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For immediate release

## **POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH FOR WOMEN DOESN'T HAPPEN IN A VACUUM**

October 10, 2012 is the World Mental Health Day, and Women's Health Victoria is pleased to support this cause. World Mental Health Day is a day for global mental health education, awareness and advocacy.

'Mental health doesn't happen in a vacuum', says Women's Health Victoria Policy and Health Promotion Manager, Rose Durey. 'Apart from biological factors, mental health is affected by our work, our relationships, where we live, our sense of safety and how we feel about our body.'

'Women tend to experience mental health differently to men - not only because of biology but also because there are gender differences in the way women and men live their lives.'

Issues that influence women's mental health in particular include concerns about personal safety, body image, financial security associated with women's career and caring roles, and social connection. These issues are linked to women's experience of depression, anxiety and eating disorders.

'There needs to be a cross-sectoral approach to mental health that looks beyond treatment to actively promote mental health', said Ms Durey.

'We need to enhance protective factors, like creating safer neighbourhoods, promoting social connectedness, and advocating for pay equity', said Ms Durey. 'At the same time we need to be working towards addressing risk factors like bullying, domestic violence, unrealistic body ideals in magazines and sexism in the media.'

In order to raise awareness about the importance of how social factors and physical health can impact on women's mental health, Women's Health Victoria is running the Body and Soul social media campaign between 8 and 12 October. To find out more: <https://twitter.com/WHVictoria> hashtag #b&s

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