



MEN'S HEALTH WEEK

The Hon. A. PICCOLO (Light): Today, I would like to briefly speak about Men's Health Week, which is next week, from 14 to 20 June.

Men's Health Week is an opportunity for the community to focus on the health and wellbeing of men and boys in our community and what we need to do to improve health outcomes for them. I provide the house with some data from the latest edition of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

In 2018, half of Australia's population—49 per cent or \$12.4 million people—were male. On average, Australian males experience different health outcomes from Australian females. I quote from the report: They are more likely than females to engage in risky health behaviours and to die prematurely. They are also more likely to be homeless or in custody. Compared

with females, males experienced more of their total disease burden due to dying early from disease and injury than from living with disease. The importance of that fact is that when men get sick, they tend to die more so than women.

Women tend to be able to manage their illnesses and live longer. In the case of men, it is quite fatal when they get ill. Yesterday, it was interesting to read in the paper that men seem to delay reporting heart attacks. That is a topic sensitive to my heart, you might say, that men are, for some reason, delaying reporting or seeing a doctor when they actually have a heart attack.

I am not sure why. Today, my message is: if you are not feeling well, see a medical practitioner or health practitioner because it is very important for your health. In the case of heart attacks, I have now learnt from experience that the quicker you get medical help and the quicker you get fixed up, the less danger of any long-

term effect to your heart walls, etc. I am abiding by my health rehabilitation program at the moment and men need to do that. Interestingly, men actually undertake more physical activity than women.

When it comes to diet, though, their diet is poorer than women's, particularly when it comes to fruit and vegetables and sugar. Men are sadly more overweight and obese than women; in fact, 75 per cent of men are either overweight or obese. Men smoke more, drink more alcohol and use more illicit drugs, which are some of the high-risk factors of poor health.

When it comes to work, nine in 10 people who are killed at work are men, so either men are doing more dangerous work or men are not looking after themselves at work.

When it comes to violence, two in five men have experienced violence since the age of 15—over 40 per cent of men have actually been on the receiving side of violence since the age of 15—with 41 per cent of that being physical violence, 4.7 per cent being sexual violence and 6.1 per cent having experienced cohabitating partner violence since the age of 15. These are often data and things that we do not talk about in the community and, as a result, we actually do not have a policy response.

One woman is killed by her partner every nine days and one male is killed by their partner every 21 days. One-

third of women and one-fifth of men with a disability experience emotional abuse from a partner. While these stats portray a very sad picture of men's health in this country, on a positive note there are people doing research to make sure we actually get changes in practice and policy.

I would like to mention the Freemasons Centre for Male Health and Wellbeing, which brings together researchers and stakeholder organisations across the Northern Territory and South Australia via its divisions based at the Menzies School of Health and SAHMRI respectively.

The mission of the centre is to improve the health and wellbeing of all males and consequently their families and communities while upholding the principles of equity, respect and integrity. Since 2012, when Professor Gary Wittert was appointed director, Marg McGee was appointed executive officer and Dr Roger Sexton was appointed principal patron, the centre has had a really good track record in research to improve the quality of health in this state.