

IMPACT REPORT Spring Edition 2021

HERE FOR HER



BC WOMEN'S
HEALTH
FOUNDATION



A BREATH OF FRESH AIR FOR WOMEN IN RECOVERY

A NEW OUTDOOR SACRED WELLNESS SPACE SUPPORTS WOMEN WITHIN THE FAMILIES IN RECOVERY (FIR) PROGRAM AT BC WOMEN'S HOSPITAL + HEALTH CENTRE.

Fresh air and sunshine can be a great source of healing. Now, women who receive in-patient care in the Families in Recovery (FIR) Program at BC Women's Hospital + Health Centre are able to access a beautiful outdoor Sacred Wellness Space, thanks to your generosity.



FIR is a leader in providing compassionate care for women who are navigating the challenges of substance use recovery during and after pregnancy — and every element of the new space has been designed with the needs of these women in mind.

Informed by the medicine wheel that is so integral to many cultures, the Sacred Wellness Space invites women to be at peace with themselves and gather collectively to share knowledge and to support one another through their healing journeys.

Moved by the creativity of the space, Chantal, a patient at FIR, was inspired to offer a rock painting class for the other women in the program. Their rock art is proudly displayed in the gardens today.

"It is a wonderful place to be by myself and my thoughts. Being outside in nature is good medicine and so peaceful." - Chantal, FIR patient

This space of healing would not have been possible without the support of our community of donors, including the *Run for Women* event, brought to you by the *LOVE YOU by Shoppers Drug Mart®* program.

"FIR is so blessed to have such an incredible space for healing, reflection, and serenity. It is like a labyrinth we walk together with the North Shore mountains and trees in the background watching over us."

- Catherine Zarchinski, Patient Care Coordinator, FIR



“It is an amazing experience. We enjoyed, and are enjoying, every music class. It's a great way of fostering development because babies love music and the music therapist's voice.”

– NICU parent

Christine and her son David with NICU Music Therapist, Carol Wiedeman.

THERAPEUTIC MARVEL OF MUSIC FOR PREMATURE INFANTS

THE NICU MUSIC THERAPY PROGRAM OFFERS LIFE-CHANGING THERAPY FOR THE MOST CRITICALLY ILL BABIES IN THE PROVINCE.

Did you know that music therapy has proven developmental benefits for premature infants? Benefits include reduced perception of pain, improved weight gain, and even increased oxygen saturation. Music is a true therapeutic marvel.

This is why we are so excited to share that – thanks to the generosity of Music Heals, the Auxiliary to BC Women's Hospital, and our community supporters – the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at BC Women's Hospital + Health Centre has been able to extend the Music Therapy pilot project to continue to support premature and critically ill infants in the province.

Parents cannot speak highly enough about the program. They describe how they themselves are positively impacted, with music helping them to feel calmer and more focused even during distressing procedures like a tracheostomy.

Today, weekly sessions are being provided for babies in the Complex Care Unit of the NICU. There is a need of \$100,000 per year to expand the Music Therapy program to support all of the fragile infants cared for in BC Women's Hospital's NICU.

“This program has become beloved in our NICU. We see the smiles on parents' faces, and we know that it is promoting the healthiest outcomes for NICU patients.”

– Julie de Salaberry, Director, Neonatal Program

COMMUNITY PARTNER, MELANIE AULD JEWELRY

USING THEIR PLATFORM TO CHAMPION WOMEN'S HEALTH IN BC



MELANIE AULD JEWELRY IS ONE OF SEVERAL PARTNERS INVESTING IN WOMEN'S HEALTH THIS MOTHER'S DAY

We couldn't be more proud to have partnered with Melanie Auld Jewelry last year for Mother's Day to raise over \$30,000. This mighty team of women has made it their mission to advocate for women's health.

The Melanie Auld Jewelry partnership continues into 2021 as 100% net proceeds of the special edition Jillian Harris Adorned Mama charm will be donated to the BC Women's Health Foundation. From supporting urgently needed medical equipment and the scientific endeavours of women's health

researchers to amplifying women's voices through education and awareness initiatives, Melanie Auld is helping to give women in BC the highest quality healthcare they deserve.

"BC Women's Health Foundation is doing such integral work, and being able to utilize our platform to showcase their dedication and advancements in women's health is something Melanie Auld Jewelry is honoured to be a part of! The fact that, historically, women's health has been understood through men's health research was shocking to me. We need to advocate for ourselves, now is the time."

- Melanie Auld, owner of Melanie Auld Jewelry

"As women, we are the caregivers, always giving to those around us. If we don't prioritize our health, who will be left to care for those we love?"

- Melanie Auld, owner of Melanie Auld Jewelry

SHOPPERS DRUG MART®

PUTTING WOMEN'S HEALTH FIRST

OVER \$1.2 MILLION RAISED IN SUPPORT OF WOMEN'S HEALTH

At *Shoppers Drug Mart*®, the culture of philanthropy runs deep. There is a united dedication to making a difference in the health of women within the community. The *LOVE YOU by Shoppers Drug Mart*® program is a true manifestation of this dedication. This program works together with local charities, like the BC Women's Health Foundation, to help advance women's health.

Shoppers Drug Mart® has been a long-time supporter of the BC Women's Health Foundation through participation in annual events like our Illuminations

luncheon, Air Canada Birdies for Babies charity golf tournament, and GLOW Gala. But their philanthropic contribution goes far beyond that, as they spearhead their own fundraising campaigns through the *LOVE YOU by Shoppers Drug Mart*® program, including: *Growing Women's Health Campaign* and *Run for Women* event.

"We are committed to putting women's health first through our LOVE YOU by Shoppers Drug Mart® program."

- John Rudzitis VP Operations, British Columbia + Yukon.



Dr. Sadiq Abdulla from the BC Women's Hospital and his running companions cross the finish line at the 2019 Run for Women event in Vancouver.

SHOPPERS DRUG MART® OWNERS AND TEAM MEMBERS GO ABOVE AND BEYOND TO ADVOCATE FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH.

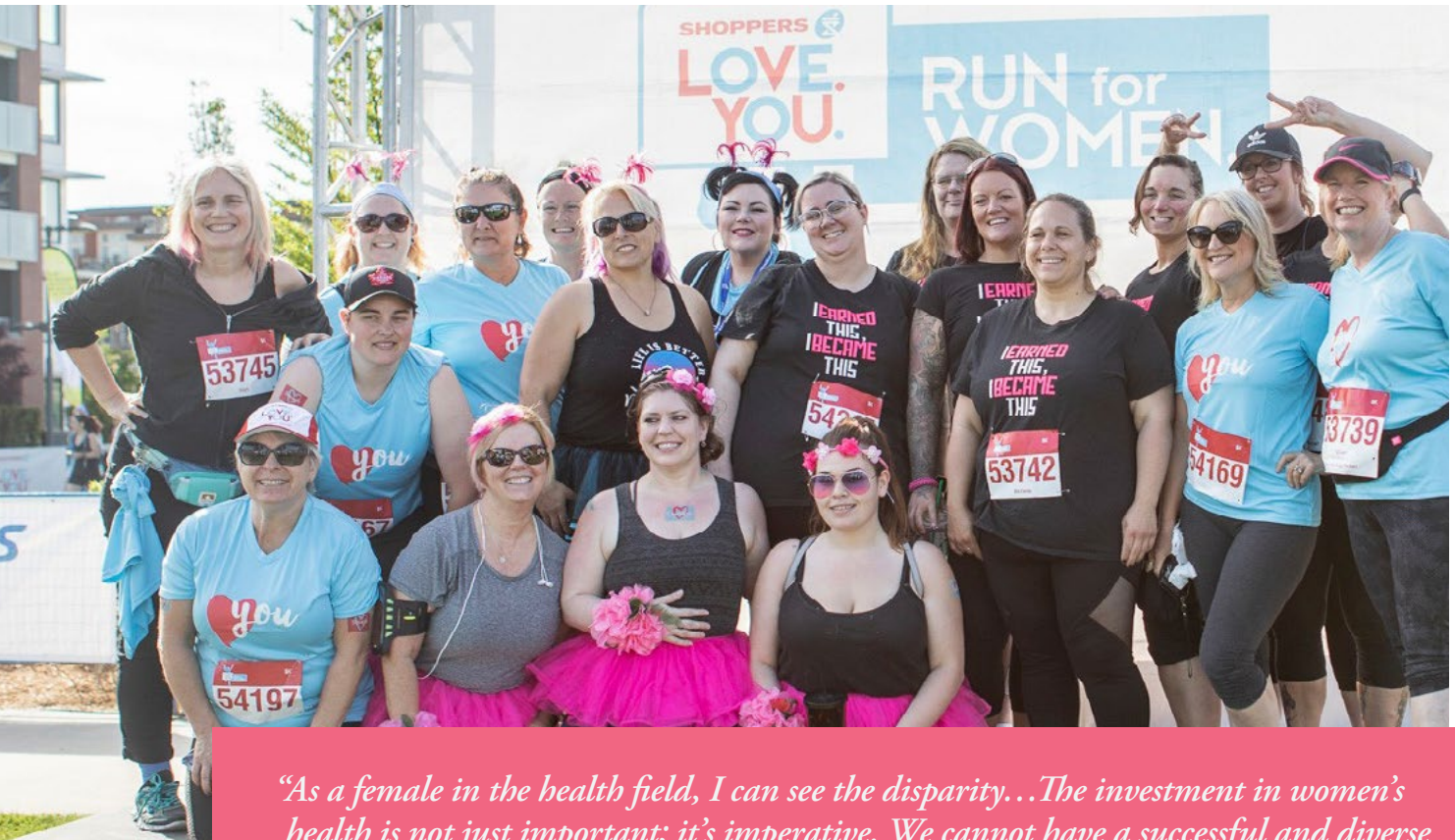
Since 2011, the *Growing Women's Health Campaign* has raised funds to support the areas of greatest need for women's health in our province. Store associates embolden customers to donate by purchasing 'Growing Women's Health' icons at the checkout. This campaign is a proven example of teamwork and community investment.

The *Run for Women* event was established in 2013 as the first national fundraiser to support women's mental health, and BC Women's Health Foundation has been a proud partner ever since. This July, the *Run for Women*

event will be held virtually across the country. Proceeds will go to the BC Women's Health Foundation's *Her Mind, Her Health Campaign*, supporting innovative research at the Reproductive Mental Health Program at BC Women's Hospital + Health Centre.

Together, with *Shoppers Drug Mart®*, and those who support the *LOVE YOU by Shoppers Drug Mart®* program through the *Run for Women* event, and the *Growing Women's Health Campaign*, we are helping to improve the health outcomes for women seeking support across BC. Thank you!

A team of runners and walkers dedicated to improving women's mental health at the 2019 Run For Women event in Vancouver.



“As a female in the health field, I can see the disparity...The investment in women's health is not just important; it's imperative. We cannot have a successful and diverse society without it.”

- Kiran Basran – Associate/Owner, Shoppers Drug Mart®, Burke Mountain in Coquitlam



Participants line up to start the run at the 2019 Run for Women event in Vancouver.

ASSOCIATES IN ACTION

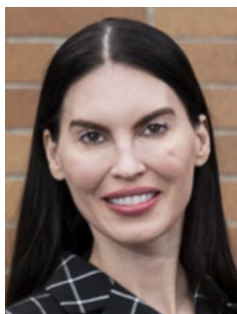


ZAHIR JIWA

PHARMACIST OWNER, SHOPPERS DRUG MART® KINGSGATE LOCATION

"I'm proud to have worked on a joint fundraising effort with my peer network and the "Growing Women's Health" Campaign, in support of BC Women's Health Foundation.

Initially the campaign started with a group of seven associates and nine stores; 10 years later we have a team of over 25 associates from 30 stores. Through this initiative, customers and staff demonstrate their generosity and commitment to supporting women's health in our community. We couldn't be more proud of everyone's contributions."



JANINE WOLFF

BEAUTY OPERATIONS SPECIALIST OF BC + YUKON REGION, SHOPPERS DRUG MART®

"I have seen first-hand, year after year, more individuals coming out to participate in the Run for Women event in support of women's mental health. Working to eliminate stigma, the Run has become less about the physical run

and more about a day of gathering to support change. There is so much power in a community coming together and truly believing in the cause."

SHOPPERS DRUG MART® MILESTONES

Shoppers Drug Mart® Life Foundation has donated **\$1.2M** over the past 10 years.

In 2011, the Growing Women's Health Campaign raised \$16,991. In 2019 it peaked at **\$67,368**.

Over the past decade, store participation has grown to **30** stores across the Lower Mainland that donate to BC Women's Health Foundation through the Growing Women's Health Campaign.

In 2013, the Run for Women event raised \$6,555. In 2020, it raised **\$172,795**.

The 2020 Run for Women event had **1,738** participants - the highest number yet despite being the first virtual year!

RESEARCH IN SUPPORT OF HEALTHY MOTHERS + CHILDREN

THE MATERNAL FETAL MEDICINE (MFM) TEAM IS PROPELLING DISCOVERIES TO SUPPORT WOMEN WITH HIGH RISK PREGNANCIES IN THE PROVINCE



Dr. Jessica Liauw, Maternal Fetal Medicine specialist

The Maternal Fetal Medicine (MFM) team at BC Women's Hospital + Health Centre treats the sickest mothers and babies in the province, and in recent years, they have seen increasing complexity in their work.

The increase in the average age of women having children, the impact of lifestyle-related health issues on pregnancy, and early detection of genetic anomalies through blood-based screening create new challenges in care. Now more than ever, there is a critical need for research that addresses the difficult questions experts face. Thanks to the generosity of Allen + Karen Wong and the Djavah Mowafaghian Foundation, Dr. Jessica Liauw has been awarded a Fellowship in Maternal Fetal Medicine — with matched funding from the BC Children's Hospital Foundation.

Dr. Liauw is a specialist in Maternal Fetal Medicine, helping women and families navigate high-risk pregnancies and complications. Her patients may have a baby that doesn't grow as much as expected or is born too early. Informed by her direct experiences with patients, Dr. Liauw is undertaking research to understand how to best detect and manage pregnancies at risk of having these complications. She is also studying how to best communicate information so families can make treatment decisions that are right for them.

All thanks to our donors, Dr. Liauw will be able to address the challenges of high-risk pregnancies — supporting the healthiest outcomes for women and their infants.

"I have had the privilege of caring for women who were faced with health challenges that were specific to women, but which I realized had profound impacts on individuals, their children, their families and their communities as a whole."

- Dr. Jessica Liauw

A COMMITMENT TO EQUITY

EXPLORING THE ACCESS OF CARE AND PATIENT PATHWAY FOR YOUNG WOMEN STROKE SURVIVORS

Mentorship is vital for up-and-coming researchers. But unfortunately, a lack of funding options for graduate students can curtail important growth opportunities. Women's health research is funded less often, for shorter terms, and at lower funding amounts, creating even more substantive opportunity gaps for students who want to explore women's health.

To help bridge this gap, Women's Health Research Fund donors have partnered with us in developing four new annual Graduate Student Awards per year, offered to inspire the most gifted young researchers to continue on the track of investigating women's health issues.



Ismalia De Sousa, a Ph.D. student in the School of Nursing at UBC and a recipient of one of the BC Women's Health Foundation's Graduate Student awards.

Ismalia De Sousa, a Ph.D. student in the School of Nursing at UBC, is a recipient of one of these donor-funded Graduate Student Awards. Her research will explore young women stroke survivors' experiences accessing care through the patient pathway in BC.

"Despite prevention, treatment, and awareness in stroke care, women are under-researched and under-treated, yet they are at higher-risk for stroke and have different health outcomes in comparison with men. Women's intersectional experiences in stroke care have not been explored through an equity lens, so the aims of this study are two-fold: (1) explore the lived experiences of young women stroke survivors in BC and (2) provide practice, research and policy recommendations to support equitable and effective care in this group," Ismalia says.

Thanks to all our donors who have provided the power to activate a new generation of women's health researchers and create a more equitable future by improving the understanding, diagnoses, and treatment of women's health issues.

"We live in a world where people value and recognize that our angle of vision can help advance a bigger goal: promoting health and reducing inequities."

- Ismalia De Sousa

FACTS + FUNDS

Women have experienced health inequities in BC for decades, and the COVID-19 pandemic is making these worse. Here are 5 facts, and 5 funds that allow the BC Women's Health Foundation, together with our donors, to be a part of the solution.

While no one has been untouched by the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, women have been disproportionately affected due to gender inequity in healthcare and wider society.

01

FACT: In BC, almost one quarter (23%) of new mothers report feelings consistent with postpartum depression or anxiety.

FUND: THE HER MIND, HER HEALTH CAMPAIGN (\$4.5 MILLION) ENSURES WOMEN'S REPRODUCTIVE MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS ARE MET THROUGH RESEARCH AND ACCESSIBLE PROGRAMMING.

02

FACT: Working mothers in BC, aged 24 to 55, also lost 26% of their work hours in April, compared with 14% of work hours lost by working fathers. Women attributed six times more of these lost work hours each week to family responsibilities than men.

FUND: THE WOMEN'S HEALTH RESEARCH INSTITUTE'S RAPID EVIDENCE STUDY OF A PROVINCIAL POPULATION BASED COHORT FOR GENDER AND SEX STUDY (\$125,000) EXAMINES TWO IMPORTANT TOPICS: COVID-19'S PREVALENCE IN THE POPULATION OF BC; AND HOW SEX AND GENDER INTERSECT WITH THE IMPACTS OF PUBLIC HEALTH MEASURES.

03

FACT: Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, every six days, a woman was killed by her intimate partner in Canada. Since the onset of the pandemic, front-line support workers are seeing an increase in both the number and severity of cases.

FUND: THROUGH THE WOMEN EXPERIENCING VIOLENCE CAMPAIGN (\$600,000) WE WORK COLLABORATIVELY WITH THE ENDING VIOLENCE ASSOCIATION OF BC TO DIRECT LIFE-SAVING RESOURCES TO ANTI-VIOLENCE ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTING SURVIVORS OF VIOLENCE.

“I am stretched to my limits in every capacity, but I can't manage to get a break from anything. I am always at home, my work is now always with me at home, and my child is also here with me 24/7.”

- BC Women's Health Foundation online story sharing participant

04

FACT: Only 4% of awarded COVID-19 research grants met the criteria that ensures sex and gender are analyzed, and only 2% went specifically to studying women's health.

FUND: THE COVID-19 FUND: WOMEN'S HEALTH RESEARCH (\$637,000) SUPPORTS VITAL RESEARCH TO ENSURE THE PANDEMIC DOES NOT EXACERBATE EXISTING INEQUITIES ALREADY FACED BY WOMEN IN BC.

05

FACT: Indigenous women are 27% more inclined to rate their emotional health poorly since the beginning of the pandemic.

FUND: THE INDIGENOUS WOMEN + FAMILIES FUND (\$30,000) HELPS FUND THE TRADITIONAL MEDICINES NEEDED FOR CULTURAL HEALING CEREMONIES, AND DIRECT AID TO FAMILIES IN THE FORM OF GIFT CARDS FOR EMERGENCY FOOD AND CLOTHING.

FOR MORE DETAILS, WE INVITE YOU TO VISIT [UNMASKGENDERINEQUITY.CA](https://unmaskgenderinequity.ca)

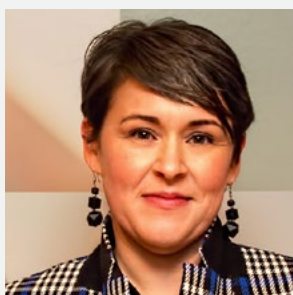




AT THE BC WOMEN'S HEALTH FOUNDATION, WE ARE COMMITTED TO KEEPING OUR SUPPORTERS APPRISED OF THE IMPACT WE ARE MAKING TOGETHER.

Fighting for women's health equity and moving women from invisible to invincible takes all of us. Thanks to you, we are proud to share our spring edition of Here for Her Impact Report that outlines our progress in meeting our shared purpose of healthy women everywhere, capable of everything.

On behalf of the staff and board at the BC Women's Health Foundation, thank you for your support in advancing the full spectrum of women's health.



Genesa M. Greening
President + CEO
BC Women's Health Foundation



Marina S. Matei
Board Chair
BC Women's Health Foundation

For more information, please visit bcwomensfoundation.org/hereforher

We acknowledge with gratitude that we carry out our work on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the *skwx̱ wú7mesh* (Squamish), *sel̓ il̓ witulh* (Tsleil-Waututh), and *x̱məθkʷəy̓ əm* (Musqueam) nations.