



Media Release

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Violence won't end until respect begins

Violence against women will not cease until the community stands up for the right of women to be treated with respect, the Chief Executive of the Royal Women's Hospital, Ms Dale Fisher said today.

"Two violent attacks in Melbourne this week, in which a woman was allegedly stabbed and burned alive by her partner, and a 14 year old girl was set alight after being raped in her own home, are shocking examples of what can happen when society turns a blind eye to the reality and risks of intimate partner violence in our community," she said.

"A woman is killed almost every week by a male partner or ex-partner, thousands of women are injured each year, and more than half of all women experience some form of physical or sexual violence in their lifetime.

"In fact, intimate partner violence alone is the leading contributor to death, disability and illness in Victorian women aged 15 to 44.

"The Women's, and other organisations in the health and community sectors, need resources to follow the recent improvements in national and state policy on the prevention of violence against women," Ms Fisher said.

The May state budget pledge of \$14 million over four years for the first stage of its *A Right to Respect: Victoria's Plan to Prevent Violence against Women 2010-2020* program, plus nearly \$3 million to extend training to community and health sector workers to respond to disclosures of existing violence, is welcomed.

"To substantially reduce levels of violence against women and prevent it from occurring, attitudinal, behavioural and cultural change needs to occur at a grass roots level in the community. Ongoing, substantial funding, and a commitment by all to the principle of gender equity, is the essential foundation for this work," Ms Fisher said.

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