



# **Gender Safety**

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# Defining 'gender'



- ❗ In 2003, the NSW Department for Women defined *'A gendered approach to health may be described as any research methodology, policy or practice that takes account of the differences between women and men that influence each gender's capacity to reach and maintain optimal health'*. (OFW 2003)

# Defining 'gender'

- ! NSW Health Women's Health Plan 2009-2011 identifies the gender context as *'the product of the laws and social customs that determine male and female roles and shape the learned behaviours, relationships, attitudes and expectations that society ascribes to men and women'*.

# Gender analysis

- ❗ The NSW government is strongly committed to removing barriers to women's full participation in society.
- ❗ NSW and Commonwealth legislation prohibits sex discrimination.
- ❗ Australia endorsed key international conventions and agreements on equality for women.
- ❗ The Australian Government is committed to “integrating gender perspectives in legislation, public policies, programs and projects”.



# Gender analysis



- ❗ Gender analysis is necessary to integrate gender issues into mainstream activities.
- ❗ Gender analysis is good practice.
- ❗ Gender analysis takes into account the diversity of women.

(A practical guide to gender analysis for NSW government agencies, NSW DOW, 2003)

# International support


- ! *International organisations such as United Nations agencies, the World Bank and the International Labour Organisation and national, state and regional governments around the world use gender analysis in their work, in recognition that unless women's experiences and needs are addressed, projects and policies may not meet their objectives and can unintentionally make the position for women worse.*



# General application of gender safety



Public Space	General space, access, campus, public transport, sport, school etc
Crime Data	aggregated data
OHS	Work hazards, size of equip, segregation labour, type of labour, assess to chemicals
Medicine	Body mass index and incorrect proportioning of treatments
MV Safety	Body mass index
Clothing	Non gender safety footwear (Navy)
Economic Policy	Access – gender equity by including of gender in planning economic safety nets



***Safety and Gender Issues in Rural  
Transport in Busia District, Uganda  
(Chapter 6) By Kuumusi Paul***

A chapter extract from *Balancing the Load.  
Women, Gender and Transport.*

*Edited by Priyanthi Fernando and Gina Porter  
(2002) Zed Books, United Kingdom*

How can gender help us understand the  
management of safety?

[www.ifrtd.org/new/res/btl\\_chap6.doc](http://www.ifrtd.org/new/res/btl_chap6.doc)



# Women's safety

Security in Cities

Gender/wWomen's Safety and Security in Cities Collection of gender – disaggregated data

Patna Molestation  
(India)

Mob of 100 men strip and molest lone woman. The interview refer to gender violence. Renuka Chowdhury consistently made reference back to 'safety of women', but the internet has critiqued the story under gender safety

# Gender safety in healthcare environment

Increasing Safety and Gender Sensitivity in mixed sex psychiatric units

Gathering information about clinical mental health service initiatives. A report by Victorian Women and Mental Health Network 2009

The gender sensitivity and safety in adult acute inpatient units project.

[www.health.vic.gov.au/mentalhealth/gender](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/mentalhealth/gender)

# **Increasing Safety and Gender Sensitivity in Mixed Sex Psychiatric Units.**

- ! *There seems to be a view that making changes to the physical environment of the wards will magically fix everything. It doesn't address differences by gender of medication prescribing patterns, or differences by gender in medication dosage prescribing or differences by gender in the use of seclusion or differences by gender in the use of HDU or differences by gender in the use of physical restraint by ward staff, or the differences by gender in the physical restraint by security staff. Not looking at these sorts of things is the biggest barrier.*

# **Gender safety in provision of health services**

- ! ‘However, the extent to which even these surveys prompt victim/survivors to disclose sexual assault largely depends on the sensitivity of the approach taken to collecting the information.’

*Australian Centre for the Study of Sexual Assault  
National Crime and Safety Surveys 2005 (includes reported and  
unreported incidents).*

See ABS report: 4509.0 - [Crime and Safety, Australia, April 2005](#)

# **Sexism and sex role stereotyping**

- ! From a feminist women's health centres policy and practice perspective, we stipulate that practitioners and health care workers need an understanding of the effects of sexism and sex role stereotyping and that workers need to demonstrate that understanding at the interview stage.
- ! This is further supported through workforce development, and accreditation against continual quality improvement best practice standards.



# **Sexism & sex role stereotyping**



We consistently take into account the effects that systemic and individual misogyny and sexism have had on women and in turn on their capacity to reach and maintain optimal health. It is this understanding (along with a commitment to the principles of respect and empowerment) that creates an environment for health and wellbeing.

# Gender analysis to staffing

- ! In addition to all efforts being taken in applying a gender lens and analysis, we would also like to see 'gender sensitivity' applied to employment practices in addition to workforce development and training.

# **Victorian Women's & Mental Health Network 2009**

*Factors most frequently identified as promoting gender sensitive practice were;*

- ❗ *Team approach – forming a group to work on gender sensitive issues*
- ❗ *Education/opportunities for staff to talk about gender sensitive issues*
- ❗ *Senior management awareness/support leadership/staff presence on the ward/ communication/positive relationships with clients*



# **National Health & Medical Research Council (NHMRC)**

- ❗ *“All Australians have the right to access health care that meets their needs.  
In our culturally and linguistically diverse society, this right can only be upheld if cultural issues are core business at every level of the health system—systemic, organisational, professional and individual.”*



# Feminists say



! *“All Australians have the right to access health care that meets their needs.*

*In our culturally and linguistically diverse and **gendered** society, this right can only be upheld if cultural issues are core business at every level of the health system— **and if gender analysis and consideration is undertaken at every level of the health system** -systemic, organisational, professional and individual.”*