

Why we need local National Male Health Policy

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Male Health requires the structure of a Government National Male Health Policy because National Mortality and Morbidity Rate of males in countries across the globe demonstrate a rate of premature death amongst men that is unacceptable but is preventable.

“Most people assume that men, by virtue of their economic advantages in society, must be correspondingly healthy. Those of us who look at health statistics know, however that being male is a risk factor for premature mortality from infancy through to old age.

There is increasing recognition of this issue, but little yet in the way of progress”.

In 1994 Bernard Denner, founder of the Australian Centre for Advancement of Men's Health (CAMH) developed the Man Model of Health Promotion to develop strategies to support men understand their health and take responsibility for their health outcomes. This journey has seen the CAMH (Man Model) developed around Australia and into Canada with over 12,500 men attending sessions. Bernard has made ongoing representations to federal and state government ministers to help influence the development of policies and strategies for a range of issues impacting males. The work of CAMH furthermore has been successful in presenting Professional Development programs across Australia and Canada that support General Practitioners (Doctors) and Health Workers to ‘Understand & Engage Males Better’

WHY DO WE NEED A NATIONAL MALE HEALTH POLICY?

A National Strategic Framework for Men's Health will acknowledge men's health as a national health priority based on the National Health Priorities and the mortality and morbidity status of men

- There is epidemiological evidence that men have a shorter life expectancy than women, access health care less frequently and respond differently to life stresses
- Many of the factors contributing to the poorer health status for men are preventable and can be addressed in the community setting
- Stereotypes held by society and men themselves, present barriers to men when responding to their individual health needs
- Recognition that men need Programs that they feel will provide a result and outcome.

A Strategic Framework for Men's Health incorporating a National Men's Health Strategy will provide men with opportunities to address their issues.

In Australia, like other Western World economies, men require special attention not only in relation to gender issues and health but also in relation to geographical location, service availability and utilization.

Our research clearly indicates that men have health needs beyond the National Mortality and Morbidity Health Status of men. Research by CAMH (Table 3) is based on 10years of Men's Health Nights nationally and further illustrated by results based on Canadian feedback.

No.	Issue / Australian Men	Issue \ Canadian Men
1	Heart Disease	Heart Disease
2	Cancer	Cancer
3	Exercise / Fitness	Exercise / Fitness
4	Cholesterol	Blood Pressure
5	Stress Management	Cholesterol
6	Blood Pressure	Urinary / Bladder
7	Wellbeing	Diabetes
8	Urinary / Bladder	Wellbeing
9	Retirement	Stress/Depression
10	Diabetes	Retirement/Social Activities

Table 3 Top 10 issues for Australian and Canadian Men

The MAN Model of Health Promotion was designed on the premise that a Health Education strategy will create a greater understanding of the issues and risks associated with maleness.

It is important to recognise that men are different and that their needs are different. Recognizing that men are different provides Health Practitioners with a greater ability to achieve results for the wider community of men impacting on their general health and wellbeing.

A National Male Health Policy will set a framework and strategy that will provide the Health Industry with a direction based on best practice models that attract men to act in dealing with male health issues in a similar way as women deal with women's health issues.

There is enough evidence and enough talk. Now is the time for governments to act. Bernard will present a Paper at the National Men's Health Conference in Arlington USA in May 2004.

REFERENCE:

Based on a Paper published by Bernard Denner in 2001 for the 4th National Men's Health Conference Richmond NSW. The work of CAMH and the research is based on Men's Health Information Nights & Sessions across Australia and in British Columbia Canada in 2001.