



Ministerial Expert Panel on Women's Health

Meeting communiqué

The Ministerial Expert Panel on Women's Health (expert panel) held its third meeting on 6 July 2026. The Hon Rebecca White MP chaired the meeting in her role as Assistant Minister for Health and Aged Care, Indigenous Health and Women.

The expert panel welcomed and reviewed stakeholder feedback from the consumer roundtable held in Sydney on 19 May 2026. The roundtable brought together women and gender-diverse people with lived experience. Participants shared valuable insights on cardiovascular disease and stroke, including symptoms, assessment, diagnosis, treatment, prevention and follow-up across the life course.

The Expert Panel discussed feedback from the stakeholder roundtable and identified priorities for consideration including opportunities to:

- Elevate women's voices and empower women to advocate for themselves and actively participate in decisions about their cardiovascular health and care, including the need to amplify First Nations voices.
- Improve public and health professional awareness of women's cardiovascular disease and stroke symptoms, including where presentations may differ from those more commonly recognised in men, to support earlier detection, timely assessment and holistic patient centered interventions for women's Cardiovascular care..
- Introduce routine screening and risk assessment at key life stages across the life course and strengthen consideration of family history and other risk factors, to support earlier identification of cardiovascular disease and stroke risk in women.
- Update clinical guidelines and decision-support tools to better reflect sex- and gender-specific symptoms, risks and care considerations relevant to women's cardiovascular disease and stroke.
- Improve women's cardiovascular health literacy through awareness, education and access to evidence-based information to support prevention, earlier recognition of symptoms and informed decision-making.
- Increase research focused on women's cardiovascular health and stroke, including strengthening the evidence base on sex and gender differences in prevention, diagnosis, treatment and recovery



- Strengthen coordinated models of care, including clearer care pathways and follow-up, to improve women's experiences of navigating the health system after diagnosis.
- The expert panel reflected the need to implement practical actions across the continuum of care, from prevention and early identification through treatment, rehabilitation, and ongoing follow-up.
- The expert panel used these insights to consider their forward workplan and advice to the Government.

The meeting also included a strong focus on how sex and gender are considered in health research and in the approval of medicines, health technologies and health services for cardiovascular disease and stroke. Women are consistently under-represented in cardiovascular disease and stroke research. The expert panel will consider gaps and potential opportunities within these processes to improve outcomes for women. This included a number of key presentations, including:

- How sex and gender is considered in:
 - research and clinical trials
 - the therapeutic goods approval process.
 - the health technology, Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme, and Medical Services Advisory Committee processes.

The next meeting of the expert panel will be held 3 August 2026.