

to be vulnerable to criticism! It can be hard, but if organisations really want to improve we have to be receptive when someone says, 'Actually, you weren't representing us when you did this and you need to improve that.' Then you have to commit to action. Part of this journey is recognising that you're not going to 'get it right' every time.

How did you approach the task of developing an organisational strategy?

I consulted with each person in our organisation to consider what we should prioritise as our key objectives for the strategy, and then I proposed what they could do within their role to further the objectives of the strategy. Everybody is responsible for at least one task so they all feel part of the strategy and are committed. Achieving that commitment was critical so that it does not fall on the shoulders of one person in the organisation. Everybody's accountable.

How would you advise other organisations to embed intersectionality?

It's a process that's always evolving. Policies that hit the mark one year might not the next so it's about knowing when to consult others. Workplaces can set up strategies or policies that require people to share the load within an organisation, so that it doesn't sit with one person. Our Watch has set up an internal community of practice, to share some of the more challenging points of resistance. We've also done a lot of capacity building, that's created a culture that allows for challenging conversations. Employers can move towards uncomfortable conversations within their organisations. In fact, doing so can lead to improvements in worker wellbeing and the long term sustainability of the work.

It's also critical to have a champion at the highest level of the organisation who can keep it as a priority and manage resistance. The idea that it's 'too difficult' to take an intersectional approach is a form of resistance. At an individual level, the best thing is not to internalise it. It's about seeing people's good intentions and meeting them where they're at. The greater goal is social change, so we need to ensure that we look after ourselves and each other in the long term. ■

The abridged version of Our Watch's internal organisational intersectional strategy is available at www.ourwatch.org.au.

The Prevalent and Preventable conference report is also available and summarises principles to consider.

Our Watch recommend The Equality Institute booklet, **Preventing and responding to family violence: Taking an intersectional approach to address violence in diverse Australian communities.**

Meet Our Watch CEO, Patty Kinnersly



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How do we contribute to the long-term movement for equality?

“What will we leave for those coming after us to continue this work and how can we influence community norms and practices and contribute to the development of policy to ensure permanent change in women's rights?”

These are some of the big questions chief executive Patty Kinnersly has posed for herself and the Our Watch team since June, when she took on the top role at the national organisation dedicated to the prevention of violence against women and their children.

Ms Kinnersly brings extensive experience in women's health, community services, education and governance to the role. She was well known and highly respected as Chief Executive Officer of Women's Health Grampians and moved to the Our Watch chief executive role from being Director of Practice Leadership.

Within days of beginning as CEO, Ms Kinnersly addressed the Our Watch

team about her long-term vision for the organisation. She said the public conversation around violence against women had shifted significantly since Our Watch was formed five years ago.

“Since its inception, Our Watch has achieved a huge amount and made a vital contribution to raising public awareness of both the extent of violence against women and children and the drivers of this unacceptable scourge. We are now at a moment in history where there is a tidal wave of justifiable anger around this issue and we will work to harness this energy to make positive change and take our contribution further.”

Ms Kinnersly said Our Watch was in a strong position to continue its leading role in bringing together and supporting the excellent work of many organisations around Australia and harnessing the public will to tackle this issue.

“Our commitment over the next few years is to ensure that we share our knowledge, tools and resources with people across the country who want to translate their desire for change into meaningful and evidence based action. It's vital people have the tools to act”, she said.

Ms Kinnersly, who is based in country Victoria, said she was also passionate about making knowledge accessible to regional and remote communities. As well as her senior roles across the health sector, Ms Kinnersly has an impressive track record in sport, having played in VWFL for 14 years, playing in five premierships and representing Victoria on 10 occasions, twice as captain.

While her days on a muddy football oval may be behind her, the skills built up in sport, such as decisiveness, commitment, discipline and passion will undoubtedly serve her well in this latest career challenge. ■