



**BEECHWORTH
HEALTH SERVICE**

GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLAN 2021-2025

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Message from the CEO

The BHS 2021 - 2025 Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) sets the direction for gender equality ambitions within the health service and describes how we can continue to work toward and maintain a more gender equitable workforce.

The GEAP is a key feature of forward strategy within which we declare our commitment and codify our actions to becoming an inclusive workplace where all staff members feel safe, valued and can thrive.

Our organisational Vision and our Values reflect the importance of working together as a team, mutual respect, and building a health service that celebrates diversity in our workers and in our community.

Our GEAP has been and will remain fashioned through the voice of our workers and our community. Our plans for action will define our focus, inform our resource allocations, and will describe what success looks like. Our plans for action will hold us to account and allow us to embrace our achievements and to continue to identify opportunities for improvement. strengthen our weaknesses.

I commend our plan to you, and in doing so, I draw your attention to each of our respective roles and responsibilities within it.

BHS welcomes all people.

List of Acronyms

BHS – Beechworth Health Service

CALD - Culturally and Linguistically Diverse

GEAP - Gender Equality Action Plan

GE - Gender Equality

LGBTIQA+ - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Gender Diverse, Intersex, Queer, Asexual and Questioning.

Gender Equality Action Plan



Overview

The [Gender Equality Act 2020](#) aims to improve workplace gender equality in the Victorian public sector, universities and local councils.

Under the Act, Beechworth Health Service (BHS) is required to develop and implement a Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) every four years. Each GEAP must include the results from a (1) workplace gender audit (in relation to the [workplace gender equality indicators](#)) and (2) strategies for achieving workplace gender equality in light of those results.

In developing our 2021-2025 GEAP, we are undertaking consultation across the workforce including with the BHS Board, employees, employee representatives (e.g., relevant unions) and using existing workplace consultative mechanisms, to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to provide input and feedback on how we might improve workplace gender equality at BHS.

Below is a summary of our workplace gender audit results (collated from existing workforce data and the 2021 'People Matter Survey' employee experience survey results), as well as some identified areas and proposed strategies for improvement over the next four years. We welcome your input, thoughts and feedback on these, as well as any other suggestions you might have to help us become a more gender equitable workplace, thank you.

Executive Summary



BHS has reestablished a Staff Health & Wellbeing sub-Committee which includes Gender Equality.

It is through this sub-Committee that staff received training and implemented workplace and community initiatives to support changes and rethinking of attitudes and behaviours towards women.

BHS has successfully trained 100% of employees and managers in family violence, and developed tools and relationships to support our staff and community.

When the announcements were made by the Victoria Gender Equality Commissioner that the Gender Equality Act 2020 was being prepared and that BHS would need to prepare an Action Plan, the committee continued to work together to support the project.

The audit undertaken in 2021 shows there are some significant gaps in data collection in key areas. These gaps include data on age, aboriginality, disability, cultural identity, religion and sexual orientation. There is also a lack of data collection around employee promotion, accessing career development, recruitment and exits from the workplace.

Some of the key insights from the audit included:

- BHS has not received any sexual harassment complaints through Human Resources, although staff reported via the 'People Matter Survey' that there was 9% respondent rate that experienced sexual harassment.

- A higher percentage of females than males were recruited and exited the organisation than males.

From the insights, data gaps and consultation feedback, the information was used to develop an Action Plan for BHS. This report highlights the strategies developed to improve gender equality in the workplace. It is intended that a broad range of staff will work collaboratively including the Staff Health & Wellbeing sub-Committee to improve working conditions and create opportunities using an intersectional approach.

In developing our 2021-2025 GEAP, we consulted extensively across the workforce including:-

- BHS Board – Board presentation Gender Equity project updates
- employees, - Workplace Gender audit, CEO memo to all staff, presentation to Leadership team, presentation to staff work groups, monthly Gender Equity project updates to FRITS committee, presentation loaded onto staff intranet, discussed at Orientation with all new staff,
- employee representatives Letter sent to Unions requesting input into GEAP
- and existing workplace consultative mechanisms, Staff Health and Wellbeing sub-committee, FRITS Committee, weekly Leadership meetings, People Matter Survey, updated Application for Employment form

to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to provide input and feedback on how we might improve workplace gender equality at BHS and complete action items contained in the GEAP.

A Case for Change

Gender equality is a shared responsibility across the community. BHS is committed to improving the workplace culture and environment and understands that making changes in gender equality will not only benefit BHS, but the community as a whole. BHS is committed to applying an intersectional approach with fit strategies and measures to use in the action plan.

BHS Values

Respect

Unity

Integrity

Innovation

Excellence

Guiding Principles

Women and gender equality - BHS recognises the barriers faced by women, gender diverse persons and intersectional groups of women and we have a commitment to help remove these barriers.

Intersectional - BHS acknowledges the multifaceted experiences of women and gender diverse groups. Gender and discrimination are interconnected and cannot be examined in isolation.

Evidence based planning - Decisions and actions are based on research, data and best practice approaches to gender equity.

Collaboration - Collaboration and partnership at all levels of the health service are crucial to social change.

BHS's Gender Equality Work to Date

During 2019-2021 BHS introduced a number of gender equality initiatives targeted at our employees

To date the following has been achieved:

- Ongoing bullying and harassment training, including sexual harassment and bystander training.
- Annual training around family violence for all staff.
- Re-establishment of Staff Health & Wellbeing sub-Committee.
- Introduction of a new recruitment and onboarding system to better capture disability, cultural identity and religion

1. Workplace Gender Audit Results

Gender Composition of Workforce and Governing Body

- the overall gender composition of the workforce is 85% women and 15% men.²
- the gender composition of the Board is 56% women and 44% men.
- the percentage of women gradually declines as we move up role classification levels and is lowest (66%) at one reporting level below the Chief Executive.
- 0% of the workforce identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, of which 74% are women.
- 0% of the workforce have a disability (People Matter survey).
- 14% of the workforce were born overseas (People Matter survey).

Pay Equity

- there has been no pay inequity detected at BHS. Being a small organisation with only the CEO not covered under an EBA the staff are paid depending on their experience and years of qualification.
- Gender has not been identified as a pay issue.

¹ Key to reporting levels below Chief Executive: 1 level = Executive, 2 levels = Manager, 3 levels = Professionals, 4 levels = Technical and Trade, 5 levels = Community and 6 levels = Clerical.

² It should be noted that our existing workforce systems only allow for the collection of binary gender data, as such, non-binary gender data is not formally collected. In the anonymous 2021 People Matter employee experience survey results, the reported gender composition of the workforce was: 79% women, 21% men, 0% identified as non-binary and 0% opted not to disclose their gender.

Recruitment and Promotion

- by classification level, the percentage of women recruited is lowest (59%) for roles one reporting level away from the Chief Executive.
- by employment contract type, the percentage of women recruited is lowest for full-time fixed term contract (61%) and highest employment type is part-time fixed term contract (87%) employment.
- by classification level, the percentage of women who resigned is highest in senior leadership roles and lowest for those in roles three reporting levels below the Chief Executive.
- by employment type, the percentage of women who exited is highest for part-time permanent (88%) and lowest for full-time fixed term contract (55%) employment.

Flexible Leave

- 3% of the workforce have formal flexible work arrangements, of these 93% are women.
- by classification level, formal flexible work arrangements are only held by those in roles two, three and four classification levels below the Chief Executive.
- 5% of the workforce took parental leave in the reporting period, of these 100% were women.
- 31% of the workforce accessed careers leave, of which 84% were women.
- 0.01% of the workforce accessed family violence leave, and of these, 100% were women.

Gendered Segregation

- 46% of the workforce are health professionals, of which 84% are women.
- occupations in which women are predominantly represented include nursing and clerical and administrative work, while occupations in which men are predominantly represented include maintenance and gardening.

2. Potential Strategies for Achieving Workplace Gender Equality

In analysing our workplace gender audit results, we have identified the following areas for improvement and have proposed some possible strategies on how we might go about making positive progress on these over the next four years:

- Representation of women in senior leadership roles
 - career path planning, leadership development programs and experiences to support women in applying for senior roles – most senior roles are held by women who BHS have supported in undertaking a Leadership development course.
- Workforce diversity
 - BHS applies an equal opportunity discipline to all recruitment activities and strongly encourages applications from ATSI and people living with a disability to apply.
- Workplace equality and inclusion
 - develop resources and build awareness of gender equality, including how gender intersects with other attributes to produce inequity – BHS covers gender equality in our orientation program for all new workers.
 - BHS has reinvigorated the Healthy Workplace Sub-Committee. This Sub-Committee will investigate gender equality and inclusion
- Pay equity for women
 - embed gender pay equity in remuneration policies and practices
- Prevention of sexual harassment and support to report harm
 - increase confidence of women to report harm by building awareness and knowledge of sexual harassment and improving support and reporting mechanisms
- Recruitment and promotion
 - Support ongoing gender stereotypes and roles by creating opportunities and supporting employees to consider non-traditional gendered occupational roles
- Access to and utilisation of flexible leave and work options
 - increase promotion and knowledge of flexible leave and work options and actively encourage and embed utilisation by employees of all genders
 - provide ongoing communication and education about family violence and build awareness of available workplace support and leave options
- Gender data collection
 - upgrade existing workforce systems to close gaps in gender equality data collection to support more nuanced analysis and reporting against the workplace gender equality indicators over time.

BHS Gender Equality Action Plan 2021-2025 Indicator 1

Objectives	Actions and interventions	Timeframes	Process and Impact indicators	Evaluation Methods	Responsibility	Progress	Key Results
Indicator 1	Workplace gender equality.						
1. BHS Will apply intersectional recruitment and promotion practices in the workplace.	To develop diversity data collection mechanism that gathers, monitors and reports on the Gender Equality Act and workplace gender equality indicators.	By 2025	Number of recruitment and promotions taken place since data collection tool set up.	Evidence of data collection tool in place.	HR Manager	100%	BHS obtained legal advice. This data collection is not mandatory and therefore BHS has decided to remove the intersectional employment questions due to concerns over discrimination
2. To Collect intersectionality data on all current staff at BHS.	To design and administer an intersectionality survey to current staff.	By 2024	Number of survey responses received. Number of times survey is promoted to staff.	Evident of survey. PMS Survey results.	HR Manager Staff Health & Wellbeing Sub-Committee	100%	PMS live 10/10/22-28/10/22 Results to follow PMS completed. 83 respondents/190 surveys distributed. All staff have been surveyed via this method.
3. To apply a gender lens over each department at BHS.	To analyze the current workforce and determine the gender imbalance between departments.	By 2023	Number of identified gender imbalances found.	Copy of analysis report.	Staff Health & Wellbeing Sub-Committee HR Manager Department Heads.	100%	Analysis completed Female quota for female Board Directors. Equal opportunity for all applicants. Appointments are based on merit. No gender imbalance determined

BHS Gender Equality Action Plan 2021-2025 Indicator 2

Objectives	Actions and interventions	Timeframes	Process and Impact indicators	Evaluation Methods	Responsibility	Progress	Key Results
Indicator 2	Workplace gender equality.						
1. To set targets for recruitment of diverse persons to BHS Board of Directors	<p>To recruit at least 1 Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islander on the Board of Directors.</p> <p>To recruit a least 1 person from a CALD background to the Board of Directors.</p> <p>To recruit 1 person with a disability onto the Board of Directors.</p>	By 2025	<p>Number and gender of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders on the Board.</p> <p>Number and gender of CALD representatives on the Board.</p> <p>Number and gender of disability representatives on the Board.</p>	<p>Reporting at various levels via Gender Equality reporting tool.</p> <p>Observation.</p>	<p>Department of Health.</p> <p>CEO/ Board Directors.</p>	100%	<p>Defined in BHS Board skills matrix</p> <p>Normal Board recruitment process Makes provision for the recruitment of people culturally diverse backgrounds and disabilities</p>
2.To conduct gender quality audit of all BHS governance sub committees.	<p>Gather data on gender balance on sub committees.</p> <p>Conduct an anonymous survey to further identify intersectional groups.</p>	By 2025	<p>Number of gender imbalance identified through the audit.</p> <p>Number and type of staff completing survey.</p>	<p>Copy of analysis report.</p> <p>BHS Website for director profiles.</p> <p>Minuted in October/November 2023 board meeting</p>	CEO/	100%	<p>Sub committee charter and annual work plan is reviewed which forms the audit.</p> <p>Audit completed.</p> <p>Commitment to Gender Equality membership has been incorporated into FAC charter, CGC charter and Board code of governance document July 2023</p> <p>BHS board directors</p>

							Are required under the aged legislation to be provided the opportunity to disclose/profile any intersectionality and diversity that is important to them.
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BHS Gender Equality Action Plan 2021-2025 Indicator 3 & 4

Objectives	Actions and interventions	Timeframes	Process and Impact indicators	Evaluation Methods	Responsibility	Progress	Key Results
Indicator 3	Equal remuneration for work of equal or comparable value across all levels of the workforce, irrespective of gender.						
1. To apply an intersectionality lens and review pay gap on CEO and executive levels.	Apply intersectionality lens pay review comparing against similar sized organisations.	By 2025	Number of roles where pay review conducted. No. of identified intersectionality pay gaps identified.	Intersectionality pay review.	Payroll/ HR Manager	100%	Workforce data reviewed and submitted to Commission 2021 (Exec are paid under an EBA apart from 1 x PEERS contract (CEO). 2 x female 1 x male
Indicator 4	Sexual harassment in the workplace.						
1.Improve reporting of sexual harassment within BHS.	To ensure reporting processes for Instances of sexual harassment at BHS are promoted.	By 2023	Number of times prompting materials are promoted with BHS.	Copy of updated policy. Copy of reporting procedure and / or	HR Manager FRITS Committee	100%	In policy Policy of the month promoted yearly PMS Orientation

	<p>Implement processes to ensure that reporting has adequate response timeframe. Put adequate support mechanisms in place.</p> <p>Promotion of clear reporting pathways for staff e.g. who to report to and how to report.</p>			<p>other documents introduced.</p> <p>Copy of any promotion material.</p>			<p>Annual performance appraisal question</p> <p>Training – online</p>
2.To promote and educate staff on sexual harassment.	<p>Continue with annual training. Set up internal campaign that answers the Who. What. Why. When of reporting</p>	Ongoing	<p>Number of new sexual harassment reports since campaign.</p>	<p>Copy of promotional material.</p> <p>Evidence of data collection tool. PMS survey and focus groups.</p>	SDO	100%	<p>mandatory annual online training</p> <p>SHREV</p> <p>Prevention & Management of Workplace Bullying, Harassment & Discrimination</p> <p>schedule critical policies as policy of the month annually</p> <p>Covered in organization wide orientation. OHS & key messages & HR</p> <p>Link back to PMS, cover memo to staff to accompany related policy of the month org 139</p> <p>Explore availability of external resources to assist our campaign</p>

							Positive relationships – Leadership Victoria, unable to assist
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BHS Gender Equality Action Plan 2021-2025 Indicator 5

Objectives	Actions and interventions	Timeframes	Process and Impact indicators	Evaluation Methods	Responsibility	Progress	Key Results
Indicator 5	Recruitment and promotion practices in the workplace.						
1. Continue to develop new recruitment and onboarding systems to ensure capture of gender composition data on recruitment.	Data collection system to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginally Disability Age Ethnicity and race. Gender 	By 2025	Number of recorded recruitments to the workplace.	Copy of analysis report.	HR Manager. Payroll	100%	Age and ethnicity and race data is captured in recruitment processes.
2.Continue to develop new recruitment and onboarding system to ensure capture of gender composition data on exit from the workplace.	Data collection system to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginally Disability Age Ethnicity and race. Gender 	By 2025	Number of recorded exits from the workplace.	Copy of analysis report.	CEO/ EA	Review Exit interview policy to include provisions of data caption 50% complete	Age and ethnicity and race data is captured in recruitment Hume Region new Implementation of new onboarding software. Review HR39 (frits Nov) Captured on application of employment.

							<p>Check policy, add into KPI Culture report and re profile exit interviews. Do you have any comments to BHS commitment to Gender Equality.</p> <p>Sought and acted on advice to omit the following fields from data collection. Disability, Sexual preference. Review IT onboarding form to include Pronouns. Review HR65 to include Pronouns and reference to IT Policy ad reference to IT Policy in HR65</p>
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BHS Gender Equality Action Plan 2021-2025 Indicator 6

Objectives	Actions and interventions	Timeframes	Process and Impact indicators	Evaluation Methods	Responsibility	Progress	Key Results
Indicator 6	Availability and utilisation of terms, conditions and practice relating to family violence leave, flexible working arrangements and working arrangements supporting workers with family or caring responsibilities.						
1. To develop a system to collect flexible work arrangements with staff.	Data collection system to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginally Disability Age Ethnicity and race. 	By 2023	Number of recorded flexible work arrangements with the workplace.	Spreadsheet of staff with flexible work arrangements including intersectional data.	HR Manager.	100%	Outlined in policy and EBA System is developed Arrangements by negotiation with Line Manager
2.To develop a system to collect parental, carers and family work arrangements with staff.	Data collection system to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aboriginally Disability Age Ethnicity and race. 	By 2025	Number of recorded staff leave within the workplace.	Spreadsheet of staff leave including intersectional data	HR Manager.	100%	Policy developed and approved. Parental leave captured in workforce data reporting Payglobal reporting for parental leave Family work arrangements captured in personnel files

BHS Gender Equality Action Plan 2021-2025 Indicator 7

Objectives	Actions and interventions	Timeframes	Process and Impact indicators	Evaluation Methods	Responsibility	Progress	Key Results
Indicator 7	Gendered segregation within the workplace.						
1. To apply an intersectionality lens over BHS current manager workforce.	Analysis the current workforce and determine the gender imbalance between departments.	By 2023.	Number of managers. BHS employees	Results from analysis	Gender Equality and Diversity Working Group.	Departments analysed, 100% KPI monthly Culture Report captures W/M/Prefer not to say at organizational level	Gender imbalanced between departments noted
2.To explore staff behaviours and beliefs around inclusion.	Conduct focus groups with range of staff. Collate results and present to Gender Equality and Diversity Working Group.	By 2025.	Number of type of staff involved in focus groups. Number of focus groups conducted.	Copy of focus group analysis a report and recommendation.	Staff Health & Wellbeing sub-committee. Leadership Team	100% ongoing Analysed results on inclusion theme in PMS. PMS results to be analysed. Incorporate Gender Equality statement into BHS Joyful workplace surveys Schedule 1 st meeting for Staff Health & Wellbeing committee	To be recommended Leadership taking responsibility for PMS responses within which focus group joyful workplace surveys are distributed and reviewed to incorporate a focus on Gender Equality and diversity

3.Introduce mandatory training on gender equality, diversity and respect.	Review availability of different training packages.	By 2024	All of staff to completed and number completed.	Monthly reporting.	SDO	100% P&C Group exploring software/training module Health promotion – gender, diversity education. SDO researching current Kineo offering – module selected, to be added.	Module trialed and endorsed. Mandatory onboarding training. Existing to staff to complete within their current training cycle
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Questions and Feedback

If you have questions and/or would like to provide feedback, please contact:

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Further Information

<https://www.vic.gov.au/safe-and-strong-victorian-gender-equality>

Safe and Strong, is the Victorian Government's Gender Equality Strategy. It sets out a framework for enduring and sustained action over time, with the aim to progressively build the attitudinal and behavioural change required to reduce violence against women and deliver gender equality.

<https://www.wgea.gov.au/>

The Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) is an Australian Government statutory agency, created by the Commonwealth Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012 in order to promote gender equality in Australian workplaces. Their website has a range of resources and data on workplace gender equality in Australia.