

# Women's Wellbeing: How Employers Can Support their Workforce

## Exploring women's health in the workplace

In today's always-on world, women are a driving force. With women making up almost 50% of Canada's working population, they demonstrate resilience, resourcefulness, and creativity in managing both work and personal responsibilities.

This duality enhances their skills in multitasking, empathy, and leadership – all traits that are indispensable in today's diverse work environments.

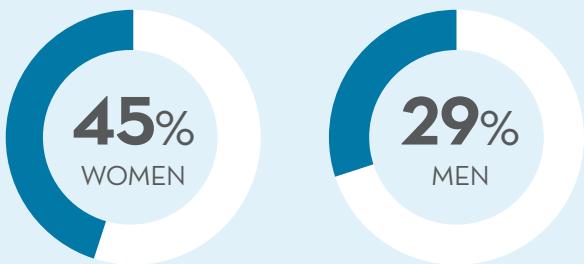
*However, women face unique healthcare challenges while still having to balance various responsibilities at home and at work.*

Medavie Blue Cross commissioned research that looked deeper into these challenges with the goal of addressing health gaps to improve both the physical and mental wellbeing of women.

### Stress level imbalance

Women generally perceive their quality of life to be good, but stress is a big factor in their health. More women rate their stress levels to be fair or poor versus men.

 Stress levels reported to be fair or poor  
 Stress levels reported to be excellent, very good or good



### The pressures of responsibilities at home and at work are taking a toll on their health.

For many women, juggling work duties and domestic responsibilities is a daily reality. The demands of a career often come with high expectations, long hours, and constant pressure to perform. At the same time, traditional roles and expectations around caregiving, household management, and family responsibilities often fall disproportionately on women, as our study confirms.



**Nearly three-quarters (72%)** of women say they are primarily responsible for household duties.



**Over half (51%) of women** feel like they don't put in enough at home due to the demands of work.



**Nearly half (49%) of women** feel a lot of pressure to be more present and productive at work.

*Women are more proactive, even in their busy lives when it comes to their health, but still face barriers to care.*

- More than 3 in 4 women regularly see a general health practitioner, but some women feel challenged in terms of scheduling appointments (14% vs. 7% of men).
- 81% of women have undergone at least one type of preventative screening, but 57% of women feel unheard when seeking treatment

# Women and their mental health

Competing work and home responsibilities appear to be having a disproportionate effect on women's mental health.

## Percentage of women that agree or strongly agree with the following statements

**30%**

"I sometimes feel guilty about not putting enough effort at home due to the demands of me at work."

**33%**

"There is a lot of pressure on me to be as available and productive as colleagues who have less pressure at home."

**17%**

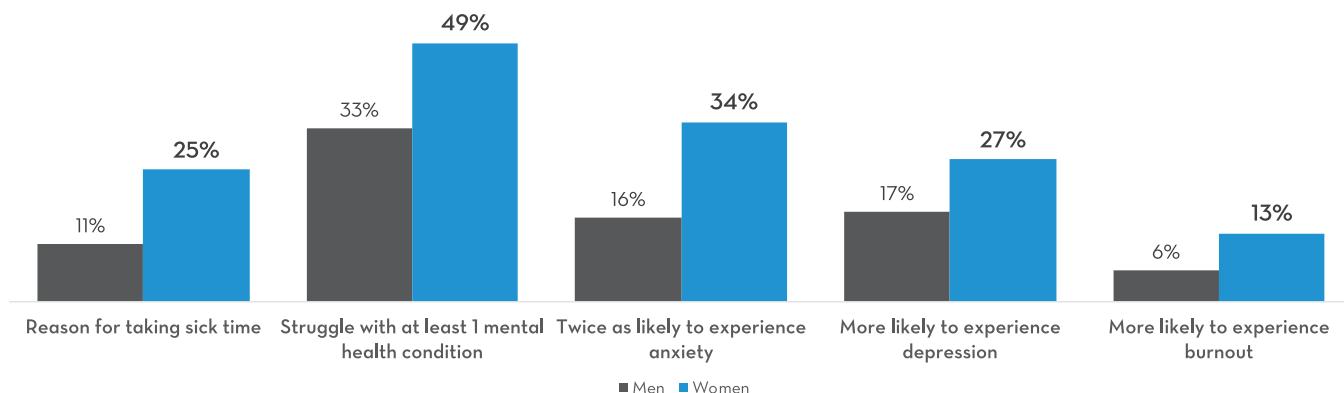
"I sometimes feel guilty about not putting in enough effort at work due to the demands of me at home."

**9%**

"I feel like I am overlooked for advancement due to my responsibilities at home."

*The overwhelming burden of responsibilities, combined with gender-related\* health challenges, often lead women to experience mental health issues.*

## Likelihood of experiencing conditions



## Menopause and mental health

More than 50% of women who have experienced gender-related\* challenges like menopause, fertility issues, and pregnancy loss say it has negatively impacted their mental health.

**3 in 4 women**

say menopause has impacted their daily lives and ability to function.<sup>1</sup>

**1 in 5 women**

say menopause has impacted their mental health a lot or severely.<sup>2</sup>

**1 in 10 women**

leave the workforce due to unmanaged symptoms of menopause.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Menopause Foundation of Canada <sup>2</sup> Medavie Blue Cross Survey on Women's Health

\*We acknowledge this topic applies to individuals beyond the gender identity of "woman." Alongside women, those who need this care have diverse gender identities.

## Menopause and mental health are topics seldom discussed in the workplace.

- Women are more likely to feel uncomfortable talking to their employer about mental health challenges (54% for women, 42% for men).
- 56% of women are uncomfortable talking to their employer about their struggles with menopause.



## Health benefits plans are not meeting women's health needs.

Women say access to support programs is limited under their current health plans.

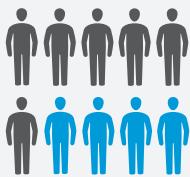
- Only 24% have access to a health and wellness program as part of their benefit package.
- 50% of women can get counselling through their Employee Assistance Program but a mere 4% are covered for services through a gender-related program.

## Employers are taking notice of the unique challenges women face.

Employers are generally aware of the health issues working women are experiencing but more needs to be done to translate that awareness into action.



**Half of employers**  
have personally seen  
women struggle  
with mental health  
in the workplace (49%)



**Four in 10**  
have seen women struggle  
with menstrual health issues  
(39%) and menopause  
symptoms (33%)

*Supportive benefit plans and workplace programs can provide timely access to care and resources, mitigate the toll, and promote better wellbeing across all stages of life.*

# How employers can help women thrive in the workplace

Women face unique health challenges while balancing professional and personal demands, taking a significant toll on their well-being. This leads to women leaving the workforce early while reducing productivity. Supporting women's health isn't just the right thing to do—it's smart business.

We encourage employers to:

- ✓ **Review** policies that actively promote work-life balance and employee well-being
- ✓ **Reduce** stigma around mental health and menopause with open communication
- ✓ **Foster** open dialogue about uncomfortable topics like women's health
- ✓ **Optimize** health coaching, mental health professionals, and specific coverage for menopause

As a fundamental pillar of the Canadian workforce, women drive innovation and leadership. Investing in their health strengthens your entire organization with our [ever-evolving suite of solutions](#) that meet their unique needs.

## Mental Health

Members access mental wellness through [Connected Care](#), including on-demand text therapy.

Members can access counselling through [inConfidence](#) anytime—24/7—in person, by phone, or online. Plus, they can choose preferred mental health practitioners through their Extended Health Benefits.

## Perimenopause and Menopause

To address how menopause symptoms disrupt productivity, we have partnered with [sanoLiving](#) for a [complimentary personalized menopause assessment](#) and Symptom Relief Guide with treatment options that include health coaching.

## Heart Health

We connect members with accredited health professionals for personalized coaching through our [Health Coaching and Chronic Disease Management](#).

Our [360 TotalCare](#) program covers health coaching, focusing on hypertension, diabetes, and obesity.

**Ready to strengthen your workforce?  
Explore our Women's Health Solutions today.**

