



Thesis Topic:

**Does the organisational culture of the
Rockhampton Women's Health Centre
have an impact on women who use the
service?**

**If so, in what ways does it impact on
them?**

Submitted by Marilyn Leeks

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Marilyn Leeks.

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Summary

In Australia women's health centres were established as alternative health services for women. They were run "for women, by women". The women's liberation movement in the late 1960s inspired women to critique and analyse the decision-making structures and gender divisions within western society.

Women's health has been controlled for the past few hundred years by the medical system and many women were dissatisfied with the health care provided. Working together in small groups feminists built alternative organisations, with or without government funding. These relatively small centres and their supporters have successfully placed women's health on the political agenda.

They have also been models of alternative organisations, deliberately creating cultures which gave women access to decision-making and planning. The Rockhampton Women's Health Centre is one of these centres situated in a regional Queensland town, population of 69,000 people, a conservative town in a large beef producing region. The two large stone bulls at the northern and southern entrances to the town are prominent cultural and economic icons of the region.

This paper explores what women in Rockhampton think about the Centre's culture and how relevant it is to their health care.