



ANNUAL REPORT

Reducing the impact of cardiovascular disease on women through evidence-based awareness, education, research, and advocacy

Contents

3	About Her Heart
4	Our Purpose
5	The Facts Matter
6	Messages from Founder & Chair
7	A Decade of Impact
9	Celebrating 10 Years
10	Inaugural Her Heart Awards
12	2025 Highlights
13	Our Research
16	Her Heart Conference
17	Real Women's Stories
19	Our Impact
20	In The Media
21	Our Partners
23	Global Community
24	Our Board, Advisors & Partnerships
30	Get Involved

About Her Heart

Her Heart is Australia's peak body and leading authority dedicated exclusively to women's cardiovascular health. As the only national not-for-profit focused solely on improving heart health outcomes for women, Her Heart delivers evidence-based education, supports health professionals, and leads advocacy and research to strengthen awareness and drive systemic change.

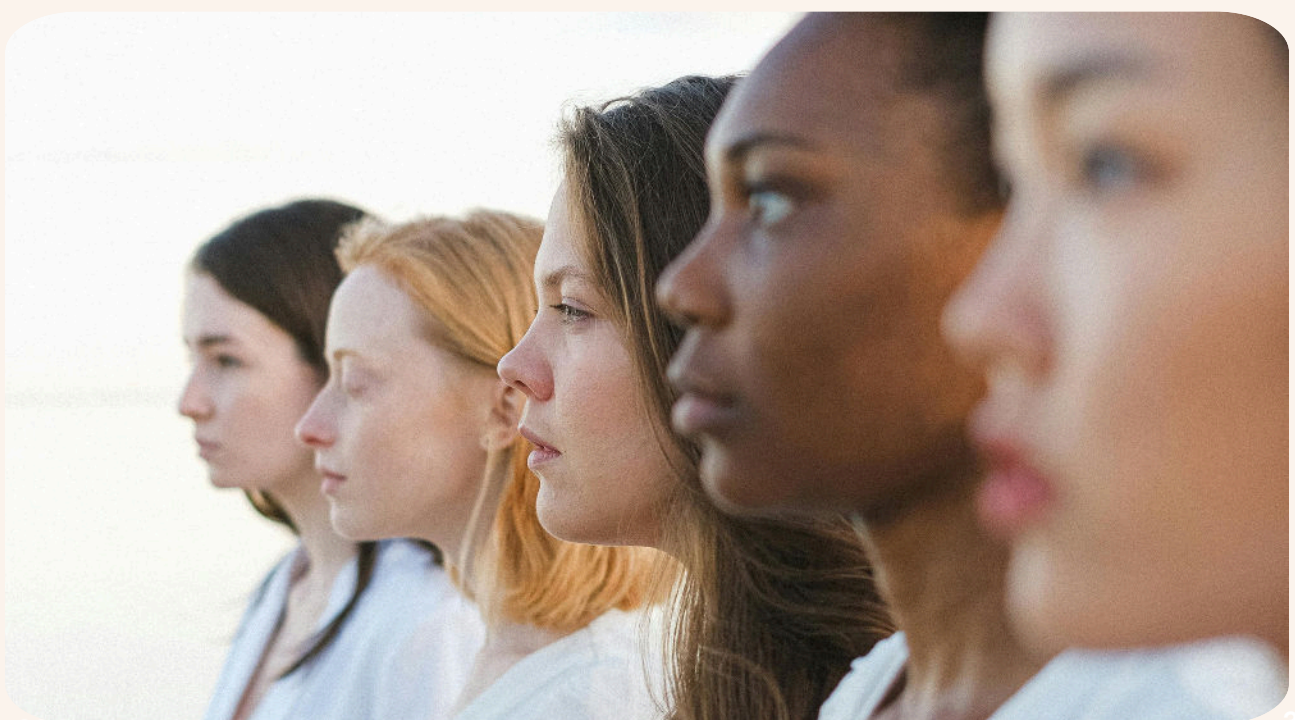
Almost one Australian woman dies every hour from heart disease, around 20 women every day. Despite significant advances in cardiovascular care, inequities in awareness, diagnosis, and treatment persist. Her Heart is committed to ensuring that every woman has access to life-saving knowledge, equitable care, and the confidence to prioritise her heart health at every stage of life.

4.5 million

Australians living with heart disease and related conditions

1 in 4

deaths in Australia are caused by heart disease



Her Heart

Our Purpose

Mission

As the only not-for-profit organisation dedicated to improving women's heart health, Her Heart works to reduce the impact of cardiovascular disease by advancing evidence-based awareness, education, research, and advocacy, while influencing policy, practice, and priorities so women's needs are visible, valued, and addressed across the cardiovascular health landscape.

Advocacy

Her Heart advocates for women's heart health as a national priority across multiple sectors. Through collaboration with government, philanthropy, healthcare, and industry partners, Her Heart works to improve cardiovascular outcomes for women. Alongside this advocacy, Her Heart also supports health professionals through education, resources, and partnership.

Our Key Pillars



AWARENESS:

Raising national awareness of cardiovascular disease in women of all ages, with a strong focus on prevention, risk reduction, and earlier recognition of symptoms.



EDUCATION:

Delivering evidence-based education on the prevalence, risk factors, and symptoms of heart disease in women, while supporting health professionals with tailored resources and a National conference



RESEARCH:

Leading and partnering on research to strengthen understanding of women's cardiovascular health, including attitudes, behaviours, prevention strategies, and gaps in diagnosis and treatment.



ADVOCACY:

Driving national action on women and cardiovascular disease through advocacy, policy engagement, and initiatives that support systemic change.

The facts matter

The top 5 risk factors of heart disease:

- Family history
- Smoking
- Obesity
- High blood pressure
- Diabetes

Heart disease in Australian women



1 woman dies almost every hour to heart disease in Australia

More than half a million women have CVD⁵

80% of premature heart disease is preventable⁶

x2 Women are twice as likely to die in the 6 months following a cardiac event compared to men⁷

21,900 women died of a heart-related disease in 2022⁸

References:

- 1 <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/heart-stroke-vascular-diseases/hsvd-facts/contents/impacts/expenditure-cvd>
- 2 <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/heart-stroke-vascular-diseases/hsvd-facts/contents/treatment-and-management/medicines-for-cardiovascular-disease>
- 3 <https://www.aihw.gov.au/getmedia/e84e445a-b4f0-4eac-96ee-b4cbf4e5639a/aihw-cvd-80.pdf.aspx?inline=true>
- 4 <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/chronic-disease/chronic-disease-participation-work/contents/summary>
- 5 <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/heart-stroke-vascular-diseases/cardiovascular-disease-in-women-main/summary>



Cost to Australia

\$14.3b cost of heart disease to the Australian health system¹

120m prescriptions filled for cardiovascular medicines in Australia in 2022-23²

18% of all medications prescribed by GPs in 2015-16 were for cardiovascular complaints³

19% loss to full-time labour force due to coronary heart disease death⁴

Who is at risk

90% of women have at least one risk factor⁹

65% of cardiovascular disease burden in Australia in 2024 is due to modifiable risk factors¹⁰

Rate of heart attack in women **aged 35-45 years** is increasing¹¹

Women who smoke are **25%** more likely to develop heart disease than men¹²

- 6 <https://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/million-hearts/>
- 7 https://www.mja.com.au/system/files/issues/209_03/10.5694/mja17.01109.pdf
- 8 <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/heart-stroke-vascular-diseases/hsvd-facts/contents/disease-types>
- 9 <https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/10.1161/cir.0000000000000582>
- 10 https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/heart-stroke-vascular-diseases/hsvd-facts/contents/impacts/burden-of-cvd?utm_source=chatgpt.com
- 11 <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/heart-stroke-vascular-diseases/cardiovascular-disease-in-women-main/summary>
- 12 <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC7399440/>

From the Founder and CEO



2025 marked a defining year for Her Heart.. As the organisation celebrates a decade of impact, it has also been a year of continued growth, new collaborations, and meaningful progress in raising awareness, strengthening education, advancing research, and advocating for women's heart health.

An important development during the year was the establishment of a partnership with the National Cardiac Registry, enabling access to large-scale clinical data to better understand how cardiovascular disease affects women across Australia. These insights will help inform future policy, clinical practice, and prevention strategies.

Alongside this, the launch of the second National Her Heart Report Card, supported by the Heart Foundation & the Sisterhood Foundation. This report continues to play a critical role in translating complex cardiovascular data into clear priorities for action.

As Her Heart enters its next decade, the focus remains firmly on impact – embedding evidence into health systems, amplifying women's voices, and ensuring prevention and early detection remain central to national health conversations.

From the Chair of the Board



As Her Heart marks ten years since its establishment by Professor Linda Worrall-Carter, it is an opportunity to reflect on the organisation's growing influence in advancing women's cardiovascular health. Her Heart has become a respected voice in national conversations around prevention, diagnosis, research, and equitable care for women.

During the past year, the organisation has continued to strengthen its partnerships, expand its reach, and contribute to important discussions about the unique ways cardiovascular disease affects women. These efforts are helping to ensure that women's heart health remains visible and recognised as a critical priority within Australia's health landscape.

I would like to acknowledge the leadership of Professor Worrall-Carter and thank the Board members, many partners, advisors, supporters, and members of the Her Heart community whose ongoing commitment makes this work possible.

As Her Heart enters its next decade, there is a strong foundation in place to continue advancing awareness, research, and advocacy to improve cardiovascular outcomes for women.

A Decade of Impact & Innovation

2015

- **Her Heart** established to address the urgent gap in awareness, education, and advocacy for women's heart health
- **National & Global audience:** Post-launch, the Her Heart Hub attracted 5k monthly users not only from Australia but in over 75 countries, showing national & international engagement
- Prof. Linda Worrall-Carter was awarded the National **League of Women Female Entrepreneur Award & Her Heart received the Casey Kinnaird Community Award**

2017

- **Global Recognition:** Her Heart became the first Australian heart charity to join the international iHHub initiative, helping to elevate women's heart health on a global stage
- **Women IN™ Event Series Launch:** Her Heart launched the Women IN™ event series to raise awareness of women's heart health. The first event, hosted by YBR Women IN™ Finance & Women IN™ Super late 2017
- **National Media Spotlight:** Her Heart's work was featured on The Daily Edition, bringing national attention to the urgent need for greater awareness of heart disease in women

2019

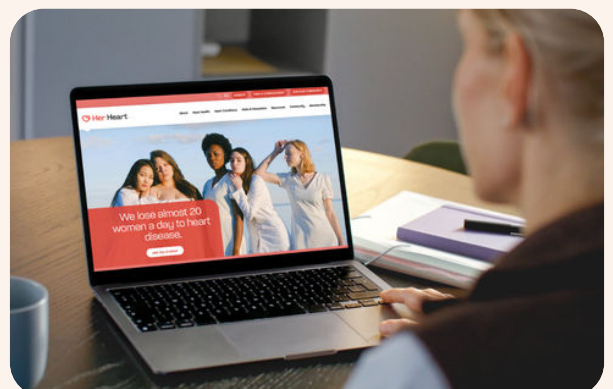
- **Award Recognition:** Prof. Worrall-Carter was honoured with the Telstra Business Women's Award for Not-for-Profit and Social Impact, recognising her leadership in transforming women's heart health awareness and advocacy
- **Driving Public Awareness:** Successful campaigns like Know the Difference and the Let's Chat video series helped challenge outdated assumptions in diagnosis and opened critical conversations about women's heart health across Australia
- **Addressed the Digital Women's Network's:** International Women's Day event, highlighting heart health as a critical part of women's empowerment

2016

- **Raising awareness activities:** Her Heart launched a Mother's Day awareness campaign during Heart Week 2016, providing free heart health advice, answering questions, and encouraging women to recognise the signs and risks of heart disease
- **National media Exposure:** Her Heart's message reached national audiences through features in Woman's Day magazine, the Warrandyte Diary, and on RRR radio, raising vital awareness about women's heart health

2018

- **Women IN™ Event Series:** Her Heart extended its Women IN™ series, being chosen as charity partner at the WIRV Annual Footy Lunch, with Dr. Susan Alberti AC and Prof. Worrall-Carter raising the profile of women's heart health
- **International Advocacy:** Prof. Linda Worrall-Carter delivered a keynote at the CSANZ Annual Meeting in New Zealand, advocating for stronger gender-specific research
- **National Media:** Prof Worrall-Carter invited to speak on The Project and Channel 9 News, highlighting the urgent need for gender equity in diagnosis, care, and research for women's heart health
- **Supporting Indigenous Communities:** Her Heart partnered with Hitnet to deliver culturally relevant heart health education to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women across more than 50 regional and remote communities



A Decade of Impact & Innovation

2020

- **Launched the Find a Female Cardiologist:** directory, improving access to gender-sensitive cardiac care for women across Australia. Accessed over 26,000 times
- **Expanded Her Heart's digital presence:** through the Her Heart Hub, offering evidence-based information and updated Fact Sheets featuring the latest research to better support women and health professionals
- **Introduced the Key Opinion Leaders Blog:** featuring expert insights on women's heart health, prevention, and risk management. Over 50 Specialists interviewed

2022

- **Launched the Her Heart Membership:** offering exclusive tools and resources to support women's heart health
- **Created Australia's first Women's Heart Age Calculator:** helping women better understand their personal risk
- **Featured in national media:** including National TV - The Project, Prevention Magazine and The Guardian raising broader public awareness about women's heart health

2024

- **Partnered with the National Cardiac Registry:** to drive national research on sex differences in heart care
- **Hosted the inaugural Her Heart Conference:** with over 160 experts, advocates and community members prioritising women's heart health
- **Presented at Epworth Hospital's Grand Round:** sharing leading research and strategies on women's heart care
- **Released the Her Heart Wallet Card:** with life saving information on heart attack signs for women
- **Featured on ABC News SBS World News and The Australian:** highlighting gender inequities in cardiovascular health and care

2021

- **Commissioned Research Reports:** Her Heart supported critical gender-specific research by commissioning two reports:
 - Lipid Management for Women Following Acute Coronary Syndrome
 - Diabetes as a Risk Factor for Coronary Heart Disease in Women
 - (Supported by a Sanofi research grant)
- **New Community Ambassadors appointed:** Kate McCarthy (AFLW player, shared story of living with arrhythmia and pacemaker) & Lisa Bennett (heart surgery survivor)
- **New Monthly Bulletin:** "5 Minutes on a Friday with Dr Linda"
- **Board & Medical Advisory Expansion:** Welcomed new Medical Advisors: Prof John Beltrame and Dr Monique Watts, both specialising in women's cardiology

2023

- **Created and developed Australia's first National Cardiovascular Report Card:** on Women's Heart Health
- **Launched the Her Heart Digital Magazine:** Open rate 48%
- **Awareness & Activation campaigns:** Know Your Risk & Her Heart Matters campaigns.
- **Featured on ABC News:** about closing the gender gap in heart care





Celebrating 10 Years

Her Heart marked its tenth anniversary with a special event bringing together supporters, partners, clinicians, researchers, and members of the community who have contributed to advancing women's heart health over the past decade.

The event provided an opportunity to reflect on the organisation's journey, acknowledge the individuals who have helped shape its work, and recognise the growing momentum behind improving cardiovascular outcomes for women.



A highlight of the day was a panel discussion featuring three women who shared their personal experiences of cardiovascular disease. Cindy, Debra and Tabitha shared their stories which provided powerful insight into the challenges many women face in recognising symptoms, seeking care, and navigating the health system.



Dr Susan Alberti AC delivered a moving address reflecting on the importance of advancing women's health and the need to continue challenging gaps in research, awareness, and care. Drawing on both her personal experience and decades of advocacy, she highlighted why improving outcomes for women must remain a national priority. Dr Alberti is a longstanding advocate for women's health and an advisor to Her Heart.

Inaugural Her Heart Awards

As part of the Her Heart 10th Anniversary celebrations, the organisation was pleased to announce the recipients of the inaugural Her Heart Awards. These awards recognised individuals whose leadership, partnership, and commitment have played a meaningful role in supporting Her Heart's work and impact over the past decade.

Awards were presented across five categories: the Legacy Award, Foundational Support Award, Distinguished Partner Award, the Katherine Smith Award, and the Outstanding Community Ambassador Award.



LEGACY AWARD ANGELA WHEELTON OAM

Angela Wheelton, in recognition of her leadership as Chair of the Board during a critical period in Her Heart's journey, and her family's extraordinary philanthropic support. Angela's guidance and generosity were instrumental in sustaining the organisation through challenging times. Her contribution will be remembered as a cornerstone of Her Heart's continued growth and impact.



FOUNDATIONAL SUPPORT AWARD JAMES HUTTON

James Hutton, Partner at MinterEllison, in recognition of his professional leadership and support during the establishment of Her Heart. James Hutton was an Inaugural Board member between 2015-2020 and also held the role as Deputy Chair of the Board during this time. Minter Ellison's pro bono legal support was critical in setting up Her Heart's legal structure and governance, creating the legal and strategic framework that enabled the charity to launch and grow.

Inaugural Her Heart Awards



DISTINGUISHED PARTNER AWARD KERENI WHITE

Kereni, in recognition of her longstanding commitment to Her Heart through dedicated IT support and the development of the organisation's first website. Her expertise and partnership have played an important role in supporting Her Heart's growth and digital presence. Her continued support has ensured the organisation's online platforms remain strong, reliable, and accessible to the community.



KATHERINE SMITH AWARD AILISH BARRY

Ailish, in recognition of her passion, reliability, and important contribution to Her Heart over four years of dedicated service. Throughout her time with the organisation, she has consistently demonstrated professionalism, commitment, and a genuine belief in the mission of improving women's heart health. Her work reflects the spirit of Katherine Smith, an early supporter of Her Heart who helped shape the organisation's early journey. This award honours Katherine's enduring legacy.



OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY AMBASSADOR DEBRA CLARE

in recognition of her courageous advocacy and her role as a powerful voice for Her Heart's mission. As a passionate ambassador, she has shared her personal story to help other women recognise the signs, understand the risks, and appreciate the importance of heart health. Her openness has helped raise awareness and encourage women to take their heart health seriously.

While it wasn't possible to give everyone an award, we recognise our community's collective commitment, generosity, and unwavering support, without which Her Heart's impact would not be possible.

2025 Highlights



Professor Linda Worrall-Carter was invited to speak at the MinterEllison Women of Influence event, that brings together women leaders from across multiple sectors.

She presented on the work of Her Heart and the growing importance of recognising and addressing cardiovascular disease in women.

Left: Professor Worrall-Carter with Elissa Romanin, Partner at MinterEllison.

100+ Hearts Project

Her Heart is proud to acknowledge **Ronda Hazell**, a talented textile artist and passionate supporter of women's heart health, whose work is helping raise awareness of heart disease in women through her creative initiative, the **100+ Hearts Project**.

This is a worldwide collection of over 100 20cm square patches that will be stitched together to become a large quilt, to be exhibited both around Australia and internationally.

The quilt is designed to illustrate the significant impact of heart disease on women, with each patch made in the name of a woman with a heart condition or heart disease.

Each patch is also accompanied by a short story of that women's journey with heart disease. The stories are honest, genuine, and there is a lot of variety!

The squares have already generated significant amount of conversation around women's heart health and disease and awareness on Instagram with some posts having more than 7000 views.



At the present time the collection is about 90 patches but the campaign to collect does not end until the 30th of June this year.

There are 30 originating from the UK (including one from the winner of the Great British Sewing Bee, Caz), 30 from Europe, 22 from Australia, 8 from the USA and 3 from Canada.

The first exhibition of this quilt in partially made-up form is to be at the Australasian Quilt convention in Melbourne's Royal Exhibition Building.

To learn more or get involved, follow [@anakiequilter](#).

PARTNERSHIP WITH THE NATIONAL CARDIAC REGISTRY

This year, Her Heart partnered with the National Cardiac Registry (NCR) to analyse sex differences in more than 93,000 percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI) procedures across Australia. Women accounted for 25 percent of the cohort, with 23,072 procedures compared with 68,635 in men.

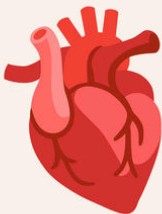
The analysis highlights important differences in diagnosis, treatment and outcomes for women undergoing PCI, providing valuable evidence to support improvements in cardiovascular care.


These findings contribute to national discussions on equity in cardiac treatment and outcomes for women.

What is Percutaneous Coronary Intervention (PCI) – and why does it matter in women’s heart health?

PCI is one of the most common and effective procedures for treating heart disease, **yet women face delayed treatment, higher risks, and worse outcomes.**

Swipe to know more →



Her Heart 

Women make up **only 25%** of all PCI cases in Australia

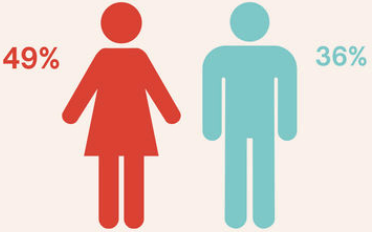



The National Cardiac Registry has invested in analysing 4 years of data on women and PCI. What they found has major implications for research, equity, and outcomes.

Her Heart 

Women and PCI: Age and Higher Rates of PCI

The rate of PCI in women over 70 years of age was higher compared to men



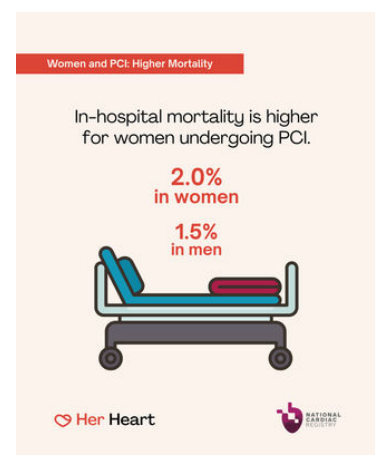
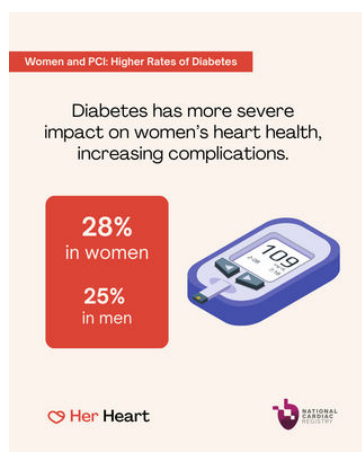
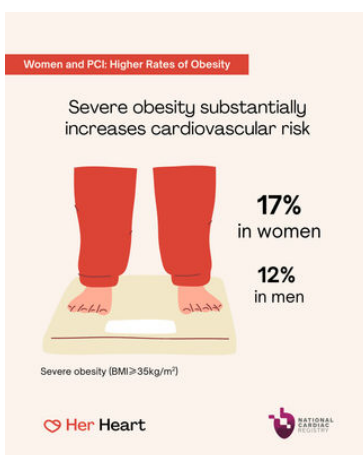
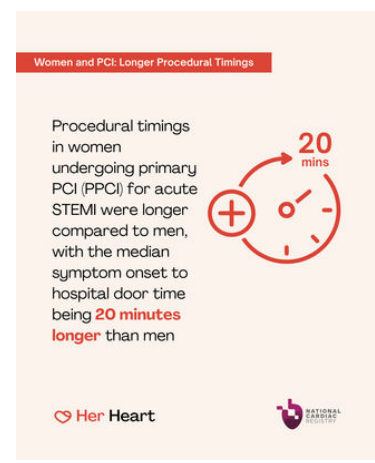
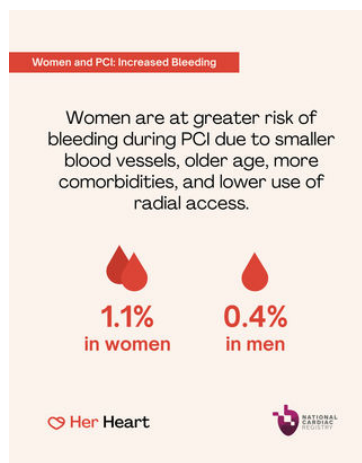
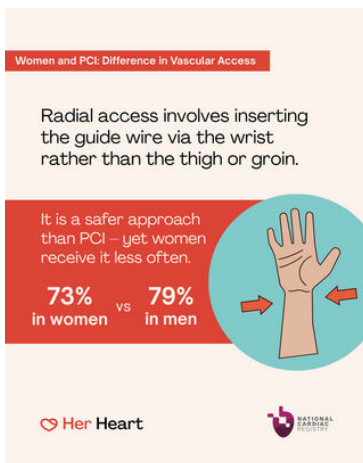
Her Heart 

These findings highlight the need for sex specific strategies in cardiovascular care.

CLOSING THE GAP IN CARDIAC CARE

Percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI) is the term used for one of the most common life-saving procedures used to treat blocked coronary arteries (with a stent).

Analysis of National Cardiac Registry data highlights persistent sex-based differences in cardiovascular risk, treatment pathways and outcomes for women undergoing PCI. These findings reinforce the need for greater recognition of sex differences in cardiovascular disease and improved approaches to prevention, diagnosis and treatment.




Her Heart will continue working with the National Cardiac Registry to ensure these insights contribute to improved clinical care, research and policy focused on women's heart health.


For more information, please see [National Cardiac Registry's Annual Status Report.](#)


Our Research

HER HEART REPORT CARD

The Report Card presents all the key statistics and metrics related to the incidence, prevalence, and management of cardiovascular disease (CVD). This years report card the emphasis was on:

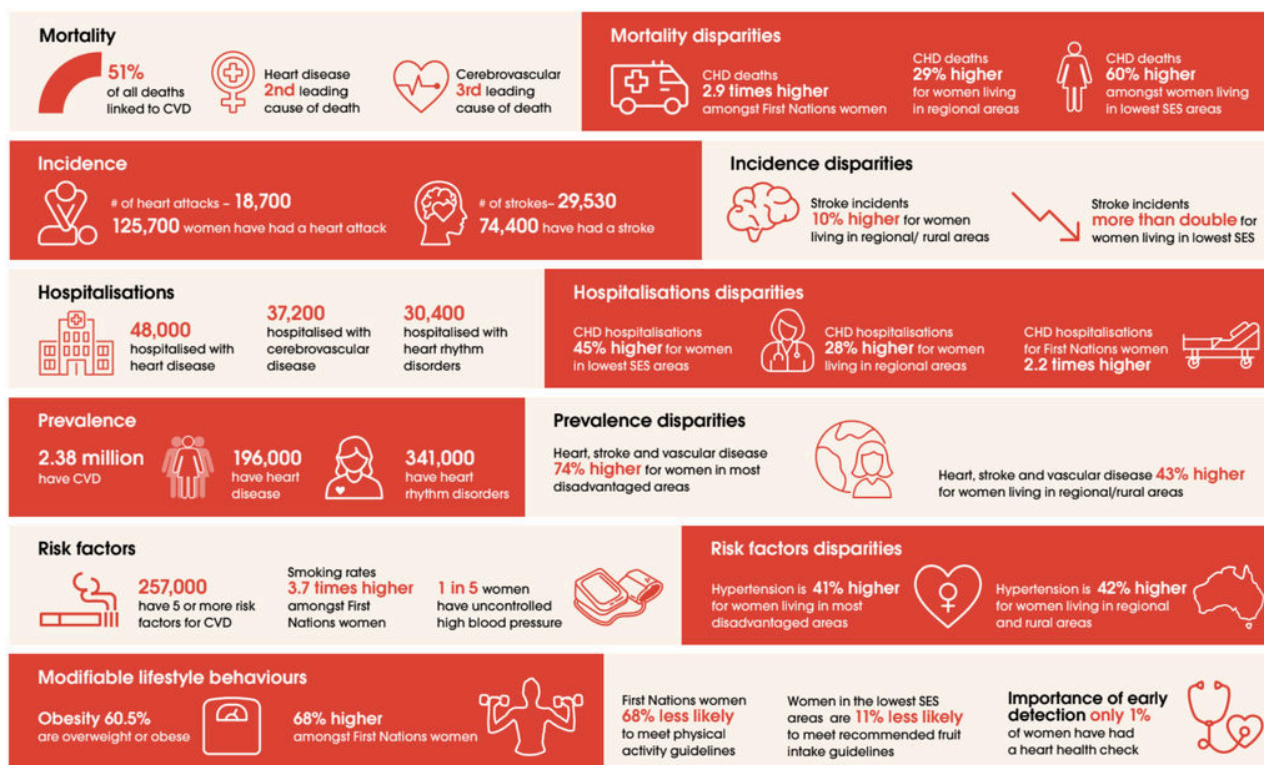
 **Focus on inequities** – shifts the narrative to show that not all women face the same risks, with the greatest burden on disadvantaged, rural, and First Nations women.

 **Burden beyond individuals** – demonstrates how cardiovascular disease affects not only women but also families, carers, and the broader health system.

 **Call for action** – emphasises the need for targeted investment and tailored interventions to reduce preventable deaths and close the outcome gap.

The Report Card brings together data on inequities between groups of women, showing where gaps exist and where action is most urgently needed.

This resource supports clinicians, researchers, policymakers, and health advocates in planning services, shaping investment, and strengthening prevention for women across Australia.



The Report card was for supported by the Heart Foundation and launched at the Her Heart Conference in October 2025



Her Heart Conference

This October, the Her Heart Conference once again brought together Australia's leading minds and hearts in women's cardiovascular health.

Held at the iconic **Grand Hyatt Melbourne**, this year's theme was Changing the Narrative: Innovation and Impact in Women's Heart Health. We celebrated progress, challenged gaps, and inspired new approaches to improving care for women.

While our conference is widely attended by health care professionals across many disciplines we were, as always, pleased to welcome a number of our consumer community members.

Our consumers also took to the stage on the day with two of our leading ambassadors sharing their very personal experiences of living with heart conditions and participating in well received panel discussions.

There were powerful presentations and discussions on closing the gender gap in diagnosis and treatment, exploring the latest research, emerging trends, and system challenges shaping the future of care.

With a diverse mix of health professionals, researchers, policymakers, and community members, the program was both informative and deeply engaging covering obesity, hypertension, smoking, sleep apnoea, cardio-oncology, acute coronary syndrome, women's participation in research, and more.

A huge thank you to our wonderful MC **Sophie Scott OAM**. Our **Platinum Sponsor CSL Seqirus**, and **Silver Sponsors Abbott, Novartis, Bloom Women's Health, Boston Scientific, and the Heart Foundation** for making this event possible.

Thank you also to every speaker and attendee for lending your expertise, time, and passion to this vital national conversation.

CSL Seqirus





Real Women's Stories

In 2025, women from all over the world shared their real experiences of heart disease with us. Each and every one is a reminder for women to listen to their bodies and speak up when something doesn't feel right, and that heart conditions don't always look a certain way.



"I never imagined I would be sharing a heart story, especially at 36 years old. I was active, healthy, and careful about what I put into my body. I exercised regularly, ate a heart-healthy diet, didn't smoke, and only drank alcohol occasionally. I had no major family history of heart disease. But in November 2024, I survived a sudden cardiac arrest—and it changed everything."

Thanks to her husband's persistence and the quick actions of medical staff, Nissa is here today, stronger, wiser, and sharing her story to remind us all that heart disease doesn't always look the way you expect.

Her Heart are committed to saving lives by raising awareness around heart health, and stories like this show women they are not alone. You can read Nissa's story and many others on [our blog](#), or [share your own](#).

Real Women's Stories

Women's stories are at the heart of our mission. Over 100 women have shared their personal experiences with Her Heart creating a powerful resource that inspires educates and supports others. Sharing your story is not just about raising awareness it is about becoming an advocate for change helping others understand the reality of heart disease and the importance of early action.

Tabitha Tworek



Tabitha, a 34 year old mother of two, faced a serious heart condition that slowed her heartbeat to dangerous levels (diagnosed with AV block Mobitz II). Fainting episodes led to the discovery of her heart block and the urgent need for a pacemaker. Earlier signs like breathlessness and lightheadedness had been easy to dismiss. After complications with her first pacemaker, she had a second procedure. Tabitha now encourages all women to listen to their bodies, prioritise their health and speak up when something does not feel right.

Debra Clare



Debra became a Her Heart Ambassador in 2023 and shared her story at our inaugural conference in 2024. After experiencing chest pain and fatigue for over a year, her symptoms were dismissed as anxiety. Finding Her Heart Hub online, she recognised the signs, advocated for a cardiac referral, and was diagnosed with a blocked artery. Unfortunately, she then suffered a heart attack and had to undergo lifesaving surgery. Now, she raises awareness, urging women to trust their instincts and seek help.

Kate McCarthy



Kate, a St Kilda AFLW player, joined as a Her Heart Ambassador in 2021. Kate shared her story about having seizures as a child, and after diagnosis of an arrhythmia (electrical problem in the heart), she had a pacemaker inserted at 12 years old. She has overcome many hurdles in order to maintain her high performance playing for Women's AFL as well as juggling her role as a teacher. Her story inspires women to manage heart conditions while pursuing things they love.

Lisa Bennett



Lisa joined as a Her Heart Ambassador following her personal experience with heart surgery. Lisa was born with a heart defect and had to have surgery when she was only two months old. In 2020, she underwent further open heart surgery, including repair of her cardiac valves and aorta. As a Community Ambassador, Lisa hopes that sharing her story will help and inspire others and raise awareness of heart health.

Our Impact



Over **40,000 users** engaged with the Her Heart Hub in 2025, with traffic spanning from all across the globe



2.7k users accessing the **Find a Female Cardiologist** resource



Our social media channels **engaged over 90,000 users** – sparking conversations, sharing life-saving information, and building awareness around women's heart health.



Our Her Heart Hub **audience is 64.5% women** and 34.5% men, reflecting the broad interest in our content and resources



With a 44% average open rate, our email **community is highly engaged**, nearly double the industry average



The **second Her Heart Conference** also sold out! It brought together health professionals, policymakers, consumers, and advocates to advance women's heart health: 75% medical and health sector; 25% consumers.

In The Media

Her Heart played a key media role in responding to these reports, helping to elevate national conversations around women's heart health and medical misogyny.

Professor Linda Worrall-Carter, Founder and CEO of Her Heart, appeared as a spokesperson on **SBS World News in March 2025**, with the story gaining further traction around International Women's Day (image pictured).

The coverage highlighted research confirming that two out of three women experience medical misogyny, with many reporting that their heart attack symptoms were dismissed or misdiagnosed.

Her Heart community ambassadors, including Debra Clare, also played a vital role in amplifying these findings. Debra shared her lived experience through national media, including **ABC News, The Australian, and The Guardian**, helping to bring visibility to the real-world impact of gender bias in healthcare.



A Highlight on Women's Heart Health on SBS World News

Two in three women say they've experienced medical misogyny. It's not just frustrating — it can kill

By Megan Macdonald Women's Health



Debra Clare turned to health care but was dismissed and misdiagnosed. (Clipped)

abc.net.au/news/women-share-experiences-with-medical-misogyny

Share article

It was a Saturday morning and Debra Clare was putting clothes into her washing machine when suddenly a pain came across her chest so intensely that she had to sit on her verandah, sweaty and nauseous, just so she could focus on breathing.

Call first - decide later: women urged to pay attention to heart attack messages



A new survey has found about a third of people would not dial Triple O if they were experiencing signs of a heart attack. But experts say that every minute is vital when someone is having a heart attack - and people should not be afraid to ask for help.



Ambsulances are seen today. (SBS/ABC)

Dr Linda Worrall-Carter is Director of the Her Heart organisation, and says that there is a lack of information about what it means for women to have a heart attack.

"Traditionally, we have seen a lot of media attention around men, and the research shows that women have very different symptoms to men. So there's a significant lack of awareness both in the community, in women in general, but also in health professionals."

Films and TV shows usually portray male symptoms, with someone suffering chest pain being the most common scene of a tachycardia on screen.

Dr Worrall-Carter says that chest pain is actually not experienced by the majority of women.

THE AUSTRALIAN

HOME NATION WORLD BUSINESS HEALTH COMMENTARY SPORT ARTS VIDEO

Women dismissing heart attacks, hesitating on ambulance calls

When Debra Clare had a sudden heart attack, her first thought was not to call an ambulance; she is not alone in that.

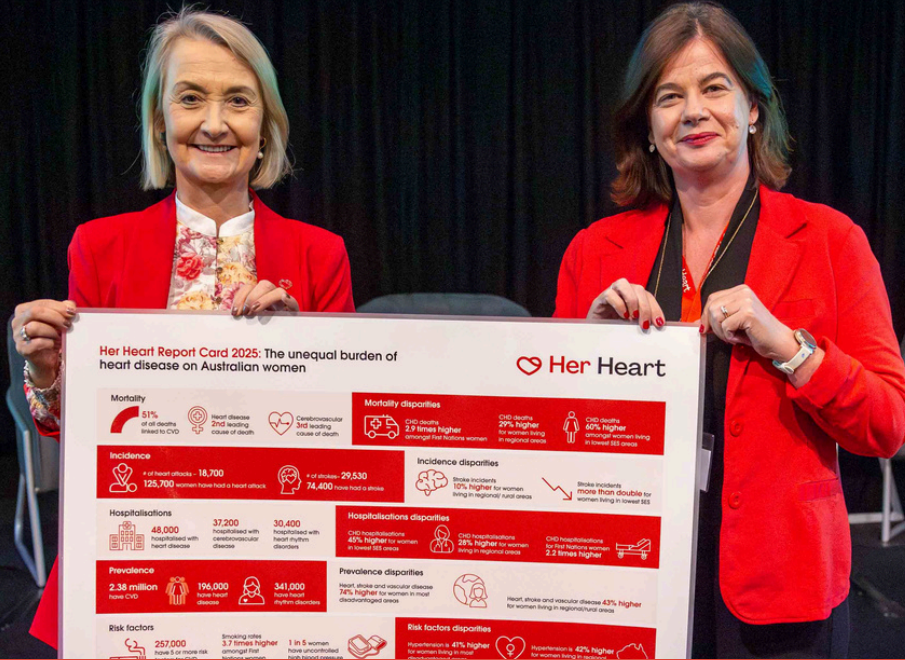
By JAMES DOWLING

When Debra Clare of Tamworth, NSW, suffered chest pains, she did not call an ambulance, but instead asked her husband to drive her to hospital.

Ms Clare, 48, did not know it, but she was having a heart attack and it would not be her last.

"I didn't think I was having a heart attack and I didn't know what was going on," she said. "I was walking back in from the washing machine and this pain just hit me in the chest, and it was so bad. The sweat was rolling off me and I was vomiting.

"When I went to the hospital they did an ECG and some bloods, and that all came back clear."



Our Partners

It has been another exciting year of collaboration between Her Heart and the Heart Foundation since first partnering in December 2024.

Together, we are working to enhance efforts to raise awareness of women’s heart disease, improve treatment and prevention strategies, and lead crucial research into gender-specific health initiatives.

Her Heart Report Card

In October 2025, we launched the 2025 Her Heart Report Card with the support of the Heart Foundation. This edition brings together the latest national data to show where progress is being made and where urgent gaps remain, and focussed on disparities around cardiovascular disease across different groups of Australian women.

Heart Foundation Catalyst Showcase

Professor Linda Worrall-Carter attended the Heart Foundation Catalyst Showcase in Melbourne, a two-day event highlighting innovation and leadership in cardiovascular health across Australia.

The showcase featured leading clinicians, researchers, and organisations pitching initiatives for significant funding, alongside panel discussions exploring emerging ideas and approaches in heart health. The event provided valuable insight into the strength of collaboration and innovation driving progress across the cardiovascular sector.





Our Partners



The Sisterhood Foundation continues to be a valued partner in championing women’s heart health through providing essential capacity building funding.

This funding has allowed Her Heart to develop and update evidence-based resources such as the **2025 Her Heart Report Card** and the **Biannual Survey** and to grow our leadership team.



There have been other opportunities with SISU as part of Westfarmers Health and the SISU station was widely used at the conference.



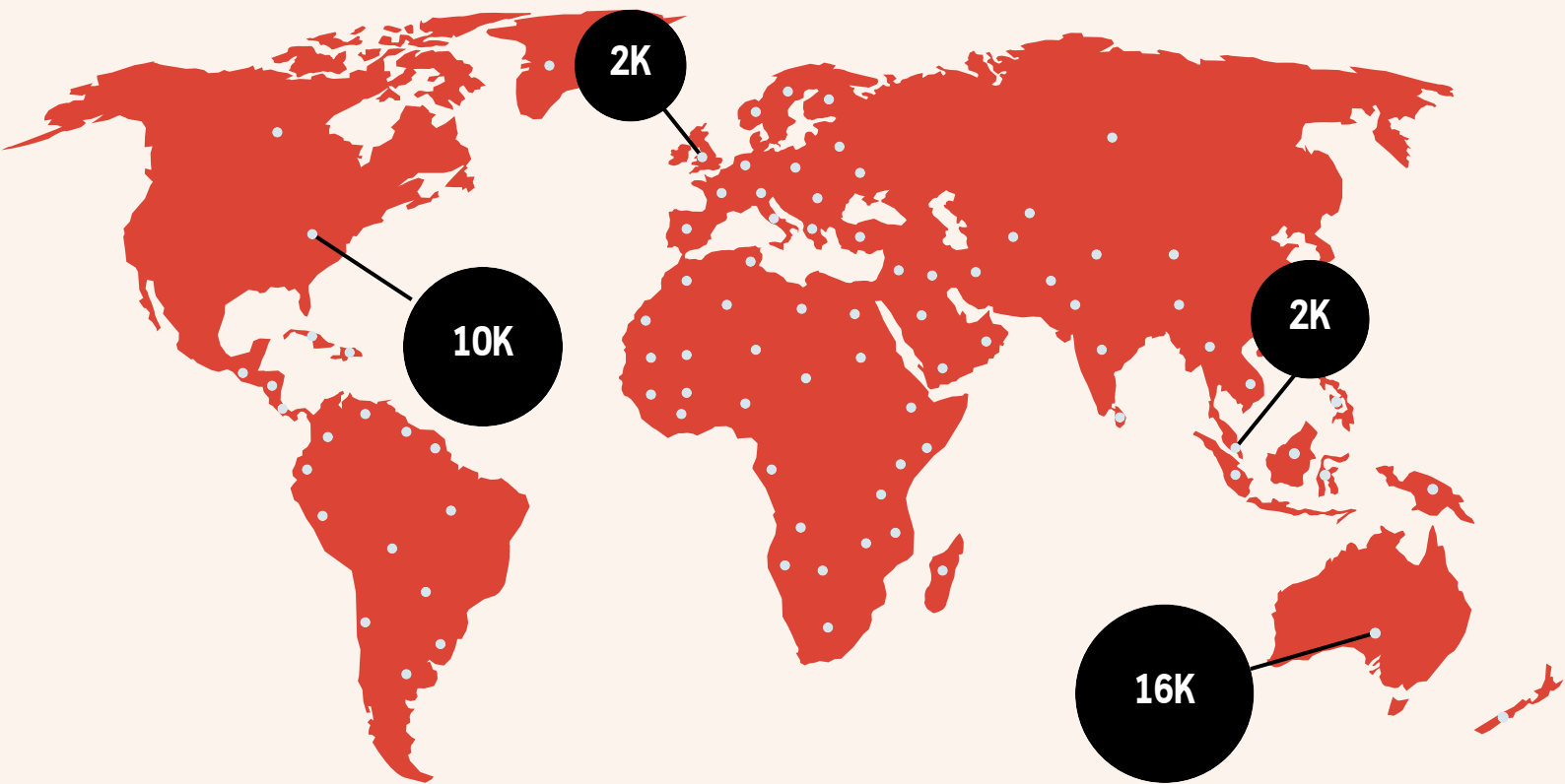
Her Heart continues to work closely with Global Heart Hub as a longstanding partner and supporter, united by a shared commitment to advancing women’s cardiovascular health globally.

Neil Johnson, CEO of Global Heart Hub, spoke at the Her Heart Conference in 2024, further strengthening collaboration between our organisations.



In turn, Professor Linda Worrall-Carter attended and contributed to the **Global Heart Hub Unite Conference,** reinforcing international connections and a shared focus on translating advocacy into action.

Our Global Community



Cardiovascular disease remains one of the most significant health challenges facing women globally, yet access to sex-specific, evidence-based information remains inconsistent.

A In response to this gap, Her Heart’s digital reach has expanded organically, reflecting clear international demand for credible, women-centred cardiovascular resources.

Since the launch of the Her Heart Hub, engagement has grown from 55 countries within the first six months to 128 countries within 18 months, and now extends to users in every country worldwide.



Global Engagement

- +16k** Australian visitors
- +10k** United States
- +3k** Asia Pacific
- +2k** United Kingdom
- +2k** Singapore

This growth demonstrates not only reach, but relevance, positioning Her Heart as an emerging international contributor to women’s cardiovascular health awareness and education

Her Heart Board



Prof. Linda Worrall-Carter
Founder & Director

Prof. Linda Worrall-Carter is the Founder of Her Heart and is a recognised expert and thought leader in women's heart health. With over 30 years of experience as a clinician, educator, academic, and researcher, Linda has dedicated her career to advancing cardiovascular health for women.

She has held academic leadership roles, including as the Inaugural Director of three research centres. During her career, she has successfully secured over 11 million dollars in government funding and publishing more than 100 papers and 160 conference papers.

Linda's advocacy centres around equality, diversity, and is deeply committed to rectifying the disparities in heart disease for women compared to men. For her work she has received awards including Telstra Businesswoman of the Year & National Female Entrepreneur Award.



Prof. Patricia Davidson
Chair of the Board

Professor Davidson is an internationally renowned leader in nursing, healthcare, and advocacy. She currently serves as a Vice Chancellor's Fellow at the University of New South Wales. Prior to this, she held the position of Vice-Chancellor at the University of Wollongong from 2021 to 2024, and before that, served as Dean of the Johns Hopkins School of Nursing in Baltimore, United States.

Her global contributions to health have been widely acknowledged, including receiving the Consortium of Universities for Global Health (CUGH) Distinguished Leader Award in 2021 for her leadership in advancing global health equity.

With a distinguished career spanning decades, Prof. Davidson brings invaluable expertise in person-centred care and improving cardiovascular health outcomes for women and priority populations, cardiovascular nursing, and addressing the broader social determinants of health – issues that sit at the centre of Her Heart's mission to improve outcomes for women affected by cardiovascular disease.

Her Heart Board



Assoc. Prof. Deanne Riddington
Director and Deputy Chair

Deanne Riddington is a passionate advocate for women, health, workforce education and public health, with a past career spanning 30 years as a Registered Nurse in Victoria.

She is the Deputy Chair of Her Heart and has extensive experience as a senior manager and education specialist, creating and leading high-performing teams and projects in the healthcare sector.

She has previously worked as General Manager of Education and Learning at St Vincent's Hospital. In this capacity, Deanne was an honorary Clinical Associate Professor with the Australian Catholic University.

Her career has transitioned from clinical practice to education and leadership. Deanne led the development of Victoria's first Aboriginal Graduate Nurse Program and was awarded a Fellowship from the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust in 2015 for her work in this field. Deanne is currently the Immediate past president of Churchill Fellows Association of Victoria.



Prof. John Beltrame
Director and Deputy Chair

Professor John Beltrame is a Senior Consultant Cardiologist with clinical, research and teaching roles. He is the Michell Professor in Medicine and the Discipline of Medicine Lead at the University of Adelaide and the Director of Research for the Central Adelaide Local Health Network.

He has vital clinical and research interests in coronary heart disease, particularly coronary artery spasms and coronary microvascular dysfunction, which primarily afflicts women.

Professor Beltrame also co-founded and co-chairs COVADIS (Coronary Vasomotion Disorders International Study Group). Appointed in 2021.

Her Heart Advisors

MEDICAL/HEALTH ADVISORS



PROF NOEL-BAIREY MERZ MD

Prof. Bairey-Merz is a Professor of Medicine and holds the Women's Guild Chair in Women's Health. She is also the director of the Barbra Streisand Women's Heart Center and the Preventive and Rehabilitative Cardiac Center at Cedars-Sinai's Heart Institute in Los Angeles.

She is a pioneer in the study of women's heart health and preventive cardiology and a global authority on women's heart health. Appointed in 2015.



A/PROF. MONIQUE WATTS (MBBS BMEDSCI)

A/Professor Monique Watts is a Melbourne-based cardiologist trained in advanced heart failure and cardiac transplantation at the Alfred Hospital. Dr Watts became interested in Women's Cardiology after collaborating with international colleagues on complex cases involving conditions that disproportionately affect women.

She has worked with the Alfred Cardiology Department to establish Victoria's first Women's Heart Clinic at the Alfred and is a passionate champion of Women's Heart Health. Appointed in 2019.



DR. KAREN PHILLIPS

Dr. Karen Phillips is a Brisbane-based Cardiac Electrophysiologist and head of the Brisbane Atrial Fibrillation Clinic at Greenslopes Private Hospital, where she has established one of the largest single-operator Atrial Fibrillation ablation services in Australia.

Trained at the Cleveland Clinic under Dr. Andrea Natale, she is a leader in Atrial Fibrillation procedures in Australia, including performing Catheter Ablation for AF and implantation of Left Atrial Appendage Occlusion Devices for stroke prevention. She is also a strong patient advocate for new therapies for atrial fibrillation. Appointed in 2024,

Her Heart Advisors

BUSINESS AND OTHER ADVISORS



DR. SUSAN ALBERTI AC

Dr. Susan Alberti is one of Australia's pre-eminent philanthropists, having donated millions of dollars to medical research and other charitable causes throughout her successful business career.

She is a role model and mentor to many young women and is recognised for her long and outstanding contribution to medical research institutions. In 2016, Susan was awarded the Companion of the Order of Australia, Melbourne of the Year in 2017 and Victorian of the Year in 2018 in recognition of her eminent service. She was appointed in 2017.



CASSANDRA KELLY AM

Cassandra Kelly AM is a global thought leader, speaker and coach to corporate and political leaders and Chair of the Treasury Corporation of Victoria. She previously co-founded The Glass Elevator, an initiative that connects, engages and inspires women in industry and government.

Cassandra was awarded the Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in the 2019 Queen's Birthday Honours List. Cassandra has previously been Chair of the Her Heart Board and an Advisor since 2016.



JAMES HUTTON

James Hutton is a partner with MinterEllison and has practised corporate and commercial law for over 25 years.

MinterEllison provides Her Heart with pro bono legal advice and assistance under its partnerships program and as part of its purpose to create lasting impacts with its clients, people and communities.

James was an Inaugural Board member and Director from 2015 to 2020 and previously held the position of Deputy Chair.

Her Heart Advisors

BUSINESS AND OTHER ADVISORS



BILL STAVRESKI

Bill is a health economist and has worked in cardiovascular and public health for over 20 years across the private, public, and not-for-profit sectors. Bill's previous roles have included leading medical research funding programs, delivery of clinical and lifestyle programs, clinical and nutrition guidelines, and health and well-being governance programs.

For over a decade, Bill has led campaign and research funding programs to improve women's cardiovascular health and eliminate disparities in treatment and health outcomes. Since late 2021, Bill has worked with Her Heart and together with Dr. Worrall-Carter, Bill designed the world's first women-only cardiovascular risk tool. Appointed in 2021.



CAROLINA FITZPATRICK

Carolina brings over 30 years of experience across the corporate, charity, and health not-for-profit sectors, with deep expertise in community engagement, strategic partnerships, and women's health.

With a proven track record in delivering high impact campaigns and events her work has supported major health initiatives. Improves access to vital medical equipment, and raised significant funds for leading hospitals and charities.

Recognised by health and community leaders, Carolina is passionate about creating meaningful change and building connections that drive results.



Australian Government
Australian Institute of
Health and Welfare



Our Funding



MinterEllison



Our Supporters

CSL Seqirus



Our Sponsors

stella★



Our Partners



SOLVE CHD



Our Network

Get Involved

There are many ways you can support Her Heart's life-changing work:



Donate

Make a donation for long-lasting impact on women's heart health.

Scan to donate



Become a member

Join our community membership to access additional resources such as webinars and stay connected with others.

Scan to become a member



Partner with us

Let's collaborate and explore sponsorship opportunities that make a difference.

Scan to partner



Share your story

Do you or a loved one have heart disease? Are you a carer or health professional with a story to share? Your story is valuable and could help save lives — we'd love to hear it!

Scan to share your story



Spread the word

Help us spread the word! Share our content on our digital channels, subscribe to our updates, and start conversations with your friends and family.

Scan to subscribe





Her Heart acknowledges Traditional Owners of Country throughout Australia and recognises the continuing connection to lands, waters and communities. We pay our respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, and to Elders past and present of all communities who also work and live on this land.

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