

Media Release

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LANDMARK NETBALL LEAGUE MOVES THE GOALPOST FOR WOMEN IN SPORT

VicHealth has applauded changes to Netball Australia's ANZ Championship league announced today along with a ground-breaking broadcast deal.

From February next year, Netball Australia will deliver what they have labelled 'the world's premier women's sporting league' – a new eight-team national netball league – as well as a five-year broadcast deal with Channel Nine and Telstra and three new teams into the competition.

The new league will replace the current ANZ Championship competition in Australia.

Research shows that despite the ongoing successes of Australian women in international sport, women's sport receives much less media coverage than male sport with only 9 per cent of television news media coverage and 7 per cent of non-news television programming content devoted to it.

This is despite the fact that three in five (62%) Victorians do not think women's sport gets enough coverage in the media, a 2015 VicHealth survey revealed.

VicHealth's Physical Activity, Sport and Healthy Eating manager Stefan Grun says it's a landmark day for female sport in Australia.

"This new league is a huge step towards our netballers receiving the professional recognition equivalent to their male counterparts that they rightly deserve," Mr Grun said.

Evidence shows that females of all ages generally have lower physical activity levels than men and that more than two-thirds of adult Australian females are classified as being sedentary or having low levels of exercise, which is concerning given that regular physical activity can prevent chronic disease and promote physical and mental wellbeing. That's why, since 2015, VicHealth's [Changing the Game](#) program has been providing innovative and flexible new ways for women and girls to be involved in physical activity, which suits their needs and interests and addresses some of the practical barriers to participation.

"Greater commercialisation of netball and increased coverage on free-to-air television networks during prime time helps showcase some of Australia's best female role models, which will lead to more young girls playing sport - not just netball," Mr Grun said.

"A huge congratulations to everyone involved in netball for their hard work over many years to reach this exciting point."

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Media Contacts