



NATIONAL
FRAMEWORK FOR
WOMEN'S HEALTH
CADRE NATIONAL SUR
LA SANTÉ DES FEMMES

Closing the Gap in Women's Health in Canada

The Challenge

Women's health outcomes in Canada have consistently lagged due to systemic gaps in research, data, treatment efficacy, and access to care. For decades, medical research and clinical trials have disproportionately centered on male biology, creating a default standard for diagnosis, treatment, and care that does not fully reflect women's needs or experiences. To illustrate this, Canada ranks 64th out of 142 countries on the Hologic Global Women's Health Index.

The consequences are significant to Canadians' interests:

- Only **7% of national health research funding** is specific to women's health. Women were not routinely included in clinical trials until 1997.
- **Cancer, heart disease, and brain disorders account for 75% of the women's health gap** in Canada.
- Up to **75% of adverse drug reactions occur in women**, due in part to research and dosing models built around men.
- **Canadian women spend 24% more of their lives in poor health than men**, equating to roughly 14 years lived with disability versus 11 for men.
- Menopause costs the economy **\$3.5 billion (CAD) annually** due to unmanaged symptoms affecting productivity.
- Women disproportionately experience dementia & autoimmune disorders (78%), Alzheimer's (66%), arthritis, and migraines.
- Canada has the **5th-largest GDP loss globally** related to the women's health gap.
 - Closing the gap could generate **\$7B in productivity-related GDP gains**.

Support Women's Health

We are asking for your support to take concrete action to close the gap in women's health.

Policy measures, such as Bill S-243, provide the permanent structure, accountability, and intergovernmental coordination needed to close Canada's women's health gap. This is a much-needed step, with benefits realized throughout women's lives, as well as by families, employers, and communities across Canada.

Bill S-243 responds directly to long-standing challenges by establishing a legislated national framework, ensuring continuity beyond political cycles and embedding women's health as a structural policy priority.

Bill S-243 would require the Minister of Health, in collaboration with stakeholders, to implement a National Framework for Women's Health. The Framework aims to:

- Strengthens research, innovation, and data collection
- Improves women's access to primary and preventative care
- Enhances training for healthcare professionals
- Supports women-led health innovation and commercialization pathways
- Addresses barriers faced by rural, remote, Indigenous, 2SLGBTQI+, equity-deserving, and unattached women

The Women's Health Framework is a collaborative campaign supported by the following partners along with many other clinical, research, and community organizations and leaders:



Together, we are a unified, evidence-driven network committed to closing the gender health gap and supporting policy options that deliver lasting, accountable progress.

For more information, please visit our website at: <https://thewhc.ca/whframework/>