



WOMEN'S HEALTH PROGRAM

Strategy 2025-2026



The George Institute for Global Health Women's Health Program 2025-2026 Strategy

The Women's Health Program (WHP) at The George Institute (TGI) brings together a global group of researchers from different disciplines to tackle some of the most pressing challenges for women's health. We focus on overlooked conditions and priority populations, including women and girls in low and middle-income settings, First Nations populations, and those with limited access to healthcare for geographical or other reasons. We consider women's health across the life course, including and beyond pregnancy care and contraception, and working to achieve gender and health equity globally.

Our overall strategic aim is to improve the lives of women and girls globally. To achieve this, we build and sustain equitable partnerships with communities; design and conduct world-class population, public health and clinical research, which will directly improve the health and wellbeing of women and girls; co-create policy with our stakeholders which is implemented through collaboration with governments and other partners; and develop the capacity of local community members and early career researchers to design and conduct research to answer the questions that are most important to them and their communities.

This strategy builds upon previous WHP strategies (2018 and 2020) and reflects our team's evolving priorities and projects. The WHP team work closely with the TGI communications, philanthropy, impact and engagement teams, CORE (the Centre for Operational Research Excellence), and other research groups across TGI.

We focus on five priority areas:

1. Sex and Gender Equity in Health and Medicine
2. Key women's life stages, including pregnancy, as opportunities to improve lifelong health
3. Protecting the health of women and girls from environmental change
4. Using Artificial Intelligence (AI) and digital technologies to improve women's health
5. Overlooked and under-researched women's health conditions

Program Operational Goals for 2025-2026

1. To connect as a global team through online/hybrid meetings three times a year
2. To conduct one face-to-face meeting of the WHP team, bringing together WHP members from across TGI to showcase projects, brainstorm ideas for future areas of focus and collaboration globally, and conduct a review of progress in achieving strategic objectives. This is likely to align with George Think in April 2026.
3. To secure funding by the end of 2026 to support Program Coordination roles for each of the five Priority Areas, to coordinate across projects, share knowledge and expertise and collaborate on research funding applications.



PRIORITY AREA 1: SEX AND GENDER EQUITY IN HEALTH AND MEDICINE

Vision: Our overarching vision is to close the sex and gender gap in health outcomes and improve health for all

Our Sex and Gender Equity in Health and Medicine program encompasses

- **The Centre for Sex and Gender Equity in Health and Medicine (CSGEHM)**, a collaboration between TGI, UNSW and Deakin University, Australia
 - » *The Centre for Sex and Gender Equity in Health and Medicine strives to facilitate advances in health and medical knowledge for all people by promoting the routine consideration of sex and gender in Australian health and medical research and healthcare delivery.*
- **The Medical Science and Gender Equity (MESSAGE) project**
 - » *The MESSAGE project aims to improve the integration of sex and gender considerations across data collection, analysis and reporting in biomedical, health and care research in the UK and internationally*
- **Epidemiological and statistical projects** exploring differences in health outcomes and care seeking behaviours between males and females across a range of health problems, injuries and multiple long-term conditions.

STATUS YEARS	LOCATION/S	PROGRAM/ PROJECT NAME	TGI TEAM	STRATEGIC GOALS FOR 2025-2026	FUNDING STATUS
Current 2024-2027	Australia	Centre for Sex and Gender Equity in Health and Medicine	Bronwyn Graham Kongchay Vongsaiya Sue Haupt Katie Harris Christine Jenkins Cheryl Carcel Kelly Thompson	Work Package 1: Complete the Victorian Audit and Report of S&G Considerations in Funding Policy, Funding Outcomes, MRIs, and Medical Curricula. WP2: Secure Government funding and complete the National Audit of S&G inclusion in health and medical curricula. WP3: Complete the National audit of human ethics committees for S&G considerations WP4: Complete the baseline audit of sex and gender inclusion and reporting in Centre Members participating institutions (cross working group collaborative activity) Develop S&G education packages and thematic advocacy seminar series	WP1: Vic Dept Health (2024-5) WP2: DoHAC funding WP3: Sex and Gender Donation WP4: Sex and Gender Donation



				<p>WP5: Engagement with Government across Federal/State jurisdictions to build awareness of Centre's expertise and advocate for potential funding opportunities.</p> <p>WP6. Facilitate the establishment of national working groups to promote sex and gender inclusion in policy, research, education, media/communications, and business</p> <p>General:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply for substantial funding to sustain the Centre (NHMRC CRE) • Conduct a donor's landscape mapping exercise • Consider opportunities for commissioned research drawing on the expertise of the centre 	
Current 2023-2026	UK	MESSAGE Project	Kate Womersley Helena Legido-Quigley Alice Witt Celestine Donovan Bradley Rachel Hulme Sanne Peters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain funding for the next stages of MESSAGE (publishing, collaboration with the NHS RHO and further activities for MESSAGE 1.0) • Expand the approach and work across other intersectoral considerations (e.g. race) 	Donation RN (2025) WHP (2025) CIHR University of Montreal grant (2025)
Current 2024-2025)	India	MESSAGE India	Kate Womersley Alice Witt Celestine Donovan Bradley Devaki Nambiar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold at least one event with funders and/or scientists on sex and gender intentional research (linking with sex and gender handbook) • Scope and identify at least one additional funder for onward work 	Internal seed award
Current (2024-2025)	UK	MESSAGE Maternity	Ed Mullins Kate Womersley Alice Witt Celestine Donovan Bradley		Philanthropic Seed award. Planned ESRC application for full programme of work.



Planned	Ethiopia UK	EDAM (Ethiopian Data-to-modelling Policy Consortium)	Jane Hirst Alice Witt Kate Womersley	Design workplan for 2025	Gates Foundation funding confirmed
Current (2025-2027)	Australia EU	Improving recognition of stroke in women in the prehospital setting	Cheryl Carcel European Stroke Organization Mark Woodward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implicit bias study • Data collection on prehospital diagnosis of stroke in women and men • Intervention study 	Funded by investigators
Current (2025-2026)	Australia	Increasing participation of women in stroke clinical trials	Cheryl Carcel Katie Harris Mark Woodward	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Systematic review • Discrete choice experiment • Study within a trial 	NHMRC investigator grant
Planned	Australia	Sex differences in sepsis: translating evidence into practice	Kelly Thompson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain funding to scale up existing epidemiological research program to incorporate a clinical research program to identify causal mechanisms of sex difference in sepsis incidence and mortality 	NHMRC Investigator Grant Application in progress
Current	EU	READI	Sanne Peters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • European public-private partnership to enhance diversity in clinical studies in Europe 	IHI
Current	EU	EDICT	Sanne Peters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doctoral training network on equity, diversity, and inclusion in clinical trials 	Marie Curie doctoral training network
Planned	Global	EMPOWER	60 partners worldwide: Sanne Peters Anushka Patel Jane Hirst Kate Womersley Amanda Henry Keziah Bennett-Brook Julieann Coombes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful Lol shortlisting • Preparation of full application due September 2025 	Submitted - GCRFF



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PRIORITY AREA 2: KEY WOMEN'S LIFE STAGES INCLUDING PREGNANCY AS OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE LIFELONG HEALTH

Vision: For all women to have access to timely, high-quality, evidence-driven, contextually relevant, and affordable early preventative care for non-communicable diseases and injuries at key life stages including:

- Comprehensive postnatal care and programs and support to improve lifelong health following physical and/or mental health complications of pregnancy
- Optimal health, mental health and nutrition before pregnancy through preconception care and inter-conception care
- Screening with personalised risk assessment and support for NCD and injury prevention around the time of menopause

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Current 2021-2027	UK India	SMARThealth Pregnancy	Jane Hirst D Praveen Sreya Majumdar Sudhir Thout Nicole Votruba	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete SHP CRT and • Complete analysis • Publish main papers • Community feedback events 	UKRI FLF until Dec 2027



Current 2025-2030	UK India Barbados Jamaica Dominica St Vincent and the Grenadines Guayana	SMARThealth Caribbean	Jane Hirst Mark Woodward D Praveen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish SHP Caribbean program and partnerships in four Caribbean countries 	NIHR RIGHT 7 (2025-2029)
Current 2025-2027	UK India Sierra Leone Zambia	CRADLE-SMART	Jane Hirst D Praveen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish CRADLE SMART collaboration and technical support in two African countries 	FCDO (2025-2028)
Current 2025-2028	UK Tanzania Uganda Rwanda Ethiopia Ireland Norway	LINDA-FAMILIA	Jane Hirst Lottie Cansdale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish project across sites Co-develop capacity strengthening in digital health technologies for maternal and newborn health in Africa 	European Commission
Current 2023-2025	UK India	PRAMH	Nicole Votruba Sandhya Yatirula Pallab Maulik D Praveen Neelanjana Das Sudhir Thout Akhil Gurram Jane Hirst	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completion of the pilot trial Analysis and publication Submission of application for grant funding for next stages 	MRC 2023-2025



Current 2025-2027	Australia	Food is Medicine: Produce Prescription in Pregnancy	Jason Wu Megan Gow Amanda Henry Kathy Trieu Kim Glover	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake clinical trial for pregnant women at high risk of gestational diabetes and food insecurity Establish rates of food insecurity in pregnancy in metropolitan Australia, undertake process evaluation to inform ongoing implementation of produce prescription in pregnancy Advocate to State/Federal policy makers, expanding on FiM advocacy, to include pregnancy, including meeting with MPs to raise awareness and interest, submissions to government enquiries, and site visits for policymakers. 	Hort Innovation
Current 2019-2027	Australia	Improving women's cardiovascular Health after hypertensive pregnancy Project : 1) Blood Pressure Postpartum (BP2) 2) Closing knowledge gaps after hypertensive pregnancy	Amanda Henry Clare Arnott Megan Gow Katie Harris Amanda Henry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publish main papers from BP2 RCT (2025) Complete BP2 cohort follow-up (mid 2025) and analysis, publish main papers (2026) Complete pilot Closing Knowledge Gaps projects (women (2025) and healthcare providers (2026)) and undertake process evaluation with view to national scale-up General: seek ongoing program funding (e.g. possible CRE Nov 2025) Advocacy campaign to influence Government to fund comprehensive maternal health check 3-6 months postpartum. 	NSW Health Philanthropic donation
Current 2021-2025	Australia	Improving Women's Mental Health after hypertensive pregnancy (data from P4 and BP2 studies)	Amanda Henry Jie Shang Katie Harris Maree Hackett Honours student UNSW/ TGI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete papers from initial work Seek collaborative opportunities and funding to expand this area of work 	



Current 2022-2027	Australia	Identifying strategies to reduce long term chronic disease in women after Gestational diabetes: DIVINE-NSW (cohort and qual studies) and DIVINE-pilot (pilot RCT)	Amanda Henry Anushka Patel Clare Arnott Vivian Lee Angela Chan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish papers from initial work (DIVINE-NSW) • Undertake pilot trial (DIVINE-pilot) • Obtain substantive funding and partners for comprehensive trial • Develop policy brief with recommendations for governments, based on findings, and engagement meetings with policymakers. 	UNSW CVMM Big Ideas Grant UNSW collaboration grant NHMRC Investigator
Current 2025-2026	Australia	Determining the prevalence of food insecurity in women with gestational diabetes in two Sydney hospitals (Campbelltown and Nepean)	Megan Gow Jason Wu Kim Glover	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit participants to survey trial • Publish paper with findings 	PhD project
Planned	India UK	3 Be project : Before, between and beyond pregnancy	Jane Hirst Ed Mullins	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication of the Lancet SEA Series on Preconception care • Submission of PCC review • Funding needed 	HCL Foundation application
Planned	Australia UK	Menopause and NCD project	Jane Hirst Amanda Henry Clare Arnott Cheryl Carcel Manuela Ferreira Margie Peden Megan Gow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish at least one project around NCDs and the menopausal period in women • Establish connections with UNSW menopause clinic • Submit one grant application 	NHMRC funding CIHR University of Montreal funding 2025



Planned	UK Africa	Fall prevention among elderly women in Africa	Margie Peden Prasanthi Attwood Dennis Mazingi Shweta Gidwani Ale Piragauta	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Submit one small grant to conduct some formative work around falls among elderly women in Africa	NIHR Bloomberg Philanthropies
Planned	Africa Australia	Sodium salt substitute for preeclampsia prevention	Megan Gow Amanda Henry Bruce Neal Clare Arnott Katrina Kisson Dike Ojji	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Obtain funding (under review with Gates Foundation call)	Gates Foundation (pending)



STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA 3: PROTECTING WOMEN AND GIRLS FROM THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE

Vision: A world where climate change mitigation, adaptation and resilience policy is informed by evidence that recognises and protects the specific vulnerabilities women and girls face globally.

Objectives

- To generate high-quality, policy-relevant evidence to inform climate policies at local, state, national and international levels
- To work with communities to understand the impacts of climate change and Indigenous knowledge and practices

STATUS YEARS	LOCATION/S	PROGRAM/ PROJECT NAME	TGI TEAM	STRATEGIC GOALS FOR 2025-2026	FUNDING STATUS
Current 2024-2028	UK India	Heat in Pregnancy- India	Jane Hirst D Praveen Sudhakar Reddy Chris Kurian Surya Surendran Karthika Kumar Gabriela Ciprano Flores Julie Abraham Devaki Nambiar (for first SP only)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete publication of heat action plan analysis (paper is drafted for submission to Lancet PH) • Commence recruitment in Bilaspur in 2025 • Commence qualitative work across three sites in 2025 • Publish qualitative study and cohort protocol 	Wellcome (2024-2028)
Planned	Australia Pacific partners UK	SHECAN	Laura Downey Jane Hirst Chatu Yapa Bronwyn Graham Veronica Le Nevez Georgia White Anna Palagyi Kate Womersley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold first roundtable meeting in Sydney • Apply for substantial funding through Wellcome or ADB 	UNSW seed Award 2025 ADB



Current 2024-2026	UK	Air pollution and pregnancy outcomes London	Cat Pinho-Gome Ed Mullins s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get the data linkages approved by the iCare team • Analyse the data • Write paper 	Seed funding from UCL transferred to TGI
Current	India	Menstrual Hygiene project	Dinesh Sudha Deepika	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community engagement and awareness raising • Commence the quantitative survey • Planning medical camps and facilitating consultations with gynaecologists Provision of menstrual hygiene kits to the community participants	Internal funding
Current 2024-2025	UK	Investigating how women's health, wellbeing and welfare are considered by climate national adaptation plans worldwide	Cat Pinho-Gomes Ed Mullins Jane Hirst Kate Womersley Alice Witt Rachel Alice Witt Celestine Donovan Bradley Gabriela	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyses completed • Paper written and awaiting Editor review with Lancet GH 	Internal funding
Current 2025	UK	Sex differences in the association between heat and all-cause mortality	Cat Pinho-Gomes Ed Mullins Jane Hirst Kate Womersley Alice Witt Celestine Donovan Bradley	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data extraction underway • Plan for publication in 2025 	Internal funding



STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA 4: WOMEN'S HEALTH AND AI

Vision: A world where AI and digital solutions effectively bridge knowledge and access gaps in women's health, expanding access to high-quality, evidence-based, contextually relevant, and trustworthy care for all women.

Objectives

- To develop and demonstrate a pipeline for how LLM chatbots could be used to support women's health in different settings
- To work with communities and health systems to identify priority use cases for AI in women's health
- To develop methodologies focussed on trustworthiness and gender considerations across different AI tools
- To develop collaborative networks with academic, industry and government partners to support technology translation and adoption in different settings around the world

STATUS YEARS	LOCATION/S	PROGRAM/ PROJECT NAME	TGI TEAM	STRATEGIC GOALS FOR 2025-2026	FUNDING STATUS
Current 2023-2027	India UK Australia	SMARThealth GPT	D Praveen Ankita Sharma Prithviraj Pramanik Uday Adavi Yasmina Al Ghabban Neelanjana Das Sridevi Gara Jane Hirst	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Complete analysis of the beta testing workshop• Submit all papers from the initial development phase• Complete technical refinements, including the development of a memory function, back-end dashboard• Design the next stage of user testing• Obtain funding for wider rollout	BMGF Grand Challenges 2023-2024 SM donation (2024-2026)
Current 2025- 2027	India UK Australia	RCOG Chatbot	D Praveen Ankita Sharma Prithviraj Pramanik Uday Adavi Yasmina Al Ghabban Neelanjana Das Gabriel Jones (Oxford)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish Collaboration agreement with RCOG• Develop working prototype of chatbot• Conduct alpha testing	SM donation (2024-2026)



Current 2023-2025	Australia UK	CEDAW AI Dashboard	Jan Shantosh Georgia White Emma Feeney Uday Adavi Shiming Zhang AHRI colleagues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation at CSW New York March 2025 • Working prototype dashboard • Paper to be submitted • Further funding obtained • Engagement with potential funders and partners to obtain funding and continue work. 	WHP/Impact and Engagement program (2024-2025) AHRI
Current 2025-2028	Australia	OVUM AI	Amanda Henry Ariella Heffernan-Marks Honours student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake initial studies to evaluate the utility of the OVUM AI women's health assistant • Scoping review of AI in women's health • Obtain further funding 	Soul Patts philanthropic donation
Current (years?)	Aus	AI and mammogram prediction of CVD	Clare Arnott	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete qualitative interviews of women, GPs and mammography providers to understanding feasibility of implementation. • Obtain further funding and commence implementation trial of ML algorithm in Australia • Validate algorithm in international cohorts 	MRFF funding



STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREA 5: OVERLOOKED AND UNDER RESEARCHED WOMEN'S HEALTH CONDITIONS

Vision: To generate high-quality evidence to inform policy and practice regarding neglected women-specific conditions in low- and middle-income countries, as well as global reproductive health challenges.

Objectives

- To improve women's awareness and access to high quality care for benign gynaecological conditions including endometriosis in India
- To improve women's awareness and care options for menopausal symptoms in Africa

STATUS YEARS	LOCATION/S	PROGRAM/ PROJECT NAME	TGI TEAM	STRATEGIC GOALS FOR 2025-2026	FUNDING STATUS
Current (2024-	India	NARI	Preety Rajbangshi Suparna Ghosh D Praveen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form state level advisory group for NARI project • Co-develop intervention in partnership with the state health department • Implement the intervention 	ICMR
Current (2023-	India	SAHELI	Devaki Nambiar Neymat Chadha Surya Surendran Anusha Seelamantula Prasanthi S	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support completion of baseline survey on women's gynaecological health in three Indian states • Submit at least 3 publications related to formative research, the policy landscape, and regional perspectives on women's gynaecological health • Build out fit for purpose SAHELI team to ensure fieldwork continuity for subsequent phases in Punjab and Telengana. Undertake public and policy engagement to advance SAHELI 	India Alliance (WT/DBT)
Current (2025-	India	Endometriosis in India: ABLE	Preety Rajbangshi Pallab Maulik Sandhya KY Susmita Chatterjee Arpita Ghosh Madhuri Dutta		ICMR



Current 2023-2027	UK	Blood in Action (BIA)	Ed Mullins Alison Perry Devaki Nambiar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advance realist review and interviews of BIA public engagement participants • Seroprevalence for rare infection sin pregnancy • Biomarkers and predictors of undiagnosed conditions at booking 	Parasol Foundation
Current 2025-2027	UK Kenya	Menopause in African Women	Dorcus Muchiri Jane Hirst	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalise protocol and secure funding from Roche • Commencement fieldwork 	CIHR University of Montreal grant 2025 Roche Global (pending)
Current 2023-2025	UK Nigeria	Satisfaction with Maternity care in Nigeria	Beatrice Ope Margie Peden Robyn Norton Ed Mullins Jane Hirst	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of thesis • Publication of final papers 	President's Scholarship
Current Years?	South Africa	E-HEALTH SA: Co-creation of an integrated e-health intervention package for non-communicable diseases and sexual and reproductive health for women and girls in South Africa	Sudha Kallakuri Deepika	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducting co-creation workshops with stakeholders • Formation of the youth advisory group • Qualitative data collection • Development of the intervention prototype 	SAMRC
Current 2022-2025	Vietnam Australia	Maternal Sepsis and AMR	Kelly Thompson Mark Woodward Jane Hirst Amanda Henry Katie Harris	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish NSW, Australian data and engage policy makers e.g. The Clinical Excellence Commission and peak advocacy bodies e.g. Sepsis Australia to support dissemination of findings and policy impact. • Finish recruitment to the UMISS study in Vietnam, analyse and publish data 	NHMRC fellowship



Planned	India	Older Women's Health	Deepika Saluja Renu Khanna	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conduct review of policies for older population's health, with a gender and intersectionality lens.• Submit at least 2 grant applications	Aiming for RSHTM, and Azim Premji University Grant
Planned	UK	Preventing women's cancer	Jane Hirst Ophira Ginsburg	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish projects in women's cancers in LMICs	Provost's Visiting Professorship for Ophira Ginsburg

CONTACT DETAILS

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