

## **MEDIA RELEASE** (FOR IMMEDIATE DISTRIBUTION)

### **More time to seek support: 1800 My Options expands hours to better meet the needs of all Victorian women seeking sexual and reproductive health services**

**Melbourne - September 2021**

Women in Victoria can now seek support for their sexual and reproductive health needs from 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday, with the 1800 My Options phone service expanding its hours from September 1, 2021 thanks to funding from the Victorian Government.

1800 My Options, a service of Women's Health Victoria, ensures that women in Victoria – no matter where they live – can access the sexual and reproductive health services they need. Having taken more than 15,000 calls in three years we know how to support women with information and pathways to services. The service is free, confidential and pro-choice. Our geomapped database can also be accessed by the public 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Knowing which local clinics provide contraception, abortion and sexual health services can be confusing. 1800 My Options phone operators provide callers with pathways to trusted clinical services that can provide essential sexual and reproductive health services. With almost 400 providers registered with 1800 My Options, callers can be confident they will receive the information they need to make informed decisions about their healthcare.

During the COVID-19 pandemic 1800 My Options has ensured women can still access vital sexual and reproductive health by working closely with the health sector across the state, so we have the most up to date information about service access and availability for callers.

Sexual and reproductive health care remains an essential health service during the pandemic, and during lockdowns in Victoria. Victorians who are worried about their sexual and reproductive health can call 1800 My Options for information about services near them that remain open during lockdown.

## Quotes attributed to Pauline Richards:

*“No matter what sexual and reproductive health question you have, you can call 1800 My Options between 9-5, Monday to Friday, and know that you will be supported without judgement.”*

*“1800 My Options is a trusted pathway to sexual and reproductive information and services for all Victorian women”*

## Quotes attributed to Dianne Hill, CEO Women’s Health Victoria:

*“Even during lock down access to sexual and reproductive healthcare is essential. 1800 My Options can help you find the information and services you need.”*

*“Ensuring women have access to vital sexual and reproductive health care is critical to gender equality.”*

**-ENDS-**

### For media enquiries and interviews, please contact:

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### About Women's Health Victoria

Women's Health Victoria (WHV) is a not-for-profit, state-wide women’s health promotion, information and advocacy service, focused on improving the lives of Victorian women. WHV works collaboratively with women, health professionals, policy makers and community organisations to influence and inform health policy and service delivery for women. The work of WHV is underpinned by a social model of health and a commitment to reducing inequities in health which arise from social, economic and environmental determinants.

For more information, visit [whv.org.au](http://whv.org.au)