



Minister for Health and Aged Care  
Minister for Sport  
Federal Member for Farrer  
**THE HON SUSSAN LEY MP**

Minister for Employment  
Minister for Women  
Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Public Service  
Senator for Western Australia  
**SENATOR THE HON MICHAELIA CASH**

## **Joint Media Release**

5 September 2016

### **WOMEN'S HEALTH WEEK: supporting women's health in a changing world 5-9 September 2016**

Women's Health Week is putting the focus on the health of Australian women and girls, with a range of events across the country and online activities to get women thinking about their health, and taking action to improve it.

Minister for Health Sussan Ley said women's health and wellbeing is one of the Government's fundamental priorities.

"Australian women are living healthier, longer lives, supported by better, more targeted health services, but there is more work to do to increase awareness, empower women and support them in their goals for better health and wellbeing," Ms Ley said.

"This week I want women to take a little time out for themselves to think about their own health needs.

"Women's health needs are diverse – as diverse as women themselves - and our health system has to be responsive, and provide women with information and options, for their own health and the health of their families."

The Australian Government's broader health system reforms are designed to streamline and tailor services to meet women's changing needs. This incorporates the full life cycle - from maternal health, breastfeeding, and broader reproductive health, to preventive health, the management of chronic conditions, mental health, and a patient-focussed aged care system built on choice.

"I am proud of the Government's range of programs and initiatives that focus on women's health," Ms Ley said.

"Initiatives such as the National Breastfeeding Helpline (almost \$3 million over 3 years from 2016-17 for workforce training and a 24-hour toll-free helpline), the National Maternity Services Plan, domestic violence services including tailored domestic violence services for Indigenous women, National Antenatal Care Guidelines, support for BreastScreen Australia,

the National Cervical Screening Program, and Healthy Ageing are all crucial for women's health.

"But our broader transformational reforms to primary health care – like Primary Health Networks, the National Mental Health Strategy and Health Care Homes – revolutionising the management of chronic and complex conditions – will also have a big impact on health outcomes for women."

Minister for Women Michaelia Cash said the Government recognises that while women's health outcomes are improving overall, there are some marked pockets of significant inequality.

"Most concerning for me is the poorer health outcomes for Indigenous women, and women from lower educational and socio-economic groups, and this includes their experience of ageing," Senator Cash said.

"The Government also recognises that healthy women are advocates and leaders for health and wellbeing in their own families, and the broader community.

"If you invest in women's health, and empower women to make choices about their own health and healthcare, it has significant flow-on effects for the health of the community."

Women's Health Week goes from Monday 5<sup>th</sup> - Friday 9<sup>th</sup> September.

See <http://womenshealthweek.com.au/> for details.

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