2026–2030

Gender Equality Action Plan





GVHealth

Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

GV Health acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which its many sites are located. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present and celebrate the continuing culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We would also like to acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are receiving care in our services.



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Message from Chief Executive

I am pleased to present GV Health's Gender Equality Action Plan 2026–2030 (GEAP). This plan builds on the learnings and foundations established through the implementation of our first GEAP and reflects our ongoing commitment to maintaining and strengthening a safe, equitable and inclusive workplace.

Our refreshed GEAP focuses on addressing the underlying causes of intersectional gender inequality and aligns with our Strategic Plan (2024 to 2026) and People Strategy (2024 to 2026), as well as our values of compassion, respect, excellence, accountability, teamwork and ethical behaviour. The GEAP also reflects our responsibility as a public health provider in our region to lead by example.

Progressing gender equality is important not only for our workforce, but also for the diverse community we serve. By continuing to strengthen gender equity across our systems, practices and culture, we enhance our ability to deliver high-quality, person-centred healthcare and support a workplace where all people feel valued and supported.

MATT SHARP
Chief Executive

About the Gender Equality Action Plan

The Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) is a strategic plan that outlines GV Health's goals, actions and measures to improve workplace gender equality. It is based on the results of GV Health's gender audit, and informed by stakeholder consultation. This plan is one of the requirements under the Gender Equality Act 2020 (Vic) and ensures GV Health continues to take positive and measurable progress towards intersectional gender equality. Progress is monitored and reported to the Commission for Gender Equality, which oversees compliance with the Act.

Below is a summary of the key information from GV Health's new GEAP 2026-2030. A full version of the GEAP, as submitted to the Commission in their required format, is included at appendix 2.

Case for Change

Gender equality is essential to delivering a safe, high-quality and inclusive health service. While the health sector is female-dominated, this does not automatically result in equitable outcomes. Where gender inequality exists, it is often women who are disadvantaged in access to opportunities, power and resources. Our data shows that gendered patterns — such as caring responsibilities, access to flexible work, occupational segregation and barriers to progression — continue to shape employee experience and outcomes. Addressing these issues is critical, particularly given our workforce is predominantly women, and where inequality intersects with factors such as Aboriginality, age, disability, ethnicity and sexual orientation. Taking action aligns with our Strategic Plan (2024 to 2026) and People Strategy (2024 to 2026), alongside our values of compassion, respect, excellence, accountability, teamwork and ethical behaviour, and reflects our responsibility as a public health provider in our region to lead by example.

Becoming a more gender inclusive and equitable workplace is not only fair and just, it is also critical to achieving our strategic priorities. A workforce that better reflects the gender and cultural diversity of our community strengthens our ability to engage with, understand and respond to the needs of those we serve, contributing to better health outcomes for people of all genders. Our vision is to create a workplace where gender equality is embedded in everyday practice, and where everyone understands their role in driving progress. This includes a strong focus on intersectional gender equality and ensuring diverse voices are heard and valued.

This is our second Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP). Since implementing our first GEAP four years ago, we have made a meaningful start in progressing gender equality and building awareness across the organisation. We enter this next phase with a mindset of continuous learning and improvement — recognising what has worked, where gaps remain, and how we can strengthen our approach. Through this GEAP, we are committed to identifying and addressing the systemic causes of inequality within our policies, systems and practices. This includes challenging gender stereotypes, roles and prejudices, removing structural barriers, and creating the conditions for equitable participation and progression. It also supports the promotion of gender equality and improvement in the status of women, while recognising and addressing the compounding impacts of other forms of disadvantage, and upholding the right to equality set out in the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities.

Progressing gender equality delivers clear benefits for our organisation and our community. It can improve staff wellbeing, strengthen engagement and trust, and enhance our ability to attract and retain a diverse and capable workforce. It supports better decision-making, improves productivity and reduces costs associated with turnover. Importantly, it helps future-proof our organisation and ensures we are well positioned to meet the evolving needs of our community.

Identifying the underlying causes of gender inequality

Based on the audit data (from 2025 and 2023) and stakeholder consultation feedback (refer to appendix 2 for further details) the most prominent underlying causes of gender inequality appear to be:

GENDERED DISTRIBUTION OF CARING RESPONSIBILITIES

Parental leave, carers leave and flexible work patterns consistently show that primary caring responsibilities are disproportionately taken up by women. Men's uptake remains lower, shorter in duration, and declines at more senior levels. This reinforces traditional gender roles and impacts women's workforce participation, progression and continuity.

LIMITED NORMALISATION OF FLEXIBLE WORK ACROSS ALL LEVELS

While access to flexible work has increased, it remains both gendered and level-dependent - more commonly used by women and concentrated in mid-to-lower-level roles. Minimal uptake in senior roles suggests cultural or structural barriers and may signal that flexibility is not yet seen as compatible with leadership or career progression.

OCCUPATIONAL SEGREGATION

Workforce composition shows strong clustering of genders in particular roles (e.g. women in clerical, caring and professional roles; men in machinery/driver roles). This reflects entrenched stereotypes about job suitability and contributes to unequal access to opportunities and pay disparities across occupation groups.

STRUCTURAL DRIVERS OF THE GENDER PAY GAP

Given the constraints of enterprise agreements, pay gaps are less about unequal pay for like roles and more about who occupies higher-paid roles, occupations and levels. Segregation, progression barriers and career interruptions linked to caring responsibilities are key contributors.

BARRIERS TO PROGRESSION AND INCLUSION (including intersectional factors)

Employee experience data from the People Matter Survey indicates that a significant proportion of staff experience or witness barriers to success, particularly related to caring responsibilities, age and cultural background. This suggests that progression is not equally accessible and that multiple, intersecting factors influence outcomes.

CULTURAL AND TRUST-RELATED BARRIERS IN REPORTING AND SAFETY

Sexual harassment data highlights a gap between experiences and formal reporting, with many employees believing reporting will not make a difference or may carry reputational or career risks. This points to underlying issues of trust, psychological safety and confidence in organisational responses.



Strategies and Measures

The following strategies and measures have been developed for the 2026 – 2030 period.

INDICATOR 1: GENDER COMPOSITION AT ALL LEVELS OF THE WORKFORCE

STRATEGIES	RESPONSIBLE	TIMELINE
1. Conduct further analysis and consultation to identify intersectional barriers affecting women's career progression, including experiences of women from diverse backgrounds, and produce a short report with recommended actions.	DEI Consultant	Aug 2026 - Oct 2026
2. Research, design and implement at least one targeted program to support women's career progression, such as a structured career pathway initiative or women's mentoring program, informed by workforce data and stakeholder consultation (above).	DEI Consultant	Oct 2026–Dec 2027
3. Using the findings from the intersectional research (above) and the initial program evaluation, refine or expand career development initiatives, ensuring they address identified barriers and improve access to progression opportunities.	DEI Consultant	Dec 2027 – Dec 2028
4. Deliver a phased, approach, with tailored support, to encourage staff to complete their diversity information in SAP SuccessFactors.	DEI Consultant	Sep 2026–Sep 2027
5. Implement a sustainable, evidence-informed LGBTIQA+ ally program to foster a safe and inclusive workplace.	DEI Consultant	Nov 2026–Sep 2027
6. Change the configuration of SAP SuccessFactors to capture diversity data accurately at the onboarding stage.	HRIS Systems Lead	May 2026 - Jun 2026

Measures

- Strategies implemented.
- Targeted women's career development program completion rates and satisfaction feedback.
- Completion rates of diversity data in our HRIS.
- Succession planning to incorporate targets regarding gender composition of pipe-liners (ie. those employees identified for critical roles).

Targets

- All strategies implemented.
- At least 80% completion rate and 80% satisfaction in the women's career development program.
- Increase in the number of women in leadership roles and/or an increase in the number of women leadership role-ready (as identified via succession planning) by June 2028.
- Increase in number of staff who have completed their diversity data in the HRIS.

Strategies and Measures

The following strategies and measures have been developed for the 2026 – 2030 period.

INDICATOR 2: GENDER COMPOSITION OF THE GOVERNING BODY

STRATEGIES	RESPONSIBLE	TIMELINE
1. Strengthen diversity data collection processes for the Board.	Chief Corporate Affairs Officer (Board Secretary).	Jul 2026
2. Maintain regular review of future turnover risks to monitor and manage potential gender imbalance.	Board Deputy Chair/Chair, Governance and Chief Executive Performance Committee, Chief Corporate Affairs Officer (Board Secretary).	Jun 2026 onwards

Measures

- Increased range of diversity data captured for the Board.
- Formal turnover risks reviewed annually.

INDICATOR 3: GENDER PAY GAP

STRATEGIES	RESPONSIBLE	TIMELINE
1. Conduct an audit of commencement and current salaries for employees to track progress, identify possible gender pay gaps or biases, and analyse the reasons behind these.	DEI Consultant & Management Accountant	Jan 2027 - Mar 2027
2. Undertake an audit, by job classification, to identify gaps and underlying reasons for differences between genders.	DEI Consultant & Management Accountant	Jan 2027 - Mar 2027

Measures

- Audit of commencement and current salaries completed (including allowances or over award payments), with findings reported to the Executive and actions identified where gender-based differences are identified.
- Audit, by job classification, completed, with findings reported to the Executive and actions identified where unexplained differences are identified.

Targets

- Decrease in mean base salary pay gap.
- Decrease in mean total remuneration gender pay gap.

Strategies and Measures

The following strategies and measures have been developed for the 2026 – 2030 period.

INDICATOR 4: SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

STRATEGIES	RESPONSIBLE	TIMELINE
1. Implement a new, externally managed, complaints platform that allows for anonymous reporting and communication campaign to support staff understanding of how to make a complaint.	DEI Consultant & Director of Employee Relations	Jun 2026 - Nov 2026
2. Develop and deliver ongoing, practical training and a clear communication campaign to support staff understanding of what constitutes sexual harassment and inappropriate behaviour, and GV Health's expectations.	DEI Consultant & Director of Employee Relations	Aug 2026 – Jul 2027
3. Develop and deliver clear, ongoing communication about safeguards in place to protect staff who make complaints, reinforcing GV Health's commitment to psychosocial safety and a culture free from victimisation.	DEI Consultant & Director of Employee Relations	Aug 2026 – Jul 2027

Measures

- New anonymous complaints platform and change management plan implemented.
- Comprehensive communication campaign implemented.
- Refreshed mandatory training on sexual harassment implemented, that includes information on the complaints process and addresses issues raised via the People Matter Survey.
- Training completion rates monitored.

Targets

- Successful implementation of anonymous complaints platform.
- Increase in number of formal complaints (and then a decline longer term).
- Reduction in the gap between survey-reported experiences and actual formal complaints received.
- Training completion rates at or above 90%.

Strategies and Measures

The following strategies and measures have been developed for the 2026 – 2030 period.

INDICATOR 5: RECRUITMENT AND PROMOTION PRACTICES

STRATEGIES	RESPONSIBLE	TIMELINE
1. Develop and implement a suite of tools to support managers to apply equitable recruitment and promotion practices, addressing unconscious bias and broader drivers of inequity.	DEI Consultant	Jan 2027 - Jun 2027
2. Improve data capturing to enable accurate reporting of promotion, higher duties and secondment data.	HRIS Systems Lead	May 2026 - Jun 2026
3. Improve data capturing to enable more accurate reporting of training and development data.	DEI Consultant	May 2026 - Dec 2026
4. Strengthen and enhance the career development component within the annual performance development review process to ensure it effectively supports employee development and advancement opportunities.	Director of Workforce & Organisational Development	Sep 2027 – Mar 2028
5. Develop refreshed approach to supporting managers' capability in facilitating above noted conversations.	Director of Workforce & Organisational Development	Sep 2027 – Mar 2028

Measures

- Successful development and implementation of a suite of tools to support equitable recruitment and promotion practices.
- Promotion data collection gaps closed.
- Improvements to collection of training and development participation data implemented.
- Successful review and update of Performance Development Review completed.
- Successful implementation of a refreshed approach to building manager capability in facilitating staff development and advancement conversations.

Targets

- Tools developed and rolled out to managers, with uptake monitored.
- Able to meet all CGEPS data audit requirements for this indicator in 2027.
- Performance Development Review process updated to strengthen career development planning, with annual monitoring of completion rates and participation by gender and level.

Strategies and Measures

The following strategies and measures have been developed for the 2026 – 2030 period.

INDICATOR 6: LEAVE AND FLEXIBLE WORKING ARRANGEMENTS'

STRATEGIES	RESPONSIBLE	TIMELINE
1. Undertake a comprehensive review of existing flexible working practices across the top three leadership levels, including formal and informal arrangements and unspoken expectations that may present barriers, and produce a short report with recommended actions.	DEI Consultant	May 2026 - Sep 2026
2. Following a review of the recommendations from above, implement actions to improve access to flexible work arrangements at senior levels.	Director of Employee Relations	Dec 2026 – Apr 2027
3. Review and update parental leave resources on the intranet to ensure messaging clearly promotes and supports parental leave uptake by fathers and partners.	Director of Employee Relations	Apr 2027 - Aug 2027
4. Deliver a communication campaign to promote equitable uptake of parental leave, carer's leave and flexible work arrangements across genders and levels.	DEI Consultant	Apr 2027 - Aug 2027

Measures

- Comprehensive review of flexible work practices (both formal and informal arrangements) across the top three leadership levels completed, with findings reported to the Executive.
- Actions implemented to broaden and improve access to flexibility in senior roles.
- Parental leave resources reviewed, updated and communicated to staff, with messaging that promotes and supports leave uptake by fathers and partners.
- Regular organisational communications delivered and monitored annually to promote parental leave, carers leave and flexible work as supported options for employees of all genders and levels.

Targets

- Increased adoption of flexible working practices (both formal and informal) at mid to senior levels.
- Increase in uptake of parental leave in terms of weeks taken (primary carer under the EBAs) and carers leave for men.
- Reduction in carer's leave gap to more closely reflect the overall workforce composition.

Strategies and Measures

The following strategies and measures have been developed for the 2026 – 2030 period.

INDICATOR 7: GENDERED SEGREGATION WITHIN THE WORKPLACE

STRATEGIES	RESPONSIBLE	TIMELINE
1. Partner with directorates with identified gender segregation to undertake further analysis and consultation to identify key drivers and barriers.	DEI Consultant	Dec 2026 – Mar 2027
2. Develop and implement at least two targeted strategies to address the underlying drivers of segregation, in response issues revealed after completing above strategy.	DEI Consultant	Apr 2027 – Dec 2028

Measures

- Documented summary of key drivers and barriers for directorates with identified gender segregation completed.
- Number of targeted initiatives implemented (minimum of two).

Targets

- Shift in gender representation within targeted areas over time (noting this is a longer-term measure).

ADDITIONAL AREA OF FOCUS: EQUITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

STRATEGIES	RESPONSIBLE	TIMELINE
1. Embed gender equality responsibilities into position description templates.	DEI Consultant & Employment Services Manager.	Sep 2026 - Dec 2026
2. Embed gender equality responsibilities into existing people management processes to support improved embedding and completions of Equity Impact Assessments.	DEI Consultant	Jan 2027 - Dec 2027

Measures

- Gender equality responsibilities incorporated into position descriptions.
- Gender equality responsibilities actively and regularly being discussed and monitored through existing people management processes (such as Monthly Accountability Meetings).

Targets

- Increase in the number of completed Equity Impact Assessments in every directorate.

Resourcing





Delivery of this GEAP is supported by a dedicated full-time Diversity Equity & Inclusion (DEI) Consultant, with additional contributions from staff across multiple directorates and departments. While this model promotes shared organisational responsibility, most contributors will undertake GEAP-related work alongside existing duties, creating potential capacity constraints.

The DEI Consultant plays a central role across all phases of delivery, including leading complex analysis (e.g. intersectional barriers, pay equity audits and workforce segregation), designing and implementing key initiatives such as workforce data improvements, culture and behaviour change programs, and targeted strategies to support women's career progression. The role also provides coordination of cross-functional actions, stakeholder engagement, and monitoring, evaluation and reporting.

In addition to the specialist expertise of the DEI Consultant, successful implementation of the GEAP requires a core set of skills and capabilities, including:

- Project management, change management and continuous improvement skills;
- Strong consultation and stakeholder engagement skills;
- Effective communication skills;
- Data collection, analysis and interpretation skills;
- Leadership and influence;
- Technical capability (desirable), including gender equality and intersectional knowledge, research skills, and intermediate to advanced IT proficiency.

A significant volume of work is concentrated in the 2026–2027 period, during which multiple initiatives will run concurrently, including system enhancements, training, consultation and program design.

Financial resourcing includes the DEI Consultant role, indirect staff time, implementation of a new externally managed complaints platform, and investment in targeted career development initiatives. Additional resources may be required to support program design, delivery and evaluation and will be considered through future budget processes. Opportunities to align with existing or emerging programs, particularly within the Organisational Development function, will also be explored.

Key risks include limited dedicated capacity beyond the DEI Consultant, reliance on specialised expertise, competing organisational priorities, and capability gaps in areas such as gender analysis, program design and change management. These risks will be mitigated through a phased and prioritised approach, clear accountability across business areas, targeted external support where appropriate, and ongoing monitoring of resourcing pressures.

Overall, while the GEAP is achievable, its success will depend on effective coordination, realistic sequencing, and sustained organisational commitment.

Appendices

APPENDIX 1: GLOSSARY

EQUITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Also referred to as Gender Impact Assessment. Is a tool used to assess and address the potential impacts of policies, programs and services on people of different genders, recognising how intersecting factors such as age, disability, ethnicity, sexuality and socioeconomic status can shape experiences and outcomes.

GENDER

The socially constructed differences between men and women, as distinct from 'sex,' which refers to biological differences. The term is also used more broadly to denote a range of identities that do not correspond to established ideas of male and female.

GENDER EQUALITY

The equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities of women, men and trans and gender-diverse people. Equality does not mean that women, men and trans and gender-diverse people will become the same but that their rights, responsibilities, and opportunities will not depend on their gender.

GENDER EQUALITY PRINCIPLES

These are principles that aim to ensure everyone can participate, contribute and thrive equally, regardless of gender.

GENDER EQUITY

Involves identifying and addressing systemic barriers and disadvantages so that people of all genders can access opportunities, participate fully and achieve equitable outcomes.

GENDER INEQUALITY

Is when men are valued more than women and/or other genders, and have more power, resources and opportunities.

INCLUSION

Is about valuing and respecting all individuals and celebrating differences. Inclusion occurs when everyone is supported, feels safe and has access to opportunity. We value treating everyone with respect and fairness.

INTERSECTIONALITY

Intersectionality is a way of understanding how different aspects of a person's identity and their circumstances (in addition to gender) interact to shape their experiences of privilege, discrimination and access to opportunities.

PAY EQUITY PRINCIPLES

These principles help organisations ensure people are paid fairly for the value of their work, regardless of gender.

SENIOR LEADER

Refers to executive staff.

APPENDIX 2: DOWNLOAD GV HEALTH'S FULL GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLAN, AS SUBMITTED TO THE COMMISSION FOR GENDER EQUALITY