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Echo News - November 2011

Report: Echo examines alcohol treatment services for women



In Canada, alcohol use is on the rise with women's consumption catching up to men's. Studies have found -the impact of alcohol use on men and women is not equal; high alcohol consumption comes with harsher impacts for women and increased - risk for experiencing alcohol-related problems. Ontario has effective gender-sensitive treatment services, but services are not available to women in all regions of the province. There are also many barriers that interfere with women seeking help for alcohol misuse, such as stigma. Some women, for example, fear disclosing their alcohol use may result in their children being taken from them.

In 2011, Echo assembled a group of leaders to serve as members of Echo's Expert Panel on Women and Alcohol Use. The Expert Panel worked to identify the current supports available to Ontario women, current best practices, and key recommendations regarding treatment services for women with problematic alcohol use.

The report, [Expert Panel Report on Women & Alcohol](#) is now available for download.

Read the Echo Advance - [Women & Alcohol](#)

Increasing Access to Cancer Screening for women who are marginalized in Ontario

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Cervical and breast cancers are costly to the individual, their family, the community and the health system. The key to survival is early detection, however, the percentage of women getting screened for cervical and breast cancers is well below the provincial target. Women who experience marginalization (e.g. low income, street involved), women with disabilities, LGBTTQ women and South Asian women have low cancer screening rates in Ontario.

Echo has established a multi-level cancer screening initiative to create community-level supports for improving access to screening. As part of this initiative, Echo and the Centre for Community Based Research (CCBR) partnered with the Brampton Multicultural Community Centre, the Anne Johnston Health Station and Planned Parenthood Toronto to host three events in the Spring of 2011. The overall purpose of the events was to support the spread of innovation underway in demonstration sites. At the event, the demonstration models were shared along with lessons learned by project staff and community women. Then stakeholders were engaged in a strategy conversation to enrich plans to support the uptake of these models across Ontario.

Read the Echo Advances on increasing access to cancer screening for policy makers and educators related to [Women with Physical DisAbilities](#), [Recent Immigrant Women in Ontario](#), and [Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Queer and Other Women who Have Sex with Women in Ontario](#).

Toward Greater Involvement of Women in Ontario's Health System



In 2009, Echo supported the Centre for Community Based Research to conduct a study to highlight the extent and nature of women's current involvement in the health system, and the conditions that hinder their involvement. The

study, Toward Greater Involvement of Women in Ontario's Health System, involved 160 health organizations and 42 women from diverse communities, the findings of which revealed ongoing gender inequity when it came to decision-making and planning processes in the health care system.

The report shares the experiences of exclusion, frustration, and negative stigmatization that women felt when it came to the processes and structures by which policies, programs and services are developed within the health sector. Based on the study findings, Echo developed key recommendations for policy makers and service providers. Read the Echo Advance and the full report:

[Echo Advance - for Policy Makers](#)

[Echo Advance - for Providers](#)

[Echo Advance - for Women](#)

[Full Report -Toward Greater Involvement of Women in Ontario's Health System](#)

Community Women Leaders Share Their Voices at 7th National Conference on Tobacco or Health (NCTH)



Earlier this month, Ignite Innovation, Echo's smoking cessation and maternal health initiative was featured in the NCTH pre-conference program for more than 50 policy makers, program providers, educators and others. The event opened as the theatre group [The MT Space](#) took to the stage with a powerful, live performance illustrating the emotional and complex issues related to tobacco smoking among pregnant and recently pregnant women.

Following this, Echo in partnership with the Centre for Community Based Research (CCBR), The North Bay Indian Friendship Centre, the Peterborough City-County Public Health Unit and women leaders from Peterborough and North Bay presented a workshop to demonstrate Echo's ABCD Method which supports community women to design their own smoking cessation program incorporating best practices and their knowledge of their community. By using this method, programs can be evidence-based, context sensitive, and support more meaningful participation.

The event was a success. Many were moved by the poignant performance of The MT Space. Some also saw how Echo's ABCD Method could immediately be applied in their communities.

For more on this project read the Echo Advance - [Smoking Cessation Best Practices for Pregnant Women: Adapting to Local Needs for more information about the project.](#)

Connect with Echo on Social Media



Echo is now using social media to extend its reach as Ontario's catalyst for women's health. Become a fan of our Facebook page, follow us on Twitter and connect with us on LinkedIn to engage in discussions and view current research and information on improving women's health in Ontario.

Visit Echo's [Facebook](#) page, follow us on [Twitter](#) and connect with us on [LinkedIn](#)

POWER Study Older Women's Health Report - NOW AVAILABLE



Older women are a large and growing portion of Ontario's population. They are more likely to experience multiple chronic conditions, more likely to experience the health impacts of being a caregiver (compared to older men), and too often experience poverty and isolation. Health care and community supports need to align with the specific needs of older women to as much as possible enable healthy living at home. This will improve quality of life and lessen costs for the health care system.

The POWER Study Older Women's Health Report reveals the state of health and health system use concerns for older women in Ontario and offers recommendations.

[Read the media release](#)

Visit www.powerstudy.ca to download the chapter and highlights document.

Tally for violence 'shocking'



The economic costs for women who leave an abusive partner do not end once they walk out the door. In fact, the ongoing costs in Canada equal a staggering \$6.9 billion annually.

Marilyn Ford-Gilboe, professor and Echo Chair in Rural Women's Health Research in the Arthur Labatt Family School of Nursing at University of Western Ontario, co-authored a recent study on the economic costs for services used by women who leave a violent partner.

[Read the article published in Western News](#)

Madeleine Boscoe honoured with Governor General's Award



Echo is thrilled to acknowledge the recent achievement of Madeleine Boscoe who was one of six Canadian women to be honoured with the 2011 Governor General's Persons Award. The award was presented in recognition of her more than 30 years of work toward improving women's health in Canada.

The award is named after the landmark 1929 Persons Case, which concluded that women were in fact "persons" in the eyes of the law.

[Read more](#)

Celebrating Ontario Women's Health Scholars Award recipients!



"First off I would like to thank Echo and the Council of Ontario Universities for awarding me this scholarship allowing me to do the research that I want, and that I am truly passionate about" -Marta Erlandson

On Friday October 21, Echo and the Council of Ontario Universities (COU) joined together to celebrate the awardees of the 2011-12 Women's Health Scholar's Award Program. The Award Program was established to ensure that Ontario attracts and retains pre-eminent women's health scholars. The award winners fostered by this program will excel in the creation of new knowledge about women's health and it's translation into improved health for women.

This year's Postdoctoral award went to Marta Erlandson who is currently researching important questions in women's musculoskeletal health from childhood through old age. Caitlin Mulcahy received the Women's Health Scholars Doctoral Award for her interdisciplinary health research concerning social, cultural, and familial dimensions of women's well-being, and Anna Maeve was the third recipient awarded for her research in imaging techniques to aid women in detecting and managing cancer and disease.

The luncheon celebration was lead by Marianne Park, Echo's Interim Chair, with remarks from Donna Woolcott, Executive Director -Quality Assurance COU and Pat Campbell, Echo CEO. Guests included University of Toronto -Dean of Graduate Studies, Brian Corman, members of Echo's Research Expert Panel and past award recipients.

Click to learn more about the [Women's Health Scholars Award](#)

Photo caption: (from left to right) Caitlin Mulcahy, Marta Erlandson and Anna Maeve

A Workshop on Living with Menopause

by Jorge Oliveira (Originally published in French in Le Régional)



Echo is co-hosting conversation events to speak with women about their health care needs during menopause. One recent event with the Centre de santé communautaire in Welland resulted in a lively discussion with a group of

20 Francophone women. The translated article follows.

On Tuesday, October 25, Centre de santé communautaire (CSC) de Welland and Echo: Improving Women's Health in Ontario offered an informative workshop on a subject many people still do not clearly understand: menopause.

Mood swings, weight gain, and a diminished sex drive. These are three reasons why many women dread this inevitable stage of life and have great difficulty adapting to it. But adapt they must. Even though there seems to be lots of information on menopause, many women still do not clearly understand it.

This workshop was a first for CSC, and the goal was to shed light on the myths and the realities of menopause. "You would think that with the Internet and all of the websites dedicated to health issues, women would have all of the information they needed. It's just not true," explained Shelley Cleverly, Director of Knowledge Translation at Echo, a public agency for promoting women's health in Ontario.

"Everybody is talking about menopause. We talk and we listen, but, in the end, it's confusing. To the point where women aren't sure what to do," explained Danielle, one of the participants in the workshop. The women around her nodded in agreement. According to trainer, Mavis Jones, that makes sense. Because each woman has a different experience of menopause, there are as many solutions as there are women. This is why personalized care and individual responses work best.

Even so, it is always useful to share tips and personal experiences in a format such as this workshop, where the participants came to realize that they weren't the only ones to suffer from hot flashes, "power surges", and feelings of isolation. "It's comforting to know that other women are in the same situation," added Marielle.

"This evening, I wanted to talk about menopause with someone other than my family," explained Gisèle, who put the word out among her friends as soon as she heard about the workshop. Gisèle is not the only one who did this. All of the women at the workshop on Tuesday evening brought a friend or even several friends.

"We spread the word through our networks of family physicians and community partners. By the end of the week, registration was full and we had to create a waiting list in case there were last-minute cancellations," explained Ghazwa Malak, a CSC nutritionist.

The women's desire to connect and communicate reflects another symptom they reported: they often feel misunderstood, especially by their partner and children. And so it is no surprise that among the many recommendations put forward by the participants, "Education for Men" was at the top, along with an active sex life and swimming pools filled with ice cubes.

The women reported that the first collateral victim of menopause was their relationship; it was their greatest concern. They were worried that, after years of working with their partners to create a harmonious relationship, it would become a casualty of their war with hormones. "When my self-acceptance suffered and I started getting depressed, I started to avoid other people. All of my relationships with other people were affected. It's really important not to let yourself go. It's important to take charge," explained Danielle in a soft voice. "You can't listen to those voices. You just have to push on," added Claudette.

"I think we can all agree that there is no miracle answer and that, really, we have all of the resources we need within us. This is the starting point for living with menopause," concluded Paule Breton, CSC Nurse Practitioner. Echo has visited Timmins, Windsor and Welland to date and is hosting a conversation in Port Colborne today (November 29). Echo is planning on visiting eastern Ontario early in the new year.

[\(click to view French article\)](#)

Interesting Resources:

['Bodies of Knowledge'](#)

[Canadian Institute for Health Information's \(CIHI\) scan of policies, programs and publications related to population health](#)

[The Chief Public Health Officer's Report on the State of Public Health in Canada, 2011](#)

Observances:



November is [Incontinence Awareness Month](#) (IAM) across Canada.



November is [Osteoporosis month](#).



November 25th was the [International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women](#).

Events:



December 5, 2011
3M Health Leadership Award
Time: 12 noon – 4 p.m.
Venue: Enoch Turner Schoolhouse, 106 Trinity Street, Toronto
Organizer: Health Nexus

[Read more](#)



December 9-10, 2011
Heart & Stroke Clinical Update 2011: From Prevention to Intervention -Giving Canadians More Time
Venue: Hilton Downtown Toronto Hotel
Organizer: Heart & Stroke Foundation of Ontario

[Read more](#)



December 12, 2011
Update on Upcoming Requirements for Hospitals under the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) Webcast
Time: 12:00-2:00pm (EST)
Organizaer: Ontario Hospital Association

[Read more](#)

March 20 - 23, 2012
Rainbow Health Ontario 2012 Conference
Venue: Ottawa Marriott, Ottawa



Organizer: Rainbow Health Ontario

[Read more](#)



April 2 – 4, 2012
Ontario Public Health Convention – Staying Ahead of the Curve
Venue: Sheraton Centre Downtown Toronto Hotel
Organizer: Public Health Ontario together with the Ontario Public Health Association (OPHA) and the Association of Local Public Health Agencies (aLPHa)

[Read more](#)



April 12, 2012
Business of Aging -Care, Career & Caregiving
Venue: MaRS Centre Auditorium, 201 College Street, Toronto
Organizer: MaRS

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