



Media Release

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More workplaces need to take domestic violence seriously: WHV

Women's Health Victoria today applauded moves by the Australian Services Union to introduce a paid family violence leave clause in their workplace agreements, as a crucial issue that affects occupational health and safety.

Executive Director of Women's Health Victoria, Ms Marilyn Beaumont, said that measures to support employees who are experiencing domestic violence makes good business sense. Family violence can result in absenteeism, lost productivity, or acts of violence carried out at work.

"It can also have ramifications on other colleagues, who might be uncertain about how to intervene, fear for their own safety or experience distress.

"Supporting staff who are experiencing domestic violence can be done in a number of ways – not just by putting it in workplace agreements. Workplace policies and procedures, staff training and education are all good ways of equipping the workplace to respond to and deal with the effects of violence.

"We at WHV have successfully implemented workplace domestic violence prevention policies, training programs and leadership support. They have been extremely successful in challenging violence supportive attitudes where they exist at work and at home.

"Workplaces can be positive places for the message that domestic violence is not tolerated. The more businesses, leading men and women and sports people who speak out and address violence against women, the better equipped we will be to mitigate the disturbingly high levels of family violence and violence-supportive attitudes that we are seeing.

"Strategies to challenge domestic violence and support staff who may be experiencing it makes workplaces safer and more respectful, thereby enhancing productivity," said Ms Beaumont.

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