



CENTRE FOR  
Women's Safety  
and Wellbeing

# Annual Report

2020-2021



# Chair's Report

I must start with the real heroine in this story - Angela Hartwig. She was the force behind the creation of an organisation - the Women's Council for Domestic and Family Violence - who relentlessly worked to improve the lives of women and children in Western Australia. There are few who dedicate their lifetime to the benefit of others with great humility, and I believe Angela was such a person.

Thank you to all staff and board members who were part of the foundational organisation and the transition to the Centre for Women's Safety and Wellbeing. Over many years, Anne Moore and Kedy Krystal were instrumental in ensuring the focus remained on vulnerable women, and the value of their work is paramount. I also acknowledge Dr Alison Evans, who played a significant role and held a vision with passion and integrity. With all that has gone before, we will never forget how we arrived at this point.

In late 2020, a new constitution and Board of Management were established, setting the formula for the future. The good will and commitment over the last year from our members, partners and stakeholders has been a key driving force, and we thank you for this. The vision and tenacity that has brought together the areas of family and domestic violence, sexual violence, women's health and gender equity has been something to behold. While it is still in its infancy, I cannot overstate how important the support has been, and how influential the achievements are, over the year.

The appointment of Rebecca Smith as the new Chief Executive Officer was an important milestone. We welcomed Rebecca who brings a range of experience, knowledge, and a strong commitment to the evolution of the Centre. Rebecca joined a small team of staff who have conscientiously and tirelessly worked over the months to ensure the Centre met its targets. This solid achievement has meant that the Centre has been able to maintain a presence across our sectors and forward plan.

I would like to acknowledge my fellow Board members - a remarkable group of women who have come together and shown such good will, generosity, and a clear focus on both the vision for the future and the practical tasks at hand. It has been a team effort and we have worked hard to ensure a connection to a diverse group of stakeholders, as well as addressing the governing duties of our work. Through the Board, I am committed to providing an ongoing forum for our colleagues advocating for the safety, health and wellbeing needs of women from varied backgrounds and experiences.

When I started, I told people that I felt privileged to be part of helping shape better outcomes for women across the State - this means even more to me now. The opportunities are limitless, and the real measure will come from the daily lives of those women.

## Kathy Blitz-Cokis

### Chair

# CEO's Report

I was extremely honored to join the Centre for Women's Safety and Wellbeing in late May 2021. It is an exciting time for the Centre as it evolves to support family, domestic and sexual violence service providers, along with those providing women's community-based health services. Thank you to everyone for making me feel so welcome.

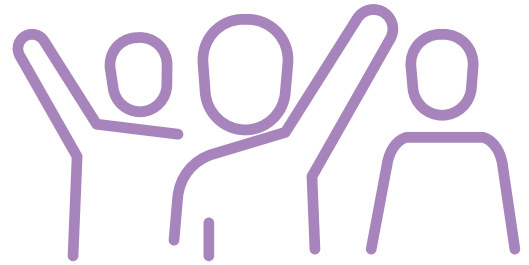
As we move forwards with activities such as strategic planning, collaboration and communication will play key roles in informing our priorities and direction. Our members and other stakeholders are extremely important to us, and I look forward to engaging with them closely as we develop a contemporary, evidence-based service model that is well-placed to support women and children affected by family, domestic and sexual violence. Building sector competence and capability through professional learning and development will be a key area of future focus for us as a peak body.

Integrating women's health and gender equality into our model presents exciting opportunities to strengthen our work, our partnerships, and our voice. Defining our purpose, vision and values has been an important first step in this next chapter, and I am pleased to share them in this report.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the passionate, committed and skilled staff at the Centre, in particular Dr Alison Evans, Director – Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence. We are privileged to have staff of this calibre working hard to improve outcomes for, and end violence against, women and children. Thank you also to the Board, especially Kathy Blitz-Cokis, Chair, who have given their time and energy so generously to support the work of the Centre - it is greatly appreciated.

**Rebecca Smith**

**Chief Executive Officer**



## Our Supporters & Partners

**We would like to acknowledge the following organisations for their financial assistance this year:**

- Department of Finance
- Department of Communities
- Water Corporation
- Minderoo Foundation
- Lotterywest
- Newmont
- Myer Carousel

**We are grateful to have partnered with, and been supported by, a number of organisations this year:**

- Stopping Family Violence
- WANADA
- Community Legal WA
- Financial Counsellors of WA
- Wesnet
- Soroptimist International South Perth
- Supporters of the Silent March

**Thank you also to everyone who donated to the CWSW this year.**

# ‘Remembering those who came before us’



Angela Hartwig

The Centre for Women’s Safety and Wellbeing would like to acknowledge the passion and commitment of earlier Western Australian women’s domestic violence and women’s health movement activists and the extraordinary efforts they made to improve the circumstances of women’s lives and to fill significant gaps in the law, service provision and access.

The domestic violence protest movement engaged with the topic both through work with women affected by domestic violence, and also by lobbying for changes to the policies and practices of key stakeholders such as government, police, courts and welfare agencies.

Angela Hartwig was the long-serving CEO of the Women’s Council for Domestic and Family Violence Services. She worked tirelessly, selflessly, generously and fearlessly over many years to improve the safety and support for those experiencing domestic and family violence, at both an individual and systems level.

Angela was an extraordinary person, who made an enormous contribution to improving the lives of countless people in the community and leaves an indelible, positive legacy.

Historical gains against gender violence in Australia only occurred because of the willingness of women like Angela to stand against complacency. Violence against women will not be solved by the simple march of time. Action continues to be needed.

# Our Charter

## Our Purpose

Amplify the collective voice for women's right to equitable access and outcomes for safety, health and wellbeing



## Our Vision

A safe and equal world, where women thrive



## Our Values

### OPEN-MINDED



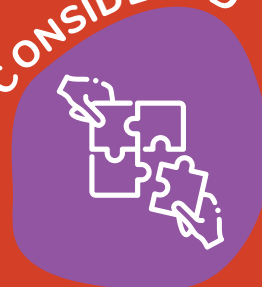
We listen, learn, and adapt

### BOLD



We are unafraid to take on challenges

### CONSIDERED



We take time to inform ourselves and others

### AUTHENTIC



We role model our beliefs

# Highlights

## 2020-2021

### Launch of Spotlight on Sexual Violence in Western Australia paper



51

people at  
launch event



Raised **awareness** of  
lack of State strategy  
and put forward key  
recommendations to  
government



CWSW will  
be involved in  
**WA strategy  
development**

### Housing crisis impact on refugees and women and children experiencing domestic and family violence



Collected  
**qualitative  
data** from  
service  
providers



Engaged  
in **media  
interviews** to  
raise awareness  
of under-funding  
of refugees, and  
impact of the  
housing crisis  
on women and  
children



Prepared **case studies**  
and a briefing paper,  
and raised with  
Minister McGurk

### Spotlight on gender inequity



Provided an opportunity  
to look at the **gendered  
drivers of violence**  
against women and the  
impact of violence against  
women on gender equity



In partnership with Financial  
Counsellors of WA, delivered  
a **gender equity workshop**  
at the WACOSS Conference



**27** attendees  
explored collaborative  
ways of working for  
collective impact

### Coercive control summary paper and committee



**Roundtable discussion**  
as part of International  
Women's Day

Discussion paper  
prepared, and  
stakeholder  
meetings and  
committee  
convened to  
progress approach  
to **improving  
responses**



Opened by **Minister  
McGurk**, with 45  
people attending



## New projects



**Women's Safety Dashboard** in development, and **data snapshot reports** released on unmet need and demand, and women without income



**Online Service Directory** under construction following extensive sector consultation



Preparation for launch of **Preventing Violence Together** primary prevention project



**Collaborating with WANADA and SFV** to develop a tool to support improved responses to the complex interplay between domestic and family violence, and alcohol and other drug use



**Sector development, sustainability and research portfolios** commencing



**Monthly e-newsletters** and sector updates



**New logo design** and website build



Working with Aboriginal controlled organisations and Aboriginal communities in the metropolitan area to develop **culturally appropriate non-fatal strangulation resources**

## Key advocacy pieces



**Improved systemic approaches** to:

- risk assessment, risk management and information sharing
- women without income experiencing domestic and family violence
- children and young people experiencing domestic and family violence
- the complex interplay of domestic and family violence, alcohol and other drug use, and mental health



Specific, standalone **laws against non-fatal strangulation** which came into effect in October 2020, and associated education and training



Establishment of a **Domestic Violence Forensic Unit** in WA

## Infrastructure and governance



**New positions** created to support sectors:

- Director - Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence
- Practice Development Specialist
- Women's Health Advocacy and Engagement



**New Board and Constitution**, with independent Chair appointed

## CWSW Staff

as at 30 June 2021

### **Rebecca Smith**

Chief Executive Officer

### **Alison Evans**

Director - Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence

### **Heidi Guldbaek**

Project Officer

### **Jayde Clancy – Robinson**

Project Officer

### **Renee Solomon**

Project Officer

### **Janette Richardson**

Office Manager

## CWSW Board

as at 30 June 2021

### **Kathy Blitz-Cokis**

Chair

### **Nicole Lambert**

Deputy Chair

### **Melissa Rowe**

Treasurer

### **Justine Colyer**

Secretary

### **Andrea Creado**

### **Kelda Oppermann**

### **Gloria Moyle**

### **Robyn Antenucci**

### **Dawn Smith**

### **Victoria Hovane**

### **Charmaine Champion**

The Centre for Women's Safety and Wellbeing acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians and first peoples of Australia.

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[csws.org.au](http://csws.org.au)



CENTRE FOR  
Women's Safety  
and Wellbeing

Preventing violence  
Promoting health  
Advancing gender equality