



the women's
the royal women's hospital

Media Release

25 November 2010

White Ribbon Day at the Women's

The Women's hosted a special breakfast on 25 November to mark White Ribbon Day, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women.

The event was initiated and organised by senior male staff and hospital Board members to raise awareness of the physical, social and economic costs of violence against women.

Guest speaker, VicHealth CEO and White Ribbon Day Ambassador, Todd Harper, praised the Women's as a pioneer in women's health and provided some startling statistics on the effects of violence on health and the community.

Studies show that violence is responsible for more ill-health and premature death among women under the age of 45 than any other well-known risk factors, including high blood pressure, obesity and smoking.

The Women's Chief Executive, Ms Dale Fisher welcomed the leadership and initiative of the organisers and urged the attendees to continue the conversation about violence against women at home and in their workplaces, and to demonstrate a commitment to eliminate all forms of harassment, intimidation and violence against women.

"Violence against women will not cease until the community stands up for the right of women to be treated with respect," she said. "That means attitudinal, behavioural and cultural change needs to occur at a grass roots level, right across the community.

"Violence against women is important to the Women's because of its effects on women's health," Ms Fisher said. "As well as encouraging men to take a stand, the Women's believes it is vital that health services treat violence as a health issue, and hospitals provide a safe place for women to talk to their health professional if violence is affecting their lives."

Mr Stewart Leslie, Vice Chair of the Women's Board and one of the event organisers, said violence against women extends across all socio-economic groups sectors. "I am a son, husband, father, uncle and cousin of women. I think men need to stand up and be counted in the campaign to eliminate violence against women which is so pervasive and damaging to our society."

For more information please call:

Robyn Anns, Media Manager, the Royal Women's Hospital – 03 8345 2953, 0419 128 400.