

November 2, 2017

Honourable Minister Hoffman  
423 Legislature Building, 10800-97 Avenue  
Edmonton, AB T5K 2B6

Dear Minister Hoffman:

Please join us to launch **The Women's Health Coalition of Alberta (WHC)**, November 24, Breakfast 7:30am (location TBC)  
**Keynote: Cradle to Cane: Examining Barriers in Women's Health in Alberta, Dr. M Tauh, Gynecologist**

We are working together to change the conversation about women's health! There is no such diagnosis as 'that time of the month', it should not hurt to have sex, bleeding excessively is never normal ....AND it shouldn't be hard to talk about.

The WHC is a network of women and people who care about, and for women. The coalition also includes health care, community, and business leaders that are committed to collaborating for women's health. I have attached our mandate, purpose and priorities statement for your information.

Albertans are blessed with exceptional supports for cancer, pregnancy and infertility – and there is so much more to talk about. Women of all ages are commonly vulnerable, unsupported and at risk when they do not have a specific diagnosis, and can't gain access to supports to get a diagnosis. Many suffer in silence because they are made to believe that pain and discomfort is 'normal for a woman' or worse, that their just 'depressed' or 'crazy' if they talk about it.

Women can spend many years struggling within a health system that can be dismissive of women's health concerns, uninformed, and doesn't encourage women to talk openly about their experiences and symptoms – not with their doctor or their partners. When women don't...or can't speak openly, referrals to specialists are delayed, resulting in less options for treatment, and too often leading to life-altering consequences that could have been avoided.

Young women often don't have a general practitioner, rarely have a gynecologist, are discouraged from exploring their sexual health, and have a tendency to not take care of themselves because of family and professional demands. When they finally take steps, they are often past early diagnosis options and their course of treatment is determined by the specialist they gain access to – *a hysterectomy is not the only option.*

Older and wiser???? Conditions and severity of symptoms of menopause become as complex and unique as every woman who experiences them. Hot flashes are only the tip of the iceberg... Coping without a professional doesn't make sense – it is alarming how many older women have never seen a gynecologist, not to suggest they don't have concerns...they just are not working with a professional to help sort them out.

The WHC will officially launch on November 24 with a public, widely publicized, free breakfast and keynote presentation for all ages. Dr. Tauh will share stories about real women, through each stage of sexual maturity, the challenges they faced, and the alternatives that might have been available to them.

**We would love for you to meet the Women's Health Coalition.** It would be our honour to have you attend the launch, bring opening remarks and greetings on behalf of the Government of Alberta. Please let me know if you need more information or if you are able to join us.

Thank you in advance for considering this new conversation for women's health.

Kindest regards,  
Carmen Wyton, Founder  
Cell: 780-257-2270