



City West Lotteries House • 2 Delhi Street, West Perth, WA 6005

Phone: (08) 9420 7212 • Fax: (08) 9486 7955

Email: iccwa@iccwa.org.au • Web: www.iccwa.org.au

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MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate release

Tackling Violence - A Call to Action

Growing concern around violence in our community has sparked the joining of forces between the Injury Control Council of WA and the North Metropolitan Public Health Unit. Supported by the Department of Health WA, the partnership has led to a successful Community Forum and the drafting of a *Community Violence Prevention Strategy in the North Metropolitan Area*.

Over one hundred people representing Government and community agencies attended the forum last year and while the *draft Strategy* is still in the consultation phase it will be finalised at the end of June 2011.

“It’s clear that alcohol is often the accelerant in many violent altercations and this topic was raised as a key area for action at the forum. What is not clear are the exact underlying causes of the recent rise in the level of aggression,” said Deborah Costello, CEO from the Injury Control Council of WA.

“Community violence is a complex but preventable issue that is perpetuated by several social factors - there is a need for greater discussion of the root causes”. There is little coordination across Government and non-Government agencies specifically targeting the reduction of violence in WA – this must be addressed if we are serious about reducing the incidence and ferocity of violent events in our community” says Ms Costello.

Priority areas in the strategy include alcohol, early childhood identification and intervention, community and individual resilience building, interagency cooperation and men accessing services.

“Although initially intended for the North Metropolitan Area, many of the themes and strategies that have emerged can easily be transferred to other communities.”

ICCWA hopes that this *Community Violence Prevention Strategy* will act as a basis for future policy and program directions amongst Government and Non-Government organisations with an interest in reducing community violence.

“We are calling to action Government agencies, community groups and others to contact ICCWA for more information on the *Strategy* and how they can get involved.”

Ends.

(**Media contact:** Deborah Costello - CEO, ICCWA (08) 9420 7212/0408 900 448 or email dcostello@iccwa.org.au.)

Photo opportunity: (photograph of team working on Community Violence Prevention)