

# Promoting healthier masculinities in the Macedon Ranges

## PART A: BACKGROUND

### 1 About North Western Melbourne Primary Health Network

**Melbourne Primary Care Network (MPCN) trading as the North Western Melbourne PHN is an independent, locally governed and run, not for profit organisation dedicated to improving primary healthcare in local communities. MPCN was successful in its bid to operate one of 31 Primary Health Networks (PHNs) formally established across Australia from 1 July 2015.**

PHNs have been established with the key objectives of increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of medical services for patients, particularly those at risk of poor health outcomes, and improving coordination of care to ensure patients receive the right care in the right place, at the right time.

Whilst primarily focused on improving population health outcomes, PHNs across the country will also work with the primary healthcare sector to improve frontline services and collaborate with Local Hospital Networks to ensure better integration between primary and acute care services.


The **North Western Melbourne PHN** catchment covers approximately 3,200 km<sup>2</sup> across the north western region of Melbourne and includes, but is not limited to, Bacchus Marsh, Craigieburn, Gisborne, Little River, Maribyrnong, Melbourne, Melton, Preston, Sunbury and Werribee. By population reach, we are Victoria's largest PHN.

A core remit of the organisation is to improve health outcomes for communities by fostering innovation, leveraging and coordinating existing community and organisational assets, and driving value for money.

Our vision is to improve the health of everyone in our region, especially those who are most vulnerable.

North Western Melbourne PHN has four key strategic goals which underpin our activities:

- Respond to local and national priorities in order to reduce the burden of disease and improve population health outcomes.
- Improve quality of care and individual outcomes.
- Improve integration and coordination of care across the continuum.
- Create a sustainable organisation which is well positioned to influence the reform of the health care system and take advantage of new opportunities.



The Victorian Government is partnering with Primary Health Networks (PHNs) to support local communities develop and implement coordinated place-based approaches to suicide prevention.

Guided by a common agenda, operating model, communications, and evaluation frameworks, these trials are harnessing local skills, expertise and resources to implement tailored, evidence-based initiatives in local communities. At each site, organisations, services and community work together to develop a plan to reduce suicides and to deliver effective suicide prevention at a local level.

The trials are being implemented across 12 Victorian locations including in Macedon Ranges. A group of local partners including health providers, the ambulance service, Macedon Ranges council, the police, youth representatives and other community services organisations are working together to implement a locally coordinated plan of action. The Macedon Ranges trial site is working closely with the Macedon Ranges Suicide Prevention Action Group (MRSPAG) to ensure that there is a coordinated approach to suicide prevention and support activities within the area. The work of the Macedon Ranges trial site is being led by the Stewardship Group who are responsible for delivery of the local action plan.

The North West Melbourne Primary Healthcare Network is also supporting the work of the Macedon Ranges trial site. This includes support with procurement activities to deliver projects identified in local action plans. The North West Melbourne Primary Healthcare Network will manage the procurement process for this project.

## 2 About the Project


### Background

There is a longstanding recognition that a disproportionate number of men die by suicide than women. The Australian Bureau of Statistics data from 2018 shows that suicide rates for males and females differ considerably with males consistently accounting for approximately three-quarters of suicide deaths.

Data from Our Watch also tells us that both women and men are more likely to experience violence at the hands of men, with around 95% of all victims of violence in Australia reporting a male perpetrator. When it comes to certain risky behaviors detrimental to health or life, the data tells us that men are more likely to engage in risky behaviors; males made up 73% of all road fatalities in Australia in 2013-2018 and Australian men were more than twice as likely to exceed the recommended guideline for alcohol consumption.

At a local level, the data presents a similar picture. From 2007-2017, approximately four out of five deaths by suicide in Macedon Ranges were male. The rate of suicide in the shire, at 15.6 per 100,000 was also higher than both the Victorian rate of 9.1 and the Australian rate of 12.1.

In recent years, a growing number of studies are considering how male attitudes and behaviours that conform to the traditional ideals of what it is to be a 'real man' are a key contributory factor in helping to explain some of these statistics. Whilst all men can feel pressure to conform to the dominant ideals of masculinity, *findings indicate that men who strongly endorse dominant ideals of masculinity are more likely than other men to consider suicide, drink excessively, take risks at work and drive dangerously.* Dominant masculine norms like self-reliance, invulnerability, and avoidance of expressing emotions have also been linked to men's reluctance to seek help for emotional and



mental health problems. This in turn impacts of the type of treatment and coping strategies men are willing to engage with and commit to. As a result, men who conform to traditional expressions of manhood are more likely to suffer harm to themselves and do harm to others.

The Macedon Ranges Suicide Prevention Trial Site (the trial site) recognises that addressing the harmful impacts of these societal masculine ideals goes well beyond mental health and suicide prevention policies and responses.

To address these significant and complex community challenges at a local level, local partners have identified a need to better understand the dominant ideals of masculinity in Macedon Ranges. This research will consider the extent to which the attitudes and behaviours of men and boys in Macedon Ranges conform to traditional definitions of what it means to be a 'real' man, and as a result places them at greater risk of doing or experiencing harm.

Whilst research tools can be informed by the existing instruments used to measure masculinity, there is also a need to better understand the interplay between adherence to traditional masculine norms and the place-based challenges specific to Macedon Ranges.

We acknowledge that it requires an intergenerational approach and a key aspect of this research will be to establish baseline data to track changes in attitudes and behaviours over time. This research will also need to provide insights and analysis into the local influences shaping attitudes and behaviours that are harmful to the health of men and boys and in turn their families and the broader Macedon Ranges community. Any research undertaken must adhere to ethical guidelines and have been through a rigorous ethical approvals process.

Taken together, an analysis of these baseline data and qualitative insights will identify potential healthier masculinities priority interventions that trial site partners can focus on to prevent and reduce harmful behaviours over time.

It is envisaged that the trial site will work closely with established partnerships such as the Macedon Ranges Local Safety Committee and the Macedon Ranges Family Violence Network. This will help to coordinate efforts and maximise the opportunities this research provides in informing healthier masculinities interventions.

## PART B: SPECIFICATION

North Western Melbourne PHN (the PHN) is seeking proposals for the provision of the services outlined in Schedule 1 to this RFQ. Given the broad set of deliverables associated with this project, the PHN welcomes submissions from both individual organisations and consortiums.

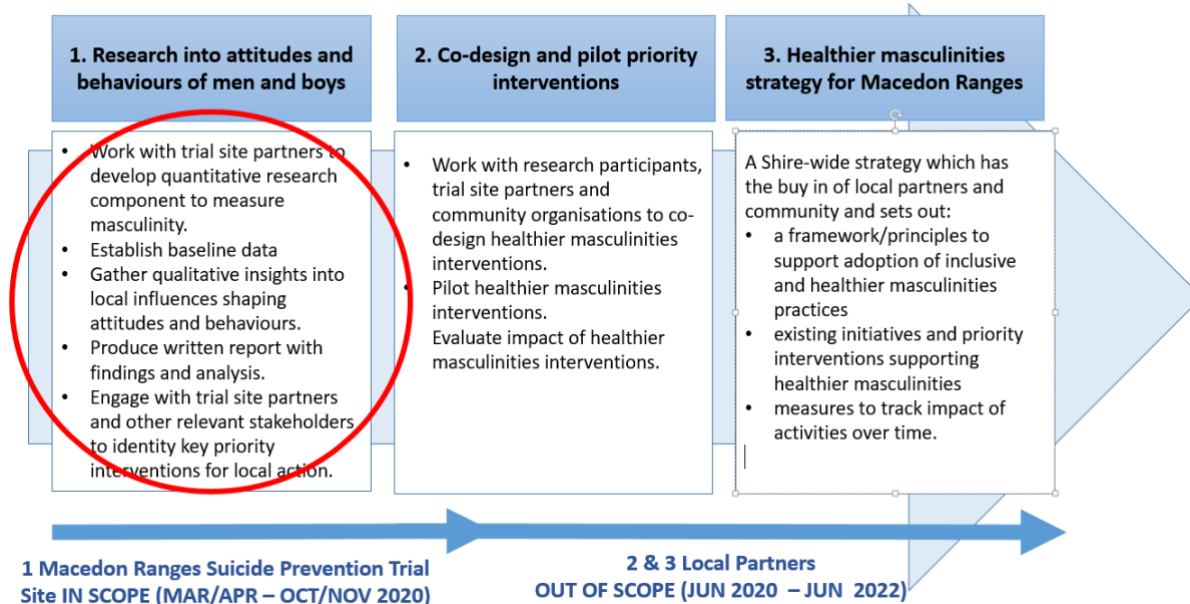
### 1 Project Purpose & Scope

The objectives of the project are to:

- Undertake research (both qualitative and quantitative) to understand the extent to which the attitudes and behaviours of boys and men in Macedon Ranges align with the dominant ideals of masculinity and how this compares to national research findings.
- Identify and understand the place-based factors (local contextual influences) which contribute to harmful behaviours of boys and men in Macedon Ranges.
- Engage with trial site partners and other relevant stakeholders to identify (at a high level) healthier masculinities interventions which local efforts could focus on.

Note that the work set out in this Request for Quote is part of a broader project, see **Figure 1** below.

## PROMOTING HEALTHIER MASCULINITIES IN THE MACEDON RANGES



At the end of Phase 1, trial site partners will have a common understanding of the harmful impacts that dominant ideals of masculinity can have. They will also have identified a shared set of priority interventions for local action. This will provide a strong foundation to help guide future work.

*The project scope does not include Phase 2, co-design and pilot of priority interventions, or phase 3, the development of a healthier masculinities strategy. Trial site partners will explore other avenues through which to secure funding for these phases.*

There is a strong expectation that this project will need to draw on existing research in this field to inform which priority interventions are the focus of local action.

## 2 Organisation Resources

For the purpose of completing the project, the consultant/s will be provided with reasonable virtual, and if possible, face to face access to organisational staff and resources including meeting rooms and related equipment. The suicide prevention project officer will support the identification and logistics of stakeholder engagement with project deliverables.

## 3 Term of the Project

The project agreement will end on 31 December 2020. The project shall commence within three working days from the confirmed date of engagement by North Western Melbourne PHN.

## 4 Intellectual Property

Intellectual property in any new material created for the purposes of the project will become the property of North Western Melbourne PHN unless otherwise agreed in writing.

Intellectual property in any existing material used for the purposes of the project will remain the property of the respective owners. In Part C, the respondent should specify the details of existing material that will be used for the project. Unless otherwise agreed in writing, the respondent must ensure that North Western Melbourne PHN is able to use, reproduce, and adapt the existing

material after the end of the project at no extra cost. North Western Melbourne PHN must also be able to give the existing material to others, including the Australian Government.

## 5 Capacity Development

It is a requirement of this project that transfer of knowledge and/or information to North Western Melbourne PHN staff be made in order to operate, manage and/or maintain the results of the project.

## PART C: RESPONDING TO THIS REQUEST FOR QUOTE

### 1 Communication

All queries should be submitted to [quotations@nwmpnh.org.au](mailto:quotations@nwmpnh.org.au).

### 2 Confidentiality

This RFQ and all related documents are to be treated as commercial-in-confidence. Proposals received in response to this RFQ will be treated as confidential and will be used only as described in this RFQ.

### 3 Proposal Submission

Proposals must be submitted via email to [quotations@nwmpnh.org.au](mailto:quotations@nwmpnh.org.au) by no later than close of business, **5pm (local time in Melbourne) on 30 April 2020**

North Western Melbourne PHN is not obliged to accept any proposal received after the Submission Deadline.

Where a respondent provides evidence of exceptional circumstances affecting on time submission, North Western Melbourne PHN may, at its sole discretion, decide to accept a proposal received after the Submission Deadline, but is not obliged to do so.

### 4 Errors, omission and amendments

North Western Melbourne PHN may, at any time before the Submission Deadline, issue a correction, update or amendment to this RFQ.

### 5 Pricing and Payment

The respondent will provide a price quotation as part of their proposal (see Part D). The indicative budget for this project is \$100,000 to \$105,000 (GST exclusive).

The project needs to be completed in an eight month time frame. The cost and estimated number of days required to complete each project deliverable should be included in the quote.

A payment of 70 per cent of the total value of the contract will be made following completion of the research and analysis component of the project (Activities 2-6 under Required Services). A final payment for remaining costs will be made upon satisfactory completion of the project.

Any travel, transfers, accommodation, meals, printing, postage, photocopying and associated expenses must be agreed in writing before they are incurred. Unless otherwise agreed, allowances

will be based on relevant ATO rates at the time. Expenses not covered by ATO rates will be paid based on receipts submitted.

## 6 Assessment Criteria

All proposals received by the Submission Deadline or otherwise accepted by North Western Melbourne PHN using its discretion will be evaluated by reference to the following assessment criteria. In evaluating proposals, regard will be given to the following criteria:

### Criterion 1: Understanding of the services required and capacity to deliver (20%)

- Response demonstrates an understanding of the subject matter and the key components of the project.
- Evidence that the organisation has experience for appropriately engaging with the community and stakeholders and understands any significant risks or factors that should be considered.

### Criterion 2: Experience and suitability of key personnel (20%)

- Evidence that the organisation has experience for appropriately engaging with the community and stakeholders and understands any significant risks or factors that should be considered.
- Evidence of any relevant skills and experience working in the areas of public health, research, data analysis and stakeholder engagement. Examples of relevant past projects are required - a brief CV may also be attached.

### Criterion 3: Methodology and approach to delivering the services (30%)

- Describe in detail the methodology, approach and/or framework that will be used to support successful delivery of the project.

### Criterion 4: Suitability of proposed project schedule (15%)

- Provide a complete project plan, including key steps and milestones and mitigation strategy relating to project risks.

### Criterion 5: Price and value for money (15%)

- Provide a breakdown of fees, expenses and costs.


Given the current situation regarding COVID-19, North Western Melbourne PHN expects bidders to address the potential impacts on their proposals (e.g. organisational capacity, delivery approaches, scheduling etc.) within the relevant criteria above.

North Western Melbourne PHN may also consider other factors relevant to the respondent's suitability to deliver the services, including conflicts of interest, financial viability and current insurance.

## 7 Assessment Process

Representatives from the Stewardship Group and the North Western Melbourne PHN will assess all proposals against the assessment criteria set out above, some or all of which may be weighted. The Stewardship Group and the North Western Melbourne PHN may also take into consideration information already known to it that is relevant to the assessment of any proposal.

Where proposals are assessed as meeting the evaluation criteria, respondents will be invited to interview, following which an approach to referees may be made.



Where North Western Melbourne PHN and the Stewardship Group considers that a proposal contains an ambiguity, unintentional error or minor omission, they may, in their sole discretion, contact the respondent and allow them to clarify or correct the matter, but will not do so where it would unfairly disadvantage other respondents.

## 8 Contractual Arrangements

North Western Melbourne PHN receives significant funding from the Australian Government, the Victorian Government, and other government and non-government sources. Each funding source may have particular requirements regarding consultancies and sub-contractors. The respondent understands that it will need to comply with these requirements if successful.

The successful respondent may be asked to:

- enter into an agreement in a form specified by Melbourne Primary Care Network Ltd;
- sign a confidentiality and non-disclosure agreement;
- provide due diligence information such as a statement of solvency;
- provide certificates of currency for relevant insurances:
  - Workcover or similar; and
  - Public Liability - \$20 million any one claim; and
  - Professional Indemnity - \$10 million any one claim;
- undertake a financial audit for services exceeding \$100,000.00 in the aggregate per financial year;
- consider itself a “Commonwealth service provider” for the purposes of the Ombudsman Act 1976;
- ensure that personnel, including sub-contractors, who may come into contact with “vulnerable people” as part of the work, have undertaken national police and working with children checks, and if relevant develop a risk assessment and management plan;
- provide details of referees who can provide reliable information with reference to your experience in program delivery and contract/funding management;
- comply with relevant legislation as specified from time to time.

Respondents must disclose any actual, perceived or potential conflicts of interest. A conflict of interest arises where a person makes a decision or exercises power in any way that may or may be perceived to be, influence by either professional, commercial or personal interests or associations. North Western Melbourne PHN maintains a register of Conflicts of Interest and Related Entities, and reports this register back to our funding bodies as required.

North Western Melbourne PHN may seek formal government approval and will disclose contract details including legal and trading name of successful respondent, the nature and duration of the work to be undertaken, and the procurement process. Approval is granted at the discretion of the government department. Relevant departments may require additional information at any time which North Western Melbourne PHN is obliged to provide. Relevant departments may list this information on their websites from time-to-time.

Please note that the Australian Government reserves the right to terminate North Western Melbourne PHN funding at its convenience. This requirement is passed through to the successful respondent. Expenses incurred and committed up to and including the termination date will be paid, if funds are received by North Western Melbourne PHN.

## 9 No contract or warranty

No legal relationship is created by the issue of this RFQ, or the submission of any proposal in response to it.

North Western Melbourne PHN is under no obligation to award a contract to any respondent as a result of this RFQ process.

North Western Melbourne PHN has taken reasonable steps to ensure that all information presented in this RFQ is accurate at the time of issue. However, North Western Melbourne PHN accepts no responsibility for errors or omissions, and recommends that respondents make their own enquiries about any matter relevant to the preparation of a proposal.

## PART D: PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

### Criterion 1: Understanding of the services required and capacity to deliver

- Response demonstrates an understanding of the subject matter and the key components of the project.
- Evidence that the organisation has experience for appropriately engaging with the community and stakeholders and understands any significant risks or factors that should be considered.

### Criterion 2: Experience and suitability of key personnel

- Evidence that the organisation has experience for appropriately engaging with the community and stakeholders and understands any significant risks or factors that should be considered.
- Evidence of any relevant skills and experience working in the areas of public health, research, data analysis and stakeholder engagement. Examples of relevant past projects are required - a brief CV may also be attached.

### Criterion 3: Methodology and approach to delivering the services

- Describe in detail the methodology, approach and/or framework that will be used to support successful delivery of the project.  
NOTE: it will be important to recognise the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, for example the current face-to-face and social distancing restrictions, on any proposed methodology, with required flexible adaptations to be identified.

### Criterion 4: Suitability of proposed project schedule

- Provide a complete project plan, including key steps and milestones and mitigation strategy relating to project risks, including those that relate to the potential impacts of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

### Criterion 5: Price and value for money.

- Provide a breakdown of fees, expenses and costs.

### Intellectual Property

If relevant, include details of intellectual property that will be used in the delivery of services, and a description of the respondent's rights to use that material.

### Conflict of Interest

All respondents must declare any actual, perceived or potential conflict/s of interest. Respondents



must provide a response (or attach a document) declaring any actual perceived or potential conflict/s of interest and any:

- I. Particulars of the conflict of interest; and
- II. Details of the process and procedures used to manage or resolve the actual, perceived or potential conflicts.

### Skills/Knowledge Transfer

Describe the knowledge and/or information that will need to be transferred to MPCN staff in order to operate, manage and/or maintain the results of the project. Describe how these will be transferred.

## SCHEDULE 1 STATEMENT OF SERVICES

### 1 Required Services

The service provider will be required to undertake the following tasks (which are to be completed within an eight-month time frame). Indicative timelines for each task are provided below, although it is recognised that exact timings will be dependent on proposed project methodology. To ensure project timeframes are met, some tasks will need to be undertaken simultaneously.

1. Finalise project plan (within 1 week of contract establishment).
2. Develop quantitative research component in consultation with local trial site partners, to understand the extent to which the attitudes and behaviours of boys and men in Macedon Ranges align with the dominant ideals of masculinity. Obtain required ethical approvals prior to research commencement (6 weeks).
3. Recruit research participants and administer quantitative research component (8 weeks).
4. Analyse quantitative data and establish baseline data (2 weeks).
5. Gather qualitative insights to further understand local contextual influences on the attitudes and behaviours of men and boys, and the challenges relevant to promoting healthier masculinities (6 weeks).
6. Produce a written draft of report with both qualitative and quantitative analysis of findings. (3 weeks)
7. Engage trial site partners and other relevant stakeholders with report findings, and work collaboratively with them to identify (at a high level) a shared set of healthier masculinities interventions. (4 weeks).
8. Produce final draft of report which brings together quantitative and qualitative analysis of findings and priority healthier masculinities interventions (note that will be informed by local research findings, but should also draw on broader available research in this field). (2 weeks)

### 2 Deliverables

At a minimum, the following deliverables are required:

*Research and analysis: (June 2020 - Nov 2020)*

- Work with local partners to develop quantitative research component which will be used to measure the extent to which attitudes and behaviour of boys and men in Macedon Ranges align with the dominant ideals of masculinity. (This work can draw on existing measurement instruments, but will also need to support an understanding of local contextual influences).

- Obtain required ethical approvals prior to research commencement.
- Establish baseline data on the attitudes and behaviors of men and boys in Macedon Ranges.
- Gather qualitative insights from men and boys to further understand baseline data and identify local influences that reinforce rigid gender stereotypes or promote healthier masculinities.
- Produce a written report (both draft and final) which captures both quantitative and qualitative analysis and identifies (at a high level), potential healthier masculinities priority interventions that local trial site partners can focus efforts on. (Note these should be informed by local research findings, but also drawn on the broader research in this field).

#### *Engaging trial site partners and relevant stakeholders: (Oct - Dec 2020)*

- Engage trial site partners and other relevant stakeholders (such as the Macedon Ranges Family Violence Network and Local Safety Committee), with report findings, so that the impacts of dominant ideals of masculinities are well understood.
- Engage trial site partners and other relevant stakeholders to identify a shared set of healthier masculinities interventions for local action.

### 3 Reporting Requirements

The Macedon Ranges Suicide Prevention Trial Site will formally monitor project deliverables through the establishment of a Healthier Masculinities Working Group (the Working Group). Monitoring activities will require:

- The appointed consultant to provide monthly updates on project activities to the Working Group. Updates will take the form of face to face meetings (or may be provided via phone/email in some instances, subject to agreement by the Working Group).
- The appointed consultant to highlight any risks associated with project deliverables to the Working Group as soon as is practically possible.
- The appointed consultant to ensure that all communication with research participants is approved by the Working Group prior to being distributed.
- The Working Group to undertake a mid-project review with the consultant.
- The Suicide Prevention Project Officer to share regular updates on progress with project deliverables with the Macedon Ranges Suicide Prevention Stewardship Group and North West Melbourne PHN. This includes escalating any project risks which compromise delivery of the project.

We acknowledge the peoples of the Kulin nation as the Traditional Owners of the land on which our work in the community takes place. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present.



**T** (03) 9347 1188 | **F** (03) 9347 7433 | **E** [nwmpnh@nwmpnh.org.au](mailto:nwmpnh@nwmpnh.org.au) | **W** [nwmpnh.org.au](http://nwmpnh.org.au)  
 ABN 93 153 323 436 | **Level 1, 369 Royal Parade, Parkville VIC 3052** | **PO Box 139, Parkville VIC 3052**