and Women's Safety Ministerial Council meetings to discuss next steps to accelerate action to end gender-based violence in a generation.

The Minister provided an update on the launch of Pathway to Prevention: NSW Strategy for the Prevention of Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence 2024-2027. The Council and Minister discussed the recent focus on the primary prevention approach.

The Minister also spoke to the upcoming NSW and South Australian Social Media Summit, scheduled for 10 and 11 October.

Member updates

Council members shared key updates from their work and networks since the 24 June meeting. The Council asked for this to be integrated as a standing item, giving members more time to share professional developments.

Stakeholder presentation: Professor Martha Hickey on an empowerment model of menopause

Professor Hickey discussed growing research into an empowerment model of menopause. The ideas and initiatives discussed include:

- [In My Prime website](#), providing evidence-based health and wellbeing information,
- [Flesh after Fifty](#) art exhibition, highlighting the representation of older women in art,
- [Menopause Information Pack for Organizations \(MIPO\)](#) & menopause friendly workplaces,
- Professor Hickey's research into understanding self-care for menopause,
- Other new areas in menopause research, including [the Menopause Priority Setting Partnership](#) which will identify global top priorities for those experiencing menopause.

The Council suggested the possibility of proposing to the NSW Government that it consider advancing a similar art project to those mentioned within Professor Hickey's presentation. It was suggested that potential exhibitions could highlight the diversity of women's experiences and be linked to resources and materials, particular social issues, or health information.

The Minister discussed the recent opening of the new Hunter New England Menopause Hub, which will provide specialist support for individuals experiencing complex menopause symptoms based out of the Wallsend Health Campus.

Gender lens to inquiries and reviews proposal

The Council emphasised that action on gender equality is not the sole responsibility of the Minister for Women but requires whole-of-government prioritisation. The Council will develop a request to the Minister to raise these matters to Cabinet colleagues, containing three key components which will address:

1. Government initiated inquiries
2. Parliamentary inquiries
3. Department and agency responses

Women NSW, as Secretariat, will work with the Council to draft this formal communication.

Strategic Planning working session

The Council finalised the draft SMART actions developed out of the Strategic Plan and during out-of-session meetings. Members discussed the practical elements of the actions and reached agreements on the wording and timeframes of each action. These have been edited further by the Secretariat and will be finalised with the Council out of session.

Planning for future Council meetings

The Council advised the Minister of a preference for nominating a member to assume a Chair position to strengthen the effectiveness of the Council. The Secretariat will determine the process for appointing from existing Council members through an Expression of Interest and seek endorsement of relevant amendments to the Council's Terms of Reference.

The Council also highlighted the upcoming end of current membership terms. The Secretariat has begun looking at the process for extending terms. Members will be notified of their reappointment as soon as possible and will accompany amendments to the Terms of Reference.

End of Communique