

Preventing sexual harassment in Victoria's health sector

Actions
<p>Build awareness of sexual harassment in the health care sector</p> <p>The department, in conjunction with WorkSafe Victoria is developing a targeted campaign that will address sexual harassment and inappropriate behaviour more broadly including bullying within health services.</p>
<p>Improve leadership and accountability for a culture free from sexual harassment</p> <p>Board and executive education, formal guidance and resources will be developed so that health service boards and executive understand their responsibilities to identify and respond to allegations of sexual harassment.</p> <p>Health services will be held to account for creating a positive culture free from sexual harassment. People Matter Survey sexual harassment results will be analysed and health service action plans will be monitored under the performance monitoring process.</p>
<p>Develop better organisational strategies and systems that prevent sexual harassment in health services</p> <p>An organisational framework and toolkit will be developed that provides practical guidance to health services on identifying the risks of sexual harassment and strategies and systems to effectively prevent and manage sexual harassment.</p> <p>The department will work with other agencies such as the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission, Victorian Public Sector Commission and WorkSafe Victoria to provide health services with guidance related to preventing sexual harassment, its impact on health and safety and how to report and access help.</p>
<p>Train our healthcare workforce to better prevent, identify and respond to sexual harassment behaviours</p> <p>Minimum standards will be developed to ensure consistent training in preventing, identifying, reporting and responding to sexual harassment. This will include the role and responsibilities of individuals, managers and supervisors to prevent and speak up against sexual harassment behaviours.</p>
<p>Support people to speak up about inappropriate behaviours and sexual harassment in the workplace</p> <p>Two Independent Facilitator roles will be established. These roles will support individuals to raise issues of sexual harassment and access the appropriate information and services to address complaints of sexual harassment. These roles will more broadly support individuals with concerns around inappropriate behaviour including bullying.</p> <p>The trial will be evaluated and will inform the need for further roles to support healthcare workers to raise issues of inappropriate behaviour within our healthcare system as well as enable a better understanding and address the prevalence and drivers for this unacceptable behaviour within the healthcare sector.</p>
<p>Ensure appropriate responses to allegations of sexual harassment</p> <p>Where allegations of sexual harassment have occurred – ensure that there is a standardised approach to investigations and response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop best practice guidelines for health services including thresholds• Establish a standardised approach for investigating allegations involving board members and CEOs

The panel of independent experts being established will be available to undertake reviews of health services where there are indicators of possible systemic sexual harassment behaviour or cultures that are accepting and permitting these behaviours.

A surveillance strategy will be developed to monitor the frequency of sexual harassment allegations across health services.