



MEDIA ALERT– Expert Panel hosted by the Parliamentary Group on Population and Development (PGPD)

---For Immediate Release---

**5-6:30 pm Sunday 20 March
The Lobby
King George’s Terrace, Parkes ACT**

The Link between Gender Based Violence and Maternal Health

Members of the Parliamentary Group on Population and Development (PGPD) in collaboration with the Australian Reproductive Health Alliance (ARHA) will host presentations and discussion on the relationships between gender based violence (GBV) and maternal health on Sunday night.

Each year 1 in 3 women in Australia experience violence in the form of intimate partner violence, sexual assault, or other forms of abuse. These types of violence perpetuate male power and have extremely negative affects of the reproductive health of women including unwanted pregnancies, limited access to family planning, high-risk pregnancy, poor antenatal and postnatal care, sexually transmitted infections, and continuing gynecological problems.

“We see this area as a gap in current discussion on gender based violence. Understanding the effect that violence can have on maternal health is critical to developing policy and programming to combat gender based violence and provide services to women” says Mary Mertin-Ryan, CEO of ARHA.

Australian scholars, Dr. Kyllie Cripps, Senior Lecturer from the Indigenous Law Centre, University of New South Whales, and Dr. Angela Taft, Senior Research Fellow at Mother and Child Health Research, La trobe University, will present on their work and research. Both of these women have done extensive work one women’s health and violence within Australia and globally. Dr Cripps will speak on sexual assault and maternal health in indigenous communities, while Dr Taft will focus on results from Australian Longitudinal Women's Health Study and maternal health evidence from around the world.

“This expert panel discussion will provide a foundation for examining gender based violence as it pertains specifically to maternal health” says Ms Mertin-Ryan, “and it will pave the way for further dialogues at the Parliamentary Roundtable on Ending Gender Based Violence in the Asia Pacific Region to be held in May.”

For media enquires please call Ms Mary Mertin-Ryan: 02 6249 6566 or 0410 623 030

For more information about ARHA, www.arha.org.au

For more information about PGPD, www.pgpd.asn.au

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