
**WOMEN'S HEALTH
RESEARCH INSTITUTE**



ANNUAL REPORT

2023 - 2024

ABOUT US

Established in 2006 in Vancouver, British Columbia, the Women's Health Research Institute (WHRI) is one of only three research institutes in Canada with an explicit focus on women's health. We are the women's health research arm of the Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA) and a UBC Faculty of Medicine Research Centre.

The WHRI is devoted to improving the health and health care of girls and women through knowledge generation, serving as a catalyst for research in women's health and supporting an expanding provincial and national network of women's health researchers, policy makers and healthcare providers. We strive to be equitable and inclusive in how we collaborate, in what we prioritize, and in all that we do. To achieve our goals our research respects, works alongside, collaborates with, and supports the health of women across the 2S LGBTQIA+ spectrum.

With over 650 members, the WHRI engages research partners across the province to support, enhance, and champion women's health research. We know that translating evidence into action is central to improving health and health care, so the WHRI has an important role to play in supporting knowledge translation initiatives.



Provincial Health
Services Authority



OUR YEAR IN REVIEW

This annual report represents a celebration of community from April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024. We invite you to read through our year as we profile people, partnerships and programming. Join us in celebrating some of 2023-2024 highlights, and review our membership and online metrics.

OUR COMMUNITY

PEOPLE

The WHRI is anchored by a Scientific Advisory Committee, which initiated in 2017. This year we said farewell to five of our inaugural members. Thank you to Jehannine Austin, Hamideh Bayrampour, Liisa Galea, Sheona Mitchell-Foster, and Joanne Weinberg for providing your guidance and expertise.

PARTNERSHIPS

Thanks to the [BC Women's Health Foundation](#) and Pacific Blue Cross we launched the Health + Economics Research on Midlife Women in BC study. The study explores the physical and psychological health experiences of midlife women including the transition through menopause, its associated symptoms, and their impact to daily living, quality of life, work productivity and caregiving responsibilities. This is the first large-scale study conducted in the province to examine the health needs of midlife women.

PROGRAMMING

On March 8, 2023, the [Ninth Annual WHRI Symposium](#) celebrated the evidence and opportunities for Midlife Women's Health Research and Menopause. This was the most well attended symposium to date with 309 joining online and in person.

This year marked another first in strengthening the WHRI's methods support. We brought on our first qualitative methods specialist, Julia Santana-Parrilla.



2023-2024 HIGHLIGHTS



1

B.C. LAUNCHES AT-HOME CERVICAL CANCER SCREENING PROGRAM ENABLED BY RESEARCH BY WHRI INVESTIGATOR

In January 2024, based on a program of research led by WHRI Associate Director and investigator, Dr. Gina Ogilvie, the province of British Columbia launched a new cervix self-screening program which now offers at-home cervical cancer screening, the first of its kind in Canada. This new self-screening program will help detect cervical cancer sooner compared to traditional pap screening. With this new program, women and individuals from 25 to 69 with a cervix can choose to order a kit to self-screen for the human papillomavirus (HPV), the leading cause of cervical cancer, or have their screening sample collected by a health-care provider. This more accurate testing, combined with a new, patient-informed self-screening testing option enables more women across the province to get screened, including those from equity deserving groups and those in more rural and remote communities. With the launch of the cervix self-screening program, BC has also instituted HPV testing as its primary cervical cancer screening method.



2

THE WHRI LAUNCHED THE BEYOND THE BINARY IN BC GUIDE: A GUIDANCE DOCUMENT FOR THE RESEARCH COMMUNITY TO SUPPORT THE CONDUCT OF GENDER INCLUSIVE HEALTH RESEARCH

The Beyond the Binary in BC project, which takes a patient-oriented and trauma-informed approach to incorporating gender equity into women's health research, resulted in a guidance document to support inclusive women's health research. In February 2024, the WHRI launched the Beyond the Binary in BC Guide, a comprehensive, community-informed resource meant to support the research community through various approaches to language use in a health research context. The guide outlines how language can be both exclusionary and, inversely, inclusive, describes the different approaches to language use, provides example scenarios for language choices, and showcases practical tools to support ongoing learning. This project has now been scaled up pan-Canadian with broad input nationally from research and community task forces. For Beyond the Binary Canada, our goal is to develop a nationally relevant, and feasible guidance and resource package to support health researchers and health research institutions in their commitments to conducting gender equitable health research for women, trans, and non-binary people.



3

UNIVERSAL FREE CONTRACEPTION TO ALL PEOPLE IN CANADA: RESEARCH BY WHRI INVESTIGATOR LEADS TO FEDERAL PHARMACARE PROGRAM CHANGE

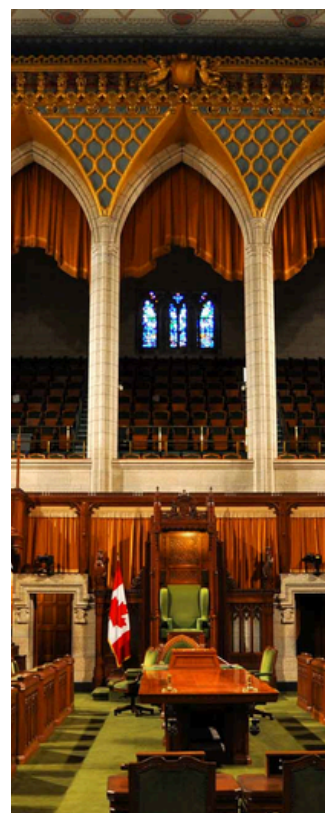


Research evidence and advocacy led by WHRI researcher, Dr. Wendy Norman and her Contraception and Abortion Research Team (CART), in partnership with BC Women's Hospital + Health Centre (BCW), underpinned a federal policy change. On February 29, 2024, Canada's Pharmacare program announced their plan to provide universal free contraception to all people in Canada. Dr. Norman was a key leader in the BC Universal Contraception policy implementation and her research findings significantly contributed to this recent federal policy announcement that will benefit millions of people across Canada into the future.

4

WHRI RESEARCHERS PRESENT AT THE CANADIAN HOUSE OF COMMONS STANDING COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

In 2023, the Canadian House of Commons Standing Committee on Health initiated a specific study on Women's Health. As part of this study, several WHRI researchers were called upon to present to the committee as experts and asked to share key women's health research findings. Presentations were given by Dr. Catherine Allaire and Kate Wahl (on endometriosis and EndoAct Canada), Dr. Gillian Hanley and Dr. Jessica McAlpine (on gynecologic cancer), Dr. Catriona Hippman (on postpartum mental health), Dr. Nichole Fairbrother and Dr. Lisa Galea (on women's mental health) and Dr. Deborah Money (on the importance of sex- and gender-based research). These presentations are true knowledge mobilization in action.



5

DR. DEBORAH MONEY RECEIVES ORDER OF CANADA FOR HER CONTRIBUTIONS TO WOMEN'S HEALTH RESEARCH

Dr. Deborah Money, founding Executive Director of the Women's Health Research Institute and current UBC Department Head of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, was announced as a Member of the Order of Canada in December 2023. The Order of Canada recognizes people across sectors who have made extraordinary and sustained contributions in Canada. Dr. Money was recognized specifically for her contributions to women's health, notably in the field of reproductive infectious diseases as a researcher, clinician, teacher and mentor. We at the WHRI and BC Women's Hospital are incredibly fortunate exceptional passion, dedication and capabilities in clinical care and research, which has significantly advanced the quality of care received by women across BC, Canada and internationally.



OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

From April 1, 2023 - March 31, 2024, our investigators have advanced knowledge through a substantial increase in scientific publications and trainee supervision. The excellent calibre of research at the WHRI continues to attract competitive external funding and our provincial network of women's health research grew significantly this past year.

1250

NEW PUBLICATIONS

1% increase over the previous year

\$55.8

MILLION IN FUNDING

15% increase over the previous year

633

INVESTIGATORS

15% increase over the previous year

1082

RESEARCH TRAINEES

6% increase over the previous year



OUR YEAR ONLINE

As both a physical and virtual organization, we continue to promote our events, services, and successes through WHRI.org. Be sure to bookmark this page and follow us on social @WomensResearch on most platforms.

83k

LINKEDIN IMPRESSIONS

Resulting in 1.4k page reactions

833

NEW LINKEDIN FOLLOWERS

Resulting in 2.4k total followers

189.9k

INSTAGRAM IMPRESSIONS

Resulting in 5k page reactions

1,056

NEW INSTAGRAM FOLLOWERS

Contributing to a total of 2.6K total followers.

17k

**NEW WEBSITE USERS BY
ORGANIC REACH**

160

**COUNTRIES REACHED ON
OUR WEBSITE**

And over 29k active users on the site

EXECUTIVE

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BC Women's Hospital
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Research Coordinator

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Health*

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Research Assistant

OLIVIA PATRICK
Communications Assistant

HENRY PAYETTE
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Research Manager

ASHWINI PRABHAKARAN
Research Assistant

NICOLE PRESTLEY
*Manager, Research +
Knowledge Translation*

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JULIA SANTANA-PARRILLA
Research Coordinator

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The Women's Health Research Institute would like to acknowledge that we are uninvited guests on the unceded ancestral territories of the xʷməθkʷə́yəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and selílwtulh (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

As a provincial research institute committed to improving the health outcomes of women, including those across the 2S LGBTQIA+ spectrum, we recognize our responsibility in the collective effort towards establishing culturally safe health care systems and services that address health inequities among Indigenous peoples, especially Indigenous women, girls, and Two-spirit peoples.

We encourage all people involved in research to read both the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action and the In Plain Sight Report, and reflect on ways we can incorporate the recommendations into our work. As we gather in spaces together, we encourage you to reflect on your positionality on these lands and your personal commitments to reconciliation.

We thank you for your continued support in our efforts to contribute to transform the health and health care of women and their families.





4500 Oak Street
Vancouver, BC, Canada
604-875-3459

whri_cwbc@cw.bc.ca
www.whri.org