

PHILANTHROPIC BC ACTION PLAN FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH

This *Philanthropic BC Action Plan* was informed by the national *Blueprint for Action: Closing the Women's Health Gap in Canada*, developed by Women's Health Collective Canada with analysis by knowledge partner McKinsey & Company Canada. It includes expert input from across the country that translates national insights into philanthropic opportunities to accelerate progress in British Columbia.



Across Canada

Canadian women **spend 24% more of their lives in poor health** compared with men.

Closing this gap could **contribute an estimated \$37 billion** to Canada's GDP by 2040, but the true opportunity is more human: giving back the equivalent of **one additional week of good health every year to all women**, their families and communities.

In British Columbia

By closing the women's health gap, **\$5.1 billion** in projected value could be unlocked in BC over the next 15 years through better health outcomes that support workforce participation; help women miss fewer days of work; and expand access to preventive care that strengthens families, communities and long-term health.

Research leads to better care across every stage of life. BC Women's Health Foundation is committed to supporting innovative science that improves women's lives.

Only

7%

of national health research funding is directed to women's health research.

If we want to move faster, philanthropy is essential.

ADDRESSING THE GAP IN WOMEN'S HEALTH

Global healthcare systems were not designed to support women's health.

Women's health is understudied

Care is built around male norms

Women's symptoms continue to be stigmatized + dismissed

The good news is that improvements to women's health are now underway, especially here in BC. Thanks to our donor community, BC Women's Health Foundation, BC Women's Hospital + Health Centre, and the Women's Health Research Institute have already helped launch life-changing breakthroughs:

Cervical cancer self-screening program

BC's largest menopause study

Free universal contraception in BC

WITH YOUR SUPPORT, WE CAN ADVANCE RESEARCH AND CARE TO DELIVER LASTING IMPROVEMENTS IN WOMEN'S HEALTH.

BECAUSE WOMEN'S HEALTH AFFECTS EVERYONE

Informed by the national *Blueprint for Action*, this plan outlines BC-specific philanthropic priorities.

Source: McKinsey Health Institute, 2025

MENOPAUSE + MIDLIFE

Nearly all women experience menopause-related symptoms, yet care remains inconsistent and stigmatized.

51%

of the population is female and will experience menopause

1 IN 3

women are going through menopause right now

\$25M

to close critical gaps in menopause care

MENTAL HEALTH

Mental and neurological disorders are major drivers of disability and workforce disruption for women.

Suicide is the

4TH

leading cause of maternal death in Canada

1 IN 5

BC women are affected by a mental health disorder each year

BC Women's Health Foundation supports a new model of maternal mental healthcare that keeps mothers and babies together to improve long-term outcomes. Expanding this approach will enable more families to benefit from integrated women-centred care.

\$9M

to close critical gaps in mental health care

CANCER

Cancer remains the leading cause of death for Canadian women, yet women are still under-represented in clinical trials.

Breast cancer is the

2ND

leading cause of cancer-related death among women living in Canada

1,650

diagnoses of cervical cancer each year in Canada

400+

deaths annually from cervical cancer in Canada

- Advancing the global elimination of cervical cancer, research at the Women's Health Research Institute has guided the implementation of HPV primary screening in BC.
- The Sadie Diamond Breast Health Imaging Centre at BC Women's has state-of-the-art breast cancer screening technology to support early detection and prevention.
- The Women's Health Research Institute is advancing research for cancer survivors, including physiotherapy and pathways for recovery and healing.

\$5M

to close critical gaps in cancer care

WOMEN'S HEALTH RESEARCH

Investing in research will shape the future of women's health.

Historical
exclusion
from clinical
trials until

1997

Women
experience
52%
more
adverse
reactions to
medications
than men

Only
7%
of national
health
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women's
health
research

BC Women's Health Foundation is investing in research and training that advances discovery and accelerates women-centred care. This includes:

- Funding a transformational biomedical facility for women's health research, as well as closing gaps in discovery science.
- Awarding grants and funding projects that enable researchers and clinicians to test novel ideas to generate critical evidence for larger-scale studies.
- Training the next generation through new fellowships and awards that ensure women's health research continues to evolve into better care.

\$25M

to close critical gaps
in training

ENDOMETRIOSIS + PELVIC PAIN

Conditions like endometriosis are common, yet underdiagnosed and undertreated.

1 IN 10

women are living with endometriosis, a main cause of pelvic pain, such as painful periods, painful sex, and chronic pelvic pain

To accelerate progress, we have a unique opportunity to establish a dedicated Endometriosis Research Hub within a new women's health research facility.

This hub will:

- Drive precision medicine, identifying disease subtypes for tailored treatments.
- Launch first-in-class, non-hormonal therapies in clinical trials within five years.
- Co-ordinate a national research network across Canada, amplifying global collaboration.
- Serve as the epicentre for discovery, care and hope for women worldwide.

\$10M

to close critical gaps
in endometriosis care
and research

YOU HAVE THE POWER TO DRIVE CHANGE

The national *Blueprint for Action* makes clear that closing the women's health gap requires a co-ordinated pan-Canadian approach with shared accountability, measurable outcomes and sustained investment. Each province must do its part.

Here in British Columbia, **BC Women's Health Foundation** is uniquely positioned to lead a philanthropic response by funding research and accelerating solutions that improve care in BC, and contribute to our national progress.

**Early investments have already proven what's possible.
The opportunity to accelerate impact is clear.**

Scaling impact across the province requires much greater philanthropic support – at an ongoing level. By aligning action in BC with the national strategy led by Women's Health Collective Canada, we can help shape better outcomes for women, families and communities.

WE CAN'T CLOSE THE WOMEN'S HEALTH GAP WITHOUT PHILANTHROPY.

For more information or to discuss opportunities to support women's health in BC, please contact:

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Women's
Health
Research
Month

BCWHF.ORG/WHRM



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IWK Foundation

Dr. Christina Atkinson
Emma Beukema
Dr. Justine Dol
Valerie Malone
Dr. Maria Migas
Dr. Shawna O'Hearn

Other

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This *Philanthropic BC Action Plan* is informed by the national *Blueprint for Action: Closing the Women's Health Gap in Canada*, developed by Women's Health Collective Canada (WHCC). McKinsey & Company Canada contributed to the national *Blueprint* on a pro bono basis, and as a knowledge partner. © Women's Health Collective Canada. Used with permission.