

# Media Release



21 November 2017

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## SAMARITANS RAISES THE FLAG FOR WHITE RIBBON DAY

On Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> November, Newcastle-based charity, the Samaritans Foundation, will raise the White Ribbon flag in support of White Ribbon Day, which will be recognised nationally this Saturday.

STOP is the theme of this year's *White Ribbon Day* on 25 November which encourages men to safely intervene when they witness disrespect, abuse or violence against women.

STOP stands for:

- See (Your actions are important in helping to stop violence against women)
- Talk (Words are part of disrespectful and abusive behaviour but words can also help stop abuse and prevent violence against women)
- Offer support (Intervening doesn't mean putting yourself in danger)
- Prevent (Think about what you can do every day to promote respect towards women, educate yourself and learn the signs of disrespect and abusive behaviour and don't be afraid to talk about it with friends)

"Samaritans is committed to taking active and effective steps to stop violence against women. We are looking forward to recognising White Ribbon Day by wearing white to work, bringing staff together to talk about the issue and raising the White Ribbon flag at our head office," Mr Gardiner, CEO of Samaritans, said.

Samaritans is the only Hunter-based workplace to be accredited by White Ribbon thus far, leading the way locally in taking a stand against violence against women.

"Through training and the provision of educational tools for staff, we hope to be making a difference by enabling people to respond to incidents of violence, whether it occurs inside or outside of the workplace and to prevent this violence from occurring in the first instance," Mr. Gardiner said.

With over 700 staff, a high representation of females and a number of services supporting women and children fleeing domestic violence, Samaritans is motivated to make a difference in the space.

"On average, one woman is killed every week in Australia by domestic violence. Statistics show that one in three women been a victim of physical and/or sexual violence perpetrated by someone known to them- it's highly likely that someone you know would have experienced domestic violence. These numbers are far too high. We must empower all people to take a stand against disrespectful behaviour and all acts of violence," Mr Gardiner said.

"Samaritans is proud of the commitment and persistence of its staff to ensure women's safety is a man's issue too. Community members are welcome to attend any of our Samaritans Shops (Hamilton, Mayfield, Wallsend or Boolaroo) to purchase a White Ribbon this week in support of the cause," Mr Gardiner said.

- ENDS -

**Media are invited to contact** Samaritans Communications team on 49 60 7 100 or 0438 475 772.

**We invite media to attend the Flag Raising on Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> of November at 10am.** Samaritans Executive Leadership will be on site at 35 Warabrook Boulevard for media interviews and/or photographs. Please call for more information.