

GENDER EQUALITY **ACTION PLAN**

2021 – 2025



Forensicare





We acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land. We recognise their continuing connection to land, water and culture and pay our respects to their Elders past and present.

FOREWORD

We are delighted to share with you our first Gender Equality Action Plan.

To be a workplace of choice, we must have a workplace that is safe and positive for everyone, every day. A safe and positive workplace is inclusive, and it must ensure the equal rights, opportunities, responsibilities and outcomes for people of all genders, be they women, men or gender diverse.

Our Gender Equality Action Plan outlines a range of objectives and targeted actions that we will implement over the next four years to ensure gender equality at Forensicare. When all staff are able to access and enjoy equal rewards, resources and opportunities, when leadership reflects the diversity of our workforce, and when staff tell us our workplace is safe and inclusive, we will know we have been successful.

This plan aligns with our organisational-wide cultural change program, the Model of Care 2021-26, the Strategic Plan 2021-26, and our Disability Action Plan 2020-23. Together these important tools will ensure we attract, develop and retain a diverse, high performing and engaged workforce that will continue to deliver outstanding services to consumers and confirm Forensicare as a workplace of choice.

Forensicare is committed to leading the way when it comes to gender equality. We look forward to taking on this important journey with you.

Dr Margaret Grigg
CEO
Forensicare

Ken Lay
Chair
Forensicare



“Gender Equality means equality of rights, opportunities, responsibilities and outcomes between persons of different genders”

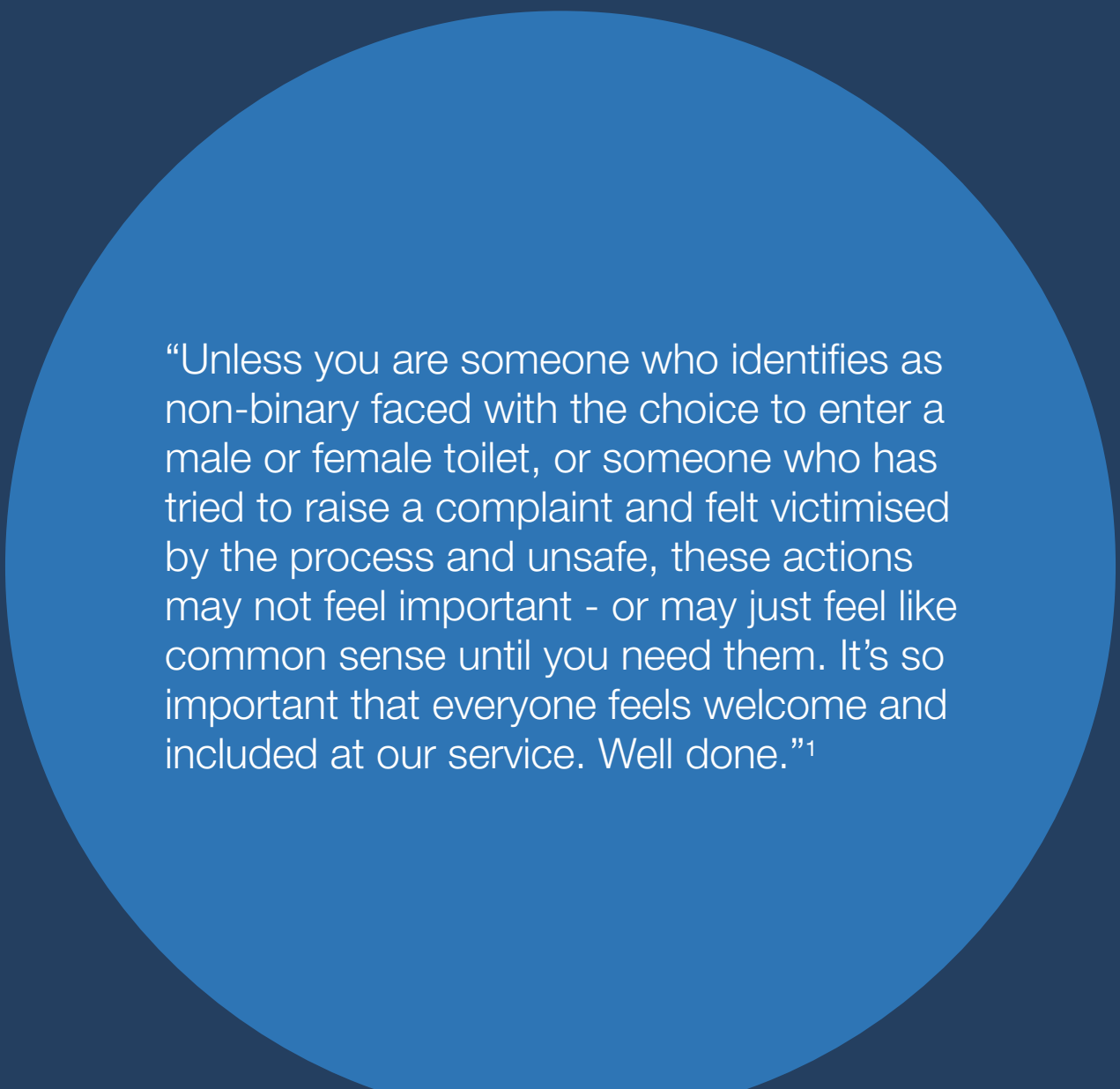
Gender Equality Act 2020

DEFINITIONS IN THIS DOCUMENT

Gender	Gender refers to the socially constructed characteristics of women, men and gender diverse people. There are many genders outside of the binary understanding of gender (women and men), including transwomen, transmen, bigender, agender, non-binary, self-described, genderfluid and genderqueer.
Gender diverse	An umbrella term for people who experience and identify outside of the binary understanding of gender.
Gender identity	Gender identity is the personal sense of one's own gender. Many of us are taught that there are two genders – woman and man – however we now understand gender to exist on a spectrum. Some people feel more masculine, some people feel more feminine, others have changing or less strong gendered feelings. People's potential to identify as their authentic gender can be limited by social constructs and expectations.
Gender fluid/ Genderfluid	Having a gender identity and presentation that shifts between or shifts outside of society's expectations of gender.
Cisgender	Having the same gender identity that largely meets expectations given the sex assigned at birth
Gender pronouns	Pronouns are a way people refer to each other and themselves. She and he are gendered pronouns typically used by female or male identifying people. Gender-neutral pronouns such as they, them, theirs don't imply 'male' or 'female' and are typically used by gender diverse identifying people. Other gender-neutral pronouns include ze, hir, hirs and ze, zir, zirs.
Sex	A person's biological sex characteristics – generally classed as female, male or intersex. Sex characteristics are not the same as gender. A person's anatomical characteristics can often be conflated with gender identity, such as genital and chest shape. Sex has historically been understood as either female or male, however, some people are born with natural variations to sex characteristics, referred to as intersex, that do not fit medical norms for female or male bodies.
Sexual orientation	Sexuality or sexual orientation describes a person's romantic and/or sexual attraction to others. Gay, lesbian, bisexual, asexual and pansexual are some examples of sexualities.
People who identify as...	The terms 'men' and 'women' are commonly used to describe sex characteristics. Saying 'people who identify as...' when referring to gender is inclusive of trans people. Alternatively, you can use 'all women' (which implicitly includes trans women) compared with 'cisgender women' (to specifically refer to those assigned female at birth who also identify as women), and so on.
Intersectional gender inequality	The disadvantage or discrimination that a person may experience based on any of the following in addition to gender inequality: Aboriginality, age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, race, religion, sexual orientation and other attributes.

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“Unless you are someone who identifies as non-binary faced with the choice to enter a male or female toilet, or someone who has tried to raise a complaint and felt victimised by the process and unsafe, these actions may not feel important - or may just feel like common sense until you need them. It’s so important that everyone feels welcome and included at our service. Well done.”¹

¹ Quotations used throughout this document, unless specified, are taken from our Gender Equality Action Plan Survey, conducted in February 2022. The survey was anonymous and therefore all quotes are non-attributable to individuals.

1. THE CASE FOR CHANGE

Gender inequality impacts health and wellbeing, and can lead to increased family violence, mental health issues, social exclusion and poverty. This is experienced most strongly by gender diverse people and people who identify as women. People of all genders should be equally represented across our economy, education, politics and health.

Our commitment to being a workplace of choice and provide an environment that is psychologically safe means we will actively address inequalities described by our workforce. Everyone has the right to be valued and treated equally. Yet gender inequality continues to impact many people's lives and careers.

The Victorian *Gender Equality Act 2020* requires all Victorian public sector organisations to implement plans to help achieve gender equality in the workplace. Whilst people experience gender inequality differently and to different extents, achieving gender equality will benefit everyone.

Over the next four years, Forensicare will ensure all aspects of our organisation comply with the new *Gender Equality Act 2020*.

This plan summarises how the Act applies to Forensicare, our commitment, and the actions that we will implement to help achieve gender equality.

1.1 Forensicare's vision

Forensicare's strategic directions explain the priorities we must deliver to achieve our vision. This includes establishing Forensicare as a workplace of choice that inspires excellence through continuous improvement to deliver the highest-quality forensic mental health care.

To be a workplace of choice, we must provide equal rights, opportunities, responsibilities and outcomes through inclusive policies, practices and programs. Everyone must be able to participate equally regardless of Aboriginality, age, background, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, race, religion, sexual orientation or other attributes.

Forensicare is committed to the objectives² of the *Gender Equality Act* and acknowledges that gender is not a determinant of role, employability or capability.

² *Gender Equality Act 2020* (legislation.vic.gov.au)

1.2 Equity and equality

Our Gender Equality Action Plan addresses equality and equity through the consideration of intersectional gender inequality in our audit and actions.

What's the difference between equity and equality³?

- > equality means providing everyone with the same amount of resources (or support) – an equal share - regardless of whether they need them or not
- > equity is when resources are shared based on what each person needs to adequately level the playing field.

To achieve equality, the principles of equity must be considered. People who experience disadvantage across multiple attributes (such as gender, age and ethnicity) may require more resources or support than someone who does not experience the same level of disadvantage.

Forensicare must address inequity and ensure resources and support are provided based on who needs them most.

1.3 Actions for workplace gender equality

To achieve gender equality at Forensicare we need to consider our actions, performance, policies and procedures at all levels of the organisation. This will help us identify where further improvement is required. Our initial Action Plan is proposed in section 4, based on the requirements of the *Gender Equality Act 2020* and best-practice guidance on gender equality.

Forensicare intends to carefully review its procedures, practices, and behaviour to:

- > ensure a safe, inclusive working environment for all employees
- > benefit from an increasingly diverse workforce, that reflects our community diversity
- > contribute to achieving gender equality for the benefit of all Victorians, especially our employees, consumers, and community members
- > adhere to the *Gender Equality Act 2020*.

While Forensicare performs well on gender equality in some areas, our aim is to perform well in all areas. Over the next four years, we will assess where we can make improvements towards achieving equality. This will include:

- > addressing pay gaps
- > working towards a more diverse workforce
- > promoting flexible work and leave for people of all genders
- > ensuring our facilities and communications are gender inclusive
- > ensuring equitable promotion opportunities by gender
- > including diverse voices in governance, leadership, management, and program design.

It is not the intention of this plan to present complete solutions, but rather identify areas of work that will require further consideration.

2. CREATING THE PLAN

The *Gender Equality Act 2020* provides a clear framework that guides the development of gender equality action plans. Gender equality action plans must include/ensure:

- > the gender equality principles are considered
- > a workplace gender audit is undertaken, encompassing workforce data (extracted from our internal data collection systems) and employee experience data (collected from the People Matter Survey, Riskman reports and 2020 Review into Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination)
- > consultation with staff, Board, unions and any other relevant person
- > strategies and measures to improve gender equality in the workplace based on the results of the workplace gender audits
- > ensure adequate resources are allocated to developing and implementing the Gender Equality Action Plan.

2.1 Gender equality principles⁴

The ten gender equality principles underpinning the Act are outlined below. In addition to these principles, Forensicare, in our commitment to becoming a workplace of choice, focused on ensuring our plan guided us towards:

- > more responsive and accessible workforce policies and services
- > challenging harmful gender attitudes and social norms that underpin drivers of violence against women and gender diverse people
- > paying people equally for work of same or comparable value
- > striving for equitable workplace gender composition
- > fair and equitable recruitment and promotion practices
- > providing enhanced flexible working arrangements.

4 Sourced from the *Gender Equality Act 2020* (legislation.vic.gov.au)

THE TEN GENDER EQUALITY PRINCIPLES:

1. All Victorians should live in a safe and equal society, have access to equal power, resources and opportunities and be treated with dignity, respect, and fairness.
2. Gender equality benefits all Victorians regardless of gender.
3. Gender equality is a human right and precondition to social justice.
4. Gender equality brings significant economic, social and health benefits for Victoria.
5. Gender equality is a precondition for the prevention of family violence and other forms of violence against women and girls.
6. Advancing gender equality is a shared responsibility across the Victorian community.
7. All human beings, regardless of gender, should be free to develop their personal abilities, pursue their professional careers and make choices about their lives without being limited by gender stereotypes, gender roles or prejudices.
8. Gender inequality may be compounded by other forms of disadvantage or discrimination that a person may experience based on Aboriginality, age, disability, ethnicity, gender identity, race, religion, sexual orientation, and other attributes.
9. Women have historically experienced discrimination and disadvantage based on sex and gender.
10. Special measures may be necessary to achieve gender equality.

2.2 Baseline audit analysis

A workforce gender audit was conducted in accordance with s.11 of the Act to establish current state, or baseline, across the organisation. The aim was to identify critical gaps, areas for improvement and/or challenges to address.

The audit required the gathering and analysis of data across seven workforce indicators. These indicators are listed below and in Figure 1.

1. Workforce gender composition at all levels
2. Gender composition of the Board
3. Equal remuneration for work of equal or comparable value across all levels of the workforce, irrespective of gender
4. Sexual harassment in the workplace
5. Recruitment and promotion practices
6. Availability and utilisation of terms, conditions and practices relating to family violence leave and flexible working to support workers with family or caring responsibilities

7. Gendered segregation within the workplace (i.e., gender composition by occupation such as nurses and doctors)

For indicators one to five above, the Act required organisations to collect data on Aboriginality, age, disability, cultural identity (ethnicity and race), religion and sexual orientation.

There were two limitations to the audit.

1. Data for the 2020-21 year was only collected for women, men, age and Aboriginality.
 - a. We started collecting Aboriginality information from new staff in 2019 so data in the 2020-21 year is understated
 - b. Gender diversity is not included in the audit findings as historically information on gender identity was not collected. This means some genders may have been inaccurately identified.
2. Our systems in 2020-21 did not store data on career development, flexible working, higher duties and secondments.

AUDIT INDICATORS:

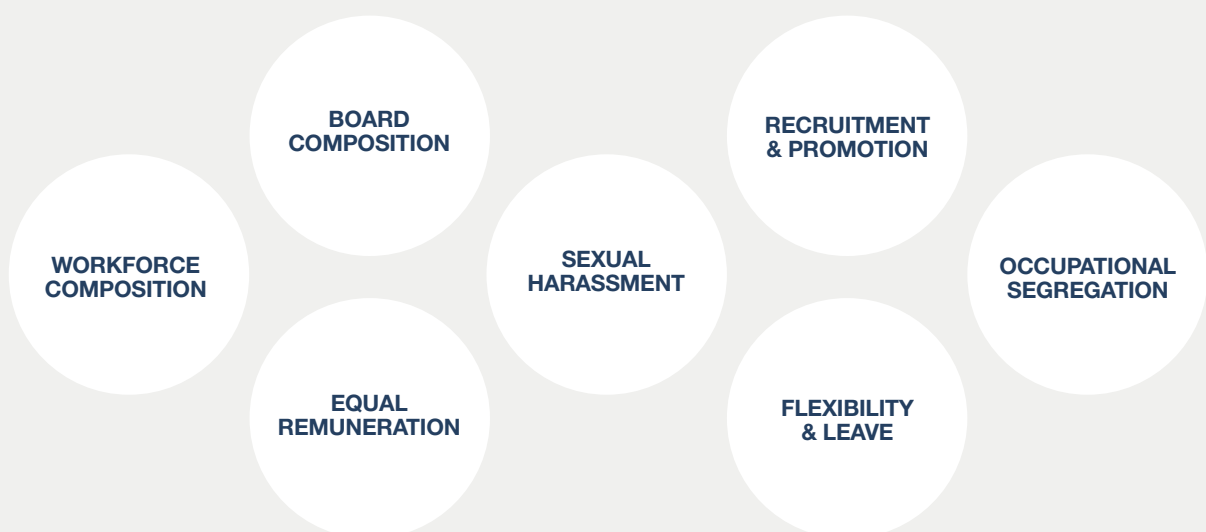


Figure 1: Audit Indicators

2.2.1 Results from the 2020-21 Audit

Key results from our audit are included in the infographic on pages 20 and 21. Individual results are summarised below.

Workforce and Board Composition

As a healthcare organisation our workforce is highly feminised, particularly in nursing, allied health staff, administration and psychology. Both our leadership and our overall organisational ratio reflects a similar gender split.

WE EMPLOYED 857 STAFF IN THE 2020-21 YEAR

Staff by employment status:

- > full-time employees account for 58 per cent of staff of whom 60 per cent (302) were women and 40 per cent (194) were men
- > part-time employees account for 33 per cent of staff of whom 75 per cent (211) were women and 25 per cent (70) were men
- > casual staff account for nine per cent of staff of whom 55 per cent (44) were women and 45 per cent (36) were men. (see Figure 2)

Staff composition by gender:

- > 65 per cent were women (557) and 35 per cent were men (300). (see Figure 3)

Staff by leadership positions:

- > of the 79 employees in supervisory positions (team leader to executive), 66 per cent (52) were women and 44 per cent (27) were men. (see Figure 4)
- > of the 10 executive members (excluding the CEO), 60 per cent (six) were women and 40 per cent (four) were men. (see Figure 5)

Board members by gender:

- > Of the 10 Board members, 60 per cent (six) were women and 40 per cent or (four) were men. (see Figure 6)

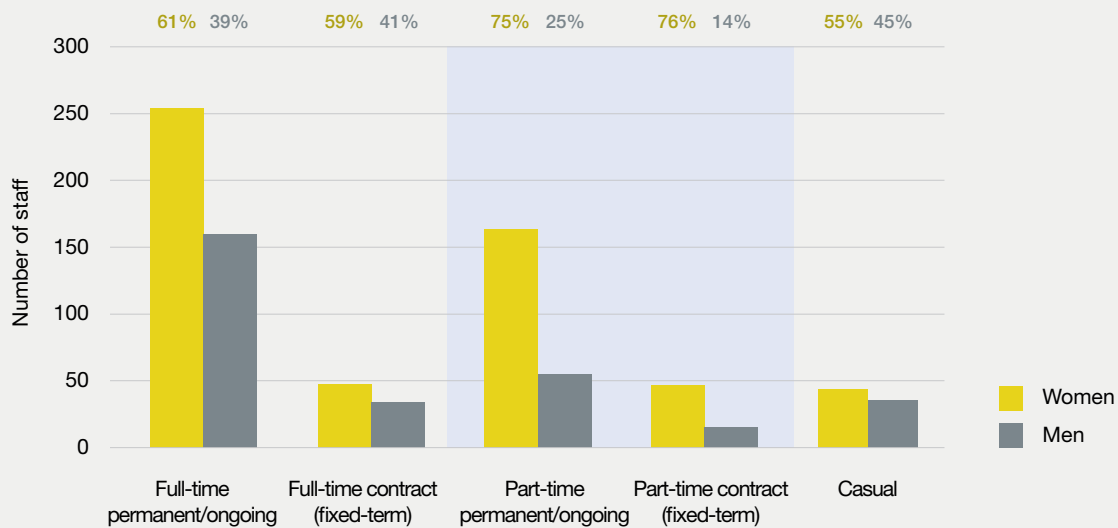


Figure 2: Workforce composition by status (full-time, part-time, and casual)

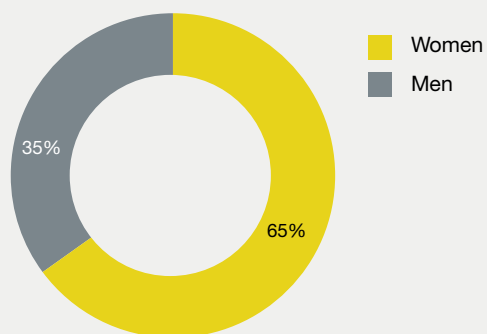


Figure 3: Staff breakdown by gender

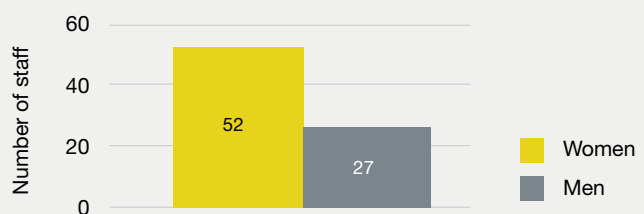


Figure 4: Distribution of staff in supervisory roles by gender

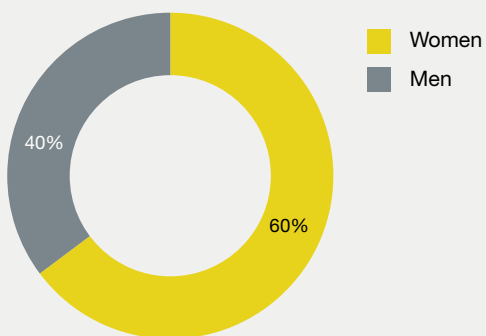


Figure 5: Composition of Executive

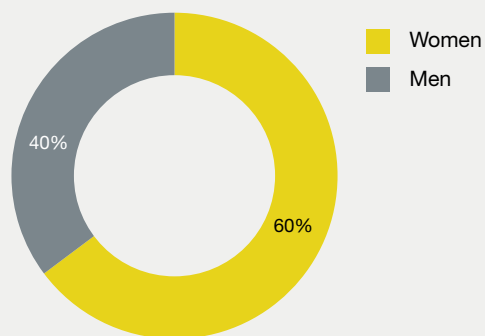


Figure 6: Composition of Board

Remuneration ⁵

Although there was little difference across most levels of the organisation by the median base salary, there was a marked difference in the median total remuneration. This indicates men earn more than women (see Figure 7). On average:

- > women who worked full time received one per cent less base salary and 13 per cent less total remuneration than men⁶
- > women who worked part time received around 20 per cent less than men in both base salary and total remuneration.

From our analysis, the possible reasons for the pay gap are:

- > women appear to work a wider range of levels than men in nursing, allied health and administration than men
- > more women than men take parental leave and work part-time, therefore salaries are less likely to increase as quickly over time
- > men appear to work more overtime than women
- > the percentage of men in the higher paid medical profession is 60 per cent, compared to 60-80 percent of women in lower paid occupational therapy, nursing, social work and psychology.

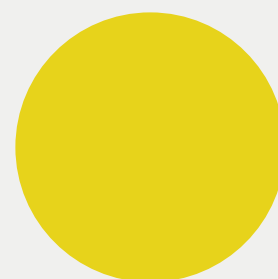
Sexual harassment

This section is dealt with as part of the cultural reform program (see section 2.3.3).

Recruitment, promotion and exits

The audit found levels of recruitment, promotion and exits by gender were equivalent to the ratio of women and men in Forensicare (60:40).

Workforce participation for women and men by age is also reasonably constant throughout the age groups, albeit more women appear to start their careers with Forensicare (see Figure 8).



⁵ These figures are exclusive of contractors. The figures listed on page 20 under the 'median annualised salary' section are inclusive of contractors.

⁶ Total remuneration equals base salary plus superannuation, overtime, uniform allowance and other benefits.

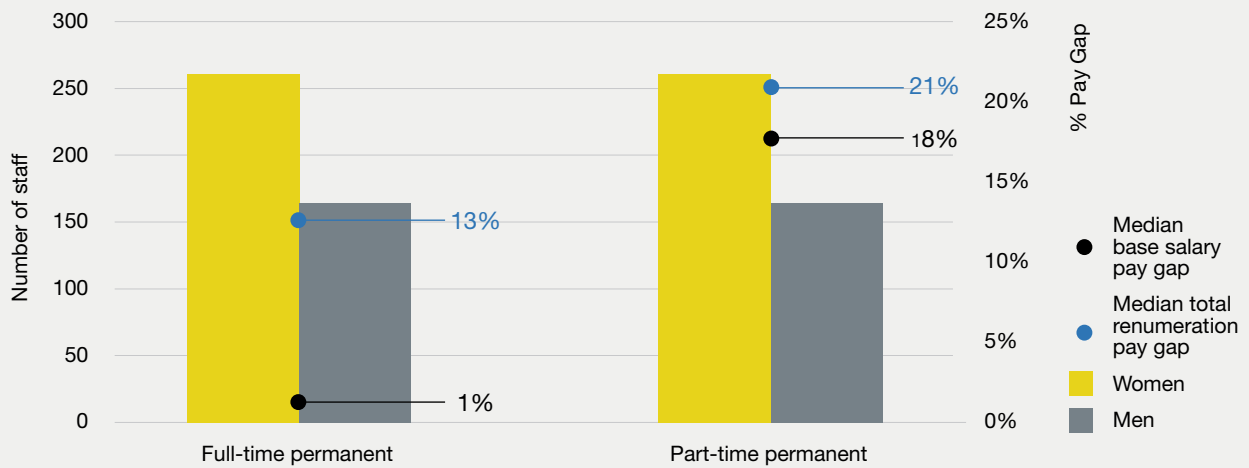


Figure 7: Overall median pay gap by employee type (full-time and part-time)

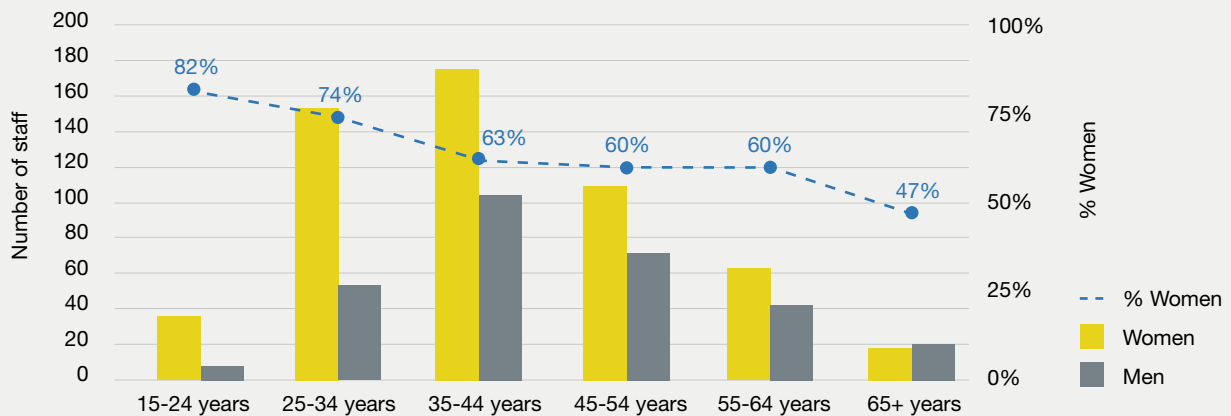


Figure 8: Participation by age

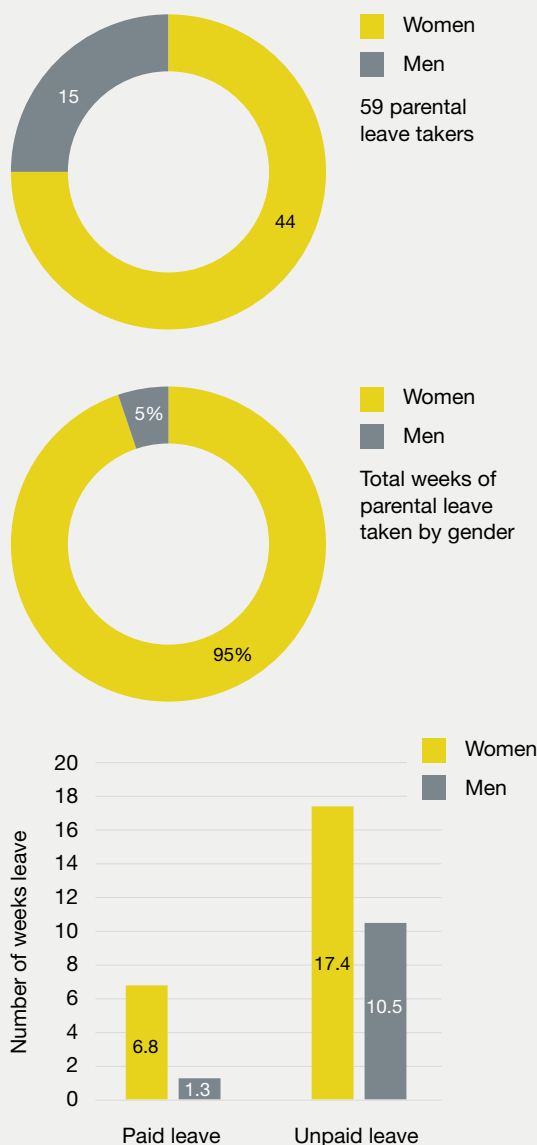


Figure 9: Parental leave

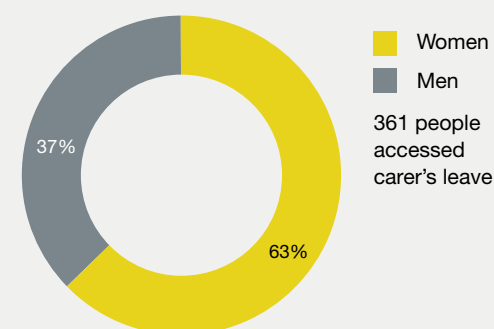


Figure 10: Carer's Leave

Availability and utilisation of terms, conditions and practices relating to family violence leave and flexible working to support workers with family or caring responsibilities

Family violence leave:

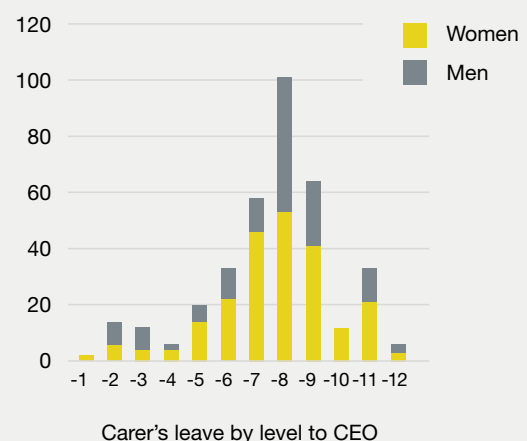
- > No official family violence leave was recorded in the system for the 2020-21 year, although there are anecdotal reports of leave granted.


Parental leave:

- > of the 59 parental leave takers taking paid and unpaid leave, 75 per cent were women and 25 per cent were men
- > when the total weeks of parental leave are combined, women account for 95 per cent of those weeks. (see Figure 9)

Carer's leave:

- > A total of 361 staff accessed carer's leave across all levels of the organisation. Of these, 63 per cent were women and 37 per cent were men. (see Figure 10)

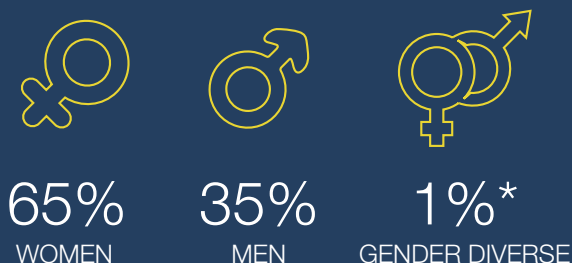




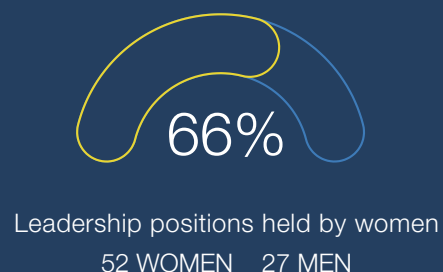
“Rather than parental care focusing on women’s needs only, I believe the evidence suggests that equality in the workplace occurs when it is also acceptable and common for men to take parental leave or work part-time...”

GENDER EQUALITY AUDIT 2020-21

WORKFORCE



LEADERSHIP

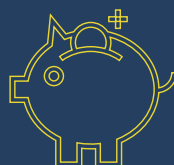


*Staff identifying as gender diverse, trans and intersex in the 2021 People Matter Survey

MEDIAN ANNUALISED SALARY

BASE SALARY

8%
Less for women
than men



TOTAL REMUNERATION

22%
Less for women
than men

Women tend to occupy a broader range of paid positions and are less likely to do overtime

BOARD



60%
WOMEN

40%
MEN

EXECUTIVE



60%
WOMEN

40%
MEN

PART-TIME POSITIONS



75%
WOMEN

25%
MEN

OCCUPATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Occupations with more than 60% women: nursing, allied health, administration and community



Occupations with more than 60% men: medical, PSOs, trades, machinery operators and labourers



19
PROMOTIONS
68% to women
32% to men

RECRUITMENT AND PROMOTION
IS FAIR AND BASED ON MERIT**

44% women agree
50% men agree



CARING RESPONSIBILITIES

PARENTAL LEAVE

75%
of staff who took
parental leave were
women



15
Number of men who
took parental leave
(compared to
44 women)



95%
Total weeks of
parental leave taken
by women (compared
to 5% by men)



11.9 weeks
Average duration of
women's parental leave
(compared to
2.5 weeks for men)



CARERS LEAVE

37%
of staff who took
carers' leave:
200 women
117men



WOMEN

56%
agree

49%
agree

68%
agree

Our culture supports
caring responsibilities**

Caring responsibilities are
not a barrier to success**

Forensicare would support
them taking family
violence leave**

63%
agree

57%
agree

58%
agree



MEN

CULTURE



9
staff identify as Aboriginal
or Torres Strait Islander***

Staff who agree our
culture is positive toward
employees of different
sexes/genders**



72%

78%

NOTES:

** People experience data from the 2021 People Matter Survey

*** Data collection for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders started in 2019

2.3 Employee Experience

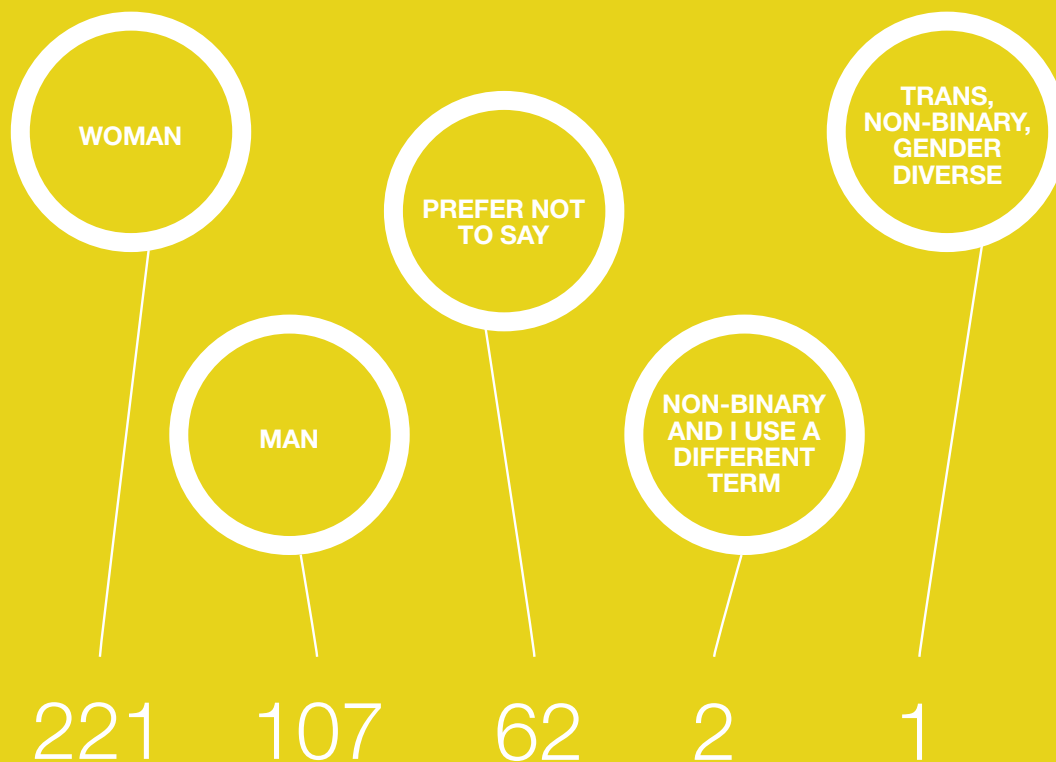
2.3.1 People Matter Survey 2021

Forensicare participated in the People Matter Survey 2021 (PMS) administered by the Victorian Public Sector Commission (VPSC) to capture employee experiences.

1. 55 per cent of staff responded to the People Matter Survey.
2. Only 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' responses by gender were provided by the VPSC. No data was provided for 'neutral,' 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' responses.
3. Due to VPSC threshold limitations, survey results are unavailable for small staff groups such as gender diverse people and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
4. 'Other' relates to all respondents who chose gender categories other than women or men.
5. All outcomes around 'negative behaviours' will be addressed within the Cultural Reform Plan as per the findings from the Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Review.

2.3.2 Employee Experience Results

These are results from the 2021 People Matter Survey gender equality questions.



AGREE OR STRONGLY AGREE			
DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION	WOMEN	MEN	OTHER
Gender is not a barrier to success in my organisation	71%	71%	47%
There is a positive culture within my organisation in relation to employees of different sexes/genders	72%	78%	47%
Senior leaders actively support diversity and inclusion in the workplace	62%	65%	42%
There is a positive culture within my organisation in relation to employees from varied cultural backgrounds	71%	72%	45%
There is a positive culture within my organisation in relation to employees of different age groups	69%	71%	44%
Age is not a barrier to success in my organisation	68%	67%	50%
There is a positive culture within my organisation in relation to employees who are Aboriginal and / or Torres Strait Islander	62%	64%	42%
There is a positive culture within my organisation in relation to employees who identify as LGBTIQ+	66%	64%	47%
There is a positive culture within my organisation in relation to employees with disability	51%	52%	34%
My organisation uses inclusive and respectful images and language	77%	80%	63%
RECRUITMENT AND PROMOTION	WOMEN	MEN	OTHER
My organisation makes fair recruitment and promotion decisions, based on merit	44%	50%	13%
LEAVE	WOMEN	MEN	OTHER
My organisation would support me if I needed to take family violence leave	68%	58%	41%
Having caring responsibilities is not a barrier to success in my organisation	49%	57%	38%
There is a positive culture within my organisation in relation to employees who have caring responsibilities	56%	63%	38%
There is a positive culture within my organisation in relation to employees who have family responsibilities	60%	64%	39%
FLEXIBLE WORKING	WOMEN	MEN	OTHER
Using flexible work arrangements is not a barrier to success in my organisation	53%	53%	31%
There is a positive culture within my organisation in relation to employees who use flexible work arrangement	55%	55%	33%
NEGATIVE BEHAVIOURS	WOMEN	MEN	OTHER
My organisation takes steps to eliminate bullying, harassment and discrimination	53%	60%	33%
I am confident that I would be protected from reprisal for reporting improper conduct	53%	64%	28%
YES			
During the last 12 months in your current organisation, have you witnessed violence or aggression against a colleague	14%	18%	23%
During the last 12 months in your current organisation, have you experienced bullying at work	22%	21%	30%
During the last 12 months in your current organisation, have you experienced discrimination at work	8%	9%	14%
During the last 12 months in your current organisation, have you experienced sexual harassment at work	15%	9%	20%

2.3.3 Cultural reform

Employee experiences were also taken from consultation with staff related to bullying, harassment and inclusion.

In 2021, the Board and CEO commissioned an independent review into bullying, harassment and discrimination at Forensicare. The report was commissioned after the delivery of the results for the annual People Matter Survey in late 2020. While there was awareness of incidents of bullying, harassment and discrimination from earlier People Matter Surveys (and our own Health, Safety and Wellbeing Survey, also in 2020), the 2020 People Matter survey results indicated a concerning increase in these issues.

The review found that there were unacceptable levels of bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, racism and discrimination at Forensicare. These findings related to concerns around diversity, equity and inclusion (including gender), insufficient people management skills within our leadership, and policies and initiatives failing to counter these matters and have lasting impact.

To address the findings from the review, a program of cultural reform commenced in late 2021, inclusive of a Cultural Reform Plan. These programs will work to address the negative behaviours found in the 2021 People Matter Survey.

2.4 Stakeholder engagement

To supplement the audit and employee experiences, the findings and suggested strategies were consulted upon with the Board, executive, staff, Workplace Consultative Committee and Gender Equality Advisory Committee. 103 staff responded online to an anonymous gender equality survey and provided over 90 detailed comments.

Staff were asked to score their support for survey actions on a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being the highest. Average support for each of the actions was high, at 8.4 out of 10. A more detailed analysis using the Net Promoter Score framework was applied with the results outlined in Appendix 5.

The framework used:

- > any score above eight as 'favouring' the proposed action
- > scores seven to eight were considered neutral
- > any scores below seven were considered as 'not favouring' the proposed action.

Common concerns related to initiatives being available for people of all genders; bathroom usage; gender-neutral language; and making pronouns compulsory in emails. Further comments can be found in Appendix 5.3. It is expected that promotion, training and education will assist in addressing staff concerns.

3. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REPORTING

Forensicare's Gender Equality Action Plan outlines several aims and actions which will be undertaken over the next four years. This work will be reviewed and updated annually. The Executive Director People and Culture is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Gender Equality Action Plan. Progress will be reviewed by the Gender Equality Steering Committee who will report to the Strategic Executive. The CEO will report to the Forensicare Board.

The Gender Equality Commission has developed a comprehensive framework, guidance and advice regarding the obligations to monitor, evaluate and promote gender equality. These include:

- > conducting gender impact assessments when developing policies and programs and delivering services to the public
- > monitoring and evaluation through two-yearly progress reports and four-yearly workforce gender audits.

The Gender Equality Action Plan and progress against actions will be made publicly available on Forensicare's website. Highlights will be shared with staff via our internal communication channels.

3.1 Measures

Gender equality and new conceptions of gender can challenge deeply entrenched social and cultural norms. Change will take time.

Workforce changes in gender equality are less likely to be observed in the short term, so medium to long-term measures will be used to implement actions and monitor progress as follows:

- > medium-term measures will be used to measure the success of projects and implementation

- > long-term measures will be used to show progress against the seven indicators and priorities.

Forensicare will develop an evaluation framework to ensure we continuously reflect on and learn from the work undertaken for the Gender Equality Action Plan. Due to the breadth and scope of this plan, specific projects will be selected for evaluation of their progress and project outcomes.


Evaluation will be based on the following questions:

- > have we done what we said we would do?
- > has this project achieved the desired change?
- > is this project having the influence we expected?
- > what, if any, are the learnings and opportunities for improvement?

3.2 Implementation

This work will link with the new Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Framework to shape a positive and safe workplace for everyone, every day. Resources have been allocated to implement this plan and framework via a dedicated staff member and budget.

A cross-functional team will assist with the implementation and evaluation of the actions to ensure we make reasonable and material progress in relation to the workplace gender equality indicators.



“I think there is great opportunity for Forensicare to develop and progress in this area and pave the way/set a standard for other organisations, and most importantly support their staff.”


4. ACTION PLAN

WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ACHIEVE		LEAD	YEAR (Y)		
BENCHMARKING, AUDITING AND CERTIFICATION					
1.	DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS				
1.1	Identify strategies to collect missing gender and intersectional data across the organisation and implement, where practicable.	EDPC	Y1	Y2	Y3
1.2	Identify and implement methods to collate and track data by individual, team, department and directorate, (and integrate in the planned HRIS system as appropriate), including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">> recruitment, promotion, exits, career development, higher duties and secondments> flexible working, carers leave, parental leave.	EDPC	Y1	Y2	Y3
1.3	Review an appropriate gender and intersectional workforce mix that meets the needs of the organisation and those of our consumers and; identify areas of concern, root causes and strategies to redress any issues.	EDPC	Y1	Y2	Y3
EDUCATION AND ATTITUDINAL CHANGE					
2.	TRAINING AND EDUCATION				
2.1	Promote gender equality, intersectionality, its benefits and our responsibilities under the family violence framework, MARAM.	EDSPP	Y1	Y2	Y3
2.2	Develop mandatory gender equality training to increase understanding of gender inequality and required workplace-related behaviours, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">> avoiding and addressing unfair assumptions, pressures and treatment of people based on gender> improving understanding of intersectional experiences of discrimination and inequity> required workplace policies, protocols and procedures that help address gender inequality.	EDPC	Y1	Y2	Y3
3.	AWARENESS RAISING AND COMMUNICATIONS				
3.1	Implement initiatives such as revising the style guide to assist people with understanding gender equal behaviour, language and support, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">> including pronouns alongside people’s names, to reduce risk of misgendering> using images of gender and culturally diverse people, to better reflect our community> terminology guidelines around how to refer to people and avoiding gendered language where possible.	EDSPP	Y1	Y2	Y3

WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ACHIEVE		LEAD	YEAR (Y)		
3.2	Proactively demonstrate we are a gender-inclusive organisation to prospective employees and external stakeholders by introducing standardised protocols for all internal and external communications, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > promoting pronouns in email signatures (that employees can update themselves as needed) > including gender-identity flags in email signatures, on the website and key reports – including the rainbow pride flag, trans flag and non-binary flag. 	EDSPP	Y1	Y2	Y3
3.3	Join a support organisation such as Diversity Council Australia to receive resources, research and training that can be shared with all staff.	EDPC	Y1	Y2	Y3
3.4	Conduct an audit of our publications and messaging in adherence to the revised style guide and update as required.	EDSPP	Y1	Y2	Y3
CULTURAL AND PHYSICAL SAFETY					
4. FACILITIES					
4.1	Investigate options for facilities to meet the needs of people of all genders and those who have experienced gender-based violence. This may include but is not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > gender-neutral bathrooms > appropriate lighting, exit signage and safe passage out of facilities, for victim-survivors of trauma and gender-based violence. 	CFO	Y1	Y2	Y3
4.2	Investigate and develop strategies to ensure Forensicare's signage actively demonstrates gender inclusivity. This may include but is not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > posters and statements on not tolerating gender discrimination and how to report it if you see it > equitable representation of people of different genders in imagery <i>(Links to Culture Plan recommendation 2.6b)</i>	EDSPP EDRAM	Y1	Y2	Y3
5. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES					
5.1	Implement the Safe Place and Culture Plan initiatives for bullying, sexual harassment, discrimination and victimisation.	EDPC	Y1	Y2	Y3
6. GENDER IMPACT ASSESSMENTS					
6.1	Conduct gender impact assessments as per the <i>Gender Equality Act 2020</i> when developing or reviewing a policy, program or service	COO	Y1	Y2	Y3

WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ACHIEVE		LEAD	YEAR (Y)		
STAFFING, RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION					
7.	LEADERSHIP REPRESENTATION				
7.1	Monitor gender and diversity balance and report annually. Consider strategies to diversify recruitment to leadership roles and implement as necessary. This may include but is not limited to: > A review of gender balance in leadership roles considering representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, culturally and linguistically diverse people, people living with disability and LGBTIQA+ people.	COO EDPC	Y1	Y2	Y3
7.2	Ensure our consultation processes seek the views and experiences of diverse groups.	COO	Y1	Y2	Y3
8.	STAFF DIVERSITY				
8.1	Monitor gender and diversity balance across all occupations and levels of the organisation (when data is available) and implement strategies where necessary to diversify recruitment to roles.	EDPC	Y1	Y2	Y3
9.	RECRUITMENT				
9.1	Identify any gender disparities and opportunities in recruitment and develop strategies accordingly (see action 7.1).	EDPC	Y1	Y2	Y3
9.2	Attract people of all genders to roles at Forensicare, including those that break conventional 'gender norms', this could include but is not limited to: > ensuring gender neutral language and imagery in all marketing and recruitment materials > specifically targeting recruitment campaigns at diverse groups such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, culturally and linguistically diverse people, and LGBTIQA+ communities	EDPC	Y1	Y2	Y3
9.3	Review current recruitment and selection practices for opportunities for improvement, based on best practice. This may include but is not limited to: > de-identified application processes (to a minimum long-listing level), removing identifying features such as name, gender, location, place of study, age, where systems either support or could be improved.	EDPC	Y1	Y2	Y3
9.4	Provide unconscious bias training to managers involved in recruitment (see culture and workforce plans).	EDPC	Y1	Y2	Y3
10.	PROMOTION, SECONDMENTS, AND HIGHER DUTIES				
10.1	Identify any gender disparities and opportunities in promotion, secondment, and higher duties, subject to data extraction and availability, and develop strategies accordingly.	EDPC	Y1	Y2	Y3

WHAT ARE WE TRYING TO ACHIEVE		LEAD	YEAR (Y)		
10.2	Identify strategies to ensure equitable access to career development opportunities to all staff, especially women and gender diverse people from diverse communities. This may include but is not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > a mentoring scheme to provide guidance and encouragement to women and people from diverse backgrounds in their professional development > improved opportunities for flexibility, including for secondment and higher duties opportunities, to encourage applications and suitability of employees. 	COO	Y1	Y2	Y3
REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS					
11. PAY GAP					
11.1	Investigate any pay equity issues by gender, employment status, occupation, and discipline.	EDPC	Y1	Y2	Y3
11.2	Develop a pay gap issues paper to identify any concerns and root causes.	EDPC	Y1	Y2	Y3
11.3	Develop and implement strategies and responses to address pay equity issues and opportunities	EDPC	Y1	Y2	Y3
12. TAKING LEAVE					
12.1	Investigate leave types by gender and workforce type (for example, clinical vs non-clinical, rostered vs Monday to Friday) for impact on career progression, organisational knowledge and skills and develop strategies to address issues as necessary.	EDPC	Y1	Y2	Y3
12.2	Promote the availability of and confidential support for accessing family violence leave.	EDSPP	Y1	Y2	Y3
12.3	Identify strategies to ensure taking parental or carer's leave does not impact employees long-term career development prospects.	EDPC	Y1	Y2	Y3
13. FLEXIBLE WORKING					
13.1	Investigate the extent of flexible working options in use and develop strategies inclusive of the needs of direct and non-direct care staff and people of all genders and diverse backgrounds.	EDPC	Y1	Y2	Y3
14. WELLBEING SUPPORT					
14.1	Develop and encourage diversity support networks that staff can contribute to and benefit from (see Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Framework)	EDSPP	Y1	Y2	Y3
14.2	Review opportunities to support and encourage people to feel safe disclosing disabilities and the need for reasonable adjustments (see Disability Action Plan)	EDSPP	Y1	Y2	Y3



“A more diverse organisation that is focused on equality will be stronger, and a much more attractive employer. We need that as staff.”

5. APPENDICES

5.1 Consultation results – well supported actions

No.	Action Item	Favour	Neutral	Do Not Favour
1	Implement the Safe Place and Culture Plan initiatives for bullying, sexual harassment, discrimination and victimisation.	83	13	7
2	Identify strategies to ensure taking parental or carers leave does not impact employees long-term career development prospects.	83	13	7
3	Promote the availability of family violence leave and the confidential support offered.	82	15	6
4	Investigate the extent of flexible working options in use, inclusive of clinical and non-clinical staff, and develop strategies as necessary.	78	17	8
5	Investigate any pay equity issues and root causes and address pay equity issues and opportunities.	75	12	16
6	Provide unconscious bias training to managers involved in recruitment.	72	16	15
7	Investigate leave types by gender and workforce type (for example, clinical vs non-clinical, rostered vs Mon-Fri) for impact on career progression, organisational knowledge and skills and development.	71	12	20
8	Promote gender equality, its benefits and our responsibilities under MARAM (Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management)	68	18	17
9	Identify strategies to ensure equitable access to career development opportunities, especially for women and gender diverse people from diverse communities.	68	17	18
10	Develop mandatory gender equality training to increase understanding of gender stereotypes and required workplace-related behaviours, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > avoiding and addressing unfair assumptions, pressures and treatment of people based on gender > improving understanding of intersectional experiences of discrimination and inequity > required workplace policies, protocols and procedures that help achieve gender equality. 	67	23	13
11	Identify any gender disparities and opportunities in recruitment, promotion, secondment and higher duties and develop strategies accordingly.	66	22	15

5.2 Consultation Results – less supported actions

No.	Action Item	Favour	Neutral	Do Not Favour
12	Attract people of all genders. E.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > using gender neutral language > specifically targeting diverse groups such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, culturally and linguistically diverse people, and LGBTIQ+ communities 	65	15	23
13	Develop and encourage diversity support networks that staff can contribute to and benefit from	65	27	11
14	Implement initiatives such as revising the Forensicare style guide to assist people with understanding gender equal behaviour, language and support.	60	23	20
15	Investigate options for facilities to meet the needs of people of all genders and those who have experienced gender-based violence. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > gender-neutral bathrooms > 'safe spaces' for people who identify as women > appropriate lighting, exit signage and safe passage out of facilities 	59	22	22
16	Join a support organisation such as Diversity Council Australia to receive resources, research and training that can be shared with all staff.	58	21	24
17	Evaluate an appropriate gender and intersectional staffing mix that meets organisational and consumer need and develop strategies to redress any issues. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > a mentoring scheme for women and people from diverse backgrounds > improved opportunities for job-sharing and other flexible working arrangements (including secondments and higher duties) 	58	20	25
18	Monitor gender and diversity balance across all occupations and levels of the organisation and implement strategies where necessary to diversify recruitment to roles.	57	22	24
19	Conduct an audit of our publications and messaging in adherence to the revised style guide	54	25	24
20	Investigate and develop strategies to ensure Forensicare's signage actively demonstrates gender inclusivity	51	22	30
21	Proactively demonstrate we are gender-inclusive by introducing standardised protocols for all internal and external communications, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > promoting the use of pronouns in email signatures > including gender-identity flags in email signatures, on the website and key reports 	49	13	41
22	Review current recruitment and selection practices for opportunities for improvement. This may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> > de-identified application processes (e.g. removing name, gender, location, place of study, age) > multiple options for responding to key selection criteria, as appropriate to role (e.g. telephone transcript responses to remove unconscious bias for people without strong written English skills). 	46	25	32

5.3 Consultation results – comments

OVER 90 COMMENTS WERE RECEIVED TO OUR GENDER EQUALITY ACTION PLAN SURVEY, CONDUCTED IN FEBRUARY 2022. THE SURVEY WAS ANONYMOUS AND THEREFORE ALL QUOTES ARE NON-ATTRIBUTABLE TO INDIVIDUALS. A SAMPLE OF THE COMMENTS WE RECEIVED INCLUDED:

1. "In regard to the use of pronouns and gender-identity flags in email signatures, I believe this should be voluntary. It should be each staff member's personal choice as to what they want to include and not include in their own email signature."
2. "No gender-neutral bathrooms please!"
3. "Actually supporting staff who have parent and carer responsibilities. Currently rostering guidelines, managers personal opinions and biases prevent carers (namely females) from being able to work (forced to work part-time, inability to work overtime etc.)"
4. "As long as the training is sensitive of other cultures because some of the discussions are taboo or disrespectful to be openly discussed in open/common meetings."
5. "This is a really important piece of work, that Forensicare is doing and proud of the organisation for conducting this."
6. "I feel that Forensicare has historically been struggling to keep up with current advice and contemporary best practice in this area so would support all of these initiatives"
7. "There needs to be a cultural shift around "banter" and workplace interactions/ discussions. Management need to set a standard and correct staff on the spot if such behaviour (sexist comments, jokes) is observed."
8. "Mentoring opportunities should apply to all not just certain dominant clinical groups."
9. "We not only need diversity in leadership roles but we also need diversity in disciplines..."
10. "Increased training for all staff around not assuming gender..."
11. "Implement avenues for employees to confidentially disclose diversity and/or disabilities."
12. "...Consider for example - recent research showing the late diagnosis for women who have neurodiversity such as ADHD and Autism, how this impacts their engagement... and what supports they might need."
13. "There is a clear disparity in levels of knowledge, experience and awareness on the ground amongst staff (what language is/isn't appropriate/use of correct pronouns etc)."
14. "Nursing staff are left behind in terms of flexible working arrangements, particularly RPN3's at TEH. The constant excuse is it is "too hard" to manage because there are so many nurses. This isn't good enough and makes work life balance difficult, particularly for parents of school age and younger children."
15. "Would love to see support of women during times of parental leave, as it doesn't put you at a distinct disadvantage compared to men at this stage and it is really hard to recover this."
16. "... inequalities... in our workplace are not simply gender issues. For example, ... psychiatrists are male, while... nurses are female, and their respective roles and power dynamic are complex..."
17. "Remove historical gender role expectations within the workforce - i.e. expecting male staff to handle aggressive patients."





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