

# 2024 Progress report: Gender Impact Assessments at Austin Health

Austin Health is committed to improving gender equality in our community via our policies, programs and services. We are working to achieving real change by conducting high quality Gender and Equity Impact Assessments that are effective in achieving change and that are meaningful to our community.

To date, Austin Health has focused on developing the systems, processes and tools necessary to support our staff to conduct Gender and Equity Impact Assessments. We have aimed to implement Gender and Equity Impact Assessments in a way that is both sustainable and that supports cultural change among our staff.

This work has included identifying the organisational approach to impact assessments, as well as developing training and supportive materials for our staff. The below sections outlines that work that Austin Health has undertaken to implement Gender and Equity Impact Assessments.

## Strengthening the intersectional approach.

Understanding and applying intersectionality is at the core of achieving gender equality.

After much consideration, Austin Health determined in late 2022 to take a Gender and Equity Impact Assessment approach to our assessments in order to ensure that intersectionality is embedded into our thinking and approaches. This approach means that we have enhanced scope to take into account a range of intersectional attributes when conducting impact assessments.

An explicit focus on gender and gender equality remains at the core of our approach.

## Gender Equality is everyone's responsibility.

We believe that working toward gender equality is a shared responsibility. This means that assessing the impacts of our policies, programs and services on people of different genders is not a discrete function to be conducted by 'specialists', but rather that anyone who is involved in delivering or reviewing initiatives has a role to play in an assessment.

In line with this, Austin Health has been working throughout 2022 and 2023 to embed Gender and Equity Impact Assessments into usual business across our entire organisation. This includes key areas such as operations and projects, strategy and planning, policy, capital and infrastructure, and research.

By embedding Gender and Equity Impact Assessments into our usual business, we are also facilitating a greater awareness and understanding among our staff of how people's gender can impact their experiences and outcomes in health care settings.

In early 2024, Austin Health will be launching the Gender and Equity Impact Assessment across the organisation. This launch include:

- An education campaign to inform staff on the importance of Gender and Equity Impact Assessments, as well as their relevant roles and responsibilities relating to Gender and Equity Impact Assessments
- Resources for staff to conduct Gender and Equity Impact Assessments, including:
  - o A health-specific online learning module (created in 2023 in partnership with the North East Metro Health Service Partnership)
  - o An Austin-Health specific template and toolkit
  - o An intranet site with a range of links and further information about gender equality, intersectionality and diversity.

### Accountability and continuous improvement.

A key part of embedding Gender and Equity Impact Assessments into usual business is the development of an accountability framework. This framework outlines how we will record, monitor and evaluation the completion of Gender and Impact Assessments at Austin Health. This framework will be launched in early 2024.

An evaluation of the new processes, systems and tools will be conducted in 2025. This evaluation will build our understanding of how Gender and Equity Impact Assessments are being implemented at Austin Health. It will include an assessment of the quality of assessments undertaken and the changes that have taken place as a result of the assessments. Learnings from the evaluation will be used to improve our work towards gender equality in the future.

### Gender and Equity Impact Assessments in action.

In addition to planning for implementation, Austin Health has completed a number of Gender and Equity Impact Assessments. These are described in the Progress Report template. A range of other Gender and Equity Impact Assessments are underway and at various stages of completion. These will be reported via the next progress report to the Victorian Gender Equality Commission, currently scheduled for 2026.