



STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

2026-2029

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK (2026-2029)

Dedicated investments in women's health research* improve the lives of women, transgender, and non-binary people, their families, and communities.¹ Canada has a significant women's health gap – with women spending 24 per cent more time than men living in poor health or with a disability.² Lack of female and women specific research contributes to gaps in prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and care. Failing to close the women's health gap is a lost opportunity equivalent to \$37 billion-dollars annually due to women's ill health and decreased productivity.³

Despite national health research policies promoting sex and gender-analysis, women's health research remains significantly underfunded in Canada. Over fifteen years (2009-2023), female-specific research garnered just 7 per cent of funds awarded by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research.⁴ It is time to act to reap the health, social, and economic benefits of investing in women's health research.

The Partnership for Women's Health Research Canada (PWHR) was created to catalyze national efforts to promote women's health research and its use. It is a collaboration between the [Women's Health Research Institute](#) (BC), the [Women and Children's Health Research Institute](#) (Alberta), the [Research and Innovation Institute](#) at Women's College Hospital (Ontario), and [IWK Health](#) (Nova Scotia with a mandate to serve the Maritimes).

PWHR's partner institutions bring together more than 900 women's health researchers who address health issues across the lifespan and come from diverse disciplinary perspectives. Annually, our researchers mentor more than 1,400 trainees, ranging from undergraduates to postdoctoral and clinical fellows. PWHR's partner institutions are closely integrated with Canada's leading women's hospitals, fostering research that responds to the priorities of people with lived and living experience, as well as those of healthcare professionals, and promoting research use in care delivery.

PWHR is committed to ongoing learning and practicing humility to establish mutually respectful relationships and to advance research that values the lived experiences, knowledge systems, and priorities of diverse women, transgender, and non-binary people, particularly those who have been systemically and historically excluded in health care and health science career trajectories.

The PWHR Strategic Framework (2026-2029) provides guidance to advance our common vision and goals.



*The Partnership for Women's Health Research Canada uses the term women to refer to all people who identify as women. We use transgender and non-binary as umbrella terms to refer to people with a wide range of gender identities that are different from the gender they were assigned at birth.

VISION

Better health for all women, transgender, and non-binary people through research equity, excellence, and inclusion.

MISSION

Enable knowledge creation and mobilization to benefit the health of women, transgender, and non-binary people across the lifespan.

GOALS

- Leverage our resources to further national research and promote evidence-informed practice and policy to benefit women, transgender, and non-binary people from coast-to-coast-to-coast and around the world.
- Be a leading voice and champion for research that includes biological and socio-cultural sex and gender-based analyses and considers how these factors intersect with other social categorizations.
- Increase training and mentorship opportunities for trainees and researchers at all career stages.
- Support networking of health researchers.
- Mobilize knowledge to improve health behaviours and medical practices, cultural safety, and policies that affect health.
- Advocate for increased investment in women's health research.



PWHR STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 2026-2029 AT A GLANCE

Between 2026 and 2029, PWHR's partner institutions will collaboratively advance three mutually reinforcing aims that contribute to our vision and mission.

AIMS

Support and grow the next generation of women's health researchers.

Elevate the profile and prioritization of women's health research in Canada.

Strengthen strategic partnerships to advance women's health research and inform policy and practice.

ACTIONS

PWHR convenes mentoring and networking, offers targeted professional development, supports and promotes trainee research.

PWHR advocates to embed women's health research as a strategic priority within Canada's health and research ecosystems, and for equitable funding for women's health research.

PWHR provides a national platform to share women's health research.

PWHR catalyzes research collaborations, convenes networks, and increases researcher capacity and opportunities for knowledge mobilization.

OUTPUTS

Trainees gain knowledge about opportunities and develop relationships and skills to support career advancement in the field of women's, transgender, and non-binary health.

PWHR is a national voice promoting women's health research.
Recognition of the value of investing in women's health research among relevant decision-makers.

Collaborative research that benefits women, transgender, and non-binary people.
Guidance, tools, and expanded networks support knowledge translation.

OUTCOMES

Career success for trainees.
Stronger national network of women's health researchers.

Increased investment in women's health research.
More women's health research.

Researchers are supported to conduct and mobilize research to improve the health of women, transgender, and non-binary people.

¹ Baird MD. Et al. 2022. The WHAM Report: The case to fund women's health research. An economic and societal impact analysis. https://thewhamreport.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/TheWHAMReport_crosscutting-compressed.pdf

² McKinsey Health Institute. Closing the women's health gap: Canada's \$37 billion opportunity. October 22, 2025. <https://www.mckinsey.com/mhi/our-insights/closing-the-womens-health-gap-canadas-37-billion-dollars-opportunity>

³ McKinsey Health Institute. Closing the women's health gap: Canada's \$37 billion opportunity. October 22, 2025. <https://www.mckinsey.com/mhi/our-insights/closing-the-womens-health-gap-canadas-37-billion-dollars-opportunity>

⁴ Gravelsins, L., Splinter, T., Mohammad, A. et al. Women's health research funding in Canada across 15 years suggests low funding levels with a narrow focus. *Biol Sex Differ* 16, 78 (2025). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13293-025-00763-y>

